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4 Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru

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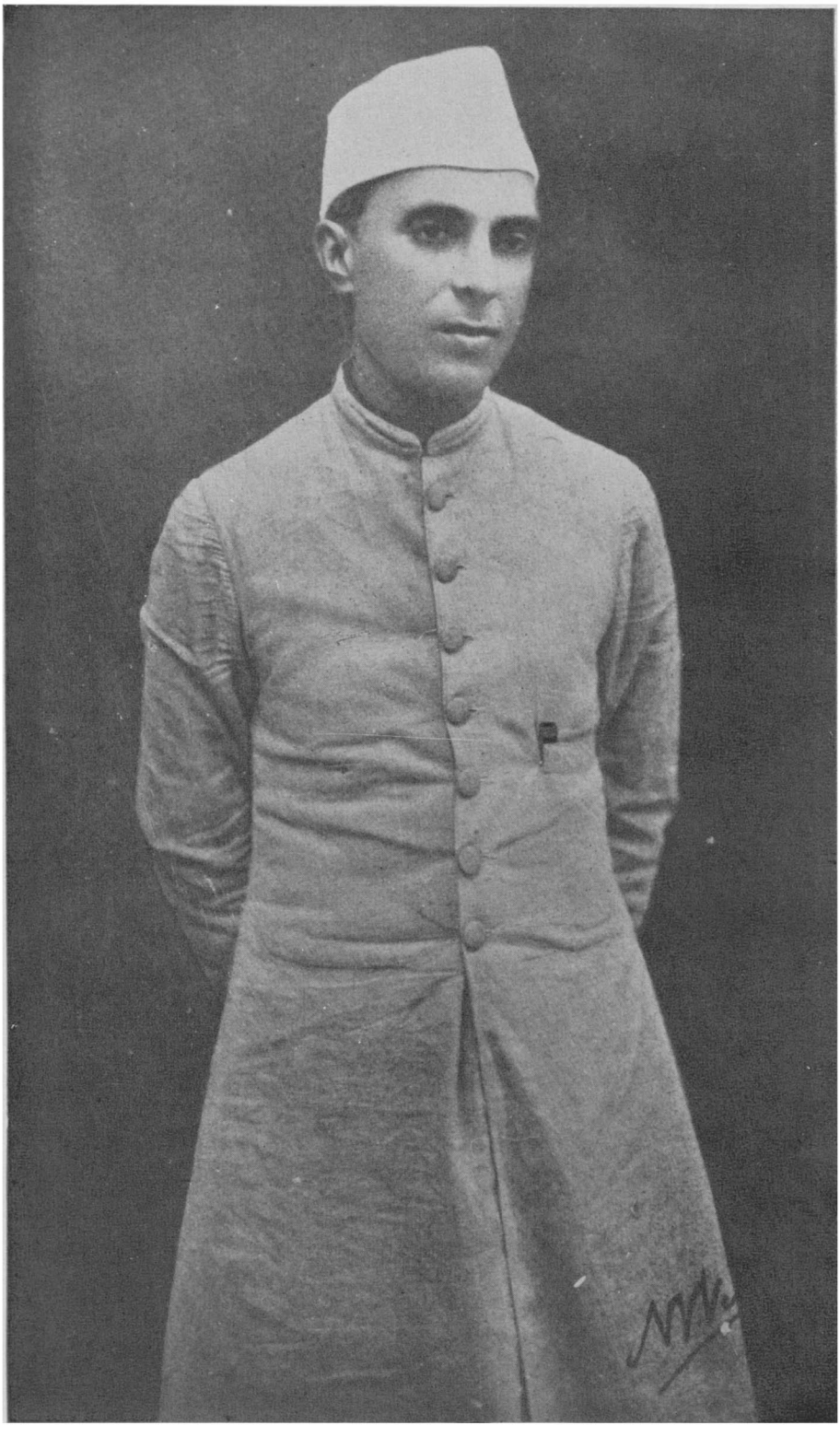
"So the story of Jawaharlal Nehru is that of a man who evolved, who grew in storm and stress till he became the representative of much that was noble in his time. It is the story of a generous and gracious human being who summed up in himself the resurgence of the 'third world' as well as the humanism which transcends dogmas and is adapted to the contemporary context. His achievement, by its very nature and setting, was much greater than that of a Prime Minister. And it is with the conviction that the life of this man is of importance not only to scholars but to all, in India and elsewhere, who are interested in the valour and compassion of the human spirit that the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund has decided to publish a series of volumes consisting of all that is significant in what Jawaharlal Nehru spoke and wrote.... the whole corpus should help to remind us of the quality and endeavour of one who was not only a leader of men and a lover of mankind, but a completely integrated human being."

Indira Gandhi

Rupees Sixty

Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru



Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Volume Four

A Project of the
Jawaharlal Nehru
Memorial Fund



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FOREWORD

Jawaharlal Nehru is one of the key figures of the twentieth century. He symbolised some of the major forces which have transformed our age.

When Jawaharlal Nehru was young, history was still the privilege of the West; the rest of the world lay in deliberate darkness. The impression given was that the vast continents of Asia and Africa existed merely to sustain their masters in Europe and North America. Jawaharlal Nehru's own education in Britain could be interpreted, in a sense, as an attempt to secure for him a place within the pale. His letters of the time are evidence of his sensitivity, his interest in science and international affairs as well as of his pride in India and Asia. But his personality was veiled by his shyness and a facade of nonchalance, and perhaps outwardly there was not much to distinguish him from the ordinary run of men. Gradually there emerged the warm and universal being who became intensely involved with the problems of the poor and the oppressed in all lands. In doing so, Jawaharlal Nehru gave articulation and leadership to millions of people in his own country and in Asia and Africa.

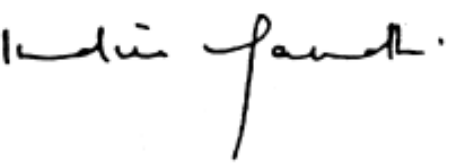
That imperialism was a curse which should be lifted from the brows of men, that poverty was incompatible with civilisation, that nationalism should be poised on a sense of international community and that it was not sufficient to brood on these things when action was urgent and compelling—these were the principles which inspired and gave vitality to Jawaharlal Nehru's activities in the years of India's struggle for freedom and made him not only an intense nationalist but one of the leaders of humanism.

No particular ideological doctrine could claim Jawaharlal Nehru for its own. Long days in jail were spent in reading widely. He drew much from the thought of the East and West and from the philosophies of the past and the present. Never religious in the formal sense, yet he had a deep love for the culture and tradition of his own land. Never a rigid Marxist, yet he was deeply influenced by that theory and was particularly impressed by what he saw in the Soviet Union on his first visit in 1927. However, he realised that the world was too complex, and man had too many facets, to be encompassed by any single or total explanation. He himself was a socialist with an abhorrence of regimentation and a democrat who was anxious to reconcile his faith in civil liberty with the

necessity of mitigating economic and social wretchedness. His struggles, both within himself and with the outside world, to adjust such seeming contradictions are what make his life and work significant and fascinating.

As a leader of free India, Jawaharlal Nehru recognised that his country could neither stay out of the world nor divest itself of its own interests in world affairs. But to the extent that it was possible, Jawaharlal Nehru sought to speak objectively and to be a voice of sanity in the shrill phases of the 'cold war'. Whether his influence helped on certain occasions to maintain peace is for the future historian to assess. What we do know is that for a long stretch of time he commanded an international audience reaching far beyond governments, that he spoke for ordinary, sensitive, thinking men and women around the globe and that his was a constituency which extended far beyond India.

So the story of Jawaharlal Nehru is that of a man who evolved, who grew in storm and stress till he became the representative of much that was noble in his time. It is the story of a generous and gracious human being who summed up in himself the resurgence of the "third world" as well as the humanism which transcends dogmas and is adapted to the contemporary context. His achievement, by its very nature and setting, was much greater than that of a Prime Minister. And it is with the conviction that the life of this man is of importance not only to scholars but to all, in India and elsewhere, who are interested in the valour and compassion of the human spirit that the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund has decided to publish a series of volumes consisting of all that is significant in what Jawaharlal Nehru spoke and wrote. There is, as is to be expected in the speeches and writings of a man so engrossed in affairs and gifted with expression, much that is ephemeral; this will be omitted. The official letters and memoranda will also not find place here. But it is planned to include everything else and the whole corpus should help to remind us of the quality and endeavour of one who was not only a leader of men and a lover of mankind, but a completely integrated human being.



New Delhi
18 January 1972

Chairman
Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund

EDITORIAL NOTE

The confrontation with the government which Jawaharlal Nehru had foreseen came to a head during the two years, 1929 to 1931, covered in this volume. Jawaharlal Nehru continued to take a deep interest in the peasant and trade union movements. On the other hand he found himself elected, on Mahatma Gandhi's insistence, the President of the Congress. His address at the Lahore session in December 1929 is a clear and courageous statement of his political ideas. It was a socialist and a republican who was at the head of what was basically a conservative body interested only in political concessions.

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In this volume much of the material has been selected from the papers of Jawaharlal Nehru.

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CONTENTS

1. On the Role of Youth

1	Message to Naujawan Bharati Sabha	11	January	1929	1
2	Advice to Youth	5	February	1929	1
3	Socialism and Communism	8	February	1929	2
4	To Yusuf Meherally	22	February	1929	4
5	To Bhagwat Dayal	3	April	1929	5
6	To Yusuf Meherally	29	June	1929	7
7	On the Hunger Strike of Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt	5	July	1929	8
8	To Yusuf Meherally	24	July	1929	9
9	Statement on Punjab Arrests	26	July	1929	10
10	To Balvantray Mehta and H. M. Pandya	1	August	1929	10
11	To Sri Prakasa	2	August	1929	11
12	On Violence	5	August	1929	12
13	On a Visit to Prisoners on Hunger Strike	9	August	1929	13
14	On Hunger Strikes	9	August	1929	14
15	Address to Allahabad Youth League	11	August	1929	16
16	On the Need for Change	21	August	1929	17
17	The Need to Abolish Feudalism	31	August	1929	18
18	To Yusuf Meherally	23	September	1929	19
19	To Damodar Swarup Seth	7	October	1929	20
20	Statement to the Press	16	October	1929	21
21	To Sumant Mehta	5	December	1929	22
22	Speech at Students' Convention	30	December	1929	23

2. The Trade Union Movement

GENERAL

1	To J. E. Potter-Wilson	22 January	1929	27
2	Note on the Strike at Bauria	24 January	1929	27
3	To Subhas Chandra Bose	24 January	1929	29
4	To D. B. Kulkarni	22 March	1929	29
5	To R. R. Bakhale	March	1929	30
6	On the General Strike at Bombay	28 April	1929	31
7	On the Trade Union Movement	18 May	1929	31
8	To D. B. Kulkarni	1 June	1929	32
9	To C. B. Johri	12 July	1929	33
10	To R. Bridgeman	23 July	1929	35
11	To V. Chattopadhyaya	24 July	1929	36
12	To S. Y. Yatzdani	14 August	1929	37
13	To C. B. Johri	25 August	1929	37
14	To D. B. Kulkarni	10 September	1929	38
15	Address at U.P. Trade Union Conference	16 September	1929	40
16	On the Royal Commission on Labour	20 September	1929	41
17	To R. R. Bakhale	24 September	1929	42
18	To D. B. Kulkarni	7 October	1929	43
19	To N. M. Joshi	20 October	1929	44
20	To R. S. Ruikar	20 October	1929	45
21	To R. S. Ruikar	29 October	1929	46
22	To R. R. Bakhale	31 October	1929	48
23	To Nilakantha Das	20 November	1929	48
24	Presidential Address at the All India Trade Union Congress	30 November	1929	49
25	Statement on the Proceedings of the All India Trade Union Congress	30 November	1929	55

GOLMURI TINPLATE WORKERS STRIKE

26	Message to the Golmuri Tinplate Workers	17	May	1929	57
27	To Jatindranath Mitra	1	July	1929	58
28	To R. R. Bakhale	1	July	1929	58
29	On Strikes	13	July	1929	59
30	To Jatindranath Mitra	16	July	1929	61
31	To M. John	16	July	1929	62
32	To the General Manager, Golmuri Tinplate Company	31	July	1929	63
33	To V. V. Giri	19	August	1929	64
34	To Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co.	21	August	1929	64
35	To Maulana Azad	25	August	1929	68
36	To Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co.	10	September	1929	69
37	To Father	10	September	1929	70
38	Note on the Golmuri Tinplate Workers' Strike		September	1929	72
39	To Abdul Bari	4	October	1929	80
40	Statement to the Press	5	October	1929	80

3. General Secretary, A.I.C.C.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

1	To Madam Sun Yat Sen	16	January	1929	85
2	To General Secretary, National Minority Movement	16	January	1929	86
3	To Goune Sinha	16	January	1929	86
4	To Secretary, Perhipunan Indonesia	19	January	1929	87
5	To Alokananda Mahabharati	19	January	1929	88
6	To P. N. Trivedi	19	January	1929	88
7	To M. E. Burns	22	January	1929	89
8	To B. Weinbren	22	January	1929	89
9	To Otto Reinemann	22	January	1929	90

10	To N. N. Acharya	22	February	1929	91
11	To Secretary, Punjab P.C.C.	23	February	1929	91
12	To T. Braganca-Cunha	2	March	1929	94
13	To Secretary, Punjab P.C.C.	2	March	1929	95
14	To Sailendranath Ghose	6	March	1929	95
15	To Satyapal	13	March	1929	96
16	Statement to the Press	21	March	1929	98
17	To Miaz Ali	7	May	1929	100
18	On the Victory of British Labour	2	June	1929	101
19	On the British Labour Government	7	June	1929	102
20	Interview to the Press	9	June	1929	102
21	To B. J. K. Hallowes	26	June	1929	103
22	To A. C. N. Nambiar	11	July	1929	105
23	To Fenner Brockway	1	August	1929	107
24	Anglo-Indians and the Congress	27	August	1929	109
25	To C. Rajagopalachari	9	September	1929	110
26	To L. Paul	7	October	1929	110
27	To Members of the N.W.F.P.C.C.	21	November	1929	111
28	To Sakarben K. Vyas	6	December	1929	112
29	To S. Srinivasa Iyengar	7	December	1929	112
30	To D. V. Gundappa	11	December	1929	113

MAHATMA GANDHI'S U.P. TOUR

31	To Sri Prakasa	12	March	1929	114
32	Circular to Members of the U.P.P.C.C.	13	July	1929	115
33	To B. D. Misra	23	July	1929	117
34	To Sri Prakasa	31	July	1929	117
35	To Damodar Swarup Seth	31	July	1929	118
36	To J. B. Kripalani	5	August	1929	119
37	To M. A. Ansari	22	October	1929	119
38	To J. B. Kripalani	28	October	1929	120

CONGRESS BRANCHES ABROAD

39	To Ramlal B. Bajpai	19	March	1929	122
40	To Ramlal B. Bajpai	7	May	1929	123
41	To Sailendranath Ghose	20	June	1929	124
42	To Sailendranath Ghose	23	August	1929	125
43	To Ramlal B. Bajpai	31	October	1929	126
44	To Ramlal B. Bajpai	21	November	1929	127

HINDUSTANI SEVA DAL

45	To N. S. Hardikar	25	January	1929	129
46	An Appeal for the Hindustani Seva Dal	25	January	1929	130
47	To N. S. Hardikar	11	February	1929	130
48	The National Flag	8	March	1929	131
49	On the Hindustani Seva Dal	27	June	1929	132
50	Message to the Seva Dal Camp at Nawakot	18	September	1929	133

BRITISH GOODS BOYCOTT COMMITTEE

51	On the Duties of the Kisans	9	March	1929	134
52	On Khadi	21	March	1929	135
53	To Jairamdas Doulatram	23	March	1929	136
54	To Secretaries, Punjab and Delhi P.C.Cs	23	March	1929	137
55	To Jairamdas Doulatram	23	March	1929	137
56	To Jairamdas Doulatram	23	March	1929	138
57	To Jairamdas Doulatram	8	April	1929	140
58	To P.C.Cs	8	April	1929	140

INSPECTION OF CONGRESS OFFICES

59	To Secretary, Punjab P.C.C.	13	March	1929	141
60	U.P.P.C.C.—Notes of Inspection	15	March	1929	143
61	To Secretary, U.P.P.C.C.	23	March	1929	145
62	To Jairamdas Doulatram	30	April	1929	146

63	To Lala Shankarlal	2 May	1929	148
64	To Secretary, Bombay P.C.C.	6 May	1929	149
65	To Secretary, U.P.P.C.C.	13 July	1929	151
66	Report on Hathras	22 July	1929	151

4. The Congress Presidentship

1	To Mahatma Gandhi	9 July	1929	155
2	To Mahatma Gandhi	13 July	1929	156
3	On the Congress Presidentship	21 August	1929	158
4	Telegram to Mahatma Gandhi	21 August	1929	158
5	To Father	30 August	1929	158
6	To V. Chattopadhyaya	23 September	1929	159
7	To R. Bridgeman	1 October	1929	160
8	To Shiva Prasad Gupta	1 October	1929	160
9	To S. A. Brelvi	7 October	1929	161
10	To Govind Ballabh Pant	14 October	1929	161
11	To Editors of Nationalist Newspapers	29 October	1929	162
12	To All Members of the Working Committee	29 October	1929	163
13	To B. N. Sen	31 October	1929	164
14	The Delhi Manifesto	1 November	1929	165
15	To Mahatma Gandhi	4 November	1929	166
16	To the President of the Congress	4 November	1929	168
17	To M. Desai	14 November	1929	169
18	To D. V. Divekar	14 November	1929	170
19	To Frances J. Pratt	20 November	1929	170
20	To S. Srinivasa Iyengar	20 November	1929	171
21	To B. V. Burli	20 November	1929	172
22	To Satyapal	21 November	1929	173
23	To R. Bridgeman	23 November	1929	174
24	To V. Chattopadhyaya	26 November	1929	175
25	The Congress and the Viceroy's Statement	November	1929	175

26	To K. Santanam	4 December	1929	178
27	To Prafulla C. Mukherji	9 December	1929	179
28	To Krishna Narayan	10 December	1929	180
29	To Nand Kumar Rai	11 December	1929	180

5. The Lahore Congress

1	The Hoisting of the National Flag	29 December	1929	183
2	Presidential Address	29 December	1929	184
3	Concluding Address	1 January	1930	199

6. Preparation for Civil Disobedience

1	To Secretaries, P.C.Cs	6 January	1930	203
2	Statement to the Press	6 January	1930	204
3	To Abdur Rahim	7 January	1930	205
4	To Mahatma Gandlii	7 January	1930	206
5	To R. Bridgeman	8 January	1930	207
6	On the Boycott of Councils	9 January	1930	208
7	On the Treatment of Political Prisoners	11 January	1930	209
8	The Coming Struggle	13 January	1930	210
9	To Mahatma Gandhi	13/14 January	1930	211
10	To Syed Mahmud	15 January	1930	213
11	To Mahatma Gandhi	17 January	1930	214
12	Telegram to Mahatma Gandhi	17 January	1930	215
13	The Independence Pledge	17 January	1930	215
14	Circular to P.C.Cs	17 January	1930	217
15	To Abdur Rahim	21 January	1930	219
16	To T. V. K. Naidu	21 January	1930	220
17	To Bhagwan Din Mishra	22 January	1930	220
18	To R. S. Misra	23 January	1930	221

19	On the Duty of Youth	23	January	1930	222
20	To Syed Mahmud	23	January	1930	222
21	Circular to Secretaries, P.C.Cs	24	January	1930	223
22	Circular to P.C.Cs	24	January	1930	224
23	On Independence Day Celebrations	25	January	1930	225
24	To G. V. Ketkar	25	January	1930	225
25	Statement to the Press				227
26	Complete Independence				228
27	To B. C. Roy	27	January	1930	230
28	To Uma Shankar	28	January	1930	231
29	Statement to the Press	28	January	1930	231
30	To V. Chattopadhyaya	30	January	1930	232
31	To R. Bridgeman	30	January	1930	233
32	To Secretaries, League against Imperialism	30	January	1930	234
33	To Secretary, Punjab P.C.C.	31	January	1930	239
34	To Bansgopal		January	1930	240
35	To Raja Mahendra Pratap		January	1930	241
36	No Going Back on Pledges	1	February	1930	242
37	Speech at Tangan	5	February	1930	242
38	Call to Action	17	February	1930	251
39	Message to Volunteers	18	February	1930	252
40	To Shiva Prasad Gupta	24	February	1930	253
41	Circular to Secretaries, P.C.Cs	25	February	1930	253
42	To J. Adhikari	25	February	1930	254
43	Resolution at U.P.P.C.C.	1	March	1930	255
44	To Edo Fimmen	4	March	1930	256
45	To Shiva Prasad Gupta	5	March	1930	258
46	Message to Baroda State People's Conference	13	March	1930	258
47	The Problem of Minorities	14	March	1930	259
48	The Satyagraha Pledge	24	March	1930	262
49	Note on Congress Disputes in Bengal	29	March	1930	263
50	To Secretary, League against Imperialism	9	April	1930	267
51	On the Boycott of British Drugs	11	April	1930	268

7. Salt Satyagraha

1	Circular to P.C.Cs	22	February	1930	271
2	To Secretaries, P.C.Cs	5	March	1930	273
3	Either Freedom or Slavery	6	March	1930	274
4	Statement to the Press	7	March	1930	275
5	To Mahatma Gandhi	7	March	1930	275
6	To B. G. Lokhare	7	March	1930	276
7	On the Arrest of Vallabhbhai Patel	8	March	1930	277
8	The Campaign in the U.P.	8	March	1930	278
9	Circular to P.C.Cs	12	March	1930	279
10	If Mahatma Gandhi Be Arrested	12	March	1930	280
11	To Mahadeva Desai	13	March	1930	280
12	Students and Satyagraha	14	March	1930	281
13	To M. S. Aney	16	March	1930	282
14	To K. F. Nariman	16	March	1930	283
15	Statement to the Press	18	March	1930	283
16	Note for the *Congress Bulletin*	20	March	1930	284
17	To Secretaries, P.C.Cs	20	March	1930	285
18	Interview to the Press	20	March	1930	286
19	The A.I.C.C. and Civil Disobedience	22	March	1930	287
20	Inqilab Zindabad	24	March	1930	289
21	Circular to Secretaries, P.C.Cs	25	March	1930	290
22	Appeal for the Seva Dal	25	March	1930	290
23	To Lal Behari Tandon	25	March	1930	291
24	To Basheer Ahmed Sayeed	25	March	1930	292
25	To Mahatma Gandhi	27	March	1930	292
26	To Shri Krishna Dikshit	28	March	1930	293
27	No Choice but to Fight	31	March	1930	294
28	The Battle for Independence	3	April	1930	295
29	Circular to Secretaries, P.C.Cs	4	April	1930	295
30	Circular to P.C.Cs	4	April	1930	296
31	Statement to the Press	4	April	1930	297
32	Circular to P.C.Cs	4	April	1930	297
33	To Roger Baldwin	4	April	1930	298
34	To Ranu Bala Debi	4	April	1930	299

35	Students and Civil Disobedience	6	April	1930	300
36	Message to Punjab Satyagraha Conference	6	April	1930	301
37	Statement to the Press	8	April	1930	302
38	To Vichitra Narain Sharma	10	April	1930	303
39	To the Working Committee	10	April	1930	304
40	To Ganesh Lal Dashera	10	April	1930	304
41	To Sitla Sahai	11	April	1930	305
42	Reply to U.P. Government	11	April	1930	306
43	To Sitla Sahai	12	April	1930	307
44	To Mahadeva Desai	12	April	1930	308
45	To Rafi Ahmad Kidwai	13	April	1930	311
46	To Din Dayal	13	April	1930	312
47	To Sri Prakasa	14	April	1930	313
48	The Trial	14	April	1930	313
49	Message to the People	14	April	1930	314
50	Message to the Citizens of Allahabad	14	April	1930	314
51	Message to Mahatma Gandhi	14	April	1930	314

8. Prison Diary with Letters
14 April 1930-11 October 1930

Prison Diary with Letters 317

9. The Eight Days Interlude
11-19 October 1930

1	Very Much Alive and Kicking	11	October	1930	391
2	Message to the Country	12	October	1930	391
3	Reply to the Viceroy	12	October	1930	392
4	To Secretary, All India Spinners Association	13	October	1930	395

5	To K. D. Malaviya	13	October	1930	397
6	Circular to P.C.Cs	14	October	1930	397
7	To C. Rajagopalachari	15	October	1930	400
8	Message to the North West Frontier Province	16	October	1930	401
9	To K. Santanam	17	October	1930	402
10	To Dhan Gopal Mukerjee	17	October	1930	404
11	On the Boycott of Foreign Cloth	18	October	1930	405
12	Reply to Municipal Address	18	October	1930	406
13	On Khadi	19	October	1930	407
14	To the Workers of Bombay	19	October	1930	408
15	A Note on Acting President in Case of Arrest	19	October	1930	408

10. Prison Diary with Letters
19 October 1930—26 January 1931

Prison Diary with Letters 413

11. The Gandhi-Irwin Settlement

1	Speech on His Release	26	January	1931	465
2	On His Father's Illness	30	January	1931	465
3	Acknowledgement of Messages on His Father's Death	9	February	1931	466
4	To Khan Sahib	11	February	1931	467
5	To Jaffar Shah and Abdulla Shah	11	February	1931	468
6	To Tej Bahadur Sapru	12	February	1931	470
7	Draft Communique of the Working Committee	16	February	1931	470
8	Note for the Working Committee	16	February	1931	473

9	Interview to the *Hartford Times*				474
10	Circular to P.C.Cs	17	February	1931	475
11	Interview to the Press	18	February	1931	476
12	To Kiran Sankar Roy	23	February	1931	476
13	To B. C. Roy	23	February	1931	477
14	To Vijayalakshmi Pandit	28	February	1931	478
15	Note for the Working Committee				479
16	A Note on the Provisional Settlement	4	March	1931	481

12. After the Settlement

1	Interview to the Press	8	March	1931	485
2	Telegram to Roger Baldwin	8	March	1931	486
3	To Mulkraj Bhalla	8	March	1931	486
4	Truce but not Peace	9	March	1931	487
5	To Secretaries, P.C.Cs	10	March	1931	488
6	The Significance of the Settlement	10	March	1931	490
7	To Krishnanand	10	March	1931	492
8	To Nripendra Chandra Bannerji	12	March	1931	493
9	Puma Swaraj, not Dominion Status	15	March	1931	493
10	Speech at Ghatkopar	16	March	1931	497
11	Tribute to Mahatma Gandhi	17	March	1931	498
12	Speech at Volunteers Rally	18	March	1931	499
13	To Secretary, Agra District Congress Committee	22	March	1931	499
14	On the Execution of Bhagat Singh	24	March	1931	500

13. The Karachi Congress

1	Speech at All India Students Convention	27	March	1931	503
2	The Release of Political Prisoners	27	March	1931	504
3	Message to The Bombay Chronicle	29	March	1931	504
4	On the Lahore Executions	29	March	1931	505
5	On the Gandhi-Irwin Settlement	30	March	1931	507
6	The Future of Burma	31	March	1931	508
7	On the Forward Policy in the Frontier	31	March	1931	509
8	Resolution on Fundamental Rights	31	March	1931	511

14. Trip to the South Sri Lanka

1	To Vijayalakshmi Pandit	15	April	1931	517
2	To Indira Nehru	21	April	1931	518
3	To Vijayalakshmi Pandit	22	April	1931	520
4	To Vijayalakshmi Pandit	25	April	1931	521
5	To Syed Mahmud	25	April	1931	522
6	To Syed Mahmud	30	April	1931	523
7	Speech at Kandy	2	May	1931	525
8	To Syed Mahmud	5	May	1931	527
9	To Vallabhbhai Patel	5	May	1931	528
10	Speech at Civic Reception, Colombo	16	May	1931	529

SOUTHERN INDIA

11	To Krishna Nehru	22	May	1931	532

12	Interview to the Press at Tuticorin				536
13	Reply to Addresses at Tinnevelly	27	May	1931	537
14	Reply to Addresses at Trichur	30	May	1931	539
15	Message to Travancore	30	May	1931	540
16	Reply to Addresses at Calicut	30	May	1931	541
17	Speech at Calicut	31	May	1931	543
18	Speech at Civic Reception, Coimbatore	31	May	1931	544
19	Address at Civic Reception, Mysore	1	June	1931	545
20	Reply to Addresses at Mysore	1	June	1931	547
21	Address to Bar Association, Mysore	1	June	1931	549
22	Reply to Addresses at Bangalore	2	June	1931	550
23	To Vijayalakshmi Pandit	8	June	1931	553
24	On Indian Labour in Ceylon	11	July	1931	559

15. Miscellaneous

1	To Gopal Singh Khalsa	1	July	1929	563
2	To K.T.Shah	12	July	1929	563
3	To S.A.Brelvi	16	July	1929	565
4	To S.A.Brelvi	23	July	1929	565
5	To Dan Singh	14	August	1929	566
6	To Rash Mohan Roy	16	August	1929	567
7	To the Editor, The Scholar	19	August	1929	567
8	To Shambu Nath Hakhu	25	August	1929	568
9	To Devi Das Vaid	7	October	1929	569
10	To Nripendra Chandra Bannerji	7	October	1929	570
11	To T.L.Ahobalacharya	7	October	1929	571
12	To Master Tara Singh	10	October	1929	572
13	To K.P.Choubey	21	October	1929	574
14	To S.E.Stokes	5	December	1929	574
15	To Jahangir Vakil	6	December	1929	575

16	Message to The Light of the World	9	December	1929	576
17	To R. V. Dhulekar	16	January	1930	576
18	To C. V. J. Chetty	27	January	1930	578
19	To K. S. Venkatramani	1	February	1930	578
20	To Durbar Secretary, Rewa State	25	February	1930	579
21	Statement to the Press	8	March	1930	580
22	To Sri Prakasa	13	March	1930	580
23	To Motilal Nehru	28	March	1930	581
24	To Members of the Working Committee	28	March	1930	582
25	To Father	5	April	1930	583
26	To Krishna Nehru	21	February	1931	584
27	To Khwaja Ahmad Abbas	12	March	1931	586
28	To Chairman, Allahabad Municipal Board				587
29	The Economic Exploitation of India	24	March	1931	588

ILLUSTRATIONS

Frontispiece

With Congress workers at Bombay, 1929
Lahore Congress, 1929
President Elect — *between pp.* 96—97

Lahore, 1929
Lahore, 1929 — 192—193

Salt Satyagraha, Allahabad
At Naini Prison, 14 April 1930 — 304—305

Diagram of Barrack No. 6, Naini Prison
Cover of *The Eight Days Interlude* — 320—321

First page of statement at trial, 24 October 1930
Photostat of first page of letter to
Indira Nehru, 26 October 1930 — 416—417

At a meeting in Bombay, 1931
In Sri Lanka, 1931 — 528—529

1

ON THE ROLE OF YOUTH

1. Message to Naujawan Bharati Sabha[1]

I have been following with anxious interest the news in the press about the numerous arrests that have recently been made in the Punjab. Friends from the Punjab have also told me of what is happening there and of how under the pretext of investigation the police are making a dead set against earnest young workers and specially the Naujawan Bharati Sabha in the Punjab.

From what I know of this Sabha and its members I feel sure that nothing that the police can do by way of repression or terrorism is likely to damp their ardour. They are brave men who will realise the consequences of their acts and are not afraid of them. They do not require courage from outside but they can rest assured that many in India are full of sympathy for them and are prepared to help them as much as they can. I am sure the Naujawan Bharati Sabha will survive and grow in strength to take a leading part in forming a national India.

1. *The Searchlight*, 11 January 1929.

2. Advice to Youth[1]

The world is moved by ideas. Thought is always greater than armies, more lasting than the most powerful and best organised despotism. Thoughts are more powerful than fighting men, guns and prisons and laws. Their beginnings are feeble but their effect is mighty.

The British Government is afraid of Soviet principles and is trying its best to uproot socialist ideas and not to allow any communist to preach his gospel. So it has prepared the so-called Public Safety Bill. The Bill in fact aims at crushing everything that leads to freedom. Its underlying idea is to weaken the forces of nationalism in India.

1. Speech at Delhi, 5 February 1929. From *The Hindustan Times*, 7 February 1929.

Communism is a new principle and like other new-born principles it has to undergo the tyrannies of imperialists. But the government should know that ideas can never be checked by cruel laws. The more the *zulum*, the greater the spread of ideas.

The mistake which despots have been making ever since organized states came into existence is that they overestimate their coercive powers, which are only physical and material, and, on the other hand, underestimate the power and vitality of ideas and sentiments.

Youth should not be slaves of tradition, but should break the authority of custom, tradition and government. It is false to say that the ideas of socialism are against Hinduism or Islam. In spite of all effort to suppress the ideas of socialism they are making great progress because society is suffering from numerous social and economic evils which require immediate eradication.

The whole question before the ordinary people is that of bread. Indian youth are so greatly in the grip of unemployment that over a thousand M.A.s, graduates and others had recently applied for a job of thirty rupees.

By merely shouting 'Swaraj' it will not come to us. It is our duty to face problems like practical men. Swaraj is not our goal, it is a means to our goal. The goal is human happiness and human equality.

It is my desire that the spirit that was infused in the youth of Europe after the Great War, and especially by the Russian revolution, should be kindled in every Indian youth. The youth of Delhi should form an active youth league and chalk out a way for themselves. The Bombay, Bengal and Madras youth leagues have done splendid work. I am confident that the youth of Delhi will not lag behind. I want youth to bring the older generation to the right path and revolutionise their rigid ideas, and release India from the clutches of foreign slavery.

3. Socialism and Communism[1]

We want to discuss socialism and preach its gospel to the people, because we want to help to solve the problem of bread and butter. In

1. Speech at Lahore, 8 February 1929. From *The Tribune*, 10 February 1929.

India, millions of people are underfed and underclothed and the mere discussion or talk of freedom cannot bring them freedom. We want to change the order of society in India and raise our people to the same level as the modern nations of the world, so that our people can live more comfortably and get sufficient food every day. I disapprove of the spirit of fatalism and accepting everything blindly, which has caused great harm to our country. But whenever we attempt to create a new order of society, the government immediately gets nervous and sees 'red' in everything. The whole aim of the government is to shut out all new ideas which could come into this country from outside. Government has proscribed from time to time foreign literature, particularly Russian literature, in order to prevent Indian youth from imbibing fresh and new ideas.

The spirit of nationalism has existed in India for many years, but if nationalism is combined with socialism the day of freedom would be hastened. I know that if we spread socialistic ideas we are bound to come into conflict with the capitalists. But this should not deter us from working for the welfare of the peasants and the workers. These are the real sons of the soil and they truly represent the Indian nation. If they are organised we will have the real sanction of the people behind us. It is clear that the big landlords and talukdars and the Rajas and the Maharajas will not join us and support our cause; but as soon as we are able to organize the workers and create a mass consciousness among the people, these capitalists will themselves come down from their places of privilege and join us. The workers and the peasants are the only people who would stand by us at all times of difficulty. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the former Labour Prime Minister of England, has suggested that Indians should adopt socialistic principles gradually and slowly. But this slow rate would mean fifty years for us to come in line with the advanced socialist countries of the world.

The Bolsheviks believe that sooner or later the people will have to confront the autocrats and the bureaucrats and therefore the people should be trained from now. All that goes to form wealth and power should be secured by the people, who should form a state of the proletariat. The exploitation of the workers by the capitalists must be stopped. Those who help and labour in the production of wealth should live as comfortably as those who possess wealth. Socialism means cooperation. I, therefore, ask all of you to work together in order to elevate the masses.

Students should not only express enthusiasm but train themselves in such a manner that they might become experts and not mere amateurs. Incompetent amateurs can never hope to achieve anything in the world.

Students should discard foreign cloth and wear khaddar and take an active part in national activities.

4. To Yusuf Meherally[1]

February 22nd, 1929

My dear Meherally,

Thank you for the literature[2] you have sent me. Your league must have had a very heavy and arduous time during the Bombay riots.[3] From all accounts that I have heard your members did remarkably well. I was deeply grieved to learn of the death of the three young volunteers. Will you kindly convey my heartiest congratulations to your members and volunteers for the splendid work they did during these riots ?

In Lahore I met the members of the students' association. They are an earnest lot and I wish you would get intouch with them.

Please write to the secretary, Lahore Students' Union, Lahore. This is a sufficient address. You can say that you are writing to him at my instance.

I found that some of them were worried about the conflict between the Youth Congress and the Socialist Youth Congress. I tried to assure them that there was or should be no conflict between the two, the Socialist Youth Congress comprising the left wing of the larger congress. I wish you would write to them and impress this on them. Most of the young men who saw me were fairly advanced in their views and suggested that if there was any conflict they would prefer the more advanced congress.

Could you send me copies of the resolutions passed at the Youth Congress at Calcutta ?[4]

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-39/1928 (Pt. I), p. 113, N.M.M.L.
2. On the constitution of the Youth League.
3. Communal riots broke out in Bombay on 5 February 1929 and lasted for a week.
4. The Youth Congress, which was held in Calcutta on 25-26 December 1928, declared that complete independence and not Dominion Status should be the objective of India. It called upon youth to combat the forces of communatism and capitalism. They were asked to pledge themselves to the use of Khaddar and to encourage *swadeshi*. They were also asked to keep up and stiffen the boycott of the Simon Commission.

I have not heard anything definite about the U.P. Conference.[5] I believe however that some conversations are going on about it. I am going to Lucknow tomorrow and shall inquire.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. It was to hold its first session at Lucknow in July 1929.

5. To Bhagwat Dayal[1]

3/4/29

Dear Bhagwat Dayaiji,[2]
I received your letter of the 28th March yesterday afternoon on my return to Allahabad. I was very much surprised to read it and to find what curious notions have entered the heads of some students. What a youth league is meant for is a question which can hardly be answered in the course of a brief letter. I have given expression to my own ideas on the subject on several public occasions and specially at the All Bengal Students Conference[3] and the Bombay Presidency Youth Conference[4] last year.

I had often suggested at public meetings and elsewhere the desirability of starting youth leagues in the U.P. I had also stated that the initiative must come from the youth themselves and that it was not my business to start it. In December last, I think, I was told that a league had been started in Allahabad in a small way. I did not know much about it. In January or perhaps February I was asked if I would agree to be the president of this league. I said I had no objection. I told the young men who approached me, however, that I would be a president more or less in an honorary capacity. I would gladly help them to the best of my ability but the burden of carrying on the

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-39/1928 (Pt. I), pp. 153-159, N.M.M.L.
2. (b. 1900); lecturer, Allahabad University, 1925-45; Indian ambassador in Thailand, 1946-51, and in Indonesia, 1951-53.
3. 22 September 1928. See *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 188-196.
4. 12 December 1928. See *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 203-210.

league must rest on the young men. I was busy with other things and so far as I know the league did nothing special except holding a meeting of sympathy with the Gujarat College students.[5] I was not present at any meeting when the name or constitution was considered. Some time back, probably last year, I was shown some draft constitutions and asked my opinion. Probably I made some suggestions but I do not recollect exactly. My impression was that the league was called the Allahabad Youth League and was confined to Allahabad.

Immediately after Puran Chand Joshi's arrest I heard for the first time that the league was called the U.P. Young Comrades' League and I saw their membership form with some rules at the back. I was a little surprised at the name as I had not heard it before. I enquired about it and was told that this name had originally been given to the organisation. As I had not been in touch with what was happening I did not know anything about it. I pointed out however that it was not a happy name and that it should confine its activities to Allahabad. Most of the others agreed but said that the name should not be changed just then, so soon after Joshi's arrest. This might be interpreted as the result of fear caused by the recent arrest. I appreciated this argument and so, for the moment, we dropped the subject.

My own idea was, and I think this also was the idea of others who were working for the league, that a permanent constitution should be made after a fair number of members had been enrolled. For the moment therefore a provisional committee was elected and some general and somewhat vague rules were made.

As for terrorism and communism I do not understand why you should put me the question. Surely you did not imagine that the league would have such a monstrous aim as terrorism or that it should stand for communism! A youth league, as I understand it, should consist of young men who are dissatisfied with present conditions and seek to better them. Any young person, whatever his way of thinking may be, should be welcome if he takes life seriously and wants to discuss its problems and do something. The league should not encourage rigid adherence to creeds and dogmas and any one who is full of self-complacency would not be a desirable member.

The principal object of such a league should be, I think, self-education by discussions, study circles and by developing contacts with the masses. The members should prepare themselves for future work rather than

5. The students of Gujarat College, Ahmedabad, had gone on strike on 3 January when the principal fined those students who had been absent on the day of the arrival of the Simon Commission and ordered them to reappear for the examinations.

take up active work before they are clear in their own minds what to do and how to do it. The preparation itself may involve some active work but the object should not be so much the work as the training and knowledge that the work gives. Some kinds of activities can be indulged in even at this stage, for example, boycott of foreign cloth and occasional participation in national demonstrations and the like. Occasionally also, activities are thrust on the league by repressive measures of the government.

Communism today is a very vital factor in world politics and quite apart from its merits it seems to me essential that our youth should try to understand it. Personally, although I do not agree with many of its methods and am doubtful how far India is developed enough for it, I am attracted by its ideology. And even if I was not so attracted the mere fact that the government wants to suppress all honest consideration of the subject would induce me to do this. But that is neither here nor there. So far as the youth league is concerned it is certainly not committed to communism or any other 'ism' and its doors are open to those who may be communisticallv inclined as well as those who consider communism the special gift of the Evil One. So far as the average student is concerned, as you must know, he knows precious little about communism or socialism.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

6. To Yusuf Meherally[1]

June 29th, 1929

My dear Meherally,
I have just received your letter of the 24th June. I am very glad to learn that you propose to issue a weekly called the *Vanguard*.[2] I am convinced that there is a great deal of room for such a paper. Indeed for some time I myself thought of having such a paper issued from Allahabad or Benares but want of time prevented me from doing it.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-39/1928 (Pt. II), pp. 211-213, N.M.M.L.
2. On 24 June 1929 Yusuf Meherally wrote to Jawaharlal that he proposed to start a weekly journal—*Vanguard*—to propagate the principles of socialism.

Besides, I was loth to issue anything which was not A-l. I wish you all success.

My experience of Indian journalism has been very disappointing and hence I am diffident of connecting myself in a business capacity with any newspaper. I should not like to be a director of a paper in name only and I do not see what else I can do from such a distance. However it is difficult to say 'no' to you and if you insist you can have my name as a director.

I am glad you have got a number of competent young men with you. That is very good. Try to spread your net as wide as possible and get articles from a variety of individuals. The same persons writing repeatedly become a little stale. Try also to get an international outlook by getting contributors from other countries.

I think that the annual subscription you have fixed is too little. I would suggest at least Rs. 5, if not more. However this is for you to decide.

I think you ought to make a point of paying your contributors. To begin with you need not pay them much but you must recognise the principle that literary craftsmen have to live and the Indian habit of getting free articles is a most pernicious one. You will get much better work if you pay for it and you will help some deserving young men.

One thing more. Do not make your paper too heavy with politics. As for an article from me I shall try to send you one occasionally but I shall not promise anything just at present. Probably I shall prefer writing to you on a non-political subject. I have too much of politics in my life already.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

7. On the Hunger Strike of Bhagat Singh and B.K. Duti1

I have learnt with deep grief of the hunger strike of Bhagat Singh[2]

1. Statement issued at Delhi, 5 July 1929. *The Tribune*, 7 July 1929.
2. (1901-1931); organised revolutionary activities in the Punjab, Delhi and U.P.; alleged to have been involved in the shooting of a police officer at Lahore on 17 December 1928; arrested after he and B. K. Dutt had exploded a bomb in the Central Assembly on 8 April 1929. He was one of the principal accused in the Lahore Conspiracy Case and was sentenced to death and executed on 23 March 1931.

and Dutt.[3] For 20 days or more they have refrained from all food and I am told that forcible feeding is being resorted to. The two young men may have done wrong, but no Indian can refrain from admiring their great courage and our hearts must go out to them now in their great and voluntary suffering. They are fasting not for any selfish ends but to improve the lot of all political prisoners. As days go by, we shall watch with deep anxiety this hard trial and shall earnestly hope that the two gallant brothers of ours may triumph in the ordeal.

3. Batukeshwar Dutt (1908-1965); close associate of Bhagat Singh; awarded life imprisonment in the Lahore Conspiracy Case; released in 1938.

8. To Yusuf Meherally[1]

July 24th, 1929

My dear Meherally,

... Your letter of the 19th together with the memorandum and the articles of association of the Vanguard Publishing Co. Ltd. I am afraid life is too short to consider your memorandum and articles in detail. I suppose they are in the usual form. There is one small matter however which I should like to point out. In paragraph 3 of your memorandum Ci.(a) you refer to "vernaculars". I have strong objection to the use of this word anywhere. As a matter of fact it is incorrect English although the word is used frequently enough in India. Certainly it is a slight on our languages. I would therefore suggest the substitution of "or in any of the Indian languages" in place of "or in the vernaculars" ...

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-39/1928 (Pt. II), p. 235, N.M.M.L, Extracts.

9. Statement on Punjab Arrests[1]

This Committee congratulates the people of the Punjab on the gallant way in which they are facing the arrests and convictions of their leaders and workers, brutal assaults, including assaults on under-trial prisoners, and the barbarous methods of repression of the British Government. In view of the fact that this terrorism appears to be aimed at preventing a successful session of the Congress in Lahore, the only adequate answer that the people of the Punjab can make is to redouble their efforts to make the forthcoming Congress a complete success and to prepare themselves for the action contemplated in 1930.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. 7/1929, p. 9, N.M.M.L.
   This statement, issued by the Congress President after the A.I.C.C. meeting on 26 July 1929 at Allahabad, was drafted by Jawaharlal.

10. To Balvantray Mehta and H.M. Pandya[1]

August 1st, 1929

Dear Sirs,[2]

I have received your letter of the 26th July. As I am wholly ignorant of what is taking place in Rajkot in connection with the organisation of the youth conference there I am unable to answer your questions

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-39/1929, p. 77, N.M.M.L.
2. Balvantray Gopalji Mehta (1899-1965); born at Bhavnagar; entered public life in 1920; actively worked for harijan uplift and women's education; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; one of the founders of the All India States People's Conference and its general secretary from 1928 to 1947; president of the All India Panchayat Parishad, 1958-61; Chief Minister of Gujarat from 1963 till his death in an air crash on 19 September 1965. Balvantray and Pandya were then president and secretary, respectively, of the reception committee, Kathiawar Youth Conference.

definitely. I may however inform you that I am very much against any restriction of the right of free speech and so far as I am concerned I should not like that right to be limited in any way. I am writing accordingly to the office-bearers of the Rajkot conference. In case any undertakings which restrict this right have been given I should prefer to be relieved of the presidentship.

As for asking the permission of the ruler of a state, if there is no rule requiring it there appears to be no necessity for it. The mere asking of permission however does not seem to make much difference. It is the conditions which are often attached to the permission that are apt to be humiliating.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

11. To Sri Prakasa[1]

August 2nd, 1929

My dear Prakasa,
I saw Dandekar[2] at the station. He was looking very cheerful as I expected him to be. He is a very brave boy and I have no doubt that he will survive whatever trouble and suffering he has to undergo and come back to put his shoulder to the wheel again.

He told me that he did not propose to defend himself. I agreed with him. Quite apart from any question of noncooperation and the like I do not see how any of us can offer a defence in a purely sedition case. It is our business in life to propagate disaffection for the government and that is sedition. In case the speech or speeches that Dandekar delivered are correctly reported there is little to be done except to admit them.

I suggested to Dandekar, however, that it might perhaps be advisable to have some lawyer to visit him, not with the intention of appearing

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-20/1929, p. 109, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. V. S. Dandekar, assistant secretary of U.P.P.C.C., 1929. He had been arrested on 31 July 1929 on a charge of sedition.

in his case subsequently but just to keep us in touch with him so long as he is not convicted. A lawyer has greater facilities than others. You might therefore write to some one in Mainpuri to go and visit him in jail as a lawyer...

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

12. On Violence[1]

Jawaharlal Nehru said that although they had been proclaiming constantly that they would employ legitimate and peaceful means for the attainment of Swaraj still the government was repeatedly having recourse to repressive measures. The government was realizing that Indians were now not afraid of jails and, therefore, they were adopting measures of violence.

The Congress creed was achievement of Swaraj by nonviolent and peaceful means. Of the persons who took recourse to violent means, many, he thought, did not adopt such measures under the belief that they would obtain Swaraj by those means. It was their disgust for the present plight that made them impatient. They could not tolerate the idea of living any more in a country tied with bonds of slavery and, therefore, they adopted violent means risking their lives. They might also have another object in view in risking their lives, namely, rousing the public.

The only way of removing the impatience of such people was to have a strong organisation in the country, because anything could be achieved by a strong organisation without anybody risking his life.

Young men should train themselves for the service of the nation. Mere excitement without any training and expert knowledge was useless.

1. Speech at Allahabad on Political Sufferers' Day, 5 August 1929. *The Leader*, 7 August 1929.

13. On a Visit to Prisoners on Hunger Strike[1]

I visited the Central Jail and the Borstal Jail yesterday and saw Sardar Bhagat Singh, Mr. Batukeshwar Dutt, Mr. Jatindranath Das[2] and all the other accused in the Lahore Conspiracy Case, who are on hunger strike. Attempts have been made for many days past to feed forcibly all these hunger-strikers. In the case of some of them, the results of this forcible method were so injurious that, all forcible feeding had to be given up in the face of a greater danger.

Some of the accused are just maintaining a measure of strength on account of forcible feeding which is given twice a day. Others are in a bad way. Those who cannot be forcibly fed, lest they should die under the force used, cannot obviously survive long now if present conditions continue. They are dying slowly from day to day and the final act in the tragedy cannot be long delayed.

The condition of Mr. Jatindranath Das is specially critical. He is very weak and cannot easily move. He speaks in whispers. He is in considerable pain and looks for release in death. Others whose condition is serious are L. Shiv Varma,[3] Mr. Ajoy Kumar Ghosh,[4] and L.Jaidev.[5]

It was very painful for me to meet these extraordinarily brave young men and to see their manifest suffering. I gathered from them that they would adhere to their resolve, whatever the consequences to their individual selves might be. Indeed, they did not care very much for their own selves. They could not undergo such tremendous suffering for a little personal comfort in future. They feel strongly, however, that the lot of political prisoners in India is bad and must be improved.

1. Statement issued at Lahore, 9 August 1929. The Tribune, 10 August 1929.
2. (1904-1929); member of the Revolutionary Party; arrested on 14 June 1929 for complicity in the Lahore Conspiracy Case; died on 13 September 1929 after 63 days of hunger strike.
3. (b. 1906); a revolutionary of Hardoi district, U.P.; chief organiser of the Hinduatan Socialist Republican Association in U.P.; in jail, 1929-46.
4. (1909-1962); son of a doctor of Kanpur; member of the Hinduatan Socialist Republican Association; one of the accused in the Lahore Conspiracy Case; general secretary of the Communist Party, 1951-1962.
5. (b. 1909); a revolutionary of Hardoi district, U.P.; studied at D.A.V. College Kanpur and Banaras Hindu University Varanasi; convicted in the lahore Conspiracy Case, and in prison, 1929-1946,

The position, as explained to me by Sardar Bhagat Singh, was that all political prisoners, with one exception if necessary, should be given special treatment. This exception was the case of an actual perpetrator of murder.

I can only hope that the great sacrifice which these young men are making will bear fruit.

14. On Hunger Strikes[1]

The hunger-strikers in Lahore jail are undergoing this magnificent suffering, suffering which it is in the power of few men to endure, not for themselves but for all political prisoners. The few comforts which they themselves might hope to get are not commensurate with the terrible and prolonged agony through which they are voluntarily and cheerfully passing.

How can we help these brave souls, these national heroes? Not by raising shouts at public meetings or in the streets of Lahore, but by joining in the national army of freedom. Let us free our country from bondage. Then there will be no political prisoners. Let us extend and perfect the organisation of the Congress.

I had heard in Allahabad that the people of the Punjab had been giving up their slumber and were preparing themselves to take part in the battle for the country's freedom. Since my arrival I have been hearing the new shouts of *Inqilab Zindabad*, but I have also heard another quiet, but equally powerful, shout inside the jails which the Conspiracy Case hunger-strikers were raising. The sacrifice of these young men has roused us to a new consciousness of political life and once more made all of us yearn for the liberty of our country. We should realise the great value of the struggle that these brave young men are carrying on inside the jails. They are not struggling to get honours from the people or laurels from the crowd for their sacrifice. What a contest this is, compared with the unfortunate wrangles among Congressmen and the fighting for securing positions in the Congress and the reception committee! I am ashamed to hear of these internecine differences amongst the Congressmen. But my heart is equally

1. Speech at Lahore, 9 August 1929. From *The Tribune*, 11 August 1929.

delighted by witnessing the sacrifices of the young men who are determined to die for the sake of the country.

These young men, particularly two of them, who have been on hunger strike for the last 57 days, have taken up their battle in right earnest. The forcible feeding resorted to by the authorities has added to their trouble, but at the same time has made them more determined to suffer. These hunger-strikers are not undergoing suffering for their personal happiness. If they have determined to suffer they have done so for the sake of a great principle, namely, to improve the status of political prisoners in India. The European and Eurasian prisoners get better treatment compared to the treatment meted out to Indians. These hunger-strikers are determined to end that state of affairs md, therefore, they have taken the vow to end their valuable lives. Bhagat Singh, Dutt and Das have been showing us every day by their suffering on what path we should be moving. Some of them may leave the mortal coil here within a few days, but that will not solve the question of our liberty and freedom. Their sacrifices at least will teach us one lesson, which is that the people should now give up their lethargy and join in freedom's battle. They are determined to die, but the question is what will the rest of us do? Will we not also follow in their footsteps and free the country from foreign bondage by similar sacrifices?

The police in India have for some time past been using the lathi rather freely. It seems that they have come to the conclusion that the people have no fear of jails. The police want to take us to jail after first breaking some of our heads. This improper use of the lathi began with the beating of Lala Lajpat Rai and this practice is taking a worse turn every day. I am told that the deputy commissioner of Lahore was smoking his pipe while the police were beating the volunteers with lathis. I cannot understand the psychology of the authorities. What sort of conduct is it to beat volunteers and then also to take them to jail?

We should organise ourselves and take mass action. Isolated bomb-throwing and pistol-firing will not succeed; only nonviolent mass action and mass movements will pay if we want to face the well-organised British people. Unless the people in this country are organised it will be impossible to carry on the fight to a finish. There will always remain a class of people in this country who will betray their country for a few crumbs, but there must also rise and spring up another section of the people, who will unite to end the subjugation of their country. This section of the people will consist of the masses, the peasants and the workers, and their joint action will paralyse the government.

Everybody in the army cannot be officers. If all of them became

officers who would form the rank and file? It is the habit of the young to criticise their elders. But this criticism will not have any meaning if young men cultivate the same disease of self-advertising and speaking on platforms. Give up cultivating the habit of platform speeches. Speakers there are many; and the habit should be abandoned. Youth should learn the habit of discipline, which is a very necessary element in the attainment of true success.

Give up also the habit of condemning the provincial Congress or the All India Congress Committee. The Congress is not made of mere resolutions. It stands above these things and occupies a unique and supreme position. The Congress is greater than its leaders. You should not try to dismantle this old structure, which has been built brick by brick with great labour during the last forty-three years. To try to break up such an institution would be suicidal.

The Congress is about to take a big step forward on the 1st of January, 1930. So you should not fritter away your energies by useless personal or communal differences. You should prepare for that struggle and stand up together to free our motherland from bondage.

15. Address to Allahabad Youth League[1]

I am asked by people outside what the League stands for and especially whether it has anything to do with communalism or communism or terrorism. The questions are curious, and I personally doubt if they are seriously meant. If the questioner had troubled to read the rules and objects of the League, he would have got some idea of what they stood for. He would find that the League was deadly opposed to communalism. As for communism, our rules and objects say nothing about it. It is open to communists and non-communists, socialists, individualists and any other 'ists. We welcome all who feel that they could work for our country, and want to help in strengthening it. The main principle of the League is freedom from dogma. As for the question, whether

1. 11 August 1929. From *The Hindu*, 12 August 1929.
Jawaharlal Nehru was elected president and R. N. Mukherji, secretary.

the League stands for terrorism, the questioner could not have asked this ridiculous question unless for some reason or other he had not been suffering from fright of some kind himself. Our main purpose is to discuss social, political and economic problems and hammer out the truth. Our objects have also been laid down, that we should try to get rid of all antiquated social and religious customs.

16. On the Need for Change[1]

Personally I feel it is impossible for us to make any progress politically or economically if we are chained up to the past customs. The suitability and adaptability of these particular customs to the present age is a question for you to consider. Undoubtedly the world has changed and it is changing day by day at a terrific speed. It is sheer folly on our part not to see that and not to adapt ourselves to it. That does not, of course, mean that we should give up everything that is old and past and copy everything that is Western. But we must try to realise that in the race of life we have been left behind. India is utterly stagnant and static and youth must bring a dynamic change in the country.

Youth wants continuous change for the better and revolution against everything that is evil. The present system of government tends to suppress the best elements in the country by employing an army of secret service and spies. The benefit of association with *Pax Britannica* to India has been peace; but it is the peace of the graveyard and not of the living.

A dangerous tendency in the youth movement in India is only to criticise the elder statesmen and not do what they ask us to do. This tendency is due to the fact that youth is not self-reliant enough, self-conscious enough, and self-disciplined enough. Do not lean on others, but think out problems for yourselves and come to a logical and clear conclusion. If you try to do that there will be no occasion to ask the question as to what will be done on the 31st December, 1929.

1. Speech at Calcutta, 21 August 1929. From *The Tribune*, 24 August 1929.

17. The Need to Abolish Feudalism[1]

I have just come to know that a prince[2] in a state in Kathiawar has issued an order that no young man or woman from his subjects shall take any part in this conference. The order is really strange. Perhaps, the prince might have feared that the youth of his state may learn bad things by attending the conference. Neither this prince nor this order requires any comment. This prince is a very famous man. His reputa-tion is unique in the cricket world. But on the cricket field, the art of administration is not taught. And this prince appears to know little of how to rule. There is no doubt there are many such other princes also.

The imperial game is to divide into two watertight compartments British India and Indian India. The youth of the Indian states should offer a united front against this mischievous attempt.

You all know, all the world over there were many kings and emperors nearly one century before. But now only seven or eight kings survive in the whole of the world. And they too are totally powerless. Let me count before you the present kings. In France, Germany or Russia, nobody today even remembers the king. At present the race of kings is steadily losing in power. I tell you that the days of kings and emperors, the days of Rajas and Maharajas are gone. During the last great war their fall had commenced and now they can never rise again. Rajas and Maharajas have no place in the future society.

There was a period of European history when the people of different countries after a long, strenuous and desperate fight deprived their kings of all power. King Charles I of England attempted to levy taxes on the English nation without securing the consent of Parliament, which ultimately resulted in his being beheaded. Kings lost their heads in the French revolution and the Russian revolution.

The feudal system still prevailing in Kathiawar cannot survive. Without giving a death-blow to feudalism you cannot proceed even a step in the direction of progress.

1. Speech at Kathiawar Youth Conference, Rajkot, 31 August 1929. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 14 September 1929.
2. The Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, Maharaja Ranjitsinh, the famous cricketer 'Ranji'.

The young men and women of Kathiawar should provide their quota in the battle of Swaraj. I warn you, and the leaders of British India, never to expect the Rajas and Maharajas to range themselves on the side of the people, that is, against the British Government on whom they depend for their existence. Princes as an institution cannot join us. They fear their rights and privileges will be taken away from them. They are not prepared to lose their present incomes. Let me once more tell you that Rajas and Maharajas can have no gains by Swaraj. They can, then, enjoy no more their autocratic hereditary rights. I may once again say this too that, in future, the princes will not remain. That the institution of the princes can continue is against the lessons of history. Whether the people of Indian states want the princes or not they can decide. I believe every man and woman has equal rights. Nobody can have more or less rights because of birth or inheritance. In this age, it is sheer foolishness to say or to believe that one particular class or man has or should have special rights.

Young men, you may have your residence in British India or in an Indian state; no matter, the fight is the same. Young friends, keep before your eyes the vision of the new society of the future in which every man and woman will have equal rights, in which feudalism, imperialism and such institutions will have no place. Young men, keep this vision before you, think over it again and again and leave no stone unturned to materialize it in this land of your birth. That is your real work. That is real service of the motherland.

18. To Yusuf Meherally[1]

September 23, 1929

My dear Meherally,
I had seen in the papers that you had been assaulted by the police again.[2] I did not know how serious this was. I find now that you had quite a good beating. My congratulations. This will make you tough.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-39/1929, p. 43, N.M.M.L.
2. On 15 September 1929, the police lathi-charged a procession taken out by the Bombay Youth League to honour the sacrifice of Jatindranath Das.

19. To Damodar Swarup Seth[1]

Camp Gorakhpore
October 7th, 1929

My dear Damodar Swarup,[2].

I have your letter of the 3rd October. The resolution of the A.I.C.C. you refer to was passed at the express desire of many persons intimately concerned.[3] I do not think that under the circumstances the A.I.C.C. could have done otherwise. I realise with sorrow however that as you say the effect on the treatment of the Kakori prisoners4 has been bad. If you will kindly send me definite particulars about their ill-treatment I shall be glad, specially mentioning how they were treated previous to the hunger strike and subsequent to it...

It is difficult to discuss the question of hunger strike in the course of a letter. Whatever the abstract merits or demerits of it may be there is no doubt that under certain circumstances it becomes the inevitable course. It may even be better to die rather than submit to continuous suffering and degradation. But the weapon can be misused or overused and then it results in additional suffering only and sometimes in humiliation and demoralisation. There can be no doubt that Jatin Das's death and the hunger strike of Bhagat Singh and Dutt and others created a profound sensation in the country and at the same time forced the issue on the public mind. Undoubtedly the government's hands were also forced to a large extent and many privileges have been given to political prisoners which they never had before. A continuation however of these methods by many others had a great measure of danger in it from many points of view. Of course, such as insist on continuing it could not be restrained by the resolution of the A.I.C.C.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40 (ii)/1929 (Pt. Ill), pp. 481-483, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. One of the accused in the Banaras and Kakori Conspiracy cases but released on medical grounds; later a leading Congressman in U.P.
3. The resolution passed on 28 September 1929 at Lucknow advised the hunger-strikers to give up the hunger strike in view of the fact that the government had conceded most of their demands.
4. A dacoity was committed on 9 August 1925 when a passenger train was stopped by some persons and looted about 10 miles from Lucknow. A large number of people were tried on a charge of conspiracy to commit dacoity. The special judge, on 6 April 1927, sentenced three to death by hanging, two to be transported for life and others to various terms of imprisonment.

I am very sorry indeed that the Kakori prisoners had not benefited at all by the recent agitation. If you will kindly send me the facts we shall try to give publicity to them as much as possible...

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

20. Statement to the Press[1]

statements have appeared in the press about the treatment accorded to the Kakori prisoners in the Bareilly and Agra jails.[2] I have enquired into the matter and it appears that, instead of any improvement in' their unhappy lot, as a result of the assurances given in the Assembly in regard to political prisoners,[3] they are actually being treated worse than before. It is difficult to know the exact facts as interviews are not easy and the jail officials observe a discreet silence. Some facts, however, emerge from the visit of two members of the local council to the Bareilly jail.[4] It appears that as a punishment for having gone on hunger strike they have been deprived of a number of small privileges in regard to reading books, food, and meeting each other occasionally. They have further been deprived of the remissions they had gained during the last two years. They were kept in dark and dirty cells when the M.L.Cs saw them. It is further stated that they are subjected in many other ways to harsh and humiliating treatment. In all probability, the hunger strike is continuing. At the insistence of many friends they had agreed to give up the hunger strike but when they found that they were being punished for it and were treated worse than before they

1. Allahabad, 16 October 1929. *The Hindu*, 17 October 1929.
2. The Kakori Conspiracy Case prisoners were confined in narrow cells and subjected to degrading jail drill.
3. The death of Jatindranath Das led to a nation-wide protest. On 14 September 1929 an adjournment motion was carried in the Assembly. The Home Member denied allegations of ill-treatment of prisoners and said that the governments was in touch with the governments of U.P. and the Punjab regarding the hunger-strikers.
4. Actually in October 1929 Jia Ram Saxena visited Bareilly jail and Lakshmi Narain Garg visited Agra jail.

felt they could not give it up. It cannot definitely be said whether they are at present hunger-striking or not as no news is allowed to come out of jail. No interview is allowed and the superintendent refuses to give any information either. From this it is highly probable that the strike continues and the government is trying to break the prisoners by additional punishments. We are used to the ways of the government and anything that it may do can hardly surprise us, and yet one is amazed at the vengeful and inhuman spirit which prompts it to inflict further suffering on helpless men in jail who are on hunger strike. The A.I.C.C. passed the resolution urging suspension of the hunger strikes on the assurance of members of the Assembly that there was a change of heart on the part of government and Jatin Das's martyrdom had assured a better lot for political prisoners. If a change of heart means further suffering for our comrades in jails then we would rather do without it. It may be that the government followed its usual practice of promising bravely at a time of crisis and then carrying on in its usual way when the crisis was past. If so, the members of the Assembly who were imposed upon by the government owe it to themselves and to the A.I.C.C., to find out how the barbarous treatment accorded to the Kakori prisoners fits in with the assurances given to them.

21. To Sumant Mehta[1]

December 5th, 1929

Dear Dr. Mehta,[2]

Thank you for your invitation to the Youth Conference.[3] It would have given me great pleasure to attend the conference and to renew acquaintance with many of the friends I made in Poona last year but I am afraid it is not possible for me to do so. Both as Secretary of the

1. A.I.C.C. File No. C-40(l)/1929 (Pt. Ill), p. 303, N.M.M.L.
2. Dr. Sumant Mehta, a doctor and social worker of Gujarat and a prominent member of the Baroda State Subjects' Conferences.
3. The third session of the Bombay Youth Conference was scheduled to be held at Ahmedabad on 14 December 1929.

Congress and as the prospective President I have a great deal of work to face. You will, I hope, forgive me.

It is superfluous for me to send you my good wishes because you have them in full measure already. The youth of Bombay will soon have to face very difficult problems and much will depend on their attitude. Everyone in India is at present talking of the youth movement and expecting much of it. The Bombay Youth League is the leader in this movement and it must therefore not only have the glory of leadership but also must bear the burden of it. I earnestly hope that it will face the future calmly and unflinchingly and demonstrate to the world that Indian youth can rise to the occasion.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

22. Speech at Students' Convention[1]

So much has been said about the youth movement and the awakening of youth. The latter criticise the leaders as being old fossils and demand that they must make room for younger people. Much of this criticism may be justified to some extent. The elders have got into the habit of getting rusty. The youth say that they must take charge; but are the young men ready to take charge today ? The spirit of youth is criticism and restlessness rather than the spirit of shouldering responsibility. The youth movement is of recent growth and lacks experience. Enthusiasm is essential for any work, but we must see that this is not wasted. The youth of our country sadly lack discipline. There has been too much bickering, too much struggle for leadership. It is essential therefore that the students should develop themselves and their organisations so that the people may realise that the youth movement is a movement not only of words but also of deeds.

1. Lahore, 30 December 1929. From *The Bombay Chronicle,* 31 December 1929.The speech was delivered in Hindi.

Some of you want me to speak in English. I am more at home in English than in Urdu as unfortunately most of my education was in England. I am sorry the students are indifferent to learning Hindi or Urdu which is one of the greatest languages not only of India, but also of the world. If the deliberations of our country were not carried on in our own tongue progress would be impossible. Western people love their own languages. When General Botha[2] went to see the king he spoke in Dutch, although he was perfectly at home in English. When the Irish delegates went to the League of Nations they spoke in Gaelic, although there was no third person to understand their tongue. So I would like you students to learn your mother tongue and carry on your deliberations only in that language.

2. (1862-1919); South African general and statesman; Prime Minister of the Transvaal, 1907-10, and of the Union of South Africa, 1910-19.

THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

GENERAL

1. To J. E. Potter-Wilson[1]

January 22nd, 1929

Dear Comrade,[2]

I thank you for the message of greeting which you sent to the Indian National Congress. The message was read out in Calcutta and was much appreciated. As you are aware a deliberate attempt is being made in India to prevent the workers from organising themselves. Numerous strikes have taken place in the course of the last year and firing has frequently been resorted to. The government has brought forward legislation in order to hamper the workers' movement. In this fight for the workers and for their right to organise themselves the National Congress stands shoulder to shoulder with the workers of India.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-91/1928-29, p. 63, N.M.M.L.
2. Secretary, Workers' Welfare League of India, London.

2. Note on the Strike at Bauria[1]

The little village of Bauria lies sixteen miles from Howrah town. A short railway journey carries one from the palaces and noble mansions of Calcutta to the mud huts and coolie lines of Bauria. In this village and

1. Allahabad, 24 January 1929. A.I.C.C. File No. C-95/1929, pp. 191-195, N.M.M.L.

the surrounding area is being fought a grim struggle between the poor worker in the factory and the jute kings of Bengal.[2] For companions the worker has hunger and semi-nudity and stark want; but the lords of jute have wealth in abundance and their allies are the government, the police forces and even the law courts. The scales are heavily weighted, but still with amazing endurance the workers have been carrying on the fight. Fifteen thousand of them have carried on the struggle for six months or more. During this period they have had to face firing and arrests and lengthy trials in courts of law, which are still proceeding.

Nowhere in India have such tremendous and outrageous profits been made as in the jute mills of Bengal. Other trades may suffer depression but the jute trade continues to flourish and to produce vast dividends. And yet it is in this trade also that the condition of the workers is bad and wages are low, and now attempts are made by changing shifts to increase the number of the unemployed. It is difficult to conceive of a greater contrast.

The employers are behaving after the manner of their kind; the workers are struggling manfully with amazing courage against tremendous odds. But what of the public? What of the awakened youth of the country? What are they doing to help in this struggle? What have they done? It is sad but little has so far been done by them. Are they prepared to see the arrogant lords of jute, aided by all the powers of the government, crush the poor workers of Bauria and set this example to all the jute workers of Bengal? For the struggle is not a local one merely but one which affects the whole jute area and the trade union movement in India.

All those who feel that the workers in Bauria have right on their side should not merely sympathize with them but help them with money and with their time and energy. All those who admire the tenacity and endurance of these poor workers should come to their aid in their moment of trial.

2. The strike at Bauria began in July 1928 when the workers in the jute mills formed a union and the management retaliated by closing down the mills. The strike ended on 31 December 1928.

3. To Subhas Chandra Bose[1]

24/1/29

My dear Subhas,

Kishorilal Ghosh writes to me that the position of the Bauria strikers is becoming more and more critical. Even a little financial assistance may help them to tide over this period. I should be so glad if you could arrange to have some help given to them.

I hope you are coming to Delhi for the Working Committee meeting on Feb. 3rd.

Yours affly.,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-95/1929, p. 197, N.M.M.L.

4. To D. B. Kulkarni[1]

Allahabad
March 22nd, 1929

Dear Comrade,[2]
I have your letter dated the 19th March. I have been in communication with Mr. Joshi for some time past regarding a meeting of the executive council. I believe it is proposed to hold it towards the end of April in Bombay.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. C-95/1929, p. 187, N.M.M.L.
2. A communist and trade union leader; communist candidate against Jawaharlal for the presidency of All India Trade Union Congress, 1928; vice-president, All India Trade Union Congress, 1929.

I am entirely in agreement with you regarding the Royal Commission on Labour.[3] It seems to me that we have no alternative but to boycott it, specially after the recent arrests. I suppose only the Executive Council can give a decision on the point.

Yours sincerely,
JawaharlaI Nehru

3. The British Government, in consultation with the Government of India, appointed on 24 May 1929 a Royal Commission on Indian Labour. Its chairman was J. H. Whitley. The report was published in June 1931.

5. To R. R. Bakhale[1]

Allahabad
March 1929

My dear Bakhale,[2]

I do not know if Joshi is in Bombay. I have just sent a telegram to your office suggesting that in view of the arrests of labour leaders and the government's policy of repression against labour we should issue a state-ment declining cooperation with the Labour Commission. I feel that it would be very wrong for us not to take up this attitude at this stage. The matter will of course be considered at the meeting of the Executive Council but some kind of lead should be given. If you think that it is not desirable to commit the congress I can issue the statement in my personal capacity and leave the Executive Council to decide. I do feel that a little boldness is necessary at this stage. We cannot take things lying down.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-95/1929, p. 185, N.M.M.L.
2. A prominent trade union leader and chief associate of N. M. Joshi; member of the Servants of India Society; d.1952

6. On the Generel Strike Bombay[1]

Jawaharlal Nehru said that he had come there to express his sympathy for the workers. He was told that the general strike was declared because the owners had resorted to methods of victimisation.[2] It was proper that they had declared a strike in order to protest against victimisation of their workers. He warned the strikers against attempts of interested people to disrupt their forces and especially against attempts to foment Hindu-Muslim dissensions. They had to realize that their struggle was against capitalism and not against any religion. In this struggle Hindus and Muslims had to fight shoulder to shoulder. The whole country was anxiously observing the big fight that they were carrying on. Their fight was a fight of the masses of the whole country. If they succeeded, it would be a success for the whole country, just as their defeat would mean the defeat of the whole country.

1. Speech at Bombay, 28 April 1929. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 29 April 1929. The speech was delivered in Hindi.
2. The communists organised a general strike of textile workers in Bombay from April to October 1929. After the strike the strike committee was transformed into the Mumbai Girni Kamgar Union—the Bombay textile workers' union. The membership increased to over 50,000. The communists organised another strike of textile workers in 1929 but it proved a failure.

7. On the Trade Union Movement[1]

It is perfectly clear the government is out to weaken the labour movement in India and put difficulties in the way of its development. The

1. Statement at Calcutta, 18 May 1929. *The Tribune*, 22 May 1929.

trade union movement in India, though still in its infancy, is giving indications of a virile growth and at the same time is beginning to cooperate with the national movement because an organised labour is always a strong weapon in any such smuggle. The government is, therefore, out to disorganise labour as early as possible, both by their attitude as regards strikes and lock-outs and by repressive legislation.

The government probably thought that they could break up the strongest union in the country, viz., the Girni Kamgar Union in Bombay, by arresting all their prominent leaders in connection with the Meerut case, but to their consternation the Union remained as strong as ever.

Similarly, the repressive policy of the government cannot break the trade union movement in the country. There may be ups and downs. The final outcome must be a victory of trade unionism. The rank and file of Indian labour is surprisingly strong and the sense of class solidarity is very evident today. They may go astray occasionally on account of weak or defective leadership, but their new-found strength is bound to prevail.

8. To D. B. Kulkarni[1]

June 1st, 1929

Dear Comrade,

I have your letter dated 30th May. I was sorry not to see you and Purandare in Bombay. I shall be glad to see Mr. Purandare before he sails but he must make sure of my whereabouts before coming here. I am often going out and he might otherwise miss me.

In regard to the Labour Commission you must have seen in the papers that the National Congress has asked all its members to withdraw from the councils as well as from all committees and commissions. A Congressman therefore cannot join the Labour Commission without disobeying the Congress mandate. My opinion has been expressed on several occasions in regard to this matter. If occasion arises I shall do so again.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-95/1929, p. 73, N.M.M.L.

About translation of *Soviet Russia* in Marathi, it appears from your friend's letter that he proposes to bring out not a complete translation but a resume of it. I am quite agreeable to this being done. I would suggest however that all profits from this venture should be given to the cause of labour to be determined upon by the translator and myself.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

9. To C. B. Johrl[1]

July 12th, 1929

My dear Chandra Bhal,[2]
Your letter of the 9th July. I was surprised to find that you were acting as secretary to Ginwala's[3] Union. I had heard of the split at Chalisgaon but I did not have much information on the subject.[4] Without this information I am not in a position to give an opinion. Generally however, I might say that I am far more in agreement with the more radical elements in the trade union movement than with the conservative element like Ginwala and Joshi. I think the policy pursued by the conservatives is harmful to the trade union movement as a whole. But I have no desire to precipitate a split in the movement and I am therefore not taking any active step of any kind. Joshi is undoubtedly one of the few men we have in the movement who is a sound trade unionist and who is efficient in his work. I feel however that the time is bound to come when there will be a split in the Trade Union Congress.

Even in the Meerut trial the attitude taken up by Ginwala and his friend Jhabvala has been unfortunate. They are not cooperating with the other accused or with the defence committee. They want to keep apart in the hope of saving Jhabvala regardless of the interests of others. This seems to be a very undesirable state of affairs.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-20/1929, pp. 25-27, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. Secretary, G.I.P. Railway Kamgar Union, Bombay, 1929.
3. F. J. Ginwala; a moderate trade union leader and an associate of N. M. Joshi; organiser of the non-communist G.I.P.Railway Kamgar Union, Bombay,1929.
4. This refers to the split in the G.I.P.Railwaymen's Union and the formation of two rival unions by the communists and the non-communists.

Regarding the question[5] you put me it is difficult to give advice but you will gather from what I have written above that I am not in great sympathy with Ginwala's point of view. In any event I should of course like you to work for a reconciliation between the two sections.

Regarding the national service for the U.P. it was my intention to collect funds for a service to be run under the directions of the provincial Congress committee. I have made some little collections for this although they may not amount to much. Your proposal that I should start a society of the kind started by Lala Lajpat Rai is an attractive one but for various reasons I do not think I can give effect to it at present.[6] All my activities must be through the Congress or through other existing organisations with which I am concerned. I cannot however discuss this question at length in a letter. For the moment I should certainly like competent workers to join the Congress or the trade union movement.

1 do not think that the existing societies have been very great successes. You mention Vallabhbhai's work in Gujarat and Subhas Chandra Bose's in Bengal and Srinivasa Iyengar's in Madras. Probably you would not be so enthusiastic about the last two if you knew all the facts. Vallabhbhai has undoubtedly done very good work in Gujarat for which he deserves great credit. His resources, however, including as they do the whole of Gandhiji's Ashram and Gandhiji's personality, are very great.

So far as you are concerned I should very much like you to come to the U.P. I am not in a position to suggest or to promise any work of a permanent kind. But if you would agree to work on behalf of the provincial Congress committee or amongst the kisans, say near Allahabad, I would very gladly arrange this. Unfortunately we cannot afford to pay much. Personally I should like you to take charge of an area which is 20 miles from Allahabad, where there is a fair amount of kisan awakening. We should like to have a regular centre there for work. The place is within easy distance of Allahabad and is not far from Benares. After making a start there we could survey the situation and see what else we could do so far as kisan organisation is concerned...

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. Johri had asked what his attitude should be toward the proposed compromise between the G.I.P. Railwaymen's Union and the G.I.P. Railway Kamgar Union.
6. Lala Lajpat Rai had founded the Servants of the People Society in 1921.

10. To R. Brldfleman[1]

Allahabad
July 23rd,1929

My dear Bridgeman,
I have received your letters dated June 30th and July 1st with their enclosures. Citrine evidently did not act up to your suggestion to send me a cable. Indeed I have not even had a letter of acknowledgment from him.[2]

We have been having some extraordinary exhibitions of the might of the British Government in India. In the Lahore Conspiracy Case the accused are kept even in court handcuffed with a policeman on either side and the policemen have actually thrashed them in court while the magistrate is trying to look the other way. When an application was made for a transfer of the case from this magistrate's court it was thrown out as being frivolous. It was ordered however that handcuffs need not be kept on inside the court room. In the city of Lahore even stranger things have happened. Processions have been going about collecting funds for the accused. The other day a procession consisting of seven young men was asked to disperse. On their refusal to do so they were belaboured with lathis (long batons) till some of them became senseless. They were then dragged along the road to the police lorries and carried away to the lock-up. The by-standers were also be laboured and many shop windows were broken by the police. Several leading Congressmen who happened to be present were also arrested.

Meanwhile the hunger strike of Bhagat Singh and Dutt is in its sixth week.

In three days' time we are having an important meeting of the All India Congress Committee here and I am busy in connection with it.

Ever yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 23/1929-1930, p. 47, N.M.M.L.
2. For Jawaharlal's letter to Citrine, see *Selected Works*,Vol. 3, pp. 349-353.

11. To V. Chattopadhyaya[1]

July 24th, 1929

My dear Chatto,

I received your cable this morning asking me to send an express message to Shiva Rao, Kalappa[2] and Sethi[3] asking them to represent the T.U.C. at the World Congress. As desired by you I have sent an express cable4 although this has been a heavy drain on my purse. The National Congress obviously cannot pay for such cables, and the T.U.C. does not provide me with any funds for the purpose.

Although I have sent the cable I doubt very much if it will serve any useful purpose. If any of the three persons you have mentioned do not want to participate officially in your congress my cable will hardly induce them to do so. However we shall hope for the best.

Day after tomorrow the All India Committee is meeting here. There is considerable excitement and we are likely to have one of the biggest sessions that we have had. The excitement centres round the proposed resignation from councils. As a matter of fact this is a cloak. The real thing is whether we are going in for any stiff action at the end of the year or not, and if we are, whether we are going to prepare for it from now. It is difficult to say which way the decision will lie now.

Meanwhile you must be reading in the papers of the strange happenings in the land of the five rivers.

I have not heard from you for some little time although I get official letters from Nanu almost every week. I suppose you have been much too busy preparing for the World Congress at Frankfurt. Reuter has been good enough to send a brief report of your congress. This was more than I expected of them. Even from this report it appears that

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 1 (ii)/1929 (Pt. 1), pp. 22-23, N.M.M.L.
2. V. R. Kalappa (1898-1949); member of the executive committee of the All India Trade Union Congress, 1924-26; a founder and first secretary of the All India Railwaymen's Federation; delegate to the International Labour Conference in Geneva, 1929; president, All India Trade Union Congress, 1940-42.
3. R. G. Sethi, secretary of the Jamshedpur Labour Association.
4. "Trust your representative attending congress according to T.U.C. decision."

the congress was a successful one. My congratulations. You must be continuing your sessions now and my thoughts are with you and with other friends there.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

12. To S. Y. Yatzdani[1]

Camp Calcutta
August 14th, 1929

Dear Comrade,[2]

I am glad to learn that the Indian Seamen's Union is bringing out a new weekly. I trust this weekly will serve the cause of the Indian seamen as well as the larger cause of Indian labour and will help in strengthening the trade union movement in the country. In these days of strikes and lock-outs it is as well to realise that the strength of Indian labour lies in its solidarity. The failure of a strike in Bombay has its inevitable consequences on labour in the north or the east of India. I trust your weekly will lay stress on this solidarity of labour.

Wishing you all success,

Yours fraternally,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1929 (Pt. Ill), p. 463-A, N.M.M.L.
2. Yatzdani was a worker in the docks at Kidderpore, Calcutta.

13. To C. B. Johri[1]

Camp Calcutta
August 25th, 1929

My dear Chandra Bhal,

I have just received your letter of the 20th August which was forwarded to me here. I am sorry to learn that you have been unwell.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1929 (Pt. Ill), p. 587, N.M.M.L.

I have carefully read through what you have said and realise your difficulties. I would indeed help you as far as I can to overcome them. But I am afraid it is not possible for me to become president of the G.I.P. Ry. Union. I do not believe in accepting responsible positions without discharging the work required. I am at present too full of work to be able to take any other. Indeed I do not know how to manage as it is. Touring is utterly out of the question. I cannot even give any office time to other work. So you must excuse me.

The trade union movement in India is going through a very difficult phase. I do not think you can get over the difficulties by putting me or anybody else as the 'show' presidents of big unions. But as I have written above it is physically impossible for me to take up additional work this year. What I can do next year I cannot say now.

I am returning to Allahabad tomorrow. I have decided to go to Rajkot after all. But I do not go *via* Bombay.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

14. To D. B. Kulkarni[1]

Allahabad
September 10th, 1929

Dear Comrade Kulkarni,

I have your letter of the 6th September. I heard some time ago about the split in the G.I.P. Railwaymen's Union and that Ginwala had started another union. Mr. Johri, who is acting as secretary to Ginwala's union, wrote to me about them and he asked me if I would agree to become president of the union in case a compromise was arrived at between the two groups. I wrote to him that this was not possible for me as I was too full of other work. Also, that I did not like to undertake responsibilities which I could not discharge. I felt that the G.I.P. Union presidentship was a big job for which I was hardly fitted.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. 16/1929, pp. 111-113, N.M.M.L.

Some days ago I was in Rajkot and Mr. Joliri came there to see me 5° and again pressed me to help in bringing the two groups together. He nested that the only way this could succeed was by my accepting the presidentship of the joint union. I was put in a great difficulty because I did not want to interfere where I was not wanted. Besides I really have no time for additional work. Ultimately I told Mr. Johri that if I could help in bringing about a compromise and if my presidentship was desired by all sections I would agree to it.

The G.I.P. Railwaymen's Union is such an important union that it would be a great pity to weaken it by internal troubles. It was because of this consideration that I agreed to help in bringing about a compromise. I was not at all sanguine of my capacity to do so.

In the last number of the *G.I.P. Railwayman* there is a leading article in which the National Congress is attacked for not boycotting the Whitley Commission. Some reference is also made to "dangerous enemies of labour" like me. This criticism of the Congress is based entirely on ignorance. Of course everyone knows that the Congress is not a labour organisation. It does not pretend to be one. To expect it to act as a pure labour organisation is a mistake. The National Congress is a large body comprising all manner of people. Diwan Chaman Lal is hardly a Congressman. His only connection with the Congress is his membership of the Swaraj Party in the Assembly.

There has been a strong move in the National Congress to boycott all committees and commissions and even the Assembly and councils. This move nearly succeeded but for various reasons the decision was put off till December next. I have no doubt that the Congress will formally adopt this at the end of the year. Under the constitution of the Congress it is not an easy matter to take the initiative in the middle of the year through its committees. To talk therefore that the Congress is cooperating with the Wliitley Commission is entirely wrong. The Congress is much too busy at the present moment preparing for the great struggle early next year.

In the article reference is also made to the Meerut trial and it is stated that the Congress has not helped the defence. Now this is an amazing proposition. I think the National Congress has done more for the defence and is doingmore than any organisation in India. It has not done so much in any case in the past. The Meerut case is going on from day to day. Mr. Chagla had to leave because many of the accused from Bombay did not want him. Also, because the funds at the disposal of the defence were limited.

So far as I am concerned I can assure you that I have no desire whatever to take up any job unless I am wanted. I accepted the

presidentship of the T.U.C. much against my will. If I had been present at Jharia on the day of election I would certainly have retired in your favour. I feel that the presidentship should go to an active unionist and worker like you and not to a person like me who has not been connected with trade unionism before. But owing to my absence I was elected and later I did not know how to get out of it. I am glad however that my period of office is coming to an end and I hope that a fitter person will be chosen in my place.

As I have said above I shall gladly help you to bring about a compromise in the G.I.P. Union. My only difficulty is want of time to go to Bombay. I am exceedingly busy and I shall be touring about for the rest of this month and may be in October. Even your telegram may not reach me for many days. However, if it is at all possible for me I shall try to come to Bombay. Would it be possible for the two parties to meet me in Allahabad?

Yours fraternally,
Jawaharlal Nehru

15. Address at U. P. Trade Union Conference1

Jawaharlal Nehru, who was voted to the chair, said that it was a great weakness for the Labour Conference to have elected him, an outsider, as chairman. It was necessary to produce presidents from among themselves. The right to strike is a weapon in the hands of labour, but it is an instrument to be used only on very grave occasions, and with full determination and organisation. The Whitley Commission would do no good to Indian workers. It was a clever move on the part of Britain to distract the attention of the workers from the real struggle. It had been said that it should not be boycotted because two of its members were prominent leaders of the Indian trade union movement. That was no reason at all. Such boycotts took place in other countries also. Even in England a Labour Commission that included persons from the British trade union organisation was boycotted by workers there. Further, India

1. Kanpur, 16 September 1929. *The Hindu,* 17 September 192

had bitter experiences of such commissions, as for instance the Agricultural Commission.[2] The first demand of the workers before the commission should be that the commission should leave the country.

The working class movement had been criticised for class hatred. But if big dividends were necessary for capitalists, at least a minimum living wage was indispensable for the poor labourers.

2. The Royal Commission on Agriculture in India was appointed in April 1926 under the chairmanship of Lord Linlithgow. Its report was published on 28 June 1928.

16. On the Royal Commission on Labour[1]

I have been asked to say a few words about the Royal Commission on Labour which is soon going to descend upon us. Only a few days ago I spoke on this subject at some length at the Cawnpore session of the U.P. Trade Union Conference.

A little knowledge of the history of trade unionism in England and India shows that such commissions are seldom intended to benefit the worker or the peasant. Almost always it will be found that they have been appointed when labour was becoming aggressive, in order to divert attention and induce the workers to give up their militant attitude in the hope of getting some relief from the commission. Almost invariably the commission has resulted in the forging of new fetters for the growing labour movement.

On general grounds, therefore, such commissions must be looked upon with great suspicion. So far as we are concerned in India we have recently had experience of a similar commission—the Agricultural Commission—which after spending vast sums of money did not produce even the proverbial mouse, so far as any relief to the poor agriculturist was concerned.

1. 20 September 1929. A.I.C.C. File No. 16/1929, p. 73, N.M.M.L.

On special grounds the case for a boycott of the Labour Commission is even stronger. Ostensibly the Commission has been appointed to better labour conditions in India and to conciliate labour. As a prelude to it however we have had and are having a persistent and widespread attack on labour and peasant organisations. We have had legislation penalising labour, like the Trades Disputes Act and the Public Safety Ordinance. We have the Meerut trial. We have the open partisanship of the government with the employers, and the police and military being used to break strikes, the most recent instance of which is the tinplate workers' strike 2 in Golmuri. We have police charges on strikers and peaceful workers and occasional firing. Are these the methods to conciliate labour?

It is obvious that the government and the employers are out to break the labour movement in'India and the Royal Commission is one of the methods which are being used for this purpose. If this is so, can we cooperate with it? Can we be consenting parties to an attack on ourselves? Our obvious duty is to have nothing to do with the com-mission and to boycott it, and to strengthen our labour and peasant organisations. Only in our strength lies our safety and the promise of future success.

2. See *post*, item 26.

17. To R. R. Bakhale[1]

24/9/29

My dear Bakhale,
Your letter of the 16th Sept.

Ordinarily I would of course agree with your suggestion that Shiva Rao should go to Ceylon.[2] But I have been worried of late about certain matters. You know that our viewpoints differ in politics and in trade union matters. I have however tried my utmost to avoid all disharmony.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. 16/1929, pp. 65-66, N.M.M.L.
2. The All Ceylon Trade Union Congress had asked Bakhale to send fraternal delegates to their second session.

I find however that many of my efforts in foreign countries, specially England, have been counteracted by Joshi. I have been taking a strong line with Citrine & Co. not only about the Meerut case but about other matters. Ultimately Citrine, not having any suitable answer, has sought refuge in silence. Being personally acquainted with many of the labour leaders in England I hold definite views in regard to them. I understand now that much of what I had done or was hoping to do was counteracted by Joshi.

I have just also heard from Reginald Bridgeman. He wrote twice to Joshi in London but Joshi did not even acknowledge his letters although Bridgeman had referred to me and to what I had written to him. Obviously it is somewhat ridiculous for office-bearers of the same organisation to spend their time in trying to undo each other's work. At one time I felt like resigning but then the year was drawing to a close and I did not think it worthwhile.

I feel that in view of the tension between the two groups in the congress I should not like to take the responsibility of nominating a pronounced member of one group. But if you can get the consent of some members of the executive who consider themselves to belong to the left' wing I shall gladly agree to Shiva Rao or anyone else.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

18. To D. B. Kulkarni[1]

Camp Gorakhpore
October 7th, 1929

Deaf Comrade,
Thank you for your letter of the 1st October and your good wishes. I am glad to know that you are trying hard to put the G.I.P. Ry. Union on a firm basis. I wish you all success. I have heard from Johri recently.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. l (ii)/1929 (Pt. I), p. 60, N.M.M.L

It would have been much better if the A.I.T.U. Congress could meet early and decide on the question of boycott of the Whitley Commission. But the Executive Council has decided by a majority of votes to hold the congress in December. We must therefore wait till then for the congress decision. Before that individual unions will have to decide for themselves. In view of the council decision I have suggested that the congress might be held from the 7th December onwards.

Yours fraternally,
Jawaharlal Nehru

19. ToN.M. Joshi[1]

Camp Mussoorie
October 20th, 1929

My dear Joshi,
Your letter of the 11th October has been forwarded here. I am very glad to read it and to find that I was quite wrong in imagining what I did. I am very sorry indeed that I did so. I have not at present with me a copy of the letter I wrote to Bakhale but from what I remember I suggested that in view of the fact that you had studiously avoided getting into touch with Bridgeman and his committee you did not probably approve of what I have done. From your letter it is clear that far from avoiding Bridgeman you wrote to him and sent him a donation. Obviously in view of this fact the whole basis for my impression vanishes and I am sorry I was guilty of harbouring it.

It is very strange that Bridgeman should not have received your letter or your donation. I am writing to him about it.

About the larger question of cooperation between the left and the right wings, I can assure you that so far as I am concerned I am no lover of splits and obstruction and I shall gladly cooperate to the best of my ability with others whenever there is such a chance of cooperation. And certainly there must be no coercion or intimidation or suggestion of unworthy motives.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. l (ii)/1929 (Pt. III), p. 139, N.M.M.L.

I hope you have profited by your stay in Europe and are in much better health.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

20. To R. S. Ruikar[1]

Camp Mussoorie
October 20th, 1929

Dear Ruikar,[2]

I have your letter of the 15th October. So far as the next session of the T.U. Congress is concerned I am afraid we shall have to abide by the decision of the majority of the Executive Council. The question has again been referred to that committee as to whether the dates should be from the 28th November or the 7th December. Whatever the decision may be I trust we shall abide by it. I can quite understand your difficulties. I am afraid all of us have difficulties but we have to face them somehow. It would be most unfortunate if on the question of date the whole congress session was either not held or there was some kind of a split. If there is going to be a split let it be on a matter of principle, not on a trivial matter.

I cannot say which way the Executive Committee will decide. But whatever this may be I hope you will accept it. You know that personally I have been in favour of an early session. It was only right that the T.U.C. should consider and decide its attitude regarding the Whitley Commission at an early date but if circumstances are against us we have to accept them for the moment. One thing, however, I should like to put before you. That is this. There is some possibility, though not a big one, that the Meerut case might end suddenly and the accused might be discharged. If this happens it would be a good thing for the congress. Regarding your suggestion that I should draft and circulate a statement for the boycott of the Whitley Commission I feel that it will not be proper for me to organise such a movement.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1929 (Pt. IV), pp. 701-703, N.M.M.L.
2. (1895-1954); a labour leader; president, All India Trade Union Congress in 1932 and 1935; president of Hind Mazdoor Sabha in 1948.

I will gladly take part in any such movement and give expression to my views but I occupy a somewhat peculiar position at present and I am not sure that I will help the cause by taking up the attitude you suggest. Apart from other reasons I am afraid I am full up with many things and can hardly give time to any special propaganda.

Regarding Madras I can do nothing.[3] I am sorry to say that Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar is apparently displeased with me and my writing to him may have the opposite effect to that intended.

Thanking you for your good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Ruikar had suggested that as Madras lagged behind in the boycott of the Whitley Commission, Jawaharlal should write to Srinivasa Iyengar or some other Congress leader to take the lead in the matter.

21. To R. S. Ruikar[1]

29/10/29

My dear Ruikar,
When I wrote to you yesterday your letter of the 20th October was not before me. It had gone to Mussoorie and had to follow me back here.

I have referred to Rule 7 to which you draw my attention. The rule undoubtedly gives the initiative to the reception committee in regard to the fixing of dates for the congress. But it also says that the dates are to be fixed in consultation with the Executive Council and are subject to its approval. Under the circumstances a reference to the Executive Committee cannot be unconstitutional. The method of doing so may or may not be happy but that will not make it illegal.

About the voting it will be difficult for me to get the votes here. If however the votes are mentioned by name there should be no difficulty in checking them.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. 12/1929, pp. 27-30, N.M.M.L. 46

Bakhale referred the question to me as to whether secretaries of unions can vote when there are duly accredited representatives of unions on the Executive Council. I replied to him yesterday that it was difficult for me to give a final opinion without knowing the usual practice. Much depends on practice and convention. I suggested however the following rules:

1. Where the representatives of unions have been elected and their names have been sent in, and they have voted, these votes should be counted and not that of the secretary's on their behalf.

2. Where the representatives have not so far been elected, the secretary's vote may be counted on behalf of the union.

3. Where the representatives have been elected but they have not voted, the secretary's vote may be counted on behalf of the union on the presumption that he is acting under the instructions of the representatives.

You are no doubt aware of the impending official pronouncement of the government about the future constitution of India or a Round Table Conference or whatever it may be. I do not know what it is going to be but it is highly unlikely to be satisfactory. It is very important that Indian labour should make its voice heard in regard to it. It is very necessary therefore that we should meet in congress and give our opinion.

Dr. Bhupendra Nath Datta has written to me suggesting a joint manifesto against the Whitley Commission. I wrote to you about this that I could not spare the time to do much in this respect. I suggest however that if such a manifesto is issued it might refer to my statement[2] on the boycott and quote from it, if necessary. This would associate me fully with the manifesto. I have not got a copy of my statement. Will you kindly send a copy of it to Dr. Bhupendra Nath Datta, 3 Gour Mohan Street, Calcutta.

Yours fraternally,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. See *ante*, item 16.

22. To R. R. Bakhale[1]

31/10/1929

My dear Bakhale,

I have just received copy of your letter to Ruikar dated 29.10. I must say it is very decent of you and Joshi to agree to accept Ruikar's dates, if he insists, in spite of the majority of the council deciding in your favour. I very much appreciate your attitude.

It seems to me that I am in for a fairly bad time. As the year approaches its end my work seems to increase. For the National Congress I am supposed to function both as Secretary and as President! Besides the ordinary routine work, which is heavy, I am supposed to draw up annual reports and accounts, and write the presidential address.

I am going to Delhi tonight for two or three days. Probably I shall meet Joshi there. I have had a letter from him from Lahore.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. 12/1929, p. 39, N.M.M.L.

23. To Nilakantha Das[1]

Allahabad
November 20th, 1929

Dear Mr. Das,[2]

I have your letter of the 16th November. I am afraid I am not an admirer of the activities carried on at Geneva on behalf of labour. Indeed I would welcome the abstention of Indian delegates from the Geneva Conference. I am therefore hardly a suitable person to advise you in the matter.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. 12/1929, p. 107, N.M.M.L.
2. (1884-1967); a prominent Congress worker of Orissa; twice president of Utkal Provincial Congress Committee but left Congress in 1940; member, Central Assembly, 1924-1930 and 1935-1945; member, Orissa Legislative Assembly, 1952-1957, and elected Speaker in 1957.

24. Presidential Address at the All India Trade Union Congress[1]

The last decade has seen strange happenings in India. New forces and ideas have arisen and have come into play even in our ancient country. They threaten not only the present political structure, under which India has suffered so long, but also the social and economic structure. In the political field we have seen the ideology and practice of direct action displace the slow and ineffective methods of an earlier generation. We have seen the growth of a great movement which convulsed the country and shook the foundations of British rule in India, and then weakened and gave place to reaction and mutual strife. We see it again gathering its strength for another and more powerful and determined move forward.

But great as has been the political achievement of the last decade, no less remarkable has been the growth of the labour movement in India. None of us can call our trade union movement today strong or ready for successful battle. But who can deny that during a few short years we have covered ground which it took generations in other countries to traverse? In spite of the great poverty of the worker and the fear born of slavery that possesses him and makes it difficult to organise him, in spite of political difficulties which a foreign government is ever placing in his way, in spite of the preoccupation of the country as a whole with the national struggle, there has developed rapidly a class-conscious and militant and aggressive spirit in the Indian worker. This spirit has led him to numerous strikes, sometimes ill-conceived, often with failure as certain goal but, nothing daunted, he has gone on ahead. If he has weakened, it has, not unoften, been due to the weakness of his leaders.

And yet the movement is weak and the work that has been done is exceedingly little, and how much remains! The fact that I stand here today and address you as your president is itself a sign of your weakness. Why should I, a newcomer to the labour movement, and one who, whatever his sympathies may be, is not one of you and has not suffered as you have done in field and factory, why should I preside

1. Tenth Session, Nagpur, 30 November 1929. *The Indian Quarterly Register*, Vol. II, July-December 1929, pp. 424-428. The speech was delivered in Hindi.

over your deliberations? At your command I am here, and I am grateful for this honour and the confidence which it implies. But you could have given no greater sign of the infancy and weakness of your movement. I shall welcome the day when the worker from the mine and the factory and the field stands in this place which I occupy today, and when I, and those who are like me, take a secondary place in your counsels. Only then will you be able to speak with confidence and pride of your labour movement; only then will the true voice of the worker be heard from your forums and council halls.

Our country today is under the domination of another and the sentiment of nationalism is strong. It is natural that the best and bravest in the country should strive for national freedom, but to how many of our workers does this make appeal? Ground down by poverty and by forces which seem to be unconquerable, with the daily struggle for wages and bread ever before us, how can we think of larger issues? And yet we cannot afford to ignore them for our future is intimately bound up with them. The lot of the worker cannot be improved much by charity, nor by the goodwill of an employer or even of a government. The trouble lies deeper as you all know. It is the system that is wrong, the system that is based on the exploitation of the few and the prostitution of labour. It is the system which is the natural outcome of capitalism and imperialism and if you would do away with this system you will have to root out both capitalism and imperialism and substitute a saner and healthier order.

What is this ideal that you should have? It will not profit you much if there is a change in your masters and your miseries continue. You will not rejoice if a handful of Indians become high officers of the state or draw bigger dividends, and your miserable conditions remain, and your body breaks down through incessant toil and starvation and the lamp of your soul goes out. You want a living wage and not a dying wage. You want to prevent the exploitation of man and to ensure equal opportunities and fair conditions of living for all. It is certain that this cannot be done under the existing system.

We are often accused of preaching the class war and of widening the distance between the classes. The distance is wide enough, thanks to capitalism, and nothing can beat the record of capitalism in that respect. But those who accuse us are singularly unseeing and ignorant of what goes on around them. Is it the socialist or the communist who separates the classes and preaches discontent or the capitalist and imperialist who by his policy and methods has reduced the great majority of mankind into wage slaves who are worse even in many ways than the slaves of old? The class war is none of our creation. It is

the creation of capitalism and so long as capitalism endures it will endure. For those who are on the top it is easy to ignore it and to preach moderation and goodwill. But the goodwill does not induce these self-proclaimed well-wishers of ours to get off our backs and shoulders They only shout the louder from the eminence which they have acquired at our cost. The class war has existed and exists today. By our trying ostrich-like to ignore it, we do not get rid of it. Only by our removing the causes are we likely to bring peace.

This ideal then we must ever keep before us; and we must try to get our national movement also to adopt it. It may be that before we can attain our full ideal we may be able to gain somewhat better conditions for labour and more opportunities for organising them. These will bring only some little relief but we cannot refuse anything that brings some comfort to the unhappy worker. But we cannot at the same time work for such petty relief or compromise on them. For us the objective can only be a new order under which the worker will have true freedom and opportunity of growth.

Today you have an immediate problem facing you and you may want me to say something about it on this occasion. Some of you have already decided on your lines of action. Others have not done so. Meanwhile the Labour Commission is going its way and recording evidence as is offered to it. In considering whether we should cooperate with the commission or not we have to bear in mind many things. Some of these I shall place before you.

Let us consider the circumstances under which the Labour Commission has been appointed. The much advertised Labour Government is in office in England, and labour everywhere should ordinarily rejoice. But its past record, specially in regard to India, is difficult to forget. Its present record is fresh in our memory. Having reached the promised land they seem to be content with remaining there and not to do anything which might imperil their existence. We are told from day to day that their intentions are of the best, but what can they do with a hostile majority in Parliament? Meanwhile, like the newly rich, their chief aim appears to be to prove to the world that they are as sober and respectable as those who are the inheritors of wealth. When Prime Minister MacDonald speaks in America or in Geneva, is it the socialist or the pacifist that is speaking? He speaks as the representative of imperialist England and Sir Austen Chamberlain could be no fitter representative. Mr. Snowden[2] at the Hague forgets his socialism and

2. Philip, 1st Viscount Snowden (1864-1937); Chancellor of the Exchequer in the British Labour Governments of 1923 and 1929; joined the National Government of 1931.

stands for the prestige of John Bull and the glory of the Union Jack. The very triumphs of the Labour Government's policy, such as they are, are the triumphs of imperialist policy. Is it any wonder that Mr. Stanley Baldwin has congratulated Mr. MacDonald for his adoption of conservatism? Or that Mr. Winston Churchill[3] has tauntingly promised him his "cordial cooperation in the government's self-imposed task of carrying out the Conservatives' policy and making the world easier if not safer for capitalism"? Or that Mr. Lloyd George[4] should call Mr. MacDonald the "last of the Conservatives"? We know the part played by Mr. MacDonald in the appointment of the Simon Commission, in spite of the resolution of the British Labour Party pledging itself to self-determination in India.[5] We know also his part in the Chinese crisis when British troops were sent to Shanghai,[6] and in the Egyptian crisis[7] when British dreadnoughts and cruisers went to Alexandria to overawe the Egyptian Parliament into suspending a measure dealing with internal order.

Recently there has been an impression that the Labour Government has pursued a liberal policy in Egypt and elsewhere. So far as India is concerned, I shall refer to it later. In Egypt the best judges are the Egyptian people and it appears that they do not approve of the draft Anglo-Egyptian treaty.[8] In China extra-territoriality still continues and in Palestine we have recently seen the policy of national suppression of the Arabs.

3. (1874-1965); British Conservative statesman; First Lord of the Admiralty, 1911-15 and 1939-40; Minister of War, 1918-21; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1924-29; Prime Minister during the war years, 1940-45, and during 1951-55. He was well known for his diehard views on India, but after 1947 his personal relations with Jawaarlal were Cordial.
4. (183-1845); a leading British Liberal stqatement; Prime Minister, 1916-22.
5. The British Labour Party conference unanimously carried a resolution moved by Lansbury recommending Dominion Status for India. Ramsay MacDonald, however, against the wishes of Lansbury and some members of the Independent Labour Party, agreed to let two Labour members (Clement Attlee and Vernon Hartshorn) serve on the Simon Commission.
6. Early in 1927 when the communist workers seized power in Shanghai, Chiang Kai Shek, who was leading the counter revolutionary movement, sought the help of the imperialists. More than 30,000 British, U.S., French and Japanese troops advanced on Shanghai.
7. On 30 May 1927 three British warships left Malta for Egyptian ports—two for Alexandria and one for Port Said-as the British Government was alarmed by the reported increase in the strength of the Egyptian army.
8. The Egyptian people did not approve of the draft Anglo Egyptian Treaty of 1927 which qualified Egyptian sovereignty by reserving certain matters over which Egypt would have no control.

The Labour Party in England, under Mr. MacDonald's guidance, was the complacent partner of the Tory Party in their imperialist policy. Now that it is itself in the seat of authority it is taking a lead in formulating that very policy. And this policy is all the more dangerous and deceptive because it is clothed in honeyed language. Calling itself socialist, it has betrayed the principles of socialism. Calling itself the friend of freedom in other lands and of internationalism, it has acted in a rigidly national and imperialist way and has forfeited all claim to the confidence of the Indian people.

The Labour Commission is sent to India. Is it an earnest of peace and goodwill to the suffering workers and a promise of better times to come? If so, the ways of the British Government are strange and past all understanding. We have had in India during the past year a general offensive against labour in which the government and the employers have joined hands and cooperated together. The Trades Disputes Act and the Public Safety Ordinance were the first contributions of the Government of India. Then followed the trial of the thirty-two labour leaders and workers in Meerut and a large number of individual cases against labour workers. This trial, as you know, has attracted a great deal of attention not only in India, but in foreign countries. It has now, after prolonged sitting, arrived at the end of the first stage, that of magisterial enquiry. Apart from the more important considerations in the case, you will observe what vast sums the government is spending in trying to put down respected leaders of the labour movement. You will join with me, I have no doubt, in sending them and all other comrades of ours, who are being proceeded against or have been convicted for their labour activities, our fraternal greetings and good wishes.

These are the conditions that face us. Are they the forerunners of peace or of strife? And yet we are asked to believe in the *bona fides* of the Labour Government and to cooperate with the Whitley Commission. Some of the respected leaders of our movement are in fact so cooperating and I for one will not easily consider them wrong. But with all respect to them I do submit to you that it is utterly wrong for us to offer this cooperation. Indeed the time has come when we should make it perfectly clear that we cannot cooperate with any such commission or with the British Government that appoints them.

The question of affiliation troubles us. If I may venture to suggest it would be best for us not to be affiliated to either International. So far as the Second International is concerned the proximity and the occupancy of office in various countries has made its leaders betray their principles and to become the exponents of a new type of imperialism, Labour imperialism, which may not speak in the accents of the

Tories but which is nonetheless thorough. The main preoccupation of the Second International is no longer the fight against capitalism but the fight against communism. And, in particular, India and the colonial countries have been studiously ignored by it and at every vital step it has sided with the forces ranged against us. I am quite convinced that we should not affiliate ourselves with it, and to do so would be disastrous to our cause.

Should we then ally ourselves to the Third International? Recently all manner of threats have been held out to those who may do so. I hope this congress is strong enough to ignore them and to act regardless of them. It is obvious, however, that affiliation with the Third International is largely a gesture because under the present circumstances it is not easy for us, with various government restrictions, to develop contact with the Communist International. There is another difficulty that I feel. Personally, I am a strong admirer of the general trend of policy in Russia. Soviet Russia today, in spite of heavy blunders and many sins, holds out the bright promise of a better day to the world at large and to the worker specially more than any other country. The great experiment has already succeeded in some measure and it would be a tragedy if anything happened which interfered with it or put a stop to it. With all my sympathy for the communist viewpoint, however, I must confess that I do not appreciate many of their methods. The history of the past few years in China and elsewhere has shown that these methods have failed and often brought reaction in their train. To affiliate with the Third International must mean an adoption of their methods in their entirety. I do not think this is desirable for us and I would therefore respectfully recommend to this congress not to affiliate itself to either International. This does not of course mean that we should not develop contacts with them whenever desirable.

Recently, we have had a new diversion. The Labour Government has offered some kind of a conference, at some time or other, to discuss something connected with India's future constitution. In spite of the vagueness of everything in his announcement it created some excitement, which is rapidly cooling as subsequent events have revealed the true inwardness of the situation. I shall have something to say about this in another place a few weeks hence and I shall content myself here with some brief remarks. Those of us who stood by independence stand by it still. We do so not because we want isolation from other countries, but because we want the freedom to change the structure under which the worker is exploited. Tire labour movement is above all international. It seeks to build society on a cooperative basis not

only in the national, but also in the wider international sphere. And litical freedom means nothing to it if the present exploitation is to continue. That position it cannot give up and no individuals have the right to compromise it. And by that position those who stand by independence stand today and nothing that has happened has made any difference to it. The time is fast approaching when our professions will be put to the test of action and suffering. And the measure of your earnestness and your desire for real freedom will be the measure of the deeds that you can do and not the strong language that you may use.

So I would beg of you to prepare yourselves for the struggle that looms ahead and not to lose yourself in mutual conflict and barren strife.

25. Statement on the Proceedings of the All India Trade Union Congress[1]

Unlike the National Congress, the Trade Union Congress elects its president for a year at the conclusion of its annual session. The president so elected presides at the next annual session. I was elected president last year at Jharia, and my presidentship terminated at Nagpur, where Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was elected president for the next vear. I was a newcomer to the labour movement, and it has been a great privilege for me to come in contact with its leaders and its rank and file. Especially do I value having met and worked with real workers who are gradually coming to the front as trade unionism develops. Although, as subsequent events have shown, the Indian labour movement is showing signs of cleavage, it was my honour and privilege to have had the cooperation of both sections, and I am very grateful to all my colleagues for it. I am particularly grateful to Mr. N. M. Joshi and Mr. R. R. Bakhale, general secretary and assistant secretary of the T.U.C. during the past year, for their uniform courtesy and cooperation.

I had hoped in my presidential address that the threatened split[2] would not occur, but even before I had a chance of delivering this address, the cleavage developed, and widened as a result of the decisions

1. Allahabad, 30 November 1929. *The Indian Quarterly Register,* 1929, Vol. II, pp. 428-429.
2. The communist-dominated Trade Union Congress passed some resolutions which were disliked by the moderates, who seceded and formed a rival organisation: the All India Trade Union Federation.

of the Executive Council which met before the open session. I deeply regret that this should have been so, for I realise that our labour movement can ill afford disunity. But perhaps, a split at this stage was inevitable. I have no doubt that experience and force of circumstances will bring the two wings together again, so that even though they may differ, they may also act together whenever occasion demands. But, although the split was likely in any event, there is no doubt that many people actively worked for it and forced the issue. On the one side, there was the youthful enthusiasm of some members of the left wing, who wanted to go ahead regardless of consequences, and on the other, the deliberate attempt to push them on so as to widen the breach and thus get additional reasons for seceding.

The seceders did not take part in the open sessions of the congress on the ground that the resolutions passed in the Executive Council were bound to be passed in the congress. They need not have been so hasty in their conclusions, or precipitate in their action. It was easy enough for them to withdraw after the congress had finally decided one way or the other. As a matter of fact, subsequent events showed that, had they attended the congress, the final decisions might well have been different. Even in their absence, one resolution to which they had taken the strongest objection, the Pan-Pacific affiliation, was postponed to next year.

Credentials were accepted at the congress on behalf of 51 unions representing 189,436 organised workers. According to the constitution, in a division, voting takes place by unions, and each delegate represents 200 members of the union. There was, thus, a total voting strength of 938. One union with a membership of 1,000 was ultimately not represented. This reduced the voting strength to 933. The seceders from the congress represented thirty unions with a membership of 36,639, and a voting strength of 478. Those that attended the congress represented twenty unions with a membership of 91,787 and a voting strength of 455. Thus, it is clear that the seceders had a majority, and I regret the split, but far more, I regret the manner in which it was brought about. I have no doubt that, sooner or later, the real workers of both the wings will join hands. The trouble comes from those who change colour in the course of an afternoon. I am glad to see that the new president of the T.U.C., Subhas Chandra Bose, is already trying to bridge the gulf. I may suggest it might be worthwhile to hold a meeting of the full Executive Council some time during the National Week in Lahore to discuss the methods of future work and common lines of action. One thing I would beg of all my colleagues in the labour movement, and that is to avoid mutual recrimination.

GOLMURI TINPLATE WORKERS STRIKE

26. Message to the Golmuri Tinplate Workers[1]

I am deeply grieved that in spite of repeated requests I have so far been unable to respond to the call of the Golmuri tinplate workers and to visit them in Jamshedpur. From what I have read and heard of the strike[2] that is in progress it seems to me clear that the demands of the workers are fully justified and they must command the sympathy of all who desire that labour should have a decent standard of living and should not be victimised for organising itself in unions. I have also heard with pleasure that in spite of discouragement and want of effective help from outside the workers have shown great solidarity and perseverance in their struggle. It is easy for an outsider who does not have to bear the brunt of the struggle to advise a course of action which may bring suffering and privation to many thousands. It would be easy for them to do so. Advice of outsiders on such questions does not help much. The decision must ultimately come from those who have to carry on the struggle themselves. If this decision is taken by them after full thought, the outsider can offer his fullest sympathy. Our comrades of the Golmuri Tinplate Workers' Union have taken this decision and for forty days or more have bravely carried on the struggle. I admire them and wish them all success.

I regret greatly that I cannot promise to come myself at this stage owing to severe illness in my family. I shall however try my utmost to come, if only for a few hours, on Saturday evening next. If I am prevented from coming then I shall endeavour to come early in June.

1. 17 May 1929. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 20 Mav 1929.
2. In December 1928 the tinplate workers at Golmuri in Jamshedpur formed a union and demanded higher wages and improvement in their conditions of work. As the British management did not concede these demands a strike began on 6 April 1929 and continued for more than ten months.

27. To Jatindranath Mitra[1]

Allahabad
July 1st, 1929

Dear Mr. Mitra,[2]

I thank you for your letter of the 27th June. I am glad my press statement was of some help to you. You are keeping up the strike wonderfully and I do hope that you will be able to carry it to a successful conclusion.

I am writing to Bakhale about the suggested loan. So far as I am concerned I shall certainly recommend it but I do not know what the state of the finances of the T.U.C. is. I shall also suggest to Bakhale to circularise the unions to help you.

With best wishes for your success and greetings to all those on strike,

Yours fraternally,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G95/1929, p. 63, N.M.M.L.
2. Jatindranath Mitra, a trade union leader in Jamshedpur; president of the All India Trade Union Congress in 1932.

28. To R. R. Bakhale[1]

Allahabad
July 1st, 1929

My dear Bakhale,

I have just received a letter from J. N. Mitra, the acting president of the Golmuri Tinplate Workers' Union. He tells me that he has asked you for help for the strikers. As a last resort he suggests that you might give him a loan on behalf of the T.U.C. I do not know what your finances are and whether you can do anything or not. But I do

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-9 5/1929, p. 61-C, N.M.M.L.

feel that the Golmuri workers deserve every sympathy and help. They are up against sheer pig-headedness and obstinacy on the part of the management. If you can in any way help them I shall be very glad. I believe you have already circularised the unions on this subject. It might be worthwhile to do so again. The longer the strike lasts, and it has lasted nearly three months now, the more vital becomes the question of help.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

29. On Strikes[1]

Sir,

How heavy is the burden and how gallantly the white man shoulders it! Silver and gold are heavy to carry and dividends are apt to mount up and it is said that the possessor of them may not find it easy to enter the kingdom of heaven. The eye of the needle is small and will not permit the passage of a camel or of bags bulging with money. But, even at the cost of imperilling their immortal souls, the princes of finance and industry, the lords who control the destinies of oil and jute and steel and tinplate, insist on carrying the heavy burden.

Workers with little minds and no vision, with no appreciation of the majesty of the existing social structure whereunder they contribute their little mites so that palaces may arise to solace in their leisure moments the giants who shoulder the great burden, protest and strike and give troubles. Intent on their petty selves and unreasonably insistent on having enough to eat or something to wear or somewhere to live, they forget the larger purpose of things. Do we not all believe in the doctrine of evolution? Should not then the fittest survive? Who can be fitter than the Man of Money, lord of many a factory or field and master of many thousands of undistinguished and miserable persons labouring away so that the stream of dividends may never cease? What does it matter if the thousands or the millions starve or die? There are others to replace them.

1. Letter to the Editor, 13 July 1929. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 18 July 1929.

In Jamshedpur, three months ago, there was a strike of tinplate workers who dared to make a few claims so that their lot might be a little better. That strike continues today. But the masters who rule over the Golmuri Tinplate Factory are no weaklings. They are made of stern stuff. Are they to be cowed down by a lot of miserable workers presuming to ask for something more than they have been getting? Never! What does it matter if the workers' demands are reasonable? If that is so it is all the more necessary to have no talks with them or discussions. Else what answer could be given to them? And so the strong, silent men who manage the Golmuri Tinplate Factory continue their strong silent career. What does it matter if the condition of workers is bad or if they suffer? That is unfortunate no doubt but how are the managing agents or the directors responsible for nature's economic laws? But alas for the perversity of human nature! The strike continues and there are deep rumblings in the ranks of other workers in the employ of the same masters. People have even said hard things about the strong, silent men of Messrs. Shaw Wallace and Co.,[2] and have dared to suggest a boycott of the Burma Oil Company's[3] oil and petrol.

News comes that the workers in some jute factories have gone on strike. How ungrateful some people can be to those who provide them with work! Is it not a glorious destiny that we should all work and work till our backs are bent and our eyes are dim and our hands tremble so that mighty dividends should go forth to those who toil not but typify, in their highly cultured and aesthetic selves, the fine flower of modern civilisation? Is it not a comforting thought that although the worker may have nothing to eat and his children are weak and hollow-eyed for lack of food, the master in his palace has an abundance of delicate viands which are wasted and thrown away for very excess ? Low wages are apt to annoy. But surely any sensible worker will put up with them when he realises that the result of his labour is a mighty dividend for some other people.

Some of the jute workers are on strike. But despite this, the lords of jute refuse to be deflected from the straight and narrow way which they have chalked out for themselves. And so, despite strikes, dividends continue to come. The Hooghly Mills Co. Ltd., has this year declared a dividend of 125 per cent. It is obvious that they had no special desire to profit. Large sums were put aside for depreciation and renewals. The managing agents no doubt got their share, which must

2. Managing Agents of the Golmuri Tinplate Company.
3. The Burma Oil Company held two-thirds of the shares of the Golmuri Tinplate Company.

have been considerable and a large sum was carried forward to the next year Income tax and super tax consumed a substantial amount and preference shares got their ten per cent. But in spite of all this, much remained. What could one do with it but distribute it as a dividend of one hundred and twenty-five per cent free of income tax to the holders of ordinary shares?

The burden was a heavy one. True, it would have been light if a part of it had gone to the starving workers who had by their labour created the dividend. But was the white man, and his occasional brown colleague in this work of exploitation, going to say 'no' because the burden was heavy? Not they, Gallantly they shouldered it even though it was one hundred and twenty-five per cent free of income tax.

Workers were striking outside asking for higher wages and better living conditions, a modest share in the wealth they were producing. What did it matter if they were miserable and starving? The white man was doing his duty. However heavy the burden he gallantly shouldered it.

Yours etc.,
Jawaharlal Nehru

30. To Jatindranath Mitra[1]

July 16th, 1929

Dear Mr. Mitra,
Thank you for your letter of the 14th July. I received a telegram a few days ago from John[2] from Calcutta asking me to go down to Jamshedpur immediately. I am afraid it is not at all easy for me to change my programme suddenly at a moment's notice. I was therefore unable to go. I wrote to him to say so and suggested that if I could be kept in full possession of the facts I might be able to help by writing to the press, etc. For the rest of this month it is not at all possible for me to go owing to various meetings that are going to be held here soon.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-95/1929, p. 45, N.M.M.L.
2. Michael John, a trade union leader; assisted Prof. Abdul Bari in building up the Tata Workers' Union; president, Indian National Trade Union Congress, 1952 and 1960.

I have not had any reply from Mr. Bakhale about the suggested loan. Indeed I have not heard from him at all for a long time although I have written to him repeatedly. I do not know if he is ill or away from Bombay.

The success of your strike has really been gratifying and it would be a very great pity if it could not be carried to a successful conclusion.

My colleague here, Mr. Bakar Ali Mirza,[3] who is the Congress Labour Research Scholar, proposes to visit Jamshedpur within the next few days. He would like to study both the strike situation as well as the general conditions of workers. He wrote to you some time ago but he says that you have not replied to his letter. I hope you will kindly help him in every way during his stay in Jamshedpur.

Yours fraternally,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. (1900-1973); a Congress worker of Hyderabad, active in the labour movement; general secretary of the Bengal Jute Workers' Union, 1929-35, and of the Hyderabad Pradesh Congress, 1951-52; member of the Lok Sabha, 1962-67.

31. To M. John[1]

July 16th, 1929

Dear Comrade John,

My colleague, Mr. Bakar Ali Mirza, the Labour Research Scholar of the National Congress, proposes to go to Jamshedpur soon to study the strike and labour conditions there. I hope you will give him every help in this work.

I have just had a letter from your acting president giving me some idea of what the position is now. It seems to me that in spite of the obstacles you have in front of you there is great deal of promise in the situation. I wish you all success.

Yours fraternally,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-95/1929, p. 43, N.M.M.L.

32. To the General Manager, Golmuri Tinplate Company[1]

31st July, 1929

Dear Sir,

The Working Committee of the Indian National Congress considered at their last meeting held in Allahabad a representation from the Golmuri Tinplate Workers' Union. In this representation reference was made to the grievances of the workers and an account was given of the strike which has been in progress for nearly four months now. It was further stated that the union executive had repeatedly tried to open negotiations with the management, and, in order to bring about an honourable settlement, had agreed to the appointment of an impartial committee consisting of representatives of the management and the workers to discuss and settle the outstanding grievances of the workers. The union had further laid stress on there being no victimisation and on the reinstatement of workers dismissed before and during the strike. To this offer of the union, it appears, there was no response from the management. Attempts made by labour leaders like Messrs. V. V. Giri[2] and M. Daud[3] to bring about a settlement were also unsuccessful owing to this lack of response from the management. It is stated that the management refused even to grant interviews to these gentlemen.

The Working Committee were unable to appreciate why the management should avoid a settlement of the dispute. Before taking any farther action however the committee directed me to communicate with you to find out if the version given above is substantially correct. Further, they desire to know if you are opposed to any attempt at mediation on the lines suggested above.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-71/1929, p. 67, N.M.M.L.
2. (b. 1894); one of the founders of the All India Railwaymen's Federation; president of Trade Union Congress, 1926 and 1942; delegate to I.L.O. Conference, Geneva, 1927; member, Central Assembly, 1934-37; Minister, Madras, 1937-39 and 1946-47; High Commissioner to Ceylon, 1947-51; Labour Minister, Government of India, 1952-54; Governor of U.P., 1957-60, of Kerala, 1960-65, and of Mysore, 1965- 67; Vice-President of India, 1967-69; President of India since August 1969.
3. Muhammad Daud, secretary of the Indian Seamen's Association, Calcutta; delegate to I.L.O. Conference at Geneva in 1926 and 1929; president, All India Trade Union Congress, 1928.

I shall be glad if you will kindly send me an early reply.

Yours faithfully,
Jawaharlal Nehru

33. To V. V. Giri[1]

August 19th, 1929

Dear Mr. Giri,

Thank you for your letter of the 9th August. I am sorry for the delay in acknowledging it. I appreciate your difficulties. It seems to me that we must try to build up a strike fund. But even such a fund can hardly survive a big strike.

I went to Jamshedpur last Friday. The position there is not at all promising as you know. Under the circumstances I feel the strike must be carried on whatever the consequences. Meanwhile we shall try to do what little we can.

Your sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1929 (Pt. III), p. 509, N.M.M.L.

34. To Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co.[1]

Camp Calcutta
August 21st, 1929

Dear Sirs,

I have received your letter No. P. L. 9-168 dated 6th August 1929. I have also received communications from the officers of the Golmuri

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-71/1929, pp. 68-71, N.M.M.L.

Tinplate Workers' Union in which they have stated their grievances and have given an account of the negotiations preceding the strike. Since the strike commenced, it appears to be common ground between them and you that the management of the company has refused to encourage any attempt at a settlement.

For various reasons, which you no doubt appreciate, the tinplate workers' strike has attracted considerable attention in India and elsewhere. Strikes and lock-outs involving a far larger number of men have seldom attracted so much attention. I presume you are aware that the strikers have received both moral and financial help[2] from trade union organisations in England and in the continent of Europe. The reason for this widespread sympathy and desire to help can only be a belief that the strikers' claims are reasonable and that they are being unjustly dealt with. That belief may be right or wrong but you will agree that it exists.

The National Congress is not a labour organisation and it does not usually interfere in industrial disputes. The Congress has however felt impelled to take interest in the tinplate workers' strike principally for two reasons. One of these was the allegation, not denied by you, that the management refused to have any dealings with the representatives of the strikers or with others on their behalf, and that they were not prepared to help in any way to bring about a settlement. The second reason was based on the fact that the tinplate industry is supposed to be one of the essential national industries and as such it had received a special measure of protection from the state. Both these reasons have induced the National Congress to take the unusual step of interesting itself directly in the strike. If an industry desires the help of the state, this help can only be given on the clear assurance that the labour in that industry is being paid a proper wage and is not being unjustly treated.

You mention in your letter that "the present position of affairs is that there are more tinplate workers in the district than the factory is capable of accommodating". From a perusal of the reports of the Tariff Board on the tinplate industry in India it appears that the success of the industry depends on skilled labour and the whole problem before the industry is one of training the particular kind of skilled labour required. It was with this object that the Tinplate Company brought a large number of expert workers from abroad and paid them a very high salary. It was stated before the Tariff Board, and accepted by the Board as an argument in favour of giving protection to the

2. See *post*, item 37.

industry, that Indian experts would gradually be trained to take the place of the foreign experts. I gather that this has been done in some measure although a considerable number of foreign experts still remain. I have further been given to understand that, in spite of the decrease in the foreign element, the output per head has increased and thus Indian labour costs have actually lessened. This appears to be due to the general improvement in the quality of Indian labour. The Tariff Board had expressed the hope that this improvement would continue rapidly and would result in Indian labour replacing foreign labour in the factory and in lessening the costs of production.

Under these circumstances it is not clear how there can be a superfluity of trained tinplate workers in the district. Presumably you refer to the ordinary unemployed labourers, specially those who have recently had to leave the Tata Iron and Steel Co. owing to retrenchment, who have no special training to do tinplate work. Unemployed untrained workers are of course to be found in abundance in India, but it is a little difficult to understand how the quality and efficiency of labour is going to be improved if untrained hands are to replace trained workers from time to time. According to you, at present you have 3,200 men working in the factory although the tinplate works normally employ only 3,000. This itself shows that the efficiency of labour has decreased. The exact extent of this decrease must of course be known to you and your officers.

From the point of view of the state there appear to be two alternatives. Either the industry is a very specialised one and requires highly trained workers, or it does not require specially trained workers. In the former case state help may be desirable for the initial period during which workers are being trained. In the latter case there appears to be no necessity for state help.

So far it has been stated on behalf of the industry that they were training up the special workers. If this process is stopped or delayed by untrained workers being taken it means a wastage of the money given by the state. It appears to me, and I shall be glad if you will correct me in case I am wrong, that the tinplate company are bound to take back nearly all their old trained workers and the present employment of new hands is largely meant to create an impression that they are carrying on successfully and in order, if possible, to break the strike. Once the strike is broken the company, it may be thought, can easily replace the new hand by the old trained hand.

You refer in your letter to the fact that the management cooperated with Mr. Daud until the Tinplate Workers' Union threw him over, and

with Mr. Homi[8] till he resigned his post of president of the union. It seems to me that there has been a great deal of misunderstanding in the matter and much of the trouble is due to this fact. Who is responsible for this misunderstanding between the management and the workers I am unable to say, but many representatives of the workers seem to be convinced that Mr. Homi played a dubious part in the negotiations. The workers were given to understand that certain demands of theirs would be acceded to. Later they were told that if this was not done by a certain date they should strike. Your manage-ment must of course know what they told Mr. Homi. But the workers only know what Mr. Homi told them the management said and it is quite possible for serious discrepancies to creep in between these two versions.

The workers genuinely felt that they had a grievance and equally genuinely felt that they had been promised redress. When this redress did not come, in spite of assurances conveyed to them through Mr. Homi, there was a strong feeling that they had not been justly treated. This feeling ultimately led to a strike when the workers thought that some of their colleagues were being victimised. It is quite possible that the workers acted somewhat precipitately but to them the action did not appear as precipitate and from day to day they had been discussing this action with Mr. Homi and others. As for Mr. Daud, his sympathy with the tinplate workers and the strike may be gathered from the fact that he has repeatedly tried to help them. He had previously resigned from the Union because of Mr. Homi's activities.

In the course of the strike Mr. Daud, Mr. Giri and Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmad[3] 4 have, I understand, definitely approached the management with the request for interviews but the management was unable to agree to this. Whatever the sins of the workers may have been it seems extraordinary that these gentlemen should have been denied these interviews. It also seems extraordinary that the management should not even attempt to understand the workers' point but should rely solely on its power to starve them into submission. If this is the attitude of the management then wider issues are affected and the National Congress cannot remain indifferent.

The Congress Party in the Assembly has taken considerable interest, as you know, in the proposals to grant protection to various industries in

3. Manek Homi, an official of the Tata Iron and Steel Works at Jamshedpur who resigned and became a prominent trade union leader of the area.
4. Vice-President of the Labour Association of Jamshedpur, 1929.

India. If one of these industries is carried on in a manner that is defi-nitely vindictive to its own workers and is at the same time uneconomical and wasteful from the point of view of the state, the question of continuing any state help or protection has to be considered afresh. In view of the approaching session of the Legislative Assembly in Simla, the Congress Party will have to decide its attitude on this question in the near future. I have written to you fully on the subject so that my committee may know your viewpoint on the points referred to. I have not discussed the grievances of the tinplate workers. These can be considered later. For the present the only question to be considered is the attitude of your management towards the tinplate workers on strike. I can only conclude that this attitude is the result of some grave misapprehension or misunderstanding.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the General Manager of the Tinplate Company of India Ltd.

Yours faithfully,
Jawaharlal Nehru

35. To Maulana Azad[1]

Camp Calcutta
August 25th, 1929

My dear Maulana Saheb,

I have been here for some days and I would have very much liked to meet you. But I was told that you were away. I have just heard that perhaps you may have come back. If so I shall try to meet you before I go. I am going away tomorrow and am rather rushed. I am therefore not quite sure if I shall be able to come.

I had hoped that you would visit Allahabad but unfortunately this visit has not come off yet. I hope you will be able to come in the near future.

One thing more I have to request you. You must have heard of the Golmuri tinplate workers' strike near Jamshedpur. I was there yesterday and I was asked specially to request you to visit the place for a

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1929 (Pt. Ill), p. 589, N.M.M.L.

day. I wonder if you can manage it. Your visit will be very much appreciated both by the labour elements and the general public of Jamshedpur. It would just mean a day's absence from Calcutta. Subhas Bose is in Jamshedpur and will remain there for some days. If you can manage to go please send a telegram to him care Labour Association, Jamshedpur.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

36. To Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co.[1]

September 10th, 1929

Dear Sirs,

I am in receipt of your letter No. P.L. 9-200 dated 7th September.

It is clear from your brief account of the negotiations preceding the strike that there is considerable difference of opinion as to what occurred between you and the officials of the Golmuri Tinplate Workers' Union. You have referred me to Mr. Daud. I had already consulted him on the subject and to the best of my recollection he confirmed the account given to me by the union officials. The fact that Mr. Daud has been interesting himself on behalf of the strikers since the strike in itself shows how he sympathises with those strikers. In view of this difference of opinion the obvious method to remove misunderstandings and misapprehensions would have been a free and frank discussion between the two parties. But the management of the Tinplate Company have not thought fit to encourage any such discussion or negotiation ever since the strike commenced. You are yourself aware that even Mr. Daud to whom you refer and an independent labour leader like Mr. Giri were refused interviews by the General Manager. This attitude can only be interpreted in one way and that is the desire not to discuss the issues and to starve the strikers into submission.

You will no doubt appreciate that no worker looks forward light-eartedly to a strike which must necessarily mean considerable suffering

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-71/1929, p. 25, N.M.M.L.

for him. It may be that he is misled or misinformed. But a long strike must necessarily be based on a conviction that there are substantial grievances. If there are no such grievances as you appear to indicate it ought to be very easy to demonstrate this fact to those who are deluded enough to believe in such imaginary grievances. The management of the Tinplate Company, by refusing to have any dealings with anyone on behalf of the strikers, has adopted a course which leaves no alternative to the outsider but to believe in the justice of the workers' cause.

You must have noticed the great amount of sympathy for the strikers all over the country. I regret that in spite of this widespread expression of public disapproval of the attitude of the Tinplate Company that the company should persist in maintaining it. This can only result in greater estrangement between the workers and the company and in stronger public disapproval. You are no doubt aware that the Congress party in the Assembly proposes to take up the matter and to move that no further protection be granted to the tinplate industry'. In view of the persistent attitude of the Tinplate Company to which I have referred above, culminating in the employment of Pathans by the company to overawe the strikers and in the forcible ejectment of workers from their houses, the Congress Party cannot remain an indifferent spectator and must take such action as it can to help the workers. The Behar Legislative Council has already condemned both the management of the Tinplate Company and the local government in regard to the attitude taken up towards the strike.[2]

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. On 6 September 1929 the Swaraj Party in the Bihar Council carried an adjournment motion on the subject.

37. To Father[1]

September 10 th, 1929

My dear Father,
Your telegram came this morning. Deoki Prasad must have left Meerut before he received any telegram from you. As a matter of fact when I

1. M. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.

reached the telegraph office after your departure I found that our first telegram to him was being despatched. I stopped this and gave another in its stead. This was sent Express but evidently missed him.

As desired by you I am sending the first volume of Michael Collins[2] book. I cannot find any other book dealing with the hunger-strikers in Ireland. I have sent another little book by Dan Breen. I am not sure if this contains any account of the hunger-strikers but it will give you some idea of the violence with which the Sinn Feiners waged war.

I hope you will take some interest in the Golmuri tinplate strike. I think that the Managing Agents and the management of the Tinplate Company have behaved very badly and very unfairly and this fact should be brought home to them. To my knowledge no strike of this kind has evoked so much widespread sympathy. The British Trade Union Council has sent them £ 100. The Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions has sent them £ 200. Both of these organisations are eminently respectable and moderate.

Among the strikers one finds Hindus, Mohamadans, Christians and Sikhs. They include also the ordinary workmen, the skilled workers and the clerical staff. The strike has now lasted five months and in spite of Shaw Wallace's great words the Company has suffered greatly and cannot carry on for long. Yet they refuse to have any talk even with the representatives of the other side. A more pig-headed attitude I cannot imagine. The question is not. whether a certain demand is reasonable or not. The strikers have only asked for an impartial enquiry into their grievances and no victimisation. I cannot conceive of any striker having a lesser demand.

I should have liked to send you a full account of the strike but I have no time to prepare one now. If possible I shall send one later. Meanwhile, however, I am sending you copies of my correspondence with Shaw Wallace. This will give you some idea. In case a resolution is being moved in the Assembly on the subject perhaps you might show this correspondence to the mover of the resolution. I should like you to say something yourself. You know of course that Shaw Wallace are representing the Burmah Oil Company which is a tremendously rich and powerful corporation. They deserve no sympathy. Their oil mills in Budge Budge have also gone on strike largely in sympathy with the Golmuristrikers.

Jawahar

1. (1890-1922); irish revolutionary leader.

38. Note on the Golmuri Tinplate Workers' Strike[1]

This strike has now been going on for about five months. It has attracted a great deal of attention in India and even in foreign countries. The Working Committee meeting held on the 27th July asked me to prepare a case for the strikers and to get into touch with the management. In accordance with this direction I wrote both to the General Manager of the Tinplate Company, Mr. J. Leyshom. and the Managing Agents, Messrs Shaw Wallace and Co., of Calcutta. Copies of my correspondence with the latter are attached. These will give some idea of the present position.

The tinplate industry has been granted special protection by the Legislative Assembly on the recommendation of the Tariff Board. In view of this fact the industry is considered a semi-national one. . It is therefore all the more necessary that the labour dispute between the workers and the employers should not be ignored by the general public.

I give below certain facts relating to the grant of protection to the industry and to the happenings before and after the strike.

The Tinplate Company of India was registered in 1920. It was to be started at Golmuri near Jamshedpur as a subsidiary or allied industry to the Tata Iron and Steel Co. The share capital was 75 lacs; 2/3 of the shares were held by the Burmah Oil Company and 1/3 by the Tata I. & S. Co.

The estimate for the erection of the plant and buildings was greatly exceeded owing, it is said, to the unfavourable exchange and the higher price of materials. There being a shortage of capital, 10% debentures were issued. An issue of 125 lacs was authorised. It is not known how much was actually issued. The exact figure is kept confidential. All the debentures issued were taken over by the Burmah Oil Company.

It will thus be seen that the debenture holders controlled the situation completely. The debenture holders, i.e., the Burmah Oil Company, are also the holders of 2/3 shares so that the B.O.C. may be considered the sole proprietors of the Company. Tata's 1/3 shares have little value and it is stated on behalf of Tata's that they have written them off. Tatas have however the right to nominate some members to the Board of Directors. I understand that their directors take little interest in the concern.

1. September 1929. A.I.C.C. File No. G-71/1929, pp. 59-65, N.M.M.L.

It was stated at the beginning that the tinplate industry was a highly technical one requiring special experts. This expert element was provided by the engagement of a large number of Welsh tinplate workers. These workers were paid very heavy salaries. I am told that the average pay was Rs. 750 per month plus bonuses which amounted to another Rs. 500 or Rs. 600 per month. Thus the monthly pay came to about Rs. 1,300 or over. It should be remembered that these Welsh workers were ordinary skilled workers getting far less in Wales. The Tinplate Company commenced work at the end of 1922. In 1924 all mills came into operation.

In 1924 the Tariff Board recommended a duty of Rs. 60 per ton which was equivalent to 15%, on imported tinplate. In 1926 this duty was raised to Rs. 85 per ton owing to the rate of exchange changing. In order to help the company the revenue duty on tin (raw material) was reduced from Rs. 555 to Rs. 250 per ton.

The Tinplate Company entered into long-term contracts with the B.O.C. and the Tata I. & S. Co. The Tariff Board state that the contract with the Tatas was very unfavourable to the Tata Company.

The output of the plant increased rapidly and in 1926 was 35,000 tons i.e. 7,000 in excess of the output designed on the plant. There was an improvement in the quality of Indian labour and the output per head also increased in spite of the decrease in the number of Europeans. In 1924 there were 84 European experts. In 1925 there were 71 and in 1926, 58.

In spite of this output however the financial results were not satisfactory. According to the Tariff Board the losses up to the end of 1925 were 50 lacs. The company stated that the losses amounted to 87 lacs. These losses were largely due to the exchange being fixed at 1-6 and the consequent fall in the sterling price of tinplate.

The general conclusion of the Tariff Board in 1926 was that but for the protection given in 1924 the company could not have survived. There had been rapid progress and they were working up to an economic output. The industry was one of great national importance and was likely to become firmly established in a short period.

The Tariff Board also referred to the desirability of reducing labour charges. This reduction referred to the European staff and they said that the wages of Indian labour were relatively low. They recommended greater efficiency and a lesser number of men to be employed resulting in a higher standard of living. The Board were of opinion that after 1933 no special protection would be necessary.

At the suggestion of the Board the contract with Tatas was revised.

It is interesting to note that the Welsh Plate and Sheet Manufacturers' Association presented a memorandum to the Tariff Board objecting to the protection that was being given. In this memorandum they laid stress on the excessively high wages paid to the Welshmen who had been brought by the Tinplate Company and to the very low wages of Indian labour. The Welsh Association referred to the Tinplate Company as a mere department of the B.O.C. and stated that this protection was being used to penalise rivals in the oil trade. They said that the B.O.C. being a monopoly should pay the losses of the Tinplate Company. The Tariff Board did not agree with these contentions. They laid stress on the military reasons for encouraging the industry as tinplate was a necessary part of war equipment.

In December 1926 the Tariff Board recommended a reduction of the protection duty from Rs. 85 to Rs. 48 per ton. This was to continue for seven years.

The production went on increasing and in 1927 amounted to 45,000 tons. In 1928 the output suffered because of the strike in the Tata I. & S. Co.'s Works.

On the 18th of October 1928 the Tinplate Workers' Union was formed with Mr. Daud as chairman. To begin with the membership was 1200. This increased to 2700. The total number in the factory at that time was under 3000.

The union was recognised by the company on the 18th January 1929 on assurance that it would be registered. Application for registration was made in January but there was delay and actual registration took place on the 13th April.

The union used to take up individual cases of hardship to the General Manager but relief was not usually forthcoming.

In December 1928 workers' demands were drawn up by the union. These were sent to the General Manager but were not acknowledged. They were followed by repressive measures. At workers' meetings repeated reference was made to preparations for a strike in case demands were refused.

The company started working all men for 3 days a week and paying them for these days only. It may be noted that during the Tata strike last year the men worked for three days only but were paid for five or six days.

Early in January 1929 the company dismissed six active workers of the union. Three of these, Biswas, Profullo Bhattacharji and Jan Mohamad, were members of the executive committee of the union. These workers were dismissed on the pretext that they were not working properly and were inciting other workers.

On the 18th January Daud came and interviewed the General Mana-ger about these dismissals and other grievances. No relief was given but the General Manager agreed to recognise the union as mentioned above.

Owing to the failure of Daud to get redress there was great disappointment among the workers. At this stage Homi intervened. The workers were disappointed with Daud and thought that Homi might bring them better luck. Thereupon Daud resigned and Homi was elected president of the union.

Homi interviewed the manager many times. He announced to the workers on the 7th February that a settlement had been arrived at on 31-1-29 but the company wanted the sanction of their Directors. It was stated that the company had agreed to pay five days' wages for three days' work. They were going to take back the six workers who had been dismissed. There was an increase of roughly 7% in their wages and there were various provisions regarding bonus, provident fund, maternity, etc.

The union was more or less satisfied with these terms as announced by Homi. It was found later that the terms applied only to some of the workers. Out of 847 men in the hot mills only 368 got the increase and 479 did not get it. There were other differences of opinion between the company's interpretation and the workers' and the workers were greatly dissatisfied. Homi promised to interview the manager again. He did so but it is not known what transpired.

6th March—Abdul Samed, a member of the executive committee of the union, was discharged for alleged bad work. Thereupon all men of his shift came out. Homi saw the manager and he agreed to have a joint committee of enquiry. Men resumed work the same day. Next day the committee sat and it was agreed to take back Abdul Samed. He was however not taken back. The men of his shift again came out on strike at Homi's instance. Two active members of the union, Manga and Hanif Ullah, were then dismissed by the manager. Later these two were taken back. But Abdul Samed was not taken. Homi told the workers in a mass meeting that Abdul Samed would be taken back later. If he was not taken within a fortnight they could strike.

On 28th March the union wrote to the manager about Abdul Samed. There was no answer. Previously, on the 22nd March the union sent a deputation to the manager about certain grievances but this was not received as the manager disapproved of the personnel.

Many men were discharged, suspended and transferred. Several letters were sent by the union in consultation with Homi to the management regarding these grievances and suggesting a joint committee and employment of old hands. The manager refused. At the end of March the

General Manager spoke to the vice-president of the union, Mitra, in the mill and said that he would like some people to be present besides Homi at interviews as apparently Homi did not represent the management's viewpoint correctly.

15th April—Homi, Mitra and Hayat Baksh[2] on behalf of the union had interviews with the General Manager. Homi and Mitra pointed out that the situation was getting hopeless and unless something was done there was bound to be a strike. The manager said that there would be no repression for the next seven days. The workers' representatives said that they would try to cooperate with the management. When asked about the men who had been discharged the manager said that he would give them an assurance that he would consider Abdul Samed's case.

The union executive was not satisfied with this specially because the management had not kept their promise to take back Abdul Samed. At this time the management started employing Gurkhas as workers. This annoyed the old workers who thought that the management was merely gaining time to prepare for a strike.

On the 7th April Mitra asked Homi to interview the manager as the situation was very serious. Homi refused to go. They then asked Homi to convene a general meeting of the workers to explain the situation. Homi said he was too busy but he suggested that an announcement be made by beat of drums that men should go on working as usual. This was attempted but the drum was snatched away by the men who went about canvassing for a strike. Men started picketing. Mitra and others asked them not to do so but they refused and were bent on a strike. Homi stated later the same day that he would support the strike.

8th April—The strike began. Homi sent his resignation from the presidentship of the union but he explained to the union executive that he had done so for form's sake to enable him to help in the settlement. He was asked to withdraw the letter. He wanted three days' time to consider. On the evening of the 8th, a mass meeting of the workers confirmed the strike. The executive of the union did likewise. On the 12th day of the strike Homi came into a mass meeting of workers and asked the men to remain firm. At Homi's request there was a fresh election of the executive committee. He was again elected president.

On the 26th day of the strike Homi attended a workers' mass meeting accompanied by high police and district officials and a number of policemen and asked the men to end the strike unconditionally. The men refused.

2. Assistant secretary, Golmuri Tinplate Workers' Union, Jamshedpur, 1929.

There was great resentment at Homi's sudden change and his display of police force. His resignation from the presidentship was accepted by the union.

Early in May Mr. V. V. Giri, ex-president of the A.I.T.U.C., came to Golmuri. In consultation with the executive committee of the union he wrote to the General Manager asking for an interview. No reply was received. At Giri's suggestion the union applied to the government for application of the Trades Disputes Act.

The government sent the Commissioner of the division, Mr. J. R. Dain,[3] to enquire. On the 28th May Giri, Mitra and others went on deputation to Ranchi to interview the government. They presented a note on the grievances of the workers. They pointed out that the promised increment had not been given, that there had been victimisation of workers, that the management had refused to receive the union deputation and old hands were being replaced by new. The government however refused to intervene.

In June Mr. Daud came to Golmuri and wrote to the General Manager for an interview. No formal reply was sent but an official of the union saw Daud and told him that the company could not reply officially to his letter and was not prepared to open negotiations.

Later Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmad, vice-president of the Labour Association of Jamshedpur, asked for an interview from the General Manager. He was informed by telephone that the General Manager could not see him on this subject.

In July Daud came again and again tried for an interview but he got the same answer. About this time Jawaharlal Nehru also visited Golmuri and addressed a workers' meeting.

On the 5th July Sir B. N. Mitra[4] happened to visit Jamshedpur. He saw unofficially Giri, Daud and Mitra. Commissioner Dain and Homi were also present. Homi at this interview opposed the labour case.

Representations were sent by the union to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. Appeals for funds were also issued. They received help from the British Trade Union Congress, £100, the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions, £200, the All India Trade Union Congress and individual unions in India.

Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose visited Golmuri on many occasions. Others who visited were Babu Rajendra Prasad, Baba Gurdit Singh,[5] Pt. Nilakantha Das and Jawaharlal Nehru. All these visitors appreciated the

3. (1883-1957); joined I.C.S. in 1907 and served in Bihar.
4. Bhupendra Nath Mitra (1875-1937); member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, 1924-30.
5. The Sikh leader who had chartered the Komagata Maru.

moderation of the workers' demands and criticised the company for their unbending attitude.

The demands of the workers were:

1. That there should be an impartial committee of enquiry for all grievances.
2. That there should be no victimisation.
3. The cases pending in the courts against strikers for picketing, etc., should be withdrawn.

Subhas Bose sounded Shaw Wallace and Company in Calcutta. He was told verbally that the local management had full powers and that they were helpless.

The great majority of the strikers remained firm but after some months there was a tendency for strikers to get back. All of those who wanted to go back were taken by the company. About the middle of August the position was this: Out of a total of 3200 persons employed, 700 were old hands and 2500 were new hands. Most of the new men were not competent. The result was that the factory was working at a great loss in spite of having full complement of men. To encourage people to work the management started giving free meals at great cost to themselves. They also gave better pay to those who joined as well as to the new hands. The company also engaged a large number of Pathans ostensibly to keep order.

In the third week of August an attempt was made to picket on a big scale. Three or four hundred workers accompanied by Mr. Subhas Bose and Baba Gurdit Singh stood some distance from the factory entrance and shouted various *jaykars*. The crowd was very orderly and was congratulated by the police officials who removed most of the policemen. The mass demonstrations induced many of those who were working in the factory to come out. The day passed peacefully.

The next day about thirty or forty workers accompanied by Baba Gurdit Singh went to the same place to picket. The Afghan employees of the Company attacked them with stones. The picketers retaliated also by throwing stones. Just then the mounted police arrived and ruthlessly drove the picketers away, riding down some of them and pursuing them right to their quarters. The door of one hut was actually broken open and the man inside was beaten.

That same day an order under Sec. 144 Cr. P.C. was passed prohibiting all gatherings of five persons or more in the Golmuri area. The next day this order was somewhat modified.

The effect of the attack by the Pathans and the police was to produce great excitement amongst the workers. Large numbers of the new' hands as well as the old hands in the factory came out and joined the strike.

Most of the clerical staff also joined. The work of the factory had practically come to a standstill. In spite of this however the management continued their stiff-necked attitude and refused to have any negotiations. Nor did the government intervene.

I have no accurate knowledge of what is happening during the last fortnight. It appears however that the company is continuing its aggressive attitude and is now trying to eject the men from their quarters which belong to the company. I do not know how many people are still carrying on the strike and how many have gone back. The papers say that the company is thinking of locking out all workers. If this is so it clearly shows that they cannot carry on with their existing staff and that the strike is being continued successfully.

An interesting feature of the strike has been the cooperation between the different religious groups amongst the workers as well as between the low paid and the better paid staff. The strikers are Hindus, Muhamadans, Sikhs and Christians and they are both manual workers, mechanics and clerical staff.

About the 3rd week of August the oil workers in the Burma Oil Company's mills in Budge Budge also came out on strike. This was partly on account of their own grievances which were many and partly in sympathy with the Golmuri strikers. I do not know if this strike is continuing.

It must be remembered that the B.O.C. are the owners of both the concerns. It was because of this that at one time an appeal was made on behalf of the Golmuri Union for a boycott of B.O.C. petrol.

A few days ago the Golmuri strike was discussed in the Behar Council on a motion for adjournment. The motion was carried in spite of government opposition.

A resolution has been tabled in the Assembly to put an end to the protection being given to the tinplate industry because of the attitude of the Tinplate Company during the strike.[6] There is no doubt that the company must view this withdrawal of protection with alarm.

6. On 24 September 1929 Pt. Nilakantha Das moved a resolution to amend the Steel Protection Act of 1927 in order to withdraw the protection granted to the tinplate industry in India. The motion was carried.

39. To Abdul Bari[1]

4.10.29

My dear Bari Saheb,
I have your letter of the 30th. I am glad to learn that the Golmuri strikers are firm.

I am afraid it is not possible to get any Sikh leader of note to go to Golmuri for some time. The Sikh League is meeting in about 10 days and there is a big tussle going on between two parties. One party wants to boycott the Congress, another wants to cooperate. No prominent Sikh will leave the Punjab for a fortnight or more. As for Sardar Kharak Singh[2] he is very bitter at present against the Congress and all its works and if I write to him he is likely to feel very annoyed.

Personally I do not think it will make much difference if any Sikh leader comes or does not come. Golmuri has had Baba Gurdit Singh and he has already done his utmost to influence the Sikh workers.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-71/1929, pp. 33-34, N.M.M.L.
2. (1867-1963); prominent Sikh leader of the Punjab; founder-president of the Shiromani Akali Dal and the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee; participated in the freedom struggle and spent 20 years in jail.

40. Statement to the Press[1]

It is evident that the government is helping the management of the Tinplate Company in every possible way. Armed police go up and down the *bastis* partly to terrorise the strikers and partly to help in recruiting new men. Police lorries with policemen before and behind

1. Calcutta, 5 October 1929. *The Tribune,* 8 October 1929.

carry these new men to the works. There is absolutely no question of force being offered to these workers by the strikers, yet there is always this imposing array of police. Several cases have been instituted against the strikers, I am told, on trumped up charges. The chief cashier, who joined the strike last month, is being proceeded against by the company on a charge of embezzlement of a small sum.

Many strikers have been ejected from their quarters and most amazing of all is that the company has cut off the water supply from some of the strikers' quarters. As there are no wells the suffering caused by cutting off the water can well be imagined. The whole thing is a most shameful exhibition of how employers and government combine to crush the poor workers. Some of the workers who had been on strike have been forced to rejoin by starvation. Over 2,000 are still holding out. And all this is happening because the employers and the government will not agree even to an enquiry or to a discussion. The Trades Disputes Act which contains a multitude of most objectionable clauses also contains clauses relating to the settlement of labour disputes by government intervention. Yet the government refuses to intervene or apply the Act.

3

GENERAL SECRETARY A.I.C.C.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

1. To Madam Sun Yat Sen[1]

January 16th, 1929

Dear Madame Sun,

I am exceedingly grateful to you for the two messages which you sent us, one for the National Congress and the other for the women of India. The messages were read out in the Congress and were greatly appreciated. It is humiliating for us that a foreign power should prevent one whom India honours from visiting our country. We trust however that the time is not far distant when you will be able to come to this country as the honoured guest of the nation.

Unfortunately little is known in India of the present conditions in China. It is generally assumed that China has gained her freedom from Western imperialism. A resolution congratulating China was passed by the National Congress although some of us pointed out the true facts and opposed the resolution.[2]

With warmest regards and good wishes,

I am,
Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 1 (ii)/1929 (Pt. III), p. 174, N.M.M.L.
2. The resolution was opposed by Jawaharlal who was of the view that the people in China were not really free: a few military governors had seized power with the financial support of the imperialist powers.

2. To General Secretary, National Minority Movement[1]

January 16th, 1929

Dear Friend,

I thank you for your letter of the 10th December conveying your message of goodwill to the National Congress. Unfortunately your letter arrived after the Congress session was over but publicity is being given to your letter. I regret very much that your chairman, Mr. Tom Mann[2], was prevented by the British Government from coming to us in person. It would have been a great pleasure for us to welcome him.

We appreciate greatly what you and some other friends in England have done in exposing the true character of the Simon Commission. India has had sufficient experience of the official labour leaders of England and desires to have no more to do with them. We realise however that a great part of British labour is not represented by their official leaders in Parliament and we have no doubt that when the rank and file of the labour movement know the real facts they will refuse to help in the exploitation of others which ultimately results in their own exploitation.

With fraternal greetings,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-91/1928-29, p. 75, N.M.M.L.
   The National Minority Movement was started in 1924 by the British Communist Party to gain influence among the industrial workers.
2. (1856-1941); British labour leader and socialist; one of the founders of the British Communist Party, 1920.

3. ToGouneSinha[1]

January 16th, 1929

Dear Sir,[2]

Allow me to express my gratitude to you on behalf of the National

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-91/1928-29, p. 71, N.M.M.L.
2. President, All Ceylon Trade Union Congress, Colombo.

Congress for the message of fraternal greeting on behalf of' the workers of Ceylon which you were good enough to send to Calcutta. We realise that the struggle for freedom is a joint struggle for all who are oppressed and we rejoice that in this struggle we have the good wishes of our comrades in Ceylon.

With fraternal greetings,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. To Secretary, Perhipunan Indonesia[1]

January 19th, 1929

Dear Comrade,

From a letter from the League against Imperialism we came to know that you were celebrating your twentieth anniversary on the 22nd December 1928.[2] The letter which gave us this information reached us long after the 22nd December and it was impossible for us to send our greetings to you even by cable so as to reach you in time. We regret very greatly that we were thus not able to send our good wishes to you on your anniversary. May we assure you now however that we have followed with deep interest your struggle for independence and the sufferings you have had to undergo. We realise that there is a great deal in common between your difficulties and ours. We have to fight different powers but in effect the fight of both of us is against imperialism.

Your country has been bound to ours by innumerable ties in the past. And even now there are many points in common between us. We hope that we shall be able to develop our contacts so that we might know a little more of each other and may be able to help each other whenever possible.

Wishing you all success in your fight for freedom,

I am,
Yours fraternally,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 24/1929, p. 1, N.M.M.L.
2. In the Indonesian nationalist movement a notable part was played by the student organization—the Indonesian Association (Peihipunan Indonesia).

5. To Alokananda Mahabharati[1]

January 19th, 1929

Dear Friend,
I thank you for your letter dated 30th December. On the question of independence I am wholly at one with you. I should very much like the Congress to declare in favour of it completely. Unfortunately it is not easy to get what one wants done. I hope however that the whole country will turn to independence after a few months.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(l)/1929 (Pt. I), p. 79, N.M.M.L.

6. To P. N. Trivedi[1]

January 19th, 1929

Dear Friend,[2]
I have your card. It is difficult to explain anything in a letter. I may mention however that I was very much averse to accepting the secretaryship of the Congress this year. The Independence for India League however decided that in view of the fact that the Congress resolution still adheres to independence and permits the fullest pro-paganda for independence, members of the League should enter the Working Committee of the Congress. There upon a number of members were elected to the Working Committee. In obedience to the directions of the League I consented to be the Secretary of the Congress.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(1)/1929 (Pt. I), p. 69, N.M.M.L.
2. A student of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi.

7. To M. E. Burns[1]

January 22nd, 1929

Dear Comrade,[2]

Your message to the Indian National Congress was read out at Calcutta and was much appreciated by the Congress. We are very glad to find that the organised workers of London District are with us in our struggle against imperialism and repudiate absolutely the Simon Commission. British labour has unfortunately lost all prestige here owing to the activities of some of its official speakers in Parliament who have fully supported the Simon Commission. It is pleasing therefore to notice that the rank and file of the workers are determined to fight imperialism. I hope that you will take steps to make it clear to India and the world that the present leaders of the Labour Party in Britain do not represent the workers in their views on imperialism or their policy to India.

With all good wishes and fraternal greetings,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-91/1928-29, p. 65, N.M.M.L.
2. Secretary, London District Committee, League against Imperialism.

8. To B. Weinbren[1]

January 22nd, 1929

Dear Comrade,[2]

I have to thank you on behalf of the Indian National Congress for the message of fraternal greetings which you have sent. Your message was read out to the National Congress and was greatly appreciated. In our struggle against imperialism in all its manifestations it is a great consolation to us that our comrades from thousands of miles away are

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-91/1928-29, p. 59, N.M.M.L.
2. Chairman, South African Federation of Non-European Trade Unions, Johannesburg.

with us. We are fully aware of the difficulties against which you have to contend in South Africa and we watch your efforts to overcome them with the liveliest sympathy. We feel that imperialism in India has been the bulwark of imperialism in many other parts' of the world. A free India would help greatly in freeing the other oppressed races of the world.

We shall appreciate it if you will send to us from time to time a record of your activities.

With all good wishes and fraternal greetings,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

9. To Otto Reinemann[1]

January 22nd, 1929

Dear Comrade,[2]

On behalf of the Indian National Congress I write to thank you for your message of greeting. We rejoice that your committee is working to create a World Federation of Youth for Peace. There can be no greater work and none more urgently needed in view of preparations for war that are still going on. We wish you all success in your endeavour and thank you heartily for your sympathy in our cause. Our cause is as much yours as yours is ours. For we feel that so long as India is not completely free there can be no true peace or freedom in the world.

With fraternal greetings,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-91/1928-29, p. 47, N.M.M.L.
2. Secretary, German Preparatory Committee for a World Federation of Youth for Peace.

10. To N. N. Acharya[1]

22-2-1929

Dear Sir,[2]
I have received your letter. We too feel sorry that we have no relations with Nepal although it is so near us. We wish to improve our ties with her and it pains us to read about the conditions you have described in your letter. We shall consider any measures you may suggest.

Yours faithfully,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(ii)/1929 (Pt. I), pp. 83-84, N.M.M.L. Original in Hindi.
2. A resident of Haridewat.

11. To Secretary, Punjab P.C.C.[1]

23/2/29

Dear Sir,
I shall be glad if you will keep me informed of the progress of work in connection with the next Congress. I hope that now that both the parties have agreed to cooperate there will be no hitches or difficulties. A little generosity and courtesy go a long way to smooth difficulties. I hope therefore that in the composition of your reception committee as well as your provincial executive you will kindly bear in mind that both groups should be well represented.

I have already written to you that early steps should be taken in regard to certain matters if you wish the Congress to be successful and desire to avoid waste.

EXHIBITION

This requires careful preparation spread out over a long period. Your committee is no doubt aware of the strong objection which Mr. Gandhi

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-99/1929, pp. 3-9, N.M.M.L.

took to certain features of the Madras and Calcutta exhibitions. His objection raises a question of principle and your committee must come to an early decision in regard to this. The longer you delay a decision on this the more difficult will be your task later on. Mr. Gandhi has suggested that you should give the control of the exhibition entirely to the A.I.S.A. It is for you to consider if you are agreeable to this. This does not of course mean that your committee will have no voice in the matter. The exhibition committee would, even so, consist of your members and the representatives of the A.I.S.A. but the final decision in any important matter would rest with the Council of the A.I.S.A. This course would save you a great deal of trouble. The suggestion is that if you adopt this course the A.I.S.A. will bear losses, if any, and the profits would go to you.

It is often thought that the exhibition is a money-making concern and in order to make as much money as possible some features to which Mr. Gandhi objects have been introduced in the past. The chief objections have been to:

1. all foreign articles, including machinery,
2. mill-made cloth,
3. certain types of amusements.

I take it that if the exhibition is to be a *swadeshi* exhibition all foreign articles have to be excluded. This does not mean that all foreign articles are bad. Many of them indeed are very useful but the distinctive feature of a *swadeshi* exhibition is that it should contain Indian-made articles only. Machinery made in foreign countries, even though useful, hardly requires boosting up from us. It seems to me therefore that there should be no difficulty in deciding that foreign articles including machinery should be excluded.

It is of course not necessary to exclude Indian-made machinery. Ordinarily the machinery to be exhibited should be suitable for cottage industries or agriculture.

Difficulties might arise in determining whether a certain article is made in India or not, but this need not trouble us much. The point is that the manufacture must have taken place in India even though the raw products came from outside. A mere putting together in India of articles manufactured in foreign countries does not make the article concerned *swadeshi*. Thus a Chevrolet car is now assembled in Bombay but all the parts come from America. It cannot possibly be called *swadeshi*.

In regard to mill-made cloth even the Calcutta exhibition excluded it in theory, though not in practice. There can thus be no doubt that it should be entirely excluded, specially in view of the intensive boycott

campaign which we are undertaking.

Some amusements are of course necessary. There should be no great difficulty in determining which should be excluded. Games, sports, wrestling and athletic events can certainly be included.

It seems to me that you should have little difficulty in arriving at decisions in consonance with Mr. Gandhi's wishes and yet without giving up any aspect of the exhibition to which you attach importance. The object of the exhibition should certainly be educative and not merely a money-making one. You will have, I take it, a health section and an education section. A fine-arts section is also desirable and perhaps also a music section.

If you feel that you cannot agree entirely to Mr. Gandhi's proposal to put the A.I.S.A. in charge of the exhibition, may I suggest a *via media*?

The khadi section to be put in entire charge of the A.I.S.A., mill cloth being wholly disallowed.

For the other sections of the exhibition a strong joint committee consisting of representatives of the reception committee and the A.I.S.A. Council to be formed. This committee to nominate sub-committees for the various sections. This course may help you to get over various difficulties.

I hope that a special effort will be made to find out what cottage industries and arts and crafts exist in India, specially in the Punjab and U.P. and to exhibit these.

VOLUNTEERS

I would suggest that you should concentrate on having a minimum of 500 fully trained volunteers. By fully trained I mean those who have had the Hindustani Seva Dal course of training. In addition to these you can of course have as many more as you like of semi-trained volunteers. The latter can be got ready during the last few weeks but the full training will require a long period and should be taken in hand forthwith. Apart from the Congress you will appreciate the advantage of having a trained volunteer corps for all Congress activities in the future.

You can, if you like, ask the Hindustani Seva Dal to take charge of the volunteer department. But even if you do not do so you should take full advantage of their help. They are undoubtedly the most experienced organisation for this kind of work and they are a Congress organisation. It will be desirable to get two or three of their trained instructors immediately and to start training centres at Lahore, Amritsar

and wherever else you can manage them. This training need not interfere with the ordinary work of the person trained. Thus a student or shopkeeper or a professional person need not leave his work. He need only devote some of his spare time to the training. During the vacation training camps can be organised.

At a later stage I think it will be desirable for you to get at least a dozen well trained volunteers from the headquarters of the H. S. Dal. The travelling expenses will be worth paying for their services.

I suggested during my stay in Lahore that the election of the office bearers of the reception committee might be delayed for the present. This may be done but I feel that immediate steps should be taken in regard to the funds collected for the Congress. These should be kept entirely separate from the ordinary' funds of the provincial committee, It is also desirable to appoint as soon as possible a competent and thoroughly trusted individual as the treasurer of the reception committee. He may be given assistants of his choice.

I trust your Committee will not consider it presumption on my part to offer these suggestions. I have written at length with no desire to dictate but to help as far as I can in making the next Congress a successful and memorable one. Everything in India points to an approaching crisis and it may be that the Punjab will have the high honour to take the lead again in the great struggle. My earnest desire is that it should be prepared for it when the time comes and should sink all petty and personal quarrels in the great quarrel which all of us have to wage.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

12. To T. Braganca-Cunha[1]

March 2nd, 1929

Dear Mr. Cunha,

... I am sorry to learn of the activities of your government. On the whole, however, this is a good sign. Such repression means that people in Goa are waking up. It is a good idea of yours to have your suppressed articles published in book form...

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. A-4/1929-31, p. 51, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

13, To Secretary, Punjab P.C.C.[1]

March 2nd, 1929

Dear Sir,

...You state that "the government are out to make the coming Congress session a failure and thus are trying to put obstacles in the way of workers". You have not given any specific instances apart from the list of persons arrested. If there is anything else to warrant your statement I shall be glad if you will kindly intimate it to me. I need hardly add that the Lahore session of the Congress is bound to be a success in spite of any efforts of the government.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-42/1929, p. 35, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

14. To Sailendranath Ghose[1]

March 6th, 1929

Dear Sir,

The President of the A.I.C.C. has forwarded to me your letter of the 24th January. We are noting with pleasure your activities in the States.

It is not possible for us to regulate in any way the activities of the press here. Unfortunately the press in every country gives special prominence to the darker aspects of life. All thinking persons however realise that this in no way represents the life of the nation. The United States is too big and great a country not to have its dark corrers.

In regard to American imperialism it is a little difficult and I am not quite sure how far it is desirable to avoid all reference to it. If such references are to be avoided similar references of imperialist activities of other countries, for instance, France, Japan, Italy, etc., must also

1. A.I.C.C. File No. A-3/1929-1931, p. 309, N.M.M.L.

be avoided. That simply means that we do not consider the world aspect of the question but only attack British imperialism. I agree with you that there is no point in our attacking the American Government. But a consideration of imperialism must necessarily involve the American aspect of it.

I do not quite understand what you mean by saying that we should not give prominence to any American in our deliberations so long as such American has not got your approval. So far as America is concerned we have no opportunity to give prominence or otherwise. So far as India is concerned we seldom have visits from any prominent Americans. It is obvious that in any matter relating to America we shall immediately communicate with you and consult you before taking any definite action.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

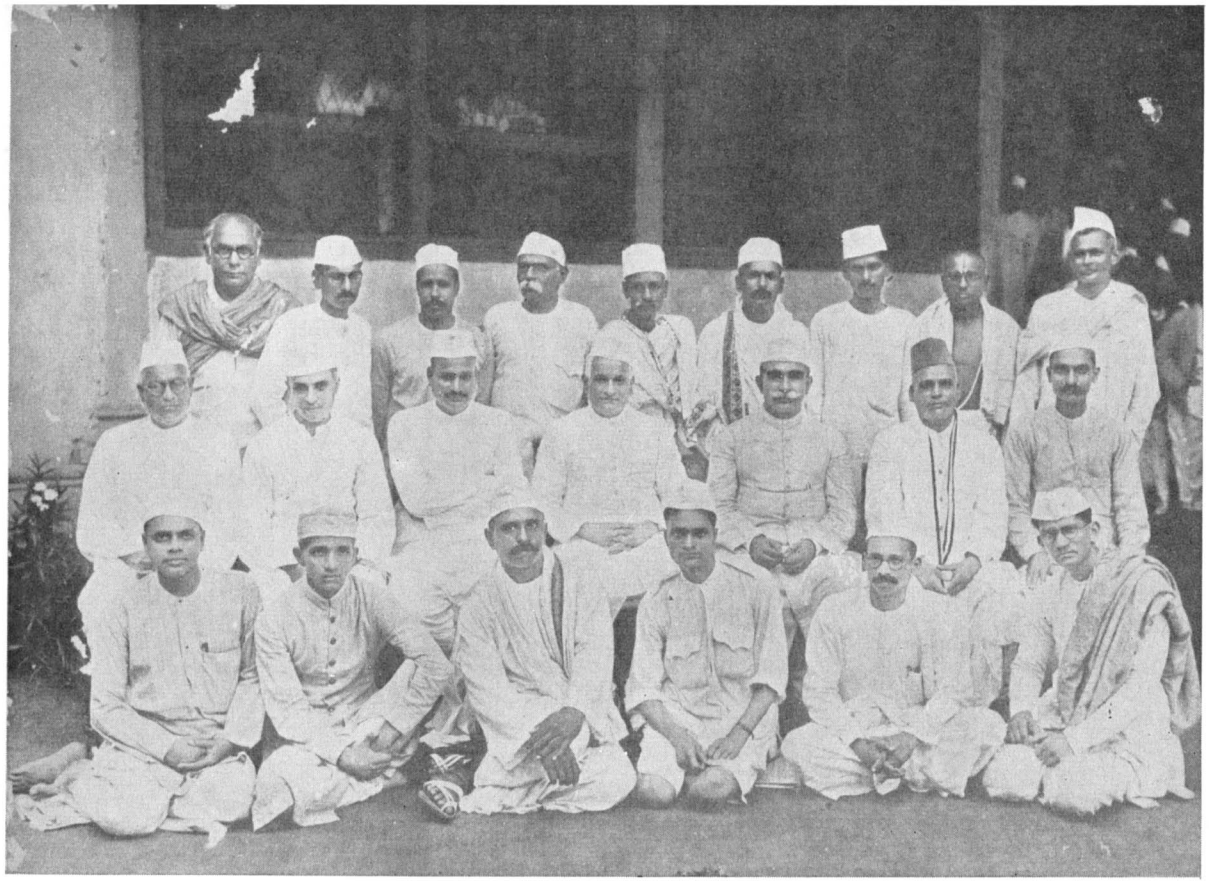
15. To Satyapal[1]

March 13 th, 1929

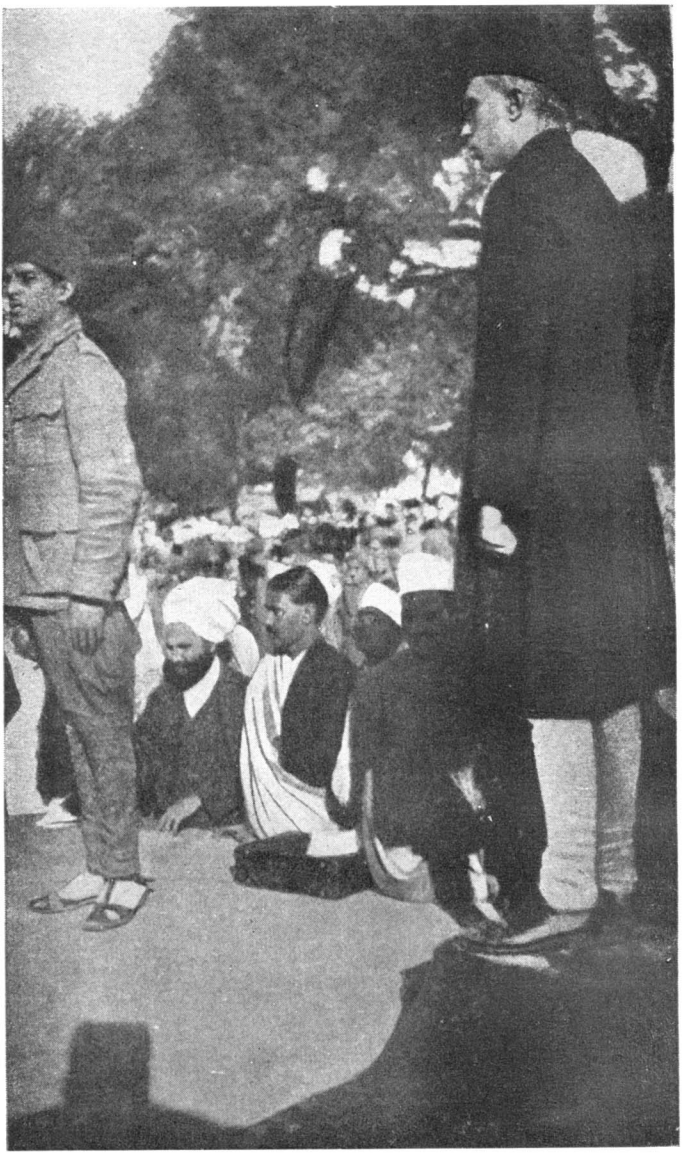
My dear Dr. Satyapal,

I am sorry I could not have a good talk with you at Rohtak as I intended.[2] I had hoped when I left Lahore that there would be no further trouble of any consequence so far as the party question was concerned. I am not aware that there has been any particular friction but I did feel at Rohtak that all was not well. I am therefore writing to you frankly on the subject. I am writing to you specially because in conversation with several colleagues of yours we were informed that your attitude was the hardest in the matter.[3]

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-99/1929, p. 23, N.M.M.L.
2. Dr. Satyapal presided over the Punjab Provincial Conference at Rohtak on 8 March 1929.
3. There were sharp differences between two sections of the Punjab Congress.



WITH CONGRESS WORKERS AT BOMBAY, 1929



LAHORE CONGRESS, 1929
PRESIDENT ELECT

It seems to me that it is neither wise policy nor is it good tactics either from the larger or from the narrower viewpoint to endeavour to perpetuate the feuds of election time. I was not in India at the time of the latest election and I do not know all that happened. But I have a good idea of what happened and I may inform you that I have not an atom of sympathy for the activities of Lala Lajpat Rai's party4 during election time. I think they have erred grievously and did a lot of injury to the national cause. Nonetheless I am quite clear in my mind that we must put no obstacles in the way of that group joining the Congress and to join the Congress not as outsiders but as colleagues and comrades. If we do a thing let us do it generously and reap the benefit of generosity. Otherwise we are neither here nor there. I was strongly opposed in Lahore to the way in which Lalaji's group put forward certain conditions. I pointed out to them that this was all wrong and I am glad to say that they appreciated my viewpoint. The question is what we have to do now. I had hoped that your group will be generous and go more than half way to meet the others.

In Delhi the other day I made a suggestion to Sardar Sardul Singh.[5] I do not know if he has mentioned it to you. I have suggested that special care should be taken to have a strong finance committee and a treasurer who is, as far as possible, not intimately connected with any party and is thoroughly trusted. I do not know many people in the Punjab and so obviously I cannot say who is the ideal person for this job. I suggested however that Purshottamdas Tandon might be asked to serve as treasurer. From many points of view he would be a very good choice. His business is finance and banking. He is a man who is very well known in Congress circles in India and he is a man whose extraordinary trustworthiness even in trivial matters is notorious in the U.P. and outside. He has been connected with Lala Lajpat Rai in the past but so far as I know he has not taken any active part in party politics. I suggested his name for these reasons and also because a man of his ability should certainly be utilised by you to the full advantage. Please do not imagine that I wish to force this suggestion of mine on your committee. The choice is yours and you can do just what you wish. I only claim the liberty to make recommendations. You have the liberty to reject them.

4. The Nationalist Party'.
5. Sardul Singh Caveeshar (1886-1963); a prominent nationalist Sikh leader of the Punjab; secretary, All India Sikh League, 1920; secretary, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, 1920; participated in the noncooperation movement and was imprisoned several times; elected member, A.I.C.C., 1928; close associate of Subhas Chandra Bose and president of the Forward Bloc, 1941.

I was very much troubled by the fiasco of the Jullundur election.[0] It struck me that the whole thing was greatly mismanaged and an occurrence which might have added to your strength in many ways has led to a serious blow being struck at the Congress prestige. I hope no such mismanagement of Congress affairs will happen in the future.

I am sending copies of this letter to Dr. Mohammad Alam[7] and Sardar Sardul Singh.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

6. The Congress candidate withdrew from the by-election to the Council from the Jullundur constituency at the last moment, thus enabling an independent to be elected unopposed.
7. A barrister and prominent nationalist leader of the Punjab.

16. Statement to the Press[1]

Maulana Mohamed Ali has done me the honour of criticising some remarks I have made. I stand corrected. The ex-Presidents of the National Congress are certainly a mixed lot and are not always amenable to discipline. Like the king they appear to be above the law. I had ventured to criticise a statement made by one of them forgetful of this truism in Indian politics because of my high regard for this gallant leader in the cause of Indian freedom.[2] He has made history and, if he but will, can do so again. But just when India is stretching her limbs for another and a stiffer struggle, when drooping spirits are reviving, he cries 'halt' and calls back his regiments and battalions. And have not many of those with whom he consorts in this endeavour been the strongest bulwarks of British rule in India and the antagonists of those who strive for freedom ?

1. Allahabad, 21 March 1929. *The Tribune*, 24 March 1929.
2. On 9 March 1929 Jawaharlal criticised the Muslim leaders' manifesto (which was signed among others by Maulana Mohamed Ali, an ex-President of the Congress) asking the Muslims not to take part in the Congress demonstrations in favour of the Nehru Report. On 13 March Maulana Mohamed Ali issued a rejoinder.

I was no admirer of the so-called compromise resolution of the Calcutta Congress. I spoke against it. But by virtue of that resolution itself the time is fast approaching when the Congress must stand for independence and independence alone. That may be nine months hence or even sooner. Does Maulana Mohamed Ali believe that Dominion Status, whatever that may signify, is going to be presented to us in the course of the year? If not, then why worry? The goal of the Congress remains independence and there can be no compromise on any other basis after a few short months. Our work then is cut out for us to prepare ourselves and the country for the struggle. The programme of the Working Committee was aimed at this preparation.

Will not Maulana Mohamed Ali help in the boycott of foreign cloth? Is he not pleased at the splendid response in the country to the call for boycott? Do not the bonfires of foreign cloth warm and gladden his heart? Is not Maulana Mohamed Ali in favour of strengthening the Congress organisation so as to make it a fit instrument for the fight?

Maulana Mohamed Ali, if I may say so, suffers from the Mahasabha complex. He sees the evil hand of the Hindu Mahasabha everywhere and its tainted mark on every forehead. He will allow me to assure him that his fears and suspicions have little basis in fact. It is my misfortune to be unable to understand how a Hindu or a Moslem can have any political or economic rights as Hindu or Moslem. And I cannot conceive why Moslems or Sikhs or Hindus should lay stress on any such rights. No minority should be unjustly treated. But Maulana Mohamed Ali is well aware that minorities get on well enough as a rule. It is the great majority which requires protection. A handful of foreigners rule India and exploit her millions. A handful of India's rich men exploit her vast peasantry and her workers. It is this great majority of the exploited that demands justice and is likely to have it sooner than many people imagine. I wish Maulana Mohamed Ali would become a champion of this majority and demand political and economic rights for them. But this majority does not consist of Hindus only or Moslems only or Sikhs only. It consists of Hindus and Moslems and Sikhs and others. And if he works for this majority, I am sure he will come to the conclusion that he need attach little importance to the imaginary rights of individuals or groups based on adherence to a religious creed.

News comes today that the government is making a desperate effort to crush the labour and the youth movements. What reply will Maulana Mohamed Ali give to this challenge? What commands will he issue to his battalions?

17. To Miaz Ali[1]

May 7th, 1929

Dear Sir,[2]

... Regarding the national flag I shall try to send you a small one in khaddar. I am afraid it will not be very well made but it will give you some idea. We only use hand-spun and hand-woven cloth for flags. This makes them rather heavy unless they are made of very expensive stuff. For the moment I have only got very cheap flags here.

The flag contains three colours, one above the other, the top one being white, middle one, green and the bottom, red. Right across the flag there is the emblem of the charkha or the spinning wheel. Often however this charkha is left out because it is not very easy to print it properly.

This flag has not been formally adopted by the National Congress. As a matter of fact however it is used on all Congress occasions and is recognised generally as the national flag. It was not formally put before the Congress in order to avoid a flag controversy being suddenly raised. We wanted to give it prestige and to develop the tradition behind it. As a matter of fact it has already got a history behind it and many people have suffered for it.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 16/1929, p. 19, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. Secretary, United India League of Detroit, U.S.A.

18. On the Victory of British Labour[1]

The British election results are certainly important from the international viewpoint as they would probably mean a reorientation of the foreign policy of England.[2]

From the Indian point of view, however, they make little difference. Indeed, the slight difference they might make might not be to the advantage of India. With the Conservatives in power the issue as regards India is usually a fairly straight one, but with Labour there is so much empty and pious talk that some minds are apt to be confused and overlook the fact that there is no action behind the talk.

It is clear that the Labour Party as a whole is as imperialist in its outlook as any other British party. They have tried to ignore the Indian problem and have hardly referred to it in their election campaign. They will probably continue this ostrich-like policy so that, so far as we are concerned, our programme must hold good in India, whatever party is in power in England.

It is by no means certain how things will shape themselves after the re-assemblage of Parliament. In spite of the sweeping gains of Labour, they have not got a clear majority and it is probable that Conservatives and Liberals will defeat them if any vital issue is raised.

This may precipitate another election in the near future because it is obvious that Conservatives certainly cannot hold office for long.

As for the Liberals they have shot their last bolt and both the party as a whole and its leader, Mr. Lloyd George, can never hope for office.

The Labour Party has a left wing which is slightly preferable from the Indian viewpoint. But this left wing, as far as one can make out, has little influence in shaping the party's policy.

The real bosses of the party are Ramsay MacDonald, J. H. Thomas, Arthur Henderson[3] and Philip Snowden, and as far as all these gentlemen and especially Mr. Thomas are concerned they glory in possessing an imperialist viewpoint.

Therefore for India the work is cut out and this work is to carry on with the organisation of resistance so that we may achieve our objective, whatever party may be in power in England.

1. Statement to the press, Allahabad, 2 June 1929. *The Leader*, 3 June 1929.
2. In the general elections in Britain in May 1929, 288 seats were won by Labour, 260 by the Conservatives and 59 by the Liberals.
3. (1863-1935); Secretary, Labour Party, 1911-1934; Foreign Secretary, 1929-31.

19. On the British Labour Government[1]

India's prospect depends not on any government in power in England but only on the organised strength of the Indian people. The Labour Party dare not conciliate various groups in India. It is quite possible they may adopt an aggressive anti-Indian attitude. *Lord Olivier's*[2] appointment to the India Office would be objectionable. The alternative of Lord Chelmsford in Whitehall is highly insulting to India.[3] India must protest against being thus trifled with, which is possible only by concentrating on Congress organisation.

1. Calcutta, 7 June 1929. *The Tribune*, 9 June 1929.
2. He had served as Secretary of State for India in 1924.
3. In fact Wedgwood Benn was appointed Secretary of State for India.

20. Interview to the Press[1]

India's prospects depend very little on the government in power in England. They depend very much on the organised strength of the Indian people. The sooner this fact is completely appreciated, the better.

The motley collection of individuals in the British Labour Party, including as it does lords and knights, Labour imperialists and a small group of earnest anti-imperialists, cannot make much difference. They are not, for fear of offending various groups, going to take up any sensible attitude in regard to India. They can either sit tight and allow things to drift to their inevitable crisis or, what is quite possible, they may take up an aggressive anti-Indian attitude.

The only course, and the obvious course, for India, is to clench her teeth and concentrate on organising the Congress and labour, so that we may be able to show to the noble lords and gentlemen in Westminster that it is not easy to trifle with India. The Congress has laid down a comprehensive plan for re-organisation. Let us all attend to it.

1. Calcutta, 9 June 1929. The Tribune, 12 June 1929.

21. To B.J.K. Hallowes[1]

June 26th, 1929

Sir,

Your letter of the 19th of June was delivered to me on the evening of the 24th June. I am afraid I have no authority to make grants out of Congress funds. Only the Working Committee of the Congress can do so. If you so desire it, I shall place your request before the Committee at their next meeting.

Conditions in the district of Gonda and in its neighbouring district of Bahraich are terrible enough. Indeed many other districts in the province are little better. You say in your letter that government have done their part in relieving this distress and it is for private persons and organisations to do their share. In the face of an appalling catastrophe, as in the case of a critical illness, immediate relief measures have necessarily to be undertaken. But you will no doubt appreciate that such measures have a temporary significance only. They neither cure the disease of the social group or of the individual. To find the remedy you have to search for the causes of the distemper and to remove them.

Is it not a strange and disconcerting fact that such terrible famines should occur with more and more frequency, and even in the intervals scarcity, own brother to famine, should prevail? And is it at all surprising that continued starvation should result in the "resistance of the people" being "seriously weakened" as the recent *communique* of the U.P. Government puts it? Surely there must be something very seriously wrong somewhere in the machinery of the state or the structure of society or both.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F-16/1928, pp. 17-23, N.M.M.L.
B. J. K. Hallowes, Deputy Commissioner, Allahabad, and president of the Famine Relief Fund of Gonda made an urgent appeal to the Congress committees for help. He wrote to Jawaharlal: "If you commute the sentence on European clothes from burning to banishment, I guarantee that they will never return. You will not, I think, wish any longer to burn clothes, when you realise that there are thousands of your countrymen wearing rags which are too scanty even for decency. You have promised £ 1000 to the League against Imperialism. Will you not give as much to the League against Starvation? Prominent members of the Congress are collecting funds to save from prison 31 alleged communists at Meerut. Will you not do the same to save from famine five lakhs of hungry men at Gonda?"

The days when we could cast the blame on the Gods for all our ills are past. Modern science claims to have curbed to a large extent the tyranny and the vagaries of nature, to have increased production and to have introduced swifter methods of transportation and communication. And yet in spite of all this progress India faces almost continually famine and scarcity and her condition becomes steadily worse.

Your relief works must bring some solace, however temporary, to many. They are certainly to be appreciated. But do you not think that all this charitable relief does not touch even the fringe of the problem of Indian poverty? For the problem is one of poverty, not of failure of rains or other natural calamity. You do not ask me to send you food, but money. There is enough food in the country and enough of trains and conveyances to carry it to every famine area. But there is no money to buy it. How and why this state has arisen and how it can be remedied are vital questions which we must answer. Probably your method of tackling these questions is different from ours. But it is certain that the charity of the wealthy does not put down poverty and famine relief measures do not put an end to conditions which cause famines.

The whole *raison d'etre* of the National Congress is to put an end to such terrible conditions by removing the root causes. The Congress is convinced that only by changing the whole system of government and the structure of society can poverty be conquered and a measure of social well-being introduced. The Congress therefore fights for this change and in so doing faces a considerable measure of risk and suffering. And it is for this reason that the Congress associates itself with other organisations, like the League against Imperialism, which also attack the root cause of poverty and inequality.

If the government at present functioning in India were really desirous of attacking and eradicating poverty they would do something much more and vastly different from the petty relief they give in times of acute distress. They would feel that in a country where there is such terrible poverty it is a tragic absurdity to have an expensive and top-heavy system of administration. They would feel that the whole political and economic system they have built up in the country, and the social structure they have bolstered up, have impoverished the country with great efficiency and rapidity, and this process continues. They would realise that the responsibility for this poverty is theirs and therefore the speediest way of ending it is to remove themselves from the scene of action, liquidate their government and make room for others who can tackle the problem with greater disinterestedness and competence than they have shown.

I cannot believe that any one who has given some thought to this

question can fail to arrive at this conclusion. Your sympathy for the poverty-stricken will not end by giving them temporary relief. You will want a surer remedy giving more permanent results than the quack's nostrum. I trust that you will appreciate this sure remedy lies in the complete replacement of the present system of government and a change in the social structure. Believing this to be the only right way which promises a measure of comfort and happiness to our suffering countrymen, the National Congress has determined to follow this path. Your cooperation, moral and material, as well as the cooperation of all others who object to the exploitation of a country or a people or a class by another, will be welcome.

I might add that so far as immediate relief measures in case of urgent necessity are concerned, the Congress has in the past given such relief either directly or through its associate organisation, the All India Spinners' Association. The Congress believes that even temporary relief should take the form of teaching an auxiliary industry to agriculture which will provide an immediate income now and a welcome addition in better times. Every person taking this form of relief is a permanent gainer thereby and his spare time which was wasted gets converted into yarn and cloth and money. The method of organising this kind of relief is to encourage carding and hand-spinning by lending and distributing spinning wheels and cotton. Hand-weaving, of course, automatically benefits by this. If you appreciate this kind of relief and are prepared to cooperate with it, I shall gladly recommend to the All India Spinners' Association to do what they can in the matter.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

22. To A.C.N. Nambiar[1]

July 11th, 1929

My dear Nanu,
I have received your letters of the 12th and the 19th June. I am glad that the Bureau[2] is progressing well.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 20/1929 (Pt. II), pp. 81-83, N.M.M.L.
2. Immediately after the Calcutta Congress of 1928, the Working Committee sanctioned a monthly grant of £ 30 for the establishment of a Students' Information Bureau in Berlin. The grant was later increased.

As you will remember the Congress sanctioned one year's expenses for your Bureau. You have now been functioning for about five months and have another seven months to run. The question is what will happen at the end of this seven months. I should like you to consider this question at an early stage so that we may be prepared for all eventualities. In one of your letters you mentioned that you hoped to make the Bureau almost self-supporting by the end of this year. If that could be done, of course there would be no further difficulty. Even if you could make it partially, say to the extent of 50 p.c., self-supporting, I think it would not be difficult to carry on. In the event however of your requiring a continuance of the present grant there is just a possibility of difficulties arising. There are many people who have influence in the Congress here who are not keen on so much money being sent to you. They appreciate what you do but they feel that the money might be utilised to better purpose here. It is not an easy matter to argue with them or convince them to the contrary. We may perhaps be able to do it. If so, well and good. If not what is to be done ?

There is another difficulty. If the situation in India develops as it well might in the course of the next few months it may become very difficult and even physically impossible for us to continue helping you in the way we have done. I am putting these considerations before you so that you may give thought to them. There is no immediate hurry. Another factor which I should like you to remember is that I am not going to be the permanent Secretary of the Congress, partly because in the nature of things I cannot continue for ever and partly because it is highly unlikely that the British Government will permit me to carry on my ordinary activities for very long.

You refer to Srinivasa Iyengar. You are right in saying that personal differences and animosities have had an unfortunate effect on him. Yet I think that the explanation is not quite so simple. He is a very hard person to cooperate with.

Krishna is well but my wife's troubles continue.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

23. To Fenner Brockway[1]

August 1st, 19291

Dear Fenner,

Thank you for your letter of the 22nd July. You are absolutely right in telling us to rely upon ourselves. That is a lesson which hard experience has taught us and we are not likely to forget it. There is no question of our placing reliance on communists in England or elsewhere. If communists happen to do something which helps us we are prepared to cooperate with them. If not we go different ways. There is no question of the communists dictating our policy here or elsewhere. At the same time I do not appreciate why we should consider the communists as untouchables and keep away from them lest more respectable people might be offended.

So far as you are concerned I fully understand and appreciate the position. I was glad to find your name on the Provisional Meerut Prisoners' Defence Committee. But even if your name had not been there I would not have misunderstood.

I have been sending the I.L.P. our little *Congress Bulletin* which gives our proceedings and some odd facts from time to time. I suppose you have seen this. There is nothing much in it. The situation here is undoubtedly getting more difficult. The National Congress is absolutely committed to adopting a strong line at the end of this year. Most of us agree on the merits that such a line should be taken up. Others may be a little doubtful of this but even they realise that circumstances are too strong for them. If by any chance the Congress fails to take any effective action or having taken such action did not show any good enough results, it will be extraordinarily difficult to prevent India from adopting the ways of Sinn Fein in Ireland. No man in his senses welcomes the prospect of this bitter warfare. It is bound to lead to terrible suffering and no one can say what the result will be. And yet we seem to go inevitably in this direction.

Perhaps you may have seen in the press some account of what is happening in Lahore. Various conspiracy and sedition cases are going on there. I have no complaint against these cases as such. But the behaviour of the civil authorities and the police has been extraordinarily barbarous. Young men collecting funds for the defence have

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 33/1931, pp. 19-23, N.M.M.L.

been beaten down senseless because they uttered what are called revolutionary cries. Being made senseless they were dragged along the road to police lorries. They are now being tried and will no doubt be sentenced. These young men it is admitted did not raise a hand against anybody. Certainly they cried out, "Down with Imperialism, Long Live Revolution", etc. Seven young men were beaten again and again by about three dozen policemen with enormous batons.

Then again in the court room persons were till recently kept handcuffed with a policeman on either side. They could not talk to each other and even inside the court policemen beat them and swore at them, the judge trying to look in another direction. Several press reporters have been excluded from the court and all reporters are searched thoroughly. You can imagine the kind of search that takes place when you are told that in one case even the trousers were searched and in almost all cases the police "tapped the stomachs and lower parts of the bodies" of the pressmen. And remember that each one of these pressmen holds a permit issued by the police.

Meanwhile nearly all the under-trial prisoners in Lahore are hunger-striking. Two of them[2] have been on hunger strike now for 46 days. The others for 17 days. Any day may bring news of the death of one or more. I am no believer in hunger strikes but it is impossible not to sympathise with brave young men and be anxious about their future fate. Forcible feeding has been resorted to. I am told by doctors that this can be done without any great difficulty or injury to the person concerned. But here even this operation has been performed with the maximum of barbarity.[3] In one case that was described eleven convicts under long terms of imprisonment for grave offences were utilised to feed one of the hunger-strikers forcibly. Most of these people sat down on various parts of his body and then the forcible feeding took place in such a way that the man fainted and was positively ill.

It is a strange irony of fate that all this should be happening when a Labour Government is in power. Almost as I write news comes of the arrest of a valued colleague of mine.[4] This kind of thing is happening all over the country and I have no doubt that it will grow.

My wife's health has given me a tremendous deal of trouble during the last few months. She is very unwell. Probably she will have to

2. Bhagat Singh and B. K. Dutt.
3. On 25 July 1929 some of the accused protested to the magistrate that due to forcible feeding, the condition of Jatindranath Das was serious. Major N. D. Puri, the medical officer, was examined by the magistrate in this connection.
4. V. S. Dandekar.

be operated upon for appendicitis. I am myself far from well. I should like to be out of India for a month or two but I can expect no such luck.

Sincerely yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

24. Anglo-Indians and the Congress[1]

At a luncheon with well-known members of the Anglo-Indian community, Jawaharlal Nehru said that he had been honoured by the opportunity for an informal discussion and, had he not been leaving the same evening, he would gladly have accepted the offer to address a larger meeting.

He pointed out that the development of the national spirit among Anglo-Indians did not entail a loss of their cultural identity and that there was no foundation for such mutual suspicion as may exist, for the Anglo-Indians were a small community and the Indians had nothing to fear from them. There was so much work in India that Anglo-Indians need have no fear of unfair competition from Indian or other communities.

He remarked that, with the growth of the spirit of independence and a wider outlook, of which this meeting was a promise, Anglo-Indians would no longer need preferential treatment; they should welcome, rather than be afraid of, fair competition.

He gave a brief summary of the general ideals of the Congress and suggested that there should be a mutual interchange of ideas between Anglo-Indian organisations and the Congress. He did not ask Anglo-Indians to commit themselves for the present to a definite policy within the Congress, but to attempt to understand what the Congress was working for and what this work meant to the community—as a community in India. There was a great deal of constructive work to be done in India which, by their higher educational standards, Anglo-Indians were peculiarly well fitted to do and he hoped that they would turn their attention to them.

1. Calcutta, 27 August 1929. *The Statesman,* 28 August 1929.

Concluding, he thanked those present for the spirit which had prompted the arrangement of the meeting and wished the community every success.

25. To C. Rajagopalachari[1]

September 9th, 1929

My dear Rajagopalachari,
I have just seen your letter of the 26th August. Certainly I shall do what I can to help you in your campaign. I must confess to you however that I do not feel terribly excited about it. I think that your task is much too easy a one. India is really convinced of the rightness of prohibition. I do not think any other country can be considered to be so convinced of it. The only people who succumb are the poor workers specially in factory towns and the rich whom we are not likely to influence much unless we deprive them of their riches which would be a very laudable thing to do.

I shall mention your campaign in the next issue of the Bulletin and will also send a circular to the provincial committees.

Your cuttings are enclosed.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. C-2/1929, p. 39, N.M.M.L.

26. To L. Paul[1]

Camp Gorakhpore
October 7th, 1929

Dear Sir,[2]
I am in receipt of your letter of the 2nd October. I do not understand

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-4(ii)/1929 (Pt. III), p. 449, N.M.M.L.
2. A Goan of Bombay.

wht Goans should be under any misapprehension about their future. They are as much Indians as any one else. They should therefore be sharers in any good that may come to India. So far as the Portuguese Government is concerned it is for them to decide what they should do. It is not for us to dictate to them or force their hand. But you can rest assured that the rest of India will gladly cooperate with them in any task for the betterment of our country.

I hope therefore that you will remove any misapprehensions that may have arisen. It is absurd to say that if India attains Swaraj, "Goans will have to march bag and baggage to Goa." Nobody need march bag and baggage out of India unless his sole object is to exploit India. Even foreigners will be very welcome to remain in India and cooperate with us in our work. Much more so must Goans be welcome who are them-selves Indians.

Yours truly,
Jawaharlal Nehru

27. To Members of the N.W.F.P.C.C.[1]

Allahabad
21st November, 1929

Dear Friend,

It has given me much pleasure to read in the report of the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee that you have helped greatly in organising Congress work in your province. I hope you will permit me to congratulate you and to express my thanks. We have difficult times coming when every ounce of energy and organisation will be wanted. I have every hope that your province will take the lead in the next forward movement that the Congress is planning next year.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-23/1929, p. 31, N.M.M.L.

28. To Sakarben K. Vyas[1]

December 6th, 1929

Dear Sister,2
I have your letter of the 30th November. I am afraid you have not appreciated fully the function of the Indian National Congress. The Congress is a political organisation seeking political change in India. Much as it does believe in social service it is of opinion that social betterment can be brought about only through political and economic changes and not to any large extent by social service. Therefore the Congress must necessarily concentrate on the struggle for power. No number of *ashrams* of the kind you mention will transfer the power from the foreigner to Indian representatives. Therefore I regret that the Congress cannot make any grant of funds for the purpose you mention.

This does not mean of course that Congressmen do not sympathise with your work. They wish you well but you will no doubt appreciate that if any fundamental or quick change is to be brought about in India it cannot be by social service.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(l)/1929 (Pt. III), p. 315, N.M.M.L.
2. Mantri, Arya Seval Ashram, Broach.

29. To S. Srinivasa Iyengar[1]

December 7th, 1929

Dear Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar,
You have stated on several occasions that you desire the Congress to change its creed at its next session. I take it this means that only

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-63/1929, p. 3, N.M.M.L.

persons pledged to independence can become members of the Congress in future. I shall be glad if you could let me know what other ideas you may have in regard to Congress work in the future. How would you suggest that sanction should be developed or the will of the Congress made to prevail ? It seems to me that this is a vital question that we have to face. We can hardly talk bravely and pass resolutions only in the Congress without any subsequent effective action. I shall be greatly obliged if you would suggest to me what in your opinion should be done on an all-India scale and also what you would suggest that you might do in South India. I am myself not at all clear on this and your opinion might help me.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

30. To D.V. Gundappa[1]

11th December, 1929

Dear Sir,[2]

I am in receipt of your letter of the 6th December with its enclosures. I thank you for them.

I do not think there is any chance of the Congress accepting invitations for the Round Table Conference. Personally I cannot conceive of such a conference being representative if only the rulers of Indian states go there and not the people.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(1)/1929, p. 393, N.M.M.L.
2. (b. 1889); president, Kannada Sahitya Sammelan, 1932; founder, Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs, Bangalore.

MAHATMA GANDHI'S U.P. TOUR

31. To Sri Prakasa[1]

12/3/29

My dear Prakasa,
I gather that you are going to Gorakhpore to help in the formation of a Gandhi Reception Committee.[2] Sitla Sahai has already been to Gorakhpore once and he tells me that the situation there is by no means an easy one. You will therefore have to exercise your arts of peace and war to induce the denizens of Gorakhpore city and district to cooperate together and not to behave like the famous cats of Kilkenny. ..

I feel that we cannot afford to carry on our old election bitterness and rivalries. Of course if we think that a man is a thorough bad sort we have to keep away from him. Otherwise we must try to cooperate. The political situation is developing fast and it is folly to waste our time and energy in mutual conflict.

It is a good thing that you are going to Gorakhpore and you happen to be the defeated candidate of the last election. If you advise that Raghava Das[3] should be taken into the fold it is as well that you should do so and not another.[4]

But before this reunion there should be a heart to heart talk. It should be made perfectly clear that if any one intends to come in merely to create splits and parties and trouble then he had better keep out.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-27/1929 (Pt. III), pp. 495-498, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. Mahatma Gandhi toured the U.P. during September-November 1929 to strengthen the Congress and collect money for the Khadi Fund.
3. Resident of Poona but migrated to U.P., where he established an *ashram* at Barhaj; participated in the noncooperation movement and imprisoned in 1922, 1932, 1941 and 1942; associated with a number of educational institutions in eastern U.P.
4. Baba Raghava Das, who had considerable influence in Gorakhpur, had incurred the displeasure of the local Congress committee on account of his activities against the official Congress candidate during the previous election.

There must be the fullest intention to cooperate and to carry out the directions of the P.C.C.

Try to form a representative reception committee. Bindhyabasini Prasad might be the chairman or better still have no chairman. A convener is all that is necessary. This is no special honour and I do not know why people should fight about it. However if they do then you have simply to put your foot down. If any party does not wish to co-operate except on special terms, well then let him keep out. If there are no sensible groups in Gorakhpore then the whole district may be left out of Gandhiji's tour programme.

I am sure however that you will be able to fix up something. This is essential from the point of view of our future work.

Yours affly.,
Jawaharlal Nehru

32. Circular to Members of the U.P.P.C.C.[1]

You must have read the new decisions of the All India Congress Committee reached at Bombay. One of its decisions issuch that if we all do not try our utmost, there is a danger that all the rights of our provincial committee may be taken away and we may not be able to participate in the All India Congress Committee or attend the Congress.[2] Why was this severe action suggested by Mahatma Gandhi to the All India Congress Committee and why did the latter agree to it? A little thinking will reveal the real reason. The All India Congress Committee is preparing from now for what is going to happen at the end of this year. It was necessary therefore now to set its own house in order.

1. *Abhyudaya*, 13 July 1929. Original in Hindi.
2. The Congress Working Committee at its meeting held in Bombay on 24-25 May 1929 passed a resolution that in the event of a P.C.C. not paying its annual contribution to the A.I.C.C. by the prescribed date the A.I.C.C. members representing the defaulting province should be debarred from participating in the meetings of the committee.

You are well aware of the present state of affairs in our province. The work of the Congress is carried out by a few. Every year when there are elections in the provincial Congress committee, Congressmen turn up in large numbers; and after that the attendance gradually goes down. So much so that sometimes at the provincial committee council meetings there is not even a quorum. Such little interest can lead to only one result; a deterioration in the position of the Congress in the province. Only two or three persons have worked in the whole province. No organisation can function soundly with two or three workers. So you should consider how we can best organise ourselves for work in this province and what contribution you can make. The All India Congress Committee has made it difficult for nominal Congress committees to continue. Either the committees function satisfactorily or they will cease to exist.

A crucial period is ahead. We have to prepare for action by the end of the year. I hope that taking all these factors into consideration, you will decide to work for some months setting the Congress organisation right.

I have dared to write this only because I have myself worked very little in my province. What I have written applies to me as well. The All India Congress Committee office takes up a lot of my time; so does, unfortunately, the illness of members of my family. But hereafter I am prepared to tour the province, as much as I possibly can. If you think that my coming to your district will do some good, please write to me. But it is apparent that I cannot, for lack of time, go to every district. Wherever I go, I would like some contribution to be collected for the Congress organisation and specially for the national service scheme.

You are aware that Mahatma Gandhi will be touring our province from about 20 September. We should completely set right the organisational work of our provincial Congress by then. That would be the best welcome to him.

Yours etc.,
Jawaharlal

33. To B.D. Misra[1]

July 23rd, 1929

Dear Bansi Dharji,[2]
Your letter of the 19th July. Certainly I should like to go to Lakhimpur but unfortunately I can not split myself up into several parts. I can only go to one place at a time and I have to visit many places in the province as well as some places outside. All I can do therefore is that I shall try my best to include Lakhimpur in my tour. When I can come I am not able to say.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-64/1929, p. 12, N.M.M.L.
2. (b. 1900); advocate, and Congressman of Lakhimpur Kheri (U.P.); member of the Constituent Assembly; well-known Hindi writer.

34. To Sri Prakasa[1]

July 31st, 1929

My dear Prakasa,
...You know already what the A.I.C.C. decided. Whether one approves of that decision or not, and I am inclined to disapprove of it to a large extent, it was almost an inevitable decision having regard to the temper of the country. I do not know anything about the Bombay incident[2] you refer to. It is difficult therefore for me to understand what happened. I presume however that something had happened quite apart from the incident you mention which had upset my father and hence his exhibition of temper. I wish you will not attach any importance to it.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P. 20/1929, pp. 97-101, N.M.M.L.
2. Motilal Nehru had cut short a rambling speech by Sri Prakasa at a public meeting.

... It was my intention, as I wrote to you, to tour about a great deal in the U.P. in August. I find however that I shall not be able to do anything of the kind. I have to be in Meerut on, the 7th August to give evidence in a sedition case[3]—not the conspiracy case. From there I must go to Lahore where the situation is daily becoming more critical.[4] At the earliest I can return on the 12th. On my way to Meerut I shall go to Etawah...

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. The *Desk Bhagat* case; see *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 121-122.
4. See *ante*, item 23.

35. To Damodar Swarup Seth[1]

July 31st, 1929

My dear Damodar Swarup,
I am still waiting to get from you a list of the donors to the National Service Fund with their addresses. So long as I do not get this list I cannot send out my receipts. You must know that it is very unbusi-nesslike not to issue receipts immediately. As it is, several weeks have passed by. This has a very bad effect on the general public. I pride myself on my efficient habits but what am I to do if you will not help me in keeping to them? Please send me immediately these names and addresses.

Have you got any money from Pandey?[2] If not let me know his name and address and I shall write to him.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1929 (Pt. II), p. 259, N.M.M.L.
2. Bindeshwari Prasad Pandey, Chairman, Municipal Board, Bareilly.

36. To J.B. Kripalani[1]

August 5th, 1929

My dear Kripalani,
I was expecting you here but you have not come. I am going away tomorrow for nearly a week. On my return I may have to leave almost immediately again. It is just possible therefore that I may not meet you at all. As you must realise there is very little time left now to make final arrangements for Bapu's tour. The only possible way to proceed is for one man to take dictatorial charge of it. That man can only be you. Don't waste time in consulting people. Of course if you have a chance, consult them. I suppose you have fully consulted Sri Prakasa. You know my views already. Thus you can go ahead and fix up matters finally...

It seems to me that Bijnor, Dhampur, Nagina and Najibabad are too many places in the same area. Politically they are all dead. Could not one day be saved there?...

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-27/1929 (Pt. III), p. 357, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

37. To M.A. Ansari[1]

Camp Mussoorie
October 22nd, 1929

My dear Ansari,
Thank you for your letter of the 18th. I appreciate your difficulties. We have to face something of the kind in almost every place. Yet the Mahatma has a way of lifting money which is extraordinary. He has definitely decided to go to Delhi reaching there on the evening of

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-64/1929, p. 113, N.M.M.L.

November 1st. If you arrange a public meeting or a ladies' meeting or both on November 2nd, he will attend them and take such purses as are offered to him. If you feel that meetings should not be held he will take rest. In any event he will leave Delhi by car early on November 3rd for Bulandshahr. He has received an invitation from Sultan Singh[2] or his son[3] and he proposes to stay at their house in Delhi with his party which is a fairly large one.

I have mentioned your letter to Gandhiji. I am glad to inform you that in spite of the very heavy strain of the U.P. tour he is flourishing. The day he arrived in Mussoorie he had a very bad time. People here pulled him about in a rickshaw all over Mussoorie and Landaur. He was thoroughly exhausted and not in the best of tempers but he revived soon. He has very long walks twice a day and he walks at a good pace.

Kamala, since her return from Calcutta, has been keeping fairly well. She has been avoiding all kinds of exertion so far because we wanted to take no risk.

I am returning to Allahabad on the 25th November. The same day Gandhiji goes to Saharanpur. If you wish to write to him please send your letter to Meerut.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. A landlord of Delhi.
3. Raghubir Singh, the founder of Modern School, New Delhi.

38. To J.B. Kripalani[1]

28.10.29

My dear Kripalani,
Your letter of the 22nd missed me at Mussoorie and reached me here. We found at Mussoorie that contradictory reports were being received from Muzaffarnagar and Saharanpur. I hope however that everything passed off satisfactorily.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-27/1929 (Pt. I), pp. 91-93, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

Delhi cannot now be left out. Bapu will speak to you about it. He has fixed up engagements there.

I am glad you have purchased the building at Meerut. It will do you good to get tied down to a piece of earth. Next to a wife, or perhaps even more than a wife, it has a tremendous sobering effect!

I find huge files of work awaiting me here. I am afraid I cannot budge from Allahabad for some time...

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

CONGRESS BRANCHES ABROAD

39. To Ramlal B. Bajpai[1]

March 19th, 1929

Dear Sir,

Pt. Motilal Nehru has asked me to reply to your letter dated the 5th February.[2] Your cable to the effect that you propose to open a legation next month has also been received. The question you raise is a very important one and involves a new departure for the Congress. So far as I am concerned I may inform you that I am entirely agreeable to the Congress opening such legations in foreign countries. I am not sure however how far the idea will be approved of by the Working Committee of the Congress. The matter, involving as it does a new departure, must be considered by the Working Committee. I propose to place it before them at their next meeting. I am not sure whether even the Working Committee will be prepared to take any definite action without referring the matter to the All India Congress Committee.

It seems to me however that you require no special authority from the Congress here to represent it in America. As office-bearers of the branch of the Indian National Congress in America your president and secretary naturally speak with some authority. So far as the resolutions of the Congress are concerned they speak with full authority. So far as any new question is concerned they can only speak subject to confirmation by the Congress.

You will no doubt realise that it is not very easy for the Congress executive here to authorise any one to bind it down to any course of action without any reference to it. I do not see that any such contingency is likely to arise in the future.

I shall communicate to you the decision of the Working Committee.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. A-3/1929-31, p. 293, N.M.M.L.
2. Bajpai had written that he intended to set up a Congress Legation in Washington.

40. To Ramlal B. Bajpal[1]

7.5.1929

Dear Sir,

... Regarding American imperialism, I am afraid our viewpoints are not identical. The question is a large one and hardly capable of discussion or solution in a letter. In various ways the matter has been discussed and will be discussed in the National Congress and the All India Congress Committee. What the decision will be at any particular moment nobody can say. It is one of the vital questions before the world today.

One thing is quite clear. That under certain conceivable circumstances we may certainly seek the cooperation even of imperialist powers as against British imperialism.

Regarding Johnston, perhaps you are not aware of the fact that he came to us' as a delegate of the League against Imperialism with which the Congress is associated. He did not represent America as a whole or even any particular group in America. I do not know what you would have us do to the fraternal delegates from the associate bodies that come to us. If through sheer fear of America we are to give up our friends and consort only with those people whom America approves of then American friendship is a bit too expensive.

As a matter of fact so far as American imperialism is concerned it is too far away from us to touch our daily life or to excite anything except a distant interest. Therefore there is no obvious conflict between our national movement and the American Government.

You will no doubt realise that the Indian National Congress is a mass movement which is ultimately controlled not by a few individuals, even though those individuals may include a man like Gandhi, but by the opinion of the rank and file. It is not possible to work on mass lines with a hush hush policy. I happen to be the Secretary of the Congress today. Very probably somebody else will be Secretary a few months later. The Congress may then be a much more revolutionary body or a much more conservative body. It may be completely in the hands of Indian capitalists, or Indian labour may capture it.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Maharashtra Government Records, Bombay Commissioner's File No. 1291/B/I. Extracts.

41. To Sailendranath Ghose[1]

June 20th, 1929

Dear Sir,

... I have received a copy of a letter dated May 15th sent by you to the League against Imperialism, Berlin. I have read this letter with some surprise. You are undoubtedly entitled to hold any views that you like. But as a branch of the Indian National Congress you cannot go behind the declared policy of the Congress. You can try to change this policy within the Congress itself. But outside, no subordinate committee can range itself against the parent body. The National Congress as you are aware has determined to associate itself with the League against Imperialism and it has also sent an official delegate to the Second Congress of the League.[2] The Congress does not thereby commit itself to the whole policy or programme of the League but the Congress does range itself with the League in its joint fight against imperialism. That policy may be right or may be wrong but it is the policy of the Indian National Congress so far and it is not open to any of its subordinate committees to challenge it except by the ordinary constitutional means of moving for a change in the policy or programme at a session of the Congress. In your letter you state as follows :

"Somebody has got to take the initiative in challenging this programme of the Indian National Congress and we do so now by this open action".

It is evident that you do not realise what the functions and duties of a branch of the Congress are. Your branch has a perfect right to challenge the programme of the Congress but the inevitable result of such a challenge is the supersession of your branch. In this connection I should like to draw your attention to a resolution passed recently by the A.I.C.C. in Bombay.[3] You will find it printed in the ninth number of the *Congress Bulletin*, pages 93, 94 and 95. This lays down that any committee of the Congress which deliberately acts against the declared policy of the Congress may be superseded.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. A-3/1929-31, p. 257, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. The Congress was held at Frankfurt on 20 July 1929.
3. It met during 23-26 May 1929.

42. To Sailendranath Ghose[1]

August 23rd, 1929

Dear Mr. Ghose,

... I have read with great surprise that you do not keep any lists of members for fear that your members may get into trouble. In other words your branch has to exist more or less in secret. Indeed it is so secret that even its headquarters cannot know much about it. From the point of view of the National Congress this is an extraordinary state of affairs. The very basis of our work has been our public character. I do not suppose that there is more police surveillance and harassing of Indians in any country than there is in India. Every day news comes to us that our colleagues have been arrested and sentenced to monstrous sentences. Yet no activity ofthe Congress has gone underground. If we break the law we do so quite openly. In regard to our membership our lists are completely open in spite of the fact that for large numbers of people membership of the Congress means harassment from the police. It is an arguable matter as to what is the right policy for the Congress to adopt. But there can be no doubt that its present policy is in favour of public activity and full publicity. If the Congress and its headquarters lay stress on this it can hardly admit the right of a branch committee to a different form of activity.

I would also remind you of the statement made by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu to the effect that you have only a handful of members and are not representative of the Indian residents of America. Obviously, under the circumstances it is up to you to send lists of your members so that the Working Committee can decide on the truth of this allegation. I am quite sure that the committee will disapprove entirely of your having a branch without any lists of members.

Regarding the question of association with the League against Imperialism I would point out to you that the All India Committee definitely associated the Congress with the League in 1927 and the Madras Congress of 1927 reiterated this association. So the position of the Congress is quite clear. At the same time the Congress is in no way bound to every resolution or programme of the League against Imperialism. The Congress wants to fight imperialism and because it felt that

1. A.I.C.C. File No. A-3/1929-31, pp. 235-239, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

the League against Imperialism is carrying on the same fight vigorously, it joined hands with it to that extent and no more.

I do not suppose it will serve any useful purpose for me to argue about the merits and demerits of the League or an anti imperialist programme for the Congress. Presumably we would not be able to convince one another. I only desire to point out to you the present position of the National Congress.

You are quite correct in saying that the Congress has not issued any instructions regarding the functions and duties of foreign branches. As a matter of fact they have treated them as any other branches or committees in India. The fact that a branch is situated in a foreign country does not in their eyes give it any different position although its activity undoubtedly might be somewhat different. Obviously the work of the American branch is to further the interests of India in the United States but there are many ways of attempting to do the same thing. Who is to decide on the method? In matters of policy only the Congress, the A.I.C.C. or the Working Committee of the Congress can decide.

In regard to the declaration of policy which you want to be moved in the Lahore session of the National Congress I shall gladly have it included in the agenda of the Subjects Committee. But some member who is present must be found to move it before it can be considered. Will you therefore kindly get into touch with someone who is prepared to move in the committee.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

43. To Ramlal B. Bajpai[1]

31.10.29

Dear Bajpai,

... I am afraid there is a divergence in outlook and methods between yours and those favoured by the Congress authorities here. It is not so much a question of merits as to which is better or more effective. If the Congress is wrong or misguided in its activities it is up to us

1. A.I.C.C. File No. A-3/1929-31, pp. 193-196, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

to get it on the right path. But it is not clear to me how an affiliated or subordinate branch can work independently or contrary to the parent body.

I am glad to learn that you have a distinguished membership. But I have yet failed to appreciate why your membership rolls should be secret. Our activity here and elsewhere is definitely open activity and the Working Committee views with great disfavour this new principle of secret membership rolls which you seem to have introduced for the first time in Congress history...

The Working Committee want specially to be assured that their affiliated branches are really representative of the Indians resident abroad. Unfortunately in many places abroad our countrymen cannot cooperate with each other and factions arise. The committee would not like an affiliated branch to be dominated by such factions. We know quite as well as you do that the British have their secret service agents everywhere to create trouble. Our experience has been that the only possible way to deal with them is to have open activities. Nothing encourages a secret agent more than secret activity...

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

44. To Ramlal B. Bajpai[1]

Nov. 21st, 1929

Dear Bajpai,
I have your letters of the 23rd October. I have also received a letter of the same date from Sailendra Nath Ghose. Also a letter from the Hindustan Association of America.

I was considerably surprised to read the newspaper cuttings that you sent me and for which I presume you are responsible. To refer to Gandhiji as having gone out of public life shows a singular ignorance of conditions in India. Quite apart from one's views on matters of principle or policy no one in India can deny that Gandhiji is the most powerful individual factor in politics here today. Far from retiring he is in the thick of everything. There are many other statements in the

1. A.I.C.C. File No. A-3/1929-31, p. 145, N.M.M.L.

article which are quite incorrect. I wish that .anything going out from a foreign branch of the National Congress should be absolutely correct. This is not so in so far as these articles are concerned. You are also no doubt aware that Gandhiji is at the present moment an important member of the Working Committee of the National Congress, that is to say, he is a member of the inner cabinet. How anyone can refer to him as having retired from politics is a little difficult to understand. Nor do I appreciate attempts being made by Congress branches to run down members of the Congress executive. Many of us happen to differ from Gandhiji in many matters but this does not mean that we should try to run him down.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

HINDUSTANI SEVA DAL

45. To N.S. Hardikar[1]

January 25th, 1929

My dear Hardikar,

... Regarding my issuing an appeal for funds the right thing would be for a joint appeal to be issued, signed by Subhas and me, and if possible, some others like Dr. Ansari. Individual appeals are not very desirable. I hope to see Subhas in Delhi. We shall then discuss and draw up such an appeal...

About the press appeal to observe a flag hoisting on the 27th I am afraid it is already too late for me to take any action. I must confess, besides, to a strong dislike of issuing manifestos and press appeals. I do not even like to be interviewed by the press. You see that I am not sufficiently modern for your purpose. But manifesto issuing is becoming so common in this country that I want to be a little uncommon. Besides in what capacity would you expect me to issue such a message? Subhas is the right person to do so...

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-8/1929 (Pt. II), p. 293, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

46. An Appeal for the Hindustani Seva Dai[1]

25.1.1929

Slowly but surely the Hindustani Seva Dal is justifying its existence and training up a fine body of young men and young women for the service of the country. The work of the Dal is quiet work. It is not the business of the volunteer to shout or advertise his or her existence. And it is not the business of the Dal to advertise itself. But in this imperfect world money is required for most activities and even the Hindustani Seva Dal requires money for its work. Owing to lack of funds its work is necessarily limited. The larger the funds the greater the work. The Congress is moving to a fateful decision next year. We have to prepare for it with all our might so that when the call comes we may be ready for it. The Seva Dal offers its whole-hearted services for this work of preparation as well as for the day of action. Those who cannot join it in person and take the training can supply money for our work. I trust therefore that all who believe in training disciplined workers and in increasing the efficiency of our people will help the Hindustani Seva Dal with donations.

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. An enclosure to a second letter to N. S. Hardikar, 25 January 1929. Hardikar papers, N.M.M.L.
   Jawaharlal wrote: "Since writing to you this morning I have changed my mind and have issued a small message to the press about the observance of next Sunday. I am enclosing an appeal for funds..."

47. To N.S. Hardikar[1]

February 11th, 1929

My dear Hardikar,
Your letter of the 5th February. I am not surprised at Subhas Bose's not answering your letters. He seldom does so. I have written to him

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-8/1929 (Pt. II), p. 245, N.M.M.L.

at least five or six times in the course of the last month and I have had no reply.

Regarding funds I am afraid I cannot help you greatly. It is not possible for one and the same person to make appeals at the same time for a variety of objects. I have naturally to appeal for the Congress. I am also very much interested in collections for trade unions. Then there is our Independence League. I am also asked to help in Laipat Rai Memorial Fund collections. All I can do is to put in a good word now and then for you. But I cannot write personal letters to people and specially not to "leaders".

I have mentioned a few important funds above but as a matter of fact I am very worried about some other matters which require money also. Friends in Berlin write to me that they are in a very bad way and must be helped soon. I have to make some collection for them also.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

48. The National Flag[1]

The national flag is the symbol of unity and independence. It is the honour of the nation and not a symbol of oppression over others. The flag in one's own country is a mark of honour but when it is waved over other countries it becomes a symbol of oppression and tyranny. People of other countries have sacrificed their lives for upholding their national flag. Indians should also hold their flag aloft and win freedom.

1. Speech at Rohtak, 8 March 1929. From *The Tribune*, 10 March 1929.

49. On the Hindustani Seva Dai[1]

In an imperfect and suffering world there are a host of righteous causes deserving support. They are all worthy enough. But today in India there is one supreme cause—he cause of freedom—to which all others must necessarily give precedence. Gradually but surely the mighty giantess that is India is again stretching her limbs and preparing to shake off the invader and the usurper. How shall we, her sons and daughters, help her so that she may be free again?

How many of us remember and realise the significance of the 31st of December that is coming?[2] And yet that may well be a date which will end an epoch, giving place to another with a larger vision, a new ideology and more effective methods of action.

How do we prepare for this day and its aftermath? Surely the best way is to have as many trained and disciplined soldiers of freedom as possible. For freedom will be won not by the shouting crowds but by the disciplined and efficient workers who shout little and do much.

The Hindustani Seva Dal is performing this task of training and disciplining these soldiers of India. Join it yourself if you have the fire of youth in you and be proud of belonging to the army of Indian freedom. But if for any reason you are unable to do so or if age has lessened your activity and your blood does not tingle and course through your veins as it used to do, nonetheless help the Dal with money. Men and money are wanted for our national army. Give us both if you can or at least one of these. Many cannot immediately spare the time for the training. They can become associates of the Dal. And everybody can contribute something to the funds of the Dal.

The 31st of December is coming. What have you done so far? What will you do? Get ready for it through the Hindustani Seva Dal.

For Punjab

To the young men and to the young women of the Punjab I would specially appeal to join the Hindustani Seva Dal and to help it in every way. They have to shoulder the burden of the Congress this year and

1. Statement to the press, Allahabad, 27 June 1929. The Tribune, 30 June 1929.
2 As the one year's to the government to concede the demand for Dominion Status was being ignored, it was becoming obvious that at the Lahore session on 31 December 1929 the Congress would decide on action.

they will have to shoulder a heavier burden before very long. Let them prepare for it by training themselves under the banner of the Seva Dal and becoming efficient instruments for giving effect to the national resolve.

50. Message to the Seva Dal Camp at Nawakot[1]

I am glad to learn that a volunteer camp has been started to train volunteer instructors for the coming session of the Congress. I hope that all members of the camp realise the work that they have to do. It is not merely to do social work at the time of the Congress. They have to show their powers regarding organisation and discipline on a large scale. It is, therefore, necessary that they should train themselves thoroughly, to be ready for all emergencies. Nothing is more impressive to the outsider and more heartening to us than a fine disciplined body of volunteers.

It is one of the purposes of the camp to lay the foundation for a volunteer army in the Punjab. Your responsibility is great. I trust that you will discharge it efficiently.

I trust also that you will not permit this training to disappear after a few months. We are out to build up a permanent volunteer organisation in the country. The Hindustani Seva Dal is the premier organisation for this purpose. I hope, therefore, that as many volunteers as possible will join the Hindustani Seva Dal and start branches of it in their respective localities.

1. Lahore, 18 September 1929. *The Tribune,* 20 September 1929.

BRITISH GOODS BOYCOTT COMMITTEE

51. On the Duties of the Kisans[1]

Jawaharlal Nehru said that the problem before them was how to remove their sufferings and troubles due to disease and ignorance. The big landlords owned enormous wealth and property and spent their time more or less in idleness, while the poor peasants suffered untold miseries. He asked the peasants to read and write and keep themselves informed of what was happening in India and how crores of rupees out of the taxes paid by them were wasted on new and costly buildings in New Delhi and the exorbitant salaries of officers. Although they paid taxes, very little was spent on their own education, sanitation and the betterment of their lives. He asked the peasants to assert their rights. The exploitation of India would not cease unless the peasants and workers organised themselves. If they could put up a fight on their grievances like the peasants of Bardoli, they were bound to improve their conditions of life and save themselves from ruin and starvation. The peasants of Rohtak had provided lakhs of recruits in the last war. They had sacrificed their lives in order to protect the independence of England. But what was their reward? Martial law was declared in their province and people were shot down in hundreds. They were bombed by aeroplanes and all sorts of indignities were inflicted on them. They should not take part in any future war if it was declared against the wishes of the people of India. Peasants should take to the *charkha* and wear khaddar. The spinning wheel would solve the economic problem of this country to a very great extent. At least it would help them to promote the boycott movement against foreign cloth.

1. Speech at Rohtak, 9 March 1929. *The Tribune*, 12 March 1929.

52. On Khadi[1]

Jawaharlal Nehru explained why they urged the use of khadi only and not of *swadeshi* mill cloth. There was no doubt that foreign cloth could be driven out by the use of *swadeshi* mill cloth but there were circumstances which forced the Congress to insist only on the use of khadi. The attitude of the swadeshi mill owners was mainly responsible for their insisting on the use of khadi only and not of mill cloth.

The mill owners not only failed to cooperate with the leaders in the foreign cloth boycott movement but showed a tendency to compete not with foreign cloth but with khaddar. They began to manufacture cloth similar to khaddar with the result that it became difficult to distinguish between hand-spun khaddar and mill khaddar.

Accordingly, there was a discussion on the subject a year ago and a suggestion was made to form a committee of *swadeshi* mill owners and others to persuade the mill owners to manufacture fine cloth to compete with foreign cloth and not to make undue profit. Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Motilal Nehru, therefore, went to Bombay to discuss the problem with the mill owners, but the latter practically refused to see them and left for Poona.

The result, therefore, of urging the use of *swadeshi* mill cloth and not of khadi would be to enrich a handful of Indian mill owners only, though the wealth would not be drained out of the country. They, therefore, could not recommend the use of swadeshi mill cloth and were obliged to insist on khadi only.

One object of khadi propaganda was to force the *swadeshi* mill owners to cooperate with them in the driving out of foreign cloth from the Indian market by manufacturing fine cloth without making enormous profits. When the mill owners realised that only khadi was getting popular and the swadeshi mill cloth too was being discarded they would be forced to effect a compromise and insist on the boycott of foreign cloth.

The main reason, however, for fixing that day for preaching the boycott of foreign cloth and the use of khadi was to bring pressure on the British administration to compel them to yield to their demand, for this movement was a very effective weapon.

1. Speech at Allahabad, 21 March 1929. *The Tribune*, 24 March 1929.

53. To Jairamdas Doulatram[1]

March 23rd, 1929

My dear Jairamdas,[2]
Your circular letter dated 18th March. You did not enclose with it the pledges you mention.[3] Hence I am unable to give you any opinion in regard to them.

But generally I might say that I dislike pledges and feel that they do not help us much. A few conscientious people observe them, others break them whenever they feel like it and the measure of their fall is all the greater because of the pledge they took. Therefore, personally I am not keen on any pledge. Then there is the difficulty pointed out by you that a pure khadi pledge may not be taken up by numbers of people whilst an alternative pledge will necessarily weaken the khadi pledge.

For the moment I would suggest that we might not enter into this question. What is the good of our asking people to take pledges when we are unable to supply them with khadi ? Let us concentrate on producing khadi and inducing people to buy it...

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-34/1929 (Pt. II), p. 295, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. (b. 1892); leading Congressman of Sind; member, Bombay Legislative Council, 1926-1929; secretary, All India Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee, 1929; member of A.I.C.C., 1917-1941, of the Working Committee, 1928-1941, and General Secretary of the Congress, 1931-1934; participated in the noncooperation movement and was imprisoned several times; Governor of Bihar, 1947; Minister, Government of India, 1948-1950; Governor of Assam, 1950-1956; member, Rajya Sabha.
3. The suggestion was that Congress volunteers should take pledges from the people for the boycott of foreign cloth.

54. To Secretaries, Punjab and Delhi P.C.Cs.[1]

March 23rd, 1929

Dear Sir,

I enclose a copy of the letter I am sending to Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram, secretary, Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee. The letter will put you in possession of the facts. The boycott movement naturally depends on a joint effort all over India. It is essential therefore that Delhi and Amritsar should be in the forefront of the boycott movement. Will you kindly take all steps to bring this about?

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-34/1929 (Pt. II), p. 307, N.M.M.L.

55. To Jairamdas Doulatram[1]

March 23rd, 1929

My dear Jairamdas,

The demand for khadi is increasing so rapidly that we are hard put to meet it. I have my work cut out in answering complaints of people who cannot get what they want. Our khadi bhandars have got little stocks left and our production centres cannot supply the demand. This is having a very bad effect. We are trying to do our best but production cannot be increased to any large extent without additional capital being put in and we have no fresh capital. I suppose that we shall get some capital when Gandhiji tours here in June.[2] But it would be wasting a golden opportunity if we have to wait till then for increasing our production. I have written to the A.I.S.A. to give us a loan of at least

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-34/1929 (Pt. II), p. 303, N.M.M.L.
2. In June 1929, Mahatma Gandhi went to Bareilly, Almora and Naini Tal as a prelude to a more extensive tour of the U.P. from September to November.

Rs. 12,000. As a matter of fact, I think that we ought to take our courage in both hands and push the boycott by increasing our production and sale depots right and left. There may be some risk involved in it from the business point of view but the risk is well worth taking from the political and economic point of view. Every considerable town writes to me asking for a *bhandar*. What am I to do ?

So much about the U.P. I am writing to you however not because I want any particular help from you for the U.P. but because similar conditions are probably arising in other parts of the country and I should like you and your committee to consider them and make some provision for them.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

58. To Jairamdas Doulatram[1]

March 23rd, 1929

My dear Jairamdas,

I have recently visited Cawnpore and interviewed some of the cloth dealers there. I find that the situation there is hopeful. Big orders for foreign cloth are usually sent in February and March and in July. During this spring barely 10% were, I am told, sent. The cloth importers were not sure of the future and did not like to take the risk of sending big orders. Of course their reluctance to place these orders was not however largely due to patriotism and the like. They are now waiting and watching. If the boycott movement develops they will adhere to it. If, on the other hand, they see other big centres importing cloth as usual, they will follow suit. They told me their experience of the last boycott movement in 1921 was very unfortunate. Whilst they adhered to the boycott, other centres did not, with the result that a good deal of business was permanently transferred to Calcutta and Delhi, specially Delhi. They are very much afraid that the same thing might happen again. On the last occasion they paid fines amounting to about Rs. 12000 for importing some foreign cloth after they had taken a pledge not to do so.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-34/1929 (Pt. II), pp. 301-303, N.M.M.L.

They insist therefore that the same treatment should be accorded to them as to other importers elsewhere. Further that they should not be made to suffer unless the same amount of pressure is brought to bear on Delhi and Calcutta and Amritsar. From this you will no doubt gather that they are a little apprehensive of our strength in Cawnpore.

I assured them, of course, that we did not desire to do them any injury. Our object was entirely to boycott foreign cloth. Obviously this could not be gained by boycotting it at Cawnpore alone.

In Cawnpore they have got a regular committee of their own called the Kapra Committee and it is easy to deal with them in a body. I do not know if any such committees exist elsewhere. I would suggest that an attempt be made to have such committees of shopkeepers dealing in foreign cloth to further the boycott. This sub-committee would consist of only a few persons who are favourable to us. But their influence in an organised way would be great and we would be able to tell people in other places that even the importers themselves are helping us. This was the suggestion of the Cawnpore people.

They further suggested that it should be made perfectly clear what their position was going to be, and till when they could continue dealing in foreign cloth. I told them that after the Working Committee resolution requesting them not to give further orders they were supposed not to get any more foreign cloth. If they do so in spite of our warning they do so at their peril. As regards previous stocks we would permit them to dispose them off, i.e. in the sense that we would not picket them but we would lay stress, of course, on khadi. To prevent fraud they said it would be desirable to find out what stocks of foreign cloth were possessed by the importers or the retailers. This could easily be done in Cawnpore with the help of the trade people themselves. A layman would find great difficulty in doing it. If any subcommittees of the kind I have mentioned above are formed they might be entrusted with this work.

I would specially like you to induce people in Delhi to take some action of this kind. Cawnpore is specially afraid of Delhi. As a matter of fact nearly 75% of Cawnpore business is in *swadeshi* cloth. Delhi on the other hand has about 75% foreign business. Amritsar also is very largely foreign.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Delhi and Punjab provincial Congress committees.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

57. To Jairamdas Doulatram[1]

April 8th, 1929

My dear Jairamdas,
Your letter dated 4th April. Our Congress organisation is much too elephantine to move easily. The only thing to be done is to peg away at them. I am writing to the provincial committees as suggested by you. The difficulty of most provinces is that their districts do not send them proper reports. What is the provincial office to do when it does not get information from others ? However I shall try my best.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-34/1929 (Pt. II), p. 283, N.M.M.L.

58. To P.C.Cs[1]

April 8th, 1929

Dear Sir,
The secretary of the Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee complains that he is not receiving much cooperation from the provincial Congress committees. Only five committees, namely, Behar, Bengal, Delhi, Gujarat and Kerala have so far sent reports of boycott work. Of the other committees, eight, namely Andhra, Assam, Burma, Berar, C.P. Hindustani, Sind, Tamil Nad and N.W.F.P. have not even taken the trouble to send formal acknowledgements to letters from the Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee. You will no doubt appreciate that it is impossible for any committee or individual to work effectively unless he receives the cooperation of others. A nation-wide boycott, in particular, depends on the closest cooperation. It was with this object in view that the Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee was started and special care was taken in appointing as its secretary an efficient and enthusiastic organiser like Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram. Mr. Jairamdas has given up most of his other activities for this work. I trust that your committee will give him every facility in his work and, in particular, will send him frequent progress reports.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-34/1929 (Pt. II), p. 281, N.M.M.L.

INSPECTION OF CONGRESS OFFICES

59. To Secretary, Punjab P.C.C.[1]

March 13th, 1929

Dear Sir,

With reference to the inquiries I made from you at Rohtak regarding the working of your provincial Congress committee, I have to make the following observations.

It is clear that the Congress organisation in your province is at a low ebb as only 10 districts out of 30 have committees and even these 10 districts have the barest minimum of members. If you desire the Congress to be a really effective organisation in your province it is essential that almost every district should have a proper committee and there should be a large membership. I was informed by you that the number of Congress members was about 1000 in the whole of the province but that no accurate figures were available from the districts. The figure 1000 is a very small one for a big province.

Even that, as you say, is a rough estimate.

It seems to me that you should take effective steps to lay down that no district committee should be affiliated to the P.C.C. until it can show a fair number of members, the very lowest number being 250. A rule to this effect has recently been made by the U.P.P.C.C. The minimum they have fixed, I believe, is 320 for a district. If such a rule is made two or three months' time should be given to each district to enrol the necessary members. After that, if the district has not fulfilled your conditions it should not have the right to be represented in the provincial Congress committee or to send delegates to the Congress or provincial conference. Of course, as soon as it fulfils the conditions it will recover its rights.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-28(i)/1929, pp. 107-109, N.M.M.L.
In March 1929 Jawaharlal inspected a number of Congress offices in the U.P. and other provinces and made detailed recommendations. Some letters and one set of notes have been included here as specimens of his method of work.

As you are having the Congress this year, there is likely to be a great competition in getting elected as delegates to the Congress. If it is known that only such committees as have a decent membership can send delegates, there will be incentive to form committees with a larger membership. Your task therefore should not be difficult.

I have no doubt that in any district where one or two earnest workers try hard enough Congress members can be made in sufficient numbers. Ordinarily no one tries himself but casts the blame on the apathy of others just as few people subscribe themselves to Congress funds but complain of others not subscribing. We do not deceive anybody by a paper show. It is better to disaffiliate the district and say so than keep it on as an affiliated body without any membership.

I suggest therefore that you should amend your rules in the manner hinted at above.

Further, it seems to me that your rules for the election of delegates for the Congress are most unsatisfactory. There is bound to be friction and trouble if a large number of people desire to get elected. As this competition is going to take place this year you should change your rules now so as to provide for it. You may, in this connection, get into touch with other provincial Congress committees and get their rules for comparison.

Your primary committee or unit is the district committee. A district seems to be too wide an expanse for a primary committee. Probably a tahsil or taluqa would be better. But this is for you to decide. At the present moment, if you had a large Congress membership your district committee would become a terribly unwieldy body.

I gather that you have no permanent rule for the filling of interim vacancies in the list of Congress delegates. Ordinarily the President and the General Secretary are authorised to fill the vacancies. This is not desirable. I do not know if it is necessary for you to have any rule now in view of the recent change of the constitution but to provide for contingencies you might have a rule to the effect that your executive committee or council of the P.C.C. or a special committee appointed in this behalf be authorised to fill such vacancies. It should be made clear, however, that vacancies only arise in case of death or resignation in writing.

I would recommend to you to form a small Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee to cooperate with the Central Boycott Committee.

You are at present very busy with arrangements for the next Congress and specially with the enrolment of members for the reception committee. This of course has to be done. But I would like to impress upon you that even more important is the strengthening of the

Congress organisation by enrolling Congress members, forming com-mittees and enrolling volunteers. If the Congress organisation is a strong one it is obvious that the annual session of the Congress must be a success.

I have already written to you previously on the desirability of all ranks of Congressmen cooperating both in strengthening the Congress organisation and to make the next Congress a success. Your com-mittee must be aware that the political situation is developing very rapidly. It will be unwise for us and very shortsighted policy to keep out people who can be of help at this juncture. This does not mean that a few individuals who are kept out necessarily make much differ-ence. But by the adoption of such a procedure an atmosphere of friction is created and this is certainly prejudicial to good work.

You will, I trust, keep me fully informed of the activities of your provisional reception committee. I am specially waiting to hear from you your decision regarding the tent agreement with A. N. Mukerjee.[2]

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. A tent-maker of Calcutta.

60. U.P.P.C.C.—Notes of Inspection[1]

15/3/29

Office in a room of the Kashi Vidvapitha—no rent—room good but room is shared with Vidyapitha—morning lectures 11.30 to 5.30—office hours of P.C.C. Previously in Dec. 1928 and before, separate office building. This was left to save rent.

46 districts.

Unit or primary committee—tahsil committee—also circle, town and village committees.

Town committees of Allahabad, Lucknow, Bareilly, Cawnpore, Agra and Benares have status of tahsil committee.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-28(i)/1929, pp. 79-82, N.M.M.L.

35 D.C.Cs have sent representatives to P.C.C.

11 ,, have not so far sent reps. to P.C.C.

Some of these 11 have people who call themselves Secys D.C.Cs & correspond with P.C.C. but there cannot obviously be any proper Congress organisation there.

Of the 35 it is by no means clear that all have got proper D.C.Cs. In many places all tahsil committees not formed. No proper figures of this available.

Total No. of P.C.C. members under rules: 171 including 9 *ex-officio* (ex-presidents) and 162 elected.

Present strength	Elected	136
	Ex-officio	9
		145

CONGRESS MEMBERSHIP

No figures available either for 1928 or 1929. No report from D.C.Cs.

Recom. send forms for reports to D.C.Cs.

No special time for enrolling members.

VOLUNTEERS

H.S. Dal board for province.

Demand for organisers and trainers.

No figures available of trained volunteers.

Rs. 50 a month given to H. S.Dal.

CIRCULARS

Now being issued regularly to C.C.Cs and T.C.Cs; sometimes in print.

Our questionnaire not answered yet.

P.C.C. meetings last year 1927-285

Council meeting in 1927-287

Travelling allowance paid only to Council members—3rd class.

ELECTION DISPUTES

Mirzapur D.C.C.

Etawah D.C.C.

INTERIM VACANCIES

New rule: to be filled by council or special committees—vacancy only in case of death or resignation in writing.

Rolls being revised.

Muttra newly added.
Recom. Muttra to be informed of U.P. unit etc.

P.C.C. PAID STAFF

Assistant Sec	60/-	just arrived Mr. Dandekar
Clerk	40/-	
Clerk	15/-	
Part-time worker	15/-	
Peon	15/-	
	145/-	

New budget includes organisers, printing, travelling etc. Proposal to inspect all D.C.Cs.
So far inspected : Rae Bareli, Ghazipur also probably: Etah, Muttra.
No propoganda leaflets issued yet, might be done.
Recom. filing and proper organisation.

ACCOUNTS

2 years' muddle—sub-committees etc. trying to clear it up. With S.P.G.
At present practically no money left.
Paid 300/- to A.I.C.C.
No debts—all paid off.
Special Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee.
Inspectors.
Magic lantern slides.

J.N.

61. To Secretary, U.P.P.C.C.[1]

March 23rd, 1929

Dear Sir,

I enclose my notes of inspection of the Benares District Congress Committee. I regret the great delay in sending them. I inspected the D.C.C. on the 15th of March. I also inspected the town Congress committee books.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-28 (i)/1929, pp. 70-72, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

I did not find any special irregularities in the offices, but I must confess that I had a feeling that not sufficient work was done. Tne Benares District Congress Committee reminded me of a prim and proper maiden lady of advanced years, irreproachable but with little life. I think it would be a gain for the committee if it gave up this maidenly attitude and developed a little more vigour...

62. To Jairamdas Doulatram1

Moving train
April 30th, 1929

My dear Jairamdas,
I have written to the secretary, Maharashtra P.C.C. about your going to Poona to inspect their office. Please therefore write to them yourself and fix up some time for your visit.

It is not necessary to make any detailed suggestions about the inspection. As I told you the idea was to have a good notion of the present state of the Congress organisation so that we might, where possible, try to remedy the existing defects. You will therefore kindly make such recommendations for future work as you may think desirable.

During the inspection the following points may be kept in mind:

1. What is the primary committee to which all four-anna members belong?
2. How many such primary committees are functioning in the province?
3. Have all districts got committees and do they function?
4. Are all districts fully represented in the P.C.C. according to the P.C.C. rules?
5. What is the full membership of the P.C.C.? What is the present membership?
6. Are there any election disputes in the P.C.C. or in any of the D.C.Cs ? If so, what steps are being taken to settle them?
7. Do the D.C.Cs send regular reports of their activities and specially of their membership figures, to the P.C.Cs ? It is desirable that the P.C.C. should send printed forms for such monthly reports.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-29/1929, pp. 37-40, N.M.M.L.

8. Does the P.C.C. take any steps to inspect the D.C.Cs and verify the figures supplied to them. It is very necessary that this should be done. Are there any inspectors for this purpose?
9. What are the membership figures for the province as a whole and for the individual districts? Last year's figures should be given as well as this year's.
10. Is there a branch of the Hindustani Seva Dal? If so, how many members and associates has it got?
11. Are there any other volunteers for any special purpose, e.g., boycott of foreign cloth, demonstrations etc.
12. Has the P.C.C. got a proper office and are office hours kept? Have any of the D.C.Cs got proper offices (or) are they usually housed in a comer of the secretary's house?
13. What is the office staff of the P.C.C. (clerks, menials, etc.)? What are they paid?
14. Are there any other paid workers in the province or districts?
15. When circulars are received by the P.C.C. from the A.I.C.C. office or the office of the F.C.B.C., are they immediately sent on to the districts?
16. How often does the P.C.C. meet every year? And the council or executive committee?
17. Does the P.C.C. keep a register of all Congress four-anna members or do only the D.C.Cs or the primary committee, whatever they may be, keep them ?
18. Does the P.C.C. keep the usual registers, account books, etc., which an up to date office should keep? Has it got a stock register?
19. Are the accounts of the P.C.C. audited annually or six-monthly? If so, does a qualified auditor do the work or a layman? It is desirable that only certified auditors be asked to do this work.
20. Are the accounts of the D.C.Cs audited?
21. Does the P.C.C. prepare a balance sheet in addition to a statement of income and expenditure? Does the D.C.C. do this? With out a balance sheet it is not possible to find out the exact position of the P.C.C. or other committees. It is desirable, therefore, that such balance sheets should be prepared.
22. Does the P.C.C. prepare a budget for the year? If so, a copy of the budget as well as the copies of the audited accounts should be taken.
23. Has the P.C.C. done anything special in furtherance of the programme for the boycott of foreign cloth ? Have there been any bonfires in the province? Have the cloth dealers been approached? Is the campaign meeting with success?

24. Have the Sunday programmes been observed?
25. Are there any political prisoners in the province? If so their names and particulars of convictions.
26. Is there any special feeling against the co-called khaddar franchise? Is it considered a hindrance in the way of Congress organisation? If it is removed will this not affect adversely the movement of boycott of foreign cloth?
27. In the past there has been considerable friction between two groups of Congressmen in Maharashtra. Is there any such friction now or are the groups cooperating?
28. Generally, is the Congress on the upgrade or not?

I have reproduced from memory most of the points of my question naire and have added to them. It is therefore not necessary for me to send you from Allahabad a copy of the questionnaire.

If it is at all possible for you to go to Gadag (Karnatak) I would be very grateful. It will just mean another step from Poona. If you can go please write to them direct. I am mentioning to them that perhaps you might be able to come.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

63. To Lala Shankarlal[1]

May 2nd, 1929

My dear Shankarlal,
Your letter of the 25th April. I do not know if this answer of mine is likely to reach you soon or not. Anyway I am writing to you in the hope that it might reach you.

I am sorry that anything that I wrote previously hurt you.[2] Such was obviously not my intention. But I must confess to you that I am myself very much pained by the extraordinary casual way in which Congress affairs are managed. It seems to be the general opinion that

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-29/1929, p. 36, N.M.M.L.
2. Jawaharlal had expressed his displeasure to Shankarlal for his failure to hand over the cheque-book and the passbook to his successor, Prof. Indra.

everything connected with the Congress can be done in an unbusinesslike way. Certainly no business could have survived the want of method which the poor Congress has had to put up with. My own personal bent is all for method and thoroughness. The less I see of these in Congress offices the more I get put out. And in Delhi I saw very little of it...

... What is necessary for any organisation is strict business methods and they are sadly lacking in our Congress.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

64. To Secretary, Bombay P.C.C.[1]

6/5/29

Dear Sir,

I am grateful to you for your courtesy on the occasion of my visit to your office for the purpose of inspection.

I must confess that I was a little disappointed with my visit. Bombay has, in the past, always played a leading role in our national activities and we have come to expect a high standard from your committee. Judged by that high standard your committee today does not come up to the mark. Your office carries on its usual activities in a methodical way and I have nothing to criticise in regard to it. But a dynamic movement, such as our Congress movement, has to do something more than routine work if it has to justify itself and achieve results. I trust therefore that your committee will endeavour to shake up the city of Bombay and make the Congress organisation there really representative of its life.

Although the Congress is not so pre-eminent in Bombay as it used to be, you know well that even today Bombay is full of activity. The labour movement is probably stronger there than anywhere else in India. The Bombay youth also lead the youth of India in the rapidly growing youth movement in our country. There seems to be no reason why the Congress only should lag behind in Bombay where there is such good material at hand.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-28(i)/1929, pp. 57-62, N.M.M.L.

You have also the great advantage of having a fine building and an assured income. All that is required is additional energy and I am sure this will not be lacking now that the country is faced again with a full-blooded repression on the part of the government.

Many provincial committees controlling vast areas have some difficulty in keeping in effective touch with their distant district committees. Bombay has no such difficulty to face. You can and should remain in constant and intimate touch with all your district committees. I was surprised and grieved to find that there is no such contact between you and your district committees.

I would strongly recommend that your committee should have a paid inspector or organiser whose chief function should be to visit the district committees frequently. If you have such an inspector it will not be necessary for you to wait till the D.C.Cs send you information on any subject. The inspector must himself see to it that the D.C.Cs keep up to the mark and should send you frequent reports from personal inspection of the number of Congress members, etc.

The number of your Congress members is very small. I think that you should aim at getting a minimum of 10000 during the next two or three months. These should be allotted to different D.C.Cs.

To facilitate the sending of regular reports you might issue printed forms for the purpose to your D.C.Cs. Reports should come at least once a month.

I appreciate your difficulty in enrolling volunteers but to have only 3 members of the Seva Dal and a board of 9 to look after them seems curious. In spite of the fact that there are other volunteer corps in the city it should not be difficult to have at least 100 or 50 trained members of the Dal. Even if this takes a little time you could start with enrolling associates of the Dal who need not be trained to begin with.

Besides the above, however, I would recommend that you enrol special volunteers for special activities, e.g., demonstrations, boycott of foreign cloth etc. These volunteers need not have the training required for a member of the Hindustani Seva Dal.

Your committee had no detailed information about the volunteers enrolled by D.C.Cs. I think you should have this information.

In regard to the enrolment of Congress members I found that there was no uniform system in Bombay and each D.C.C. was free to adopt its own system. I think you should have uniform procedure.

Thanking you again,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

65. To Secretary, U.P.P.C.C.[1]

13/7/29

Dear Sir,
I visited Kashipur on the 3rd July and Moradabad on the 4th, and inspected the papers of the district committees. I enclose my notes of inspection.

The Naini Tal district is working fairly well and can be made to work better. Moradabad is however in a bad way. There are two or three young men who have some enthusiasm. The older men seem to be all dried up and little need be expected of them.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-20/1929, p. 39, N.M.M.L.

66. Report on Hathras[1]

The visit to Hathras was a great disappointment. I had gone there on the express stipulation that I should get at least Rs. 1000. On arrival there I was coolly informed that the Congress committee did not consider it desirable to collect funds at the moment. I was helpless and I did not desire to sally forth on my own account. In Aligarh I had had an annoying experience which I did not wish to be repeated. One of the persons we went to for a donation was offensive in his behaviour and hinted at the *mala fides* of Congress people collecting funds. He was a vakil. Having given expression to his views on the subject he had to listen to about ten minutes of abuse from me. Later I understand he stated to some people that he would bring a libel action against me.

We had a very good public meeting at Hathras. Personally, I think I could have collected a few hundred rupees in Hathras if I had tried.

1. 22 July 1929. A.I.C.C. File No. P-20/1929, p. 81, N.M.M.L. This was submitted by Jawaharlal to the secretary, U.P.P.C.C.

4

THE CONGRESS PRESIDENTSHIP

1. To Mahatma Gandhi[1]

Allahabad 9.7.29

My dear Bapuji,
I returned last evening. On my way back from Delhi I stopped for two days in Bareilly to keep my promise made when you were there. I visited a number of villages.

Could you kindly ask Pyarelal to let me know who will accompany you when you come here for the A.I.C.C. meeting? As desired by you we shall not have any public functions which usually take place during your tours. I should like to know however if you would mind attending a public meeting which we propose having on the 27th evening. The A.I.C.C. and W.C. are sure to take 2 days, so in any event you will be here till the evening of the 27th or return on the morning of the 28th. We should like to have a meeting or perhaps more than one meeting to be addressed by visitors. As there is always danger of rain we shall probably have our meetings in a hall, admission being regulated by tickets. The meetings will take place in any event. But of course if you could go there for a short time it would be a great advantage. Please ask Pyarelal to reply. You need not trouble.

Regarding the Congress presidentship, I think it would be better if you did not write or say anything in public for another month or so. There is no hurry. I am very nervous about the matter and do not like the idea at all. The situation in the country is changing and developing and another month might give us more data to go by.

Yours affly.,
Jawaharlal

1. Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Serial No. 15417.

2. To Mahatma Gandhi[1]

Allahabad
13.7.29

My dear Bapuji,
I have your letter. About the presidentship, I wrote to you a few days ago and you must have got my letter soon after you wrote yours. My own personal inclination always is not to be shackled down to any office. I prefer to be free and to have time to act according to my own inclinations. But for years past I have been tied down to various offices and have had to give a great deal of my time to routine and other work to the exclusion of other matters to which I would have liked to attend to. On my return from Europe I had the fixed intention of spending a few months at least in some village areas, more or less cut off from outside activities. I wanted to try to organise them according to my own ideas but even more so I wanted to educate myself and try to get at the back of the mind of the villager. The Congress secretary duties and repeated and continuous calls for other work prevented me from doing this.

Somehow or other I cannot extricate myself from the tangle of activities I have got into. It seems even more difficult to extricate myself now than it has been. Now that it is proposed to take a really serious step in the near future, it is all the more difficult to think of retirement for a while to a village.

So far as I am concerned the presidentship will thus be a burden to me. Most others also are likely to consider it a burden and a nuisance. You will not of course be deceived by various odd persons here and there expressing their confidence in me. It is very good fortune that I have won the goodwill of a number of people but with this goodwill there is also a lack of confidence. I represent nobody but myself. I have not the politician's flair for forming groups and parties. My one attempt in this direction—the formation of the Independence for India League last year—was a hopeless failure so far as I was concerned. Instead of having a group of single-minded individuals cooperating together for a common object, I found that there was neither single-mindedness nor cooperation and I was being compelled by force of circumstances to do things I was in thorough disagreement with.

1. Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Serial No. 15428.

Most people who put me forward for the presidentship do so because they want to keep some one else out. I am the lesser evil. This kind of negative backing is hardly good enough and does not enthuse.

If there is going to be effective action next year there can be no doubt that it will make all the difference in the world whether you lead it or not. Of course you can lead, as you have done in the past, without being Congress President. But it would help matters certainly if you are also the official head of the organisation. I feel that it would be a great gain if you would preside. That would strike the imagination of the country and other countries. If I have the misfortune to be President you will see that the very people who put me there, or many of them, will be prepared to cast me to the wolves.

Anyhow, I do not see why a final decision should be made now. The A.I.C.C. meeting this month is bound to have far-reaching results whichever way the decision goes. I think the best one can do is to wait till it is over.

I am sorry you disapproved of my giving Bhagat Singh and Dutt's statement in the *Congress Bulletin*. I was myself a little doubtful as to whether I should give it but when I found that there was very general appreciation of it among Congress circles I decided to give extracts. It was difficult however to pick and choose and gradually most of it went in. But I agree with you that it was somewhat out of place. I think you are mistaken in thinking that the statement was the work of their counsel. My information is that counsel had nothing, or practically nothing, to do with it. He might have touched up the punctuation. I think the statement was undoubtedly a genuine thing.

Have I been advocating the fast? I had not intended doing so and I do not know to what statement of mine you are referring to. In Delhi I had stated that we could not help sympathising with Bhagat Singh and Dutt during their long fast. As a matter of fact I am not in favour of hunger strikes. I told this to many young men who came to see me on this subject but I did not think it worthwhile to condemn the fast publicly.

Kamala had another attack three days ago but it was a short and mild one this time. My mother is now laid up with dengue fever.

Yours affiy.,
Jawaharlal

3. On the Congress Presidentship[1]

"Do you want me to sit in judgment over Mahatma Gandhi?" said Jawaharlal Nehru when questioned on the refusal of Mahatma Gandhi to accept the presidentship of the Lahore session of the Indian National Congress. He declined to make any statement or comment on the Mahatma's refusal and his suggestion to the Reception Committee that Jawaharlal Nehru be elected to the position, as this was a question in which he was personally concerned.

1. Interview to the press, Calcutta, 21 August 1929. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22 August 1929.

4. Telegram to Mahatma Gandhi[1]

Calcutta
21-8-29

Beg of you not to press my name for Presidentship.

Jawaharlal

1. Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Serial No. 15496.

5. To Father[1]

Ashram
Sabarmati
30.8.29

My dear Father,
I have had a long talk with Gandhiji. Briefly put, he feels that few people are prepared to follow him although they demand loudly for

1. J. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.

his presidentship. If he was convinced that he was seriously wanted to lead and not merely to be exploited, he would, I think, agree to preside. In any event there should be a meeting of the A.I.C.C. He would like to place his position before the Committee and if they agree to his conditions he is likely to accept the presidentship. Please let me know where and when you would like the meeting to be held. I think it might be held in the last week of September. The place might be Lucknow, Cawnpore or Benares. Allahabad would mean too much of a burden on us.

I have discussed the Meerut summons with Gandhiji also. He is strongly of opinion that I should not help the prosecution in any way either by producing documents or giving evidence. He says, and I entirely agree with him, that this raises a question of principle and we should not give in.

I am going tonight to Rajkot. Probably I shall come here again for a day on my return.

Your loving son,
Jawahar

6. To V. Chattopadhyaya[1]

September 23rd, 1929

My dear Chatto,

Your letter of August 28th came as a pleasant surprise. I had almost given up hope of hearing from you. For this of course I did not blame you. The reason was obvious enough. Evidence in the Meerut trial has gone to show that the government has issued special orders for the interception of my correspondence. So far as you are concerned you know well how dearly the British Government loves you. How can they then miss a *billet-doux* from you !

About the Congress presidentship, I do not yet know definitely what will happen but it is probable that Gandhiji will preside. I cannot discuss in the course of a brief letter the various reasons for and against

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. l(ii)/1929 (Pt. I), pp. 30-31, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

his presiding. I feel however that under all the circumstances it is best that he should preside.

Kamala has just come back from Calcutta after her operation for appendicitis. She is weak still but I hope she has got rid of her trouble...

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

7. To R. Bridgeman[1]

October 1st, 1929

My dear Bridgeman,
... 1 have just been elected to preside over the next session of the National Congress. I tried my best to get out of this but circumstances were too strong for me. I am not at all happy about it.

Ever yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 23/1929-30, p. 45, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

8. To Shiva Prasad Gupta[1]

October 1st, 1929

Dear Shiva Prasad,
...Three days ago the All India Committee met in Lucknow. Strenuous attempts were made to get Gandhiji to preside over the next Congress but he absolutely declined. Ultimately I was elected simply

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. l(ii)/1929 (Pt. III), pp. 148-149, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

because somebody had to fill the vacuum created. I have been placed during the last few months in a very difficult position but now it is even worse. I realise thoroughly that few people are keen on me but somehow or other, without many people wanting it, I have been pitchforked into the Congress chair. I am afraid I shall have my work cut out for me to avoid losing all my cheerfulness and light-heartedness.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

9. To S. A. Brelvi[1]

Camp Gorakhpore
October 7th, 1929

My dear Brelvi,
Thank you very much for your congratulations though indeed I feel I am an object of sympathy rather than congratulation. I have been quite clear in my own mind that my election as president would reduce my effectiveness in many directions. But fate has willed it otherwise and I feel in spite of my scientific spirit and outlook that after all we are to some extent playthings of fate.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(ii)/1929 (Pt. III), p. 473, N.M.M.L.

10. To Govind Ballabh Pant[1]

14th October, 1929

My dear Govind Ballabhji,
Thank you very much for your telegram of congratulation. You will

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(ii)/1929 (Pt. III), p. 551, N.M.M.L.

forgive me, I hope, for the delay in acknowledging it. I have been touring to some extent with Gandhiji.

You must have read Gandhiji's article on the duty of the U.P.[2] The fact that I am President does not make very much difference but the fact remains that the U.P. has got a tremendous responsibility. I have been a poor enough president of the P.C.C. and now I am getting more and more entangled in other activities. I only hope that friends like you and others would take the burden of provincial work and see to it that the U.P. does not lag behind any other province.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. *Navajivan*, 3.10.1929. *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, XLI, pp. 501-502.

11. To Editors of Nationalist Newspapers[1]

29.10.29

Personal-Not for publication

Dear Sir,
I am writing to you at the instance of the President of the A.I.C.C. You are no doubt aware that an official pronouncement is going to be made by government within the next few days. It is not known yet what this announcement is going to be but it is highly unlikely that it will meet the Congress demand. Whatever it may be it is obviously desirable that nationalist India should preserve a united front as far as possible. It is well known that it is the policy of the government to divide our ranks by rallying one group or another. We should try to defeat this policy. The Working Committee will meet at an early date to give a considered reply to the government. Meanwhile it would be unfortunate if separate conflicting statements were made by Congressmen and well-known nationalist newspapers committed

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-l5/1929, pp. 15-16, N.M.M.L.
This was sent to *The Bombay Chronicle*, *The Hindu*, *Swarajya, Liberty, Basumati, Amrita Bazar Patrika, The Tribune, The Hindustan Times, Aaj*.

themselves. The President suggests for your consideration that the most helpful policy for nationalist newspapers would be a critical one without any commitment. They might wait for a few days for further development and for fuller consideration. This would enable the country to give a dignified and powerful reply to government.

I would add that this suggestion is made for your consideration and not with any desire to fetter your discretion in the matter.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

12. To All Members of the Working Committee[1]

29th October, 1929

Dear Friend,

At the request of the President I have sent you the following telegram today:

> In view impending official pronouncement President suggests early Working Committee meeting to issue answer on Congress behalf. Meanwhile separate conflicting statements from members Working Committee undesirable. Would welcome your presence Delhi November 1st or second for informal consultation. Congress.

It is not known yet what the statement is going to be but it is unlikely that it will be such as to meet the Congress demand. In any event a united front and a united response on the part of Congressmen must necessarily create a strong impression. It was not possible to have a Working Committee meeting at very short notice. At the same time it was undesirable to allow matters to take their own course pending a Working Committee meeting. Hence it is proposed to have an informal meeting of such members of the Working Committee as can come to Delhi on November 1st and 2nd. Mr. Gandhi will be there then.

1. J. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.

It is further suggested to have a meeting of the Working Committee in Allahabad on November 16th when Mr. Gandhi will be here.

I might add that the President would be glad if nationalist newspapers did not commit themselves wholly immediately on publication of the statement. A critical attitude pending further developments and fuller consideration would, in his opinion, be helpful.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

13. To B.N. Sen[1]

31/10/29

Dear Friend,[2]

Thank you for your letter. I appreciate the difficulties you have pointed out and it was because of these and because of my inability to cope with them that I was very much averse to becoming President. However the thing is done now and we have to make the best of it.

I am grateful for your offer of assistance. This is very welcome. I cannot at present say what we shall have to do, but I have no doubt that the time is coming when earnest and thoughtful men will be badly needed.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40 (iii)/1929, p. 1, N.M.M.L.
2. Bhupendra Narayan Sen, a Congress worker of Calcutta.

14. The Delhi Manifesto[1]

We the undersigned, have read with careful consideration the Viceregal onouncement on the question of India's future status among the nations of the world.[2] We appreciate the sincerity underlying the declaration, as also the desire of the British Government to placate Indian opinion. We hope to be able to tender our cooperation to His Majesty's Government in their effort to evolve a scheme of Dominion constitution suitable for India's needs.

But we deem it necessary that certain acts should be done and certain points should be declared so as to inspire trust and ensure the cooperation of the principal political organisations in the country. We consider it vital for the success of the proposed conference that (a) a policy of general conciliation should be definitely adopted to induce a calmer atmosphere; (b) political prisoners should be granted a general amnesty; and (c) the representation of progressive political organisations should be effectively secured and that the Indian National Congress as the largest among them should have predominant representation.

Some doubt has been expressed about the interpretation of the paragraph in the statement made by the Viceroy on behalf of His Majesty's Government regarding Dominion Status. We understand, however, that the conference is to meet not to discuss when Dominion Status is to be established but to frame a scheme of Dominion constitution for India. We hope that we are not mistaken in thus interpreting the import and implication of the weighty pronouncement of His Excellency the Viceroy.

Until the new constitution comes into existence, we think it necessary that a more liberal spirit should be infused in the government of the country, that the relations of the executive and the legislature should be brought more in harmony with the object of the proposed conference and that greater regard should be paid to constitutional methods and practices. We hold it to be absolutely essential that the public

1. New Delhi, 1 November 1929. The Leader, 4 November 1929. The signatories included Jawaharlal Nehru.
2. The Viceroy's statement (31 October 1929) on the Round Table Conference to settle the Indian political problem declared that "it is implicit in the declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status."

should be made to feel that a new era has commenced even from today and that the new constitution is to be but a register of the fact. Lastly, we deem it as an essential factor for the success of the conference that it should be convened as expeditiously as possible.

15. To Mahatma Gandhi[1]

November 4, 1929

My dear Bapuji,

I have thought well for two days. I can take, I think, a calmer view of the situation than I could two days ago but the fever in my brain has not left me.

Your appeal to me on the ground of discipline could not be ignored by me. I am myself a believer in discipline. And yet I suppose there can be too much of discipline. Something seems to have snapped inside me evening before last and I am unable to piece it together. As General Secretary of the Congress I owe allegiance to it and must subject myself to its discipline. I have other capacities and other allegiances. I am president of the Indian Trade Union Congress, secretary of the Independence for India League and am intimately connected with the youth movement. What shall I do with the allegiance I owe to these and other movements I am connected with? I realise now more than I have ever done before that it is not possible to ride a number of horses at the same time. Indeed it is hard enough to ride one. In the conflict of responsibilities and allegiances what is one to do except to rely on one's instincts and reason?

I have therefore considered the position apart from all outside connections and allegiances and the conviction has grown stronger that I acted wrongly day before yesterday. I shall not enter into the merits of the statement or the policy underlying it. I am afraid we differ

1. J. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L. First published in *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 76-78.

fundamentally on that issue and I am not likely to convert you. I shall only say that I believe the statement to have been injurious and a wholly inadequate reply to the Labour Government's declaration. I believe that in our attempts to soothe and retain a few estimable gentlemen we have ruffled and practically turned out of our camp many others who were far more worth having. I believe that we have fallen into a dangerous trap out of which it will be no easy matter to escape. And I think that we have shown to the world that although we talk tall we are only bargaining for some titbits.

I do not know what the British Government will do now. Probably it will not agree to your conditions. I hope they will not. But I have little doubt that most of the signatories—excluding you of course—will be quite prepared to agree to any modification of the conditions which the British Government might suggest. In any event, it is quite clear to me that my position in the Congress will become daily more and more difficult. I accepted the presidentship of the Congress with great misgivings but in the hope that we shall fight on a clear issue next year. That issue is already clouded and the only reason for my acceptance has gone. What am I to do with these "Leaders' Conferences"?[2] I feel an interloper and am ill at ease. I cannot have my say because I am afraid of upsetting the conference. I repress myself and sometimes the repression is too much for me and I break out and even say things which I do not wholly mean.

I feel I must resign from the secretaryship of the A.I.C.C. I have sent a formal letter to father, a copy of which I enclose.[3]

The question of the presidentship is a far more difficult one. At this late hour I do not know what I can do. But I am convinced that I was a wrong choice. You were the only possible president for the occasion and the year. I cannot be president if the policy of the Congress is what might be described as that of Malaviyaji. Even now if you agree there is a possible course which does not necessitate a meeting of the A.I.C.C. A circular might be sent round to A.I.C.C. members saying that you are agreeable to accepting the presidentship. I would beg of them to excuse me. This would be a formal matter as of course all the members, or nearly all, would welcome your decision with joy.

2. The Leaders' Conference held in Delhi on 1 November 1929 issued the Delhi Manifesto. The second Conference which was held in Allahabad on 18 November 1929 expressed concern at the debates in Parliament but decided to stand by the Delhi Manifesto.
3. See *post,* item 16.

An alternative course is that I should declare that in view of the circumstances, and also in view of the difficult[7] of choosing another president now, I shall not retire now but immediately after the Congress is over. I shall act as the chairman and the Congress can decide what it likes regardless of me.

One of these two courses seems to me to be necessary if I am to retain my physical and mental health.

As I wrote to you from Delhi I am not issuing any public statement. What others say or do not say does not worry me very much. But I must be at peace with myself.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

I am sending a copy of this letter to father. I feel a little lighter after writing this letter. I am afraid it will trouble you a little and I do not want to do so. I feel half inclined not to send it to you just yet but to wait for your arrival here. Ten days more will no doubt lessen my agitation and give me a better perspective. But it is better that you should know how my mind has been working.

16. To the President of the Congress[1]

4.11.29

Dear Sir,

At the informal meeting held in Delhi on the 2nd November it was pointed out to me that as a member of the Working Committee I was bound to carry out the wishes of the majority of the members of the Committee and sign the statement subsequently issued. Although there had been no formal meeting of the Working Committee, I felt the force of the argument and signed the statement, in spite of my personal reluctance and disagreement with it. I have thought over the matter carefully and I have come to the conclusion that the only course

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-l 17/1929-30, pp. 15-16, N.M.M.L.

open to me is to tender my resignation from the general secretaryship of the A.I.C.C. and the membership of the Working Committee. The question raised in Delhi was a vital one for me and I have no doubt that we shall have to face similar contingencies again. It would be most unfair to the Committee and to me if I continued to occupy a responsible position in the A.I.C.C. and in the Working Committee when my views are opposed to those of the majority of its members.

I beg therefore that you will accept my resignation. This resignation, I would add, need not upset the work of the A.I.C.C. office. My colleague, Dr. Ansari, would be in charge of it but this need not mean an additional burden on him. The actual work will be done by the under-secretary and my services will always be at hand for any particular work.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

17. To M. Desa [1]

14/11/1929

Dear Friend,[2]
Your letter. I would not like you at this stage to publish my letter. I shall make a statement when I think it necessary. Probably many friends might misunderstand my silence but for the moment that cannot be helped.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G. 40(1)/1929 (Pt. II), p. 153, N.M.M.L.
2. Associated with the journal, *The Young Liberator*, Bombay.

18. To D.V. Divekar[1]

14.11.1929

My dear Divekar [2],
...The Delhi Manifesto[3] is a very unfortunate affair. I quite agree with you in what you say. I hope that the matter will be set right soon.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(i)/1929 (Pt. II), p. 169, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. Associated with the *Kesari*; secretary of Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee, 1929.
3. See *ante*, item 14.

19. To Frances J. Pratt[1]

November 20th, 1929

My dear Miss Pratt,[2]
...The presidentship of the National Congress to which I have been elected is not a very soft or pleasant job. There is a great deal of talk of Round Table Conferences and the like between the British Government and Indian nationalist leaders but all this, I think, is mere eyewash and nothing will happen. Our Congress is bound to take up a strong line this year. It may be therefore that early next year you may have interesting items of news of India.

Sincerely yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 16/1929, p. 59, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. A member of the Foreign Policy Association, New York.

20. To S. Srinivasa Iyengar[1]

November 20th, 1929

Dear Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar,

I am not wholly surprised at receiving your telegram. The proceedings of the so-called leaders' conferences are strange enough but they must appear stranger at a distance. The great redeeming feature however is the approach of the Congress which will automatically put an end to all such conferences and their activities. I am not very worried over this matter. What does worry me greatly is the action that we must take at and after the Congress. It is clear enough that there is not an outside chance of the British Government acceding to the four conditions laid down. So that even moderate Congressmen will have no alternative left except to stick to independence. It is not a very difficult matter to take a strong line, so far as a resolution is concerned, in the Congress. Some such thing is bound to be done. What is more important however is effective action which must follow in support of the independence claim. Once that is started, as I hope it will be, it will not be difficult to put an end to such conferences.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-l 17/1929-30, p. 7, N.M.M.L.

21. To B.V. Burli[1]

November 20th, 1929

Dear Sir,[2]

I have your letter of the 15th. I am not surprised at your disappointment. Indeed if I had been in your place I would have been very angry. I cannot in a short letter write to you all that I would wish to but I shall only tell you that so far as the question of independence is concerned I have not changed my opinion in the slightest. Indeed for me the question is not one of declaring independence as the goal at the Lahore Congress but of doing something much more effective in order to achieve it.

We must remember however that in an organisation or a committee decisions are taken by majorities and ordinarily discipline requires that the minority, so long as it is in that organisation or committee, should not criticise it. As a matter of fact I tendered my resignation from the Working Committee but it was not accepted.

If I were you I would suggest your preparing your colleagues for a big offensive at the Lahore Congress and after. We should do something more than passing a merely pious resolution. Almost all Congressmen who signed the Delhi Manifesto will be compelled to side with full independence at the Lahore Congress unless some very unlikely events happen.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-5/1929 (Pt. IV), p. 495, N.M.M.L.
2. Associated with the Hindustani Seva Dal, Hubli.

22. To Satyapal[1]

21st November, 1929

My dear Dr. Satyapal,

Thank you for your letter. I am very glad to learn that you are cooperating with the Reception Committee. This is very sporting of you. It is a most unfortunate sign of the times that from almost every part of India we are having election troubles and disputes. I am almost inclined to think that prominent Congress workers who are more concerned with the work than with anything else should pass a self-denying ordinance under which they should not accept any high office in the Congress. I am sure that their influence for public good will increase thereby.

In the U.P., on the whole we have been fortunate in avoiding quarrels in the ranks of the Congress. This has largely been due to the fact that some of the principal workers here have consistently tried to keep away from office and even when they have accepted it, it has been thrust on them. We have also a convention that no one person should remain in high office for long. Thus we change our presidents regularly every year. The result is that the presidents as such have no special powers or influence. Of course if the president happens to be a prominent public man then he has that influence.

As you know I was partly involved in Punjab Congress affairs this year. I was exceedingly grieved to note the developments. It seems to me that the right course for real Congress workers to follow at the present moment in the Punjab is to cooperate in the fullest degree in making the Congress a success. They will thus demonstrate that they can put down personal feelings in the matter in the interests of a higher cause and they will undoubtedly rise in public esteem thereby.

The various leaders' conferences that have taken place are rightly agitating the public but I hope that another five weeks will see us launched on the path of independence. I am not saying anything at present in public in spite of many misunderstandings because I want to

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-100/1929-30, pp. 153-155, N.M.M.L.

make it very difficult for people to oppose independence at the Lahore Congress.

I am told that all manner of police arrangements are being made in Lahore. We are evidently in for a warm time.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

23. To R. Bridgeman[1]

November 23rd, 1929

My dear Bridgeman,

... You must have been wondering greatly why my name has appeared as if I supported the Labour Government's proposals. As a matter of fact I look upon them simply as a trap into which many of my confiding countrymen are prepared to fall. But still the position created here was such that some of us thought it better from the point of view of a campaign for full independence at the Lahore Congress to give some rope to those here who wanted to adopt a compromising policy. They laid down a number of conditions and as it is certain that none of these conditions is going to be fulfilled, the Congress will meet in Lahore much stronger for effective action. Anyhow the next few weeks will show whether some of us have made a great mistake or not. I myself have been exceedingly troubled and anxious. On the whole however I feel that in spite of what people, ignorant of the conditions here, may say we have prepared the ground better for the struggle next year.

With all good wishes,

Ever yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 23/1929-1930, p. 31, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

24. To V. Chattopadhyaya[1]

26 November, 1929

My dear Chatto,

Your letter of November 6th (typed October 6th) has just come.[2] I quite appreciate your position and largely agree with it. I have written to you briefly on the subject already. In view of the Delhi Manifesto I had sent in my resignation from the Congress Working Committee. This resignation was not accepted for various reasons. As I feel that the end of the year will see a big offensive on our part I do not wish to create any difficulties in the way of this offensive at present. It is a question of three or four weeks now.

I am going to Nagpur tomorrow.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D.I. (ii)/1929 (Pt. III), p 145, N.M.M.L.
2. Chattopadhyaya had written on 6 October.

25. The Congress and the Viceroy's Statement[1]

1. The National Congress, at its last session held in Calcutta, resolved to keep the door open for a compromise with the British Government on the basis of the acceptance in its entirety of the national demand, as embodied in the All Parties Committee's Report, till the 31st December 1929. It further resolved that in case no such settlement was arrived at within the stated period or, in case there was an utter rejection of the national demand, the Congress would work for the independence

1. Jawaharlal's note written in November 1929. A.I.C.C. File No. G-l13/1929, pp. 5-10, N.M.M.L.

of India. Congressmen are bound by that resolution and only a full session of the Congress itself can vary it. Many events, which have happened in the course of the year, and the policy of widespread repression carried on unceasingly by the British Government in India, may legitimately be taken to indicate a rejection on the part of the British Government of the national demand, and it would have been open to the Congress Executive to shorten the period fixed by the Calcutta resolution. But the Executive has no power to extend that period. Only the Congress itself can do so.

2. We have referred to the Calcutta resolution of the Congress be cause we as Congressmen are bound by it. We have however paid careful attention to the statement made by the Viceroy on behalf of the British Government and have tried to interpret it as liberally as possible. We regret to find that the statement is vague in regard to essential matters and, as it stands, can in no way be interpreted to mean an acceptance of the national demand. We recognise that the language of the declaration is conciliatory, but there is no assurance in it that our demands will be acceded to in the near future. It is well known that there is a strong party in the country which desires complete independence for India and the Congress itself is committed to this objective if no settlement is arrived at before the end of the year. All other parties in the country have based their minimum demand at Dominion Status. It is on the basis of this minimum demand alone that any fruitful conference can take place between the representatives of India and the representatives of the British Government. There can be no common ground if even Dominion Status is considered a distant objective to be arrived at by successive stages.

3. We are also of opinion that the success of any conference must depend on the personnel of the Indian delegation. Unless that delegation is really representative of political India and Indian labour it will carry no weight with the people of India and its decisions can bring no settlement. We feel therefore that it must be made clear that the representatives from India will be such as to command the respect and authority of those whom they represent and that the National Congress will have the dominant voice in their selection.

4. We have referred to the policy of widespread repression carried on by the British Government in India. All over the country Congressmen and others have been convicted and are being tried for their political opinions and activities. A member of the Working Committee,[2] the supreme executive of the Congress for the year, has been

2. B. Sambamurti.

in jail for many months; another member[3] is now being tried for sedition. Many members of the All India Congress Committee have been convicted or are under trial. The treatment of political prisoners has been such as to evoke widespread protest in India and has resulted in hunger strikes in jails and in the self-immolation of a brave son of India. Assurances given for better treatment have still to be given effect to. Even under-trial prisoners have been subjected to treatment which can only be described as barbarous. Organised labour has been penalised in many parts of the country and resolutions of the Assembly ignored by the government.

5. This policy of organised and persistent repression can only result, as it has resulted, in creating bitterness and ill-will, and in producing an atmosphere which cannot be conducive to the success of any conference. It is manifestly impossible for representatives of India to confer honourably or with any peace of mind with the British Government when many of their colleagues are in jail or are liable to be tried or convicted for their political activities. It may be even difficult to choose our best men to represent India when some of them are in prison. The British Government should therefore, if it desires a real conference, which is expected to lead to a settlement, abandon the policy of repression and, as an earnest of its desire to deal honourably with India, should release all political prisoners and withdraw all pending political cases.

6. We have every desire to believe in the goodwill of the Viceroy and of the British Government, but our past experience has not been a happy one. If we take upon ourselves the responsibility of recommending to the National Congress a variation of the resolution, passed after full consideration at Calcutta, or an extension of the period mentioned therein, we must be assured that there is a real change of heart on the part of the British Government and an earnest desire to meet our national demand. We have mentioned above some of the conditions which we consider necessary to produce this assurance. We would add that if there is a real change in the angle of vision of the government it must necessarily result in an immediate change in the present methods of administering the government of the country. We realise that the existing constitution, such as it is, is too archaic and undemocratic to be easily adapted to democratic procedure. But even under present conditions it is possible, if an earnest attempt is made, to make a change for the better by the abandonment of autocracy and an adherence to democratic methods.

3. Subhas Chandra Bose.

7. Finally, we would point out that if the Congress is asked to extend the period fixed by it at Calcutta it will be difficult to have a lengthy extension. It will be desirable therefore to expedite all the preliminary steps so that the final consideration and the settlement take place at an early date.

26. To K. Santanam[1]

4th December, 1929

My dear Santanam,

I was surprised to receive your telegram in Nagpur and wondered what it was about. On my arrival here I got your letter and was greatly disappointed to find that there was nothing exciting in it.

I am not aware of anyone having said that the Reception Committee would only arrange for me or two persons and not for a large party. As a matter of fact I have myself stated that I thought it unfair for the Reception Committee to be saddled with a large party.

I have already written to Dr. Gopichand[2] that I would like to stay in the camp. Father does not want to go to the camp. I think you had better arrange for me and my wife and perhaps Indira, though I am doubtful about her, to live in the camp. The others will have to put up somewhere else. Father would probably like to have more than two or three persons with him. There is my mother, my two sisters, Ranjit, just to mention a few. He is likely to return here tomorrow and I shall find out from him.

I entirely approve of your charging everyone. As the General Secretary is going to develop into the President you need only allow for him once and not twice. But I think you should give free quarters and food to the A.I.C.C. staff.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-100/1929-30, pp. 107-109, N.M.M.L.
2. Gopichand Bhargava (1890-1966); a prominent Congress leader of the Punjab; imprisoned several times in the civil disobedience movement; Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly, 1937-40; Chief Minister of Punjab, 1947-51, and Minister, 1957-64.

I am amazed to read about the chariot. I thought you had some sense but it is obvious that the Lakshmi Insurance Co. has gradually driven it out of your head.[3] Do you expect me to go about Lahore on a bullock cart? I wish your committee will have the courage to do away with the procession completely or at most just to drive through certain selected routes, the whole thing not lasting more than an hour. It is an absurd waste of time and energy to spend five or six hours over this. As for riding on horseback I have no objection to it but what on earth are you going to do for five or six hours? I do not at all like this idea of a *barat*. Be original and say that you will have no procession.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. K. Santanam was the chairman of the Lakshmi Insurance Company, Lahore.

27. To Prafulla C. Mukherji[1]

9/12/1929

Dear Mr. Mukherji,[2]
I thank you for your letter of November 8 which has just reached me.

The kind of press reports that you get from India are often misleading. But there is no doubt that the Viceroy's statement has been accepted as more or less satisfactory by the moderate elements here. The National Congress will only consider it in Lahore. I do not think there is much chance of its weakening. Indeed it may stiffen up more. So far as I am concerned I entirely agree with your opinion in regard to this statement.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 16/1929, p. 57, N.M.M.L.
2. Chairman, Hindustan Association of America, Pittsburgh, U.S.A.

28. To Krishna Narayan[1]

December 10th, 1929

Dear Sir,[2]

I have your letter and your post card. Your criticism that responsibility and power invariably tone down people is perfectly justified. All of us no doubt equivocate to some extent frequently and it is quite possible that if we had a large measure of responsibility we would do so even more.

Yours truly,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(i)/1929 (Pt. II), p. 379, N.M.M.L.
2. A resident of Chiniot (now in Pakistan).

29. To Nand Kumar Rai[1]

December 11th, 1929

Dear Sir,[2]

I am in receipt of your card of the 9th December. I appreciate the motive which has induced you to write it but I am at a loss to understand what you mean. You refer to threatening letters written by me. To whom have I written these letters? Will you kindly specify anyone? Nor do I quite follow what you mean by asking me not to join the Congress. I presume you refer to the National Congress. It is my misfortune this year to have been elected its president. Would you have me resign from this?

Yours faithfully,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. Fiie No. G-40(i)/1929 (Pt. III), p. 391, N.M.M.L.
2. A vakil of Ballia.

5

THE LAHORE CONGRESS

1. The Hoisting of the National Flag[1]

I have just unfurled the national flag of Hindustan. What is the meaning of this flag? It is one of the symbols of India's freedom. It is a symbol of India's unity. But remember that when a country's flag is raised then as long as there is a single living soul in the country it is not brought down. Today you have met on this occasion, when the National Congress is holding its most momentous session and is going to take a great step forward in the fight for the country's freedom. Today, when you have raised this flag, are you not fired by the determination that it shall not be lowered? I want you to take a vow that you will have sufficient strength to protect this flag, and that you are ready to sacrifice your lives for freedom.

The flag under which you stand today and which you have just now saluted does not belong to any community. It is the flag of the country. If you have so far worked for any particular community to the detriment of the nation you have proved false. All those who stand today under this flag are Indians, not Hindus, not Muslims, but Indians. The volunteers, who have saluted the flag today, should be prepared to lay down their lives for its honour. Remember once again, now' that this flag is unfurled, it must not be lowered so long as a single Indian, man, woman, or child lives in India.

1. Speech at Lahore, 29 December 1929. *The Tribune*, 31 December 1929.

2. Presidential Address[1]

For four-and-forty years this National Congress has laboured for the freedom of India. During this period it has somewhat slowly but surely awakened national consciousness from its long stupor and built up the national movement. If today we are gathered here at a crisis of our destiny, conscious of our strength as well as of our weakness, and looking with hope and apprehension to the future, it is well that we give first thought to those who spent their lives with little hope of reward so that those that follow them may have the joy of achievement. Many of the giants of old are not with us and we of a later day, standing on an eminence of their creation, may often decry their efforts. That is the way of the world. But none of you can forget them or the great work they did in laying the foundations of a free India. And none of us can ever forget that glorious band of men and women who, without reckoning the consequences, have laid down their young lives or spent their bright youth in suffering and torment in utter protest against a foreign domination. Many of their names even are not known to us. They laboured and suffered in silence without any expectation of public applause, and by their heart's blood they nursed the tender plant of India's freedom. While many of us temporised and compromised, they stood up and proclaimed a people's right to freedom and declared to the world that India, even in her degradation, had the spark of life in her, because she refused to submit to tyranny and serfdom. Brick by brick has our national movement been built up, and often on the prostrate bodies of her martyred sons has India advanced. The giants of old may not be with us, but the courage of old is with us still, and India can yet produce martyrs like Jatin Das and Wizaya.[2]

This is the glorious legacy that we have inherited, and you wish to put me in charge of it. I know well that I occupy this honoured place by chance more than by your deliberate design. Your desire was to choose another—one who towers above all others in this present day world of ours—and there could have been no wiser choice. But fate and he conspired together and thrust me against your will and mine

1. Lahore, 29 December 1929.
2. A Buddhist monk of Burma who was imprisoned on a charge of sedition and who died after a prolonged hunger strike on 19 September 1929.

into this terrible seat of responsibility. Should I express my gratitude to you for having placed me in this dilemma ? But I am grateful indeed for your confidence in one who strangely lacks it himself.

You will discuss many vital national problems that face us today, and your decisions may change the course of Indian history. But you are not the only people that are faced with problems. The whole world today is one vast question mark, and every country and every people is in the melting pot. The age of faith, with the comfort and stability it brings, is past, and there is questioning about everything, however permanent or sacred it might have appeared to our forefathers. Everywhere there is doubt and restlessness, and the foundations of the state and society are in process of transformation. Old established ideas of liberty, justice, property' and even the family are being attacked, and the outcome hangs in the balance. We appear to be in a dissolving period of history, when the world is in labour and, out of her travail, will give birth to a new order.

No one can say what the future will bring, but we may assert with some confidence that Asia, and even India, will play a determining part in future world policy. The brief day of European domination is already approaching its end. Europe has ceased to be the centre of activity and interest. The future lies with America and Asia. Owing to false and incomplete history many of us have been led to think that Europe has always dominated over the rest of the world, and Asia has always let the legions of the West thunder past and has plunged in thought again. We have forgotten that for millennia the legions of Asia overran Europe and modern Europe itself largely consists of the descendants of these invaders from Asia. We have forgotten that it was India that finally broke the military power of Alexander. Thought has undoubtedly been the glory of Asia and specially of India, but in the field of action the record of Asia has been equally great. But none of us desires that the legions of Asia or Europe should overrun the continents again. We have all had enough of them.

India today is a part of the world movement. Not only China, Turkey, Persia and Egypt, but also Russia and the countries of the West are taking part in this movement, and India cannot isolate herself from it. We have our own problems, difficult and intricate, and we cannot run away from them and take shelter in the wider problems that affect the world. But if we ignore the world, we do so at our peril. Civilization today, such as it is, is not the creation or the monopoly of one people or nation. It is a composite fabric to which all countries have contributed and then have adapted to suit their particular needs. And if India has a message to give to the world, as I

hope she has, she has also to receive and learn much from the messages of other peoples.

When everything is changing it is well to remember the long course of Indian history. Few things in history are more amazing than the wonderful stability of the social structure in India which withstood the impact of numerous alien influences and thousands of years of change and conflict. It withstood them because it always sought to absorb them and tolerate them. Its aim was not to exterminate but to establish an equilibrium between different cultures. Aryans and non-Aryans settled down together recognising each other's right to their culture, and outsiders who came, like the Parsis, found a welcome and a place in the social order. With the coming of the Muslims the equilibrium was disturbed, but India sought to restore it, and largely succeeded. Unhappily for us, before we could adjust our differences, the political structure broke down, the British came and we fell.

Great as was the success of India in evolving a stable society, she failed in a vital particular, and because she failed in this, she fell and remains fallen. No solution was found for the problem of equality. India deliberately ignored this and built up her social structure on inequality, and we have the tragic consequences of this policy-millions of our people who till yesterday were suppressed and had little opportunity for growth.

When Europe fought her wars of religion and Christians massacred each other in the name of their Saviour, India was tolerant, although, alas, there is little of this toleration today. Having attained some measure of religious liberty, Europe sought after political liberty and political and legal equality. Having attained these also, she finds that they mean very little without economic liberty and equality. And so today politics have ceased to have much meaning, and the most vital question is that of social and economic equality.

India also will have to find a solution to this problem, and until she does so, her political and social structure cannot have stability. That solution need not necessarily follow the example of any other country. It must, if it has to endure, be based on the genius of her people and be an outcome of her thought and culture. And when it is found, the unhappy differences between various communities, which trouble us today and keep back our freedom, will automatically disappear.

Indeed the real differences have already largely gone, but fear of each other and distrust and suspicion remain and sow seeds of discord. The problem before us is not one of removing differences. They can well remain side by side and enrich our many-sided culture. The problem is how to remove fear and suspicion, and, being intangible, they

are hard to get at. An earnest attempt was made to do so last year by the All Parties Committee, and much progress was made towards the goal. But we must admit with sorrow that success has not wholly crowned its efforts. Many of our Muslim and Sikh friends have strenuously opposed the solutions suggested, and passions have been roused over mathematical figures and percentages. Logic and cold reason are poor weapons to fight fear and distrust. Only faith and generosity can overcome them. I can only hope that the leaders of the various communities will have this faith and generosity in ample measure. What shall we gain for ourselves or for our community if all of us are slaves in a slave country? And what can we lose if once we remove the shackles from India and can breath the air of freedom again? Do we want outsiders, who are not of us and who have kept us in bondage, to be the protectors of our little rights and privileges, when they deny us the very right to freedom? No majority can crush a determined minority, and no minority can be sufficiently protected by a little addition to its seats in legislatures. Let us remember that in the world today almost everywhere, a very small minority holds wealth and power and dominates over the great majority.

I have no love for bigotry and dogmatism in religion, and I am glad that they are weakening. Nor do I love communalism in any shape or form. I find it difficult to appreciate why political or economic rights should depend on the membership of a religious group or community. I can fully understand the right to freedom in religion and the right to one's culture, and in India specially, which has always acknowledged and granted these rights, it should be no difficult matter to ensure their continuance. We have only to find out some way whereby we may root out the fear and distrust that darken our horizon today. The politics of a subject race are largely based on fear and hatred; and we have been too long under subjection to get rid of them easily.

I was born a Hindu, but I do not know how far I am justified in calling myself one or in speaking on behalf of Hindus. But birth still counts in this country, and by right of birth I shall venture to submit to the leaders of the Hindus that it should be their privilege to take the lead in generosity. Generosity is not only good morals, but is often good politics and sound expediency. And it is inconceivable to me that in free India the Hindus can ever be powerless. So far as I am concerned I would gladly ask our Muslim and Sikh friends to take what they will without protest or argument from me. I know that the time is coming soon when these labels and appellations will have little meaning and when our struggles will be on

an economic basis. Meanwhile it matters little what our mutual arrangements are, provided only that we do not build up barriers which will come in the way of future progress.

The time has indeed already come when the All Parties Report has to be put aside and we march forward unfettered to our goal. You will remember the resolution of the last Congress which fixed a year of grace for the adoption of the All Parties scheme. That year is nearly over, and the natural issue of that decision for this Congress is to declare in favour of independence and devise sanctions to achieve it.

That year has not brought Dominion Status or the All Parties Constitution. It has brought instead suffering and greater repression of our national and labour movements, and how many of our comrades are today forcibly kept away from us by the alien power! How many of them suffer exile in foreign countries and are refused facilities to return to their motherland! The army of occupation holds our country in its iron grip, and the whip of the master is ever ready to come down on the best of us who dare raise their heads. The answer to the Calcutta resolution has been clear and definite.

Recently there has been a seeming offer of peace. The Viceroy has stated on behalf of the government that the leaders of Indian opinion will be invited to confer with the government on the subject of India's future constitution. The Viceroy meant well and his language was the language of peace. But even a Viceroy's goodwill and courteous phrases arc poor substitutes for the hard facts that confront us. We have sufficient experience of the devious ways of British diplomacy to beware of it. The offer that the British Government made was vague and there was no commitment or promise of performance. Only by the greatest stretch of imagination could it be interpreted as a possible response to the Calcutta resolution. Many leaders of various political parties met together soon after and considered it. They gave it the most favourable interpretation, for they desired peace and were willing to go half way to meet it. But in courteous language they made it clear what the vital conditions for its acceptance were. Many of us who believed in independence and were convinced that the offer was only a device to lead us astray and create division in our ranks, suffered bitter anguish and were torn with doubt. Were we justified in precipitating a terrible national struggle with all its inevitable consequences of suffering for many when there was even an outside chance of honourable peace? With much searching of heart we signed that manifesto, and I know not today if we did right or wrong. Later came the explanations, and amplifications in the British Parliament and elsewhere, and all doubt, if doubts there were, was removed as to the true significance

of the offer. Even so your Working Committee chose to keep open the door of negotiation and left it to this Congress to take the final decision.

During the last few days there has been another discussion of this subject in the British House of Commons, and the Secretary of State for India has endeavoured to point out that successive governments have tried to prove, not only by words, but by deeds also, the sincerity of their faith in regard to India. We must recognize Mr. Wedgwood Benn's desire to do something for India and his anxiety to secure the goodwill of the Indian people. But his speech and the other speeches made in Parliament carry us no further. "Dominion Status in action," to which he has drawn attention, has been a snare for us, and has certainly not reduced the exploitation of India. The burdens on the Indian masses are even greater today because of this "Dominion Status in action" and the so-called constitutional reforms of ten years ago. High Commissioners in London, and representatives on the League of Nations, and the purchase of stores, and Indian governors and high officials are no parts of our demand. We want to put an end to the exploitation of India's poor and to get the reality of power and not merely the livery of office.

Mr. Wedgwood Benn has given us a record of the achievements of the past decade. He could have added to it by referring to Martial Law in the Punjab and the Jallianwala Bagh shooting and the repression and exploitation that have gone on continually during this period of "Dominion Status in action". He has given us some insight into what more of Dominion Status may mean for us. It will mean the shadow of authority to a handful of Indians, and more repression and exploitation of the masses.

What will this Congress do? The conditions for cooperation remain unfulfilled. Can we cooperate so long as there is no guarantee that real freedom will come to us? Can we cooperate when our comrades lie in prison and repression continues? Can we cooperate until we are assured that real peace is sought after and not merely a tactical advantage over us? Peace cannot come at the point of the bayonet, and if we are to continue to be dominated over by an alien people, let us at least be no consenting parties to it.

If the Calcutta resolution holds, we have but one goal today, that of independence. Independence is not a happy word in the world today, for it means exclusiveness and isolation. Civilization has had enough of narrow nationalism and gropes towards a wider cooperation and interdependence. And if we use the word independence we do so in no sense hostile to the larger ideal. Independence for us means

complete freedom from British domination and British imperialism. Having attained our freedom I have no doubt that India will welcome all attempts at world cooperation and federation, and will even agree to give up part of her own independence to a larger group of which she is an equal member.

The British empire today is not such a group, and cannot be so long as it dominates over millions of peoples and holds large areas of the World's surface despite the will of their inhabitants. It cannot be a true commonwealth so long as imperialism is its basis and the exploitation of other races its chief means of sustenance. The British empire today is indeed gradually undergoing a process of political dissolution. It is in a state of unstable equilibrium. The Union of South Africa is not a very happy member of the family, nor is the Irish Free State a willing one. Egypt drifts away. India could never be an equal member of the Commonwealth unless imperialism and all it implies is discarded. So long as this is not done India's position in the empire must be one of subservience, and her exploitation will continue. The embrace of the British empire is a dangerous thing. It cannot be the life-giving embrace of affection freely given and returned. And if it is not that, it will be, what it has been in the past, the embrace of death.

There is talk of world peace and pacts have been signed by the nations of the world. But despite pacts armaments grow and beautiful language is the only homage that is paid to the goddess of peace. Peace can only come when the causes of war are removed. So long as there is the domination of one country over another, or the exploitation of one class by another, there will always be attempts to subvert the existing order, and no stable equilibrium can endure. Out of imperialism and capitalism peace can never come. And it is because the British empire stands for these, and bases itself on the exploitation of the masses, that we can find no willing place in it. No gain that may come to us is worth anything unless it helps in removing the grievous burdens on our masses. The weight of a great empire is heavy to carry, and long our people have endured it. Their backs are bent and down and their spirit has almost broken. How will they share in the commonwealth partnership if the burden of exploitation continues ? Many of the problems we have to face are the problems of vested interests, mostly created or encouraged by the British Government. The interests of rulers of Indian states, of British officials and British capital and Indian capital and of the owners of big zamindaris are ever thrust before us, and they clamour for protection. The unhappy millions who really need protection are almost voiceless, and have few advocates. So long as the British empire continues in India, in whatever shape it

may do so, it will strengthen these vested interests and create more. And each one of them will be a fresh obstacle in our way. Of necessity the government has to rely on oppression, and the symbol of its rule is the secret service with its despicable and contemptible train of agents provocateurs, informers and approvers.

We have had much controversy about independence and Dominion Status, and we have quarrelled about words. But the real thing is the conquest of power by whatever name it may be called. I do not think that any form of Dominion Status applicable to India will give us real power. A test of this power would be the entire withdrawal of the alien army of occupation and economic control. Let us, therefore, concentrate on these and the rest will follow easily.

We stand, therefore, today for the fullest freedom of India. This Congress has not acknowledged and will not acknowledge the right of the British Parliament to dictate to us in any way. To it we make no appeal. But we do appeal to the parliament and conscience of the world, and to them we shall declare, I hope, that India submits no longer to any foreign domination. Today or tomorrow we may not be strong enough to assert our will. We are very conscious of our weakness, and there is no boasting in us or pride of strength. But let no one, least of all England, mistake or underrate the meaning or strength of our resolve. Solemnly, with full knowledge of consequences, I hope, we shall take it and there will be no turning back. A great nation cannot be thwarted for long when once its mind is clear and resolved. If today we fail and tomorrow brings no success, the day after will follow and bring achievement.

We are weary of strife and hunger for peace and opportunity to work constructively for our country. Do we enjoy the breaking up of our homes and the sight of our brave young men going to prison or facing the halter? Does the worker like going on strike and losing even his pittance and starving? He does so by sheer compulsion when there is no other way for him. And we who take this perilous path of national strife do so because there is no other way to an honourable peace. But we long for peace, and the hand of fellowship will always be stretched out to all who may care to grasp it. But behind the hand will be a body which will not bend to injustice and a mind that will not surrender on any vital point.

With the struggle before us the time for determining our future constitution is not yet. For two years or more we have drawn up constitutions, and finally the All Parties Committee put a crown to these efforts by drawing up a scheme of its own which the Congress adopted for a year. The labour that went to the making of this scheme was

not wasted, and India has profited by it. But the year is past and we have to face new circumstances which require action rather than constitution-making. Yet we cannot ignore the problems that beset us and that will make or mar our struggle and our future constitution. We have to aim at social adjustment and equilibrium, and to overcome the forces of disruption that have been the bane of India.

I must frankly confess that I am a socialist and a republican, and am no believer in kings and princes, or in the order which produces the modern kings of industry, who have greater power over the lives and fortunes of men than even the kings of old, and whose methods are as predatory as those of the old feudal aristocracy. I recognise, however, that it may not be possible for a body constituted as is this National Congress, and in the present circumstances of the country, to adopt a full socialistic programme. But we must realise that the philosophy of socialism has gradually permeated the entire structure of society the world over, and almost the only points in dispute are the pace and the methods ot advance to its full realization. India will have to go that way, too, if she seeks to end her poverty and inequality, though she may evolve her own methods and may adapt the ideal to the genius of her race.

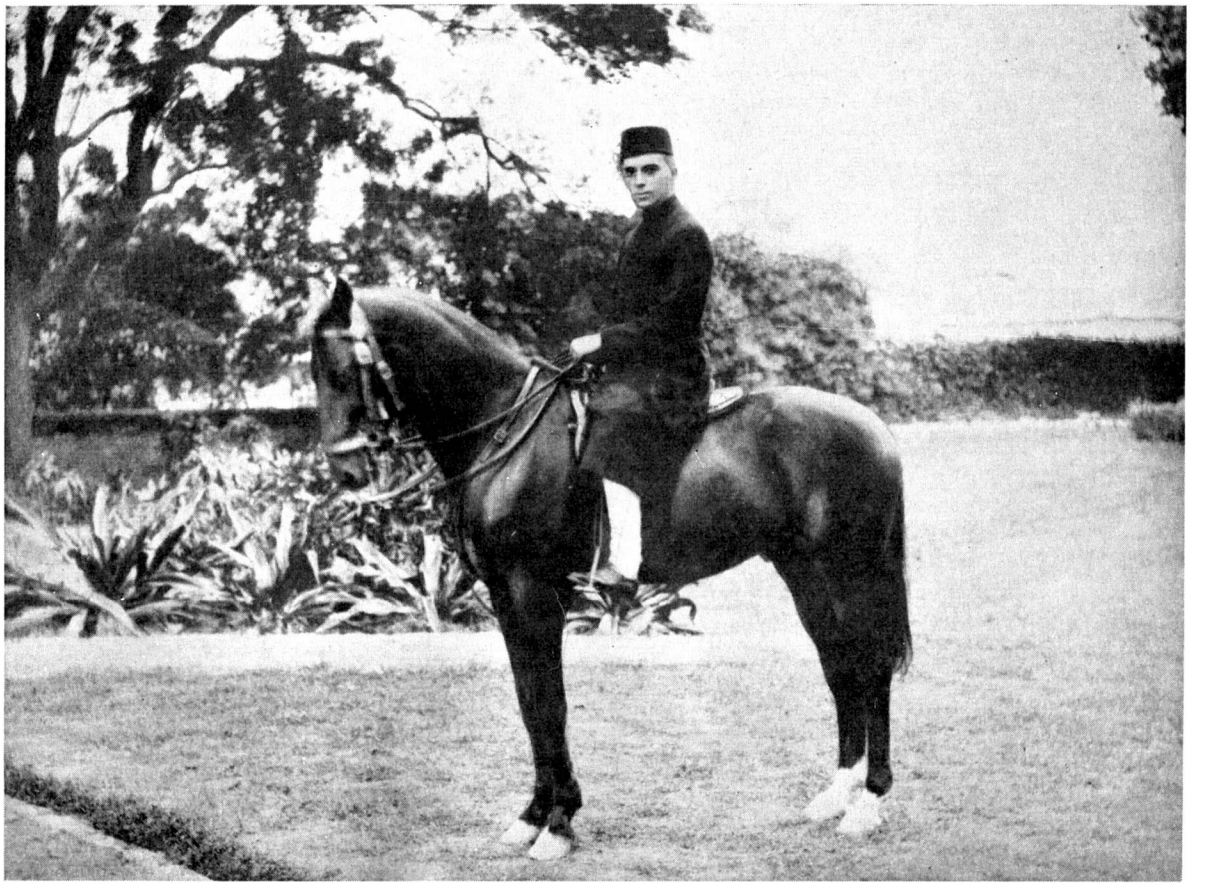
We have three major problems—the minorities, the Indian states, and labour and peasantry. I have dealt already with the question of minorities. I shall only repeat that we must give the fullest assurance by our words and deeds that their culture and traditions will be safe.

The Indian states, even for India, are the most curious relics of a bygone age. Many of their rulers apparently still believe in the divine right of kings—puppet kings though they be—and consider the state and all it contains to be their personal property, which they can squander at will. A few of them have a sense of responsibility and have endeavoured to serve their people, but many of them have hardly any redeeming feature. It is perhaps unjust to blame them, for they are but the products of a vicious system, and it is the system that will ultimately have to go. One of the rulers has told us frankly that even in case of war between India and England he will stand for England and fight against his mother country.[3] That is the measure of his patriotism. It is not surprising, then, that they claim, and their claim finds acceptance with the British Government, that they alone can represent their subjects at any conference, and no one even of their subjects may have any say. The Indian states cannot live apart from the rest of India, and their rulers must, unless they accept their inevitable limitations, go the way of others

3. Ganga Singh of Bikaner : see Selected Works, Vol. 3, p. 262.



LAHORE, 1929



LAHORE, 1929

who thought like them. And the only people who have a right to determine the future of the states must be the people of those states, including the rulers. This Congress which claims self-determination cannot deny it to the people of the states. Meanwhile, the Congress is perfectly willing to confer with such rulers as are prepared to do so, and to devise means whereby the transition may not be too sudden. But in no event can the people of the states be ignored.

Our third major problem is the biggest of all. For India means the peasantry and labour, and to the extent that we raise them and satisfy their wants, will we succeed in our task. And the measure of the strength of our national movement will be the measure of their adherence to it. We can only gain them to our side by our espousing their cause, which is really the country's cause. The Congress has often expressed its goodwill toward them, but beyond that it has not gone. The Congress, it is said, must hold the balance fairly between capital and labour and zamindar and tenant. But the balance has been and is terribly weighted on one side, and to maintain the status quo is to maintain injustice and exploitation. The only way to right it is to do away with the domination of any one class over another. The All India Congress Committee accepted this ideal of social and economic change in a resolution it passed some months ago in Bombay. I hope the Congress will also set its seal on it, and will further draw up a programme of such changes as can be immediately put in operation.

In this programme perhaps the Congress as a whole cannot go very far today. But it must keep the ultimate ideal in view and work for it. The question is not one merely of wages and charity doled out by an employer or landlord. Paternalism in industry or in the land is but a form of charity with all its sting and its utter incapacity to root out the evil. The new theory of trusteeship, which some advocate, is equally barren. For trusteeship means that the power for good or evil remains with the self-appointed trustee, and he may exercise it as he will. The sole trusteeship that can be fair is the trusteeship of the nation and not of one individual or a group. Many Englishmen honestly consider themselves the trustees for India, and yet to what a condition have they reduced our country!

We have to decide for whose benefit industry must be run and the land produce food. Today the abundance that the land produces is not for the peasant or the labourer who work on it; and industry's chief function is supposed to be to produce millionaires. However golden the harvest and heavy the dividends, the mud huts and hovels and nakedness of our people testify to the glory of the British empire and of our present social system.

Our economic programme must, therefore, be based on a human outlook and must not sacrifice man to money. If an industry cannot be run without starving its workers, then the industry must close down. If the workers on the land have not enough to eat, then the intermediaries who deprive them of their full share must go. The least that every worker in field or factory is entitled to is a minimum wage which will enable him to live in moderate comfort and humane hours of labour which do not break his strength and spirit. The All Parties Committee accepted the principle and included it in their recommendations. I hope the Congress will also do so, and will in addition be prepared to accept its natural consequences. Further, that it will adopt the well-known demands of labour for a better life, and will give every assistance to it to organise itself and prepare itself for the day when it can control industry on a cooperative basis.

But industrial labour is only a small part of India, although it is rapidly becoming a force that cannot be ignored. It is the peasantry that cry loudly and piteously for relief, and our programme must deal with their present condition. Real relief can only come by a great change in the land laws and the basis of the present system of land tenure. We have among us many big landowners, and we welcome them. But they must realise that the ownership of large estates' by individuals, which is the outcome of a state resembling the old feudalism of Europe, is a rapidly disappearing phenomenon all over the world. Even in countries which are the strongholds of capitalism the large estates are being split up and given to the peasantry who work on them. In India also we have large areas where the system of peasant proprietorship prevails, and we shall have to extend this all over the country. I hope that in doing so we may have the cooperation of some at least of the big landowners.

It is not possible for this Congress at its annual session to draw up any detailed economic programme. It can only lay down some general principles and call upon the All India Congress Committee to fill in the details of cooperation with the representatives of the Trade Union Congress and other organisations which are vitally interested in this matter. Indeed I hope that the cooperation between this Congress and the Trade Union Congress will grow, and the two organisations will fight side by side in future struggles.

All these are pious hopes till we gain power, and the real problem, therefore, before us is the conquest of power. We shall not do so by subtle reasoning or argument or lawyers' quibbles, but by the forging of sanctions to enforce the nation's will. To that end this Congress must address itself.

The past year has been one of preparation for us, and we have made every effort to reorganize and strengthen the Congress organization. The results have been considerable, and our organisation is in a better state today than at any time since the reaction which followed the noncooperation movement. But our weaknesses are many and are apparent enough. Mutual strife, even within Congress committees, is unhappily too common and election squabbles drain all our strength and energy. How can we fight a great fight if we cannot get over this ancient weakness of ours and rise above our petty selves? I earnestly hope that with a strong programme of action before the country our perspective will improve and we will not tolerate this barren and demoralizing strife.

What can this programme be? Our choice is limited, not by our own constitution, which we can change at our will, but by facts and circumstances. Article I of our Constitution lays down that our methods must be legitimate and peaceful. Legitimate I hope they will always be, for we must not sully the great cause for which we stand by any deed that will bring dishonour to it and that we may ourselves regret later. Peaceful I should like them to be, for the methods of peace are more desirable and more enduring than those of violence. Violence too often brings reaction and demoralization in its train, and in our country specially it may lead to disruption. It is perfectly true that organized violence rules the world today, and it may be that we could profit by its use. But we have not the material or the training for organised violence, and individual or sporadic violence is a confession of despair. The great majority of us, I take it, judge the issue not on moral but on practical grounds, and if we reject the way of violence, it is because it promises no substantial results. But if this Congress or the nation at any future time comes to the conclusion that methods of violence will rid us of slavery, then I have no doubt that it will adopt them. Violence is bad, but slavery is far worse. Let us also remember that the great apostle of nonviolence has himself told us that it is better to fight than to refuse to fight out of cowardice.

Any great movement for liberation today must necessarily be a mass movement, and mass movements must essentially be peaceful, except in times of organised revolt. Whether we have the noncooperation of a decade ago or the modern industrial weapon of the general strike, the basis is peaceful organization and peaceful action. And if the principal movement is a peaceful one, contemporaneous attempts at sporadic violence can only distract attention and weaken it. It is not possible to carry on at one and the same time the two movements side by side. We have to choose and strictly to abide by our choice. What

the choice of this Congress is likely to be I have no doubt. It can only choose a peaceful mass movement.

Should we repeat the programme and tactics of the noncooperation movement? Not necessarily, but the basic idea must remain. Programmes and tactics must be made to fit in with circumstances, and it is neither easy nor desirable for this Congress at this stage to determine them in detail. That should be the work of its executive, the All India Congress Committee. But the principles have to be fixed.

The old programme was one of the three boycotts—councils, law courts and schools—leading up to refusal of service in the army, of non-payment of taxes. When the national struggle is at its height, I fail to see how it will be possible for any person engaged in it to continue in the courts or the schools. But still I think that it will be unwise to declare a boycott of the courts and schools at this stage. The boycott of the legislative councils has led to much heated debate in the past, and this Congress itself has been rent in twain over it. We need not revive that controversy, for the circumstances today are entirely different. I feel that the step the Congress took some years ago to permit Congressmen to enter the councils was an inevitable step, and I am not prepared to say that some good has not resulted from it. But we have exhausted that good, and there is no middle course left today between boycott and full cooperation. All of us know the demoralisation that these sham legislatures have brought in our ranks, and how many of our good men their committees and commissions lure away. Our workers are limited in number, and we can have no mass movement unless they concentrate on it and turn their backs on the palatial council chambers of our legislatures. And if we declare for independence, how can we enter the councils and carry on our humdrum and profitless activities there? No programme or policy can be laid down for ever, nor can this Congress bind the country or even itself to pursue one line of action indefinitely. But today I would respectfully urge the Congress that the only policy in regard to the councils is a complete boycott of them. The All India Congress recommended this course in July last, and the time has come to give effect to it.

Our programme must, therefore, be one of political and economic boycott. It is not possible for us, so long as we are not actually independent, and not even then completely, to boycott another country wholly or to sever all connection with it. But our endeavour must be to reduce all points of contact with the British Government and to rely on ourselves. We must also make it clear that India will not accept responsibility for all the debts that England has piled on her.

The Gaya Congress[4] repudiated liability to pay these debts, and we must repeat this repudiation and stand by it. Such of India's public debt, as has been used for purposes beneficial to India, we are prepared to admit and pay back. But we wholly deny all liability to pay back the vast sums which have been raised so that India may be held in subjection and her burdens may be increased. In particular, the poverty-stricken people of India cannot agree to shoulder the burden of the wars fought by England to extend her domain or consolidate her position in India. Nor can they accept the many concessions lavishly bestowed, without even proper compensation, on foreign exploiters.

This boycott will only be a means to an end. It will release energy and divert attention to the real struggle, which must take the shape of non-payment of taxes and, where possible, with the cooperation of the labour movement, general strikes. But non-payment of taxes must be well organised in specific areas, and for this purpose the Congress should authorise the All India Congress Committee to take the necessary action wherever and whenever it considers desirable.

I have not so far referred to the constructive programme of the Congress. This should certainly continue, but the experience of the last few years shows us that by itself it does not carry us swiftly enough. It prepares the ground for future action, and ten years' silent work is bearing fruit today. In particular we shall, I hope, continue our boycott of foreign cloth and the boycott of British goods.

I have not referred so far to the Indians overseas and I do not propose to say much about them. This is not from any want of fellow-feeling with our brethren in East Africa or South Africa or Fiji or elsewhere, who are bravely struggling against great odds. But their fate will be decided in the plains of India, and the struggle we are launching into is as much for them as for ourselves.

For this struggle we want efficient machinery. Our Congress constitution and organisation have become too archaic and slow-moving, and are ill suited to times of crisis. The time of great demonstrations is past. We want quiet and irresistible action now, and this can only be brought about by the strictest discipline in our ranks. Our resolutions must be passed in order to be acted upon. The Congress will gain in strength, however small its actual membership may become, if it acts in a disciplined way. Small determined minorities have changed the fate of nations. Mobs and crowds can do little. Freedom itself involves restraint and discipline, and each one of us will have to subordinate himself to the larger good.

4. December 1922.

The Congress represents no small minority in the country, and though many may be too weak to join it or to work for it, they look to it with hope and longing to bring them deliverance. Ever since the Calcutta resolution the country has waited with anxious expectation for this great day when this Congress meets. None of us can say what and when we can achieve. We cannot command success. But success often comes to those who dare and act; it seldom goes to the timid who are ever afraid of the consequences. We play for high stakes; and if we seek to achieve great things, it can only be through great dangers. Whether we succeed soon or late, none but ourselves can stop us from high endeavour and from writing a noble page in our country's long and splendid history.

We have conspiracy cases going on in various parts of the country. They are ever with us. But the time has gone for secret conspiracy. We have now an open conspiracy to free this country from foreign rule and you, comrades, and all our countrymen and countrywomen are invited to join it. But the rewards that are in store for you are suffering and prison, and, it may be, death. But you shall also have the satisfaction that you have done your little bit for India, the ancient but ever young, and have helped a little in the liberation of humanity from its present bondage.

Vande Mataram.

3. Concluding Address[1]

The declaration of independence as your creed has already resounded all over the world wherever Indians are living.[2] They can hold their heads high and they are full of hope, but remember today you have merely set your foot on the right path. The way to be traversed is full of difficulties, but it is a great thing that you have adopted the right course. This Congress has attracted attention all over the country. Some have liked and some disliked our decision. Some threaten to defy us. That would be a matter of pain, but the fact remains that the Congress has now taken a step which will enable you to differentiate between those who stand for mere reform and the present order, and those who stand for a radical change in our previous creed, a creed which enabled all sorts of men to remain in our ranks, and pull us in all directions, thereby delaying our onward progress. I am not worried by the statements that the Congress will, as a result of secession, lose its strength. If there is one lesson the world's history teaches us, it is that strength does not come of sheep-like behaviour, but through a band of disciplined, organised men, pledged to action.

Vande Mataram.

1. Lahore, 1 January 1930. *The Hindu,* 2 January 1930.
2. In the resolution passed at Lahore on 31 December 1929, the Congress had declared the attainment of Swaraj or complete independence to be its aim and had called on Congressmen to resign from legislatures and official committees and not participate in elections.

6

PREPARATION FOR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

1. To Secretaries, P.C.Cs[1]

Allahabad
January 6th, 1930

Dear Sir,

The office of the A.I.C.C. will send you soon the resolutions passed by the Congress, the A.I.C.C. and the Working Committee in Lahore. These resolutions, as you must have appreciated, are very important and require immediate action. In particular, I would draw your attention to the following steps that should be taken without delay.

1. Resignation from councils. Kindly address all Congress members of the central and provincial legislatures from your province and ask them to resign forthwith. Names of all those who resign should be forwarded immediately to the A.I.C.C. office. Names of such Congress members as do not resign in spite of the Congress resolution should also be forwarded. In case any member resigns and then stands for re-election, please intimate the fact to this office.
2. A campaign to enrol Congress members and volunteers and to recover subscriptions from last year's members should immediately be started. We have heavy work before us and it is desirable that we should put our organisation in order immediately. It may be that after some weeks we may have to concentrate on more important work and we may not have time then to look after the organisational side of the Congress. It is necessary, therefore, that this side be attended to immediately. I would suggest also that every province should endeavour to have a body of fully trained and uniformed volunteers. These may not be many but even a small number will be of great help.
3. Holding of public meetings to explain the Congress resolutions and to prepare.
4. National celebration on Sunday, January 26th, of independence or Purna Swaraj or *Azadi*. This celebration must be organised on as big and impressive a scale as possible. I am taking the liberty to send you a copy of a press statement I have issued about this

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-l/1930, p. 96, N.M.M.L

celebration. It is not enough to have a celebration at the chief town of the district. There should be meetings and flag unfurlings in as many villages as possible. Full reports of all such celebrations should be sent to this office and to the press.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Statement to the Press[1]

The Congress Working Committee has fixed Sunday, January 26th, for country-wide celebration of the adoption of complete independence or Purna Swaraj as its immediate objective by the Congress. This celebration will, I trust, take place on as wide a scale as possible so that the message of independence may be carried to all the towns and villages of India. The provincial Congress committees and district and local committees are requested to take immediate steps to organise this national celebration. Detailed directions will be issued soon.

Meanwhile, it is desirable to have preliminary meetings everywhere to explain the scope and implications of the Congress resolutions and to prepare for the great demonstration of January 26th. Local programmes may be drawn up by the respective committees for this day. It should be remembered that January 26th is the last Sunday of the month, that is to say, the day on which the national flag is to be hoisted at eight in the morning.

I would suggest that the flag should be unfurled as usual at this time. Later in the day there should be processions, and public meetings should be held at five in the evening under the national flag.

1. Allahabad, 6 January 1930. *The Searchlight,* 15 January 1930.

3. To Abdur Rahim[1]

January 7th, 1930

Dear Friend,[2]

I have just received your open letter.[3] I have read it carefully. I agree with much that you say but I do not quite see what you would like me to do. I regret, of course, that there should have been a misunderstanding in Lahore resulting in a section of our colleagues walking out from the A.I.C.C.[4] I regret specially that this should have been due to any action of mine. I had been hoping that in spite of what has happened there would be no difficulty in our cooperating in action. Personally, I fail to see what vital differences there are between the two viewpoints.

For the moment I leave out the question of boycott of councils because Subhas Babu himself proposed this in his amendment. I take it we are agreed about it. Subhas Babu laid stress in a recent statement on a boycott of local bodies. I entirely agree and you will remember that the old Working Committee recommended this but the Subjects Committee was not in favour of it. Then there is the question of including the organisations of workers and peasants. Some mention of this was made in Subhas Babu's amendment. I entirely agree. The question is how best this can be brought about. Finally, there was the question of a parallel government. I have no doubt that a time will come when a regular parallel government will have to be established in India. There is nothing against it in the Congress resolution. At the same time I feel that vague and tall talk often defeats its very purpose. Any campaign for independence must necessarily aim at parallel government at some stage. Civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes in a particular area practically means the organisation of a parallel form of government.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-126/1930, pp. 13-15, N.M.M.L.
2. A Congressman of Bengal.
3. Abdur Rahim had written that Jawaharlal should not give adventurers any opportunity to discredit the Congress and that many Congressmen were jealous of Jawaharlal becoming president at such a young age.
4. At the A.I.C.C. meeting on 1 January 1930, differences had arisen on the procedure for electing members, resulting in the formation of the Democratic Congress Party.

My difficulty is that I do not understand what vital difference there is in the programme suggested by the newly formed Democratic Party and the programme of the Congress. There is a great deal of talk about left wings and right wings. I wish there was some clear thinking also. Mr. Satyamurti, for instance, in a recent statement practically says that the declaration of independence was for show purposes only and he can easily conceive of our going to a round table conference and agreeing to Dominion Status. I cannot conceive this.

The whole question is one of calm discussion. I fail to appreciate the inclusion of the personal factor in politics and I for one would very gladly discuss this or any other subject quite apart from incidents of the like. I can assure you that I have not the least bitterness against anybody. How can I have bitterness against people who have been my valued colleagues for years past ? Of course, in the nature of things, people's temperaments and methods of work differ but that is no reason why there should not be cooperation whenever necessary.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. To Mahatma Gandhi[1]

Allahabad
7.1.30

My dear Bapuji,
I enclose some odd notes.[2] I am sure they are perfectly useless but still I am sending them. I do not quite know what kind of information you require for the statement. Probably I am sending this too late. Anyhow this will not make much difference.

I shall expect your statement and resolution for the 26th in a few days. Could you also add some directions for the observance of the

1. Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Serial No. 16335.
2. On the exploitation of India, made by Jawaharlal from Sunderland's *India in Bondage*, Lajpat Rai's *Unhappy India* and other books.

day? For instance, should there be speeches at meetings or just a reading of the statement? I think that it would be desirable if meetings were all held at one time—5 p.m. This may be suggested, with local freedom to change the time.

I enclose a letter from Rajagopalachari.[3] I think there is something in what he says. There are so many statements and counter-statements in the press that the issues are likely to be clouded. Personally I dislike touring on a big scale but if you think I should rush about I shall do so.

Rajagopalachari's idea that we may get some of the non-Congress members out of the legislatures seems to me to be amazingly optimistic. There is no chance of this happening. Indeed it is clear that many Congress members even will stick on or resign and then seek election. I do not think we need mind this very much, provided we can create a boycott mentality in the people and take action against all Congressmen who disobey the Congress resolution.

But even apart from the council boycott it seems desirable to make the country feel that we are in earnest. If we remain quiet for some weeks it may have a bad effect.

Father is going to Calcutta for the Bengal dispute[4] on the 10th January.

Yours afflv.,
Jawaharlal

3. Rajagopalachari had written that Jawaharlal and Mahatma Gandhi should tour the country to give publicity to the decisions of the Lahore Congress.
4. Long-standing differences among Congressmen in Bengal and the rivalry between Subhas Chandra Bose and J. M. Sen Gupta had been aggravated by election disputes.

5. To R. Bridgeman[1]

January' 8th, 1930

My dear Bridgeman,

Your cable reached me in Lahore suggesting to me that I should publicly withdraw my signature from the Delhi Manifesto before the Congress session. I am afraid I have done no such thing. But, what is

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D.23/1929-30, p. 27, N.M.M.L.

more important, the Congress as a body has publicly withdrawn from it. Good advice is always welcome but it seems to me that people have a tendency to jump to conclusions without sufficient data. If I had followed the advice of your section and announced the withdrawal of my signature I have no doubt that this would have created vicious difficulties in the way of the Congress itself withdrawing from it.

We have got a stiff time ahead of us here. Probably the Labour Government will have the honour of sending some of us to prison before long.

Ever yours,
Jawaharlal

6. On the Boycott of Councils[1]

In response to the Congress mandate, a large number of members in the central and provincial legislatures have already sent in their resignations, and intimation of fresh resignations is being received daily by the All India Congress Committee office. A number of press statements, many emanating from New Delhi, have been however issued recently, attacking the boycott of councils. Leading Congressmen have described the main resolution as outrageous and others have stated that this resolution does not represent the view of the country. I should like to remind all these critics that this resolution was passed by the Congress almost unanimously, less than a dozen persons voting against it in the final stage. All the amendments, with the exception of one, were defeated by overwhelming majorities. In particular, the amendment for the deletion of the clause relating to the boycott of legislatures received very little support, only a handful voting for it. The only amendment largely supported, but ultimately defeated, was for the removal of the clauses expressing appreciation of the Viceroy's efforts. This did not affect in any way the operative part of the resolution. It may therefore be asserted with confidence that the Congress almost unanimously approved the line of action laid down in the principal resolution. Any person who does not act accordingly or does not resign his seat in the legislature or, having resigned, seeks re-election clearly disobeys the Congress.

1. Statement to the press, Allahabad, 9 January 1930. *The Hindu,* 10 January 1930.

7. On the Treatment of Political Prisoners[1]

Some months ago, the courageous hunger strike of the political prisoners in Lahore and elsewhere concentrated public attention on the treatment and condition of political prisoners all over India. Moved by public indignation, the government gave all sorts of assurances and appointed committees to enquire into their conditions. As usual, the public was lulled into the belief that something was being done, but as a matter of fact little was done and the government even ignored the reports of the committees appointed by itself. The Kakori prisoners, in particular, were punished for their temerity in going on hunger strike. The U.P. Jails Enquiry Committee suggested last year that these Kakori prisoners should be given better treatment and should be put in a higher class. No attention has apparently been paid to these recommendations.

Mr. Sachindra Nath Sanyal,[2] according to a jail visitor, was absolutely segregated and was put under fetters. Owing to having been kept for about six months in solitary confinement, he began to show signs of mental derangement. He has lost 24 lbs. in weight, of which 5 lbs. have been lost during the last three months.

Mr. Suresh Chandra Bhattacharji,[3] I understand, has contracted tuberculosis and is now in the Sultanpur jail. He has lost over 30 lbs. in weight.

Messrs. Ramkrishna Khatri,[4] Bhupendra Nath Sanyal,[5] Rajkumar Singh[6] and Ramnath[7] have also been made to undergo all manners of ill treatment and jail punishments.

1. Statement to the press, Allahabad, 11 January 1930. *The Hindustan Times* 15 January 1930.
2. (1893-1943); a Bengali revolutionary involved in the Lahore, Banaras and Kakori Conspiracy cases; released in 1931 but kept in detention from 1941 till his death.
3. Of Kanpur, serving a sentence of seven years.
4. Of Chanda, serving a sentence of ten years.
5. Of Allahabad, serving a sentence of five years.
6. Of Kanpur, serving a sentence of ten years.
7. Ram Nath Pandey of Varanasi, serving a sentence of five years.

It is difficult to get full information but even the scanty information that trickles through the high walls of jails is sufficient to make the public realise that these political prisoners are being subjected to vindictive and inhuman treatment.

8. The Coming Struggle[1]

Every possible chance has been given to the British Government for a compromise but they apparently want a compromise on their own terms which the Congress cannot possibly accept. The Lahore Congress has, therefore, finally decided about independence.

Those who were responsible for this decision did not take it in a moment, in a hurry or in a fit of anger but after a most anxious and careful consideration and with full appreciation of consequences. There is no turning back from it and every effort will be made to fight for independence in accordance with the methods indicated by the Congress.

This year is likely to see a big struggle. The Congress cannot proclaim at this stage the details of every step that will be taken. For the moment we must concentrate on taking the message of independence to all parts of India. For this purpose the 26th of January has been fixed as the day of national celebration. Very soon the Working Committee of the Congress will be meeting to suggest other steps.

The strength of this movement must necessarily be with the masses, the peasantry and the industrial workers. But the city-dwellers and members of various; professions are equally interested in the great cause and they must take full part in it or they will be left behind by the workers and the peasants.

During the next month or two we should concentrate on enrolling Congress members so that our hands might be free for other and more important work later.

The die has been cast, and the choice taken after the fullest consideration. There is no alternative for India now but to fight on till full independence is achieved.

1. Speech at Allahabad, 13 January 1930. From *The Leader*, 15 January 1930.

Whatever little good the councils might do ordinarily it is inconceivable to me to carry on the work in the councils and at the same rime fight for independence on an intensive scale.

The choice before the country is between petty reformist activity and activity meant to bring about a revolutionary change. The two cannot be carried on together by the same persons. Councils mean reformism and indeed there is very little of reform even now. Therefore, if we were serious in our declaration at Lahore, we must inevitably boycott the councils and concentrate on direct action.

The response so far has been considerable. There are, however, some people who are raising doubts and difficulties, but the Congress has decided in favour of the boycott almost unanimously and this programme is going to be acted upon strictly. There IS no doubt that opinion in favour of this boycott is overwhelming.

9. To Mahatma Gandhi[1]

Allahabad
January 13/14th, 1930

My dear Bapuji,

Your letter with your draft statement reached me late in the evening. I was under the impression that in addition to this statement there would be a resolution for the meeting on the 26th. I had issued instructions to this effect to the provincial Congress committees. I sent to you a telegram[2] accordingly. I am however not quite sure that a resolution, apart from the statement, will be necessary.

As the time at our disposal is limited I am typing this letter myself in the small hours of the morning. I have also just typed a slightly revised statement for your approval. This has been done in a great hurry and I am not at all satisfied with my draft. However, here it goes. Even if there is a little delay in issuing it, it will not matter so much.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. 26/1930, pp. 31-33, N.M.M.L.
2. Not printed.

I do not particularly fancy giving a quotation in our statement from Trevelyan.[8] The quotation itself may be apt but it is merely an expression of opinion which seems to me to be somewhat out of place in the statement.

I presume the figures you have given have been carefully verified. I do not know where you got the figure about customs in Russia. It is probably correct. But the conditions in Russia are very different and the Soviet Government controls all imports and hardly permits anything but necessary articles to come in. In the average daily income the figure given is seven pice; the average daily tax is stated to be 2.5 pies. I presume this is correct.

I am not all clear how you can keep the Congress out of any programme of civil disobedience. However this can be discussed when all of us meet in Sabarmati. I shall certainly come a day or two before the Working Committee meets.

Father is still in Calcutta and must be busy with the Bengal dispute. I expect him bade on the 15th. I doubt if he can travel about much just yet but he may be able to go to a few places. He has been very poorly since his return from Lahore. His blood pressure has been very high.

For the short resolution for the 26th meeting I had drafted the following :

> We, the people of..., assembled here to demonstrate that India must be completely free, do solemnly resolve that we will strive to our utmost capacity so that Purna Swaraj may be attained, and we will carry out the Congress instructions issued from time to time in this behalf.

I do not like this nor am I sure on reconsideration that such a resolution is necessary after a longer statement. But I give it for what it is worth.

I shall await your reply.

Yours affly.,
Jawaharlal

3. Sir Charles Edward Trevelyan (1807-1886); Governor of Madras, 1859; Finance Member, Government of India, 1862.
The quotation read : "Educated in the same way, interested in the same things, engaged in the same pursuits with ourselves they (Indian educated youth) become more English than Hindus just as Roman provincials became more Roman than Gauls or Italians."

10. To Syed Mahmud[1]

Allahabad
January 15th, 1930

My dear Mahmud,

Your letter of the 12th. I can well appreciate your difficulties but I am afraid there is no help for it. All of us have to face some difficulty or other.

I am going to Cawnpore on the morning of the 19th for a day, from there to Lucknow for another day, returning to Allahabad on the 21st. If you come on any other day I shall be glad to meet you.

Regarding the Frontier investigation, it is possible and even probable that your committee may not be able to go there.[2] If so, you should proceed nonetheless to the nearest place to the Frontier Province and hold your investigations there. We were told by the Frontier people that this was quite easy and they will be able to bring witnesses to you. Meanwhile you should ask them to supply members of your committee with copies of all the rules and regulations to which they object. Also, a full statement of their grievances. Your committee will then be armed with material to examine and cross-examine.

I am very keen on going to the Frontier Province myself but I am sure that if I announce the fact I shall not be allowed to go. If I can manage it I should like to go there quietly without any previous intimation. I should like to do so when your committee is there. You need not mention this to others yet.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

1. Syed Mahmud Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. The Congress had appointed a committee to examine the working of the North West Frontier regulations But. as Jawaharlal expected, the government prevented them from proceeding beyond AttoCk and reaching Peshawar.

11. To Mahatma Gandhi[1]

Allahabad
January 17, 1930

My dear Bapuji,

I received two telegrams from you yesterday. From the first telegram it was obvious that my express telegram and my press message sent to *Young India* had been stopped or delayed. I have learnt from a friend in Agra that the government had stopped these telegrams. Apparently they allowed them to go later. But I do not know if they were censored or not. It is obvious that we cannot rely on the Telegraph Office in future, and the Post Office is almost as doubtful. I shall send telegrams to you today but to make sure that my communication reaches you I am sending this by a messenger.

Father returned from Calcutta yesterday and I have discussed the statement with him. He felt that the paragraphs of percentages, etc., were out of place. I feel this way too, but I do not wish to make any radical changes at this stage. A few changes we are making, which I hope you will not mind. I am giving these separately. I shall issue the statement to the press, to the P.C.Cs and a number of individuals today. Probably I shall have difficulties in getting it printed because press people are very timid.

Having regard to various developments and the news in the paper it seems likely that the government will try to obstruct us as much as possible. I agree with you that stress should not be laid on processions. At the same time it is difficult to prohibit them. I propose to send a circular today discouraging processions but at the same time leaving the matter in the hands of the local committee. I shall give them the reasons which you yourself have mentioned.

It is possible that an attempt may be made to prevent the demonstration on the 26th January either by Sec. 144 or by other means. Father thinks, and I agree with him, that express directions should be issued to provincial and district committees in regard to this matter. I feel that if such an order is made merely prohibiting a meeting we cannot

1. A.I.C.C. File No. 26/1930, p. 63, N.M.M.L.

submit to it. We should gather together peaceably and make the declaration and disperse. If even this is sought to be prohibited we should disobey the order and take the consequences. There is hardly time to consult in this matter. I shall not issue a public statement but I propose to send a circular to provincial committees more or less on these lines.

I am sending this letter with a young man named Murari Sharina. You may, if you like, send him back with any message or keep him in the Ashram till we come. If he remains in the Ashram I hope some work will be given to him.

Yours affly.,
Jawaharlal

12. Telegram to Mahatma Gandhi[1]

17.1.30

Your telegram just in time. Changes made.[2] Also other changes which communicated Young India. Separate resolution unnecessary.

Jawaharlal

1. A.I.C.C. File No. 26/1930, p. 59, N.M.M.L.
2. In the Independence Pledge released on 17 January 1930.

13. The Independence Pledge[1]

The following resolution[2] is issued on behalf of the Working Committee for adoption at public meetings all over India on Purna Swaraj Day, Sunday, January 26th, 1930. The resolution must be read at the

1. Issued at Allahabad, 17 January 1930. A.I.C.C. File No. 31/1930, pp. 3-5, N.M.M.L.
2. This was the joint draft of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal.

meeting in the language of the province and those present should be invited to signify by show of hands their assent to it. Provincial committees should immediately get the resolution translated and widely distributed in their respective provinces.

We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj or complete independence.

India has been ruined economically. The revenue derived from our people is out of all proportion to our income. Our average income is seven piece, less than two pence per day, and of the heavy taxes we pay, 20% are raised from the land revenue derived from the peasantry and 3% from the salt tax which falls most heavily on the poor.

Village industries, such as hand-spinning, have been destroyed, leaving the peasantry idle for at least four months in the year, and dulling their intellect for want of handicrafts, and nothing has been substituted, as in other countries, for the crafts thus destroyed.

Customs and currency have been so manipulated as to heap further burdens on the peasantry. British manufactured goods constitute the bulk of our imports and customs revenue from these, which ought to have been used to lessen the burden of taxation on the masses, is 44 times lighter in India than it is in Russia and 24 times and 8 times, respectively, less heavy than it is in the United States of America and Germany. The arbitrary manipulation of the exchange ratio has resulted in millions being drained away from the country'.

Politically, India's status has never been so reduced as under the British regime. No reforms have given real political power to the people. The tallest of us have to bend before foreign authority. The rights of free expression of opinion and free association have been denied to us and many of our countrymen are compelled to live in exile abroad and cannot return to their homes. All administrative talent is killed and the masses have to be satisfied with petty village offices and clerkships.

Culturally, the system of education has torn us from our moorings and our training has made us hug the very chains that bind us.
Spiritually, compulsory disarmament has made us unmanly and the presence of an alien army of occupation, employed with deadly effect to crush in us the spirit of resistance, has made us think that we cannot look after ourselves or put up a defence against foreign aggression, or even defend our homes and families from the attacks of thieves, robbers and miscreants.
We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country. We recognise, however, that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. We will therefore prepare ourselves by withdrawing, so far as we can, all voluntary association from the British Government, and will prepare for civil disobedience, including non-payment of taxes. We are convinced that if we can but withdraw our voluntary help and stop payment of taxes without doing violence, even under provocation, the end of this inhuman rule is assured. We, therefore, hereby solemnly resolve to carry out the Congress instructions issued from time to time for the purpose of establishing Purna Swaraj.

14. Circular to P.C.Cs[1]

January 17th, 1930

Dear Comrade,
I have pleasure in enclosing a copy of the resolution to be passed at the meeting to be held on Sunday, January 26th—Purna Swaraj Day or Independence Day. I regret the delay in sending it. This was largely due to the fact that the government held up our telegrams and made it difficult for members of the Working Committee to consult each other.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. 31/1930, p. 39, N.M.M.L.

Kindly take immediate steps to get this resolution translated in your provincial language and broadcast throughout the province. The greatest publicity should be given to it and every effort should be made to make the celebration of January 26th worthy of India.

Enquiries are made about a detailed programme for the day. I have already suggested something through the press and I find that the Hindustani Seva Dal has also put forward a programme of celebration. In this connection it should be remembered that the essential part of the celebration is the meeting in the evening where the declaration is to be adopted. Everything should be done to make this a solemn and successful ceremony, and nothing should be done to divert attention from it.

Processions are ordinarily desirable. But it is not desirable to ask for police permission for processions on the 26th. On the other hand, if the police prohibit a procession the question arises immediately whether the police order should be obeyed or not. If obeyed it will create an unfortunate impression, if disobeyed then this disobedience itself will become the principal event of the day and the subsequent meeting may sink into insignificance. I have placed these considerations before you so that you may be able to advise your local committees accordingly. On the whole, it is not desirable to have a proces-sion where there is any danger of our having to face this dilemma. But the whole matter rests with you and your local committees.

In case, however, an attempt is made by the use of Sec. 144 or otherwise to stop the meeting itself, the order should certainly be disobeyed and we should try to hold the meeting in spite of it. We cannot give up our meeting or declaration simply because an order under Sec. 144 has been issued. In case the meeting has to be held in the face of prohibition, care should be taken that everything is done in a peaceful and disciplined way.

The meeting should be held at 5 p.m. in the evening punctually under the national flag. Speeches are not to be encouraged. Whereever possible the national flag should be hoisted at eight in the morning. The national flag should also be flown on as many public and private buildings as possible.

Please send to the A.I.C.C. office full reports of the celebrations in your office.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

15. To Abdur Rahim[1]

January 21st, 1930

Dear Friend,

After you saw me here I received your letter of the 11th January from Lahore. Later I received your letter of the 15th. I have just come back to Allahabad after a short absence.

As for the publication of my reply to you, you are perfectly welcome to do so should you so desire. There is no question of my issuing statements on the subject.

I do not know if it is worthwhile our discussing the events that happened in Lahore. I would point out to you however that it was a physical impossibility in Lahore to consult anybody. The only consultations which I attended were the Working Committee meetings. I cannot remember even a short talk on any important matter with anyone outside these meetings. The personnel of the new Working Committee was considered for the first time half an hour before the A.I.C.C. meeting to elect it. The whole Congress was such a tremendous rush for some of us that one had little time to think or do anything except the immediate matter facing one. It seems to me that people do not realise this when they start criticising, and they develop imaginary grievances of having been ignored and the like. Not being a sentimental person myself it is not easy for me to understand sentimentality in others. But these matters are over and done with and I do not know why they should be discussed again.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G 126/1930, p. 1, N.M.M.L.

16. To T.V.K. Naidu[1]

January 21st, 1930

Dear Sir,[2]

I have your letter of the 15th. I regret greatly that it is not possible for the National Congress to give any financial aid for the conduct of the appeal.[3] Ordinarily the Congress funds are not used for this purpose. After the independence resolution this has become even more difficult. Very soon it may be that a large number of Congressmen may be arrested and it will be impossible for us to spend money on their defence. We have therefore decided that Congress funds should not be spent for this purpose. It is open, of course, for private funds to be raised.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-42/1930, p. 9, N.M.M.L.
2. A South Indian Railway labour leader.
3. Naidu and some other labour leaders had appealed to the High Court against a sentence of ten years' imprisonment for conspiracy.

17. To Bhagwan Din Mishra[1]

January 22nd, 1930

Dear Sir,[2]

I have received your letter of the 17th January with a copy of Mr. Bhandari's resignation,[3] I am not aware of any rule or act which pre-vents a practising lawyer from being a member of the Congress even

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1930, p. 223, N.M.M.L.
2. Secretary, Congress Committee, Bahraich, U.P.
3. Bhandari, a lawyer and president of the Bahraich Congress Committee, had resigned from the Congress on the ground that according to the Bar Council rules and the Legal Practitioners Act, a lawyer could not be a member of the Congress "when independence is the creed of the Congress."

after the passing of the independence resolution. It is open to anyone, of course, to have his own opinion regarding the desirability of continuing to practise after believing in independence. The fact remains that the Lahore Congress deliberately did not call for a boycott of law courts. Thus it left such of its members as are practising lawyers free to practise. As a matter of fact some very prominent Congressmen who are in favour of independence are still practising in the courts. Thus the difficulty that you have mentioned does not arise.

It is clear however that people who believe in independence may have to face government action and any person who is not prepared to face any such action should keep himself away from the line of danger. That is for each one to decide for himself.

Yours truly,
Jawaharlal Nehru

18. To R.S. Misra[1]

January 23rd, 1930

Dear Friend,[2]

I do not know what to say about the Independence for India League. As a matter of fact it seems to be dying a natural death. So far as our U.P. branch is concerned, as we have had some money we are utilising it for opening a village centre which will work in full cooperation with the District Congress Committee. My own idea is that the League should continue on paper but otherwise should be dormant. In case of need it can wake up.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1930, p. 219, N.M.M.L.
2. Secretary of the Betul branch of the Independence for India League.

19. On the Duty of Youth[1]

Do not be led away by wrong statements that are appearing in newspapers in this province against the Congress resolution alleging that there is a great revolt against the Congress in the country. Seldom has any controversial resolution before the Congress been passed with such great unanimity as the independence resolution, and yet in spite of this unanimity there appear in the press long statements against the decision.

If these statements are analysed, the real dispute would appear to be over the question of participating in the legislatures. I do not understand how any one can be in a council and also carry out the Congress resolution. I fail to understand the mentality of some people who think that we can get anything only by pleasing the British. There is a sufficiently large number of people in the country who will not be satisfied with anything less than complete independence. I hope that the youth movement will follow the programme of work to be framed on behalf of the Congress. If there is strong discipline in our youth movement, nothing else is needed.

1. Address to the Youth League, Allahabad, 23 January 1930. From *The Hindustan Times*, 26 January 1930.

20. To Syed Mahmud[1]

January 23rd, 1930

My dear Mahmud,

Your letter and the translation only reached me today. I have wired[2] to you that it is not necessary to have processions on the 26th. We do

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-131/1930, p. 33, N.M.M.L.
2. Telegram not printed.

not want to have a fight with the government about the procession but we must have the meeting in spite of government prohibition if necessary. If Sec. 144 is applied to prevent the meetings, nonetheless the meeting should be held. Of course, under these circumstances care should be taken that the disobedience is in a disciplined way. Personally, I do not think that meetings will be interfered with.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

21. Circular to Secretaries, P.C.Cs[1]

Allahabad
January 24th, 1930

Dear Friend,

A large number of Congress members of the legislatures have already resigned in obedience to the Congress mandate. Some have not done so. Those who refuse to resign clearly break their election pledges. Those who resign but stand again for election do so in violation of the Congress mandate. The matter will come up before the meeting of the Working Committee which will be held on February 14th. Our office would like to have full and authorised lists of all those who have resigned and those who have not done so, or who seek reelection, for the consideration of the Working Committee. Please also inform us what steps your P.C.C. has taken or intends to take against those Congressmen in your province who oppose the Congress mandate.

I should like to remind you that the Congress direction is that we should abstain from participating "directly or indirectly" in future elections. Thus we should abstain from voting or otherwise assisting candidates. This should be made perfectly clear to all your local committees and to the voters in your province. Congressmen should take no sides in future election campaigns. It may be, of course, that sometimes one non-Congress candidate is preferable to another. But even

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-l/1930, p. 83, N.M.M.L.

so we should keep studiously apart and our only appeal must be to the electors not to vote.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

22. Circular to P.C.Cs[1]

Allahabad
January 24th, 1930

Dear Friend,

The Independence Day celebrations will see all over India a great display of national flags and emblems. It is highly desirable however that even after January 26th we should encourage in every way this display. Carriages and motor cars could have little flags attached to them. Even more desirable is the wearing of independence badges by individuals. I would suggest for your consideration that your committee should carry on a widespread campaign for the wearing of these badges and little flags on pins. The propaganda and psychological effect of this will be very great.

Many P.C.Cs and other organisations have already issued some kind of badges. I shall be obliged to you if you could send this office a few samples of the badges you may have issued or come across. After a comparison of the various badges we may be able to suggest one uniform badge for all-India adoption. Arrangements could also be made for large-scale production of this badge.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Hardikar Papers, N.M.M.L.

23. On Independence Day Celebrations[1]

In accordance with the decision of the Executive Committee of the Indian National Congress, the people of India will celebrate tomorrow all over the country as Independence Day beginning with the hoisting of our national flag.

The resolution, printed in hundreds of languages and dialects, will be distributed and voted on by the people.

Tire National Congress's decisions are meeting with enthusiastic response all over the country. Huge demonstrations have been organised. A great many members of the official legislatures have resigned in obedience to the Congress's mandate.

The National Congress's executive meeting will be held on February 14th to determine further action.

1. Cable to the North American Newspapers Alliance. Allahabad, 25 January 1930. The *Bombay Chronicle,* 15 March 1930.

24. To G.V. Ketkar[1]

January 25th, 1930

Dear Sir,[2]

I have just received your letter of the 22nd January. I think there is some misconception in regard to the Working Committee resolution. The resolution in no way attempts to go beyond the Lahore Congress resolution.[3]

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G. 131/1930, pp. 3-7, N.M.M.L.
2. (b. 1898); editor of *Kesari* and *Mahratta*; president, Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee, 1932; general secretary, Hindu Mahasabha, 1940.
3. Ketkar had felt that turning the Independence Day programme into some kind of civil disobedience had not been envisaged by the Lahore Congress.

I do not fully appreciate the difference between attainment and establishment. Attainment of Swaraj must necessarily be contemporaneous with some kind of establishment of it, otherwise there would be a gap when there is no government in the country. The distinction is a very technical one and I do not think it is worthwhile laying any stress on it. As for the establishment of a parallel government, there is no mention of this as such in the Working Committee resolution or the Lahore Congress resolution. Mr. Subhas Bose's amendment which mentioned this was rejected not because it advocated a parallel government but because as a whole it was not approved of by the house. Any movement for Swaraj, and specially any movement which has civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes as its basis, must necessarily envisage at some stage or other a parallel government which later on gives way to a Swaraj government. There is nothing in the Lahore Congress resolution against such a process. Some people did not like an immediate declaration that a parallel government be started because they felt that it will merely remain a declaration and no practical effect could be given to it. There was no difference in principle.

However, so far as the Working Committee resolution is concerned there is no reference to parallel government in it. Nor is there even an indirect hint of it at this stage. It may be that later developments, should we gain enough strength, may entitle us to talk of parallel governments.

If we fight for the attainment of Purna Swaraj we fight to gain power. If we gain power we exercise it in trying to control the government of the country. When our control is considerable we become the government of the day.

The idea of withdrawing voluntary association from the government is inherent in any form of noncooperation or civil disobedience on a national basis. Of course, it is not humanly possible to withdraw all association so long as another government controls the machinery of state. But we can try to withdraw voluntary association as far as we can. This is all that the Working Committee resolution says and this, I think, was very clearly indicated in the Lahore Congress resolution. Indeed, it has been the fundamental basis of Congress policy since 1920. You are perfectly right in saying that the withdrawal of association with the government should include the boycott of law courts and schools. But for various reasons the Congress did not preclude us from withdrawing our association as much as possible. The phrase used in the Working Committee resolution is a general one and does

not specify the items on which withdrawal should take place. Obviously the Working Committee is not empowered to make radical suggestions in this behalf. It will be for the All India Committee to do so if considered necessary.

The Working Committee resolution for the 26th January does not declare independence in the sense that independence has been achieved or that we are going to function as an independent country afterwards. This point has been made perfectly clear, if there was any doubt, by Gandhiji. All that the Working Committee resolution does is to confirm the change of creed. I do not think any person who voted for the Lahore resolution need have the slightest difficulty in voting for the resolution recommended for January 2.6th.

The Puma Swaraj Day programme is not intended to result in civil disobedience. It was specially for this reason that we have asked Con-gress committees not to have processions if there is any danger of conflict. Mahatma Gandhi has laid stress on this in *Young India*. In the circular to the provinces I made this clear. I stated however that in case the meeting itself is not allowed to be held we should endeavour to hold the meeting in spite of such prohibition. That was and is my personal view because I feel that we should not be forcibly stopped from making our declaration. But so far as we are concerned we are not out for civil disobedience at this stage.

I hope this explanation will satisfy you.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

25. Statement to the Press[1]

The first fruits of the independence resolution are the conviction of and sentence passed on Messrs. Subhas Bose, Das Gupta, and others. For accompanying a procession they have been awarded the sentence of one

1. Issued at Allahabad, clearly before 26 January 1930. (Censored.) *The Tribune*, 28 January 1930.

year's rigorous imprisonment.[2] Bengal has taken the lead again in the great fight and her honoured sons may well be proud that it has fallen to their lot to be the vanguard in the army of India. They have done their work but we that remain have to shoulder the burden and carry on.

What shall our response be to this fresh attack? Let us prepare and discipline ourselves for the onward march and make of it an irresistible sweep to the goal of independence. Let us remember that next Sunday is the Independence Day, a red-letter day in Indian history, and let us celebrate it in a manner worthy of India and of her martyred sons.

2. Subhas Chandra Bose, Kiran Shankar Roy, J. M. Dass Gupta and nine other Congress leaders of Bengal, who had been arrested for leading a procession on the Political Sufferers' Day in August 1929, were each sentenced on 23 Janu-ary 1930 to one year's rigorous imprisonment.

26. Complete Independence[1]

At Lahore on 1 January the supreme council of the country—the Congress—declared complete independence as the goal. It has proclaimed to Britain as well as to the entire world that we do not accept even the least subjection to the British Empire and India cannot remain in it. Once our country attains complete independence, poverty will be eradicated and our countrymen will lead a life of freedom and prosperity. The entire world has heard of the Congress declaration and everywhere people are excited to learn that this ancient country also has awakened from its slumber. Our countrymen living abroad will also be able to hold their heads high and say with pride that they will not allow slavery to continue and will not rest till complete independence is attained.

Complete independence is our birthright. Lokmanya Tilak was the first to assert this. And now Mahatma Gandhi, by introducing the independence resolution and getting it passed by the Congress, has launched the struggle for complete independence.

1. Hindi pamphlet, clearly written before 26 January 1930, and published by the secretary, Allahabad Youth League. A.I.C.C. File No. 3/1930, pp. 75-78, N.M.M.L.

India is a country which has a glorious past of thousands of years, and which has produced illustrious men and women; its civilization was famous throughout the world. When Europe and other parts of the world were living in a dark age, people came to India from all parts of the world to study in its seats of learning. How can such a country remain a slave country or agree to anything less than complete independence?

Such was India, and how low it has fallen! With the halter of slavery round its neck, it has suffered in every way and now it has no status in the world. Foreigners have drained India of its wealth and made this rich country an example of poverty. Crores of people lack food, clothes and houses. Even those who are educated lack employment and have no means of earning their bread. The average income per day of an Indian is only seven pice. But even on that there are exorbitant taxes, and heavy rents and revenue, the burden of all of which falls mostly on the poor. Even salt is taxed. This affects particularly the poorest class. Cottage industries which flourished in every home have all been destroyed, and no alternative is provided.

Indeed, we are educated in such a manner that we cling to the chains of slavery. A foreign army prevents us from even protesting. If we dare to do so we are crushed. Many of our brave young men are in prison. Some have even gone to the gallows. What was their crime? Patriotism! To struggle for our freedom is today the greatest sin in India.

We have heard so much about reforms. Some Indians have risen to be high officers. But what tangible advantage has this given to the people? How far has their starvation, poverty and unemployment been reduced? Big buildings have been put up at Delhi, but in the countryside most of our people have not even a mud hut.

The continuance of the British Empire implies that the wealth of India will be drained out to Britain. So long as we remain in this empire, we can never be free and shall not be able to remove our poverty. So we must achieve complete independence in the shortest possible time and then establish a Panchayati Raj in our country. That is what the Congress decided at Lahore.

Some people say that we can win freedom by being friendly with the British and by making them understand our demand. This is astounding. The British will only yield when our strength is adequate. We shall gain nothing by begging and flattering.

Now the fight for complete independence is starting with full force. Mahatma Gandhi is the commander of the army of freedom fighters.

If you love India and pine for its freedom then you must help in this struggle.

Sunday, the 26th January, is Independence Day. On that day the national flag will be unfurled and at big meetings the independence resolution will be adopted. In Allahabad on that day the flag will be unfurled at 8 a.m. in the Purshottam Das Tandon Park, and at 5 p.m. there will be a public meeting. All lovers of freedom should attend these meetings.

If you desire to strengthen the Congress in the battle of freedom, you must become its members. Those who want to become volunteers should give their names. The Congress office is located at 51, Hewett Road.

Jawaharlal Nehru
President
Town Congress Committee
Allahabad

27. To B.C. Roy[1]

January 27th, 1930

My dear Bidhan, [2]

I enclose a copy of a letter[3] which I am sending to the secretary, B.P.C.C. The letter will speak for itself. I wish that we could somehow manage to put a final end to the party squabbles that we have had in various parts of the country. We go rapidly to a crisis. We cannot afford to think of pettymatters now.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-120/1930 (Pt. II), p. 201, N.M.M.L.
2. Bidhan Chandra Roy (1882-1962); eminent physician and Congressman of Bengal; mayor of Calcutta, 1931-33; Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University, 1942-44; Chief Minister of West Bengal from 1948 till his death.
3. Not printed.

28. To Uma Sharkar[1]

January 28th, 1930

Dear Sir,[2]

I thank you for your letter addressed to the Secretary of the A.I.C.C. intimating to us that you have resigned from the local council. I think that you are attaching far too great importance to the views of a few individuals when you say that there is bitter controversy. The Congress independence resolution has been welcomed with greater unanimity than almost anything in recent Indian history and the Congress today is stronger than for a long time past. Probably you have got your information from prejudiced sources like the daily papers issued from Allahabad.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-125/1930, p. 81, N.M.M.L.
2. A vakil of Fatehpur, U.P.

29. Statement to the Press[1]

Reports from all over the country show how magnificently the Independence Day was celebrated by all classes, and I must respectfully congratulate the nation on the success of the solemn orderly demonstrations and the enthusiastic adherence to independence. In the great cities, led by Calcutta and Bombay, scores of thousands met and took the great resolve, and in the countryside thousands of villagers assembled at numerous village meetings.

In Lahore, the Congress spoke on behalf of the nation and proclaimed complete independence as our immediate objective. On the Independence Day, it was the nation itself that spoke—India herself with a

1. Allahabad, 28 January 1930. *The Hindu*, 29 January 1930.

million voices taking the pledge of independence and resolving to sever the British connection which had ruined her in so many ways. The pledge has been taken. The flag of freedom has been hoisted. Let no one who has taken that pledge forget it or weaken in his resolve, and let no one do anything which may bring dishonour to the national flag.

In the midst of these national rejoicings, I have read with pain and surprise of the slight disturbance[2] that marred the great Bombay demonstration. I do not know all the facts and therefore I hesitate to draw any conclusion or to say much. But I cannot permit any attempt to dishonour the national flag, by whomsoever committed, to pass unnoticed. There is, and should be, no rivalry between our national tricolour flag and the workers' red flag. I honour and respect the red flag, because it represents the blood and suffering of the workers. And our tricolour flag, if it stands for anything, stands for the freedom of the masses of India from exploitation. Today, it is the symbol of independence, the outer emblem of our yearning hearts, the sight of which floating bravely and proudly against the blue Indian sky fills us with gladness and gives us strength and hope to go forward and win. We shall tolerate no dishonour to that flag from any country or from any individual, whether he is an Indian or a foreigner. We shall protect it and defend it with full determination, and with the last ounce of strength and energy in us. And those that may attack it and seek to dishonour it shall be none of us and with them we shall have nothing in common.

The pledge of independence has been taken. Let us work to redeem it with right good will.

2. During the Independence Day celebrations in Bombay efforts had been made to hoist the red flag alongside the national flag.

30. To V. Chattopadhyaya[1]

January 30th, 1930

My dear Chatto,

I enclose a formal letter[2] which I am addressing to the secretary of the League against Imperialism. The letter is long enough and requires

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D.-1/1929-30, p. 45, N.M.M.L.
2. See *post,* item 32.

no further explanation. I am afraid you are often very much misled by some of your correspondents in India. I can well understand a difference in outlook. If this difference is fundamental then cooperation is difficult. If there is a fair measure of agreement then it is desirable to work together. In any event it does not help matters much by calling people, with whom you may happen to disagree a little, traitors and the like. Perhaps if you came in personal contact with some of our most aggressive young men who pose as workers' leaders you might change your opinion of them. Some of them undoubtedly are fine young men but some also are entirely untrustworthy.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

31. To R. Bridgeman[1]

January 30th, 1930

My dear Bridgeman,
I enclose a copy of a letter I am sending to the secretary of the League against Imperialism. I have written at length because I wished to deal with the question fully. I wish it was possible for me to go to Europe for a short period to discuss various matters but this is not at present possible. Letters are hardly satisfactory. It seems to me that there is a great deal of misapprehension as to the position in India. I hope you will also write to the League secretariat your views on the matters touched upon by me.

With all good wishes,

Ever yours,
Jawaharlal

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 23/1929-30, p. 25, N.MM.L.

32. To Secretaries, League against Imperialism[1]

30/1/30

Dear Sirs,[2]

Our office has received a circular letter[3] from you dated January 8th, 1930, addressed to all anti-imperialist organisations in India. This letter, as well as some other communications from you and the attitude adopted towards our delegate, Mr. Shiva Prasad Gupta, at the Frankfurt Congress, impel us to write to you frankly about the relation of the League to our National Congress. We had hoped to avoid any controversy on this subject, although many things that your secretariat had done appeared to us strange, but in view of your persisting in a particular attitude to our Congress we feel that it is neither fair to ourselves nor to you for us to remain silent any longer.

You will remember that in the early days of the League the attitude of the League towards national organisations was repeatedly discussed by the executive council. It was pointed out then that important national organisations could not possibly agree to subordinate themselves to the League or to bind themselves to carry out the dictates of the League. While fully desirous of working against imperialism and appreciating the common platform offered for this purpose by the League, many national organisations were not prepared to subscribe to the entire policy or methods of the League. And in no event could they agree to take orders about policy or programme from the League. This objection was considered a weighty one and in the provisional constitution of the League it was specially laid down that apart from affiliation there could be association of an organisation with the League. Further, it was stated that association meant a general agreement with the aims and objects of the League and did not mean acceptance of all its methods and resolutions. Thereupon the Indian National Congress, on

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 1/1929-30, pp. 47-61, N.M.M.L.
2. V. Chattopadhyaya and Willi Munzenberg.
3. This criticised "the leaders and executive officers of the Congress" for having placed themselves "under the dominating leadership of Mr. Gandhi", who was protecting the interests of "the propertied class who are the chief supporters of the imperialist system".

my recommendation, agreed to associate itself with the League. In doing so it expressly stated in a note that it did not thereby accept all the resolutions or the methods of the League.

So far as the National Congress is concerned, that is its present position. It is not clear, however, what you consider the position of the Congress to be in relation to you. Some time ago when the draft statutes of the League were prepared I pointed this out to you and requested you to make special provision for this kind of association. You informed me that you would do so. Since then I have not heard from you on the subject and I do not know how matters stand.

Your subsequent activity in regard to India, however, makes it appear that you imagine your function to be not only to dictate to us our policy and programme but to criticise in unsparing language those who happen to be at the helm of the Indian National Congress. You have, of course, every right to criticise any body and to suggest any line of activity. But you will appreciate, I hope, that such criticisms do not make it any the easier for us to continue our association with you or contribute to your funds. Our delegate to the Frankfurt Congress definitely recommended to us, after his experience of that Congress, that we should not formally affiliate or associate (he did not appreciate the difference) ourselves with your League. Many members of our Working Committee were of a like opinion but we decided not to take any action which might weaken your position. Your subsequent communications, and specially the circular letter referred to above, make it clear that your principal activity in regard to India at present is to run down the executive of the National Congress as well as the general policy of the Congress as decided at its annual session in Lahore. It is difficult enough to understand an intricate political situation in a distant country. You chose not only to imagine that you had done so far better than 95% of the delegates of the Lahore Congress, but you evidently based your conclusions on telegraphic summaries of the proceedings which must have appeared in the European press. Evidently you could not have seen any detailed report of our proceedings on January 8th when you issued your circular letter.

In this circular letter you have made many wrong statements of fact which were perhaps inevitable as you had no full report before you. The principal object of your letter however is to condemn Mr. Gandhi and the present and past Working Committees of the Congress, who according to you should have been expelled from the Congress itself, and to call upon Congressmen of the left wing to rebel against them and dismiss them from their posts. Who these gentlemen are to whom you appeal I do not know for the main resolution of the Congress was

passed almost unanimously, only a dozen out of 2500 delegates voting against it. But the point is that you are trying to take an active part in the internal politics of this Congress, and that part is directly in opposition to the elected executive of the Congress. It is this very executive which deals with you on behalf of the Congress and decides about affiliations and associations and grants. It is not surprising therefore if this executive expresses a desire to discontinue its association with you.

If you feel that there is a vital difference between your viewpoint and that of the Congress then it is obvious that we cannot work on a common platform and the sooner we separate the better. That would be a straightforward course and that would give both parties full freedom of action. But it is an impossible position for us to be associated with you and to be continually attacked by you.

It may interest you to know that the present leaders, who according to you make a habit of betraying their country, have never clung to leadership or to any office in the national organisation. They have been thrust, very often against their will, into positions of responsibility because the great majority so desired. Their views are public enough, and they are not in the habit of delivering radical speeches merely to gain the goodwill of the people. They believe in strong action and not in strong language and perhaps, accustomed as you are to strong language only, you are led to think that our courteous phraseology is a sign of weakness and servility. It may also interest you to know that many strong and radical speeches that seem to impress you from a distance emanate from British secret service agents or from gentlemen whose strength is speech and not action. You seem to imagine that a minority was excluded from the Working Committee because it wanted immediate mass action. You are wholly mistaken. There was no such issue at the time of election of the Committee and, indeed, many of the people who belonged to this minority have shown their desire for immediate mass action by remaining in the official legislatures in spite of the Congress boycott of them.

You may also be interested to learn that the "shameful document", the Delhi Manifesto, was never accepted unconditionally by the Leaders' Conference. The offer of this conference in vague phraseology had deluded many people. In order to bring out the real issues clearly various conditions precedent were laid down in the Manifesto. The failure of the British Government to accede to these conditions immediately convinced large numbers of people of the real intentions of the government and made the path of the Congress towards independence far simpler. The Congress stands today irrevocably committed to a

fight to a finish with British imperialism, largely because some of its leaders had the wisdom to prepare the ground for it. It would have been poor consolation indeed for them to talk bravely and keep their individual reputations for extremism and at the same time to see the national movement weaken and hesitate to take the great step forward.

I am afraid you have not the least notion of conditions in India and yet you do not hesitate to lay down the law for us. The National Congress has welcomed your League and has agreed to cooperate with you but it cannot tolerate outside interference of the kind you have been carrying on.

It is curious that you should have chosen a moment to attack us when the Congress is more advanced in its views, both political and social, than it has ever been before, and when it has launched a great revolutionary struggle. The capitalist and the zamindari elements have dropped out and are openly siding with the British Government. Many of the richer professional classes are keeping aloof from us because of the risks involved in a struggle for independence. Many Congressmen of old standing have gradually dropped out because of this same fear and also because the Congress is becoming definitely a mass organisation and is developing a socialistic outlook. And yet in spite of these defections the Congress is stronger today than it has been since 1921, and it may soon become more powerful than it was then. This is the critical moment when you have chosen to attack it and to create disruption in it.

The resolution of the Congress repudiating the so called "national" debt and all unjust concessions has also resulted in scaring away big financial interests and in making it almost impossible, if the Congress remains true to its own declaration, for it to come to any terms with British imperialism.

Four days ago the country celebrated Independence Day at the bidding of the Congress. These celebrations were on a vast scale and the success was beyond our expectations. Millions participated in them. In your circular referred to above you had suggested that these celebrations should be interfered with and their direction taken out of the hands of the Congress. This is the curious attitude you adopt, sitting in a distant place, towards an associated organisation. Fortunately your circular had no effect on any body and the celebrations have resulted in increasing the prestige of the Congress organisation greatly.

You have referred in your circular to the case of China. We are well aware of the unfortunate turn of events there and the tyranny of the present government over the workers and the peasants. We realise that this government is largely in the hands of foreign capitalists.

We would venture to suggest that the present condition of China is a danger signal not only to us but to you also. This condition was brought about largely by the mistaken methods of those who were in charge of the revolutionary movements. A purely revolutionary act may well result in counter-revolution if it does not fit in with the existing circumstances.

We appreciate your motives and believe that you earnestly desire the freedom of India. But your earnestness and good motives divorced from a real knowledge of the situation may well prove harmful for our movement. We cannot abdicate our functions as the executive of the Congress at any body's bidding. We have undertaken the grave responsibility of directing the national movement and we will discharge it to the best of our ability. Today in India there can be only two parties—those who work with the Congress for the independence of India and those who directly or indirectly oppose the Congress and thereby help the British Government. The Congress has done me the high honour of making me its President for the year and it has entrusted Mr. Gandhi with the direction of the movement. Whether you agree with him or not, you must appreciate that he is the only possible leader here today. That, at any rate, is the conviction of the vast majority of the people, even though many of them may not wholly agree with him.

I have written to you at great length because I want you to appreciate fully our position. It is likely that some of us may be arrested in the near future and may thus be removed from the scene of our activities. Complaints have repeatedly been made in your executive council and elsewhere that your secretariat is working along communist lines. We have no objection to cooperating with communists in a common task but please understand that most of us, and certainly the National Congress, are not communists. If the League is going to function purely as a communist organisation then clearly it is not the place for us. If, however, it is going to be a meeting place for all anti-imperialist elements, communist and non-communist, and both viewpoints have sufficient weight attached to them, then there is a possibility of our cooperating together.

In this connection I should like to draw your attention to my personal position also. You have done me the honour of putting me on your executive council. I am not of much use there as I cannot attend your meetings. I am prepared however to continue there if the position of non-communists in the League is cleared up. If not, then I would beg of you to treat this letter as my resignation from the council.

I should like to have an early answer to this letter from your secretariat. I should also request you to place this letter before the next meeting of your executive council.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

33. To Secretary, Punjab P.C.C.[1]

January 31st, 1930

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter No. 794 dated 28th January.[2] The Working Committee will no doubt issue instructions as to what should be done with those Congressmen who continue in councils in spite of the Congress mandate and in spite of their own pledge. It is open to provincial committees, however, to take action on their own initiative. Before taking any definite action it will be desirable to call upon such members to show cause why disciplinary action should not be taken against them. Perhaps the best course would be to ask them to show cause now and await the meeting of the Working Committee, which will be held on the 14th February, for further instructions in the matter.

Care should be taken to distinguish between the case of those members who definitely went on the Congress ticket and had promised to carry out Congress directions, and those who did not go on such a ticket but otherwise formed members of the Congress party. In the case of the former, they are bound to resign from the council whatever their views may or may not be. Resignation from the Congress executive is not enough to absolve them from the pledge they took and we must take disciplinary action against all such persons.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-125/1930, pp. 67-69, N.M.M.L.
2. He had written that while two Congressmen had resigned from the legislature, another, a member of the A.I.C.C., had not done so; nor had Dewan Chamanlal or any Sikh member.

In regard to those who did not take this particular pledge, all that the Congress committee can insist on is that they should not occupy any executive office in the Congress. This, however, is my personal view.

Where new elections are held there should certainly be propaganda asking the voters not to vote.

So far as I know, Diwan Chamanlal did not actually take the Congress pledge on seeking election. Please let me know if this is the fact. Nor did the Sikh members so far as I am aware.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

34. To Bansgopal[1]

Allahabad
January 1930

My dear Bansgopal,[2]

I have your letter. There is not such a storm of opposition to the Con-gress resolutions as you seem to imagine. The fact that we have no nationalist newspapers in the province gives one a wrong impression of what is happening.

I agree with you in much that you say.[3] I am trying to do my best. But after all I can only do one man's work and not that of a dozen.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1930, p 457, N.M.M.L.
2. A Congress worker of Fatehpur, U.P.
3. Bansgopal had made some suggestions for strengthening the Congress.

35. To Raja Mahendra Pratap[1]

Allahabad
January 1930

My dear Friend,[2]

It was a pleasure to hear from you again.[3] I received your telegram also at Lahore. You must have read in the newspapers of the proceedings at the Lahore Congress. Apart from details the main thing is that the Congress is definitely and finally committed to full independence for India. This is a great gain. In the course of the year there is likely to be a big struggle for independence.

Most Indians are in favour of Pan-Asian unity. It is difficult however to do anything practical in regard to it. As for Russia, I am personally very sympathetic to the great experiment going on there and I have repeatedly stated as much.

I enclose a copy of our *Congress Bulletin*. I would like to send this to you regularly but I do not know to what address I am to send it. Please let me know. There is also some difficulty in sending letters to Afghanistan because apparently the postal arrangements are not good.

We have had no news of the Kabul Congress Committee for a long time. Please ask them, if they still exist, to write to this office formally sending full particulars about their membership, etc. They will also have to send the annual affiliation fee if they want to have the right of representation in the Congress. I shall be glad to have their address.

Yours very sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 22/1929, p. 5, N.M.M.L.
2. (b. 1886); son of Raja Ghanshiam Singh of Murshan in Aligarh district; president, First Provincial Government of Hind founded at Kabul on 1 December 1915; met Lenin in 1919; president of the executive board of Free India, an organization founded in Japan in 1940; returned to India in 1946; member of the Lok Sabha, 1957-62.
3. In his letter of 21 December 1929, Mahendra Pratap had said that Indians must express their support for Soviet Russia, accept the principle of Pan- Asian unity and work for the freedom of all nations and a world federation.

36. No Going Back on Pledges[1]

I have noticed with amazement a Lucknow "Free Press" message stating that a special session of the Congress was being discussed because the response had been poor.

The correspondent, who issued this message, must have a fertile brain and I shall be glad to know what, if any, is the reliable source from which he gets his news.

The response to the Lahore Congress decisions has been splendid. The Independence Day has shown what the country wants and what it is going to have. A very large number of council members have resigned but even if not a single one had resigned, the Congress and the country would have gone ahead and left them to muse in their council chambers. Let no one mistake it. There is no going back from the pledges solemnly taken. A greater ideal than that of 1921 is before us and a greater movement than even the noncooperation of nine years ago has begun in earnest. India is fighting for independence and India will be independent despite the doubters and the quibblers.

1. Statement issued at Allahabad, 1 February 1930. *The Tribune*, 5 February 1930.

37. Speech at Tangan[1]

Mr. President and Peasant Brothers,

Just now you have shouted out "*Jai, Jai*" several times, and Pt. Mata Prasad Ji has told you much about me. You should understand now that it is no longer the time to shout "*Jai, Jai*" only. Praising one another is of no use. We have got accustomed to consoling our hearts

1. Based on the translation by official reporters of the speech delivered in Hindi at Tangan, Rae Bareli district, on 5 February 1930. Home Department (Political) File No. 90/1930, National Archives of India.

by praising one another. If you have heard or read anything you must be knowing that a hard time is coming in your country. Times have always been hard for you. Which of our peasant brothers has not to face pain and trouble? But now your courage is going to be put to a severe test all over the country. You have heard that about a month ago the big parliament of the country, the Congress, held its session at Lahore. The Congress is an old organisation. The parliament of this country was born forty-five years ago. When it was born, our brothers saw that many evils were daily creeping into the country and began to reflect on how to get rid of these troubles. The first thing they observed at the time was that many of our troubles are due to the fact that the people of foreign countries come to rule over us and take away the products of our country. At first they thought it advisable to talk of a few things only and in a suppressed tone. This was forty-five years ago. They knew of very few things. But slowly this organization gained in strength until it produced ten or twelve leaders whose names you must have heard. Many of the leaders, Lokmanya Tilak for instance, were sent to jail twenty-five years ago. Lala Lajpatrai was one of these. He was arrested and sent to Burma. The arrest of these men caused the power of this big organisation to increase all the more. The reason was that the people began to perceive what the government was doing to their greatest leaders. Whoever was thought to be a big leader by the people, and was most respected by them, would be caught and sent to jail by the British Government. From this we could infer what our position in the country was and could see how poor our country was growing day by day. Famines were frequent and our peasant and labourer brothers were becoming poorer and poorer every day. Just see how many lakhs and crores of rupees go out of our country every year. You probably know why the Englishmen came to our country. Our country was thought to be very rich, and in their greed for wealth they came here to trade. We quarreled amongst ourselves. They deceived us and settled down in our country. They increased their strength slowly until they had established their rule. It was then chiefly because of our quarrels and our folly that they became the rulers here. Our country was very wealthy when they came here. You have read about it in books and stories. This was not at the time of the Vedas or of the Mahabharata, but only a very short time ago. If you read our history, you will know what was the condition of England. The Englishmen had no wealth in their own country. It was one of the poor countries of the world. They came here then, greedy for wealth, and if you look around now you will find that even the people called poor in Britain are very wealthy when compared with you.

What, on the other hand, is the condition of our country? You can also see how poor it has grown and how many people do not even get enough food. It is no use telling you these things. Only last year after the crops had failed for two or three years, the people had to starve and die for a long time and could not get food for many months. During these hundred and fifty years our country has grown much worse while England has much improved. It is an open affair and not a thing which requires teaching. That much wealth has gone out of our country, you yourself will know if you look around. It is not easy to explain this. You peasants pay lakhs of rupees but the zamindar keeps one large portion of it, and another large portion goes to the government. This is direct taxation. But when you go to the market and buy something, a large portion of the money paid by you goes to the government. Take the example of salt. You know that salt is also taxed, though you do not have to pay this tax. But the taxation of salt increases its price and the government is paid out of the price that you pay. The money collected in this way goes to a foreign country. When you wear foreign cloth, you send your money to a foreign country. You like foreign cloth, but you do not know that by the price you pay you make your country poorer. This money goes across the seven seas. If all the people do such things how much money would go out? This is how the money' goes out of your country. If the money goes out of your country like this and you do not get money from foreign lands in exchange for this, the country will become poorer, famine will result and epidemics will break out. What is famine? If the rains fail even a little, there is a great deal of weeping and crying over the failure of crops. Agriculture is not practised in our land only, but in other places also. But have you ever heard of famines in these places? The people of these places never die of epidemics. But they are wealthy. One or two crops may fail, but they have money and are not afraid. You are afraid of the failure of crops because you have no money. As for food, it can be brought from Cawnpore, Partabgarh and Allahabad, if there is a shortage of it at Rae Bareli. Food can never be scarce. It is the money which runs short. This is not true famine. If the food is before you, but you have not the money necessary for buying it, it cannot be called true famine but a shortage of money. The thing is that our peasants have become so poor that they can be blown away by a breath, and die in thousands during the epidemics. You wail and beg of high officers with folded hands but you have to think how your troubles can disappear. This cannot happen by begging with folded hands. Small branches of this big organisation of the country, which holds its session annually, exist in your districts and tahsils. What is

the business of this organisation? The business is to do away with the evils in the country. If people are becoming weaker and weaker, what will be our condition after a few days? We have to make many efforts. We cannot sit down to make long-drawn-out arrangements. We are hungry at present. It is not enough if some one asks us to wait for ten or twenty days after which the arrangements will be made. Our want is immediate. Your country asks you a big question. What is to be done now?

Now I am not going to tell you the whole history of forty or forty-five years of the Congress. You know that eight years ago the Congress had started the great noncooperation agitation, and Mahatma Gandhi, our great leader, had organized it. He told us that we ought to follow the path of noncooperation to achieve Swaraj for the country and to get rid of our troubles. You will recall that there was a great commotion in the country at that time. The peasants had, at that time, organized themselevs rather well and the zamindars were also frightened by their organisation. The peasants here were fired upon and many of them were arrested. Every effort was made to break the peasants by threats and other such means. You were much threatened. Still the work, which was going on in our country and your district, never slackened. But it is generally true that sometimes the work went ahead fast and sometimes slowly. But you must be knowing that the movement which was started in the country was never stopped. Many people, twenty-five thousand men and women, were sent to jail; still the work did not slacken but continued as before. Many of you must have wondered what benefit you had derived from the arrest of so many people, what was the use of having gone to jail once that you should go again? And what is the use of this talk of Swaraj and of the big flag which was taken out recently? The question, then, is, do you wish to change the present state of things? To this you will reply that you do wish to change it. What, then, is the means of doing it? What are your troubles? Your troubles are that the zamindar makes you pay huge rents and realizes the enhancements in revenue, and his worker or the policeman or other people are ready to trouble you. In Oudh, specially, the zamindar as well as the government had been frightened by the agitation. The government made great promises at that time that they would enact laws preventing eviction. This did not benefit the peasants much. Indeed, it has not benefited you at all. The reason is that so long as the peasants are weak and cannot stand on their own legs, the same state of affairs will continue to exist, however good the laws may be.

On coming here, I have heard that the revenue is being enhanced

and ejectment is practised. You want to stop these things. The zamindar is against you and wants to extort as much as he can through the rent. Your government also wants to get as much money as possible so that it may pay high salaries. You must have heard of the man who was beaten with his own shoe. Money is realized from us and through it the army and the police are maintained in order to suppress us. We are oppressed by our own money. Whose money is it? It is the peasant's money. Go to big cities like Allahabad, Lucknow or Delhi, and you will find big palaces for the governors being built there. Seventeen or eighteen lakhs of rupees have been spent on buildings in New Delhi. Where does all this money come from? It comes from the peasant. A small portion comes from the inhabitants of the cities. But what comes from the cities is spent in the cities. How much of the money realized as rent is spent on you? We want that the money collected from the country should be spent for the benefit of the country. There are many things which can be done for the good of the country, such as the spread of education, the making of roads, the opening of the hospitals. Money is required for this. It is the duty of your panchayat that when it has money, it should open good dispensaries all over the country, make good roads and arrange for sanitation and provide for educational facilities. The money that you pay should be spent on you; only then can your condition improve. But of the money which is realized from you, how much is spent on you? If a hundred rupees are realized, five of these are spent upon you and ninety-five on the pay of big Englishmen, the building of big palaces and the maintainance of large armies. Much of the money is sent to foreign lands. This will continue, and what will be its result? Our country will continue to be harmed. Of the people who live in our country, a handful are big people but the remainder are poor. All the inhabitants are becoming poor while the peasants are being ground down. What are the burdens on the peasant? On the one hand is the burden of running the whole of the government and paying the salaries of big officials and on the other the burden of the zamindar and his workers. How can the poor, unfortunate peasant bear these burdens? He is being ground down bv the burden while vou are asking, 'What shall we do?' Can you not do anything because you are afraid? Such big issues are before the country. If you wish it, you can lighten these huge burdens of the government and the zamindar. These will not disappear by shouting *"Jai, Jai"* or by clapping. The government is here for its own benefit. So long as it is benefited it will not abdicate. One or two zamindars may exist, who do not seek their own benefit, but all of them cannot be of this nature. No one gives up his benefits so long as he is

not forced to it. So now, neither the zamindars nor the government will give up their or its benefit so long as we do not force them and they do not begin to be afraid that the peasants of the country have become strong.

So this is your problem. If you wish to improve your condition, you will have to increase your strength and fight them and show that you can no longer bear their tyranny. They will threaten and try to frighten you. We ourselves have allowed ourselves to be frightened and have consented to continue in slavery as we have done up till now and to be kicked about by them as we have always been. You ought to be sure that your condition has become such that however much you are repressed you will no longer go to them. This is quite possible. If the peasants are organized, neither the zamindar nor the government, nor the police, nor anyone else whosoever can keep them down. These people can continue to threaten you for a short time only. If during this time you fall, you will gain nothing whatever. But if you can fight, you are bound to win. You should, therefore, rise up now; and, after all, you shall have to rise before tyranny. If you do not wish to do it, keep on undergoing hardships. But if you do want to do away with these things you will have to do a good deal of fighting. Not only a good deal but much fighting and trouble will have to be borne. What this trouble will be, I cannot tell you. It may be that your goods will be confiscated or that the police officers will threaten you. But I really cannot say what it will be. They will keep on trying to frighten you so long as they see that the peasants can be suppressed. But what will they do when they find the peasants cannot be put down? So your condition cannot improve so long as they think that you can be suppressed and frightened. If some one asks you, 'What was the result of going to jail on the former occasion?' you also should ask him, 'What was the condition of the zamindar and the government when we were strong?' The zamindar and the government became presumptuous the moment you had weakened. You can see for yourself that in proportion to the weakening of your power they will tyrannize over you, and in proportion to the increase in your power they will become weaker. Your power will increase only in proportion to your preparations. I ask you neither to go to jail nor to keep out of it, but you should understand that no one can do away with his troubles so long as he is not prepared to fight. Do you think that your troubles will disappear by your sitting idle and doing nothing? To what a condition have our peasants been reduced! Even the meanest policeman behaves like a lion when he approaches them. The parliament of our country, the Congress, has been thinking over these things and has found that the poverty and

evil of our country can be removed only when a republic is established in our country in place of the foreign government, and the money going to the foreign lands from our country has been stopped. After this we can make other efforts to enrich the country. But to make these efforts, it is necessary to end foreign rule and establish a republic here. Remember that the Congress does not want to rule by imprisoning people. Those days are gone when one man ruled after becoming a raja or maharaja. Now the people rule in every country. The people elect a parliament which rules over the country. A parliament which has been elected all over the country does not rule here at present. But when it has acquired sufficient strength, it will become the ruling body. But how far will your troubles be heard, when your parliament is ruling? How long can the people remain in it? If they do not act as your representatives you can remove them. They will not be the rulers but your servants. The Congress, then, is trying for the parliamentary form of government. This attempt is now being made. Mahatma Gandhi has put forth a resolution that we do not wish to have any relationship with the British Government because the relationship with the British people is nothing but an exploitation of our poor men. The more Englishmen came here, the more were the poor exploited. And this exploitation will continue. This, then, is the resolution passed by the Congress. We will fight enthusiastically for it; still our battle will be peaceful. You know that Mahatmaji asks us to fight our battles peacefully, which means through noncooperation. This fact is much emphasised that we have every authority to get freedom and Swaraj.

But we shall have to consider two or three points. The first thing is to find out which is the easiest and the best way. The easiest way for us at present, and one which will give you also the least trouble, is to organise ourselves by peaceful means and to turn out the British Government by means of our organisation. So we will do it by peaceful means now. The second thing is that we will stop the payment of the taxes we are paying at present. You know how the British Government is run here. It is run by your money. By getting the money realized as tax and revenue from you, our other brothers help it with their co-operation. The government cannot function if our brothers cease to help them. But you should know that some of our brothers have become blind or greedy and, being entrapped by the Englishmen, they are willing to help them fully and to work against their country. Well, let them do it. A handful of people can do nothing. The strength of the land lies in the peasants and the labourers of the country. It is possible that the British Government may draw a few men to its side by tempting them, but it cannot tempt the whole country. If it can

not all the peasants of the country in this manner, we are willing to accept the offer and will no longer fight it. So we wish to stop the ment of taxes. Remember, then, that no battle can be fought by tomfoolery. Battles are fought by means of armies. Even though our battle is peaceful, we shall have to fight in the military fashion. Our power will increase only if our soldiers obey us just as soldiers obey their officers. At present our greatest leader is Mahatma Gandhi and our biggest organisation is the Congress. If, then, we want to be fully benefited we should obey the orders of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress. When the Congress decides anything it should be done by the whole of the country on the same date. If all the people do it on the same date, you will be able to see your own power and your enemies also will see it. In this way we will gradually acquire power and we will have the whole country under our control.

If, then, you mean to do it, do it with all your power. Whatever is decided by the Congress is decided only after consulting together and taking into consideration its benefits and the capacity of our brothers to do it. So you can deliberate over your troubles—be they of the enhancement of revenue or of tyranny—and after considering them fully—whether you call their solution Swaraj or the cure of your troubles—you can communicate what you think to be right to your district panchayet (i.e., Congress committee). We can send it all over the country. In this way we will know your troubles and by deliberating over them decide what is to be done. When a decision has been made all should obey it like soldiers.

You should remember that the time of battle is approaching once more. The battle will be fought, whether ten men take part in it or a lakh. It should not be that if ten persons are frightened, all should run away from the field. After much consideration your leaders have said at Lahore that they will fight for complete independence. This was not said as a joke but after due consideration. They will do what they have said. You have to consider that the more the people act like soldiers, the quicker will your and your country's power increase and your troubles disappear. If you do not act in this way your troubles will not begin to disappear. I cannot force you to stop the payment of taxes or to refuse the payment of the enhancement in revenue. I cannot force you. I can only advise you. But I do want you to understand fully what this talk of Swaraj means. Swaraj is not a prize for a few of us in the cities. It is for us also only because we also live in this country. But really it is needed for the poor peasants. Swaraj has a different meaning for everybody. If you are a shopkeeper it means that you should be able to trade well. Things should not continue as

they are at present. The Englishmen have framed such laws that our sources of business are being destroyed. If you are a peasant and till the land, you want that the land should belong to you and be your own property, that there should be no possibility of your being ejected and that the problem of taxes and enhancement of revenue should not face you every day. This, then, should be the meaning of Swaraj for each one of you. If, then, some one in India asks the meaning of Swaraj for the peasant he should be informed that it means that the land should belong to the peasant and that, if by using their strength peasants organise their panchayats and thus increase their power, their panchayats should rule the country. If there is a parliamentary form of government established in the country, the majority should be obeyed. At present, only a few men are obeyed. They enforce their will through the threats of the police which has you under its feet. But this can never happen if you have the power in your hands.

In my opinion the zamindar community is quite superfluous. I cannot understand the sense of zamindari. The man who works should enjoy the fruits of his labour while the man who sits on the cushion should get nothing. If I have my way I will arrange that no one should be idle and that the man who works harder should get more, while the man who works less should get less. This is my resolution. Look at other countries. The landlords in these places are slowly disappearing. It does not mean that they should run away, but that, finding themselves idle, they should exert themselves. The land should belong to the peasant. If this problem is to be solved, you alone can solve it. The one thing to be considered is this: what will be the respective share taken by you and them in this battle for Purna Swaraj, which the parliament of the country is going to begin in right earnest? This is your own battle. If you want to do away with your troubles, you should, like a soldier, take full part in it. You have seen that seven or eight days ago the Independence Day was observed all over the country. Thousands of men took part in it. It was observed in big cities like Bombay, Calcutta, Lahore, Benares and Lucknow. From this you could infer how many persons wanted complete independence. You should remember that the police used threats and tried to frighten away the people from the procession. The sub-inspectors and other officers who were present tried their best that the people should not take part in it. Still lakhs and crores of people took part in it. The country is offended and worried. It wants to get out of this condition somehow or the other. But to get out of it we should strengthen and organize ourselves and await Mahatmaji's orders. On the day he asks you to stop paying taxes, the payment should be stopped. If we refuse to pay a tax, and even ten persons go on

paying it, our strength will be decreased. But they, and no one else, will be the losers because of it. The problem of the enhancement of revenue is before you at Rae Bareli. About this, what advice shall I offer you? In my opinion you have the right to refuse the payment of the whole revenue. At least the zamindar's share is absolutely wasted; you are having bad crops. It appears to be blindness to me to propose the enhancement of revenue. But you have to decide for yourself. I have heard that to consider these things a meeting of your tahsil is to be held after a month or five or six weeks. It should be held in other tahsils also. You should all meet and decide what is to be done about these troubles. We are prepared to advise you, but really it is you alone who can decide it. If you help yourself, we also will help you. I hope, then, that Rae Bareli will be foremost in the big battle now being fought.

38. Call to Action[1]

The Working Committee after careful and anxious consideration has decided that civil resistance should be started.[2] The decision was not lightly taken nor with any disregard of the immediate and ultimate consequences. The civil resistance, however it may begin, will develop into a mass campaign and the whole strength of the Congress organisation and the nation will have to be concentrated on it. The A.I.C.C. has been convened and will meet on the 21st March to take stock of the existing situation and give marching orders for the future.

Meanwhile, all provincial Congress committees should meet to consider the general situation and specially chalk out the plan they contemplate to adopt in their provinces. All Congressmen will naturally watch eagerly the beginning of civil resistance. They must help this

1. Statement to the press issued on 17 February 1930. *The Tribune*, 20 February 1930.
2. Meeting at Ahmedabad from 14 to 16 February 1930, the Working Committee had authorised Mahatma Gandhi to start civil disobedience as and when he chose.

great movement by maintaining perfect discipline in their ranks remembering that nonviolence is the essence of this kind of action. At the right time they can become civil resisters in their own provinces. But this must be done in a disciplined way so as to help the central struggle.

It is now for the provincial committees to consider what method of civil resistance is possible. The decision of the Lahore Congress has to be honoured. The pledge taken on the Independence Day has to be redeemed. Get ready for action. The time has come.

39. Message to Volunteers[1]

Again the nation has to face a great struggle for freedom, a grim struggle and a difficult one, but nonetheless a joyful one. For the prize in front of us is none other than Indian independence and the future happiness and well-being of the Indian people. What part will the Seva Dal play in this good fight? Surely they will be of the vanguard carrying proudly the tricolour, standard of freedom to the citadel so long occupied by the foreigner. It was for this that the Seva Dal was, started; for this that we have laboured and trained quietly and without ostentation these many years. The time has come and the hour of trial is on us. Who comes forward with faith and courage in his heart and joy on his countenance?

The volunteers of the Seva Dal are the soldiers of freedom. To them has come the high honour of serving their country at a great moment of her destiny. May they ever remember that they have the country's honour in their keeping and do nothing to tarnish or sully it. They desire no leadership but service and sacrifice. Perfect discipline must be their motto.

All Seva Dal branches should improve their organisation and enrol and train members. Those members who voluntarily desire to take the pledge of civil disobedience should do so, but there should be absolutely no compulsion in the matter. Let everyone weigh for himself or herself the consequences and having come to a decision stick to it.

1. Bombay, 18 February 1930. The Searchlight, 2 March 1930.

40. To Shiva Prasad Gupta[1]

February 24th, 1930

My dear Shiva Prasad,

I have your two letters of the 8th and the 16th *Magh*. I have also read your correspondence with Chatto. It does seem very strange that they should have got through an important and controversial resolution[2] without any clear reference to you. I am afraid I do not at all like these backstairs methods. As you know I have already written to the League against Imperialism regarding our association with them. During the Congress last year no mention was made of the League or our association with them. It may however be presumed that our association continues so long as it is not definitely put an end to. I am waiting for the answer of the League before putting the matter before the Working Committee, or, if you like, we shall wait till you return. I enclose a copy of the letter I am sending to the League on this matter.

You must have seen the Working Committee's resolution regarding civil disobedience. The progress of matters cannot be delayed any longer and it may be that before you come back to India much may happen here and you may miss many old faces.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 1/1929-30, N.M.M.L.
2. The League against Imperialism had resolved that the Congress could not be relied upon for an "uncompromising struggle against imperialism".

41. Circular to Secretaries, P.C.Cs[1]

Allahabad,
February 25th, 1930

Dear Sir,

I have been directed by the Working Committee to take the necessary steps under the disciplinary rules of the Congress against members of

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-l/1930, p. III, N.M.M.L.

the Congress who have violated the Congress mandate in regard to the boycott of councils and still continue in elective Congress committees. It is desirable that wherever such steps have to be taken they should be taken early. I have, however, no sufficient information at my disposal to enable me to take necessary action. Most provincial committees have not yet sent authorised lists of those who have resigned and those who have not. This should be done immediately.

It should also be clearly stated if any present member of the central and provincial legislature is a member of any Congress elective committee. If so, he must be asked by you immediately to resign from either the legislature or the elective Congress committee. He cannot remain a member of both. He may, however, continue as a four-anna member. Please therefore put this alternative to such members and communicate their replies to me within ten days if possible.

This procedure will apply to all members of the legislatures who are in the Congress committee.

In the case of those persons who went on the Congress' ticket to the councils and took the pledge and yet have refused to resign, it may be necessary to take some further action against them as their conduct is more reprehensible. Please therefore clearly indicate who such persons are.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

42. To J. Adhikari[1]

February 25th, 1930

Dear Comrade,

. . . . So far as the G.I.P. Railway strike[2] is concerned I have expressed my views pretty clearly on several occasions. I think that the railwaymen were perfectly justified in striking and I think it is up to the other

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-13/1930, p. 1, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. Over 75,000 employees of the Great Indian Peninsular Railway had gone on strike from 4 February 1930, to protest against the unfair treatment given to the Indian employees.

railwaymen in India to support them in every way. It would certainly be a very fine thing if all the railwaymen in India could strike in support of the G.I.P. workers. Not knowing the exact position of other railway unions and what they are prepared to do, I can hardly make fervent appeals to them to strike. But certainly I should welcome such a strike if it could be brought about.

I agree with you that all industrial struggles are ultimately of the nature of political struggles. Indeed this should be so. I am not sure, how ever, how far this point of view is understood by the average striker. I should like him to appreciate it and act accordingly

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

43. Resolution at U.P.P.C.C.[1]

The economic programme for the nation should lay down that the principal industries of the country are owned and controlled by the state, and the land is owned, as far as possible, by the peasant who works on it. In particular the programme should include the following proposals:

1. The land system to be changed so as to remove all intermediaries between the cultivator and the state. The creation of small holdings, usually enough for one family to work in. No right of alienation.
2. Reduction of land revenue.
3. Annulment of agricultural indebtedness, partial compensation being paid.
4. Formation of producers' and consumers' cooperatives.
5. Principal industries to be owned and controlled by the state.
6. Principal means of transportation and distribution to be owned and controlled by the state.

1. *The Leader*, 1 March 1930
Jawaharlal moved this resolution at the meeting of the U.P.P.C.C. which met at Allahabad on 26 February 1930. The Committee referred it to its council for consideration.

7. Minimum income for all workers. No taxation of any kind if income is below this minimum.
8. No indirect taxation as far as possible. Abolition of salt tax.
9. Direct taxation on steeply graduated scale. The principle of income tax to be applied to income from land.
10. Inheritance taxes also steeply graduated.
11. Eight-hour day and 44-hour week.
12. Organisation of people, for purposes of representation, into occupational groups.

44. To Edo Fimmen[1]

March 4th, 1930

My dear Fimmen,

Your letter of the 12th November only reached me a few days ago.

I have already sent you a copy of a letter I sent to the League against Imperialism.[2] I quite agree with you that it will be very unfortunate if the League carries on in the way it did at Frankfurt. Unfortunately I could not get full reports of the Frankfurt proceedings. Only gradually I got to know of what happened there. I am now awaiting the reply of the League which should come soon.

Thank you for your copy of the proposals of your committee regard-ing the extension of the I.T.F.[3] I should be very glad if I could help. I do not quite know what I can do.

For the last two or three weeks a big railway strike on the G.I.P. Rly. has been going on here. The strike has been quite successful. As usual, however, there has been trouble at the top. The rank and file had behaved well but the leaders do their utmost to injure the workers' cause by mutual strife.

Within a few days the National Congress is going to begin a civil disobedience campaign against the government. This campaign is likely to develop and to become a big affair soon. What the mass response

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D.1/1929-30, pp. 21-23, N.M.M.L.
2. See *ante*, item 32.
3. International Transport Federation.

to such a campaign is likely to be it is always difficult to prophesy. But there is so much economic distress not only among the workers and peasants but also the intellectuals that it is highly likely that the movement will spread rapidly. Recently there was a celebration all over India of Independence Day. This was a very great success.

This national fight for independence is going to be a big affair. Obviously the British Government is not going to give in unless absolutely forced to do so. India is too great a prize to be given up lightly. At the same time those at the back of the independence movement in India are also pretty determined and will carry on whatever the consequences. It is probable that before long many of us may be arrested. Perhaps I may not be able to write to you again for some time. That will not mean that we have forgotten you. It will simply mean that the British Government has made it impossible for us to communicate with our friends. Whatever happens I shall think of you and other friends in Europe and it will be a comfort to feel that we have your whole-hearted sympathy. The national struggle in India has a tendency to become a racial one. Many of us here want to avoid this. In this we are helped greatly by the sympathy of friends in Europe and elsewhere. I am glad to say that the National Congress itself is becoming more and more socialistic in its outlook though the basis of the struggle is still national. Most of the rich elements like the landlords and the big capitalists are against us.

The Indian Trade Union Congress is not in a very flourishing condition. Last year there was a split as you probably know. This itself would not matter much but unfortunately the failure of several big strikes has resulted in a natural reaction. Also, the worker is a bit fed up with the quarrels of the leaders. As usual the really active elements are often those who are communistically inclined. These people are sometimes very good workers. At the same time they have a peculiar knack of annoying and irritating others. It seems to be a deliberate policy of communists to be offensive. As a matter of fact there are very few real communists in India. Many people who pose as such are British agents.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

45. To Shiva Prasad Gupta[1]

March 5th, 1930

My dear Shiva Prasad,
I have your letter of the 28th *Magh*. I have already dealt in my previous letters to you with the question of our association with the League against Imperialism. It is clear that we cannot admit the right of the League to boss over us in any way. As soon as I hear from them in reply to my letters I shall put the matter up before the Working Committee.

It may be, however, that we may not have time to consider these questions. We are on the eve of great developments and we have to concentrate on the main issue. I wish you were here also.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 1/1929-30, p. 25, N.M.M.L.

46. Message fo Baroda State People's Conference[1]

March 13th, 1930

Dear Sir,[2]
As I am unable to be present at your conference,[3] I gladly accede to your request to send you my good wishes. The strange notion that the Indian states were something apart from the rest of India and that what is called British India could carry on without any reference to the states

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1930, p. 439, N.M.M.L.
2. B. R. Naik of the Baroda State Prajamandal. He was chairman of the reception committee of the Conference.
3. The Conference was to be held at Navsari on 18 March 1930.

is rapidly disappearing. It was time it did. We have to realise that our interests are identical and are indissolubly linked together. Neither of us can do without the other. It is very gratifying to notice the increased activity of the people of the states. India is in the throes of a great national struggle today. It is not possible for anyone, whether he lives in British India or in the states, to keep himself cut off in the struggle.

I wish you all success in your conference.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

47. The Problem of Minorities[1]

The curtain has gone up again on the Indian stage and all the world is witness to our struggle for freedom. It is a strange struggle and our methods are novel. But it is also a grim struggle and the pledge that India took on Independence Day, January 26th, will not be forgotten. The spark that was lit by our leader on the banks of the Sabarmati is already spreading like a prairie fire throughout the country and soon the whole land will try to redeem that pledge. Many a tragic scene will be enacted and many an actor on this vast stage will suffer torment before the curtain rings down finally on a free India.

But even when the fight is fiercest and consumes all our energies we must remember that the true solution of our difficulties can come only when we have won over and given satisfaction to our minorities. Today it is unfortunately the fact that some of them fear the majority and for fear of it keep apart from the struggle for freedom. Fortunately, this applies to some members only of the minority groups and not to all. Many brave Muslims, specially in the Punjab and the North West Frontier Province, are in the vanguard of the struggle. The gallant Sikhs are happily with us and will allow no others to outstrive them in courage and sacrifice. But it is sad that some who were our comrades in arms ten years ago are not with us today. None of us who had the

1. 14 March 1930. *Young India*, 15 May 1930.

privilege of marching shoulder to shoulder with them then can forget the brave part they took and the sacrifices they made. We cherish that memory and we are confident that when the fight thickens they will take their rightful place in the forefront.

The history of India and of many of the countries of Europe has demonstrated that there can be no stable equilibrium in any country so long as an attempt is made to crush a minority or to force it to conform to the ways of the majority. There is no surer method of rousing the resentment of the minority and to keep it apart from the rest of the nation than to make it feel that it has not got the freedom to stick to its own ways. Repression and coercion can never succeed in coercing a minority. They but make it more self-conscious and more determined to value and hold fast to what it considers its very own. It matters little whether logic is on its side or whether its own particular brand of culture is worthwhile or not. The mere fear of losing it makes it dear. Freedom to keep it would, itself lessen its value. The new Russia has gone a long way in solving its minorities problem by giving each one of them the fullest cultural, educational and linguistic freedom.

Therefore we in India must make it clear to all that our policy is based on granting this freedom to the minorities and that under no circumstances will any coercion or repression of them be tolerated. There is hardly any likelihood of economic questions affecting the minorities as such, but should they do so we can also lay down as our deliberate policy that there shall be no unfair treatment of any minority. Indeed, we should go further and state that it will be the business of the state to give favoured treatment to minority and backward communities.

In a free India political representation can only be on national lines. I would like this representation to be on an economic basis which would fit in with modern conditions far more than territorial representation and would also automatically do away with the lines of demarcation along communal lines. With religious and cultural and linguistic freedom granted, the principal questions that will arise in our legislatures will be economic ones, and divisions on them cannot be on communal lines. But, whatever the method of representation adopted may be, it must be such as to carry the goodwill of the minorities.

If these principles are accepted and adhered to, I do not think any minority can have a grievance or feel that it is ignored. It is possible, however, that while agreeing to these principles the minority may doubt the bona fides of the majority in giving effect to them. To that the only effective answer can be the translation of these principles into action. Unfortunately, the ability to translate them into action can only come

with the conquest of power in the state. If the *bona fides* of the majority are doubted, as they might well be, then even pacts and agreements are of little value. A general and country-wide adoption of certain broad principles can create a public opinion strong enough to prevent even an aggressive and evil-intentioned majority from going astray. But temporary pacts between individuals or even representatives cannot have the same value.

These principles should apply to all minority groups—to the Muslims, who really are in such large numbers in India that it is inconceivable that any majority can coerce them; to the Sikhs who, although small in numbers, are a powerful and well-knit group; to the Parsis; to the Anglo-Indians or Eurasians who are gradually drifting to nationalism; and to all other minorities.

What is the present position of the Congress on this vital question? The Nehru Report has lapsed, but surely the non-controversial parts of the report remain. The Fundamental Rights, as stated there, included religious, cultural, linguistic and educational freedom. This declaration must remain and it removes at once the major fears of a minority. So far as other matters are concerned, minorities as such will hardly be affected and the Lahore Congress had declared that in an independent India such questions should be solved on strictly national lines. It has gone further. It has assured the Muslims, the Sikhs and other minorities that if any solution of any communal problem is proposed in future it will not be accepted bv the Congress unless it gives full satisfaction to the parties concerned. A more complete guarantee could not have been given and if the Congress remains true to its words no minority need have the least fear.

Thus the Congress has endeavoured to give effect to the principles that should govern the treatment of minorities. If in the eyes of some it is suspect still it is not because of what it has done but because of want of trust and an unjustified fear. The Congress, I trust, will remain true to these principles and will demonstrate to the country that in communal matters it will not deviate to the right or the left and will hold the centre impartially. It will, I hope, prove to the minority communities that in independent India, for which we strive, theirs will be an honoured and a favoured place. And by its sacrifices and its determined courage in the fight for freedom it will convince all of its *bona fides*.

48. The Saiyagraha Pledge[1]

Various forms of pledges for volunteers offering themselves for civil disobedience are being used in the country and thousands have already signed these pledges. It was felt, however, by the Working Committee that it would be desirable to have a uniform pledge for all such volunteers. Members of the Committee considered the various pledges and later some of them had the advantage of consulting Gandhiji on the subject. With his approval, the following pledge was drawn up:

1. I desire to join the civil resistance campaign for the independence of India undertaken by the National Congress.
2. I accept the creed of the National Congress, that is, "the attainment of Purna Swaraj (complete independence) by the people of India by all peaceful and legitimate means".
3. I am ready and willing to go to jail and undergo all other sufferings and penalties that may be inflicted on me in this campaign.
4. In case I am sent to jail I shall not seek any monetary help for my family from the Congress funds.
5. I shall implicitly obey the orders of those who are in charge of the campaign.

This pledge is simpler and shorter than many already in use. It will be noticed that it does not refer specifically to khadi or communal unity', which are usually mentioned in such pledges. This, of course, does not mean that the Congress is going to lay less stress on these items of our programme. The Congress will continue to lay the greatest stress on these and it is hoped that volunteers will remember this fact. It was felt, however, that if we are to have a mass campaign of civil disobedience in which hundreds of thousands take part our pledge must be a simple one, chiefly laying stress on civil disobedience.

The signing of this pledge by anyone does not automatically make him or her acceptable as a satyagrahi. The signed pledge is merely an application which may or may not be accepted by the committee concerned.

1. Circular issued from Allahabad, 24 March 1930. A.I.C.C. File No. 8/1930, p. 229, N.M.M.L.

Those who have already signed pledges which are stiffer than the one suggested above need not sign again. It is not essential that signatories to the pledge be touranna members of the Congress.

Jawaharlal Nehru

49. Note on Congress Disputes in Bengal[1]

I have received a letter from Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy in which he has given an account of this conflict, specially so far as the Corporation elections were concerned.[2] I need hardly say that I have watched this conflict with dismay. I have purposely avoided interfering because I could not see my way to doing anything which might reasonably be expected to put an end to it. I had hoped that in view of the conviction of various leaders the parties would come nearer each other. I had further hoped that in any event the advent of the civil disobedience campaign would put an end to internal troubles. It is exceedingly unfortunate that in spite of the fact that the whole country is on the verge of mass civil disobedience and we are faced with the biggest national struggle of our generation petty election squabbles should go on in Calcutta and should to some extent neutralise the effort of Bengal in the coming fight.

Personally, I was of opinion in Lahore that we should keep away completely from municipal elections. The Congress, however, deleted the clause dealing with the boycott of municipalities and thus left it open to Congressmen to seek election to them on the Congress ticket. This of course did not mean that Congressmen have to do so. Indeed, in many provinces provincial committees have decided to keep away from municipal elections. Whatever doubts any of us might haye had about the desirability of contesting municipal elections have certainly been

1. 29 March 1930. A.I.C.C. File No. G-120/1930 (Pt. I), pp. 63-67, N.M.M.L.
2. Roy had accused the Calcutta District Congress Committee of defying, under Sen Gupta's instructions, the Bengal P.C.C. during the elections to the Calcutta Corporation.

removed by the exhibition of mutual friction and intolerance amongst Congressmen in Calcutta. It has been an amazing sight—on the one side the country ringing with preparations for civil disobedience; on the other, Congressmen spending their time and energy and money in attacking each other for the purpose of gaining admittance to the Calcutta Corporation. I cannot conceive that any person who is desirous of taking an effective part in the civil disobedience campaign would care to enter a municipality at this stage. And I hope that even now Congressmen in the Corporation or outside will attach more importance to civil disobedience than to the Corporation.

I have been asked by Dr. Roy to give my opinion on certain issues raised by him. It is clear that I cannot give anything resembling a decision as between the B.P.C.C. and the Calcutta District Congress Committees without giving the fullest opportunity to both parties to state their case. Even so I would be somewhat reluctant to interfere as past experience has shown that such interference does not help much. I am convinced that the troubles in Bengal will be put an end to by friends in Bengal themselves when they have come to the conclusion that they must do so.

Although I cannot give any decision or final advice in the matter I propose to give my opinion on some of the issues involved. This opinion is, of course, subject to any further information that I may receive from either party.

I have read various papers, pledge forms, newspaper articles and correspondence on the subject of the recent Corporation elections. It seems to me that there can be no doubt that certain district Congress commitees in Calcutta definitely refused to obey the B.P.C.C. They in fact rebelled against some of the B.P.C.C.'s decisions and some of their own men stated that they had rebelled. What justification they had for this rebellion, I cannot say without studying their side of the case. But it is manifest that there was rebellion. If this is granted then the rest follows and it is not surprising that the spirit of defiance should continue.

The very word ‘rebellion’ denotes a breaking of the constitution. It may be justified by special reasons but it is a clear breach of the constitution. No organisation can be carried on if its component bodies are always defying the central authority. It is often unfortunately the case that the central authority itself makes a mistake or exercises its power unfairly. Ordinarily the only course open is for the minority to try to convert the majority. Any other way is fraught with the gravest consequences. Unhappily, in Bengal, I regret to say, there has not been much of the sporting spirit which puts up with defeat after a fair

fight and which organises for future victory. There has been too much of walking out and dissension and formation of rival factions. This can only lead to the break-up of the whole organisation.

The B.P.C.C. may have erred grievously in many things. But nonetheless it continues to be the properly organised Congress agency in Bengal and unless some extraordinary event occurs the district Congress committees owe allegiance to it. Rule 3 of the B.P.C.C. is quite clear on this point, but indeed no rule was necessary. In view of this fact, *prima facie* the action of the district committees in regard to the Corporation elections was a clear contravention of the constitution. The issuing of separate pledges was most unfortunate. It could only result in confusing the public, bringing the Congress into disrepute and, particularly, demoralising candidates. The very least that the districts might have done was to refer the matter to the Working Committee of the A.I.C.C. No such reference was made. It seems that the districts were out to form an organisation which would be a rival to the B.P.C.C.

It may be that as the districts contend it was their proper function to take charge of the Corporation elections, and the B.P.C.C. had no business to intervene. Even so, who is to be the final authority to decide? Obviously, in any ordered society or organisation there must be a final authority. I can conceive of no other authority within Bengal than the B.P.C.C. itself. Of course, as I have stated, the matter could have been referred to the A.I.C.C. This final authority of the B.P.C.C. has been deliberately challenged by the district committees.

This may be a legal or a constitutional view. My real difficulty however is that obviously there must be something seriously wrong in Bengal Congress politics to produce such a situation. Why is it that the B.P.C.C. has alienated so many Congressmen and so many districts? The authority of the B.P.C.C. can ultimately rest only on the willing cooperation of its constituent bodies. If it loses that cooperation the inference is almost inevitable that it has erred to some extent at least. A mere reliance on the letter of the law will not help greatly. If I may suggest to the B.P.C.C., it should be its endeavour more to win over those who are at present indisposed to it than to compel them to submit. If I may make a suggestion to the district committees, it is this: that whatever their grievances against the B.P.C.C. may be their methods have been utterly wrong, and wrong methods never lead to right results.

I now proceed to give my opinion on the five issues raised by Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy. As I have stated above, everything that I say is subject to modification after I have heard the other side. These are my tentative replies only.

1. It seems to me that it was very wrong of the districts to issue separate pledges in contravention of a certain pledge issued by the B.P.C.C. I say this regardless of the merits of the other question, that is to say, as to whether the B.P.C.C. or the district committees should run the election.
2. It seems to me even more improper of the districts to insist on members, who had already signed the B.P.C.C. pledge, cancelling and adjuring that pledge. To ask a man who has signed any pledge to give it up can never be good morals and in politics it can only lead to demoralisation. It is obvious that this has been the result already in the Calcutta Corporation. The sight of councillors shifting about from group to group and pledge to pledge is not an elevating one.
3. I do not understand how any such body as the Congress municipal council can exist if its members belong to various groups some of whom do not choose to obey the B.P.C.C. There can only be such a council or such a group with a common loyalty. If members owe allegiance to different pledges and different committees there is bound to be continuous friction.
4. Therefore, if such groups continue, it is better that those who have taken different pledges should form separate groups, however undesirable this may be. Obviously, this would lead to disruption and cannot be commended.
5. So far as the B.P.C.C. is concerned, it has obviously to stand by those who have taken its pledge and stand by it.

I have given above my views. But I feel very strongly that the matter is not merely a legal one. I wish even now that the Congress could cut adrift from the Corporation. Let the real test of leadership be the capacity for sacrifice, not a desire for power and position.

I am sending a copy of this note to the Calcutta district committees for their information. I would beg that this note be not sent to the newspapers for publication although, of course, it is not a confidential document and may be shown or read out at committee meetings. Within an hour or two I am leaving Allahabad and I shall be away almost continuously for the next ten days. When I come back here the country is likely to be in the throes of civil disobedience. No one can say what the outcome of that will be and I am afraid I can be of little service to friends in Bengal in regard to these internal squabbles. They must settle their own troubles and march shoulder to shoulder with the rest of the country.

Jawaharlal Nehru

50. To Secretary, League against Imperialism[1]

April 9th, 1930

Dear Sir,

Your letter dated 26th February acknowledged our letter of the 30th January and you promised to place our letter before your executive committee. I do not know if you have done so or not. The matter is urgent and it is to be considered by our Working Committee at an early date. Kindly therefore expedite your reply and send it by air mail.

Quite apart from what your executive committee might think I should like to know what your secretariat thinks about it. The main burden of carrying on the work lies on the secretariat and if the secretariat itself approves, as it probably does, the recent circulars and activities of the League then it becomes difficult for the National Congress to remain associated with the league.

I have been given to understand on reliable authority that some newspapers in Berlin have announced the fact that I have been expelled from your executive committee. I was not aware of this fact as you had not taken the trouble to communicate it to me. I do not know what your procedure is but it does seem extraordinary that statements should be made in the press without any previous or subsequent intimation being sent to me. I make no grievance of this. I draw your attention to it only because it has deepened my conviction that my outlook differs greatly from yours. Whether you have expelled me or not, I entirely agree with you that there is no point in my continuing to remain a member of a committee which does not want me and which I cannot attend. You will therefore kindly remove my name from your committee.

Sincerely yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 1/1929-30, p. 3, N.M.M.L.

51. On the Boycott of British Drugs[1]

I have welcomed the decision[2] of the British Medical Council to refuse to recognise Indian medical degrees. I hope this will make our medical practitioners and hospitals stand on their own legs and not look up to England or to what is miscalled the Indian Medical Service. We all know how Indian medical students have been treated in Great Britain. The sooner Indians stop going to Great Britain for their studies and instead go to the continental countries of Europe the better it will be. They will get both better education and better treatment there.

I understand that the Indian Medical Association is organising a boycott of British drugs and medical requisites and specially wants to prevent dealers from sending lucky-day indents on the fourteenth. I agree entirely with this proposal and hope that dealers will support it. Both self-respect and the national struggle demand it.

1. Statement to the press, Allahabad, 11 April 1930. A.I.C.C. File No. G-129/ 1930 (Pt. 1), p. 17, N.M.M.L.
2. Announced on 24 February 1930.

7

SALT SATYAGRAHA

1. Circular to P.C.Cs[1]

22/2/30

Dear Friend,

Our office has already drawn your attention to the recent resolution of the Working Committee regarding civil resistance. I have just returned to Allahabad and I hasten to write to you on the subject. There appears to be some misunderstanding, and doubts as to the future course of work have arisen. I am endeavouring by means of this letter to remove them as far as possible.

2. By authorising Gandhiji to start civil disobedience the Congress Working Committee has in no way divested itself or the A.I.C.C. of responsibility. The A.I.C.C., as you already know, has been convened to meet on the 21st March at Ahmedabad, and the Working Committee will meet earlier to consider the then situation and take steps accordingly. Meanwhile it was felt by the committee that Mr. Gandhi should be given a free hand to start civil disobedience on his own lines and with people of his choice. As the general methods which the Congress proposes to adopt are largely those suggested by Gandhiji, it was considered desirable for him to be given freedom to initiate the campaign. The Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. can of course take any action at any time and as the movement develops they are bound to control it.

3. The first stage of the campaign is thus likely to be some form of civil disobedience undertaken by Gandhiji and his associates. It is desirable not to complicate matters by any other aggressive action at this stage. As soon as the movement is definitely started by Gandhiji it is likely that he and his associates will be arrested. This will mark the end of the first stage and it is likely to come soon after the beginning of the campaign.

4. Gandhiji's arrest should immediately widen the area of the campaign, and the A.I.C.C., the Working Committee and the P.C.Cs then take action. This action should be at first on the lines adopted by Gandhiji. It is open to the A.I.C.C. or the P.C.Cs to organise civil resistance in particular areas on different lines also, suitable for those

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-l/1930, pp. 113-119, N.M.M.L.

areas. Thus the second stage will gradually develop into a mass campaign with a large measure of provincial autonomy as regards ways and means.

5. The third stage will be the stage of the mass campaign when it is expected that most of the present Congress leaders will be in jail and unable to guide the movement. It is hardly possible to issue specific directions about this as much will depend on the situation then existing. It is at this stage that the Working Committee has suggested that, as far as possible, all cooperation with the British Government should cease. Lawyers, students, etc., should then withdraw their cooperation. It is obvious that when a mass movement is convulsing the country it will hardly be possible for anyone who wants to help the movement to continue cooperating with the British. Also, in the absence of the older leaders new leaders will have to be chosen to carry on this campaign.

6. In view of this possible development of the campaign it is necessary that provincial Congress committees should forthwith meet and consider the kinds of civil disobedience they can offer when the time comes, and to prepare for it. The time, indeed, is not fat distant and we must be up and doing. Whatever the methods may be, Congress members and volunteers are necessary, and these should be enrolled and the latter trained.

7. There has been considerable reference in the newspapers and in speeches to an attack on the salt monopoly. It is well known that this monopoly has been in the past, and is today, one of the monstrous methods of squeezing revenue from an impoverished people and depriving them of the most essential article of food. There are various ways of attacking this monopoly but a method which can become universal is the local manufacture of salt either from sea water or salt-earth. It is possible not only to make salt with the greatest ease near the coast, but it is equally easy to make it in many places inland from salt-earth. Most villagers still remember the process which is easy. The manufacture of salt, and even the possession of salt-earth, are offences under the Salt Act of 1890, punishable with 6 months' imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 500/-. Even if salt cannot be manufactured by everyone it should be possible for each one of us to get our salt from some private individual who has made it. Thus the government-manufactured salt can be totally boycotted. If necessary government salt depots can be picketed. There are other possible methods also which need not be discussed at this stage.

8. Salt offers us a very favourable ground for attack. The monopoly is most unjust and the masses must be with us in any such movement. But apart from salt it is open to P.C.Cs to have other forms of civil disobedience which may involve non-payment of taxes, of land revenue or

rent, wherever these are very oppressive and the people who suffer under them are prepared to take action.

9. This office will always endeavour to give all possible assistance to you but you will no doubt appreciate that the time is fast approaching when those who run this office and your principal leaders and workers might all be removed from the scene of action. That contingency we must welcome and look forward to, for that must result, we hope, in mass action on an extensive scale. But, for that we must prepare also with foresight so that the removal of leaders may make little or no difference to the discipline and organisation of our forces.

With all good wishes for success in the great fight ahead.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

May I suggest to you to pay particular attention to Gandhiji's suggestions in coming issues of Young India. These will help us in understanding his plan of campaign.

For those who desire to study the question of the salt monopoly, a recent publication might be recommended. This is: A Monograph on Common Salt, issued by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Com-merce and Industry. It is obtainable at most booksellers.

2. To Secretaries, P.C.Cs[1]

Allahabad
March 5th, 1930

Dear Comrade,

On the 22nd February I addressed a circular letter to you in which I endeavoured to point out the various stages of the civil disobedience campaign. We are now on the eve of the first stage. Gandhiji has sent a letter to the Viceroy intimating to him, in his usual fashion, that on a certain date he proposes to start civil disobedience.[2] In all likelihood,

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-l/1930, p. 132, N.M.M.L.
2. On 2 March 1930 Mahatma Gandhi had written to the Viceroy that he would start civil disobedience on 11 March by violating the salt law.

therefore, we shall presently see the beginning of this campaign. Having begun it will automatically grow and spread. I trust that your committee is fully prepared to face the crisis that is impending. Some provincial committees have, I am very glad to notice, already taken effective steps to carry on the campaign.

2. Gandhiji proposes to begin with the salt monopoly. How he will attack this will soon be announced but the easiest way of doing so is to manufacture contraband salt locally. This can be done without great difficulty. District committees should, wherever convenient, choose suitable areas for the purpose and at the same time should encourage the peasantry and others to manufacture their own salt from sea water or salt-earth.

3. You should not start the campaign just yet. Wait for Gandhiji to take action. If he is arrested, start immediately. Even if he is not arrested you can start gradually with salt.

4. After Gandhiji's arrest, remember your provincial committee can, if it so chooses, lay down other methods of satyagraha also. Indeed, many provinces are already doing so. Each province should concentrate in the earlier stages on its strong point. Later, we hope that a mass campaign will comprise many methods of satyagraha.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Either Freedom or Slavery1

The final decision has been taken. Six days hence, on the 12th of this month, Gandhiji will start on his great march to begin civil disobedience. He will go and many brave men will accompany him. Who will sit still and unmoved during this great fight when India strives to regain her lost freedom? Who will remain passive when India's bravest sons and

1. Statement to the press, Allahabad, 6 March 1930. *The Searchlight*, 9 March 1.930.

daughters court suffering and imprisonment and death for her dear sake and to bring relief to her unhappy millions? There are only two ways open to each one of us-the way of freedom and the way of slavery. There can be only two hosts in the country-the army of freedom and the army of exploiters. Which way do we go and which host do we belong to? Let each one of us search his heart for the answer and give it in deeds worthy of India and of the great cause we fight for.

4. Statement to the Press[1]

On March 12th, Gandhiji begins his great march, and satyagraha for independence commences. The eyes of India will be upon him on that historic day, and the prayers and good wishes of the millions of her sons and daughters will follow him and his gallant band. I suggest that, all over the country, we should celebrate that great day by meetings and suitable demonstrations by reiterating our pledge of independence, and wishing Godspeed to the soldiers of freedom. In particular, I hope that on that day volunteers for satyagraha will be enrolled everywhere.

1. Allahabad, 7 March 1930. *The Hindu*, 8 March 1930.

5. To Mahatma Gandhi[1]

7-3-30

My dear Bapuji,
Your telegram[2] came yesterday. The *Bulletin* has been printed off accordingly and is being despatched.

1. Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Serial No. 16623.
2. Dated 6 March 1930, this read : "Letter handed press for publication. Marching early morning 12th with sixty companions." In fact, 79 satyagrahis accompanied Mahatma Gandhi.

The news was fully expected and yet it sent a thrill through all of us. How I wish I could join your gallant band or at least could see it start off bravely on the morning of the 12th.

If you are not arrested before the 20th, I do hope you will attend the Working Committee meeting on that day and the A.I.C.C. the next day. I hope to reach Ahmedabad on the night of the 19th.

Yours affly.,
Jawaharlal

6. To B.G. Lokhare[1]

Allahabad
March 7th, 1930

Dear Lokhare,

Your letter of the 3rd March. I do not think it is necessary to add "nonviolence in thought'" to the satyagraha pleadge as drafted. There is no question of any inferiority complex.

I think we should suggest to members of provincial boards to sign the satyagraha pledge. There should be no compulsion or disciplinary action at this stage at any rate. Only the All India Board can consider this question.

I hope you will send the instructions to the U.P. soon.

As regards your service men, they should be asked if they want to volunteer for satyagraha. There should be no compulsion even in their case. Those who volunteer should have their names put down in your list. It should be made clear to them that they must wait for orders from your office before offering organised satyagraha. This is more or less the policy that is being adopted by the A.I.S.A.

The breaking of the salt law or any other law undoubtedly means danger to the property of the civil resister. It is for the person concerned to decide what steps he will take about his property. Ordinarily he should not care as to whether his property is attached or not. Indeed, the more

1. Hardikar Papers, N.M.M.L.

such attachments take place the better will the movement develop. At the same time it is open to anyone to transfer his property to others. In many cases, of course, it is not possible to make this transfer. Take the case of a non-payment of land revenue or rent campaign. Manifestly, the people who do not pay must be in possession of the land and they run the risk of attachment and sale. How then can we try to avoid that risk?

It does not seem to me absolutely necessary for satyagrahis to sign any other pledge. Ordinarily they should be Congressmen. No fee should be charged from satyagrahis.

Regarding the guarding of the national flag, this should be done by all volunteers even at the risk of arrest. No fresh instructions need be asked for. Of course the only way they can guard it is to remain at their post and seek arrest. They should not retaliate.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

7. On the Arrest of Vallabhbhai Patel[1]

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's arrest and conviction[2] is a significant and happy omen. It means that we are in the thick of the fight. We shall miss his wise counsel; but his undaunted spirit and determination, which made Bardoli famous in India, will radiate from the walls of Sabarmati Jail, and create an all-India Bardoli. It is clear that other prominent Congressmen will soon follow Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Candhiji may also be arrested before long.

I suggest to all Congress committees and other organisations and individuals that Gandhiji's arrest should be followed immediately by an all-India hartal to demonstrate our deep respect for and confidence in our great leader and our determination to follow him. I hope that all institutions that sympathise with the struggle for freedom will close their doors that day and the whole country will demonstrate again that it stands for the independence of India.

1. Statement to the press, Allahabad, 8 March 1930. *The Tribune* 12 March 1930.
2. He was arrested at Ras on 7 March 1930 and immediately sentenced to three months' imprisonment and ordered to pay a fine.

8. The Campaign in the U.P.[1]

The reason why Mahatma Gandhi selected the salt laws for violation was that those laws are most arbitrary, they can be easily infringed and their infringement will also be of advantage to the country. The campaign will first be started in districts near the sea side but in the United Provinces too there are many districts where salt is produced. Since the agitation for disobedience of the salt laws began, many people have come to me telling me that they know how to manufacture salt and therefore demanding directions to start manufacturing it.

After the first stage of the campaign, which will end with the arrest of Mahatma Gandhi, the second stage will begin when it will be the turn of the Working Committee on behalf of the country and of the provincial committees to continue the movement and it would then be for each provincial committee to select the law or laws for violation suitable to its province or any district or any part of a district. Perhaps in the second stage many workers in different provinces will be arrested and the third stage will follow when a sort of mass campaign will be started in the whole country.

The citizens of Allahabad should come forward to get enrolled as volunteers. There will be two classes of volunteers, those who are ready to join the satyagraha movement at once and those who are at present not ready to participate in the campaign but are able to help in other ways in the success of the struggle.

It is a mistake to say that Mahatma Gandhi was made a 'dictator'. As it was not possible to hold meetings frequently to decide matters arising out of the civil disobedience campaign, Mahatma Gandhi was given the fullest authority by the Working Committee to organise the campaign. Such authority was needed from the Working Committee as the movement had to be started in the name of the Congress.

I hope that after the 12th March, when Mahatma Gandhi is arrested, people will give a suitable reply to Earl Winterton’s statement that not a dog barked in 1921 when Mahatma Gandhi was arrested, although the fact is that no demonstration was made then in compliance with Mahatma Gandhi's own request and directions.

1. Speech at Allahabad, 8 March 1930. From *The Leader*, 10 March 1930.

9. Circular to P.C.Cs[1]

Allahabad
March 12th, 1930

Dear Comrade,

Today Gandhiji started on his great march and a new chapter in India's long history has been opened. How this chapter will end will depend on us, the workers of the Congress, to a large extent. We are now in the thick of the struggle and the time for procrastination and debate is past. We have to plunge in whatever the consequences. The A.I.C.C. meets soon and will no doubt give a lead to the country. Meanwhile, each day and each hour is important and cannot be wasted. I hope your province is forging ahead with its preparations. These preparations must consist of: (1) enrolment of picked volunteers for satyagraha, (2) enrolment of other volunteers, (3) selection of one or more areas in your province for concentrated civil disobedience, (4) propaganda in and preparation of this area, (5) training of volunteers, specially for satyagraha, and also for other purposes, (6) general propaganda in the province.

For the moment we wait for developments before launching on civil disobedience outside Gujarat. But this does not mean that we wait for long. If Gandhiji is arrested we start satyagraha in any area where we are ready for it. If he is not arrested for some days, even so we can start in prepared areas. Therefore, in either event we should keep ready.

I have already suggested to you that civil disobedience should be for the salt tax as well as for any other grievance under which your province may be suffering, e.g., land revenue, rent, *chowkidari* tax, etc. Ordinarily, a no-tax campaign should follow the salt campaign. It will be easier to follow this procedure as the salt campaign will prepare the ground for the no-tax campaign.

In the last *Bulletin* it has been suggested that the satyagraha pledge suggested by the Hindustani Seva Dal should be used for satyagrahis. I attach a copy of this pledge[2] for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. 14/1930, pp. 29-31, N.M.M.L.
2. Not printed.

10. If Mahatma Gandhi Be Arrested[1]

It has been decided to observe a hartal, organise processions, and hold meetings when Mahatma Gandhi is arrested. Whether Mahatma Gandhi is arrested or not, either will be of advantage to the country; for in case of his arrest, the movement will gain strength, and if he is not arrested many people will follow him in breaking laws, and eventually a day might come when we will sit down to make our own laws. It has also been decided to have a bonfire of foreign cloth on the occasion of Holi under the auspices of the Allahabad Congress committee.

1. Speech at Allahabad, 12 March 1930. From *The Hindu*. 13 March 1930.

11. To Mahadeva Desai1

March 13th, 1930

My dear Mahadeo,

Your letter. How wonderful it must have been yesterday at the Ashram when Bapu left. Surely this struggle so auspiciously begun cannot but end in victory.

About writing to *Young India*, I would gladly do so. But I am stupid about writing for papers and somehow for months past I have been unable to bring myself to do it. However, we shall talk about it when we meet in Ahmedabad. I shall send you the book[2] on Michael Collins.

I am afraid it is not possible for Bapu to come back to the Ashram now for the meeting of the A.I.C.C. But I must see him before this meeting. I hope it will be possible to waylay him somewhere on his march and have a little talk with him. I shall reach Ahmedabad on the night of the 19th.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1930, p. 437, N.M.M.L.
2. *Michael Collins and the Making of a New Ireland* (1926) by P. Beaslay.

12. Students and Satyagraha[1]

It seems to be the intention of the government not to touch Mahatma Gandhi so long as it is possible for it to be so, but there is evidence to show that in the meanwhile one leader or the other will be taken away gradually. For, after the arrest of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, news has been received of the arrest of another leader, Mr. Sen Gupta, who is being taken to Burma.[2]

The movement, however, has to be strengthened and it is, as a matter of fact, already gaining in strength. It will not be long before the country will soon see the fire of struggle burning all over the country. The reason why the spread of the civil disobedience movement in other provinces has been checked at present is that they are waiting to see what happens to Mahatma Gandhi. But it cannot be checked for long.

It will not be possible for the people to let Mahatma Gandhi alone remain for long in the field, themselves being mere spectators.

The result of such a big fight cannot be expected to be known early. One special feature of the struggle initiated by Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress is that there is no room for any compromise. Peace undoubtedly follows every battle and this much I can safely foretell, that the result of the present struggle will not be that we will remain as we are.

Students, particularly, should consider during the forthcoming holidays how they can contribute towards the success of the movement.

1. Speech at Allahabad, 14 March 1930. From *The Leader*, 16 March 1930.
2. Sen Gupta was arrested at Calcutta on 10 March 1930 for speeches delivered in February at Rangoon, and taken there for trial.

13. To M.S. Aney[1]

March 16th, 1930

My dear Mr. Aney,

I thank you for your letter of the 11th March. I appreciate very much your frankness in writing to me as you have done and specially in your sending your resignation from the A.I.C.C. even though you disagree with the interpretation of the Working Committee.[2] This interpretation is not free from difficulty. As you have written to me I shall put up the matter before the Working Committee.

We are in the thick of the struggle now and we can hardly argue amongst ourselves about petty things. All of us have to do our best and I have no doubt that the A.I.C.C. will be the poorer for your absence. As a matter of fact, whether you continue a member of the A.I.C.C. or not, your cooperation and advice will always be welcome. The Working Committee took the step it did because it considered it a right one and also because unless it did so a number of people who really are not going to be of any help to the Congress might continue in the A.I.C.C. Any such general step automatically hits the wrong persons also.

I would be very glad if you could come to the meeting of the A.I.C.C. in Ahmedabad because none of us can afford to do without the help of any good fighter like you and other friends. The task before the country is prodigious and we are humble enough to know our own capacities.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-l (ii)/1930, p. 67, N.M.M.L.
2, Aney's view was that the Working Committee could ask members to resign from executive bodies of the Congress but not from the A.I.C.C. which was a deliberative body.

14. To K.F. Nariman[1]

March 16th, 1930

Dear Friend,

Your letter of the 13th March. In a vague kind of way I have already suggested a complete hartal on the day of Gandhiji's arrest. I have not specified factories and the like but I would certainly like a one-day strike as suggested by you. I do not want, however, to make this suggestion till I have consulted my colleagues in the Working Committee. I shall soon have a chance of doing this.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-56/1930, p. 7, N.M.M.L.

15. Statement to the Press[1]

The manager of All India Spinners Association, Khadi Karyalaya, Akbarpur informs that four persons with cycles, clad in khadi, are going about telling people in the district of Fyzabad that they have been deputed by Jawaharlal Nehru and that nonviolent methods will not now do, and the country should be prepared for armed resistance.

One of these persons came to stay in A.I.S.A. Karyalaya, Akbarpur, for the night, but was not allowed to stay there.

The people are warned against all such impostors, whose only object is to create mischief.

1. Allahabad, 18 March 1930. *The Tribune*, 20 March 1930.

16. Note for the Congress Bulletin[1]

The next meeting of the All India Congress Committee will take place at Ahmedabad on Friday, March 21st, 1930, at 2 p.m. The Working Committee meets on March 20th.

As civil disobedience is going to be started soon, various provincial Congress committees are getting ready to take full part in the campaign. According to the decision of the Working Committee, Gandhiji will initiate the campaign and, to begin with, this will take the form of an attack on the salt monopoly. In case of his arrest each provincial committee will, subject to what the A.I.C.C. may decide at its next meeting, have the liberty to determine the place and method of offering satyagraha. It is desirable that the salt campaign should be kept in the forefront everywhere as it touches the poorest and almost everybody can join it. In addition to this other methods of offering civil disobedience may also be adopted. Provincial committees and local committees should however remember that any action that they may take must be such as to fit in with the general campaign as initiated by Gandhiji.

As civil disobedience spreads and develops into a mass movement, it is hoped that all rendering voluntary cooperation to the government, or receiving so-called benefits from it, will withdraw their cooperation or renounce the benefit, and throw themselves into the struggle for freedom.

Particular attention should be paid now to the enrolment of volunteers, and specially to those who offer themselves for satyagraha. The satyagraha pledge is not compulsory for all volunteers. Only such as wish to take it need do so. The Hindustani Seva Dal has prepared a satyagraha pledge which can be commended to provincial committees and others.

The Working Committee has made it clear that, in view of the mandate of the Lahore Congress, members of the legislatures cannot continue as members of the All India Congress Committea or other elective Congress committees. Members of the A.I.C.C. who have acted contrary to the Congress mandate have therefore been called upon to resign from the A.I.C.C.

1. Drafted by Jawaharlal, clearly before 20 March 1930. A.I.C.C. File No. 43/1929, pp. 35-39, N.M.M.L.

In *Bulletin* No. 3 mention was made of some hundreds of places where Independence Day was celebrated. A very large number of fresh reports have since been received, which go to prove that the celebration was of a remarkable character. A particular feature of this celebration was the great part which rural India played in it. Many people were sentenced to small terms of imprisonment or fines for the part they took on January 26th. In some places students were specially penalised. In a municipality[2] in the Punjab a vice-chairman[3] was removed from his office by the government because he had put up the national flag on the municipal building. As a matter of fact many municipal buildings all over India, including the Corporation of Calcutta, hoisted the national flag on Independence Day.

Provincial committees are requested to send their annual contribution to the A.I.C.C. office by the end of March. The Working Committee has fixed these for the provinces and has asked all P.C.Cs to levy an income tax on all members of elective Congress committees.

2. Gujranwala.
3. Malik Lai Khan.

17. To Secretaries, P.C.Cs[1]

Dear Comrade,

We are leaving Allahabad today for Ahmedabad to attend the meeting of the Working Committee and the All India Congress Committee. We shall communicate to you with all possible speed the decisions of those committees. Meanwhile, before we go we should like to impress upon you again that your committee should be ready for immediate action. We are in the midst of a struggle which is rapidly developing, and in such a struggle we have to seize an opportunity as soon as it presents itself and take advantage of psychological moments. If we are unprepared when such a moment comes then we miss a great chance and injure our cause greatly. No one can say definitely when such an opportunity may present itself. All we can do is to keep ready for it.

1, Clearly written before 20 March 1930. *The Searchlight*, 23 March 1930.

If Gandhiji is arrested such an opportunity may present itself. It is probable that he will begin his satyagraha on the 1st April and he may be arrested soon after.[2] We should therefore try to be ready for action by that day. Even if he is not arrested, we shall probably have to start satyagraha in the other provinces early in April. We cannot allow the whole burden of the satyagraha campaign to rest on Gandhiji's shoulders. So that, in any event, the beginning of April is important.

In the second week of April we have the National Week.[3] This must be utilised fully for an intensification of our campaign. Details about its observance will be sent to you later.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Mahatma Gandhi reached Dandi on 5 April and started satyagraha the following day by breaking the salt law. He was, however, arrested only on 4 May at Karadi.
3. The week from 6 to 13 April was observed as the National Week every year in memory of the martial law in the Punjab and the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy in 1919.

18. Interview to the Press[1]

QUESTION : What course will the All India Congress Committee take now? Probably it will back up Gandhiji's movement.

ANSWER : Probably, yes.

Q : Press reports have it that Congress leaders think of discrediting the government's currency note issue. Is there any foundation for it?

A : Well, there are many courses open, but for the present, we are of opinion that it is better to concentrate on one programme—Gandhiji's programme.

Q : Will it not be too heavy a responsibility for the A.I.C.C. to take

1. Jambusar, 20 March 1930. *The Hindu*, 21 March 1930.

to support the Salt Act civil disobedience campaign? A plenary session of the Congress has not passed a resolution in favour of it.

A: I am surprised at the question. The Congress resolution on independence authorised the All India Congress Committee to talce whatever measures were necessary to secure independence, and civil disobedience being one of the effective measures, support for it was implicit in that resolution.

19. The A.I.C.C. and Civil Disobedience[1]

The A.I.C.C. met on the banks of the Sabarmati, but the presiding genius of the place, for whose sake the venue was fixed, was not there. But, though absent, his spirit seemed to pervade the place and everyone's thoughts were on him and his gallant band of satyagrahi volunteers marching along the dusty roads of Gujarat, through seas of humanity, to the appointed place where India is first coming to grips with the great British Empire. Two other members of the Working Committee could also not be present, being kept away by the alien power. Vallabhbhai, the victor of Bardoli and the leader of Gujarat province, which is destined to take the lead in this fight for our independence, lay a mile away behind the high walls of Sabarmati prison. Sen Gupta had been carried off suddenly across the high seas to distant Rangoon and was being tried there for having spoken sedition against the British Government.

The committee met under a heavy sense of responsibility. The fight had begun in earnest and the time for empty talk was past. Any day might bring news that their leader had been arrested. Indeed; no member of the committee knew what his own fate might be within the next few days. The attendance was good, although many members had excused themselves from attendance on the plea that they were busy with preparations for civil disobedience in their own areas. There was no question of voting in the committee. The result was a foregone conclusion.

The principal resolution that was passed confirmed the Working

1, Article written at Broach on 22 March 1930. *Young India*, 27 March 1930.

Committee's resolution authorising Gandhiji to begin civil disobedience. This resolution also laid down the conditions under which the various provinces should start satyagraha. The Congress today does not propose to indulge in satyagraha as a gesture. It aims at civil disobedience on a mass scale in which hundreds of thousands will take part. The salt laws have therefore been chosen as they affect everyone, and almost every province can cooperate in the campaign against them.

The resolution gives a great deal of liberty to provincial Congress committees in regard to the manner and place of civil disobedience. It is open to them to prepare their provinces for any form of satyagraha best suited to them, but it should be realised that different forms of satyagraha in different provinces may tend to weaken the general movement. It is therefore necessary, and the A.I.C.C. has laid stress on it, that the Salt Act satyagraha should be first undertaken in every province where it is possible. Other forms of satyagraha may be prepared for but they should be reserved for the second stage of the campaign.

In case Gandhiji is arrested, P.C.Cs can immediately, or at any date they may determine, start civil disobedience. In case he is not arrested, they should wait for him to reach the coast and start satyagraha. He will then give his signal and the P.C.Cs will be informed immediately through the A.I.C.C. office. This means that P.C.Cs must keep ready from now onwards, as it is possible that news of his arrest may come at any moment. In the ordinary course he is likely to reach his destination on April 5th, the eve of the National Week. It will be fitting that this week should see civil disobedience in a large number of places all over India.

The A.I.C.C. has confirmed the resolution of the Working Committee of February I6th. It will be remembered that in the latter an appeal was made to all who either help the government or receive benefits from it to join the campaign as soon as it develops into a mass movement. The day is not far when such a development might take place and all such persons, students, lawyers, etc., will soon have to decide if they will throw in their lot with that of the civil resisters. It is obvious that no one can go about deliberately breaking laws and yet continue his profession in a law court or his academical studies. The Gujarat Vidyapith has set a good example to all educational institutions, national and otherwise. It has mobilised all its resources for helping the civil disobedience campaign.

All institutions and individuals who wish to take part in civil disobe-dience or to help the campaign in any way must realise that we are on the verge and soon we shall have to take the plunge. Let them therefore get ready and keep ready.

20. Inqiiab Zindabad1

"Inqilab zindabad! Inqiab zindabad!" Loud the shouts rang out in onference and meeting hall, and the echo answered, "Inqilab zindabad". The young men and women of India were indeed awake and they thundered out their welcome to revolution and the will to do and die. Who could doubt the meaning of this cry? And who was not filled the enthusiasm at this great awakening and resolve? India was going to be free. The youths had decided it.

And today the pilgrim marches onward on his long trek. Staff in hand, he goes along the dusty roads of Gujarat, cleareyed and firm of step with his faithful band trudging along behind him. Many a journey has undertaken in the past, many a weary road traversed. But longer than any that have gone before is this last journey of his, and many are the obstacles in his way. But the fire of a great resolve is in him and surpassing love of his miserable countrymen. And love of truth that scorches, and love of freedom that inspires. And none that passes him can escape the spell, and men of common clay feel the spark of life. It is a long journey, for the goal is the independence of India and the ending of the exploitation of her millions.

Tire pilgrim marches onward. And whither go you, young men and women of India who shouted so loudly and so lately of independence and inqilab? Whither go you? Were your brave cries all in vain and your shouting a mere cloak for the cowardice in your hearts? The field of battle lies before you, the flag of India beckons to you, and freedom herself awaits your coming. Do you hesitate now, you who were but yesterday so loudly on her side? Is the examination hall or the counting-house dearer to you than India's freedom? Will you be mere lookers-on in this glorious straggle and see your best and bravest face the might of a great empire which has crashed your country and her children? What shall it profit you to get your empty degrees and your mess of pottage if the millions starve and your motherland continues in bondage? Who lives if India dies? Who dies if India lives?

1. Written on 24 March 1930. *Young India,* 3 April 1930.

21. Circular to Secretaries, P.C.Cs[1]

Allahabad
March 25th, 1930

Dear Comrade,

There is an impression that the salt laws can only be broken in areas where there are facilities for manufacturing salt, either from the sea or salt-earth. As a matter of fact we are at present aiming at a technical breach of the laws and not large-scale manufacture. This technical breach can take place almost anywhere with great ease. I should like you to consider this point and to arrange accordingly. For instance, each province can choose a few areas for Salt Act satyagraha, which have the sea or salt-earth. In addition, in each considerable town where there are satyagrahis, volunteers can publicly break the salt laws by collecting some salt-earth in a suitable place and, after due notice, deliberately attempting to make salt out of it, the whole object being to invite arrest. If arrests take place because of this, it is easy enough to continue it. If arrests do not take place then the operations can be widened.

In trying to restrict satyagraha to a few limited places only in a province, there is some danger of our preventing the movement from developing normally and as rapidly as it should. We have to remember that our aim is a mass campaign in which large numbers can take part.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Maharashtra Government, Home Department (Special) Intercepted Letters.

22. Appeal for the Seva Dal[1]

More than six years ago the Hindustani Seva Dal was started with the blessing of the National Congress as the volunteer department of the

1. Allahabad, 25 March 1930, *The Hindu*, 26 March 1930.

Congress. Since then, it has quietly and persistently trained volunteers in national service. Today, the time has come when it should justify itself and prove its worth in the great national struggle which we have begun. The Dal has naturally and rightly placed all its services at the disposal of the Congress for the satyagraha campaign and is busy enrolling volunteers for satyagraha. I am sure there will be no lack of volunteers for this noble work. I hope also that those who can do so will assist the Dal financially to enable it to carry on this work efficiently and with speed.

23. To Lal Behari Tandon[1]

March 25th, 1930

Dear Friend,[2]

Your letter. If Gonda district has got plenty of salt-earth it is for you to take advantage of this fact and start salt manufacture. There are many other districts in the U.P. where this can be done. Each district where we are going to break the salt law has to take the burden on itself. If Gonda is prepared to give a sufficient number of volunteers for this the P.C.C. will gladly help. But you cannot expect volunteers to come from other districts to help you.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-29/1930 (Pt. II), p. 265, N.M.M.L.
2. Secretary, District Congress Committee, Gonda; imprisoned during the salt satyagraha in 1930; member, U.P. Legislative Assembly, 1937 and 1946.

24. To Basheer Ahmed Sayeed[1]

March 25th, 1930

Dear Sir,[2]

I have your letter of March 16th. I note that you have resigned your membership of the A.I.C.C.[3] I thank you for your assurance that you will ever be ready to serve the interests of the country.

I am afraid you are taking an incorrect view of the Muslim response to the Congress campaign. This response is very satisfactory and encouraging in the predominantly Muslim provinces, the N.W.F. and the Punjab. In other provinces in the north also, as well as in Bombay, we are having many young Muslims who are throwing themselves into the movement for freedom.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-l (ii)/1930, p. 17, N.M.M.L.
2. (b. 1900); advocate, and later, Judge of the High Court at Madras.
3. Basheer Ahmed Sayeed had written that his constituents, all Muslims, had "commanded" him to continue in the legislature, and that Muslims were "altogether out of the Congress throughout the country".

25. To Mahatma Gandhi[1]

March 27th, 1930

My dear Bapuji,

I have received a letter from the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee stating that they are deeply pained to learn that illiterate Pathans have been engaged by the government to obstruct you at Dandi. The Committee feel that this use of the Pathans by the government brings discredit on the Pathans of the Frontier Province. They suggest therefore that if you are agreeable they might send some nationalist Pathans

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-29/1930 (Pt. II), p. 251, N.M.M.L.

from Peshawar to Dandi. These persons will not go there primarily to offer civil disobedience but to explain, if they have a chance, to theii fellow Pathans there in Pushtu the significance of the nabonal campaign and of civil disobedience. Two names are suggested: Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan[2] and Maulana Khan Mir.[3] The former, I know, is a good person. Khan Mir, I am told, has recently been released from exile whatever that might mean.

Of course, Pathans cannot be said to excel in nonviolence. They are apt to lose their tempers but I do not think one or two of them are likely to do anything harmful if they are near your group. Whether they do anything useful or not at Dandi, contact with your group will do them good and the Frontier Province will appreciate the honour. If you think it is worthwhile for these friends to be sent for, kindly send a telegram to our office here in which you might say, 'Send Muslim friends'.

Yours affly.,
Jawahailal

2. (b. 1891); born at Utmanzai, of the Mohamadzai clan, and brother of Dr. Khan Sahib; prominent Congress leader of the North West Frontier Province, popularly known as 'the Frontier Gandhi' for his unqualified faith in nonviolence; in 1919, imprisoned for protesting against the Rowlatt Bill; president of the Khilafat Committee at Peshawar; founded the Red Shirt or *khudai khidmatgar* organisation in 1929; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement, and from 1947 to 1955 detained by the Pakistan Government for demanding Pakhtoonistan; in November 1969, received the Nehru Award for International Understanding.
3. Secretary, Congress Committee, Peshawar; imprisoned in 1929 for propagating Amir Amanullah's cause.

26. To Shri Krishna Dikshit[1]

March 28th, 1930

Dear Sir,[2]

I have your letter. I am glad to find that you and your friends desire to serve the country.[3] Primarily, it is desirable for people to work in

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-44 (l)/1930, p. 73, N.M.M.L.
2. An employee in the collector's office at Etawah.
3. Dikshit and three others had offered to leave government service and work for the national cause if ensured suitable employment.

their own districts. If that is not possible sometimes arrangements can be made elsewhere. I am afraid, however, that we cannot give you any promise of financial help. It is impossible for us to pay our volunteers. I would suggest to you to get into touch with your district Congress committee and see what you can do, or you may write to the provincial Congress committee at Benares.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

27. No Choice but to Fight[1]

The local authorities have started prosecuting the Congress workers in the hope that their confinement would cause the collapse of the satvagraha movement, but I would like to make it clear that the district has been selected for the fight by the provincial Congress committee and every Congressman in the province will make it his duty to continue the fight in the district. I myself and a large number of Congress workers of the province shall make the district our headquarters and will continue satyagraha.

We shall begin the fight with defiance of the Salt Act, but will later on take up such other laws for violation as are determined by the Satyagraha Committee.

At this juncture there can be only two parties in the country, one for independence and the other for continuance of the present administration. Everyone will have to take sides. He who is not with us is a rebel against the country.

We have already succeeded in making the section on sedition of the Indian Penal Code a dead letter. If we continue to defy one law after another, there will be an end of the government.

1. Speech at Rae Bareli, 31 March 1930. From *The Searchlight,* 4 April 1930.

28. The Battle for Independence[1]

I have been hearing revolutionary cries such as "Long Live Revolution" for a long time. Now the time has come for actual revolution. Our satyagraha is a peaceful and nonviolent struggle and is bound to be crowned with success. There is no power on earth which can frustrate our design. Men and women of the country should devote themselves to the sole occupation of defeating the government. Mahatma Gandhi will launch the salt tax campaign from the 6th April and it is high time for young men and women to enrol themselves as volunteers for the emancipation of the country. The general has sounded the bugle and it is the duty of the soldiers to rally round the Congress banner to march ahead.

We should not lose courage if Mahatmaji is arrested. We must proceed to break the laws one after another. By so doing, one day we might make our own laws. We should not be content with simply breaking the salt law. Rather, we should bear in mind that our aim is complete independence.

1. Speech at Muzaffarpur, 3 April 1930. From *The Searchlight*, 6 April 1930.

29. Circular to Secretaries, P.C.Cs[1]

Allahabad
April 4th, 1930

Dear Comrade,
As we are on the eve of the satyagraha campaign and it is probable that large numbers of our volunteers will be arrested, we should be quite clear about our course of action in the law courts.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-l/1930, p. 114, N.M.M.L.

1. If volunteers are arrested for civil disobedience it is clear that there can be no question of offering defence. The volunteers should take no part whatever in the proceedings of the court. They should simply inform the court that they propose to take no part in the proceedings. It is desirable that they do not give even their names or addresses. It is for the police to find out their names or addresses and there is no reason why we should help the police in any way in getting at this information. The volunteers who are arrested should take up a dignified attitude in court. They should not brag or boast or be defiant but they should stand on their dignity and give no information to the court.

2. In the event of any of our workers being arrested for sedition it is also clear that we cannot engage any defence. Our very creed at present is sedition, and there can be no denial of this. If, however, any false statements are attributed to us then those statements should be denied or corrected. Otherwise, there should be no participation in the trial.

3. In case a totally false non-political case is brought against our workers, for instance, a false case of dacoity and the like, then it is open to the person concerned to defend himself and to adduce such evidence as he wishes. Such false non-political cases are frequent enough.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

30. Circular to P.C.Cs[1]

April 4th, 1930

Dear Comrade,

Friends have suggested that it may be desirable to ask people and specially the peasants to collect a little salt-earth in their houses. This will come in handy for the manufacture of salt on a mass scale. It may also be useful when the rains set in although probably by that time our campaign will have many fronts. I recommend this proposal to you.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Home Department (Political) File No. 5/90/32, National Archives of India.

31. Statement to the Press[1]

The All India Congress Committee left it to Mahatma Gandhi to give the signal to the country to start civil disobedience. Gandhiji has given that signal and has announced that satyagraha may be started in different provinces from April 8th. Provincial Congress committees are therefore at liberty to go ahead from that date onwards and I call upon them to begin satyagraha, in such areas as they may have selected, on the 8th or any date suitable to them in the National Week. With full faith in our cause we go ahead to redeem the pledge we took on January 26th. By that pledge of independence we shall stand, come what may. Let each one of us, young or old, man or woman, who cares for the freedom of our motherland and her suffering children, throw in his lot with the soldiers of freedom and may the faith and courage of our people stand the great ordeal and out of their sacrifice emerge the India of our dreams.

1. Allahabad, 4 April 1930. A.I.C.C. File No. G-5(KW) (i)/1930, p. 355, N.M.M.L.

32. Circular to P.C.Cs[1]

Allahabad
April 4th, 1930

Dear Comrade,

In our circular No. 24, dated the 24th March, I informed you that as soon as Gandhiji gave the signal for the commencement of mass satyagraha I would telegraph to you. Gandhiji has now done so and he suggests that satyagraha in other" places : started on April 8th. As Young India and the newspapers 've already announced this I am not

1. Home Department (Political) File No. 5/90/32, National Archives of India.

sending a telegram to you. Please therefore note that your provincial Congress committee is at liberty to start satyagraha from April 8th You may begin on that date or within a day or two of the 8th. In any event, satyagraha should begin in the National Week.

Go ahead now, and may good fortune attend you and may the issue of our great struggle be a free India.

Long live the independence of India!

Your comrade,
Jawaharlal Nehru

33. To Roger Baldwin[1]

April 4th, 1930

My dear Baldwin,

....1 am just returning from a four days' intensive campaign in the villages of a certain area.[2] During these four days I toured, chiefly by automobile, about 600 miles. I addressed 22 mass meetings, with audiences varying between 5 thousand and 20 thousand. In all, I must have addressed about 200,000 persons during these four days. Besides this, our route was often lined by villagers come out to greet us. Considering that we have no modern helps for propaganda and no proper means of communication, these vast crowds were amazing. Many people had to walk long distances to attend. There is no doubt that India is awake and astir and we are going to give a good fight to the British Government. The government will no doubt try its utmost to break us. But it is quite likely that in attempting to crack the nut the cracker itself may break. Somehow I cannot help thinking that the days of the British Empire are numbered now and that it is going to be our privilege and good fortune to help to end it.

We are enrolling thousands of persons pledged to offer civil disobedience. We hope to have at least 100,000 in India to begin with, and

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 16/1931, pp. 167-169, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. Rae Bareli and Muzaffarpur districts.

more to follow. We have, of course, the fullest sympathy of the millions and indeed of many of those who are outwardly allied to the government or are in government service. Wherever we go we are pursued by police reporters and officials. But usually we get on quite well with them and there is little ill-feeling.

Day after tomorrow Gandhiji begins the civil disobedience campaign. He may be arrested immediately. If so the rest of the country takes up the campaign in hundreds of chosen places. Even if he is not arrested we take it up elsewhere. Within a month or two we hope to have a mass campaign of vast dimensions. It is going to be a goodly show and merely a show.

Most of us expect arrest any moment. But the government has stayed its hands so far and has not arrested many prominent persons. It has, however, arrested and convicted several hundreds of our ordinary workers, and this continues daily. I do not know if I shall be able to write to you again in the near future. But wherever I may be I shall think of our good friends abroad and this thought will cheers us up.

With all good wishes,

Ever yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

34. To Ranu Bala Debi[1]

April 4th, 1930

Dear Sister,

I have received your letter of the 30th March signed by a large number of our sisters in Benares.[2] This letter of yours has given me very great pleasure. You will permit me to congratulate you and our other brave sisters for the brave lead you have given to the women of India. The great fight for independence requires the active help of women as well as men. If women hold back how can their brothers go forward? Therefore it is. most gratifying to find that so many of our sisters are prepared to take their full part in the struggle.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-44(i)/1930, p. 69, N.M.M.L.
2. The signatories had offered to join the national struggle.

I would suggest that you should organise yourselves in Benares under the auspices of the Benares Town Congress Committee and cooperate in the struggle with the advice of Congress friends in Benares. I would specially commend to you to consult in this matter Babu Sri Prakasa, the General Secretary of the Congress, and Babu Sampurnanand who has been appointed in charge of satyagraha in Benares.

Again, thanking you with all good wishes for victory in the struggle.

I am,
Your brother in the fight,
Jawaharlal Nehru

35. Students and Civil Disobedience[1]

.... So far as the National Congress is concerned we are soon going to take the plunge and we hope that that will result in bringing about a mass campaign all over the country. I should, of course, like students and young men to join in large numbers. I have no doubt that if they did so there would be a speedy result. It is not a question so much of the boycott of schools and colleges. The question is, however, that when the country is in a state of war with the government and large numbers of leading men are in jail, should not the young men throw in their lot with those who are leading the campaign ? Obviously we cannot combine satyagraha with the normal course of literary studies. Thus, if a person wants to join the satyagraha movement, he must of necessity be prepared to suspend his studies for a while. The best thing would have been a general strike of the students for a period of, say, six months or a year.

If this cannot be done, at any rate a sufficient number of young men might join the satyagraha movement. Others can indirectly help them by adopting the methods you have suggested. All those methods are good in themselves but they require a great deal of organising.

In Bombay, the volunteers are doing something which might interest you. They go out in batches, stop at a street corner, blow a bugle,

1. *India Tomorrow* (a fortnightly journal of students in Bengal), 6 April 1930. Extracts.

shout out various national cries, which have been previously given to them on a piece of paper, and then one of them delivers a short speech, the notes of which have been previously supplied. The whole thing does not last more than 10 minutes. Then they move on to the next street corner. In this way they have held as many as 200 street-corner meetings in one day in Bombay. You can imagine the tremendous propaganda value of these methods, specially when they are practised in the poor quarters where newspapers are not often read.

36. Message to Punjab Satyagraha Conference[1]

The 6th of April is a memorable day for India. Eleven years ago, on this very day, the whole of India declared a historic hartal as a protest against the Rowlatt Act. Today, again, on the very same day, Gandhiji and his volunteers have reached Dandi sea-coast and broken the salt laws. This day will remain a red-letter day in India. But I am sorry that the Punjab is still engaged in holding conferences, while Gujarat and other provinces have actually started civil disobedience. I hope that such conferences will stop and the Punjab will immediately start civil disobedience. The time has now come when we must declare boldly from every platform that we do not want foreign rule in this country. Gandhiji launched civil disobedience after due deliberation and with a full sense of responsibility. He has come out on the battlefield with a grim determination either to win victory or end his life fighting for freedom. I hope that people in the Punjab will leam lessons from Mahatmaji's determination and will not fritter away their energies by only raising shouts. These shouts alone will not bring us freedom. The time has now come when we should boldly declare to which side we belong; we should be loyal either to the government or to the country. Those who are not loyal to the country should be considered opponents of the national cause. I do not like being emotional but I have no hesitation in declaring that those who do not support the country's cause at the present moment are traitors to the country.

1. Gujranwala, 6 April 1930. From *The Hindu,* 7 April 1930.

The people of the Punjab should take common action with other provinces and decide to break the salt laws as far as possible. But I am told that the people of Gujranwala want to start civil disobedience on the question of hoisting the national flag on the town hall. Those who do not wish to join the satyagraha movement should step aside and not put obstacles in the way of Gandhiji. But whoever joins this battle must have implicit faith in nonviolence.

37. Statement to the Press[1]

Gandhiji has deliberately broken the iniquitous salt law and so have thousands of others. They have not dared yet to lay hands on Gandhiji, but hundreds of our comrades have been arrested and convicted. Soon I hope I shall have the honour of joining this gallant band. Contraband salt has become the symbol of our fight today. Let all, who can, manufacture it and sell it and use it. Let all, who dare, stand up against British imperialism and plunge into the fight. Our leaders are being removed, but there is no lack of human beings in India. If they are men and women worthy of their country, the way to independence lies clear before them and no further lead is necessary. Forward, then, to the goal of freedom. India expects every Indian to do his duty.

1. Allahabad, 8 April 1930. *The Searchlight*, 11 April 1930.

38. To Vichitra Narain Sharma[1]

April 10th, 1930

My dear Vichitra,[2]

I have your letter. Yes, the battle has begun and it is getting on very well. This evening I am leading the first batch of the Allahabad city satyagrahis and we propose to make salt publicly. May be I shall be arrested.

I cannot send you any detailed directions regarding our comrades in the Ashram and the U.P. Department. You will have to decide this in consultation with Kripalani. Probably it will be best for them to go in twos and threes so that you might replace them as far as possible. It is conceivable that the time may come when you may have to close down many of your departments. But I think that this time has not come yet and you should carry on as long as possible. We must remember that the boycott of foreign cloth has to be carried on too.

I think you should issue a statement to the press saying that all your workers of the Ashram and the U.P. Department have signed the satyagraha pledge and have offered to go forward as soon as they are permitted by the Ashram to do so. Further, that the Ashram proposes to permit them to perform satyagraha in small batches so that as far as possible the work of khadi production and sale may not suffer.

With all good wishes to you and your friends in the Ashram.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-37/1930, p. 1, N.M.M.L.
2. (b. 1898); educated at Banaras University; co-founder of the Gandhi Ashram at Meerut, and its general secretary, 1920-58, and in 1961; imprisoned in 1921, 1932 and 1942 during the freedom movement; Minister in U.P. Government, 1952-60 and 1962-63.

39. To the Working Committee[1]

Allahabad
April 10th 1930

The All India Congress Committee, by a resolution passed in Ahmedabad on March 21st, authorised me in the event of my arrest, and in case normal procedure cannot be followed, to nominate my successor to the presidentship. As there is a chance of my arrest today, I nominate Gandhiji to succeed me in the presidentship of the A.I.C.C. In case Gandhiji is previously arrested or is otherwise unable to accept, I nominate Pandit Motilal Nehru to succeed me.

Such nomination will have to be confirmed at the next meeting of the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. Till then my nominee will have such powers as I possess as President.

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-77/1930, p. 17. N.M.M.L.

40. To Ganesh Lai Dashera[1]

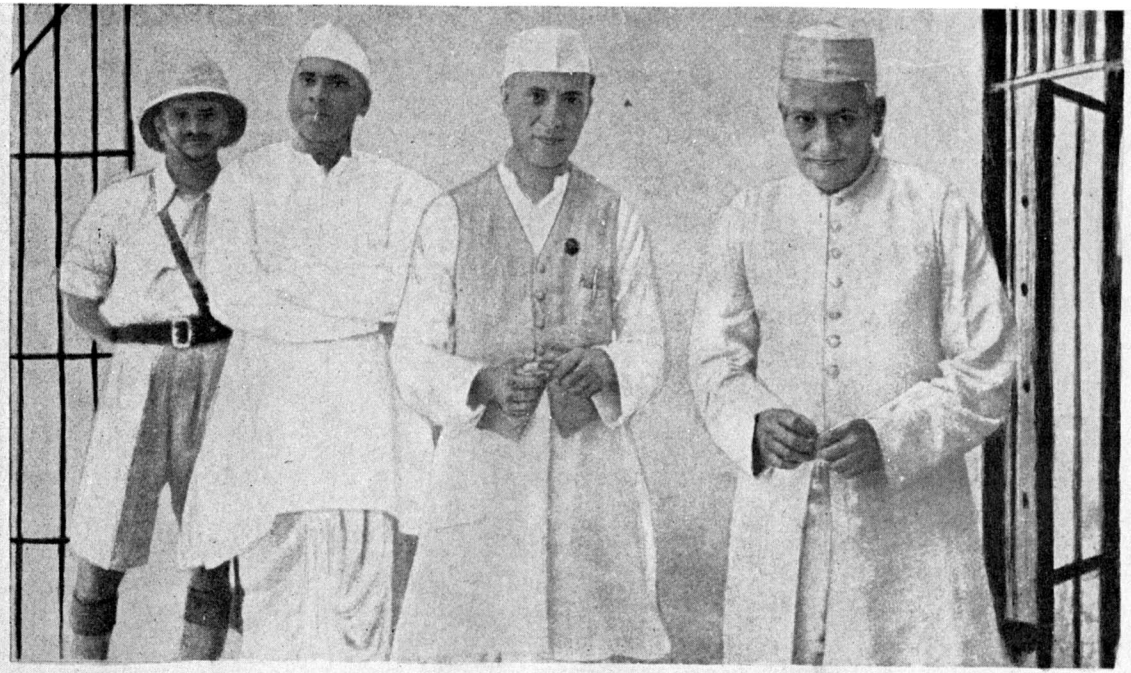
April 10 th, 1930

Dear Friend,[2]
Your letter. So far as your examination is concerned, if it does not conflict with satyagraha you can certainly appear in it. Tty to get into a batch offering satyagraha on the 17th, after your examination. If, however, you are urgently wanted before then, certainly you should give up your examination.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-44(i)/1930, p. 25, N.M.M.L.
2. A student of Allahabad University.



SALT SATYAGRAHA, ALLAHABAD



इलाहाबाद जाने के बाद और बहिन से मैं क्या कह सकूंगा इस बारे में कि मैं उनके लिए और इलाहाबाद का क्या करूं और आशा करूं कि इस देश की आजादी के महा युद्ध में वह पूरा हिस्सा लें। इलाहाबाद वापस जा कर मैं लाज लिखूंगा।

नैनी जेल
१४.४.३०

जवाहर लाल ने १८

AT NAINI PRISON, 14 APRIL 1930

About parents, it is for you to judge. I think that it is proper that parents should be informed at a fairly early stage. But not knowing the circumstances I cannot give advice in an individual case.

The first batch will not contain your name, nor will the second. These have already been fixed up.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

41. To Sitla Sahai[1]

April 11th, 1930

My dear Sitla Sahai,
....We had a tremendous show here yesterday and huge crowds collected to see us begin satyagraha. The crowds were so great that the police could not reach us. I have never seen Allahabad quite so excited. No arrests have taken place. The government has issued a most stupid communique.

I enclose a copy of a letter from Jayaprakash[2] to me and my note on it. I agree with Jayaprakash that we should lay stress on the economic side. Otherwise our salt campaign will not catch. Ultimately our strength must lie in an economic struggle. All of you should keep this in mind....

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-59/1930, pp. 27-31, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. Jayaprakash Narayan (b. 1902); Sarvodaya leader; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; one of the founders of the Congress Socialist Party, 1934; member, Congress Working Committee, 1936; leading member for some time of the Socialist Party and of the Praja Socialist Party; served as president, All India Railwaymen's Federation and All India Posts and Telegraph Employees' Union.

42. Reply to U.P. Government[1]

The U.P. government sitting on its hill top at Naini Tal has discovered that the Salt Act was not infringed in Allahabad city yesterday and has hastened to proclaim the fact lest its vanishing prestige might suffer. Presently it will discover that the Salt Act itself has disappeared, and hence, of course, there can be no infringement of it. The anxiety of the government to show that it is not weak is pathetic. It need have no such anxiety. We have seen a revealing instance of its strength recently when peaceful and inoffensive boys were beaten with lathis in Bulandshahr in the presence of the governor.[2] The mighty gathering at Allahabad yesterday, brimming over with enthusiasm, was perhaps not considered a suitable target for a repetition of this fright-fulness.

The government *communique* refers to the liquid salt solution being brought in bottles. It may interest the government to know that no such solution was brought in bottles and, indeed, we had no bottles. Subsequently, a bottle containing kerosene oil was sent for to help to keep the fire burning satisfactorily. Our salt was prepared from the salt-earth which was put in solution and strained. We propose to go on manufacturing salt from salt-earth from day to day, not only in one selected spot but in a large number of places, and to sell it, and it is wholly immaterial to us whether the government arrests us or not. Meanwhile, we shall read with interest and amusement the concoctions and falsehoods which the unfortunate U.P. government has to gather. If it chooses to behave like an ostrich we have no objection.

1. Statement to the press, Allahabad, 11 April 1930. The Tribune, 13 April 1930.
2. See *post*, item 44.

43. To Siila Sahai[1]

April 12th, 1930

My dear Sitla Sahai,

Your letter of the 11th. I am glad to find that you are getting on well. Your policy in creating new centres is the correct one. This must be pursued. At the same time I think that you must now try to make really good salt at some one place which can be sold in sufficiently large quantities for personal use. Probably Mohanganj will be the best area for this. You can start manufacturing this without any great fuss but, of course, not secretly. Try to get really good salt out and sell it at nominal prices in small packets.

I am afraid I cannot go to Rae Bareli before the Cawnpore conference.[2] I find it difficult enough to go to Handia. Day after tomorrow I have got to go to Raipur in the Central Provinces. On my return I must spend a day in Allahabad and Handia and then go on to Cawnpore for the conference. I shall try my best to visit Rae Bareli before the conference.

We are getting on fairly well here and are spreading our activities. In Handia there is a regular tussle every day for the possession of the pans. No arrests have been made in Allahabad yet.

About the money, we sanctioned Rs. 500 at our last meeting in Rae Bareli. Have you received this money yet? If not, you should demand it from Sri Prakasa or Kailas Nath Katju. I am afraid I cannot get anything from him today but in your letter tomorrow morning if you will make it clear what you have received I shall try to get the amount soon to you.

I am glad Nand Kumar[3] has joined you. He will be of help.

Please consider my suggestion above that we must start salt manufacture on a large scale somewhere not merely to break the law but to provide it to people. This means that you should open a small salt factory which will work more or less all day quietly but without secrecy. An attempt should be made to make really good salt there...

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-59/1930, pp. 7-9, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. The U.P. Provincial Political Conference was scheduled to be held on 21 April 1930.
3. Nand Kumar Dev Vasishta, an instructor in the Hindustani Seva Dal.

44. To Mahadeva Desai[1]

Allahabad
April 12th, 1930

My dear Mahadeva,

I received your letter of the 7th last night. Your account of things and happenings in Gujarat is most heartening. Indeed the whole country is responding to the call very satisfactorily. Owing to the government censorship and their way of holding up and delaying letters and telegrams we are not getting all the facts. Local news gets some prominence in local newspapers, if the latter happen to be favourably disposed to the movement. In the U.P. we suffer from the great handicap that we have no such English newspapers. *The Leader* distorts and often suppresses our news. *The Hindustan Times* is giving good publicity and is gaining rapidly in circulation in the U.P. but it is difficult to keep up a regular supply of news from distant parts of the province. We have started a local paper in Hindi—*Satyagraha Samachar*—and it is eagerly sought after. It has been coming out three times a week but we propose to make it a daily.

An amazing instance of suppression of news was the way newspapers did not give publicity to the recent savage attack of the police on a number of young boys who took out a black flag procession in Bulandshahr on the occasion of the governor's visit. These boys were belaboured mercilessly by the police in the presence of Hailey and I am sorry to say that the district magistrate...[2] took part in this savage attack. *The Hindustan Times* gave publicity to this but *The Leader* and other papers did not even mention it. A resolution of our provincial satyagraha committee on the subject calling upon all Congress committees to boycott the governor wherever he went and take out black flag processions was also suppressed. Father was very much put out by this incident and he criticised these methods of barbarism very strongly and said that in some ways these were worse than even Dyerism.

In order to keep in touch with some of our satyagraha centres we have had to arrange a daily messenger service. This is working well between Rae Bareli and Allahabad.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-29/1930 (Pt. I), pp. 105-109, N.M.M.L.
2. Name omitted.

Below I give you a brief account of what is happening in the U.P. This is of course very incomplete.

AGRA. Satyagraha started on 6th. Sri Krishna Datt Paliwal[3] arrested and convicted for six months. A few others also subsequently arrested. Satyagraha being continued in three centres in the district.

CAWNPORE. Satyagraha started, I think, on the 7th. Being continued. Harihamath Shastri[4] and some others arrested and convicted. Other centres in the district starting satyagraha.

RAE BARELI. Even before commencement of satyagraha about 45 persons arrested, mostly under section 107. The president of the D.C.C. Mata Prasad Misra, being tried for sedition. Also others. On 8th, satyagraha started. There were some difficulties about the land as the police brought great pressure on the owners of the land to eject us. Ultimately satyagraha was started in the presence of father who had specially gone there for the purpose. After father left the police turned up and arrested the leader of the satyagrahis who was also the secretary of the local Congress committee. They did not arrest the others. The next day they arrested the leaders of two batches. On the third day they came after the whole process was finished and asked Sitla Sahai to hand over any one person to be arrested. Sitla Sahai told them that it was none of his business to pick and choose. He was going to give them no information. They could arrest anybody they wanted. They did not arrest anyone. On the fourth day an announcement was made all over the city on behalf of the district magistrate that the manufacture of salt without licence was against the law and everyone who helped in this manufacture and those who encouraged it in any way would be dispersed. The result of this announcement was that greater crowds assembled. The police came and forcibly took away the pan. A start was made again. There was a tussle and the police forcibly took away the pans again. They also took seven volunteers with them. Ultimately however six of these were allowed to go back and one remained under arrest. Several volunteers were hurt in the scuffle. Two other centres of satyagraha are being started in Rae Bareli district.

3. A prominent Congress worker of U.P.; imprisoned in 1930 during the salt satyagraha; Minister for Finance and Information in the U.P., 1947-48; member, U.P. Legislative Assembly in 1956; president of the United Forward Republican Bloc in U.P., but rejoined the Congress in 1963.
4. (1904-1953); Congressman from U.P.; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; president, All India Trade Union Congress, 1933-35; president, Indian National Trade Union Congress, 1947-49; president, National Federation of Indian Railwaymen, 1953; elected to the Lok Sabha, 1952.

There is a great concentration of forces on behalf of the government in this district. The Kashi Vidyapith has sent some of its professors and senior students to help in the campaign.

ALLAHAB AD-HANDIA. Satyagraha began on the 9th. Great tussle between the police and volunteers to get possession of the pans. Ultimately police took them away. No arrests. This is continued daily. Satyagraha is being started now in some other parts of the tehsil also.

ALLAHABAD CITY. Satyagraha began on the 10th. Huge procession going through city, headed by a batch of satyagrahi volunteers whose leader was Jawaharlal Nehru, and deputy leader, Sadiq Ali.[5] Other members of the batch were Kamala Nehru and Krishna Nehru. The procession was stopped at dozens of places en route by shopkeepers and others and garlanded and various offerings were made. Muslim shopkeepers and residents vied with the Hindus in welcoming the procession and giving it their blessings. Vast crowd had gathered at the scene of operations. Allahabad had not seen the like of it before. While salt was being manufactured from salt-earth a number of policemen under the sub-inspector tried to reach the place of manufacture but the crowd was so great all round that they found it impossible to reach it in spite of repeated efforts. Later, the salt made was auctioned and a sum of about Rs. 500 was realised. Volunteers returned in procession to the Congress House. No arrests were made. This was repeated on the second day. The police did not intervene at all. The U.P. Government issued a communique after the first day that no contravention of the law had taken place as manufactured salt had been taken in solution in bottles. This was a ridiculous statement. A bottle of kerosene oil was sent for by the volunteers to help to light the fire. It is now proposed to have several centres of salt manufacture in the city. In the Congress office itself salt is manufactured on a bigger scale everyday.

BENARES. Satyagraha has been taking place daily for some time without any great interference from the police. On the 10th, however, a strong force of police raided the place and tried to seize some pots and pans. There was a great tussle for nearly 20 minutes, some volunteers getting hurt. I do not think any arrests have been made.

Satyagraha has also begun in some other places like Etawah but I have not got details of it yet.

Father took an active part in the auction of the contraband salt both

5. (b. 1910); permanent secretary, A.I.C.C., 1938-48; general secretary, A.I.C.C., 1958-62; elected to Rajya Sabha, 1958 and 1964.

in Rae Bareli and in Allahabad. We have been selling such salt in the Allahabad city daily.

Although many arrests have not been made in the U.P. so far for actual breaches of the salt laws, arrests continue to be made for sedition or under sec. 107. Owing to the harvesting season most kisans have been busy in their fields. In another week's time they will be free.

News from Behar is very good. In Saran district the police raided the volunteer camp and even took away the tents. There is tremendous enthusiasm amongst the volunteers and a spontaneous social boycott of the police, so much so that the police have to send for their food to the headquarters of the district by car. They cannot get it in the villages at all.

Thank you very much for the packet of salt collected by Bapu. It is very welcome. I should like to keep it but perhaps it is desirable to auction it. I am afraid, however, that we cannot get a good price in Allahabad. At the very outside it might perhaps go up to Rs. 400 or Rs. 500.

You are very busy and yet I have inflicted a long letter on you. You must forgive me.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

45. To Rafi Ahmad Kidwai[1]

April 13th, 1930

My dear Rafi,
Today's news from Rae Bareli showed that things are warming up and that Sitla Sahai has also been arrested. This is excellent. I wish I could come to you now but I am afraid I must go to Raipur for a day tomorrow. It was because of this that I requested Mr. Sri Prakasa to postpone the meeting of the provincial satyagraha committee. I think we can well afford to meet five or six days later at Cawnpore. Meanwhile it seems to me that the situation is developing exceedingly well everywhere.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-59/1930, p. 3, N.M.M.L.

If you require any money please write to Sri Prakasa and Kailas Nath. As you know we have sanctioned Rs. 500/- for Rae Bareli. As for more helpers, also communicate with Sri Prakasa. Perhaps you can get some from Cawnpore also. I am afraid we cannot spare any just at present.

In Allahabad we are spreading out our activities in various mohallas but no arrests have taken place. Today we have added a new feature. We are taking out the little carriages which *churanwalas* use and both making salt in it and selling it with appropriate songs. Don't you think this is a brilliant idea? Telegraph to me c/o provincial conference, Raipur. I shall be there till the night of the***[2]

Carry on as you have begun and I am sure that Rae Bareli would distinguish itself. The government appears to be hopelessly perplexed and has no uniform policy.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

2. Word missing in the text.

46. To Din Dayal[2]

Allahabad
13/4/30

My dear Din Dayal,

I have your letter. I am very sorry to learn of your mental suffering.[2] I can quite appreciate your difficulties. Most of us have had to face them at some time or other. If properly faced and overcome they go to strengthen us. Do not lose heart or become hysteric. That does not become a young man out to do great things. How shall we do them if we despair when difficulties come our way? Do not hurry. Take your time and, above all, remain cool and collected.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.
2. Din Dayal was distressed as he could not participate in the salt satyagraha owing to domestic circumstances.

47. To Sri Prakasa[1]

Allahabad
14/4/1930

My dear Prakasa,
Just a hurried line before I go to Raipur. The situation in Rae Bareli demands immediate attention and help. I would have gone there like a shot but I feel that I cannot give up Raipur at the last moment. On return from Raipur I shall go to Rae Bareli regardless of other work. I am even prepared to give up the provincial conference at Cawnpore. Meanwhile, what is to be done? Could you not send some worthwhile person to Rae Bareli for a day? Could you not go yourself? There are plenty of persons in Benares and I am sure you could be spared for a while.

Yours affly.,
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.

48. The Trial[1]

The magistrate, reading the charges against Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru asked, "Do you plead guilty or not guilty?"
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU : May I know what it is, a public trial or a private trial?
MAGISTRATE : All the members of your family have been permitted to attend the court and the representatives of the press but not the public in general.

1. Allahabad, 14 April 1930. From *The Leader*, 16 April 1930.
Jawaharlal was arrested and tried on 14 April and sentenced to six months' simple imprisonment.

J.N.: I do not propose to take any part in the trial at any time, or answer any questions. But quite apart from the trial, I have stated on many occasions and am prepared to state for your information that I have deliberately broken the salt laws.

MAGISTRATE : Would you be prepared to sign this statement?

J.N.: Rather not.

49. Message to the People[1]

Keep smiling, fight on and see it through.

1. Given by Jawaharlal while leaving the courtroom. The Leader, 16 April 1930.

50. Message to the Citizens of Allahabad[1]

What can I say to the brothers and sisters of Allahabad except that I thank them for their love and kindness and hope that they will participate fully in the great struggle for the freedom of our country.

Keep up the honour of Allahabad!

1. 14 April 1930. Original in Hindi. See illustration facing p. 305

51. Message to Mahatma Gandhi[1]

I have stolen a march over you.

1. *The Leader*, 16 April 1930.
Jawaharlal telephoned this message from prison to Motilal Nehru who conveyed it to Mahatma Gandhi.

8

PRISON DIARY WITH LETTERS

14 April 1930-11 October 1930

April 14th 1930-Monday[1]

On way to Raipur in C.P. to preside over C.P. Hindi Provincial Conference[2]—Took the shuttle to Chheoki for the Bombay mail. On arrival at Chheoki arrested in the shuttle itself at 7.35 a.m. Tendulkar[3] was with me. He was somewhat taken aback. I was brought to Naini Prison by car. Was permitted to telephone home from jail office—Spoke to father—

I was kept waiting in the jail office-At about 10 people started collecting outside. The whole family present—My trial took place in an upper room over the jail office. The city magistrate, apparently an Anglo-Indian deputy collector, presided. Charge under Sec 9(c) Salt Act of 1882. I took no part in trial but stated that I had deliberately defied salt laws.

Sentenced to 6 months simple imprisonment—No fine.

Huge crowd had collected down below outside jail. Singing national songs and shouting out slogans. In court room only relatives and pressmen admitted. A few other friends also succeeded in coming in.

After conviction father was allowed to see my quarters. Evidently not over-pleased with them. I am going to live here all by myself—Father said something about solitary confinement to which the Superintendent replied that he would keep me company from time to time! Cheerful prospect, either way!

Still, as things go, the place might be worse. I dislike the high circular wall which encloses my present domain. It is about 14 ft or 15 ft high and the space it encloses has a diameter of probably under 100 ft. In the centre of this area is an ugly little building full of bolts and bars. A part of this I occupy-half of it is vacant. I have a cell—I do not know what else to call it—about 10 ft X 8 ft with an entrance about 2 ft wide, an open arch with thick iron bars on another side, and a small open archway leading to a bathroom. The bathroom is certainly a convenience, but on one side there is a door with the usual bars and

1. In this section the diary kept by Jawaharlal in the Naini Central Prison, from 14 April to 11 October 1930, has been printed. Letters and notes written by him during this period have been interspersed. The diary, letters and notes are available in the N.M.M.L.
2. The third session of the C.P. Hindustani Political Conference commenced at Raipur on 15 April 1930; in Jawaharlal's absence Seth Govind Das presided.
3. D. G. Tendulkar (1909-1971); born at Ratnagiri and educated at Cambridge University; biographer and writer; participated in the freedom movement; well known for his biography in eight volumes of Mahatma Gandhi.

with no curtain. Of course there are no curtains anywhere. I can have little privacy. Even when I am sitting in my room I can be gazed at through the bars from various angles. Rather disconcerting. One feels as if one was in a cage and always being watched. Perhaps later I might be able to improvise some khadi curtains.

I dislike the circular wall. Whichever way one looks one sees it. It remind one of captivity more than a rectangular enclosure.

My predecessor in this barrack was an Afghan prince who got into trouble at the time when Bachha Saqqa[4] was boss at Kabul.

The Superintendent, Major Uberoi,[5] appears to be a decent person—anyway he is decent to me. The jailor Tyne (Teyen) is also an agreeable person. Both are trying to make me comfortable. A big newar bed has been sent to me. It was brought to my cell with difficulty. A teapoy and chair have also come. A little punkha has been put up.

Punkha coolies come at night also but I refused to have them. I was allowed to sleep in the open outside my cell. This is a welcome privilege—more welcome when the days and nights get hotter.

Food came from home in the evening. Against rules, but as it was the first day an exception was made.

My barrack:[6]

April 15th Tuesday

Venkatesh Narain Tewari[7] came with the jail Supt. this morning. He came as the official jail visitor.

I have been given a cook. Just as he had finished cooking food came from home. This would not have been sent to me but as Kamala or Betty had brought it, the Supdt. relented. However, no more food from outside.

Books, chiefly French ones, have also come.

I have sent for my *charkha* and some other things.

4. A rebel chief who made himself Amir of Afghanistan for a short time in 1929.
5. Later served as Inspector-General of Prisons, U.P.
6. The diagram in the diary is reproduced in the illustration facing p. 320.
7. Venkatesh Narayan Tivary (1890-1965); general secretary, U.P.P.C.C., 1914-18; edited *Abhyudaya* and other Hindi journals; for some time member of the Liberal Party; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; member U.P.P.C.C. Committee on Agrarian Distress,1931; member, U.P. Legislative Assembly during 1937-39 and 1946-52; member, Constituent Assembly of India, 1946-50; member, Lok Sabha, 1952-57.

I have quite a crowd of people looking after me—or is it watching me? Two wardens, two C.Os[8] and three other convicts seem to be permanently installed here-besides the punkha coolies who come from outside the jail. Other warders and C.Os are continually coming in and spending some time here. The real work is done by the ordinaryconvicts who are rubbing and scrubbing and cleaning almost all day. The warders of course do not work and the C.Os seldom do. The warder orders the C.Os who pass on the orders to the ordinary convicts. What a lot of human energy not being used or being wasted on trivial matters! I require little service for myself. My doing my own work seems to worry the crowd of warders and C.Os. They are very sympathetic and try their best to do something for me.

The C.Os tell me that there was great excitement in the jail yesterday when the national songs sung by the crowd outside were heard by the prisoners. Many convicts expected a mass attack on the jail! The Supt. stopped all work and locked up all convicts in their respective barracks.

All C.Os are long term prisoners, usually for life. Their offence as a rule is murder in a riot connected with a land dispute. And yet they are very far from being a murderous crowd. The look decent, quiet, easy to manage and very responsive to kindness. How easily they could be made into useful members of society!

The warder tells me that the strike of schools and colleges continues today. Yesterday there was a hartal all over the city and all schools and colleges closed down. The warder's son goes to the Jumna Mission School and it was on his information that the warder said that the strike continued.

April 16th Wednesday

Maharaj Singh0 came to see me today. Spent over an hour with me. Was very keen on doing something to add to my comfort. I am comfortable enough physically but I do not feel very bright. During the last three days I have had more rest and sleep than I have had for many a month, and yet I feel below par. Perhaps it is the effect of the environment. The circular wall is not a cheerful sight. Almost the only colour one sees is the drab mud of the walls and ground. There

8. Convict Overseers.
9. (1878-1959); Commissioner of Allahabad, 1927, 1929 and 1931; Home Member, U.P. Government, 1935-37; Governor of Bombay, 1948-52.

is no greenery inside the barrack or any other colour. Birds seldom come. A little bit of a *neem* tree peeps over the wall from outside. Sometimes, when the door leading out of the barrack is open I have a glimpse of a cabbage patch and at the other end of it a kind of huge cage. Looks like a cage at a zoo. And this reminds me of the animals at the zoo and I begin to sympathise with them in their confinement.

I have the blue sky of course in daytime and the stars at night. The high wall cuts off a good bit of both. The circular part of the sky it shows at night reminded me of a planetarium. As I write, my old friend Sirius, the Dog Star, looks wisely at me from just over the wall. Orion I cannot see now. It is hidden by the wall. Castor and Pollux are almost above me and I recognise a few other old acquaintances.

Maharaj Singh told me that Kamala had come here yesterday and wanted to come to my barrack. The Supdt. however did not encourage her and the poor girl went back disappointed. It is as well. I don't think she would have enjoyed the sight of these high walls and bleak aspect. It is difficult to enthuse over them.

What a terrible waste of brick and mortar just to deprive people of their liberty! A very decent, large-sized house could be built out of the materials of my particular wall only. There is 14 or 15 ft of it in height only.

I was massaged today for my pain in the shoulder. Some improvement, but the rubbing was done so strenuously that a bit or my skin was almost removed.

The Supt. tells me that I can have a visit every fortnight. Two persons are allowed but as a great favour he might allow three! Letters also once a fortnight. Probably the number of pages or words is limited. So I need not trouble myself about writing or seeing anybody till the end of this month.

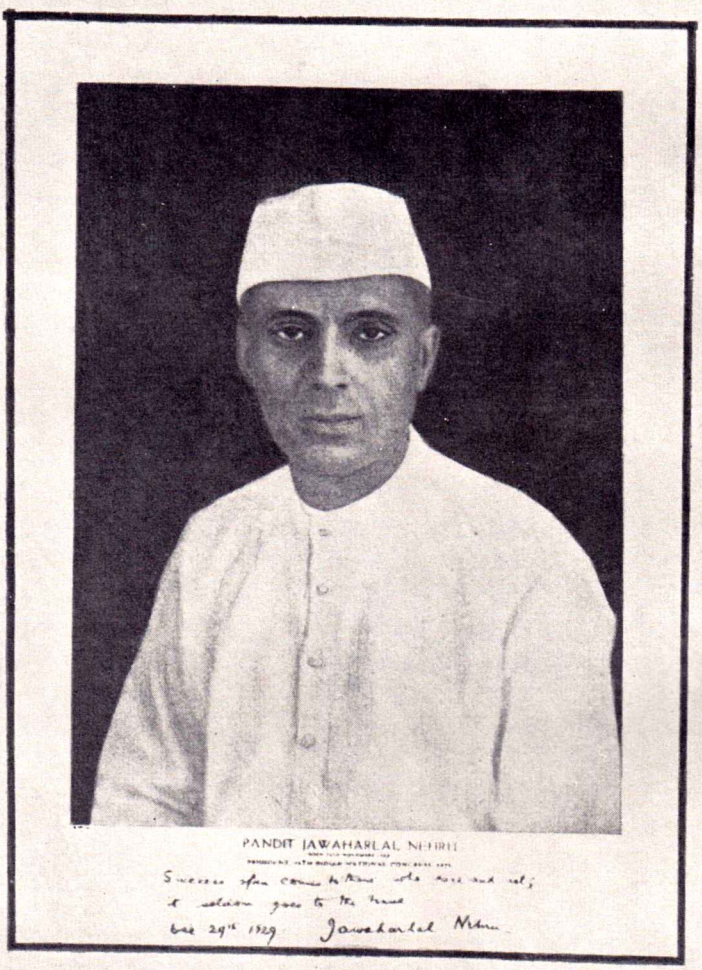
The warder says that he visited the bazaars of Allahabad today and there was a great deal of talk about salt. People generally said that they would make their own salt in future.

The prisoners and warders have evidently been much taken by the national songs which were sung outside the jail during my trial. A C.O. asked me to write them down. I happened to have a leaflet containing them and I gave it to him. Since then 2 C.Os and a warder have been jointly reading them and humming them.

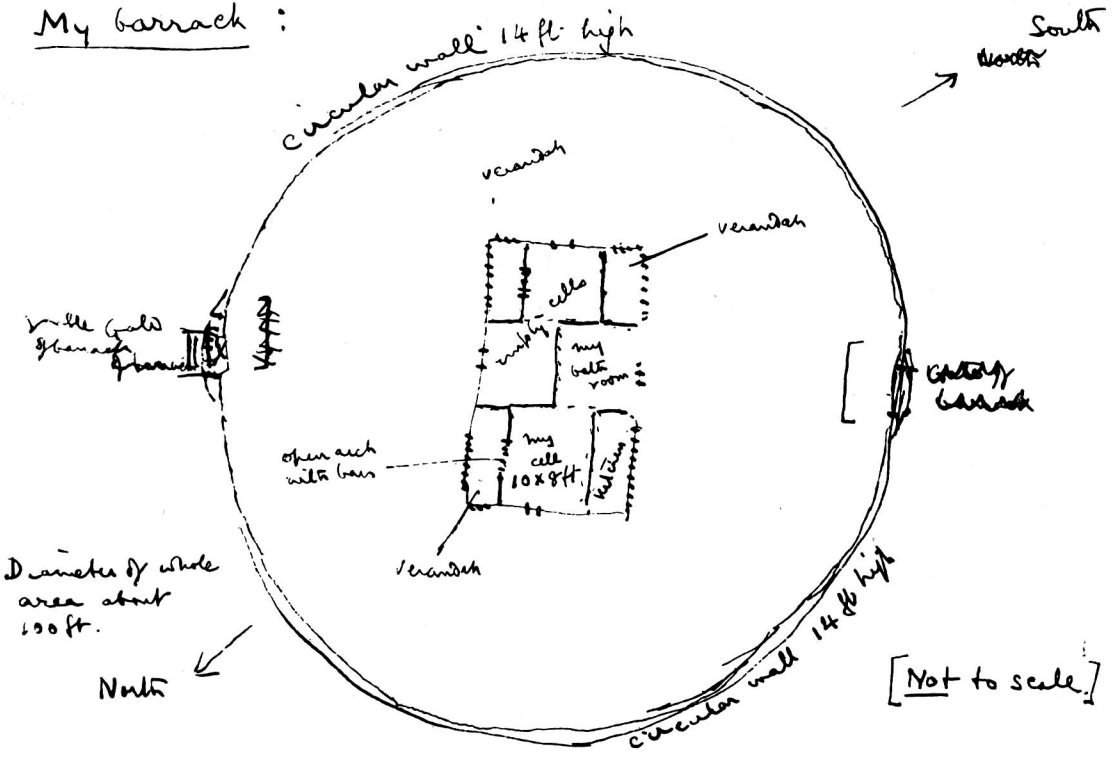
A prison is a strange place at night. All manner of noises reach one throughout the night from the night watchmen and others. Sometimes one feels as if one was on the verge of the forest and the peasants

The Eight Days Interlude

Pt. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU



President of the Indian National Congress.


My barrack :
Circular wall 14 ft. high
South
verandah
verandah
cells
my cell 10×8 ft.
verandah
open arch with bars
Diameter of whole area about 190 ft.
North
Circular wall 14 ft high
[Not to scale.]

were shouting to keep wild animals away from their fields. Sometimes, it is the forest itself and the beasts of the night keep up their nocturnal chorus.

April 17th Thursday

I was arrested and convicted on an auspicious day. It was the first of *Vaisakh* 1987 the New Year's day of the *Samvat* calendar. I do not quite understand this as we celebrated the Naoroz about two weeks or more ago. Anyway the Gyanmandal सौर रोज़नामचा[10] begins 1987 *Samvat* from the 14th April.

It was just after the full moon when I came and every morning I have watched the contest between the dawn and the moonlight. How gradually the daylight creeps and overcomes the light of the moon!

Lying enclosed by the circular wall suddenly made me feel that I was in a big well. And then I thought of the Towers of Silence and some little birds sitting on the top of the wall reminded me of the vultures. Poor inoffensive *mainas* to be compared to vultures! I apologise.

The Supt., at Maharaj Singh's suggestion, is going to let me out in the early mornings for a run. That is, he will let me out of my barrack, not of the jail. He showed me the big outer wall of the jail and said I could run along it on one side of it which is nearly 500 yards long. Tomorrow I hope to begin—I am looking forward to it—A run and a sight of trees and greenery will be delightful.

I am told that I cannot get daily papers. Of the weeklies I am offered the Bharat (Hindi)[11] and the Illustrated Times.

The Supt. told me that Venkatesh Narain Tewari had given an interview about his visit to me. He had apparently waxed eloquent about my *newar* bed! Perhaps he does not fully realise that there are other things in heaven and earth than *newar* beds.

I have asked the Supdt. for some manual work and he has suggested newar-making. I have agreed and he will have the necessary things fitted up in my barrack soon. As an inducement he informed me that if I worked I could get a reduction of four days a month. Not much inducement as I am likely to return to prison soon after my discharge—probably for a much longer period.

10. A diary based on the solar calendar.
11. A Hindi weekly published from Allahabad.

I had some more clothes and books from home. The former were hardly necessary, the latter were welcome. But the German reader I was keen about has not come. I must get to know some German before I go out. That has been an old promise I made to myself and I have repeated it to Padmaja.

One book I sent for has not come—Spengler's[12] Decline of the West. Probably the Supt. has kept it. He asked me what it was. Evidently he suspected that it contained something subversive of the British Govt.

The cabbage patch in front of my barrack looks bare and forlorn. The cabbages have all been cut off and only the stumps remain. Beyond, the cage and the pump, and today when the Supt. took me out to show me the place for exercise, I saw a large number of convicts going round and round inside this cage working the pump. A more idiotic and barbarous way of using human labour I cannot imagine.

I am told that there are some Handia[13] salt law breakers here. Three apparently came the day I was convicted. Three more are said to have arrived today. The latter include Maharaj Kishore[14] and Rup Narain (?)[15]

The warder tells me that salt is the topic of the day in the city and large numbers of people are making it. Also that the Punjab and Lucknow are going strong. Why the warder has coupled the Punjab & Lucknow, and left out the rest of the country I do not know.

The warder and the C.Os said that they had read the little leaflet of national songs again and again and wanted more literature. How was I to produce this?

Sachin Sanyal is here and wants to see me. The Supt. said he will arrange an interview.

Also Shyamvir Singh of the Bareilly case is here.

I have visits from large numbers of warders and C.Os. They come in their spare hours for *darshan* and put curious questions. All of them want to know when Swaraj is coming. None of them is enamoured of the British Govt. One of them wanted to know if there would be no jails under Swaraj! He said this was the impression of many convicts.

12. Oswald Spengler (1880-1936); German philosopher, known for his work, *The Decline of the West,* which was translated into English during 1926-29.
13. North-eastern tahsil of Allahabad District, U.P.
14. He was then president of the Handia tahsil Congress committee.
15. Rup Narain Tripathi; joined the Congress in 1924 and was imprisoned several times during the freedom movement.

April 18th Good Friday

A convict from another barrack brought me flowers today—white bela buds and red fuchsias—and some *tulsi* leaves. He said he had been wanting to see me for several days but could not manage to get permission. He is a cook in another barrack. At last on the pretext of bringing some dal or something he was allowed to come for a few minutes. It was a gracious gift he brought and I felt very thankful. But I hardly knew what to say to him.

Today is a holiday in jail, being Good Friday. It is rather silly giving Christian holidays to Hindus & Moslems but a holiday is a holiday and must be appreciated.

I had a good run this morning outside under the outer wall. Feel the better for it. I came across a new type of convict jail official today—the M.W. (Main Wall). The C.N.W.—C.O.—C.W. I knew before. The M.Ws stand like statues at fixed distances under the outer wall.

The Supt. had a long chat with me. Evidently he wants to make up for my lack of company. He told me that father had rung up and wanted to see me. The Supt. told him that he might arrange an interview for urgent private reasons only, to which father replied that his private business and public business were inextricably mixed up. That means I suppose that there will be no interview till the fortnight is over.

It is easy enough for me in jail with no worries—only occasional ennui. But the burden of the struggle and of the family falls on father and I feel greatly for him. I wish I could help.

I was weighed today—130 lbs. Yesterday they took my thumb impression and noted various distinguishing marks on my body!

April 19th Saturday

I had a pleasant surprise this morning. The jailer came and told me that my father had come to see me. I went to the office-Father was there-also mother, Kamala and Indu. We were not supposed to discuss politics but I gathered that things were going on splendidly all over the country. Allahabad was doing very well and every day there were two processions of volunteers breaking the salt laws. Uma Bhabi led one day—Ranjit another day. Contraband salt was offered for sale right in the *Kotwali*! Yet no arrests were being made here. The Youth League had contributed another 15 volunteers.

Gandhiji it appears did not wish to act as President of the A.I.C.C. and father has therefore taken on the job. Tomorrow the whole family is going to Cawnpore to attend the provincial conference.

Father has been preparing for jail himself. He has reduced the staff of servants at Anand Bhawan and wound up several of his affairs. But there is little chance of his arrest.

Kamala said that Mohanlal Saksena was being treated badly in Lucknow jail.[16] I was glad to notice that Kamala was looking well—So were father and mother—Indu was still troubled by a bad leg.

I find that six men from Handia are in the jail—among them are Maharaj Kishore, Punya Deva, Bhuwerji[17] and Rup Narain Tripathi.

My charkha has arrived in the office, but there is a hitch. The Supt. got an attack of nerves and wrote to the I.G. about it. He awaits his answer and meanwhile the charkha awaits in his office.

April 20ih Sunday

Father sent me two of my favourite picture books today—*Les Alpes* par Hans Schmithals and *Les Portraits des Mont-Blanc* par Andre-Charles Coppier. It was a delight, not unmixed with regret, to gaze at the wide expanses of the cold glaciers and the magnificent peaks in their solitary grandeur and the Alpine flowers in bloom.

April 21st Monday

A week over today! The days are getting a little monotonous. The same routine, the same programme.

As I was walking outside this morning I overheard some convicts discussing the prospects of Swaraj. They came to the conclusion that the prospects were very favourable, their chief reason apparently being that we who strive for Swaraj are a persistent and obstinate lot and it will not be possible to keep us down for long, रगड़ से झगड़ बहुत दिल तक नही हो सकती।[18]

16. He was arrested on 14 April 1930 for violating the salt law and sentenced to 18 months' rigorous imprisonment.
17. (b. 1893); member of the Sabarmati Ashram for some years; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; is actively associated with khadi and village industries.
18. Those who are persistent cannot be suppressed for long.

April 22nd Tuesday

Got the new number of *Bharat* today which gave some news, though not very much that was new.

The Dt. Magistrate of Allahabad paid a visit to the jail this morning. He was gracious enough to send word to me that if I had anything special to say to him he would come round to me. But as I had no special confidences for him the visit did not come off.

I did a little *newar*-weaving today. Not difficult. Hope to do some everyday. The *charka* meanwhile awaits the pleasure of the I.G.

In the evenings I give some time to the warders & fellow convicts in my barrack. They ask all manner of funny questions. The chief warder, who is a Moslem, could not get over one difficulty. Ramachandra, he said, is supposed to be God, and yet we know that he was born like other human beings and had a father & mother & c. How can God have a father and mother? I do not know if my answer satisfied him or not!

My senior warder has put in 26 years service in this jail. He tells me that there are many convicts who have been here for over 20 years and are still here. Amazing long sentences are given—the man who came to teach me *newar*—weaving had received a sentence of 26 years in a dacoity case!

I had a few cigarettes in my bag when I was arrested. These came with me to my cell and I smoked them from time to time. The last one was finished today-Good thing!

April 23rd Wednesday

Had an unwelcome visitor—a scorpion—in my cell. Can't make out where he came from—There is so much sweeping and cleaning going on.

There seems to be a general impression in jail that the Salt Act has gone and that I am going to be discharged. The reason for this being that salt is being made publicly in all manner of places and no action is taken.

The way jail is run in India is not unlike the British Govt. of India. There is great efficiency in the apparatus of govt.—which goes to strengthen the hold of the govt, on this country—and little or no care of the human material of the country. Outwardly this jail must appear efficiently run and to some extent this must be true. But no one seems to think that the main purpose of the prison must be to improve and help the unhappy individuals who come to it. Break them! That is the idea—So that by the time they go out they may have not an atom of spirit left in them.

I hear gruesome stories of this jail during the last regime. There has been decided improvement since the jailer etc. were changed. But the system remains. On the whole food is tolerable now and work is not so hard as it used to be.

The whole idea of having convict warders, C.Os & c. seems to be bad. It encourages sneaking and telling tales of brother prisoners to the jail officials. The C.Ws I learn are paid the lordly sum of Re. 1/- per month as pocket money—or rather this is deposited in their account.

Vague reports indicate that things are going well in the country.

Since it has got known that I appreciate flowers, I am getting quite a lot of them. Chiefly they are *bela* buds; sometimes there are other flowers also.

My daily programme at present is more or less as follows :

4 a.m.	Wake up—usually getting up at 4.15 a.m.
4.15-5.30	Toilet—exercises (Muller's &c.) &c.
5.30-6	Run and walk outside barrack - Ru of 1460 yards. Walk of a mile or more.
6-7	Massage of shoulder and arm (there is still some pain). Shave—bath.
7	A cup of tea and some fruit if received from home.
7.30-10.30	Reading, writing, *newer*-weaving and usually a visit from Supt. for half an hour.
10.30	Food : rice, dal, chapattis, vegetables.
11-1 p.m.	Reading &c.
1-2 p.m.	Sleep or at any rate rest. If night has been very disturbed I sleep longer.
2-3	Reading.
3	Some fruit (if available).
3.15- 5.30	Reading, writing &c.
5.30- 6.15	Walking inside barrack.
6.15-6.45	Bath and evening meal consisting of chapattis, dal & vegetables—no rice.
6.45-7.15	Walk inside barrack.
7.15-8.15	General talk with warders, C.Os &c. in my barrack—answering questions &c.
8.15- 9	Reading &c.
9 p.m.	Bed.

The nights are usually very disturbed. Every little while there is shouting by the night watchmen. Once or twice in the middle of the night our barrack is visited by the night inspectors to make sure that we have not fled. Lately this has been done quietly. The man has simply shouted from outside if all is well and has then gone on.

April 24th Thursday

The Supt. told me that A class prisoners are allowed only 6 books at a time. So he suggested that I might keep books in excess of six in his office. Evidently the gentlemen who make these rules are not in the habit of keeping company with books. In French alone I have about half a dozen books which I read or consult daily—a dictionary, grammar, exercises, anthologies of poetry & prose, novels—Then there is an English dictionary—two picture books on the Alps—the *Bhagawad Gita*—some reference books to help me continue my letters to Indu &c. As a matter of fact I was waiting for more books before settling down to writing work. If I am reduced to six including dictionaries I shall have to revise my programme greatly. Anyhow I am sending back home the picture books and others. I dare not leave them in the jail office.

For the last two days I have had curtains in my cell—It is a great improvement specially in the middle of the day—also they give a measure of privacy.

April 25th Friday

A large assortment of fruit arrived from home today with a note for the Supt. from father to the effect that today was his 69th birthday—I had not thought of this. The Gregorian date is May 4th. What a burden he has to carry at this age when he should have rest!

Venkatesh Narain Tewari came this morning. He was evidently put out at a message I had sent *Bharat* about my article on Gandhiji. I agreed to allow him to print it if he stated that the article was written for a French book 3 or 4 years ago.[19]

From V. N. Tewari I learnt that Mahadev Desai & Shankarlal Banker have been arrested.[20]

I gather that the Handia people have been put in jail clothes and have been given work—newar-weaving & press. Also that two additional men have come from Handia.

I felt very poorly all day today. Had a headache. Could not do much solid work.

I am told that every effort is made to isolate me from other prisoners and warders. Very few people are allowed to come here—even C.Os who usually have this liberty. My C.Os here are not now allowed to

19. The article does not seem to have been published in *Bharat*. The article in French is not traceable.
20. They were arrested at Ahmedabad on 23 April.

mix much with others outside. I suppose it is thought that they might carry messages.

Today is *Vaisakh Badi* 12, 1987 *Samvat*. I suppose this is father's birth date.

April 26th Saturday

Maharaj Singh came and spent over an hour with me. Probably it was due to his efforts that I received my *charkha* at last. I spun for an hour today. Also I did *newar*-weaving for 45 minutes.

Felt very heavy-headed in the middle of the day and slept a good deal. Felt better in evening.

How extraordinary narrow in his outlook is Maharaj Singh! Perfectly straight and honourable, yet wholly ignorant of new ideas and their suggested solutions. The English Public School ideal.

April 27th Sunday

Sanyal came to my cell today. We had quite a long talk, the jailer being present most of the time. He looked well.

I understand that Shiva Murti Singh21 has come here today and joined the Handia lot. The Handia people are being so far treated as ordinary Class C prisoners, though light work is being given them. Class B, and of course Class A prisoners, are known as the raises (रईस) in the jail population!

I learnt the interesting fact today that the cell and enclosure in which I am kept was originally built for particularly dangerous criminals who had to be kept quite apart. Some 8 or 9 years ago two such persons were kept here in fetters or chains. Their cell door was locked and so was the barrack door. Still they escaped! One of them managed to get out of his fetters, got into communication with the other in the adjoining cell, and then they together came out of the cell through the roof. To go over a few walls 14 or 15 ft. high presented no great difficulty. The very chains that had bound them were utilised to help in getting over the walls. This is the jail gossip of the prisoners—I do not know how far it is true. They add that the escaped convicts were not caught again. This place where I am quartered used to be called with the cheerful name of कुत्ता घर ![22]

21. He was then secretary of the Allahabad District Congress Committee and was arrested at Handia on 27 April 1930 for violating the salt law and sentenced to four months' rigorous imprisonment.
22. Literally, "dog house".

Another scorpion appeared today—It stung one of the *safayas*. I was more excited than he was—I suggested him to go to the hospital but he contented himself by applying some mud to the part affected. He seems to be none the worse for it.

I am getting into bad habits. Sleeping a lot in the middle of the day and generally not leading a very strenuous life. The weather is not helpful—Getting up at 4 in the morning means that by 12 or 1 p.m. or so one feels quite tired—Specially when the previous night has not been a long one. Still I am having a slack time comparatively. When I think of the work going on outside and the people who have to do it I feel quite guilty. But I wish I could have a fling outside also. This dull lotus-eating existence with walls surrounding you and warders always guarding you is not very cheerful.

April 28th Monday

Two weeks!

All round me I have prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment. Many of them have already spent ten or fifteen years in jail—some over twenty, For years and years they have not seen a child or a woman or even a horse or a dog. What a terrible outlook! A lifer! As I was walking outside my barrack early this morning a C.O. asked me : What of us lifers? Will Swaraj take us out of this hell?

Mostly they come in the gang cases. In each case a hundred or more may be convicted mostly for life or 20 years. Some of them are probably guilty but even so a life sentence is terrible. But most must be innocent—It is quite enough to look at them and say that they have not got spirit enough for big crime. Usually they get sentenced in batches on the evidence of some approves.

My cook is a lifer—a more harmless individual it is difficult to imagine. His story is that some distant relative wanted to rape his widowed daughter and in a fit of rage he stuck a knife into him. He is over 60 now and has been in jail for two or three years or more.

The Supt. casually told me today that my bed is going to be chained up in future! It was an amazing proposition and it took me by surprise. It appear that this precautionary measure is not for my sake but for the sake of the other five convicts in my barrack, lest they use my bed to climb over the wall. How they can do so with me in the bed it is a little difficult to imagine. So from tonight onwards when my bed is taken out of the cell, it will forthwith be chained.

This new direction las come from the I.G.-Our Supt. apparently refers everything to the I.G. He dare not take the initiative in anything. Having allowed me to sleep outside my cell he forthwith asked the I.G. for sanction for this too. The response brought the sanction- and the chain.

A new assistant jailer came to see me. He is fresh from Agra District Jail and brought news of friends there—These were Paliwal, Dandekar Jugal Kishore,[23] Johri and others. He said that they were getting on well together.

Two more salt offenders from Handia are said to have come here today.

A fresh stock of fruit from home-also the weekly *Bharat* and the *Illustration*.

Some of the petty jail officials—clerks, warders &c.—seem to be getting a little nervous about the civil disobedience movement. If Swaraj comes what will happen to them? Assurances to me are not lacking that their hearts beat true and only fear of starvation makes them continue serving the foreign government.

My warder visited the city today and he tells me that he saw women picketing cloth shops in the chowk.

April 29th Tuesday

A cold wave, most unusual for time of the year. The night was very cool.

Early in morning I learnt that Sardar Narmada Prasad Singh[24] had been arrested and brought to this jail and was sitting in the office. There were some trials in jail today. Apparently he was not tried. I half expected him to be brought to my barrack but he did not come.

Some person from Handia who was tried in jail this morning apologised and said he would not break the Salt Act any more. He was of course released. I do not know who this person was. The news of his apology was brought to me by a warder and subsequently by two C.Os separately. They were all rather put out at it. How quickly little things

23. Acharya Jugal Kishore (b. 1893); General Secretary of the Congress, 1930-33 and 1946-48; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; Minister, U.P., 1956 and 1960; Vice-chancellor of Lucknow University, 1952-54, and of Kanpur University, 1966-69.
24. (1889-1961); president of the district Congress committee, Allahabad, for 17 years; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; president, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, 1935-36; Minister, Vindhya Pradesh, 1948-49; left the Congress in 1951 and became president of the Kisan Mazdoor Party.

affect people in the mass. I was asked who Narmada Prasad was and if he would apologise!

I am feeling rather worried about the differentiation in treatment between me and other politicals. I am the only person who is Class A. Some others are Class B. Others apparently not classified yet. This is getting on my nerves. I have a good mind to tell the govt. that I do not want this Class A treatment. The only thing that keeps me is the effect on father & mother. Probably I shall see them in a few days and I shall mention the matter to them.

Today is a fortnight since my conviction. I ought to have been allowed to write a letter but I have had no word from the Supdt. I asked him specially to let me know.

There was *pagli* today.

30 April I930[25]

My dear Father,
Your letter of the 28th has just been delivered to me.

My life is not terribly exciting and there is nothing very particular to say but I hasten to reply to avail myself of this fortnightly privilege. It is rather incongruous to write on this note paper from Naini Prison and I am not sure if the jail authorities will approve of it. But I have no choice in the matter as I have nothing else approaching note paper. Perhaps it is not wholly inappropriate as a vital part of the A.I.C.C. office is at present in Naini Jail, though it is not functioning.

I am glad Indu is well again. I think it is better for her to remain in Allahabad during the summer and not to get a school transfer. Of course during her vacation she can go to Chand[26] at Naini Tal or else-where. I hope she is taking a daily swim in the swimming bath. That will keep her more fit than Naini Tal.

I am sorry Chand and Tara[27] continue to be unwell. Nan herself is in very poor condition and a visit of the family to the hills is certainly advisable.

About Darbhanga,[28] I suppose you must carry on with the case as long as you can. I do not see how you will be able to stick to it to the

25. M. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.
26. Chandralekha, eldest daughter of Vijayalakshmi Pandit.
27. Nayantara, second daughter of Vijayalakshmi Pandit.
28. Motilal Nehru was representing the Maharaja of Darbhanga, one of the directors of the Agra United Mills Co. Ltd., in a civil suit.

end and new developments will make it more and more difficult for you to do so. But for the present you have to appear.

I doubt if it will eventually be possible to let out any part of the old house, or at any rate any substantial part of it. I do not like the idea of it being let out for residential purposes to outsiders. At the most we can let rooms out for offices of a suitable kind like Youth League, etc. At present it is not possible to make any big changes. But ultimately we shall have a library room or rooms, and a public reading-room. We have a fairly large library as it is—it is in Bombay. The only suitable room for the library is the big drawing room or your old room. However, the library can wait. A reading-room there should be as soon as the office goes there. This room can be put in charge of the Youth League who ought to undertake to look after it. These people should also be given an office room on moderate rent.

It is right that Raja Rao should live in a part of the house. The house could really give accommodation to many of our staff members but our happy customs make it difficult for persons to live in one house without all manner of special arrangements, kitchen, etc. So for the present only Raja had better come. It may also be possible for Jaya Prakash and Prabhavati[29] to move in and, say, occupy my old rooms upstairs. They might be consulted. It will probably be more convenient and cheaper for them. They could pay Rs. 25/- to Rs. 30/- a month. About the kitchen for them, a little room adjoining the old kitchen might be given.

One thing I hope will be made clear to all. The house must be kept spick and span—no clothes drying all over the place or other similar signs of Indian habitation. Some rule might be made whereunder members of the staff might pay a proportion of their salaries as rent if they live in the house. This will be an approximate rule only.

We have an old *chaprasi pensioner* who lives near Anand Bhawan. He is called *Bare Mian*. Ask Raja Rao to tell the old man to spend the day in the old building as a kind of day chowkidar. This will not mean much trouble to him. He can be paid a slight increment for this if necessary.

The *Bharat* has given me the important news. I hope Kamala and Betty are not overdoing things. Specially I hope they will take plenty of rest in the middle of the day and not tempt the sun too much.

29. Wife of Jayaprakash Narayan; d. 1973.

My mosquito net is in good condition. So is my *charkha* which came to me three or four days ago. I do an hour's spinning every day and an hour's newar-weaving. Perhaps by the time I get out I might have woven enough newar for a bed for you! But the stuff is likely to be the property of the jail.

I have enough *punis* for another 10 or 12 days. Some days later another bundle might be sent.

Venkatesh Tewari saw me about my article on Gandhi. I told him he could print it, with an explanation, in the Bharat. But please get my manuscript from him soon and ask Raja Rao to send it to Cedric Dover[30] in Calcutta. The office people know the address. Dover should be asked to return this after he has done with it—also the other manuscripts of mine he has got.

I do not require any thermos. My *surai* gives me good cold water (which I have boiled previously). This is better and healthier than the addition of chunks of ice. A refrigerator of the electric variety would no doubt be better but that is beyond the capacity of Naini Prison or the dreams of even class A prisoners! But really I do not want any ice. The whole idea appears incongruous to me.

It is very good of you to keep up a constant supply of fruit. I wish however that the quantity was less. I can hardly keep pace with it. The only way of doing so I have found is to give up the ordinary meal every little while and have a purely fruitarian meal. Please also do not send anything that attracts ants. Ants are a perfect nuisance here if anything sweet is about.

I have been thinking that it might not be a bad idea if I had my cooking done, or did it myself, in a cooker. Perhaps you might send a small one? There is no hurry about it. The food I am getting here is quite decent.

I do not require any more books at present. If I want them I shall send word. I am surprised at my German first book not being found in the library. I was almost certain that it was in the book case containing the State trials. It is bound to be somewhere in the library. It is quite a little unbound dark grey book. However, there is no hurry about it.

There is another book I asked for but I did not get. I refer to it not because I want it now but because in case I may ask for it later

30. An Anglo-Indian writer; author of *Half Caste*.

you can spot it. It is the first volume of the *Cambridge History of India*—it deals with ancient India. There is a third volume also dealing with a subsequent period but this is not wanted. I may require the 1st vol. for reference later. If you cannot find it do not trouble to send for it from a book shop. It is too expensive and not worthwhile.

I should like to have some of my old note books. They are bound dark blue khadi—Kamala knows them. She sent me one of them the other day.

I am very glad to know that my friends of the Christmas dance remember me. Please send my love to them and my good wishes and appreciations.

I should like to have a bottle of Elliman's embrocation for massaging my shoulder and arms. I have been having them massaged daily and there is great improvement. But still sometimes I have a twinge.

Information about your birthday on the 25th April came as a bit of a surprise. I was of course thinking of the 4th May. I am late in sending you my love and good wishes. But the responsibility is hardly mine. The high walls of Naini jail are responsible. And yet the walls make little difference and I have wished with all my heart that you may have a great many happy returns of the day. Were you born on the 12th *Vaisakh*? That was the *Samvat* date on April 25th.

You will be interested to learn that the day of my arrest was the 1st Vaisakh of the new *Samvat* 1987. I started the new year well. In your room there is a copy of a Hindi diary sent by Shiva Prasad—it is called the सौर रोज़नामचा. This begins with the 14th April—1st *Vaisakh*.

Maharai Singh was here again a few days ago. He casually hinted if I felt the heat much here it might be possible to arrange for a transfer to a jail in a cooler place. He made it clear that he had no authority in the matter but that he could suggest it. I told him definitely that I required no such change. I would much rather be in Naini than in its namesake in the hills. Here at least I feel that I am not far from you although the river Jamna and the jail walls may be between us. Besides, you know that I flourish exceedingly in the hot weather.

As a matter of fact I am not very happy at the thought that I am specially selected for what is called Class A treatment. To my knowledge there is no one else here getting this treatment. I do not like being the recipient of any special favour. I am waiting for the present to see developments.

Do not worry about me in the least and do not trouble to send the car frequently. It is the people outside who have to shoulder the burden and face the heat of the fray. I do not want to come in the way

of your work. Anything that I have asked for in this letter need not be sent forthwith. At the time of the next interview I can be given them.

I think often of our friends all over India. Many of them—how many!—I find from *Bharat*, have taken shelter behind high walls and prison bars. Of them and of others I think frequently, and send my good wishes.

My love to all in Anand Bhawan and in 9, Cawnpore Road.

Your loving son,
Jawahar

April 30th Wednesday

Had a letter from father this morning. It was dated the 28th. I sent an answer for him to the Superintendent soon after. On the whole very satisfactory news.

The idea of mother picketing the foreign cloth shops is very moving. The warders tell me that the foreign cloth boycott is the talk of the city. One of the warders asked me what happened to Mohamed Ali. Apparently some notice has been issued on his behalf asking Muslims to keep apart from the C.D. movement because of Nehru Report &c. &c. It also appears that counter-notices by Muslims have also been issued. My Muslim warder strongly disapproved of Mohamed Ali's *volte face* and suggested unworthy reasons for it. The more I think of it the more I am convinced that the Muslims in India can do nothing more disastrous for their own interests than to keep away from the freedom movement. It is obvious however that they are not keeping away as a whole. What of Peshawar and the N.W.F.P![31]

31. The civil disobedience campaign was proceeding vigorously in the N.W.F.P. The Congress had decided to picket liquor shops at Peshawar on 23 April. The previous day, the Congress investigation committee, which was proceeding to Peshawar, was stopped at Attock. To protest against this, a mammoth meeting was held that evening in Peshawar. The next morning, Congress leaders were arrested and a large crowd followed them to the police station. Suddenly, without any warning, armoured cars drove through the crowd, killing some and seriously injuring many. The people were not allowed to remove their dead but instead were fired upon.

I gather that Narmada Prasad was sentenced today to 9 months' R.I. Quite a crowd was present in the jail office including Kalakankar, Malaviyaji &c. Outside there was a big crowd.

I did five feet of newar-weaving in an hour today.

May 1st Thursday May Day

I am very worried about Class A & B & C . It is annoying enough to sit idly doing no active work when people outside are working away for all they are worth. I sit and read when mother & Kamala & Nan & Betty picket in the hot sun ! It is even more annoying to find that I am the only person here in Naini Jail getting this Class A treatment Even Narmada Prasad has not been given it. I understand he will have to put on prison clothes and do prison work. This is getting on my nerves and I can't stand it. I hinted as much to father in yesterday's letter. I shall wait for my interview with him in two or three days. Afterwards, I shall write to Govt. or the Supdt.

I have given up sleeping in the afternoon. The news from outside during last few days has made me feel too excited to sleep. It seems such a futile way of spending any part of the day. I feel very proud and happy at the part mother & Kamala & Nan & Betty are taking in the campaign. Altogether the country seems to be doing splendidly. How can this wonderful energy and enthusiasm fail. Oh! to be in the fray and not to sit idly by, behind high walls.

I have been reading in a history of the Orient about the Indian colonies in Malaysia, Indo-China &c. Fascinating subject—I must get a bigger book on this subject.

The chain to tie and lock my bed up has come! Tonight I shall have to endure it.

The Superintendent mentioned today that Patel had a great proces-sion yesterday.[32] The warder also gave interesting bits of news of the great meeting last evening—apparently Abul Kalam Azad was present.[33]

32. On 30 April, on his way from Simla to Calcutta, after having resigned the presidentship of the Central Assembly, Vithalbhai Patel was welcomed by a large number of people at the Allahabad railway station and taken out in a procession.
33. This public meeting in Allahabad was addressed by Vithalbhai Patel and Maulnna Azad.

The day before Mahmud & Hasrat Mohani spoke at a monster gathering in Allahabad.[34] The Muslims are bestirring themselves.

I ran a longer distance than usual this morning. Ordinarily I run 1466 yards, today I ran 1833 yards—a little over a mile.

I finished Andre Maurois'35 Ariel ou la Vie de Shelley today. Liked it. Since I have been in Naini Jail I have not read very much as a good bit of my time has been spent in doing French poetry—still I have read the following books :

1. T'. C. Woo's *Kuomin Tang*[36]
2. K. T. Shah's *The Splendour that was Ind*[37]
3. Bertrand Russell's *A.B.C. of Relativity*.
4. Three plays by Henry Bernstein[38]
   La Marche,[39] *La Griffe*[40] *Le Detour*.[41]
   (La G rif fe we saw in Paris)
5. Habib's *Amir Khusrau*[42]
6. Johan Bojer's[43] *The New Temple*.

May 2nd Friday

The reveille was sounded at 4.30 in the morning today. Till yesterday 5 a.m. was the hour for it but now the day has been advanced by half an hour. I have been getting up about 4 a.m.

It continues to be remarkably cool, specially at night.

My punkha coolie, a poor Musulman from outside (not a convict), has been bringing me a few little mangoes almost daily. They are not up to much, but the gift is worthy of the gods. The man is very poor. I showed him some sympathy and this is his way of conveying his gratitude to me!

34. On 29 April, a public meeting was held to congratulate Sardar Narmada Prasad Singh on his arrest and to commend the people of Peshawar for their bravery; Syed Mahmud and Hasrat Mohani addressed the gathering.
35. (1885-1967); French biographer, novelist and essayist.
36. *Kuomintang and the Future of Chinese Revolution*, published in London, 19928.
37 Published in Bombay, 1930.
38. (1876-1953); French dramatist.
39. Published in 1900.
40. Published in 1906.
41. Published in 1902.
42. Published in 1927.
43. (1872-1959); Norwegian novelist.

May 3rd Saturday

Had my fortnightly interview today with father, mother, Kamala & Indu. Many others came but they remained outside and we could just see each other through the office window for a while. Among those who remained outside were Nan, Betty, Ranjit, Bibi, Mahmud, Purushottam, Mukerji, Upadhyaya,[44] Madan,[45] Raja Rao &c.

Learnt from father that practically all newspapers in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta &c. have stopped publication on being asked to give security under the new ordinance.[46] *The Leader* of course has not been asked.

This morning the District Magistrate, Thompson, came for a few minutes to see me.

I told father that I was dissatisfied with Class A treatment when others were not getting it. He did not like the idea of my objecting. However I feel I must do something. Shall write to the Supt. tomorrow.

Father seemed to think that the next fortnight will either see a general amnesty or the arrest of Bapu, father and all other important persons outside. I think that from the point of view of the movement the latter is the more desirable alternative.

As I was going to the office to see father, passed Shiva Murti, Bhuwerji &c. in the outer office. I was in such a hurry that I did not stop. I was glad to see them but I felt rather ashamed to be in my ordinary clothes when they were in jail clothes.

44. S. D. Upadhyaya (b. 1899); joined the noncooperation movement in 1920; served as personal secretary to Motilal Nehru from 1923, and to Jawaharlal from 1931; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; member Lok Sabha, 1952-57, and Rajya Sabha, 1967-70.
45. Madan Atal (1886-1957); a physician who accompanied his cousin, Kamala Nehru, to Europe in 1935; practised later in Lucknow; went to Spain as head of a medical mission and in 1938 led the ambulance unit sent to China by the Congress; died in China.
46. On 27 April 1930, the government issued the Indian Press Ordinance under which newspapers were required to furnish cash securities which could be forfeited if the government felt that objectionable matter had been published.

4th May 1930[47]

TO THE SUPERINTENDENT, CENTRAL PRISON, NAINI

Dear Sir,
Immediately after my conviction I informed the trying magistrate that I did not desire any special treatment or privilege in prison which was not accorded to other political prisoners. I find, however, that there has been a marked differentiation of treatment among political prisoners, many of whom have been sentenced for an identical offence. I am sensible that special privileges have been given to me, although my colleagues, who have been sentenced, have in most instances not even received the ordinary amenities usually associated with political prisoners. They are being treated like ordinary criminals. I appreciate the courtesy shown to me, but I would appreciate still more if my colleagues and I were treated alike.

It has been stated, I believe, that prisoners will be treated according to "social status" or their "standard of living" and not for racial or political reasons. How far racial discrimination has disappeared it is a little difficult to see. The new division into three classes itself seems ultimately to have a racial basis although the reason given may be "social status" or "standard of living". And even within the same class there is a considerable measure of differentiation on racial lines, the reason given probably being again a different one.

There are at present many persons in this jail who have deliberately committed a breach of the law in pursuance of a nation-wide movement in which the greatest and noblest in the land have joined. Their motives cannot be questioned nor can anyone doubt the purity of their conduct. They are mostly, I believe, classed and treated as ordinary criminals. Some one or two, it may be, are perhaps put in Class B. On the other hand there are many people in the jail getting special treatment whose offences have been of the most serious kind involving moral depravity. Yet they get special privileges and are put in Class B, and even there they manage to get much more than others. Whatever the reasons given may have been, in the result it is obvious that racial discrimination exists, and as between offences of a purely political character and others involving moral depravity the latter receive gentler and softer treatment.

47. J. N. Prison Papers, N.M.M.L.

If the test applied in giving any kind of treatment is "social status", I do not know how this is judged and who judges it. But in any event I wish to recognise no such test. In choosing my colleagues I applied no such test and in facing the consequences of my action it would ill become me to take shelter under this plea.

If the test is the standard of living I may state that I have experimented with many and varying standards and can get used to most. Physically, I believe I am fit, and am probably in far better condition than many of my colleagues in this jail who are being treated as ordinary criminals for the same offence as mine. In many ways I am better capable of bearing hardship than they are.

Under these circumstances I fail to see any reason why I should be granted privileged treatment which is denied to others unless the object is to keep me apart from my colleagues. I would request, therefore, that the same treatment be given to me as to my other colleagues.

I would beg of you to forward this letter of mine to the proper authorities.

Yours faithfully,
Jawaharlal Nehru

Sunday May 4th

Venkatesh Tewari came in the morning with his little son. Told me that poor Narmada Prasad was having a bad time. Specially at night when he has to sleep inside the barrack.

I sent a long letter to the Supdt. about special treatment &c. I have said that I want no privilege for myself which is denied to my colleagues.

Monday May 5th

Three weeks over today—and some heati!

The Superintendent spoke to me about my letter sent yesterday. Suggested that I might not press it. Tried to explain how fairly and leniently he had tried to act. How he wanted to reform jail administration &c. Useless to argue. I told him however that he had better

send the letter on to the I.G. It will do me good to do without punkha &c. Make me grow thin!

While the Superintendent was with me he sent the jailor to meet the Sessions Judge and to take him round. Struck me that he was treating the judge differently—not the way he behaved to the District Magistrate. The reason apparently was that the S.J. was Indian.

He was Rup Kishan Aga. Came round to see my barrack for a few minutes.

A lot more fruit came from home. But the weekly Bharat for which I was eagerly waiting did not come. I hear that Bapu has been arrested. The warder tells me that there is perfect hartal everywhere, even in Naini bazar. Evidently the news came this afternoon.

So Bapu has been arrested! *Ca marche bien*. It is full-blooded war to the bitter end. Good.

May 6th Tuesday

Probably Bapu was arrested on May 4th. Evidently the hartal yesterday was remarkable. All manner of rumours come here. Some prisoners thought that the whole Swaraj movement was ended now that the leader was put in jail.

The Supt spoke to me again of my letter to him about the treatment. He has been trying to induce me not to have it sent on to the I.G. He makes out that I am not getting anything special except fruit from outside and fortnightly interviews. Punkha he has allowed for medical reasons. The real difference is between simple and rigorous imprisonment and I got simple. My insisting on giving up more frequent interviews would do little good to the others. Besides he hopes to get orders to put Narmada Prasad in Class A soon. This was his argument. I do not know what to do. My giving up interviews would hit father, mother and Kamala hard. Besides, if father is arrested, as he well might be, am I to keep apart from him in Class B? I ought to keep myself as fit as possible physically and mentally for work later. Difficult to decide. For the present I have asked the Supt. to keep my letter with him and not to send it on to the I.G.

My weight has just been taken. It was 123 pounds—a drop of 7 pounds since 18th April—18 days. I am glad of this drop.

May 7th Wednesday

A painful incident, but not unusual in jails, took place today. I do not know all the facts but it appears that the new assistant jailer, Chhatar Singh, who has recently come from Agra, has not made himself very popular. Within a few days in his attempts to cow down the prisoners in the barrack entrusted to him he has had them beaten repeatedly with shoes &c. Today he produced someone before the Supt. for some petty jail offence and it is doubtful if there was any offence. Some punishment was given, fetters or some such thing. On coming out of the Supdt's room, in the head jailer's office this man suddenly hit Chhatar Singh. He had not a shadow of a chance. The head jailer immediately gave the order to the *pukkas, lambardars* &c. to fall on him which was done very effectively and a very thorough beating was given. Apparently he succeeded in biting Chhatar Singh in the stomach. Now the poor prisoner is likely to get 30 stripes or so. But Chhatar Singh is not likely to have an easy time. If an official consistently misbehaves there are plenty of hardened people who will give trouble and face all consequences. In every jail there are some of these usually sentenced to a life term with only a jail life to look forward to.

It is amazing how casually prisoners are beaten almost senseless for the slightest reason or no reason at all. Today's beating took place almost in the Supdt's presence and yet it is not clear if he intervened. Having given a thorough beating to the poor prisoner, now a formal applicaton for permission to flog may go to I.G. and later this judgment will be pronounced and the flogging given.

Whatever may happen in jail, a prisoner never has a chance against a jail official. And it is painful to see the C.Os & pukkas beating fellow prisoners just to please the jailer. Like our "loyalist" friends in India and the British Government.

It appears that Bapu was arrested at dead of night at about 3 a.m. in the train. He has been interned in Yeravda jail.

May 8th Thursday

The Supt. tells me that three salt prisoners are being sent here from Rae Bareli prison for disciplinary reasons.

It appears that Venkatesh Tewari has resigned from the local council as a protest against the general repression. So I suppose he ceases to be an official visitor to the jail. Poor chap—I referred to him

somewhat harshly in these notes without the slightest justification. He has evidently been much troubled by what has been going on and has repeatedly tried to do something for the political prisoners. His resignation from the council must be directly opposed to the Liberal creed but I suppose the Liberal Party is elastic enough-anyway it cannot afford to lose any of its better known members.

May 9th Friday

The warder assures me that all is well for tomorrow—*Bakr Id*—The Hindus & Muslims have come to an agreement—M. Vilayat Hussain has issued an appeal to Muslims to avoid hurting Hindu feelings &c.

He also informs that there is a general impression outside that Swaraj is coming within a few months! He got this idea from a conversation with Naini shopkeepers.

Today I had a visit from Puran Singh *alias* (or) Gurdial Singh who is a fellow prisoner. The Supt. had often spoken to me about him. He took nearly an hour of my time. Extraordinary muddle-headed fellow.

May 10th Saturday

Id ul Zuha—apparently everything passed off well, in Allahabad at least.

Uberoi, the Supt. told me that he met Betty at the Khannas last night and she said that they were worried because my weight had gone down so much. How did anyone outside get to know of it? It is really extraordinary. But news passes the jail walls rapidly enough although very often in a coloured and distorted form.

Every day rumours reach me of all manner of happenings outside—The latest is that the Indian troops and police at Patna have refused to fire on the people and indeed have marched off from their barracks! I try to discountenance these reports, but before I have finished with one, another is on the way. Quite a lot of people here seem to imagine that it is a question of a few months, if not weeks, before the British raj crumbles. I tell them that it is not such an easy matter. It is a much stiffer job and may take many years yet before final and complete victory comes.

May 11th Sunday

I had more fruit today—specially melons which Khaliq had sent from Lucknow. The *Bharat* also came.

I finished today the French anthology of poetry I have been reading.

May 12th Monday

Finished *History of the Orient* & Yvette Guilbert's *Chanson de ma Vie*.[48]

The Working Committee must have met today at Anand Bhawan.[49] I thought of it many times today. What a responsibility to shoulder! I hope there is no trace of weakness in any one of the new members.

I gather from my friend, the warder, that there is some excitement in the city and there is going to be hartal tomorrow.[50] What about I cannot make out. He also mentioned big meetings at which Abbas Tyabji[51] was expected to speak.

A salt law breaker came from ...[52] today.

There is likely to be some trouble here over the question of parade. Our political prisoners will probably not agree to all the degrading exercises in connection with it. I quite sympathise with their viewpoint.

No one to talk to—except some fellow convicts of very ordinary intelligence, and for a little while occasionally the Supt. If I did not keep myself very busy all day I would feel terribly bored.

48. Autobiography, published in 1929, of the French monologue artist.
49. This meeting of the Working Committee, under the presidentship of Motilal Nehru, resolved to continue the boycott of foreign cloth and to inaugurate a no-tax campaign in certain provinces.
50. 13 May 1930 was observed at Allahabad as Peshawar Day in memory of those who had lost their lives on 23 April at Peshawar. There was a complete hartal in the city.
51. (1854-1936); close friend of Mahatma Gandhi; joined the Baroda judicial service in 1879, and after retirement took an active part in the Congress and Home Rule movements; member of the non-official commission appointed by the Congress to enquire into the Punjab disturbances of 1919.
52. Word indecipherable.

May 13th Tuesday

Narmada Prasad is to come to my barrack. He has been promoted to Class A-so the Supdt, informed me this morning. The adjoining cell is being prepared for him.

I gather that Tika Ram[53] was brought to the jail today.

Today's hartal in the city was apparently due to Abbas Tyabji's arrest.[54] All manner of wild rumours spread in jail. The most persistent relate to Indian troops refusing to fire and coming into conflict with the authorities.[55]

I sent back a lot of books today, and received Spengler's Decline of the West.

14th May 1930[56]

My dear Father,
Your letter of the 12th has just come. Your reference in it to your health and to the possibility of a physical and nervous breakdown has alarmed me. Doctor's advice can do little to lessen the burden of worry and anxiety, and the times we live in provide enough of these. That has to be faced. Still, I hope Bidhan, during his visit to Allahabad, examined you thoroughly and that you are following his advice.

I saw in the *Bharat* that there was a Working Committee meeting on the 12th and that day I thought a great deal of you all. I am glad Shiva Prasad has come back from Europe. I hope he is thinner!

My idea about Swaraj Bhawan is that the municipality should co-operate with you in keeping up the grounds as a public garden. If you put it to them that you are prepared to treat the grounds as such, I see no reason why they should not do so. Their *malis* can supervise

53. Tika Ram Tripathi; he was arrested on 12 May 1930 for violating the salt law in Phulpur sub-division of Allahabad district.
54. He was arrested on 12 May while leading the satyagrahis to take possession of the government salt depot at Dharsana.
55. At Peshawar, on 23 April 1930, when the government ordered firing on the huge crowd demonstrating against the arrest of Congress leaders, some Indian troops refusd to fire.
56. M. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.

the garden and they can make some special arrangements for the water etc. I do not mean that the whole burden of the upkeep should fall on the municipality. But a good part of it should. The assessment of the building part could be made separately and would naturally be reduced. You might speak to Purushottam Das Tandon about this and he can discuss it with municipal officers. The fact that no municipal water reaches the home ought also to be brought to their notice. Why should a heavy tax be paid when we get no water?

I do not think it is possible for water to reach the taps on the upper floor to my old rooms. The hand pump never worked. After all, when we were there we had almost always to get water fetched from below. The only thing to be done is for you to allow your well water for domestic purposes in the whole of Swaraj Bhawan and this could be carried up to the first floor.

The rents you have fixed for the upper rooms and the corner room below appear to be fair. Of course, in particular cases you might reduce them a little if you so wish for any particulars reason but the rent fixed for particular rooms should on the whole not vary.

I sent you word about the Meerut case money as I felt that if the money is not paid there is bound to be trouble. The Meerut accused and the party sending the money will both object. Besides, I cannot remember without reference to books and papers, what part of the money received by me was spent. It is quite possible that some part of it remained. I think therefore that the full balance of Rs 850/- should be paid to them. As I said the amount should be paid to such parties as the accused indicate. I suppose Deoki Prasad Sinha will enquire and let you know. If he does not do so then a reminder might be sent to him. The principal accused to be consulted in the matter are Bradley, Dange, etc.

I am glad that Indu and Chand are going to Naini Tal. A change will do them good. As for a school I do not quite understand what you mean by asking me to think out courses of study. A good private school for little boys and girls is very necessary in Allahabad. But this is an expert's job and none of us who has not specially studied this subject can say much The thing to do is to get hold of a really competent woman who has experience of modem methods, preferably the Dalton method,[51] which is more or less a continuation of the Montessori system. The new school must be really a better place than any

57. A method of school teaching first tried by Helen Parkhurst in 1920 at Dalton in the United States.

existing one. I suppose there are enough good trained teachers in India. English women should not be employed, but I see no reason why other foreigners should not be engaged. Indeed, I would suggest getting a really competent American girl out if necessary. Dhan Gopal Mukherji's wife is supposed to be an expert and has a high reputation as a teacher according to the Dalton methods. She is the head of a school in New York, I think. It would be an excellent thing if she could be induced to come to India for a year and put the new school on a sound basis. In the alternative she might be asked if she could suggest someone who is both competent and sympathetic, and at the same time not expensive. In any event she could send us helpful ideas.

But it is not necessary to have a woman from America to start a school in Allahabad. I do think, however, that if modern methods are to be introduced we must have someone with experience of them. However, a good enough school can be started almost immediately with a good head with some assistance. If you succeed in getting a good head I would give her a free hand to a great extent.

The Modern School in Delhi, to which Ballo used to go to, is quite a good school. Perhaps some helpful ideas might be got from it. I am sure a new school will succeed and will attract students, provided it is really well run.

I am glad you are retiring from Guzders[58]—once you sell your shares it will be no concern of yours whether the business is carried on or not. But obviouslv the right thing to do is to close it up.

I was weighed on the 6th May. I was 123 lbs, that is, 7 lbs less than I was on the 18th April. The drop is considerable but I expected it and more or less brought it about. I have been taking a great deal of exercise—running, walking, Muller-and I wanted to reduce my superfluous fat. As a matter of fact I feel very fit and you yourself remarked during the last interview that I was looking better. I was weighed three days after the interview. Probably I shall be weighed again before our next interview. Betty came across the Superintendent at Khanna's place and said something about my weight having gone down. I do not know how she had got to know it. Anyway do not worry in the least—I am perfectly fit. I want to come out of jail physically and mentally strong and I shall take good care to do so.

Narmada Prasad Singh has been "promoted" to Class A and he is coming to stay in this barrack with me. This is good as I shall have

58. A firm in Allahabad.

some little companyman is a social animal and too much solitude is not good. I have drawn up a fairly stiff programme for myself and I am doing something or other all day. Any relaxation would make me feel bored!

I am very glad indeed to learn of the successful passing off of *Bakr Id* in Allahabad.

Today I complete just one month of my imprisonment. By the time I come out I expect to find the womenfolk running everything. They seem to be getting quite aggressive! I personally approve of it. I hope that Kamala, Nan and Betty are keeping well in spite of their manifold activities.

Love to all.

Your loving son,
Jawahar

The following articles might be sent when convenient. There is absolutely no hurry:

1 A *durrie* for my bed. I want to send back my *namda* which is very warm.
2. A small *surai*.
3. Spengler's *Decline of the West*, Vol. 2.

Please do not have *dahi* sent as usually this does not reach me in good condition. Nor need mango *panna* be sent. As mangoes are sent this can be easily made here.

May 14th Wednesday

Completed a month today.

Had a letter from father dated 12th, to which I replied today.

Narmada Prasad came to my barrack this evening. The hartal yesterday was in celebration of Peshawar Day.

May 15th Thursday

My weight today 124 lbs—one lb more than last time.

There has been some trouble over the parade in barrack 4 where the salt prisoners are kept. They refused to attend and the Supt. mentioned this to me. He was aggrieved about it.

I am in the thick of Spengler's *Decline of the West*.

May 17 th Saturday

Interview with father, mother, Kamala, Indu & Chand. Others outside: Nan, Betty, Ranjit, Tassadduq, Mahmud, Khwaja, Jaya Prakash &c.

Mother not looking well—Father much the same—Kamala looking fit in spite of rushing about all day. Indu going to Naini Tal tomorrow. Also Chand. Father going to Agra tomorrow for Dunthanya case.[59]

On the whole good news from outside—arrests continuing—Sardul Singh arrested on his way back from Working Committee. Abdul Qadir Kasuri[60] also arrested. So also Rafi.[61] Kamaladeivi[62] arrested and sentenced to 9 months—also another woman in Madras.[63]

Martial Law in Sholapur.[64] Ten years for carrying national flag.

Altogether most satisfactory!

Sarojini being besieged with her volunteers near the salt depot in Darsana.

Gave over 5500 yards of yarn, which I had spun, to Kamala to be sent on to the A.I.S.A.

Monday May 19th.

rrhe Supt. informs me that our books have to ba passed by the District Magistrate, and that I must not keep more than 6 at a time. Probably the Magistrate has never heard of Spengler's *Decline of the West*. He is sure to suspect the title. I have sent a number of my books to the jail office to be kept there so that the number fixed might not be exceeded.

59. A case at Agra in which Motilal Nehru had been appearing since April 1929. He wanted to retire from this case to devote himself fully to the civil disobedience movement but Mahatma Gandhi had advised him to fulfil his obligation to his client.
60. Then president of the Punjab P.C.C. He was arrested on 16 May 1930.
61. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai. He was arrested on 15 May 1930 at Rae Bareli.
62. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya (b. 1903); imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; for many years a leading member of the Congress Socialist Party.
63. Rukmini Lakshmipathi (b. 1892); president, Youth League, Madras; Health Minister, Madras, 1946-47.
64. At Sholapur, on 8 May 1930, when the police opened fire, killing several volunteers picketing liquor shops and injuring many, the crowd killed some policemen. On 12 May 1930, martial law was imposed. Four persons were sentenced to hanging and many to long terms of imprisonment.

I am worried about special treatment. There are some Kashi Vidyapitha boys[65] who are being punished here for disciplinary reasons—the Handia people are also likely to get into trouble over the parade question. And in any event they get Class C treatment. Today they sent me from home some sweets, *murrabas* &c. The sight of them put me off. I returned them.

Two salt law breakers have come from Handia today.

May 20th Tuesday

The Supt. brought Rup Narain to see me about the parade.

Finished Andre Maurois' *La Vie de Disraeli*[60] Liked it-specially the pen pictures of Gladstone[67] & his smugness.

May 21st Wednesday

Had some fruit &c. from home. Sent word that no more should be sent. In future hope to live on jail food only. After a few days intend asking for Class C food. From the looks of it I doubt if I shall be able to swallow it.

The three Kashi Vidyapitha boys from Rae Bareli are apparently being kept in solitary confinement—each in a separate cell—all day except for an hour in the morning and an hour in the evening when they can come out in the barrack enclosure. They are not allowed to speak to anyone. It is not clear what they have been punished for. The Supt. says he does not know! It seems that, high-spirited as they are, they resented some offensive remarks of the Rae Bareli Supt. about the Vidyapitha. It must be awful torture to be kept in solitary closed cells in this weather. I have been haunted by these boys and the thought of their suffering.

65. Five students of Kashi Vidyapitha were arrested on 29 April 1930 at Kaithamal in Rae Bareli district for manufacturing salt and sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment.
66. Published in 1927.
67. William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898); British Liberal statesman; Prime Minister during 1868-74, 1880-85, 1886, 1892-94.

Even little hand fans are not allowed to be given to prisoners. Narmada Prasad tried to arrange for fans for the Handia people but the jailer would not allow this. The European convicts have of course a proper overhead fan.

The reveille now takes place at 4.15 a.m. I get up usually at 3.45 a.m. and go out for the run at 5 a.m.

May 24th Saturday

This morning the Supt. brought round a young Punjabi—Sucha Singh[68] or some such name—who is Joint Magistrate in Allahabad. Has recently come here from Sitapur. Is a "friend" (quaker) and knows Reginald Reynolds[69] well. Seemed to talk as if he was in very great sympathy with the national movement.

In spite of my request, more fruit came from home. Probably my wishes were not made known to them clearly. I took the fruit but made it clear that next time if it was sent, it would be returned. The Supt. has been trying to induce me to carry on with the fruit as I must have vitamins or else my health will suffer. What about the others and their health? Strange how officials look down on the average Indian of the 95%—as if they were something subhuman. But even apart from this the classification into A & B is a camouflage. Out of 2000 prisoners in Naini Jail about 8 or less, excluding Europeans, have been given B treatment and 2—Narmada Prasad and I—A treatment. Almost all the politicals—us two excepted-are being treated as Class C prisoners. The Vidyapitha boys from Rae Bareli are apparently kept in cells all day except for an hour in the morning and in the evening.

Mohanlal Gautam[70] arrested and brought here today. From Handia it appears.

I have had no book to read for the last three days besides Spengler and the French anthology. I asked the Supt. to send me *Jean Christophe*[71] which he is keeping for me in his office. He promised

68. S. S. Khera; joined I.C.S. in 1927; Cabinet Secretary, 1962-64.
69. (1905-1958); British writer who carried Mahatma Gandhi's letter of 2 March 1930 to the Viceroy; author of *India, Gandhi and World Peace* (1931), *The White Sahibs of India* (1937) and *To Live in Mankind* (1951).
70. (b. 1902); general secretary, U.P.P.C.C., 1930-31, and secretary, 1936 and 1963-64; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; secretary of the Congress Socialist Party, 1934; member, Constituent Assembly; General Secretary, A.I.C.C., 1950-51; Minister, U.P., 1952-54 and 1957-60; member, Rajya Sabha, 1969-1972.
71. By Romain Rolland. First published in ten volumes during 1904-12.

to send it but I am still waiting. I suppose the Dist. Magte. has been referred to to find out if I can safely read a French novel!

The Supt. objected this morning to Narmada Prasad arranging his toilet things in such a manner as to make his cell look attractive and "luxurious". The articles of luxury being—tooth brush, paste, fountain-pen ink, bottle of oil &c.!

I suppose he strongly objects to my attempts to fix up my cell. I have some flowers and ferns in a pot—Indu gave me a bouquet at the last interview a week ago and I have carefully tended them since. The flowers are all dried up but even dried flowers are better than no flowrers. Before last week I stuck on to another bunch of flowers—roses—sent by Nan, for a full fortnight. All the petals came off eventually and I picked them up and treasured them up. All this must be strictly against jail discipline! Anything that cheers is bad for a prisoner. Obviously this is the view of the worthy Supt.

Of the two *safayas* we have had so far one has been ordered away today. So only one will remain. There is a great deal of work to be done. Fetching water from a distance itself takes a lot of time. I do not know how one man will be able to do it.

May 27th Tuesday

Supt. informed me that I.G. did not think it proper for my yarn to be sent out of jail or to be sent home. But I can keep it and take it out with me when I am discharged. Supt. was worried that he had allowed me to send the last lot out. He actually telephoned to Anand Bhawan for it but it had gone on to Sabarmati. He then suggested to me that the new yarn I had spun might be considered the old lot! In other words that in case of enquiry I should tell a lie! What an amazing coward the Supt. is. He is afraid of doing the least thing off his own bat. Wants to refer everything to the I.G.

Finished Spengler's *Decline of the West* Vol. 1.

Strong rumour that there has been heavy firing in Lucknow resulting in many casualties amongst women and even children.[72] Also that Ganesh Shanker Vidyarthi has been arrested and sentenced to 6 months.

72. At Lucknow, on 25 May a procession of volunteers was beaten up by the police, and a number of persons, including women, were arrested.

28th May 1930[73]

My dear Father,
Your letter dated the 23rd from Agra, with a note added by Kamala, has just come. Your reverting to injections I hope does not mean that you have had any further trouble.

The Mau melons you sent from Agra reached me here. They were very good.

Some days ago I asked the head jailer to send word to Anand Bhawan that I did not want any fruit or anything else sent to me, unless I specially asked for it. In spite of this message, fruit did come. As I thought there might have been some misapprehension I took this fruit but repeated the request that nothing more was to be sent.

I came to this decision after full thought for a variety of reasons, which I hope you will appreciate. Even the weekly budget of news that trickles through the massive walls and iron gates of Naini prison, by means of Hindi *Bharat*, is enough to give some idea of happenings outside. Frequent firings, assaults, martial law, flogging of boys, im-prisonment of women and so on and so forth denote a state of affairs that is very far from normal and in this state it is difficult for me to accept with pleasure dainty articles of food. The very sight of these dainties has the reverse of an agreeable effect on me. If Naini prison prevents me from doing something when barbarities are being committed all over this country, at least I cannot hold high festival here.

If I am in jail the least I can do is to prevent myself from being a burden, even to the least extent, on those outside. X X X X Every ounce of energy and every rupee of money of those outside must be used for better purpose in these critical days than to provide comforts for those who like me are for the moment *hors de combat*. Therefore I do not want anyone to bother about sending anything to me, except the weekly *Bharat*. My needs in future may comprise a cake of soap, some slivers of cotton, a tube of toothpaste and the like. These can be brought to me when required at the time of the interview.

A third reason which has worried me for many weeks past is the differentiation in treatment. At one stage I was so much troubled about this that I wrote a formal letter to the Superintendent requesting him to treat me as the other politicals were being treated. It was pointed to me however that there was no particular point in my asking for

73. M. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L. The censored portions are indicated by crosses.

such a change as it was always open to me to take advantage or not of particular "privilege". I saw the force of the argument and do not press my letter. I do not therefore intend to ask for any change of class, but I do feel that I should simplify my life and wants in jail as much as possible. So far as interviews and letters are concerned I shall continue to have them twice a month as at present. But I should like to approximate my food to that taken by the ordinary persons.

It has been a revelation to me that after all the hubbub of last year and the conferences you had with the Home Member and his crowd X X X X the lot of the political prisoner is really worse than it was previously. It is far worse than it was in 1921-22. People who had special treatment of the kind we had are now treated as Class C, that is, ordinary prisoners—not even Class B. X X X X An odd person here and there gets what is called Class A, a very few get Class B and the great majority of politicals are classed as ordinary prisoners. You will remember that in 1921-22 special class prisoners, even when sentenced to rigorous imprisonment, were not required to do any jail work. It is not so now and Class A people, if sentenced to rigorous imprisonment, are made to do the full day's work, although this work will be what is called the lighter work—newar—weaving, etc.

It would be interesting to have statistics of the political prisoners in all the jails in India and inquiries to show how many of them are in various classes and how many non-politicals and Europeans get Class A and Class B treatment.

The irony of it is that under present conditions I am sure even poor Jatin Das would be classed as an ordinary prisoner! Here I have in Naini many old colleagues of mine-there are graduates and students of the Kashi Vidyapitha, some are responsible office-bearers of the Congress—but I believe nearly all of them are put in Class C.X X X X It is not a question of a few annas more for food—Class B food is, I understand, nothing to shout about, and food is one of the important points in which it differs from Class C. It is really the hundred and one other things in jail that grate on one and that could be easily remedied with a little psychological insight.

When my colleagues and, specially, young students are being treated thus it seems to be highly unbecoming for me to get supplies of dainties from outside. If it is said that the food I am getting now in jail is not healthful enough, then it is a strange commentary on jail food. If even Class A food is not healthful, what of Class B and Class C food ?

Do not worry about me. I am quite fit and am well able to look after myself. But please do not press me to change my decision about

outside foodstuffs and do not bring them with you when you come for the next interview.

You will remember that I sent a cable to Indu's old school at Bex in Switzerland. A little before my arrest I wrote to this old lady there that we were having some difficulty in getting a passage for Indu and she might not be able to come. I wish someone would write to her—Betty might do it—and tell her of subsequent developments and that there is no chance of Indu going to Switzerland in the near future. She may of course go there again some time later. The address is:

Mile. Haemmerlin
Ecole Nouvelle
La Pelouse
Bex (Switzerland).

The I.G. has decided that the yarn I spin should not be sent out but that it may remain here and I may take it with me when I am discharged. X X X X It is a comfort to me that he takes such a gentle and abiding interest in me.

Class A prisoners are supposed to have 6 books at a time and no more. X X X X Six books are or should be ordinarily enough for light reading but if government officials who frame rules were used to the companionship of books and to intellectual pursuits they might realise that serious work often suffers from such a limitation. Even a schoolboy has a number of books. Besides when the six books contain dictionaries, *Gita*, etc., which are hardly reading books, the number is even more limited. It was because of the limitation that I returned some time ago the two picture books of the Alps and also some French exercise books and others. X X X X I believe I might be able to keep one dictionary apart from the six but one additional dictionary might corrupt the soul.

I am keeping some reference books in the jail office. I shall carry on in this way without much difficulty. The censorship of books is the job of the District Magistrate. I suppose outside events keep him and his tribe sufficiently busy. X X X X So I suppose they judge by the title or the colour of the cover. Some amusing difficulties arise. If a book is in two volumes, is it one book or two? I have such a book and it is at present considered two books. If, on the other hand, two books are bound together, what then? Does the jail prefer small type one-volume editions to better editions? I am reading a novel by Romain Rolland. It is in four volumes-which means it is four books. It can also be obtained in one or two-volume small type editions. I am going to ask you to send me a volume of Shakespeare's collected works. This will contain several plays—will it be considered several

books or one? I think the best solution is to allow books by weight!

I shall be glad if you will kindly bring with you at the time of the interview the following books :

1. Emil Ludwig's Bismarck.
2. Beal's[74] *Buddhist Records of the Western World*.[75]
3. Shakespeare's Works (in 8 vols. in red morocco binding)—Volume One.

All the above are in the big northern book-case in the library.

4. A copy of my letters to Indira.

Please have a copy of these letters sent to Mile. Haemmerlin at Bex whose address I have given above.

I should also like to have some washing soap and razor blades for a Gillette. I would prefer not to have the original Gillette blades. These were sent to me last time and were quite unsatisfactory. I should like to get the German ones this time.

I have enough cotton slivers but they are not good. If any fresh *punis* are received from Sabarmati please bring them. Otherwise do not bother.

I returned the two candlesticks as I was not using them. I do little reading at night as I retire early. Candles in this weather are not a success. They wilt and melt, and every additional article in a room means an additional repository for dust.

Our interview is due day after tomorrow, on the 31st. (It is the 29th today—I started this letter last night and am continuing it this morning). Our letters are so close to the interview that even a little delay in delivering them may make them overlap with the interview. There has been some slight delay this time and I am not sure if you will get this in time.

I have had no letter from Lado Bhabi. Please tell her not to write to me to the jail.

I am flourishing exceedingly. I wish all of you were as fit and well as I am.

Love to all.

Your loving son,
Jawahar

74. Published in 1926; English translation, 1927.
75. Samuel Beal (1825-1889); an English scholar of Chinese; wrote several books on Buddhism.
76. Published in 1884.

May 29th Thursday

Received letter from father last evening. There was a note added to it by Kamala. Answered the letter this morning. In the evening today the Supt. came over with my letter saying that it was very strongly worded and that there would be trouble if it was sent. He specially took exception to some greatly sarcastic remarks about the I.G. and to certain disparaging statements about the intellectuality of English offi-cials in India. I told him to cut off any part of the letter he disapproved of.

The Lucknow affair appears to be true-It was bad.

I have been getting up at about 3.30 a.m. for some days. This gives me a little more time in the mornings. I started newdr-weaving again from today.

May 31st Saturday

Interview day is a red letter day in jail—मुलाकात का दिन. How one looks forward to it and prepares for it. I took out a new blade today to get a good shave. The cleanest of my *kurtas* and dhoties were searched for, and generally there was a buzz of preparation!

Father came & mother & Kamala as usual. I missed Indu. Others outside were Nan, Betty, Bibi, Prabha, Purushottam Tandon, Tassadduq Sherwani, Uma Bhabi, Shama Bhai, Manzar Ali, Muzaffar & Waheed.

News of the outside world was serious enough. Dhanraj got badly hurt by the police lathis at Lucknow. The Viceroy has issued more ordinances![77] Picketing is a crime and so is asking people to resign from govt. service. The Congress has also extended the front. Let us hope this will go on to the bitter end. Nothing more unfortunate than a premature compromise could take place.

Some of the moderates are waking up, but some behave like old women-weeping & howling and feeling terribly oppressed about everything! *The Leader* is evidently among the weeping widows. If they have not got gumption enough to do anything why do they not shut up? It is enough to sicken one to hear them sing the praises of Irwin & Benn & Co! It is difficult to imagine a greater babe at the political

77. On 30 May 1930, the Governor-General issued the Unlawful Instigation Ordinance, which authorised local governments to 'notify' areas in which no one could instigate any person to defer payment of any tax or cess or other dues to the government, and the Anti-Intimidation Ordinance, which debarred the Congress from picketing.

game than the moderate in India. Nothing could condemn British rule in India more than the amazing product of it!

I doubt if I shall see father at the next interview—He is likely to be arrested-Tomorrow he is going out touring. Indeed there is no obvious reason why Kamala & Nan & Betty should also not be arrested. They are leaving no stone unturned to get themselves in jail. And now with picketing a crime it ought to be easy enough. Father was evidently worried at the prospect of women having to face the police lathi blows. After Lucknow it is perfectly clear that our benign govt. will not stop at anything.

Indu sent me a sweet letter. I could not get it as a letter as my fortnightly letter had already been received by me, but the Supdt. allowed me to read it in his office during the interview. The letter was from Naini Tal. She said how she wanted to come here on the 31st so as to be able to be present at the interview, but if our wishes could be realised then would we not have Swaraj immediately! She informed me gravely that a crowd of ten C.I.D. men followed her! Heigh-ho! She is getting the bitter taste of alien rule early enough. *June 1st Sunday*

My weight 122 lbs—2 lbs less than a fortnight ago and 8 lbs less than when I came to Naim prison.

My jail number is 10255.

June 3rd Tuesday

Slight change in programme from today. I do the weaving at 6.30 in the morning. Three baths a day!-at 6 a.m., 10.30 a.m. and 6.15 p.m.

June 5th Thursday

The Supt. informs me that the rules for A Class prisoners have arrived and, *inter alia*, they lay down that only one chair and one table will be allowed. So I shall have to part with a chair. It is really immaterial whether there is one chair or two or none at all. But it is annoying to have these pinpricks from day to day. I got rather put out and told the Supt. that he might as well put us in Class C and have done with these arguments &c.! I suppose he will gradually enlighten us about the rules. Probably wants to break it gently!

Yesterday a blind “habitual" prisoner was discharged after 13 years in prison. I do not know if he came blind or got blind in jail. It was rather touching to learn how prisoners who had come to know him well tried to help him. There were not many ways open to them. But still one gave him a pair of *chappals* which he had himself received that very day. Another gave him his *kurta* which was deposited with the jailer & so on. There appears to be more charity in jail than outside it.

There is a young C.O. here who has already spent 13½ years in prison. He has got a sentence of 25 years or so. He came at the age of 14. He says that his offence was that in the course of a game of marbles his companions cheated him, they had high words and a fight. Some bricks were hurled and a death occurred!

A beautiful bouquet of flowers came from home today.

June 7th Saturday

Since outside fruits & eatables were stopped there is little to eat apart from the two principal meals. I feel fairly hungry in the mornings and afternoons. In the morning we have just a cup of tea—a la rum—with lemon. In the afternoon till two days ago we had some *sattu* which mother had sent me. Having exhausted this we have to fall back on a bottle of orange. This will last for a few days and then we hope to make some lemon sherbet fresh in the afternoons if the lemons and sugar are available. Sometimes in the evenings we have some gram—चना This is good but the man who brings it is so filthy that it is hardly possible to swallow it. He brings it in a dirty cloth—Once he brought it in his cap! In spite of my desire to eat it I have to give it away. Once I was so hungry that I washed it and then swallowed it—of course all the taste and crispness had gone.

The result of this hunger is that I enjoy the two meals or at any rate I look forward to them. Otherwise I am sure I would have got thoroughly fed up with them.

June 8th Sunday

Beautiful flowers came with the *Bharat* today—and Kamala's Malabar mattress.

The warders and others say that the Collector had an accident when playing polo yesterday and died soon after.

Finished Spengler's *Decline of the West* Vol II today—curious book—fascinating at places, provoking, boring, heavy. Certainly it makes one think—but it is so heavy—wish a Frenchman had handled this theme. But perhaps none but a German could be so learned.

Also finished today Emil Ludwig's *Bismarck*.

June 14th Saturday

Two months completed! An interview day. Father came and mother, Kamala and little Tara—Outside Nan, Betty, Mahmud, Waheed, Ramkumar, Hari &c. Supdt. came a little before and told me that too many people used to come and stand outside and he did not want to encourage this. As a matter of fact there were fewer persons this time.

At father's and mother's insistence I took some fruit.

Father seemed to be worried—He is going to Bombay soon, Kamala probably with him. Betty going to Lahore.

Allahabad appears to be dull at present. Nothing important happening and so people wasting their time over trivial matters. Bombay going strong. Lucknow doing well—generally the fight is being kept up well all over the country.

Father had specially asked Supt. to advance the interview by 2 days to suit his convenience as he wanted to go to Agra—of course the subsequent interview to be two days latter. But the Supt. dared not allow this. He is about the most meek and gumptionless person I have come across. Evidently he is not given the slightest freedom of action, and he puts up with it!

He has managed to get back my yarn from Sabarmati and is keeping it in the office. He is afraid even of giving it to me to keep!

I have had no letter from home last week. We are so arranging that letters should come in between interviews and not too near them.

June 16th Monday

Weight today 121 lbs—one pound less than on 1st Junel and 9 lbs less than when I entered Naini Jail.

June 18th

Our old C.O. Ganesh has suddenly been promoted and made a *pukka*. This means that he leaves us—This is unfortunate. He was very decent and we had got used to each other.

I finished my roll of *newar* today.

June 25th 1930[78]

Nan dear,
It is about a month today since I received my last letter from home. Two weeks ago, when the time came for another letter to be sent to me, father telephoned to say that as there was an interview soon it would be better to write in between two interviews. This was certainly better. But no such letter has come and so I have decided to take the initiative myself. I suppose father is away and is fully occupied. He told me last time that he and Kamala were going to Bombay—probably he is there and is busy enough. Or it may be that he wrote, but letters have a strange way of disappearing in these days!

What am I to write about? Life in prison is not meant to be exciting—it is about as uneventful as the existence of the average turnip—and if some exciting event does take place once in a while, the veil of mystery must not be removed and no whisper of it must percolate to the outside world. Inside the jail—and outside—the massive gates and the high walls of the jail separate two worlds. Almost one might say that it is like one living world and the hereafter—but few, if any, want to rush to the hereafter, and none love the jail so much as to wish to remain here. Two worlds! You could also compare the two to the animal and the vegetable kingdoms. The object of jail appears to be first to remove such traces of humanity as a man might possess and then to subdue even the animal element in him so that ultimately he might become the perfect vegetable! Soil-bound, cut off from the world and its activity, nothing to look forward to, blind obedience the only 'virtue' that is instilled, and spirit considered the great sin—is it any wonder that the prisoner approximates to the plant? Of course this does not apply to the likes of me who come for short periods, but the others who spend years and years here, wherein do they differ, I wonder, from the plant ? And if after long years they are let off how do they feel in the strange new world of bustle and activity?

78. Vijayalakshmi Pandit Papers, N.M.M.L.

Ours is a different world in jail and we worship different gods. Above all we bow down to the Great God—Red Tape. Mighty and long-limbed is he, red like Ganesha, and all pervading and slow of movement. His scriptures multiply exceedingly and are greater and weightier than these scriptures of all other gods put together. His priests and acolytes have strange signs to communicate with each other and a mysterious language which ignores ordinary usage and grammar—and from his coils there is little hope of escape.

Then we have our Totems and Taboos. The high priests and dignitaries of the Great Red God are the Totems and none shall take their name in vain, and the Taboos are so many, how can I enumerate them! And indeed I may offend against one of their number even by endeavouring to give a covering of ink to their airy substance.

What then shall I write? Nothing, I am sure, would please the Great God R.T. better than if I were to write to you that every day in the early misty morning I get up and shout out 'Hallelujah!' to it and give thanks that India is under its benign rule, and further shout out from an overburdened heart my gratitude for its innumerable blessings! But even to please the G.G.R.T. I cannot write this as I do no such thing. Indeed to my recollection I have never shouted 'Hallelujah' and there is little chance of my beginning with the aforesaid God. Nor have I an uncontrollable desire to praise and laud him for anything at all.

I do not shout 'Hallelujah' in the early misty morning, but I get up even before the mists come and when the starlight hardly gives any sign of the coming morning. You will be surprised to learn that I often get up at 3.30 in the morning—I am myself amazed at this when I think of it for I have never been guilty of it before. But jail is responsible for this sudden conversion to these unearthly hours. I like the early morning hours. And anyhow I have to retire early at night specially since the rains commenced. So I get up when all the world is asleep, and feel very superior about it. And after a little quiet in the morning, I spend a strenuous day strictly according to time-table. You could almost take your time from my work and movements. I read and write and spin and weave and run and walk—indeed I am always running a race with time. Why this unseemly haste, you will ask, as if the Devil was after me? Purposely I do so to escape any approximation to the plant. I want to create tension, to live in it. Perhaps it is opposed to the Indian mentality and outlook. There is little enough of tension here. But I believe in it as a method of keeping in form and as an incentive to continuous effort. And that is my way

of keeping myself in training, so that when I bid *au revoir* to this delectable spot I may get out as a human animal, and not as a plant, and I may speed my way like an arrow from the bow.

For some weeks I have done less and less reading. I found that after some reading it was difficult to concentrate and my mind wandered. So I spent more time on spinning on my *charkha* and weaving *newar*. I found this, and specially spinning, soothing to the nerves. Both spinning and weaving are semi-automatic occupations and allow one to think gently at the same time. To some extent the effect is similar to having a pipe in your mouth! I spent as much as four hours a day in spinning and weaving and sometimes even five—more time being given to spinning than to weaving. Latterly the weaving has automatically stopped as I finished my last roll and I am waiting for a fresh one to be fixed up. I have woven about 150 feet of *newar*, not very good and not long enough for a bed. But perhaps it will be enough for Tara's bed or for the littlest one. You had better take it when you come next.

I have not got many cotton slivers left for spinning. Last Sunday I received a little packet which from the look of it must have come from Apurna Devi of Benares. These are very good but they do not take me far. Please thank her. I believe Kamala wrote to Mira bai[79] or some one else in Sabarmati for *punis*. If a fresh stock has not arrived please send a reminder.

I suppose I have to hold you responsible for the beautiful flowers that came last Sunday. They are delightful and make my cell look bright and gay—a most unbecoming thing in jail. The Great Red God is sure to disapprove of this frivolity and colour. Please therefore do not send too many flowers or too frequently lest the Gods get jealous and intervene. Send a few every Sunday when the *Bharat* comes. If flowers have been given during the interview on the preceding Saturday then no fresh supply is necessary on the Sunday following.

Besides, do not spoil my admiration for them by an *embarras de richesse*. I remember the first bouquet that you brought. It had roses. For a fortnight I clung to it although it dried and shrivelled and its petals fell. But I tended it carefully even in this poor shrunken condition and gathered up its fallen petals. I had not realised till

79. Mira Ben (Madeleine Slade) (b. 1892); daughter of Admiral Slade; a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi; lived at Sabarmati Ashram for many years; participated in the civil disobedience movement; arrested along with Mahatma Gandhi in August 1942 and detained with him at the Aga Khan Vs palace; now living at Ebreichsdorf near Vienna.

then how charming even dried up rose-petals can be. I have those petals still. And now, with more and more flowers coming, the influence of riches has corrupted me and I throw away dried bouquets in a lordly, plutocratic way as soon as fresh flowers come. Do not spoil me further!

Next Saturday—June 28th—is my interview day. I do not know if father is likely to be here then or Kamala—I hope neither of them will change their programme or interfere with their work just to have half an hour or so with me in the Superintendent's office. If he and Kamala are returning in the ordinary course by Saturday or a day or two later, then of course they will come to see me on any day convenient to them. If, however, they are staying away, then there is no reason why we should not take advantage of the interview day. I presume mother is in Allahabad and I suppose you are here also. Betty was to go to Lahore—I do not know if she is still there. Indu perhaps has returned and Chand. So that you and mother and Indu can fix up the interview next Saturday morning. You might telephone to the jail.

If father is still in Bombay send this letter to him and send my love to every one in Bombay—Bombay has indeed justified its motto: *Urbo primis in India*.

I asked for some books last time—only two of these came. Kindly send on, or give at the time of the interview, the following:

1. Emil Ludwig's *Kaiser Wilhelm*[80]
2. Emil Ludwig's *Types & Characters*[81] (I am not quite sure of the name)
3. Shakespeare's Works, Vols 2 and 3 (Red morocco edition)
4. Fenner Brockway: *Crime & Punishment*[82] (Some such name)

You will find all these in the big northern book-case in the library. Emil Ludwig's books somewhere near the lower shelves in the middle. Brockway's to the right fairly high up.

I should also like to have two or three books for some students who are here. I would suggest a book on economics (light brown binding)—I forget the name of the author—it is in the big book-case I think. Also books of Ruskin: *Sesame & Lilies*,[83] Unto This Last,[84] etc.

My letter seems to have grown! I hope you are well and all the children are fit. As for me, I am as fit as a fiddle—though why a

80. Published in 1926; English translation, 1927.
81. *Genius and Character,* published in German in 1923.
82. *A New Way with Crime*, published in 1928.
83. Published in 1865.
84. Published in 1862.

fiddle nobody knows. I have changed our meal times and contents. Between Narmada Prasad Singh and myself we used to get two rations of ordinary Indian food. We now take one of these rations and one of what is called the European ration. In the early morning I consume a large quantity of *dallia* and some toast-about midday we have rice etc., and in the evening at 6.30, toast, dal and vegetable. This suits me much better than the previous arrangement and I am very much afraid I shall fatten. The European ration is supposed to include 3 annas worth of meat daily. I have made a present of this to the jail!

At the last interview mother brought some mangoes and other things although I had previously requested that nothing eatable should be brought. It was difficult and rather churlish of me to refuse, so I took the mangoes. But I definitely do not want to take any eatables from outside. The very idea upsets me. This is not a pledge or anything of the kind. When I feel like having anything I shall send for it. Meanwhile kindly ask mother not to send me or bring anything to eat. Basketfuls of food and fruit get on my nerves.

We have had a little rain, though not much. At night it drives one indoors to sleep and that is not usually pleasant. But it is pleasant to listen to the pattering of the rain on the roof and to breathe fresh earth soaked with rain. We have simple joys in jail! I have been reading some extracts from Paul Verlaine :[85]

O doux bruit de la pluie
Par terre et sur les toits!
Pour un coeur qui s'ennuie,
Oh! le chant de la pluie!

But do not imagine that there is much 'ennui' about me. I keep myself too busy. Three times a day I bathe. It is pleasant to do so in this weather and, besides, my weaving shed might well be compared at times to an efficient steambath room. As I weave I melt away—and a bath becomes necessary.

Send my love to Betty—Ranjit I suppose is still away—kisses to the kids. Love

Your loving brother,
Jawahar

I hope you wrote to Higginbotham thanking him for the New Testament he sent to me to the jail.

85. (1844-1896): French lyric poet.

June 25 Wednesday

Naini Prison has been stirred to its depths—suddenly, without previous warning a great movement gathered strength challenging authority; within a day it spread all over; equally suddenly it collapsed! On Sunday the 22nd some of the habituals started a hunger strike on the ground, mainly, that the long term prisoners are not now let off as they used to be after ten or 14 years but have to go on 20 or even 25 years. No hope of discharge, why thus should they live? Food was another grievance, specially the difference between European food and theirs.

By Monday morning this hunger strike spread to other habituals and then to casuals. By Monday evening almost the whole jail was involved. There was no work done in jail on Monday except the pumps which was specially permitted by the hunger strikers and some of the kitchens. The food that was wasted was sent to the cattle.

On Tuesday morning complete hunger strike—no kitchens working—no other work. Even the C.Ws and C.Os informed the authorities that although they were prepared to do other ordinary work they must not be asked to beat the other prisoners. The politicals joined the strike merely in sympathy. It was difficult to eat when everybody else was fasting. I was rather put out as to what I should do. The action of the habituals was precipitate and I had no definite knowledge of their case. I sympathised with them a little certainly but I certainly felt I could not follow their lead. So Narmada Prasad and I continued feeding.

On Tuesday afternoon large numbers of police and warders & the Dt. Magte. turn up and separate about 60 of the habituals and put them in cells. Immediately the strike collapses! Others ask for food and get it. The ringleaders have apparently been fettered and are likely to be punished. It is not clear if they have fed yet or not.

Strange demonstration of the power of the prisoners to put an end to jail administrations by unity and passive resistance; also of difficulty of keeping this unity, and want of will power. The object aimed at did not really interest any but the lifers and long term prisoners. The others joined partly in sympathy and partly in terror.

Today everything is normal.

I have written to Nan today.

June 28th Saturday

Nan's reply came yesterday. This morning had interview with father, mother, Kamala & Indu. Outside Betty, Bidhan Roy, Abul Kalam Azad & Hardikar. Was surprised to learn that Hardikar not been arrested so far. Father and rest of family returned from Bombay only yesterday. Meeting of the Working Committee today—Hardikar had been taken on it too.

Purushottam Tandon, Shiva Prasad Gupta and Narendra Deva[86] arrested and sentenced to 3 months R.I. in Basti!

Father's account of Bombay most comforting. Some attempts being made to approach him indirectly on behalf of govt.—Hope he will have nothing to do with them.

Indu does not want to go to Convent any more—Have told her she need not go.

Nan gone off to Bombay this morning.

July 7th Monday

A hectic week after two and a half months of quiet seclusion. Suddenly on June 30th Monday we heard early in the morning that father & Mahmud had been arrested and brought to Naini Prison.[87] Soon after they came to our barrack. There was no room for them here but the other possible places were worse. So the Supt. put them here. The next day was their trial and they were both sentenced to 6 months S.I. Since they have come I have hardly done any reading or spinning—chiefly because there is hardly any place to sit down and do so. Father shares my cell with me and my bathroom, and Mahmud shares Narmada Prasad's. Each of our cells is about 11 ft square. One of these is our pantry, baggage room, bathroom, lavatory—It is cram-full—The other is also full of various things. When it rains, as it often does, it is not possible to sit or sleep outside and all manner of difficulties arise. The Supt. is having two separate sheds put up to serve

86. Acharya Narendra Dev (1889-1956); born at Sitapur in U.P.; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; member, Working Committee, 1936; president, All India Kisan Sabha in 1939 and 1942; resigned from the Congress in 1948; leading member of the Socialist Party of India and the Praja Socialist Party; Vice-Chancellor, Lucknow University, and later, Banaras Hindu University.

87. They - were Acting President and Secretary respectively of the Working Committee which was declared an unlawful association by the U.P. Government on 30 June 1930.

as a joint bathroom and lavatory. This would relieve the congestion, but slightly. Father has suggested that a verandah might be added. This would solve many difficulties. The Supt. appeared to be partly agreeable but there is the I.G., who it is said is going to inspect our prison soon! Meanwhile a *choldari* has been put up for two of us to sleep in case of rain. The place is horribly uncomfortable for father—I don't think he has ever had to put up with this lack of room and awful congestion—not even in Lucknow jail or Naini Tal jail.

A good part of the day is spent in cleaning the rooms, vessels &c., laying the table for meals, clearing up, &c. &c. Naturally all of us try to be of some service to father. At his age to have to put up with these discomforts and inconveniences and to give up many lifelong habits is a great trial.

So far as food is concerned we have an abundance and even a superfluity of everything now. Plenty of fruit and other things come for father. Narmada Prasad is in his element supervising the cooking arrangements and even cooking himself. He spends the whole morning and forenoon over it.

On Saturday July 5th father had an interview with mother, Nan, Betty & Indu. In future we propose to have interviews on alternate Saturdays.

My weight on July 2nd was 118 lbs, another drop, this time of 3 lbs in two weeks. I have lost 12 lbs in all since coming here. I feel fit however and am glad of the reduction. I am afraid that now I shall go up in weight as the exercise is much less and food is richer. I am trying to keep up my mile run in the mornings. The rest has gone.

July 14th Monday

I complete three months today.

On Saturday 12th had interview with mother, Kamala, Nan, Betty & Indu. Exciting news. Nan's arrest imminent—however she has not been so far arrested. Yesterday, Sunday, Sundarlal,[88] R. M. Mukerji, Madan, Upadhyava, Chandrakant Malaviya, Keshav & Padmakant arrested and brought here. There was a big crowd outside. Some people located our barrack from outside and climbed some trees which overlooked the jail wall. Sundarlal &c.'s case is going on today.

88. Sunder Lai (b. 1886); participated in the freedom movement; president, U.P. Provincial Political Conference, 1930; vice-president, U.P.P.C.C., 1931-36; president, All India Peace Council, 1959-63.

The I.G. descended on the prison today like a messiah or rather a prophet of doom whose advent has been long heralded. It appears that the "Governor-in-Council" is agitated about my *charkha*! If spin and send out my yarn perhaps this may have a fictitious value and may serve to excite people. During the last two months there have been overlapping and contradictory orders about my spinning. The matter is again going to be considered by the G-in-Council!

July 15th Tuesday

Letter from Kamala with a note from Ranjit & Nan attached.

28.7.30[89]

My dear Bapuji,
It is a delight to write to you again after a long interval even though it be from one prison to another. I would like to write at length but I am afraid I cannot do so at present. I shall therefore confine myself to the matter in issue.

Dr. Sapru and Mr. Jayakar came yesterday and had a long interview with father and me.[90] Today they are coming again. As they have already put us in possession of all the facts and have shown us your note[91] and letter, we felt that we could discuss the matter between us two and arrive at some decision even without waiting for the second interview. Of course, if anything new turns up at the second interview we are prepared to vary any previously formed opinion. Our conclusions for the time being are given in a note which we are giving to Dr. Sapru and Mr. Jayakar. This is more or less brief but it will I hope give you some idea of how our minds are working. I might add that father and I are in full agreement in regard to what our attitude should be.

89. J. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.
90. See the following item.
91. On 23 and 24 July 1930, Jayakar and Sapru met Mahatma Gandhi in Yeravda prison with the government's approval. Mahatma Gandhi gave them a note stating his conditions for negotiating with the government. These were: the Round Table Conference should discuss safeguards for the transitional period only, with the right for anyone to raise the issue of independence; civil disobedience would be called off but peaceful picketing and salt manufacture would continue; all satyagrahi prisoners should be released, confiscated properties restored, fines refunded and dismissed officers reinstated.

I must confess that your point (1) regarding the 'Constitutional Issue' has not won me over. Nor does father fancy it. I do not see how it fits in with our position or our pledges or with the realities of today. Father and I entirely agree with you that we can be "no parties to any truce which would undo the position at which we have arrived today". It is because of this that the fullest consideration is essential before any final decision is arrived at. I must confess that I do not see any appreciable advance yet from the other side and I greatly fear a false or a weak move on our part. I am expressing myself moderately. For myself, I delight in warfare. It makes me feel that I am alive. The events of the last few months in India have gladdened my heart and have made me prouder of Indian men, women and even children (!) than I have ever been. But I realise that most people are not warlike and like peace and so I try hard to suppress myself and take a peaceful view!

May I congratulate you on the new India that you have created by your magic touch? What the future will bring I know not, but the past has made life worth living and our prosaic existence has developed something of epic greatness in it. Sitting here in Naini Jail I have pondered on the wonderful efficacy of nonviolence as a weapon and have become a greater convert to it than ever before. I hope you are not dissatisfied with the response of the country to the nonviolence creed. Despite occasional lapses the country has stuck to it wonder—fully-certainly far more grimly than I had expected.

I am afraid I am still somewhat of a protestant regarding your 11 points.[92] Not that I disagree with any one of them. Indeed they are important. Yet I do not think they take the place of independence. But I certainly agree with you that we should have "nothing to do with anything that would not give the nation the power to give immediate effect to them."

92. these were published in *Young India*, 30 January 1930, and later communicated to the Viceroy. The points were: total prohibition; reduction of the exchange ratio to ls.4d.: reduction of the land revenue by at least 50%; abolition of the salt tax; reduction of the military expenditure by at least 30%; reduction of high salaries; protective tariff on foreign cloth; passage of the Coastal Tariff Reservation Bill; discharge of all political prisoners save those condemned for murder or threat to murder and withdrawal of all political prosecutions and abrogation of repressive laws; abolition of the C.I.D.; free issue of licences for firearms.

Father has been unwell for the last 8 days ever since he took an injection. He has grown very weak. The long interview last night tired him out.

Yours affly.,
Jawaharlal

Please do not be anxious about me.
It is only a passing trouble and
I hope to get over it in two or
three days. Love

Motilal Nehru

We have had another talk with Dr. Sapru and Mr. Jayakar. At their desire we have made some alterations in our note but they do not make any vital difference. Our position is quite clear and I have no doubt whatever about it. I hope you will appreciate it.

MEMORANDUM TO T. B. SAPRU AND M. R. JAYAKAR[93]

We have had long conversations with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. M. R. Jayakar and they have informed us of the various events which led to their seeking interviews with Gandhiji and with us in our respective prisons, in order, if possible, to terminate or suspend the present hostilities between the people of India and the British Government. We appreciate their earnest desire for peace and would gladly explore all avenues which might lead to it, provided that such a peace was an honourable one for the people of India who have already sacrificed so much in the national struggle, and meant freedom for our country. As representatives of the Congress we have no authority to alter in any material particular its resolutions, but we might be prepared, under certain circumstances, to recommend a variation in details, provided the fundamental position taken up by the Congress was accepted. We are however faced with an initial difficulty. Both of us are in prison and for some time past have been cut off from the outside world and the national movement. One of us, for nearly three months, was not allowed any daily newspaper. Gandhiji has also been in prison for several months. Indeed, almost all our colleagues of the original Working Committee of the Congress are in prison and the Committee itself has been declared an illegal organisation. Of the 360 members of the A.I.C.C., which is the final authority in the

93. A.I.C.C. File No. 26/1930, pp. 77-79, N.M.M.L.

National Congress organisation, subject only to the full session of the Congress, probably 75% of the members are in prison. Cut off as we are from the national movement, we cannot take upon ourselves the responsibility of taking a definite step without the fullest consultation with our colleagues, and specially with Gandhiji.

As regards the Round Table Conference, we feel that it is unlikely to achieve anything unless an agreement on all vital matters is previously arrived at. We attach great importance to such an agreement, which must be definite, and there must be no room for misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. M. R. Jayakar have made it very clear, and Lord Irwin has also stated in his published letter to them,[94] that they are acting on their own behalf and cannot commit him or his government. It is however possible that they may succeed in paving the way to such an agreement between the Congress and the British Government.

As we are unable to suggest any definite terms for a truce without previously consulting Gandhiji and other colleagues, we refrain from discussing the suggestions made by Sir Tej Bahadur and Mr. M. R. Jayakar and by Gandhiji in a note of his dated 23rd July which has been shown to us. We might add however that we agree generally with Mr. Gandhi's 2nd and 3rd points. But we should like to discuss the details of these points and specially his point 1 with him and others before we can finally make our suggestions.

We suggest that this note of ours be treated as confidential and be shown only to such persons as see Gandhiji's note dated 23rd July 1930.

Motilal Nehru
Jawaharlal Nehru

August 1st Friday

Long gap since last entry. And yet there was plenty to record. But I am growing lazier and lazier and all my time-tables and programmes have gone to pieces. I have not been feeling up to the mark recently and without doing much during the day, feel tired out in the evening. Father has had a bad week or ten days of fever and other troubles—ever since he took an injection on July 21st. He has just got over these troubles.

94. Dated 16 July 1930.

Today is Kamala's birthday—31st according to the Roman calendar. Acc. to *Samvat* it was on the 21st July. From all accounts she has done splendid work outside since my arrest, and work and responsibility have trained her to face critical situations. She does not shirk anything and is quick of action. Father apparently was considerably impressed by her work before he was arrested. Her nomination to the Working Committee by Vallabhbhai has apparently been disliked by some people. There is talk of petticoat govt.!

I had my last interview on Saturday 26th July. Kamala, mother, Nan, Betty, Ranjit & Indu present. On 30th I received a letter from Kamala. She is vastly agitated at the so-called 'peace moves'. There must be no peace she says except on the basis of Purna Swarajya.

Sapru & Jayakar have had two long interviews with father and me on 27th and 28th July. Lot of time wasted in listening to what Irwin said & Jinnah did and Fazl-i-Husain intrigued. Nothing important or hopeful. Bapu's note disappointing although it is clear that even that will not be acceptable to the Viceroy. We have not suggested anything. Have said that without full consultation with colleagues, specially Gandhiji, we cannot make any suggestions. We have not committed ourselves in any way although we have hinted at a stiff attitude. I have been worried however for last two or three days. I wish we had definitely stopped all talk of 'peace'. It is harmful and diverts attention. There is no peace anywhere in sight.

Sunderlal, the three Malaviyas (Chandrakant, Kesho & Padmakant), Mukerji and Madan have been transferred to Fyzabad.

The Handia salt people have also been sent away to various jails.

My weight yesterday, 31st—118 lbs.

I have hardly done, any spinning and little reading recently.

August 3rd Sunday

Maharaj Singh visits us—Finding father looking very poorly and pulled down suggests that he (Maharaj Singh) might on his own account write to the Governor strongly recommending his release. Father does not like the idea but tells him that he can do just what he pleases.

August 4th

Maharaj Singh again with fruit and flowers and chess board and even playing cards! The Commissioner encouraging frivolity in prison.

August 9th Saturday

My interview: Mother, Kamala, Nan, Betty, Indu, Ranjit, Uma Bhabi & Shammi.95

Yesterday—Friday—Sapru came again with the Viceroy's reply.[96] Says Viceroy has no objection to our going to Yeravda but he and his Council cannot permit our meeting Vallabhbhai, Abul Kalam &c. as these people are still carrying on the campaign against govt. Sapru wanted to know if we were prepared to go to Yeravda. We told him we had and could have no objection to going to see Gandhiji but under the circumstances there was no chance of us three deciding anything. The arrest of Vallabhbhai, Malaviyaji, Sherwani &c. in Bombay had not improved matters.[97] We asked Sapru to make the position quite clear to the Viceroy. Sapru however said that there would be no harm in our meeting Gandhiji almost immediately.

August 10th Sunday

The Nawab of Chhatari[98] visits the jail and comes to our barrack also. Puts on a long face when talking to father.

We are informed at 5.30 p.m. that we will have to leave by special train for Poona at 9 p.m. We claim a parting interview with the family.

August 11th

In special train—rushing past big stations—stopping at small ones. Still news of us travels ahead of us and crowds gather both at the stations we stop and those where we do not stop.

Reach Kirkee at 11 p.m.—Fast journey.

August 12th

Kept in separate barrack—not allowed to meet Bapu because of some instructions sent by Sapru! Apparently he did not want us to meet unless he was present to chaperon. Father very annoyed at this.

95. Shyam Kumari Khan (b. 1904); daughter of Shamlal and Uma Nehru; practised law in Allahabad High Court, 1928-37; member, Rajva Sabha, 1963-68.
96. Dated 2 August 1930.
97. They were arrested on 2 August 1930.
98. Muhammad Ahmed Said Khan, Nawab of Chhatari (b. 1888;, Minister of Industries, U.P., 1923-25; Home Member, U.P., 1926-33; Prime Minister Hyderabad, 1947.

August 12th-19th

In Yeravda Prison

On 13th we move to Bapu's barrack—the European Ward. Conversations with Sapru & Jayakar, on 13th, 14th & 15th.

Leave Yeravda 19th night 9.20 p.m. Taken to special Governor's siding in Kirkee station—Special train—Luxurious tourist car.

On 16th father gets high fever with shivering, brings up some blood with his sputum. Our departure delayed by two days because of this.

August 15th, 1930

TO T. B. SAPRU AND M. R. JAYAKAR

Dear Friends,

We are deeply grateful to you for having undertaken the duty of trying to effect a peaceful settlement between the British Government and the Congress. After having perused the correspondence between yourselves and H. E. the Viceroy and having had the benefit of protracted talks with you and having discussed among ourselves, we have come to the conclusion that the time is not yet ripe for securing a settlement honourable for our country. Marvellous as has been the mass "awakening" during the past five months and great as have been the sufferings of the people among all grades and classes representing different creeds we feel that the sufferings have been neither sustained enough or large enough for the immediate attainment of the end.

Needless to mention that we do not in any way share either your view or the Viceroy's that civil disobedience has harmed the country or that it is ill-timed or that it is unconstitutional. English history teems with instances of bloody revolts whose praises Englishmen have sung unstintingly and taught us to do likewise. It therefore ill becomes the Viceroy or any intelligent Englishman to condemn a revolt that is in intention, and that has overwhelmingly remained in execution, peaceful. But we have no desire to quarrel with the condemnation, whether official or unofficial, of the present civil disobedience campaign. The wonderful mass response to the movement is, we hold, its sufficient justification. What is, however, to the point here is the fact that we gladly make common cause with you in wishing, if it is at all possible, to stop or suspend civil disobedience. It can be no pleasure to us needlessly to expose the men, women and even children of our country to imprisonment, lathi charges and worse. You will

99. J. N. Papers. N.M.M.L. Original in Jawaharlal's hand with changes by Mahatma Gandhi. These changes are shown by italics.

therefore believe us when we assure you, and through you the Viceroy, that we would leave no stone unturned to explore any and every channel for an honourable peace. But we are free to confess that as yet we see no such sign on the horizon. We notice no symptom of conversion of the English official world to the view that it is India's men and women who must decide what is best for India. We distrust the pious declarations of good intentions, often well-meant, of officials. The age-long exploitation by the English of the people of this ancient land has rendered them almost incapable of seeing the ruin—moral, economic and political—of our country, which this exploitation has brought about. They cannot persuade themselves to see that the one thing needful for them to do is to get off our backs and do some reparation for the past wrongs by helping us to grow out of the dwarfing process that has gone on for a century of British domination. But we know that you and some of our learned countrymen think differently. You believe that a conversion has taken place, at any rate sufficient to warrant a participation in the proposed conference. In spite, therefore, of the limitation we are labouring under we would gladly cooperate with you to the extent of our ability. The following is the utmost response it is possible for us, circumstanced as we are, to make to your friendly endeavour.

1. We feel that the language used by the Viceroy in the reply given to your letter about the proposed conference is too vague to enable us to assess its value in terms of the national demand framed last year at Lahore, nor are we in a position to say anything authoritative without reference to a properly constituted meeting of the Working Committee of the Congress and, if necessary, to the A.I.C.C. But we can say that for us individually no solution will be satisfactory unless,

(i) It recognises, in as many words, the right of India to secede at will from the British Empire;

(ii) It gives *to India* complete national *government responsible to her people*, including the control of defence forces and economic control, and covers all the eleven points raised in Gandhiji's letter to the Viceroy; and

(iii) It gives to India the right to refer, *if necessary*, to an independent tribunal such British claims, concessions and the like, including the so-called public debt of India, as may seem, to the national government, to be unjust or not in the interest of the people of India.

NOTE : Such adjustments as may be necessitated in the interest of India during the transference of power, to be determined by India's chosen representatives.

2. If the foregoing appears to be feasible to the British Government and a satisfactory declaration is made to that effect, we should recommend to the Working Committee the advisability of calling off civil disobedience, that is to say, disobedience of certain laws for the sake of disobedience, but peaceful picketing of foreign cloth and liquor will be continued unless the government themselves can enforce prohibition of liquor and foreign cloth. The manufacture of salt by the people will have to be continued and the penal clauses of the Salt Act should not be enforced. There will be no raids on government or private salt depots.

3. Simultaneously with the calling off of civil disobedience,

(a) all satyagrahi prisoners and other political prisoners, convicted or under trial, who have not been guilty of violence or incitement to violence, should be ordered to be released, and

(b) properties confiscated under the Salt Act and Press Act and Revenue Act and the like should be restored, and

(c) fines and securities taken from convicted satyagrahis or under the Press Act should be refunded;

(d) all officers, including village officers, who have resigned or who may have been dismissed during the civil disobedience movement and who may desire to rejoin government service should be reinstated.

NOTE : The foregoing sub-clauses refer also to the noncooperation period.

(e) All Viceregal ordinances should be repealed.

4. The question of the composition of the proposed conference, and the Congress being represented at it, can only be decided after the foregoing preliminaries are satisfactorily settled.

Yours sincerely,
Motilal Nehru
M. K. Gandhi
Sarojini Naidu
Vallabhbhai Patel
Jairamdas Doulatram
Syed Mahmud
Jawaharlal Nehru

A NOTE[100]

On the 16th August Gandhiji wrote a letter to Mr. Jayakar asking him to give a copy of our joint letter of August 15th confidentially to Mr. Abul Kalam Azad and also to communicate it to Dr. Ansari,

100. Clearly written after 16 August 1930. J. N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Vithalbhai Patel. In the course of the interview or conference on 15th August, Messrs Sapru and Jayakar were requested by the Congressmen present to publish their joint letter as well as all the other papers and communications relating to our interviews. They agreed to do so after the Viceroy had seen them. They proposed to see the Viceroy on or about the 25th August. It was stated that publication might take place about the end of the month. In case, however, the Viceroy was prepared to agree to the conditions laid down in the joint letter, publication might be delayed for a few days pending an interview' with us.

August 20th

En route—huge crowds at some stations specially at Harda, Itarsi, Sohagpur. Train dashes by—accidents narrowly averted. Reach Naini at 2.30 a.m. on 21st.

August 22nd

My weight	118½ lbs
Father's	133½ lbs

August 23rd Saturday

My interview with mother, Kamala, Bhai Sahab, Nan, Betty, Indu, Bappi, Ranjit & Chand.

Father examined by Nilratan Sarkar,[101] Bidhan, Ansari &c.

August 24th

Father again visited by Nilratan Sarkar, Bidhan &c.

August 25th

Father examined by official medical Board.

31.8.30[102]

My dear Bapuji,
I enclose our joint note for you.

101. (1861-1943); a leading physician of Calcutta, and for some time Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University.
102. J. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.

Father is improving slowly. Yesterday was the first day when he had no blood in his sputum. But today again there was a trace of it. So we are not out of the wood yet. Day before yesterday he suddenly felt rather irritated at talks of his release and efforts being made for it. He was so uncomfortable about it that he sent the following telegram:

> Lord Irwin, Simla.
>
> I understand efforts are being made to secure my early release for reasons of health. While appreciating kind intentions prompting such efforts I wish to say that I do not approve of them. I seek no favour or clemency.

I take it that there is no question of his release now before his term expires.

The burdens on Kamala are increasing and she takes them very seriously and conscientiously. I should not be surprised if within the week she and my sisters were arrested. Hansa Mehta[103] having gone[104] there is no reason why Kamala and others should not also be arrested. The picketing ordinance has now been applied to Allahabad. I hope you are keeping well.

Love

Yours affly.,

Jawaharlal

Syed Mahmud sends his respects, regards and love. Hope you are taking fruits now.

31st August 1930[105]

NOTE FOR MAHATMA GANDHI

We have had further interviews with Mr. M. R. Jayakar and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru yesterday and today, and have had the advantage of long talks With them. They have given us a copy of the letter, dated August 28, addressed to them by His Excellency Lord Irwin. In this letter, it is stated clearly that Lord Irvin regards discussion on the basis

103. (b. 1897); wife of Dr. Jivraj Mehta; Vice-Chancellor, University of Baroda, 1949-58; President, All-India Women's Conference, 1946; member, Constituent Assembly, 1947-50; Indian representative on U.N. Human Rights Commission, 1947-52.
104. She was arrested on 30 August 1930.
105. J. N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

of the proposals contained in our joint letter of August 15th to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar as impossible, and under the circumstances, he rightly concludes their efforts have failed to produce any results. This joint letter, as you know, was written after a full consideration by the signatories to it and represented the utmost they were prepared to go in their individual capacities. We stated there that no solution would be satisfactory unless it fulfilled certain vital conditions, and that a satisfactory declaration to that effect was made by the British Government. If such a declaration was made, we would be prepared to recommend to the Working Committee the desirability of calling off civil disobedience, provided simultaneously certain steps indicated in our letter were taken by the British Government in India.

It was only after a satisfactory settlement of all these preliminaries that the question of the composition of the proposed London conference and of the Congress being represented at it could be decided. Lord Irwin, in his letter, considers even a discussion on the basis of these proposals as impossible. Under the circumstances, there is or can be no common ground between us. Quite apart from the contents, the tone of the letter and the recent activities of the British Government in India clearly indicate that the government has no desire for peace. The proclamation of the Working Committee as an illegal body in the Delhi Province soon after a meeting of it was announced to be held there, and the subsequent arrest of most of its members can have that meaning and no other.[106] We have no complaint against these or other arrests or other activities of the government, uncivilised and barbarous as we consider some of those to be. We welcome them. But, we feel, we are justified in pointing out that a desire for peace and an aggressive attack on the very body, which is capable of giving peace and with which it is sought to treat, do not go well together. The proscription of the Working Committee all over India and the attempt to prevent its meetings must necessarily mean that the national struggle must go on, whatever the consequences, and that there will be no possibility of peace, for those who may have some authority to represent the people of India will be spread out in British prisons all over India.

Lord Irwin's letter and the action taken by the British Government make it plain that the efforts of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar have been in vain. Indeed, the letter and some of the explanations

106. The Working Committee was declared unlawful in Delhi on 25 August, and its members were arrested on 27 August 1930.

that had been given to us take us back, in some respects, even from the position that was previously taken. In view of the great hiatus that exists between our position and Lord Irwin's, it is hardly necessary to go into details, but we should like to point out to you certain aspects of the letter. The first part of the letter is practically a repetition of his speech to the Legislative Assembly and of the phrases used in his letter dated July 16, addressed to Mr. Jayakar and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. As we pointed out in our joint letter, this phraseology is too vague for us to assess its value. It may be made to mean anything or nothing. In our joint letter we have made it clear that a complete national government responsible to the people of India, including control over the defence forces and economic control, must be recognised as India's immediate demand. There is no question of what are usually called safeguards or any delay. Adjustments there necessarily must be for the transference of power, and in regard to these we stated that they were to be determined by India's chosen representatives.

As regards India's right of secession at will from the British Empire and her right to refer British claims and concessions to an independent tribunal, all that we are told is that the conference will be a free conference and any point can be raised there. This is no advance on the previous statement made. We are further told, however, that if the British Government in India were definitely faced with the possibility of the former question being raised, Lord Irwin would say they were not to treat it as an open question. All they could do was to inform the Secretary of State of our intention to raise the question at the conference.

As regards the other proposition, we are told that Lord Irwin could only entertain the idea of a few individual financial transactions being subjected for scrutiny. While such scrutiny may take place in individual cases, its scope will have to extend to the whole field of British claims including, as we have stated, the so-called public debt of India. We consider both these questions as of vital importance and a previous agreement on the lines suggested in our joint letter seems to us essential.

Lord Irwin's reference to the release of prisoners is very restricted and unsatisfactory. He is unable to give an assurance that all of the nonviolent civil disobedience prisoners even will be discharged. All he proposes to do is to leave the matter in the hands of the local governments. We are not prepared to trust in such a matter to the generosity or sympathy of local governments or local officials, but, apart from this, there is no reference in Lord Irwin's letter to other nonviolent prisoners. There are a large number of Congressmen and others who were sent to prison for political offences prior to the civil disobedience

movement. We might mention in this connection the Meerut case prisoners who have already spent a year and a half as under-trials. We have made it clear in our joint letter that all these persons should be released.

Regarding the Bengal and the Lahore Case ordinances[107] we feel no exception should be made in their favour as suggested by Lord Irwin. We have not claimed release for those political prisoners, who may have been guilty of violence, not because we would not welcome their release but because we felt that as our movement was strictly non-violent, we would not confuse the issue. But the least we can do is to press for ordinary trial for these fellow countrymen of ours and not by an extraordinary court constituted by an ordinance which denies them the right of appeal and the ordinary privileges of accused.

Amazing events including the brutal assaults that have occurred even in open court during the so called trial make it imperative that the ordinary procedure should be followed. We understand that some of the accused in protest against the treatment accorded to them have been on hunger-strike for a long period and are now at death's door. The Bengal Ordinance, we understand, has been replaced by an Act passed by the Bengal Council. We consider this Ordinance and any act based on it most objectionable, and the fact that an unrepresentative body like the present Bengal Council has passed it does not make it any the better.

As regards the further picketing of foreign cloth and liquor shops, we are told, Lord Irwin is agreeable to the withdrawal of the Picketing Ordinance, but he states that if he thinks it necessary, lie will take fresh legal powers to combat picketing. Thus, he informs us that he might re-enact the Ordinance or do something in Simla to it whenever he considers it necessary. The reply regarding the Salt Act and certain other matters referred to in our joint letter is also wholly unsatisfactory. We need not deal with it at any length here as you are an acknowledged expert on salt—we would only say we see no reason to modify our previous position as regards these matters.

Thus Lord Irwin has declined to agree to all the major propositions and many of the minor ones laid down in our joint letter. The difference in his outlook and ours is very great, indeed fundamental. We hope you will show this note to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, Mr. Jairamdas Daulatram and in consultation with them give your reply to Mr. Jayakar and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. We feel that

107. Issued on 19 April and 1 May 1930, respectively.

the publication of the correspondence must no longer be delayed, and we are not justified in keeping the public in the dark. Even apart from the question of publication, we are requesting Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar to send copies of all correspondence and relevant papers to Chaudhuri Khaliq-uz-Zaman, the Acting President of the Indian National Congress. We feel we ought to take no step without immediate information being sent to the Working Committee, which happens to be functioning.

Motilal Nehru
Syed Mahmud
Jawaharlal Nehru

September 8th Monday

Father discharged at 7.30 a.m. He had been keeping very bad health and steadily losing weight—had lost 14 lbs since 30th June when he came to prison.

10th Sept 1930[108]

My dear Father,
I am glad everything has been fixed up at Mussoorie and that you are going there tomorrow. The rains must be finishing up there and in another two weeks Mussoorie ought to be delightful. I am sure you will get well soon there. It is immaterial whose diagnosis is correct—the doctor's or the hakim's. The main thing is to get well. Personally I have little faith in medieines—in calcium agoolar. But I have great faith in nature and in the mountain air of the Himalayas. I am glad the house you have taken is on the Happy Valley side and far from the bazar. This will save you to some extent at least from people desiring *darshan*.

I am sorry to learn about Khaliq. However it does not matter much now as you are outside. Give him my love tomorrow when you see him at the Lucknow Station and tell him to pull himself up and develop a little pep.

Excuse change in ink! The violet didn't work so I had to divert to the more homely blue-black.

108. M.N.Corresponence, N.M.M.L.

There is nothing much in the nature of news appertaining to Barrack No. 6 of the Naini C.P. that I can give you. Our population has under gone no change but if rumour is not entirely a lying jade, we may have Malaviyaji here soon. We shall try to make him comfortable to the best of our ability here. So far as we are concerned you need not worry.

Indu is best judge about going to Mussoorie. She should certainly go if she feels like it.

We are keeping the ice-box you sent back although it is not particularly needed.

I have already read Churchill's *World Crisis*[109] (2 Vols). Perhaps you might like to take it with you. Ludwig's *Genius & Character*, if you have finished it, might be sent to Kalelkar[110] in Yeravda jail.

Mahmud sends his salams.

Love

Your loving son,
Jawahar

10th September 1930[111]

Betty dear,

Hope you will enjoy your visit to Azamgarh. Go to the Shibli Manzil there and give my regards to Syed Sulaiman Nadvi and my love to Masud Ali Nadvi. Tell the latter that I am happy to know that he has taken the jump. I should like to meet him very much on my release, if he is out there.

Ask Anand, if he is here (otherwise ask Shammi to write to him) to take the following message to Jocelyn Tanner :[112]

> I was delighted to have news of him after such a tremendous long time. I have very pleasant recollections still of St Anne's Vicarage and its inhabitants. I hope that we may meet some time—but not in his capacity as S.P.!

109. *The World Crisis*, published in four volumes, 1923-29.
110. Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar (b. 1885); Vice-Chancellor, Gujarat Vidyapith, 1928-34; president of the Hindustani Talimi (Basic Education) Sangh till 1957; chairman, Backward Classes Commission, 1953-55; member, Rajya Sabha, 1952-64.
111. M. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.
112. A member of the Tanner family with whom Jawaharlal had spent some of his vacations while a student in England.

Meanwhile my love.
Don't orate too much at Azamgarh!
Love.

Jawahar

Give my love to mother and tell her to get fit in Mussoorie for all the tours she has still to make!

Sept. 12th Friday

Ranjit arrested[113]—Brought to our barrack at 4 p.m.

27.9.1930[114]

My dear Father,
According to all the most reliable reports emanating from the chowk of Allahabad and other places where the citizens of our city foregather, I ought to have been discharged today, or even yesterday. But as I am still sitting in the spacious verandah of barrack No.6, which you left as a gift for us, I am constrained to come to the conclusion that the reports were exaggerated. However all good things come to an end and I am afraid that my present term of imprisonment must also end soon and I shall have to change my life of languid ease into one of rush and bustle. Perhaps, who knows, I may then look back with regret to the months I spent here, far from the madding crowd, and all responsibility. But the regret cannot be long-lived for a benign and far-seeing government will no doubt see to it that I am provided again with peace and quiet.

We are all very much worried about your health and the latest news is not satisfactory. I wonder if Mussoorie is agreeing with you. Malaviyaji saw us this evening and he seemed to think that Mussoorie at this time of the year would be too cold for you and suggested your going to Rajpur or Dehra Dun. But of course you like the cold and, besides, Mussoorie is not cold in September or even October. It may be however that the altitude is too much. All this is for you and your doctors to consider. Personally I would have thought the climate of Mussoorie in October to be a near approach to the ideal. Would not sun baths do you good?

113. He was arrested for sedition and sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment.
114. M. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.

There is little to report here. The calm waters of jail life have few disturbances and even ripples are seldom visible. We are carrying on our daily routine much in the way we did when you were here, except for some minor changes. There is a fair amount of spinning and Ranjit is developing into a crack performer. He has been drawing out very fine and beautiful yarn. It is now his ambition to produce enough for a couple of saris for Nan. If he goes on at the rate he is doing, I have no doubt that he will produce a wardrobe full.

The *takli* has been much in evidence here lately. All four of us have taken to it and have made some progress at least. And with this small success I have dispelled a great fear that was haunting me! For many weeks or months past I was wondering how I would face everybody outside jail without being able to twiddle the *takli* with effect. None of us here need have that fear any more although, of course, we are beginners yet and there is great room for improvement. There is a fierce competition going on between Mahmud and the Sardar for honours in *takli* spinning—and it has come to this that Mahmud was noticed the other night twiddling his fingers even in his sleep as if he was working a takli!

Another diversion—but of the future—is the garden that promises to grow up in the wild open spaces of our barrack. Ranjit talks lovingly of sweet peas and hollyhocks and all manner of delectable flowers. Some seeds have already come and a lot of digging and shoving of earth has been going on. When all was ready the heavens interfered and sent vast quantities of rain converting our trenches and hollows into little lakes and pools. We await the coming of the Sun God to give us and the ground heat and dryness. But the flowers and the garden will not be for use this time. With luck I shall come and enjoy these a little later. With Ranjit in charge I have no doubt the garden will appear and make barrack No. 6 a real oasis.

I wonder if you know that the *Pioneer* has ceased to come to us. It continued to come for some days after you left. Then came orders from the high—and no more *Pioneer*. Later we discovered that an Urdu daily issued in Lucknow—the *Himmat*—was on the list of permitted papers. So at our request the Superintendent ordered this and we are getting it. It is not exactly a first—rate paper but it gives the principal news-usually not more than a few days after its occurrence.

I understand that you wish me to visit you soon after my discharge. I would myself like to do so. It is impossible for me to make any programme in my present state of uncertainty as to my release. I cannot be sure, till I am actually discharged, of my release even. But

in the ordinary course I ought to be released about the 10th to 13th. I should like to spend two or three days in Allahabad and then to go to Mussoorie. It will be difficult and perhaps not desirable for me to leave Allahabad immediately on release. I must get the hang of various things. In Mussoorie I may stay for a couple of days and then return to Allahabad. I should like Kamala to accompany me there. Betty is already going and may even take this letter.

Ranjit has discovered that the ordinary *khattas* of the jail are very like grape fruit! He has asked the Supdt. to send you a few to try. He wants you specially to try them and eat them as if they were grape fruit.

Ranjit sends you his love, and Mahmud and Narmada Prasad their salams and namaskars, respectively.

Love

Your loving son,
Jawahar

October 11th Saturday

Discharged at 3.30 p.m. Two days before sentence expired.

JAIL NOTES[115]

Books read

1. Habib's *Amir Khusrau*	15/4	Retd.
2. T. C. Woo's *Kuomin Tang*	17/4	Retd.
3. Johan Bojer's *The New Temple*	18/4	Retd.
4. Henry Bernstein: *Le Marche, La Griffe, Le Detour.*	21/4	Retd.
5. K. T. Shah's *Splendour that was Ind*	11/5/30	Retd.
6. Bertrand Russell's *ABC of Relativity*	25/4/30	Retd.
7. Andre Maurois: *Ariel ou La Vie de Shelley*	1/5/30	Retd.
8. *Les Chef-d' Oeuvres de La Langue Francaise-Poesie*	11/5/30	Retd.
9. *History of Orient*-Steijer-Beyer-Benitez	12/5/30	Retd.
10. H. A. Giles: *China and the Manchus*	13/5/30	Retd.
11. Yvette Guilbert: *Chanson de ma Vie*	13/5/30	Retd.

115. Jail Note Book No. 11, pp. 3-7.

12.	Andre Maurois: *La Vie de Disraeli*	20/5/30	Retd.
13.	Spengler's *Decline of the West* Vol I	27/5/30	
14.	*Les Chef-d'Oeuvre de la Langue Francaise—Prose*	28/5/30	Retd.
15.	Spengler: *Decline of the West* Vol 2	8/6/30	
16.	Emil Ludwig's *Bismarck*	9/6/30	Retd.
17.	Hieun Tsang's travels in Beal's *Buddhist Records of the Western World*	11/6/30	Retd.
18.	Shakespeare's *Tempest*	12/6/30	Retd.
19.	—do— *Two Gentlemen of Verona*	14/6/30	
20.	—do— *Measure for Measure*		
21-	—do— *Merry Wives of Windsor*		
22.	—do— *Comedy of Errors*		
23.	Complete long note on Spengler's *Decline of the West*	24/6/30	
24.	Emil Ludwig's *Napoleon*	27/6/30	
25.	*Slings and Arrows* by Lloyd George	28/6/30	
26.	S' *Much Ado about Nothing*		
27.	*Pardon Madame* by Romain Coolus and Andre Rivoire	7/7	
28.	S'*Love's Labour Lost-*		
29.	Manuel Ugarte—*Destiny of a Continent*	15/7/30	
30.	Lucien Romier-*Who will be Master-Europe or America*?	19/7/30	
31.	Ludwig's *Genius and Character*	25/7/30	
32.	*Les-Trois Henry*		
33.	Memoirs of Halide Edib		
34.	Churchill: *World Crisis* 1916-18 2 vols		
35.	*Enigmas*		
36.	*The Prophet* by Khalil Gibran		
37.	*Do We Agree*—a debate between G.B.S. & G.K.C.		
38.	*Les Mietteset L'Elastique* par Edmond See		
39.	*La Double Passion* par M. Auguste Villeroy		
40.	*Bukharin—Historical Materialism and Economic Theory of Leisure Class*		
41.	*An Indian Journey*		
42.	Upton Sinclair-*The Profits of Religion &c. &c.*		

9

THE EIGHT DAYS INTERLUDE

11-19 October 1930

1. Very Much Alive and Kicking[1]

I am very much alive and kicking. I hope to do my little bit to hasten the dissolution of the British Empire and take part in its final obsequies.

1. Statement issued on his release, Allahabad, 11 October 1930. *The Eight Days Interlude* (published by the A.I.C.C. in 1930), p. 2. This pamphlet contains Jawaharlal's speeches, letters, messages and statements of the period 11-24 October 1930.

2. Message to the Country1

After six months of enforced absence I am returning to my post of duty and resuming charge of the high office with which the nation entrusted me at Lahore. In doing so, I wish to express my deep gratitude to the several acting Presidents of the All India Congress Committee who have led the great struggle for freedom with high courage and self-sacrifice during these six months—to Pandit Motilal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. M. A. Ansari and Chaudhri Khaliquzzaman.

To the nation, I must pay my reverent homage for the magnificent fight that has been put up. I pray that I may be given wisdom and strength so that I may not prove an unworthy son of India in her hour of trial and an ignoble countryman of the martyrs of Peshawar and Sholapur and Bombay[2] and all the other places where the sons and daughters of the motherland have suffered for the great cause. Hundreds have died that India may live, tens of thousands have suffered great bodily injury and forty to fifty thousand lie behind the prison

1. Allahabad, 12 October 1930. *The Eight Days Interlude*, p. 8.
2. In Bombay, during 1930, there were frequent lathi charges on Congress volunteers. On 1 August, a Tilak Day procession was stopped outside the Fort area. The volunteers remained there through the night in pouring rain, and in a lathi charge the next day, 350 were injured.

bars. May their noble sacrifice inspire us to redoubled effort leading to the independence of our beloved country.

Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Reply to the Viceroy[1]

Before I begin I must pay homage to the many thousands of men and women in the country who have faced death and braved atrocities. The All India Congress Committee office has received reports that between forty and fifty thousand persons have been sent to prison in connection with the civil disobedience movement. In particular, I wish to pay my homage to the martyrs of Peshawar and Sholapur, and to the splendid part taken in the national struggle by the city of Bombay. The day of my release was an auspicious day because on that day a new ordinance was issued by Lord Irwin.[2]

The success of our movement can well be gauged by the number and variety of ordinances which are produced with regularity in the factories of Simla. The fact that this ordinance is the severest of all is in itself a sign that the British Government in India is getting in a bad way.

Indeed the time has come when, from the point of view of the British Government, every one of us should be a rebel. It is clear that India, big as it is, is not big enough to contain both the Indian people and the British Government. One of the two has to go and there is little doubt as to which this is going to be.

Today every man has to choose between the two flags, the flag of Indian freedom and the flag of foreign domination. The country has made its choice and has stuck to it in spite of all the frightfulness and methods of barbarism which history has associated in the past with the

1. Speech at Allahabad, 12 October 1930. From *The Eight Days Interlude*, pp. 3-7. The speech was delivered in Hindi.
2. The Unlawful Associations Ordinance of 10 October 1930 empowered local governments to occupy immovable property and confiscate the movable property of any association which had been declared unlawful.

Huns. Not only have we expenenced a surfeit of savagery but we have had a refinement of cruelty and hypocrisy—barbarous behaviour trying to preserve an innocent and saintly appearance.

Recently Lord Irwin made a speech[3] in which he criticized the Congress in connection with the recent effort of Dr. Sapru and Mr. Jayakar. I do not take much interest in the Viceregal utterances, but two or three things I wish to make clear. The first is about the strange charge regarding secret diplomacy. For anyone to accuse any organsation or a group with which Mahatma Gandhi is connected with any secrecy or with any diplomacy in a bad sense show his amazing ignorance. Lord Irwin is obviously ill served by his set of informers. This has led him to be surprised many a time in the past and he will have further cause for surprise many times again. The Congress stands for open diplomacy at every stage and in every way. Indeed on the very first occasion when Dr. Sapru and Mr. Jayakar visited Nairn' jail they were told clearly and in writing that no private assurance or secret understanding would be accepted by us, partly because we deal in no secret merchandise and partly because we had had enough of the assurances of Viceroys and others, which had not been kept. At every, stage and at every step of the negotiations this point was driven home to Messrs. Sapru and Jayakar. Lord Irwin refers to a certain formula which was approved by Pandit Motilal Nehru long before the negotiations started. He does not state that this formula was only meant as the basis of consultation with Mahatmaji. Lord Irwin and the government whose agent he is in India may take it that so far as the Congress is concerned, we shall not be satisfied at any step with any private assurance or anything secret.

Lord Irwin further hints, I do not know on what basis, that the terms put forward were for show purposes only and we were out to bargain. It is strange that he has not realized that people who are out to bargain do not jump into a fire or get themselves shot or get lathi blows or break up their families to go to jail in scores of thousands.

Let him realise once for all that we are in deadly earnest, we have burnt our boats, we have taken the great resolve, and there is no going back for us. For two years now the Congress has moved from step to step, after due notice, with inexorable logic. Let all realise that the Congress stands for the independence of India and it will fight to the bitter end till it has achieved it.

3 On 29 September 1930 at Simla.

It has become a pastime for some individuals who dare not show themselves in public to criticise the Congress. Without confidence in themselves or in the cause or in our country, always fearful and terrified, some of these persons have left India by the backdoor at the bidding and at the nomination of the representative of the foreign government here to speak in the name of India. It is a scandalous state of affairs that the nominees of the enemy should thus go secretly and parley with the enemy whilst the fight is in progress.

The Congress today is the Indian people, including every major and minor community. The Congress is not even Mahatma Gandhi, great as he is. When the Indian people decide otherwise, they can put an end to our movement or carry it on in any other form. It is because the Indian people have entrusted us with this duty and made us take a pledge and carry it out that we cannot be false to our pledge and our people.

If Lord Irwin or any of his colleagues want to know what the Indian people think, why do they not come down from their mountain tops and go to the bazars and the field and the factories and watch the lathi charges, the atrocities on women and old men and children, and the firing. No, they have chosen the other path of shutting their eyes to truth, suppressing it and deliberately preventing it from spreading by various ordinances and the like, and then making a hysterical reference in praise of the police and the military. But we do not complain.

Lord Irwin has also referred in his speech to what was said in the Lahore presidential address[4] on the subject of violence and nonviolence. It is always interesting to read a sermon on morals from one who does not practise them. If England were invaded by Germany or Russia, would Lord Irwin go about advising the people to refrain from violence against the invader? If he is not prepared to do that, let him not raise the issue. It is for Mahatma Gandhi and others, who believe with him, to do so.

So far as I am concerned, I stick by every word I said at Lahore. We have adopted the policy of nonviolence because we believe in it and wish to give it the fullest trial in all honesty. Recent events have conclusively shown the wonderful efficacy of that policy and I for one hope that the country will stick to it and thereby achieve success.

But let there be no mistake about it. Whether I agree with him or not, my heart is full of admiration for the courage and self-sacrifice of

4. See *ante*, section 5, item 2.

a man like Bhagat Singh. Courage of the Bhagat Singh type is exceedingly rare. If the Viceroy expects us to refrain from admiring this wonderful courage and the high purpose behind it, he is mistaken. Let him ask his own heart what he would have felt if Bhagat Singh had been an Englishman and acted for England.

Coming to the programme ahead of us, so far as the main items are concerned, like the boycott of foreign cloth, the boycott of British goods, prohibition and the salt tax, there can be no compromise of any kind on any of these issues. I deeply appreciate the attitude of merchants which brought about the wonderful boycott of foreign cloth. However, no Congress committee has any right or authority to come to any terms with any foreign cloth dealers other than the complete exclusion of foreign cloth from the market. The various no-tax campaigns going on in parts of the country will have to be extended soon to other parts.

The first phase of the great struggle has come to an end. It has been marked by a national awakening to which the world has been an admiring witness.

Now the second stage is beginning, the stage of our laying the foundations of a future, free India. Every city, every *mohalla*, every village must now play its part in this effort by making itself ready to become a living, self-dependent entity in free India. We must be prepared not only not to pay any taxes to the British Government but also to do without any service which they may render to us. While lawyers argue and raise their petty quibbles in London, we in India will fight for the reality, the conquest of power.

4. To Secretary, All India Spinners Association[1]

Allahabad
October 13, 1930

Dear Sir,
I am sending you under separate registered cover a parcel containing the yarn spun by me during my confinement in Naini Central Prison.

1. A.l.C.C. File No. G-40(KW) (ii)/1931 (Pt. III), pp. 461-463, N.M.M.L.

A part of this yarn was sent by me to you in May last but subsequently the government of the U.P. decided not to permit any such yarn to be sent out of the prison during the period of the sentence, and thereupon, at the request of the superintendent of the jail, you sent back the yarn.

The yarn represents about 3½ months' more or less regular spinning. For some time, to begin with, I was not allowed the *charkha*. Later, my visit to Yeravda prison and other occupations prevented my spinning regularly. Details of the yarn are given below. Nearly all of it is *charkha*-spun yam. A little is *takli*-spun but I am afraid this is bad and overtwisted as I had only just begun the takli. A few hanks represent an attempt at fine spinning, the finest being 65 counts. This was done from *punis* received from Sabarmati.

The total length of the yarn sent is 31426 yards—out of this 30681 yards being *charkha*-spun, and 745 yards, *takli*-spun. Kindly credit this to my past and future subscription to the A.I.S.A.

Will it be possible to get this yarn woven separately so that I may have some pieces of cloth spun by myself. I do not wish to give you any special trouble. If it can be done easily I shall welcome it and pay the cost incurred. Otherwise, please do not trouble.

Kindly acknowledge receipt of the yarn.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal

DETAILS OF YARN SENT

Yarn spun in Central Prison, Naini, between April 26th and October 10th, 1930, representing about 3½ months' regular spinning.

Charkha-spun: 42 hanks

Total length	:	30681 yards
Total weight	:	about 52-1/3 tolas
Counts from	:	19 to 65
Average count	:	28

Takli-spun : 5 hanks

Total length	:	745 yards
Total weight	:	about 3-5/6 tolas
Counts from	:	6½ to 11

Grand total length : 31426 yards

I regret that the size of the hank is, as a rule, the awkward one of 4 ft. 5 ins. This was all that was available to me for a long time in jail.

The cotton used was mostly from Sabarmati. Some came from local sources.

My A.I.S.A. Roll No. is : 17(79)

5. To K.D. Malaviya1

October 13, 1930

My dear Kapil Dev,

Your letter came yesterday in my absence. Thank you for your good wishes which are very welcome. I am surprised that of all persons you should feel shy about anything. In spite of what you say I am convinced that before long you will have to pack up your knapsack and join the army. I am just going to Mussoorie for two or three days.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(KW)(ii)/1931 (Pt. III), p. 459, N.M.M.L.

6. Circular to P.C.Cs[1]

Allahabad
October 14, 1930

Dear Comrade,

On my return to duty after six months' enforced absence, I send you and my other comrades in your province my greetings, and I wish to pay my homage to those who have suffered in the great national struggle. For seven months now, we have carried on this fight and today, in spite

1. The Eight Days Interlude, pp. 9-11.

of the barbarities and inhumanities of the enemy government, in spite of its martial law and ordinances, in spite of lathi charges and the sending of about 50,000 men and women to jail, we are marching along undaunted, more determined than ever, to the goal of independence. As we approach this goal, the struggle becomes fiercer and our sufferings greater. As defeat looms ahead before the enemy government and paralysis creeps over their trade they are becoming more and more reckless and unscrupulous.

The time has now come for us to make another great effort and to launch another offensive. I trust your committee is fully prepared for this and is ready to go ahead with vigour. I am making certain suggestions below to guide your committee in its future work.

1. Please make it clear to all our friends that they must not be misled by frequent rumours about peace talks and the like. These are started by interested parties to confuse the issue and make people think that the struggle is ending. We are far from the end of the struggle yet and there can be no peace till there is success for us. Assure our friends also that the talk of 'secret diplomacy' is a deliberate misrepresentation. The Congress can and will do nothing which is not public.

2. The main planks of our campaign must continue—the boycott of foreign cloth, of British goods and liquor, and the disobedience of the Salt Act—with all vigour and without any compromise.

3. It appears that some local committees have made compromises with some cloth dealers permitting them to dispose of their old stocks of foreign cloth on certain days. This is improper and is in direct contravention of the directions of the Working Committee. Please make it clear that under no circumstances can any such compromise or weakening be permitted. Where such compromises have been made, the provincial committee should take the necessary steps, after due notice, to put them aside and to revert to its original attitude of un adulterated boycott.

4. The disobedience of the Salt Act must also continue in any manner which your committee considers desirable. We must develop the habit of people manufacturing their own salt in large numbers.

5. In the boycott of British goods, the cooperation of people, who may not be interested in other items of our programme, should be sought and special committees formed. It may be desirable to make a list of the more commonly used articles of British manufacture and to work for their complete exclusion. Our office will send you such a list soon.

6. These activities, and especially the boycott of foreign cloth, are the backbone of our movement and must be continued at all costs. For some time there was, in various provinces, picketing of educational institutions.[2] At this stage, when more vital matters have to be attended to by us, we cannot afford to fritter away our energy over these side activities. I would suggest to you, therefore, not to encourage or carry on, on behalf of Congress organisations, any such picketing, unless there are special reasons to the contrary. If the students of an institution themselves desire to picket it, they are at perfect liberty to do so but the Congress as a body should endeavour to keep out of it as far as possible.

7. The non-payment of *chowkidari* tax[3] must continue; so also the disobedience of the forest laws wherever possible.

8. Gujarat is carrying on a gallant fight in its no-tax campaign.[4] The time has now come for other parts of India to consider the launching of a similar no-tax campaign. As President of the A.I.C.C. I authorise every P.C.C. to start any no-tax campaign which it considers feasible and proper. Of course, no such campaign should be launched lightly and without careful thought. But our struggle has reached a stage when we must use one of our greatest weapons, if at all we are prepared to do so.

9. Congress committees are being daily declared illegal bodies in all parts of the country.[5] We must welcome this as it is a sure sign of the growing strength of our movement. And in spite of such declarations we must try to carry on our work in a normal manner. No Congress committee ceases to exist because the enemy government has declared it illegal. The committee should flourish all the more because of this. On no account must an office-bearer of the Congress declare that the committee is dissolved. No one has authority to do this.

10. I must request you to make a point of remaining in touch with our office here. A regular supply of news and reports is essential for us to direct this great movement. If necessary you should send a messenger once a week.

2. Following a resolution of the Working Committee passed on 27 June 1930, colleges had been picketed at Calcutta, Varanasi and Lahore.
3. This tax was levied to defray the cost of a town or village watch.
4. The no-tax campaign in Gujarat began at Ras following Vallabhbhai Patel's arrest on 7 March 1930, and was later taken up by Bardoli and other districts.
5. During the salt satyagraha, provincial governments had begun declaring Congress committees unlawful.

11. Finally, I would have you remember that this fight is going to be fought to the bitter end and victory always goes to those who dare. Remember what Danton0 said a hundred years and more ago: "*Pour vaincre les ennemis de la patrie il nous faut de l'audace, encore de l'audace, toujours de l'audace*"-"in order to overcome the enemies of our country we must be daring, we must dare again, we must always dare." Dare therefore, and victory is ours.

Your comrade,
Jawaharlal Nehru

6. (1759-1794); leading Jacobin in the French Revolution, who was later guillotined.

7. To C. Rajagopalachari[1]

Camp Mussoorie
October 15, 1930

My dear Rajagopalachari,
Welcome back.[2] On my arrival today father showed me your telegram about the census. We do not know what the details of your proposal were but evidently you are suggesting a boycott of the next census. We entirely agree. This would, of course, involve a refusal on the part of the public to give honorary help as enumerators and otherwise as well as a refusal to give information.

I hope to be in Bombay in a week or ten days. If it is possible for you to come there about that time we might meet. Bombay is, in any event, well worth a visit. The easiest way for you to find out when I am going there is from the press as a personal telegram may not reach you.

As you must know, father is here because of his ill health. He has not improved very greatly since he has come here. Recently, however, there has been a marked change which, though little, so far gives

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(KW)(ii)/1931 (Pt. III), p. 421, N.M.M.L.
2. He had been in prison from 30 April to 10 October 1930.

promise of better results. I am going to Allahabad in a couple of days and after about three or four days' stay I am going to Bombay and may be to Ahmedabad from there.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

8. Message to the North West Frontier Province[1]

During the last seven months India has witnessed many a deed of heroism and self-sacrifice. It is difficult indeed to enumerate them or to give a list of the brave men and women who have given their lives or suffered exceedingly so that India may be free. On my discharge from prison I have taken the earliest opportunity to pay my reverent homage to all these heroes. I should like, however, to make special mention of our brave comrades of the Frontier Province who, right at the beginning of the great struggle, gave an exhibition of peaceful courage and wonderful sacrifice at which India and the world have marvelled. I have read with amazement and admiration the record of their doings and their sufferings in the Patel Enquiry Report.[2] The Pathans are known to be brave fighters but they have shown that even in our nonviolent struggle they can take the lead and set an example which is not easy to emulate. I would therefore like to send my greetings and my homage to all our comrades of the Frontier Province, whether in prison or outside. The dead are no longer with us, but their memory lives and will live.

There used to be in past years talk of petty reforms in the Frontier Province. Today we are not fighting for reforms but for independence. Our comrades of the Frontier have shown in the fire of suffering what metal they are made of. Out of our common suffering

1. Mussoorie, 16 October 1930. *The Eight Days Interlude*, p. 12.
2. The Peshawar Enquiry Committee, with Vithalbhai Patel as chairman, was appointed by the Working Committee to inquire into the happenings at Peshawar on 23 April. Its report was published on 25 June 1930.

we shall fashion free India, in which all of us, including the Frontier Province, will be equal sharers. The men and women of the Frontier Province have purchased by their blood and suffering a full right to this freedom. For the brave no gift can be too much, and those who know how to die know also how to live as free men.

Men and women of the Frontier, you have written a golden page in Indian history! That will be an inspiration for us and we shall remember it in the long days to come. India cannot forget those who helped to make her free.

9. To K. Santanam[1]

Camp Mussoorie
October 17, 1930

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 15th October informing me that the Punjab P.C.C. has passed a resolution regarding the incorporation of an additional colour in the national flag.[2] Owing to my recent release from jail, I have no knowledge of this resolution and do not know if my office has taken any steps in regard to it.

As you are aware the National Congress has not formally adopted the national flag by a resolution. But practice and convention have certainly made the tricolour flag at present in use the national flag of India. The colours of this flag were not meant to represent any communities as such. In various countries of Europe there are tricolour flags but their colours do not represent different communities. None-theless, some people have certainly stated that these colours represent different communities and I can well appreciate the desire of the Sikhs to have their own particular colour incorporated. This question was discussed at Lahore between Mahatma Gandhi and Sikh leaders. So far as I know Mahatmaji said that he would place the matter for the

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(KW) (ii)/1931 (Pt. II), pp. 345-347, N.M.M.L.
2. At a meeting held in September 1930.

consideration of the Congress executive. He did not and could not give any undertaking. Since then the country has launched on a vast campaign against the British Government in India and the Congress is involved in a life and death struggle. As you know even our executive has been declared an illegal body. Your own provincial committee and district committees have also been declared illegal. Under the circumstances it is difficult for the All India Committee to meet just to consider the question of the flag. This question will undoubtedly have to be gone into thoroughly whenever we have an opportunity to do so. But at present it is manifestly impossible for us to do so. Nor would it be fair for any small committee to take upon itself the responsibility of fixing finally what the national flag of India should be. I am afraid, therefore, that the Working Committee is not in a position at present to go into this question much as it appreciates the desire of the Sikhs.

The decision of the Punjab P.C.C. to incorporate an additional colour throughout the Punjab seems to me to have been premature and untimely. If every provincial committee acted separately in this matter we might have a variety of flags. The question can only be decided finally by the National Congress in its annual sessions. I have no doubt that our Sikh friends will appreciate the position of the Congress. We have our backs to the wall and can hardly think of anything but the great fight that we are waging. When victory comes with the joint efforts of all the communities of India it will be for all of us together to evolve a flag which is acceptable to each group and to the nation at large. I have no doubt that no individual or group can make the question of the colour the reason for holding back in the struggle. It seems to me to be doing an injustice to the Sikh community to say that they will not take their rightful part in the war for freedom because of this. Large numbers of brave Sikhs have already joined the soldiers of freedom and faced the enemy. I am sure that all others who have refrained so far will wait no longer now that the fight has become fiercer and more intense.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

10. To Dhan Gopal Mukerjee[1]

Camp Mussoorie
October 17, 1930

My dear Dhan Gopal,

Your letter reached me two days after my discharge from jail. I hasten to reply to it because I may have to go back very soon. I am perfectly fit, as indeed I always am. So you need not worry about my physical condition. Mentally and spiritually I am also at peace because, strange to say, nothing suits me more than activity and conflict. Don't worry yourself about violence and nonviolence. As a matter of fact India has been nonviolent to an amazing degree during the last six months in spite of terrible provocation. However, I had better not say much about politics. Else this letter will not reach you. As it is doubt if it will go out of India. We are more or less cut off from the rest of the world and our telegrams and letters are neither sent nor are they delivered.

About my book, do what you like with it, change it, add to it, subtract from it, mutilate it, improve it or do anything else with it. So far as I am concerned it is absolutely impossible for me to give any time to it. I am glad you think well of my literary efforts. But for the moment the artistry of action appeals to me more. It is far more exciting to help in making a nation than in making a book.

I am glad you are thinking again of coming to India but your last visit was not exactly comforting. I must confess that I had been unable to understand why you left so suddenly. The events of the last few months in India would have dragged me from the uttermost corners of the earth to India. You, on the other hand, left us just when things were becoming interesting. I hope your next visit will be a longer one. Anyway, before you come again much will have happened here.

Kamala received the £ 8 you sent her. You may have heard that Ranjit Pandit is imprisoned now. Probably before this reaches you, the whole of the clan Nehru will be in jail. But don't worry. Every decent man has been to jail or will go to jail.

If any new book of yours comes out, send it to me. I shall read it in jail if I am there.

Love to Gopal,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(KW)(ii)/1931 (Pt. II), pp. 351-353, N.M.M L

11. On the Boycott of Foreign Cloth[1]

Nothing has been more remarkable during the past few months than the success of the boycott of foreign cloth. This success has been primarily due to the response of the Indian public. It has also been due to the cooperation of the merchants all over India and I should like to express my appreciation of their patriotic efforts in this behalf. Recently it has been pointed out by some of these merchants that they had suffered considerable loss and they have asked for permission to sell the old stocks of foreign cloth with them. In some places local Congress office-bearers have entered into some kind of compromise for fixed periods. I should like to point out to all Congress committees, Congress office-bearers, merchants, and the public generally that it would be exceedingly harmful to the interests of our country if this boycott were slackened in the least at this stage. Everybody knows what is happening in India today. From day to day new ordinances c01ne and thousands are arrested. Only two days ago a great offensive was launched by the British Government on the Bombay Congress.[2] We welcome these offensives because we know they are the signs of weakening and defeat on the other side. At the same time it is incumbent on us at this present moment to stiffen our boycott and to make it complete. On no account must there be the slightest slackening, jxfo Congress office-bearer or committee has any right or authority to enter into a compromise on this subject. The boycott of foreign cloth is indeed so important that it is better for other Congress activities to suffer, but this must be kept in the forefront.

I have no doubt that when our friends, the merchants, realise the critical situation in which we are placed today, they will give us the same cooperation which they have done. The public, I feel certain, will stick to its resolve to boycott foreign cloth, whatever the consequences. In particular, I appeal to the merchants of the great importing centres of Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, Amritsar, Karachi and Cawnpore. Those who stand by the nation today in this life and death struggle cannot be forgotten by a grateful country when victory comes.

1. Statement to the press, Lucknow, 18 October 1980. *The Eight Days Interlude*, pp. 15-16.
2. On 15 and 16 October 1930, the police raided Congress offices in Bombay and arrested a large number of persons. As a protest, complete hartal was observed in the city on 16 October.

Those who line themselves with the enemy must be prepared for the consequences of their action.

12. Reply to Municipal Address[1]

It is my belief that the Lucknow Board is not honouring an individual but an institution. I have been given an address because I am President of the Congress—an unlawful body—and, as such, a rebel. In spite of the fact that the Congress is being declared unlawful it is functioning as a living organisation almost throughout the country. That shows who has more adherents among the masses. The time has come when every individual must decide which way to go—whether to follow the tri-coloured banner of the Congress or the Union Jack of those who kept the countrv under thraldom. Personally, I have no quarrel with the Union Jack as such and I cannot understand why the national flag is such an eyesore to the imperialists. I cannot comprehend why some persons take peculiar pleasure in wounding the susceptibilities of millions of Indians by insulting the national flag, by hauling it down and replacing it by the Union Jack. Every Indian, whatever his political creed, must see that such insults to the national flag and national feeling are not repeated.

In the United Provinces, the district and the town Congress committees will shortly start a campaign of non-payment of taxes. This campaign will in the first place be directed against land revenue, rent and income-tax. Then there is the scheme of running parallel institutions by the Congress. Municipal boards, district boards and other local bodies can effectively come to the aid of the Congress in making this constructive scheme a success.

Perhaps the worst phase of repression is now in store for the country, but I am confident that the policy of repression will not kill the national movement. In spite of all suppression of news the country knows very well how the people behaved at Peshawar, Sholapur and Lucknow. The bureaucracy talks of giving wretched reforms to the

1. Lucknow, 18 October 1930. From *The Leader*, 20 October 1930.

frontier Pathans. I for one am prepared to present those people of exemplary courage with a pen and ink to write out their own demands.

13. On Khadi[1]

The remarkable success of the boycott of foreign cloth has naturally resulted in greatly increased sales of khadi. So great was the demand for khadi at one period that it could not be met and appeals were made to the public to reduce their consumption of cloth. Efforts were also made to increase khadi production and these efforts met with great success. Our present production of khadi is far in excess of what it was a few months ago and the All India Spinners' Association is in a position to meet all demands on it. There is no necessity, therefore, to restrict one's purchases of khadi any longer. Considerable stocks are accumulating and those who wish to encourage khadi work should help in the disposal of these stocks so that we may go on increasing our production at a rapid rate.

In this connection, I should like to warn people against purchasing spurious cloth which is specially[7] made coarse so as to resemble khadi. In order to avoid this the best course is to purchase from recognised dealers certified by the All India Spinners' Association.

I have noted with regret that certain mills have manufactured this spurious khadi. I would appeal to all mill-owners to refrain from naming, stamping or styling cloth manufactured in their mills as 'khadi' and also to refrain, except for drills, satins, tussores, twills, jacquards and the like, from manufacturing cloth under 18 counts' yarn. To merchants I would appeal not to sell any cloth as khadi cloth unless it bears the stamp of the All India Spinners' Association or an organization certified by the A.I.S.A.

1. Statement to the press, Allahabad, 19 October 1930. *The Eight Days Interlude*, p. 17.

14. To the Workers of Bombay[1]

The workers should organise themselves in their organisations and at the same time help the Congress for fighting for complete independence of India. To oppose the Congress at the present juncture would be nothing else than to help the British Government in putting down the present movement. The workers should stick to their economic programme and demand their rights.

1. Allahabad, 19 October 1930. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 21 October 1930.

15. A Note on Acting President in Case of Arrest[1]

Owing to my impending re-arrest I regret I cannot continue to work as the President of the Congress.[2] On the last occasion when I was arrested I nominated Mahatma Gandhi, and failing him Pandit Motilal Nehru, to act as President.[3] Gandhiji not being able to accept my nomination, Pandit Motilal Nehru was good enough to take charge of the onerous duties of the Congress presidentship. I would gladly have requested him to undertake the burden again, but his ill health makes it imperative that he should have complete rest and should not be troubled with any kind of exacting work. I therefore do not wish him to trouble himself with the work of the Congress President or the leadership of the national movement at this stage and so long as he is not well. The best service he can render to the nation is to get well soon so that India may have the benefit of his wise counsel and his ever youthful energy in the difficult days ahead of us. Within a few days

1. Allahabad, 19 October 1930. J. N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Since his release on 11 October 1930, Jawaharlal had been actively propagating a no-tax campaign among the kisans and had been served with notices under sec. 144 at Dehra Dun and Allahabad.
3. See *ante*, section 7, item 39.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel will probably be discharged from prison.[4] I request him to act as Congress President and nominate him as such In case Pandit Motilal Nehru considers it necessary that there should be some acting President for these few days, before Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel is released, he has authority to nominate any person for this period.

Jawaharlal Nehru

4. He had been re-arrested on 2 August, was released on 5 November and arrested again on 9 December 1930.

10

PRISON DIARY WITH LETTERS

19 October 1930-26 January 1931

FIFTH CONVICTION[1]

October 19th (Sunday) 1930

Arrested again at 8.30 p.m. at crossing of Lowther & Thornhill Road almost in sight of Anand Bhawan—Re-enter Naini Prison on the stroke of 9.[2]

October 22

My weight II8½ lbs.

24-10-1930[3]

MESSAGE TO COMRADES

The honour of arrest has again been accorded to me. I am about to stand my trial and have no doubt that I shall be convicted for the fifth time. That honour is always welcome. And yet I am sorry it has prevented me from keeping my promise of visiting Bombay and Delhi. To the brave soldiers of freedom of these cities, my apologies and regrets. I had long hoped to journey to the new places of pilgrimage in this ancient land-to Bombay and Peshawar, Gujarat and Delhi and so many others—and to see with my own eyes what manner of men and women they were who defied the British raj in all its panoply of power; and to try to understand the magic secret which had transformed our people, in their scores of thousands, into heroes. I cannot journey now. But, rest assured, I shall keep my promise and come to you when your heroic sacrifice has borne fruit and made India a free land, worthy of the heroes and heroines that inhabit her.

I have been arrested principally for my part in inaugurating a no-tax campaign in my province. I trust that the United Provinces will answer the challenge and will carry this campaign from village to village and town to town, and will try to emulate the splendid example

1. The diary kept by Jawaharlal in Naini Central Prison from 11 October 1930 to 26 January 1931 has been printed here, with the letters, notes and statements of the period interspersed. These documents are in the N.M.M.L.
2. Jawaharlal was arrested for his speech at Allahabad on 12 October 1930; see *ante,* section 9, item 3.
3. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(KW)(ii)/1931 (Pt. III), p. 363, N.M.M.L.

of Gujarat. I trust also that other provinces will do likewise The freedom we seek is the freedom from all exploitation of the peasant and the worker. Let this message of freedom be carried to field and factory, and, together, let all of us face and overthrow the imperialism which dominates over us and exploits us.

Be of good cheer, comrades, for the day of our deliverance approaches. And if in the great struggle we lose our property and our belongings, why, then we shall be the lighter and more unencumbered and can march the more swiftly to our goal. In a long and difficult journey often one has to leave one's baggage behind.

Keep smiling! Let the enemy lose his temper and his composure. He has reason to, for defeat approaches him. But we know that we are in the right and we are going to win. Why then should we not smile even though the fight rages fiercely and clouds occasionally darken the horizon? Behind the clouds lies the sun of freedom and presently it will break through the mists and vapours and rejuvenate us with its life-giving energy.

October 24th, 1930[4]

WRITTEN STATEMENT AT TRIAL

For the fifth time I have been arrested and charged with various crimes by the officials of the British Government. For the fifth time, I have no doubt, I shall be convicted. I have so far taken no part in this trial and I desire to take none. But I wish to say a few words so that those who are trying me today, and my own people, who have honoured me beyond measure, may have some glimpse of what I have in my heart.

I am charged with sedition and with the spreading of disaffection against the British Government. Eight and a half years ago I was charged with a similar offence and I stated then that sedition against the present government in India had become the creed of the Indian people, and to preach and practise disaffection against the evil which it represents had become their chief occupation.[5] For the Indian people had come to realise that there could be no freedom for them, no lessening of the terrible exploitation which had crushed the life out of millions, till British rule was removed from India. Since this realisation came upon me in all its tragic intensity, I have had no other profession, no other business, no other aim than to fight British imperialism and to drive it from India.

4. J. N. Prison Papers, N.M.M.L.
5. See *Selected Works*, Vol. I, pp. 252-257.

On the first day of this year the National Congress finally resolved to achieve the independence of India, and on the 26th of January the Indian people pledged themselves in their millions to put an end to British rule in India. They declared the age-long right of a people to subvert any government which had misgoverned and crushed them, and they charged the British Government with having exploited them ruthlessly and done them almost irreparable injury politically, economically, culturally and spiritually. Since that pledge was taken, there can be no willing submission of any Indian to British authority, no recognition by him of British rule; and if a few of us side with the enemy or parley with him while the fight is in progress, it is a terrible measure of the spiritual injury caused by British rule, making them kiss the rod that smites them and hug the very chains that bind. Some of these misguided and erring countrymen of ours have chosen to desert the motherland in her hour of need and talk of compromises with British imperialism, but the country has chosen another path under the guidance and inspiration of our great leader, and that path it will pursue till success comes to it. There can be no compromise between freedom and slavery, and between truth and falsehood. We realise that the price of freedom is blood and suffering—the blood of our own countrymen and the suffering of the noblest in the land—and that price we shall pay in full measure.

Already the world is witness to the sacrifice and suffering of our people at the altar of freedom, to the wonderful courage of our women, and to the indomitable spirit of our brave peasantry. Strong in the faith with which our leader has inspired them, with confidence in themselves and in their great cause, they have willingly set aside their material pleasures and belongings, and written a stirring and a shining chapter in India's long history. And the world has also seen how our peaceful struggle is sought to be crushed by frightfulness and methods of barbarism which have earned for the British Government in India a comparison with the Huns of old. Unlike the Huns, however, they have added insult to deep injury and have sought, after the manner of their kind, to cover their deeds of frightfulness with a cloak of piety and sanctimoniousness. Fearful of exposure, they have sought to suppress truth in every way. Those whom the gods wish to destroy they first drive mad, and all the mad deeds which the British Government has done in India during the last seven months—desperate devices of a tottering empire—are visible emblems of the crash to come.

We have no quarrel with the English people, much less with the English worker. Like us he has himself been the victim of imperialism, and it is against this imperialism that we fight. With it there can be

no compromise. To this imperialism or to England, we owe no allegiance and the flag of England in India is an insult to every Indian. The British Government today is an enemy government for us, a foreign usurping power holding on to India with the help of their army of occupation. My allegiance is to the Indian people only and to no king or foreign government. I am a servant of the Indian people and I recognise no other master.

The end of our struggle approaches and the British Empire will soon go the way of all the empires of old. The strangling and the degradation of India has gone on long enough. It will be tolerated no longer, and let England and the world take notice that the people of India are prepared to be friends with all who meet them frankly as equals and do not interfere with their freedom. But they will be no friends with such as seek to interfere with their liberties or to exploit the peasant or the worker. Nor will they tolerate in future the humbug and hypocrisy which has been doled out to them in such ample measure by England.

To the Indian people I cannot express my gratitude sufficiently for their confidence and affection. It has been the greatest joy in my life to serve in this glorious struggle and to do my little bit for the cause. I pray that my countrymen and countrywomen will carry on the good fight unceasingly till success crowns their effort and we realise the India of our dreams.

Long live free India!

Jawaharlal Nehru

October 24th Friday

My trial—3 sections—judgement reserved.[6]

6. Jawaharlal was charged with sedition, abetting offences under the Salt Act and instigating people not to pay taxes.

For the fifth time I have been arrested and charged with various crimes by the officials of the British government. For the fifth time, I have no doubt, I shall be convicted. I have so far taken no part in this trial and I desire to take none. But I wish to say a few words so that those who are trying me today and my own people, who have honoured me beyond measure, may have some glimpse of what I have in my heart.

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S.I.H. 885 24/10/30

On the first day of this year the National Congress finally resolved to achieve the independence of India, and on the 26th of January the Indian people pledged themselves in their millions to put an end to

FIRST PAGE OF STATEMENT AT TRIAL, 24 OCTOBER 1930

Central Prison
Naini
October 26th 1930

For Indira Priyadarshini
on her Thirteenth birthday — शान्तिनिकेतन सुखी रहो

My dear, On your birthday you have been in the habit of receiving presents and good wishes. Good wishes you will still have in full measure, but what present can I give you from Naini prison? My presents cannot be very material or solid. They can only be of the air and of the mind and spirit, so as a good fairy might have bestowed on you — something that even the high walls of prison cannot stop.

You know, sweetheart, how I dislike sermonising and doling out good advice. When I am tempted to do this I always think of a story of a "very wise man" I once read. Perhaps one day you will yourself read the book which contains this story. Thirteen hundred years ago there came a great traveller from China to India in search of wisdom and knowledge. His name was Hiuen Tsang and he via the deserts and mountains of the North he came braving

TO INDIRA NEHRU[7]

Central Prison
Naini
October 26th 1930

For Indira Priyadarshini
on her thirteenth—कार्तिक सुदी 5[8]

My dear, On your birthday you have been in the habit of receiving presents and good wishes. Good wishes you will still have in full measure, but what present can I give you from Naini Prison? My presents cannot be very material or solid. They can only be of the air and of the mind and spirit, such as a good fairy might have bestowed on you—something that even the high walls of prison cannot stop.

You know, sweetheart, how I dislike sermonizing and doling out good advice. When I am tempted to do this I always think of a story of a "very wise man" I once read. Perhaps one day you will yourself read the book which contains this story. Thirteen hundred years ago there came a great traveller from China to India in search of wisdom and knowledge. His name was Hiuen Tsang,[9] and over the deserts and mountains of the North he came, braving many dangers, facing and overcoming many obstacles, so great was his thirst for knowledge. And he spent many years in India learning himself and teaching others, specially at the great university of Nalanda, which existed then near the city that was called Pataliputra and is now known as Patna. Hiuen Tsang became very learned himself and he was given the title of "Master of the Law"—the Law of the Buddha-and he journeyed all over India and saw and studied the people that lived in this great country in those far off days. Later he wrote a book[10] of his travels and it is this book which contains the story that comes to my mind. It is about a man from South India who came to Karnasuvarna, which was a city some where near modern Bhagalpur in Behar; and this man, it is written, wore round his belly and waist copper plates, and on his head he carried a lighted torch. Staff in hand, with proud bearing and lofty steps, he wandered about in this strange attire. And when any one asked him the reason for his curious get-up, he told him that his wisdom was so great that he was afraid his belly would burst if he did not wear copper

7. N.M.M.L. First published in *Glimpses of World History*, 1934.
8. The fifth day of the bright half of the lunar month Kartika. In 1930, according to the *Samva*t era Indira Nehru's birthday fell on 26 October.
9. (c. 602-664); Chinese Buddhist scholar and traveller.
10. *Hsi yu chi* (Descriptions of the Western Lands), written in 648.

plates round it; and because he was moved with pity for the ignorant people round about him, who lived in darkness, he carried a light on his head!

Well, I am quite sure that there is no danger of my ever bursting with too much wisdom and so there is no need for me to wear copper plates or armour! And in any event I hope that my wisdom, such of it as I possess, does not live in my belly. Wherever it may reside, there is plenty of room still for more of it and there is no chance of there being no room left. If I am so limited in wisdom how can I pose as a wise man to others and distribute good advice to all? And so I have always thought that the best way to find out what is right and what is not right, what should be done and what should not be done, is not to give a sermon, but to talk and discuss and out of the discussion sometimes a little bit of the truth comes out. I have liked my talks with you and we have discussed many things, but the world is wide and beyond our world lie other wonderful and mysterious worlds, so none of us need ever be bored or imagine, like the very foolish and conceited person whose story Hiuen Tsang has told us, that we have learned everything worth learning and become very wise. And perhaps it is as well that we do not become very wise for the very wise, if any such there are, must sometimes feel rather sad that there is nothing more to learn. They must miss the joy of discovery and of learning new things—the great adventure that all of us who care may have.

I must not therefore sermonize. But what am I to do then? A letter can hardly take the place of a talk; at best it is a one-sided affair. So if I say anything that sounds like good advice do not take it as if it was a bad pill to swallow. Imagine that I have made a suggestion to you for you to think over, as if we were really having a talk.

In your history books you read of great periods in the life of nations. We read of great men and women and great deeds performed, and sometimes in our dreams and reveries we imagine ourselves back in those times and doing brave deeds like the heroes and heroines of old. Do you remember how fascinated you were when you first read the story of Jeanne d'Arc[11] and how your ambition was to do something like her? Ordinary men and women are not usually heroic. They think of their daily bread and butter, of their children, of their household worries and the like. But a time comes when a whole people become full of faith for a great cause, and then even simple, ordinary men and women become heroes, and history becomes stirring and epoch-making. Great

11. Joan of Arc (1412-1431); French national heroine; defeated an English army at Orleans in 1429; tried for heresy and burnt at the stake.

leaders have something in them which inspires a whole people and makes them do great deeds.

The year you were born in—1917—was one of those great years of history when a great leader, with a heart full of love and sympathy for the poor and suffering, made his people write a noble and never to be forgotten chapter of history. In the very month you were born, Lenin started his great Revolution which has changed the face of Russia and Siberia. And today in India another great leader, also full of love for all who suffer and passionately eager to help them, has inspired our people to great endeavour and noble sacrifice so that they may again be free and the starving and the poor and the oppressed may have their burdens removed from them. Bapuji lies in prison but the magic of his message steals into the hearts of India's millions, and men and women and even little children come out of their little shells and become India's soldiers of freedom. In India today we are making history, and you and I are fortunate to see this happen before our eyes and to take some part ourselves in the great drama.

How shall we bear ourselves in this great movement, what part shall we play in it? I cannot say what part will fall to our lot but whatever it may be let us remember that we can do nothing which may bring discredit to our cause or dishonour to our people. If we are to be India's soldiers we have India's honour in our keeping and that honour is a sacred trust.

Often we may be in doubt as to what to do. It is no easy matter to decide what is right and what is not. One little test I shall ask you to apply whenever you are in doubt. It may help you. Never do anything in secret or anything that you would wish to hide. For the desire to hide anything means that you are afraid, and fear is a bad thing and unworthy of you. Be brave and all the rest follows. If you are brave, you will not fear and will not do anything of which you are ashamed. You know that in our great freedom movement, under Bapuji's leadership, there is no room for secrecy or hiding. We have nothing to hide. We are not afraid of what we do and what we say. We work in the sun and in the light. Even so in our private lives let us make friends with the sun and work in the light and do nothing secretly or furtively. Privacy of course we may have and should have, but that is a very different thing from secrecy. And if *you* do so, my dear, you will grow up a child of the light, unafraid and serene and unruffled, whatever may happen.

I have written you a very long letter. And yet there is so much I would like to tell you. How can a letter contain it?

You are fortunate, I have said, in being a witness to this great struggle for freedom that is going on in our country. You are also very fortunate in having a very brave and wonderful little woman for your mummie, and if you are ever in doubt or in trouble you cannot have a better friend.

Good-bye, little one, and may you grow up into a brave soldier in India's service.

With all my love and good wishes.

Your loving
Papu

October 26th Sunday

Indu's 13th birthday कार्तिक सुदी 5[8]

Wrote to her.

October 29th Wednesday

Judgement & sentence

Section 124 A : 18 months R.I. + 500/- fine
in default 3 months R.I.

Salt Act of 1882 : 6 months R.I. + 100/- fine
in default 1 month R.I.

Ordinance VI of 1930 : 6 months R.I. + 100/- fine
in default 1 month R.I.

Last two to be concurrent i.e. total imprisonment 2 years R.I. plus 5 months in default of fines.

Govind Malaviya arrested immediately after my trial as he was going out of Naini Jail.

November 1st Saturday

My weight-117¾ lbs

Ran jit's interview.

November 3rd Monday

Govind sentenced to 1½ year and Rs. 500/- fine.

November 8th Saturday

My usual interview ought to have taken place today but it was hastened and took place on the 5th. It was feared that perhaps all the interviewers may not be out of jail by today! This livening up in Allahabad

due to the promulgation of Sec. 144 against processions in the Civil Station, as a result of the celebration of 'Jawahar Week'.[12] Processions declared unlawful and asked to disperse—Hold on—squat on the ground for some hours and then on withdrawal of police proceed to complete the programme. Lathi attacks were expected but they did not materialise. Sundar Lai, Manzar Ali, Gur Narain, &c. arrested the next day.[13] Kamala and Nan would no doubt be arrested but apparently there is some hesitation to proceed against them or against women. Not because of any chivalry but because it is feared the reaction might be a big one.

In the last two weeks nearly I have been taking injections of contraminc & chloral iodine for the pain in my shoulders. Result—I have felt poorly all day. There is no marked improvement in my shoulder trouble.

Last night Ba and Vallabhbhai & Mahadeva must have arrived in Allahabad.

Owing to shoulder trouble and daily injections have not been able to do any spinning. Can only use my arms in early morning before injection and in the evening. During both these periods I have been doing *newar*-weaving.

Nov. 15th Saturday

Interview with father, mother, Kamala, Nan, Betty and Indu. Father not at all improving. Is bringing up far more blood. The atmosphere of worry is all against his treatment. He hopes to go to Calcutta day after tomorrow and from there for a sea trip to Rangoon and Singapore. But much depends on what happens in Allahabad tomorrow—Jawahar Day! There is some likelihood of Kamala etc. getting arrested. May be also some lathi play on the part of the police.

I have had two birthday celebrations. On the 13th it was the *Samvat* day—*Aghan Badi* 7. Food &c. came from Anand Bhawan and some presents from mother. On the 14th—the date according to the Gregorian calendar—Mahmud produced some gorgeous presents—a lovely fountain pen &c.—and arranged with Kliwaja to send a huge feast.

On the 13th Brailsforcl turned up and had a long interview with me. Amazingly weak in practice and oppressed with the might of the capitalist and the imperialist order!

12. This was celebrated at Allahabad from 3 November with processions, public meetings and spinning competitions.
13. They were arrested on 4 November on a charge of violating section 144.

I learned today that my birthday was celebrated (or rather was to have been celebrated) yesterday in the Yeravda Female prison—Sarojini wanted to celebrate 17th Nov., which is Bebee's birthday, by feeding her fellow prisoners. Bebee suggested the 14th and this apparently was agreed to.

My weight today—15th—118 lb.

Nov. 16th Sunday

Jawahar Day![14] Arrests—convictions—lathi charges all over the country!

November 1930[15]

TO KRISHNA NEHRU

I understand that you are gathering caskets and addresses. What exploit are they meant to celebrate? Surely a few hours in Malacca jail do not deserve an epic.[16] Anyway don't get a swelled head—or perhaps it is better to have a swelled head than no head at all!

It has recently occurred to me that the British Government by issuing an order under Sec. 144 on me and by subsequently arresting me on the 19th Oct.[17] made me forget a most important event, or rather anniversary on that day, and the beautiful and artistic gift that I should have made to my dearly beloved sister, did not materialize. This lapse on my own part was most unfortunate. But I hasten to correct it. Therefore, take yourself to a book shop and choose some volumes containing the wisdom of the ancients, and the faith of the middle ages, and the scepticism of the present, and glimpses of the glory that is to be, and take them and pay for them and consider them the belated but loving gift of a somewhat absent-minded brother who thinks often of his little sister. And read these chosen volumes and out of them construct a magic city full of dream castles and flowering gardens and running brooks where beauty and happiness dwell and the ills that this sorry world of ours suffers from can gain no admittance. And

14. This was celebrated all over the country. Besides processions, meetings, flag-hoistings and hartals, copies of the pamphlet, *The Eight Days Interlude*, were distributed. The government confiscated many copies and at several places there were lathi charges and arrests.
15. Clearly written after 11 November 1930. *Nehru's Letters to His Sister* (London, 1963); pp. 17-18.
16. Krishna Nehru was arrested on 11 November 1930 for attending an unlawful meeting and was sentenced to one month's imprisonment or a fine. She was released when, against her wishes, a friend paid the fine.
17. Her birthday that year according to the Hindu calendar.

life will then become one long and happy endeavour, a ceaseless adven-ture, to build this city of magic and to drive away all the ugliness and misery around us.

If you find any books likely to interest me, send them along to me. And if father has finished with Garibaldi[18] (the first volume about the Defence of the Roman Republic)[19] send it to Indu. If father has not read it perhaps it will be better to get another copy. Send the first copy to Indu. I should like her to read it soon as I want to write to her on the subject. Send me your Book Co.'s catalogue.

Au revoir, and look after Papa and yourself and come back fatter and wiser than you went.

Love,

Your loving brother,
Jawahar

2/12/1930[20]

TO MAJOR OBEROI

Dear Major,

I enclose a letter[21] which will speak for itself. All of us have been greatly upset by the news that has been coming, in papers and interviews, about floggings on political prisoners. Under the circumstances we must take some action and the letter I am attaching is the first step in this direction. I shall be greatly obliged if you will send this letter on as soon as possible to the I.G. or to the provincial government. We shall wait for some days for the reply. On receipt of the reply, or if there is no reply within a reasonable time, we shall take such further action as may appear to us to be called for.

You will now appreciate that the action we are taking or contemplating has nothing to do with Naini Prison. We would be sorry to do anything which might add to your trouble or worry. But the issue is too important and too painful for us not to take any action.

18. Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882); Italian patriot, soldier and guerilla leader. He was one of Jawaharlal's boyhood heroes.
19. Garibaldi's *Defence of the Roman Republic* by G. M. Trevelyan, published in 1907.
20. J. N. Prison Papers, N.M.M.L.
21. See the following item.

I hope we shall have a reply to my letter within a week or so.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

TO SUPERINTENDENT, CENTRAL PRISON, NAINI[22]

Dear Sir,

As you are aware, we are to a large extent cut off from the outside world and only fragmentary and belated accounts of happenings outside the prison walls reach us. From the newspapers supplied to us, however, we have come to know that recently some of our colleagues in other prisons in these provinces have been flogged by the jail authorities for alleged breaches of jail discipline. In particular, we understand that flogging was inflicted on boys or young men, sentenced for political offences, in the Mirzapur jail and in the Allahabad District Jail. In the latter case, it is stated that the alleged offence was the writing of "Mahatma Gandhi *ki jai*' on the walls of the cell. We also understand that a circular was issued some little time ago by the Inspector General of Jails to the various prisons in these provinces asking the jail authorities to inform political prisoners that in case of any breach of jail discipline or non-compliance with 'parade' rules flogging would be inflicted. It also appears that political prisoners are being frequently put in fetters and that even under-trials have had fetters put on them. We are naturally not in a position to state how far these allegations are correct. In view, however, of the gravity of these allegations and of the issues involved, I am addressing this letter to you with the request that you may forward it to the responsible officers of the British Government in these provinces, so that we may have an authoritative answer from them and may then be able to determine what our future line of action may be.

It has been our policy in prison to observe as far as possible jail discipline and rules. We have deliberately counselled a large measure of cooperation inside jail to such of our colleagues as have been convicted. But conformity to jail discipline, which we have so far agreed to and advised, has always been subject to this: that there will be nothing in the jail rules or discipline that may be degrading or dehumanizing, nor anything that may bring dishonour to our cause or our country. The allegations about flogging, etc., to which I have referred above, would indicate, if the facts are true, that a deliberate attempt is being made by the present government of these provinces, or its agents, to insult

22. J. N. Prison Papers, N.M.M.L.

and harass political prisoners and to compel them by threat of flogging to submit to certain practices or orders. Flogging is well known to be a barbarous practice in civilized countries and even in the case of hardened criminals it is seldom resorted to. To inflict it on political prisoners for minor breaches of jail discipline is a monstrous procedure. To give a general license to inflict this punishment, as the alleged circular of the Inspector General of Jails appears to suggest, indicates an outlook which it is difficult for us even to conceive.

As political prisoners we are personally concerned with this matter. But we have also a duty to our young comrades who have been punished and who are threatened with the punishment of flogging. If the facts we have referred to above are in the main correct we shall necessarily have to change our policy in prison with regard to the observance of jail rules. What we shall do, it will be for us to determine, after careful consideration, on receipt of an answer from the provincial government or the Inspector General.

We would like to add that so far as we are personally concerned we have no grievance about the treatment that has been accorded to us. The authorities of the Naini Central Prison have treated us with courtesy to which we have naturally responded by giving them a large measure of our cooperation. But the issue before us is a larger one, and we feel that we cannot remain silent or passive when a deliberate attempt is being made to humiliate and punish our young comrades by flogging.

My colleagues with me here are in agreement with me and desire me to express their concurrence with this letter. I shall be glad to have an answer to this letter at a very early date.

The matter, as you will no doubt appreciate, is urgent and vital, affecting as it does large numbers of our colleagues who are in prison, as well as the general public.

Yours faithfully,
Jawaharlal Nehru

December 7th Sunday

Have spent a bad two days. Am feeling a little calmer and more collected now, though even now my mind is frequently troubled.

On the 3rd December the announcement appeared that the Allahabad Congress Committee—Youth League *ashram*, etc., had been declared illegal. News of this trickled through to us in the course of the

day and we rejoiced thinking that now Allahabad was given a chance of doing wonders. Next morning we heard that processions and de-monstrations were going to take place on a big scale-and also that many arrests were impending. We were in a fever of excitement, eagerly waiting for news.

News came the next day and with it depression and anger. Instead of a striking and dramatic procession and meeting, the whole thing was a miserable failure. Evidently terror seized some of our नेतागण[23] and every attempt was made to avoid trouble. Kamala was told by Tandon not to lead the procession as her arrest might have a bad effect on father who was ill! The leaders conspicuous by their absence. Why did Kamala agree to this humiliation ? It was shameful and I have felt miserable. One wrong act can undo half a year's good work. The whole city is depressed. Tandon lies ill and not only does nothing himself but prevents others from acting.

December 13th 1930[24] .

TO MAJOR OBEROI

Dear Major,
We have just had a long talk among ourselves regarding your suggestion that we should delay sending our second letter. As I mentioned to you we had fully considered the question yesterday and indeed have decided to take some further action in the matter without much more delay. Subsequent news that had come to us had gone to confirm the previous impression that the provincial government and its principal officers were out to crush political prisoners by methods of frightfulness. I believe there has been flogging in other places also—in Ghazipur and probably in Fyzabad. This is bad enough but what is even worse is the lathi play on several occasions in the Allahabad District Jail when almost every political prisoner there—and there were hundreds of them—was beaten. It is a little difficult to contemplate the happenings with equanimity. To add insult to injury some of these persons who were beaten are being proceeded against in court. This hardly shows that any change has taken place in the mentality of those in authority. For us to be passive under these circumstances is not easy and every day's delay is a trial. Our reading and other work suffers because of the distress of our minds. Besides, being somewhat aggressive in such matters, a defensive attitude does not suit us, especially as those who suffer or

23. Flock of leaders.
24. J. N. Prison Papers, N.M.M.L.

have suffered are young colleagues of ours. If we had been the principal sufferers we could easily have waited but when those who relied on us and confidently looked to us to help them in time of need are made to suffer, are we merely to tell them to wait and see! We have a responsibility towards them and if any punishments are to be awarded we ought to be the first to get them. After all we led them "astray"!

Hence our desire to do something as soon as possible. We would gladly meet your wishes and postpone action for a short while but I do not quite see what difference a day or two would make—if you think it will, then we can delay our second letter by a day or so but as far as I could gather from you, you suggested a delay of about a week or so. I am afraid this will be too much and would largely stultify the action we might take.

It was our intention to state in our second letter that we would not observe jail rules or discipline whenever we so chose—in particular we would not obey any rules regarding parade or jail tasks—and to invite any punishment for these breaches. When and how else we might break jail discipline, it would of course be for us to determine. It was also our intention to state that as a mark of sympathy for our colleagues, who had been made to suffer or have been insulted and harassed in various jails, we would observe a complete fast for 72 hours, that is, three full days beginning from December 14th, Wednesday. This fast would not be in the nature of a hunger strike, but realising that fasting is an offence in jail—and one of the charges against the political prisoners being tried now—we would invite similar proceedings against ourselves. The fast being one of sympathy with the past and present sufferings of our colleagues has little to do with the attitude that the government might take, and the object of the fast is not wholly served by delaying it considerably. We would indeed have taken it already but we felt that it may have far-reaching consequences and hence we stayed our hand. I might point out that it is not our desire that the fast should become general and that other prisoners, political and non-political, should join it. We would make it clear that we do not desire others to join. At this stage, at any rate, it is a purely personal matter for us, but of course we fully realise its public aspect.

In view of what you said it seems to us that perhaps it might meet both our viewpoints to some extent if we made certain changes in our proposed second letter. The letter might be sent to you on Monday morning—unless you specially desire that it be delayed by a day or so. We would not say anything definite in it regarding the non-observance of jail rules yet—that would be postponed for some time till the reply

of the government came, or did not come, as the case might be. We would state, however, that in sympathy with our colleagues we were going to observe a three days' fast. For this of course we would invite proceedings against ourselves. This course would not commit us to any future action—apart from the fast—and would leave the door open for any response from the government. I trust you think it is a reasonable ria media.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

17112/30[25]

TO SUPERINTENDENT, CENTRAL PRISON, NAINI

Dear Sir,

We have received no answer yet to the letter dated December 2nd 1930, which was addressed to you on our behalf by one of us, Jawaharlal Nehru, on the subject of the recent floggings of political prisoners in these provinces. We understand that, in response to our request, the letter was forwarded to the provincial government. We do not know if you have had any acknowledgment or reply, but as none has been communicated to us, we presume that you have not received any. We realise that the wheels of government move slowly and red tape and efficiency seldom go together. But, as was pointed out in our last letter, the matter is urgent and vital and affects large numbers of people who are in jail as well as the general public. We had every desire to give full time for consideration to the British Government in these provinces, and indeed it was because of this that we have waited patiently for an answer. But as not even an acknowledgment has come, we have no alternative left but to consider the data that have already reached us, fragmentary and in some cases vague as they are, and to decide upon our course of action accordingly.

Indeed, such further information as has come to us goes to confirm the previous reports and to show that the policy of flogging political prisoners has been more or less general in these provinces. We under stand that in addition to the floggings in Allahabad and Mirzapore district jails, political prisoners have been flogged in Ghazipur and in

25. J. N. Prison Papers, N.M.M.L. Original in Jawaharlal's hand.

Lakhimpur. Further, we gather that some of these floggings, at least, were given in the presence of other political prisoners, with the intention, we presume, of impressing them with the might and ruthlessness of the prison authorities and the government. We need not mention here the many other instances of insult and harassment which have come to our knowledge and which apparently have taken place sometimes in the presence of high officials. But we must refer to the reports of repeated and indiscriminate lathi beatings of political prisoners in the Allahabad District Jail. We have learned of these with horror and amazement, and we can only conclude from them that the mental apparatus and nerves of the men at present in authority in these provinces have given way under stress of the national movement.

It is clear that such a widespread and ruthless attack on political prisoners can only be due to a deliberate policy of the government. We had hoped that this may not be so and in that hope we had sent you our last letter. But the government has not chosen to deny the reports or to disclaim responsibility or to punish those who have been guilty of this barbarous practice. Instead, they have added insult to injury by taking proceedings in court against some of our colleagues for indiscipline in the Allahabad District Jail.

Under these circumstances we cannot continue our policy of cooperation inside jail. We shall be constrained to change it unless a satisfactory assurance is given to us on behalf of the provincial government and suitable action is taken by them in pursuance of this assurance. To begin with, we propose to observe a three days' fast from tomorrow morning, December 18th, that is to say we shall abstain from all food for 72 hours. We shall do this as a mark of sympathy with our colleagues who have been flogged or who have suffered in other ways at the hands of jail officials in these provinces. Abstention from food is, we understand, in itself an offence in jail, and some of our colleagues are being tried for this offence. We invite a like treatment. We would add that this fast is, at this stage at any rate, a purely personal matter for us and we do not recommend others to join in it.

We shall await a little longer a response to our last letter before taking any further steps in the matter.

Yours faithfully,
Jawaharlal Nehru
Ranjit S. Pandit
Syed Mahmud
Narmada Prasad Singh

December 18th

We have begun a three-day—72 hours—fast today in sympathy with political prisoners who have been flogged in other jails. Flogging apparently has taken place in Allahabad District Jail, Mirzapur, Ghazipur & Lakhimpur jails—worst in Malacca (Alld. District). Apart from flogging, lathi beatings &c. I wrote a letter on this subject to Supt. on 2nd December. Malaviyaji wrote to the Governor—Lambert—Having waited for 10 days for an answer I wanted to write again. At Supt.'s request I postponed second letter. Ultimately sent it yesterday. This was a joint one signed by Ranjit, Mahmud, Sardar and me. Govind sent a separate letter to same effect.

So we are in the middle of the fast. Am looking forward with great interest to the 2nd and 3rd day. As far as I can remember I have never fasted for more than 36 hours in health.

Mahmud after having started the fast was discharged on completion of his term today at 2 p.m.—much to his disgust. He tried to get round the Supt. to allow him to stay on for a few days more!

Malaviyaji was sent yesterday to the Civil Hospital. He has suffered a lot lately from colic pain.

December 19th Friday

Going strong after 31 hours of fast! I had my usual exercises and the full run of a mile and three quarters this morning. At meal times yesterday some feeling of hunger but even that is not troubling me much. The day seems long.

We were weighed on December 16th. My weight was 115 lbs—a drop of 2 lbs in the previous fortnight. I have now lost 15 lbs since April when I came to jail on the last occasion and this in spite of sufficient food and exercise. My weight now—8 stone 3 lbs—is almost what it was when I left Harrow and went to Cambridge. I remember it was 8 st 4 lbs or thereabouts. I have an idea, however, that the jail balance is all wrong and shows 4 or 5 lbs less weight than it should. Thus I should be 8 st 7 lbs or 8 st 8 lbs. The balance however shows the difference in weight accurately enough.

Mahmud	has lost		23½ lbs in 6 months
Ranjit	,,	,,	1½ lb in 3 months
Narmada Pd	,,	,,	21 lbs in 8 months

and all this before the fast!

December 20th Saturday

53 hours over! Felt quite fresh when I got up in the morning at 5. Only a slight feeling of emptiness and a somewhat unpleasant taste in the mouth as in a fever. As usual had my morning exercise though not veryvigorously. Ran a mile—might have easily gone further but thought I had better be cautious.

On the whole the discomfort of the fast has been far less than I thought it would be. The little suffering is probably mental more than physical. There is a little weakness about the legs. A slight unsteadiness if one stands for some little time-and a feeling of emptiness. Sitting down and reading I can distinctly hear my heart thumping.

Ranjit and Narmada Prasad more or less in the same conditions as I am. After a cold bath at midday I felt very much refreshed and quite forgot about the fast for a while.

No news from home. Today was Ranjit's interview day but no one seems to have come back from Calcutta. Kamala is also apparently away—Mahmud must be all by himself in Anand Bhawan. Rather bravely he is continuing the fast even after his release. No!

December 21st Sunday

We are successfully through the fast without any trouble or even great discomfort. At 8.25 am today we broke it with some grape fruit, followed by *dallia* and half-boiled eggs. Even this amount of food made one feel heavy. There was not much obvious appetite or desire for food at midday.

Just before ending the fast we weighed ourselves. Surprised to find that all of us had been greatly reduced in three days. The weights were:

Mine 108lbs-reduction of 71¼ lbs

Ranjit 122½ lbs-reduction of 7 lbs

Sardar 140½ lbs-reduction of 83¼ lbs

As usual Ranjit and I had our morning run and walk—ran half a mile—walked 140½ miles without any discomfort except, towards the end of the run, there was a slight oppression in the region of the heart. This was efore we ended the fast.

Last evening the most marked feeling was a weakness of the lower leg—below the knee. The night was a restless one and I must have woven up a score of times.

Before we broke our fast we arranged that our convict colleagues in

our barrack, who had also been fasting in sympathy with us, should break their fasts. They did so with *dallia* and milk.

During the period of our fast we took absolutely nothing to eat. All we took was water—about 2 or 3 tumblers in the course of the day.

Do not feel quite normal yet. A feeling of heaviness, although the meals we have taken were not abnormal.

23/12/30[26]

Nan Dear,
I am very sorry father has worried about our fast etc. Please tell him not to worry. All that we have done (or will do) is only after the fullest consideration. There is no question of acting in a huff or in a hurry. It was a pity that you or Kamala did not prepare him for our fast etc. We had suggested previously at our interviews that you might.

We did not act as we did because of anything that Tandon may have said or done. We do not even know what he said. We acted independently of our own accord on the facts before us. I do not think Tandon's message had any effect on any jail—certainly not on the Malacca jail. The position however at our time became a difficult one and it might have justified at some later stage, perhaps, some general change of attitude as is stated to have been suggested by Tandon. There is no question of going in for parade etc. No one has objected to it or to the ordinary jail discipline. But when a deliberate attempt is made to humiliate and insult with the threat of the whipping triangle and the lathis behind it, it becomes almost impossible to remain passive. Besides, it is bad tactics. Submission to this aggression means an increase of it all round till everyone has to suffer. For instance, even lately the offensive of the I.G. was not confined to C class prisoners but was directed to B and A class prisoners also. Therefore common prudence dictated that something should be done—of course, there were stronger reasons for doing so from the larger point of view. Such action as we have so far taken has already justified itself and we arc credibly informed that the change is noticeable in many jails. There is very little likelihood of any more floggings.

So far as any future action on our part is concerned we do not contemplate anything just at present. If nothing aggressive or irritating occurs we may not take any further steps. If however the government misbehaves we may do something, but whatever we may do will not,

26. J. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.

father may rest assured, be wholly foolish. One policy I have never believed in—and that is one of defensive submission. Neither has father. If there is going to be aggression on the part of the government, there is going to be no submission on our part—quite the reverse. But we do not think much will happen either way now—certainly there is just a possibility of matters developing to such an extent that it may become desirable for us and others to disobey jail regulations etc. generally. I do not contemplate this contingency but if it should arrive I shall view it with equanimity. Even then I think our position as a whole is a strong one and it is no easy matter for the government to face and suppress general indiscipline.

Anyhow, so far as Ranjit and I are concerned, nothing much can happen to us whatever may happen elsewhere. Rest assured that we are well able to take care of ourselves, wherever we may be, jointly or separately. At the most we may be separated and one or both of us may be removed from Allahabad. That will be unfortunate but after all it is not a very terrible contingency. So do not worry. Nothing will happen. And whatever happens somehow turns out to be for our good—in spite of the folly and weakness of many of us. The very gods seem to work in our favour! So heigh-ho and long life to the Plum Pudding!

Just at present I am feeling exceedingly fit after the 3-day fast. Excellent thing—a 3-day fast! I am prepared to recommend it to everybody.

Love to the little one and the little one and to the tiny tot from the

Mamu

28.12.1930[27]

My dear Father,

I had an interview with Kamala and Indu yesterday. They could not give me any very recent news about you. The latest was five days old when apparently a 'phone message came here from Calcutta to say that you were improving under the Kaviraj's treatment. This was very pleasing news but I wish it had been followed up by some further information. We have no idea—neither had Kamala—about the date of your return to Allahabad. If all goes well, I take it, you will be here within the first week of January. Meanwhile, a letter from me is due and I propose to take advantage of this by writing to you. If, however, this letter has the misfortune to go by post, I doubt if it will

27. M. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.

reach you in time. You may be in Allahabad by the time it reaches Dakshineshwar[28] and makes itself felt more than even the visible emblems of her might! Indeed, as the stage becomes barer and emptier, the commotion behind the scenes increases, and one can even hear the panting and the throbbing of the stage hands. One might almost say that one can hear their furious attempts to think. Unhappily the hartal age inaugurated by the Mahatma and the Congress has had some evil effects. It has resulted in continuous hartals in the heads and brains of some people. The upper storey has been locked up and the key is missing. It is a sad and deplorable result, but I suppose wc must all bear up with this additional affliction.

Apropos of letters, we were much puzzled and perplexed by some news the Superintendent gave us the other day about your health. He had received a letter from Nan from Calcutta and on the strength of this he stated that you were still carrying on Nilratan Sirkar's treatment and were much the same as before. This was amazing as Nan had told Ranjit during her last visit that you had started the Kaviraj's treatment and were prospering under it. We could not make out what had happened to induce you to revert to allopathy. There seemed to be some mystery about it. This was solved by the Superintendent scrutinising the letter and its envelope again and finding out that the former was dated a week or more earlier. The letter had been written before Nan left Calcutta but, as happens often enough, it went to the other Naini in the hills and then gradually and leisurely descended to the plains below!

I suppose we have to put up with suchlike happenings—but so long as the British raj provides us with a postal and telegraph system, how—ever slow and unreliable it may be, there is no reason why some advantage should not be taken of it by Nan or Betty sending word of your health. Our noncooperation need not extend to a boycott of information!

We are well and are putting on weight rapidly, I suppose, after the fast. We have not weighed again. The weather is pleasant and cold and the mornings are spent sitting in the sun with the head covered. A few days ago we had quite a sharp snap of cold—the temperature went down to 36°F. The poor Sardar does not approve of the cold—he is quite sure of this. The very prospect of cold terrifies him-however he has survived, and is at present putting in an extra week in barrack No. 6 for his temerity in fasting for 3 days. In theory all three

28. A suburb of Calcutta known for its temple of Kali, where Ramakrishna Paramahamsa had his first mystical experiences.

of us have had a week of remission taken off, but in practice it makes precious little difference to Ranjit or me. Only the Sardar, after having packed up and brushed up, had to unpack and unbrush again! Very soon however he will go, and our little barrack will miss him as it has been missing Mahmud for the last ten days. The perpetual argument about the desirability of *masala* in food will be hushed and our cook will become monarch of all he surveys in the kitchen—within limits however. Ranjit nurses a wild hope that some day he might learn to cook in a cooker. He might be able to do so. So far as I am concerned I am quite content with my present knowledge of cookery. It is not exactly extensive, but I have the comforting conviction that I shall never starve for want of a cook.

Our garden grows and the flowers peep at us in the mornings. Some of them will go to Anand Bhawan, I hope, to welcome you back on your return.

Kamala tells me that you—more probably Betty—have bought a goodly number of books in Calcutta. I am eager to see the new books —it is a disease—I know I cannot read all of them or even many of them. If you wish to pander to this disease still further, I enclose a list[29] of books that might be ordered. Perhaps some of them have already been purchased by you.

Malaviyaji paid us a short visit the other day, after his discharge. He looked so weak and frail. It was such a pity as he made famous progress during his first two months here. He used to dash about at the rate of 5 miles an hour, and now he has lost all that and a good bit besides. I am very glad he is out. The cold weather in jail did not suit him at all.

1930, with all its ups and downs, has been a great year. 1931, I have no doubt, will be a greater. You will be well soon I hope, full of strength and energy, and ready to welcome the great day when it comes to our country. With love and all our best wishes for the New Year.

Your loving son,
Jawahar

Betty dear,
Your long stay in Calcutta will not, I hope, make you too much of a Bengali. At any rate don't take to the oil.

29. Not printed.

Here is a long list of books.[30] Get them or order them if you have not already got them.

Give my love to mother and wish her and Nanand yourself (with the help of a mirror) a happy New Year.

Love

Your loving brother,
Jawahar

December 1930[31]

TO SYED MAHMUD

My dear Mahmud,

Barrack No. 6 has been missing you a lot. I hear that you are having a big gathering on New Year's Day in Allahabad. Give my love to such friends of mine who may come. From reports it appears that things are marching satisfactorily to the appointed goal. I am almost inclined to think that our movement is becoming foolproof, that is, it will go on to success in spite of all mistakes even.

I feel that the A.I.C.C. office is behaving very badly or rather it is not behaving at all! Does it function at all? I wish you would spend some time there and make the place hum. If there is not enough work make the staff stand on their heads. Anything to keep them working.

I am sending you a copy of an agrarian programme for the U.P. which we have suggested.[32] This is for your information. Do not keep it in the office.

One good result of your working in the A.I.C.C. office in Allahabad will be that if you are arrested again you will come back to barrack No. 6.

The old Sardar has had to put in extra work because of the fast. He is the only real sufferer. We enjoyed the fast very much. Only we missed you. If you meet Masud Ali give him my love.

Love to your children and regards to your wife.

An attempt should be made to have a Working Committee meeting.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

30. Not printed.
31. Written some time after 21 December 1930. Syed Mahmud Papers, N.M.M.L.
32. See the following item.

NOTES MADE IN NAINI PRISON, 1930

The Congress, which is the great panchayat of the whole country, is fighting today for Purna Swaraj. hi many parts of the country zamindars have, at the request of the Congress, stopped paying their land revenue to the foreign government, and the tenants have stopped paying rent Zamindars and kisans must understand what our great panchayat is fighting for and what Swaraj will mean for them. How will they benefit by Swaraj? And what is Swaraj?

Today both zamindars and kisans have to carry out the orders of officials of the foreign government. Settlements are made by them, and zamindars or kisans have little say in the matter. When Swaraj comes, the power to make land laws, tenancy acts, settlements and everything connected with the zamindar and the tenant will rest with the people the kisans and the zamindar. Their panchayats will decide all these matters. When this power is in their own hands they can do away will all evils which trouble them. They with not then have to beg favours of big officials but decide for themselves what they want. This panchayati raj will be Swaraj. What the zamindars and kisans will decide them it will be for them to determine. No one else can decide it for them beforehand.

The provincial Congress panchayat has however considered these questions fully and it recommends the following programme to zamindars and kisans alike:

FOR ZAMINDARS

1. There should be a land tax.
2. Petty zamindars and peasant proprietors who cultivate their own land and whose agriculture income is below a certain taxable minimum
   1. There should be a taxable minimum and all agricultural incomes below this minimum must be exempted.
   2. The usual rate of land tax should be 25% and not 40%. The tax to be a graded one like the income-tax (after a certain limit, say, on income of Rs. 1000 per annum).
   3. There will be no forfeiture of landed properties. Where the state acquires land, adequate compensation will be given.

33. J. N. Miscellaneous Papers, N.M.M.L.

should be exempted.

4. Inheritance taxes on big zamindaris (i.e., those paying a land tax of Rs. 2000 or above).
5. No roster year as at present.
6. Collection of water rate through revenue agency instead of through zamindars.

FOR TENANTS

1. Transferable hereditary right.
2. Right to buy up outright the zamindari rights on instalment plan.
3. Reduction in rent at least in proportion to the reduction in revenue.
4. Right to construct works, build houses, plant trees.
5. Common pasture land in village.
6. No free labour or *nazrana*.

GENERAL

1. Large zamindaris should not be encouraged and should be gradually acquired by the state, adequate compensation being given. With these acquired lands provision to be made as far as possible for the landless people who require land.
2. Village panchayats elected by all the adult men and women, these should have considerable powers given to them to settle land disputes as well as other civil and criminal disputes.
3. Encouragement of cooperatives in villages, working through the village panchayat, helping the cultivators with loans, seeds &c. and getting them out of the control of the money-lender.
4. Every village to have a panchayat *ghar* which will belong to the whole village and which will be the meeting place of all the residents. The panchayat ghar to have a reading room, library, school room etc.
5. Provision to be made for education and medical relief for all villages.
6. No salt tax.

IMPORTANT

1. All zamindars and kisans must remember that the Congress has declared that it will not recognise any sales or rejections which may take place for non-payment of land revenue or

rent in pursuance of the Congress campaign. With the attainment of Swaraj all such lands will be restored to their rightful owners. So far as the Congress can help it zamindars and kisans will not be made to suffer for their adherence to the no-tax campaign for Swaraj.

2. It has been stated above that compensation will be given for all lands acquired by the Swaraj government. But it must be clearly remembered that those persons who help the enemy now and oppress the kisans and thus try to delay Swaraj can expect no consideration or compensation or special privileges from the Swaraj government.

AN AGRARIAN PROGRAMME FOR THE CONGRESS

Any movement which seeks to become a mass movement must necessarily have an economic programme for the masses. On general principles, therefore, it is essential that the Congress should lay down the broad outlines of such a programme. Such a programme would have to deal with questions of capital and labour and the land laws, more the latter, as India is still overwhelmingly an agricultural country. Two difficulties have stood in the way of the Congress and prevented it from tackling these questions. One is the lack of uniformity of the land laws in the various parts of the country, and the other is the fear of many Congressmen lest they irritate and antagonise powerful classes like the big capitalists and the landlords. The result has been that although many attempts have been made to get the Congress to tackle these questions, it has fought shy of them. In spite of this ostrich-like desire not to face facts, however, Congress was being forced gradually but surely to recognise them and to give its opinion in regard to them. An appreciation of the fact that the only solid basis of a revolutionary movement is an economic programme of radical betterment of the masses led the Congress to make several rather vague but none the less significant gestures which were meant to win over the masses. To some extent they succeeded in winning the sympathy of the people, but they did not translate themselves sufficiently into the day-to—day economic life of the people to fire them to irresistible movement.

Some of these "gestures" might be mentioned here.

Some time in May or June 1928 the A.I.C.C. adopted a resolution in Bombay (at the instance of the U.P.P.C.C.) which dealt with the removal of all exploitation of workers and peasants. A little later the All Parties Report, in the midst of some very reactionary provisions, laid down, probably without thinking of its inevitable consequences, the

principle of the living wage. There were some other important provisions also for workers etc. In October or November 1928 the outlines of an agrarian programme were discussed in the presidential address of the U.P. Provincial Conference at Jhansi by Jawaharlal Nehru.[34] The Council of the U.P.P.C.C. went a step further early in 1930 and adopted a resolution on the subject which was forwarded to the A.I.C.C. as its recommendation. This resolution *inter alia* laid down the general principle that the state should have direct dealings with the cultivators, that is to say, that there should be no intermediaries between tire state and the cultivator. According to this there was no place for the zamindar letting out his land to others. A second part of the resolution dealt with the details of the programme. The consideration of this was postponed by the U.P.P.C.C. The papers however gave it considerable publicity. Owing to the commencement of the civil disobedience movement probably the subject was not considered again.

Gandhijis eleven points, in his letter to the Viceroy, were essentially parts of an economic programme and some of them dealt with the peasantry. They were written however from the viewpoint of the Gujarat peasantry and laid stress on the reduction of land revenue by 50%. His intention was that even in the zamindari areas the rent of the tenant should be reduced by 50%.

So far as an all-India economic programme is concerned it is perhaps difficult to draw one up at this stage. Any agrarian programme applicable to the whole of India must be a very radical one which changes the present land system in every province completely. Perhaps the time is not ripe for that just yet. In any event it is doubtfull if the leading Congressmen would agree to it. But there appears to be no reason why the U.P. Congress Committee should not take the lead, so far as their own province is concerned. Indeed the U.P.P.C.C. has been doing this for the last few years. The rapid spread of the no-rent campaign in the U.P. makes it imperative that some authoritative statement be made on behalf of the Congress in regard to agrarian policy. It is only fair that zamindars and tenants should know where they stand and what they gain or lose by Swaraj. This is also sound expediency. The battle cry of an economic programme is a far more powerful one for the peasant than that of Swaraj

34. See *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 255-263.

alone. The object, clearly stated, of a no-tax campaign must be economic gain, not the release from jail of Mahatma Gandhi, Vallabhbhai Patel, or Jawaharlal Nehru or any other person. The latter gives prominence to the personal element and no mass campaign can last long on this basis.

The fear that any detailed economic programme is likely to irritate some groups is perfectly justified. It is impossible to give an abundance of the good things of life to everyone, at this stage of our civilization at any rate. All that one can do is to distribute the good things more equitably. If more of them are given to the poor peasant or tenant obviously some one has less of them. It is no use avoiding this conclusion. There should be no doubt that the basis of any agrarian programme must be the good of the man in the field—the cultivator as well as the landless man who would cultivate if he had the chance.

The Congress does not desire to precipitate a class conflict. It is wise in avoiding it, but it must always be remembered that the conflict has been there and is there. It is the inevitable outcome of existing conditions. Therefore it cannot be wholly ignored, and circumstances might at any time force the issue before the Congress for immediate decision. Those who shape Congress policy must be prepared for such a contingency and must be clear about certain matters. They must have the ultimate ideal clear-cut in their minds. This need not be advertised at this stage. At the same time it need not be kept secret either. The immediate programme will necessarily depend on many circumstances, but it must always be such that it takes us towards the ideal and benefits the really vital classes in the community. We must not do anything to irritate needlessly any group-zamindar or capitalist. It is no good adding to our enemies in the middle of a great fight. But where a choice between two positions has to be made the Congress must, without fear, back the vital groups—the masses, the kisans and petty zamindars and landless people—even though the consequences might be the driving away of the taluqdars and the big zamindars. Any weakening in such matters would end the solid and the only real support of the masses for the taluqadar's shadow which we can never grasp. This point has to be stressed as most of us are apt to think too much of the big zamindar. He is always shouting about his vested interests while the poor tenant or petty zamindar is seldom audible. So that, even without our having much sympathy for the big zamindar, we are impressed by him and his shouting and automatically give him more than he deserves.

The words ‘zamindar’ and ‘tenant’ are somewhat misleading as by far the vast majority of zamindars are petty ones, little better than the

tenants. It appears that in Agra province the figures are roughly as follows:

369000	landlords pay land	revenue between	Rs. 1	& 24
161000	do	do	25	49
73000	do	do	50	99
94000	do	do	100	4999
800	do	do	5000	& over

Thus over 86% of landlords pay land revenue of under Rs. 100/- These persons are definitely poor and the state should not cast any additional burdens on them. Our programme must not injure them in any way. Of the remaining 14% or less the great majority are probably on the borderline of subsistence and should profit by a change in , the land system. Ultimately only about 4% or 5% might remain who do not profit much by the change; and the 800 big landlords—a little over one in a thousand—are bound to be losers. We cannot afford to try to win the sympathy of these 800 at the cost of our entire programme and the goodwill of vast numbers of more deserving people. We need not assume the offensive against them, but we must realise that as a class they are bound to go over to the enemy. Indeed, it is probably desirable that they should. This would simplify matters greatly for us!

Most of the landlords are poor. But after all the whole lot of them taken together are a handful only—under seven lakhs in a population of probably over four crores in Agra province. In Oudh there must be roughly the same proportion. What of those millions who are not zamindars? They are tenants or landless labourers or the unemployed. It is they who crowd our meetings and become our volunteers and carry on the no-rent campaign. It is they who suffer most and deserve the most consideration. They are the backbone of the province and our programme is successful only in so far as it brings relief to them.

Our ultimate ideal should be large nationalised farms, and peasant proprietors cultivating their own farms but without the right of alienation. The latter restriction is desirable as otherwise big estates would grow up again. But at present this restriction will not be understood or appreciated. Therefore we must leave it out and just aim at peasant proprietorship at present. Some form or other of this exists in two-thirds of India today.

The big estates can be broken up by the well recognised and usual methods employed in Western countries, like England and Ireland. There is nothing socialistic or communistic about these methods. We can make it clear that there will be no confiscation of property except

for definite activities against the state or the national movements. Land will be acquired on payment of compensation. Almost every big zamindar will welcome this assurance today. He is afraid of the future and knows that it is not possible for present conditions to continue for long. We shall of course take steps to tax heavily big estates by means of a graded land tax and inheritance tax.

A principle that must be borne in mind in fixing the land tax or rent, is that of a living wage or income. No taxation or rent is justified if the income is below this limit.

An agrarian programme for the province is suggested below. It should apply to both the Agra and Oudh provinces. It has been drawn up with caution and contains no revolutionary proposals, and yet some of the proposals are of far-reaching importance. Inheritance taxes or death duties are not mentioned in it, but of course the state will have the right to impose them. The gradation of the land tax, on the lines of the income-tax is definitely mentioned. This should be kept as otherwise the whole programme becomes lop-sided. It is no good having proposals of exemption and reduction without some effort at counterbalancing them. The programme will lack reality otherwise and no one will take it seriously. They will all think that we have something else up our sleeves, or have really no thought-out programme. Besides a graded land tax is almost everywhere acknowledged to be just.

The other proposals made need no comment.

The principles governing our programme should be :

1. The living wage must be provided for, that is to say there should be a taxable minimum and agricultural incomes below this minimum must be exempted.
2. The usual rate of land tax should be 25% and not 40%. The tax to be a graded one like the income-tax. According to the figures given above probably about 95% of landlords would pay the minimum only. The remaining 5% or so would pay on the sliding scale, increasing as the income increases.
3. Large zamindaris will not be encouraged. Gradually they will be acquired by the state, adequate compensation being given, and provision will be made for the landless.
4. There will be no forfeiture of landed properties.
5. Inheritance taxes on big zamindaris.
6. Peasant proprietorship will be encouraged. It would be desirable not to permit alienation or mortgage as this results ultimately in the formation of big estates. Perhaps this restriction may not be appreciated at present.

7. For the Tenants

1. Right to buy up outright from the zamindar their land on instalment plan.
2. Transferable hereditary right.
3. Right to plant trees, construct works, build houses.
4. Common pasture land in the village.
5. Reduction in rent at least in proportion to the reduction in revenue.
6. No *nazranas*.
7. No free labour for the zamindar.

Quite apart from the agrarian programme, one subject might be mentioned here. It is desirable for us now to lay stress on a properly elected Constituent Assembly meeting in India and drawing up our future constitution. Most people cannot envisage how a change to a new constitution can take place apart from an agreement with the British. The idea of a Constituent Assembly is good on merits, its associations are good, and it can fit in alike with an agreement or break with England. It is the natural outcome of our demand for full self-determination. It is also a solid answer to all Round Table Conferences and the like. Some difficulties might arise as to the manner of election of such Constituent Assembly. We need not go into this question now. But we can make it clear that it must be thoroughly representative of the country as a whole. Of course it will be nothing like our puny assemblies and legislative councils of today. Propaganda on the basis of such a Constituent Assembly can be carried on easily in town and village as the idea is an easy one to grasp. No one can possibly object to it, as such an assembly will not represent any party or grouping as such, but will represent India.

NOTE WRITTEN IN NAINI CENTRAL JAIL[35]

Our campaign for independence has now lasted continuously and intensively for nine months. It has gone on from victory to victory and strength to strength and each new effort to crush it has resulted in a fresh move forward. All this is solid gain for the country and our added strength and self-confidence are certain indications that we are nearing our goal. Yet we must remember that the real thing is the attainment of the goal and every step that we take must be taken from the viewpoint of the very early attainment of this goal. This appears to be a truism but, in effect, it is not so. There is very grave danger of our [35]

35. Written some time in December 1930. J.N. Miscellaneous Papers, N.M.M.L.

putting this idea of the goal at the back of our minds and not relating it to the immediate work before us. With this outlook we may gradually relapse into a dreary round of activity, good in itself, but feeble and ineffective and wholly uninspiring from the larger viewpoint. There are some people who perhaps imagine that the goal is really a distant one and that immediately we must aim at something else. This cannot be the Congress viewpoint and can be ignored. Others, not consciously thinking in this way, are yet apt to lose themselves in petty activities which by themselves are wholly insufficient to advance our cause.

What then are we aiming at? We have definitely put before us the attainment of a revolutionary, that is root and branch, change in our national political structure. (The word 'revolutionary' is used through out as meaning a great and radical change. It has no reference to violent activities.) If our ideal is a revolutionary one then our methods must also necessarily be revolutionary (also in a nonviolent sense). And indeed, the whole conception of noncooperation and civil disobedience is revolutionary. Ideas and activities, however, have a remarkable way of losing their vitality and of falling into ruts. This appears to be happening in the country now and clear thinking is therefore very necessary.

No revolutionary movement can be static. The very terms are contradictory. Revolutionary activities must necessarily be dynamic. As soon as the dynamic character disappears the revolutionary element also goes Then again, it must be borne in mind that no revolution can stand still. It marches forward from step to step or it goes backward and collapses. Thirdly, a revolution is largely based on the psychology of the people and therefore the psychological aspect must ever be kept in mind, specially so in our type of movement which is intimately connected with mental reactions. Fourthly, and as a consequence of the last, our activity should be such as to appeal to or inspire the largest numbers of classes of our countrymen. It is possible for a while to induce people to act in the heroic way but large numbers do not continue acting in this way unless they feel that there is a good chance of their bettering their economic condition if the goal is attained. Obviously the largest numbers ultimately mean the peasantry and the workers—in the U.P., the peasantry and petty farmers. Fifthly, strength can only come in a revolutionary movement from below up, not from above down. Therefore it becomes essential that a continuous attempt be made to keep the people at the bottom of the organisation in proper form. They must have a large measure of initiative and direction and they must feel that they are the vital parts of the organisation. Thus,

in villages, the panchayat must be made as far as possible to function and act; in towns, councils and committees—specially mohalla committees—should act. Too much dictation from above kills initiative and ultimately the movement. Even when there is dictation it should almost be invisible and should take the form of a decision of a committee. The people should get used to obeying an impersonal committee chosen by themselves, not individuals.

Sixthly, the initiative should always be in our hands. We must not permit it to go to the enemy. This means that we must always be on the aggressive. No resolution can fight successfully a defensive warfare. The psychology of mass revolt disappears with a defensive attitude.

Seventhly, we must keep the idea of mass revolt always before us. Ultimately, that is the only thing that will tell. In spite of the great success of our movement we have not yet come within measurable distance of moving the masses in a revolutionary sense. There is sympathy, but no more. Gradually, if we do not look out, even this sympathy will get less and less.

These are some of the considerations that must be borne in mind incarrying on the campaign. Sometimes it is said that it is no good going to jail as we can do better work outside; that we should concentrate on constructive work, etc. This is a foolish and dangerous line of reasoning. Nobody wants to rush to jail for no rhyme or reason but to deviate by a hair's breadth from one's line of activity in order to avoid jail is playing entirely into the hands of the government. This means that the initiative has passed to the government. It also means that we are on the defensive and the psychological reaction on the people is bound to be great. And, in addition, people seem to forget that however much one may avoid jail one cannot keep out of it for long unless one does no solid work at all and more or less retires from effective public life. Anyone that is considered dangerous by the government is picked off by them, whether he wants to or not. Government is bent on keeping our effective workers in prison. Vallabhbhai Patel goes out. He is pursued by Section 144 and although, partly for reasons of health, he does not break any such order, even then he is arrested for a petty speech on a minor occasion. If one has got to be arrested one might as well do it in style and reap the benefit of a brave and defiant attitude. Otherwise we are apt to look very much like hunted animals trying to save our skins—a most demoralising and depressing outlook. The whole nature of our campaign demands aggression, defiance, daring and challenging. It is better to err on this side than on the side of caution. It is absurd for anyone to feel that he is indispensable to the movement and must keep himself safely out

of harm's way. If Gandhi is not indispensable much less are others. The best of workers becomes useless and even harmful the moment people begin to think that he is avoiding jail.

The talk of concentrating on constructive work means in plain language not doing any dangerous work. Constructive work is a side issue today. The main thing is destructive and every Congressman must hurl himself into this. The more the defiance, etc., the more will khadi, etc., flourish. If the defiance and law-breaking and arrests and lathi charges, etc., disappear then automatically the boycott and khadi will weaken. Constructive work has become the cloak for no work today. We are out now to conquer power by revolutionary means. Let this never be forgotten and this can only be done by an intensification of law-breaking and, above all, by the no-tax campaign.

Thus from every point of view it is clear that the whole basis of the movement must continue to be defiance and law-breaking. If in any place there is a tendency to revert to normal conditions the gentleman who calls himself the 'dictator of the place should be asked to take leave and rest and to leave the direction of affairs to more energetic and daring persons. It appears that several places, including even Lucknow, have shown this tendency. It must be put down with rigour and regardless of personalities. Normalcy or normal conditions are the very reverse of revolutionary conditions. Our object is to have abnormality and to make it impossible for the government and people alike to revert to normalcy.

Recently a no-tax movement was inaugurated in Allahabad district. There does not seem to be any great enthusiasm for it in leading Congress circles and it is even said that the movement should be limited to a small area only. Any more fatal move it is difficult to imagine. It was declared with pomp and circumstance that Allahabad would have a no-tax campaign. Thousands of volunteers were informed. Work was done—pledges taken—large number of arrests made. And now to try to limit it! So far as Allahabad is concerned this is unthinkable.

But even the larger question of a no-tax campaign in the U.P. as a whole must be considered very' seriously. It must be remembered that ultimately this is the only thing that counts. Some recent articles of Brailsford are very illuminating. As an impartial observer and a keen student of revolutionary movements he attaches importance at present in India only to the no-tax campaign.

We may not be strong enough to work all over the province for this. Peasants and zamindars may not be strong enough either to resist repression. But all this is not very material at this stage. Our

general appeal must be—no taxes. Then we can choose special districts for more concentrated work. But the stage of any kind of concentrated work has passed. The government will not permit it. All we can do is to issue directions to the people and leave it to them to carry them out to the best of their ability. If all of us and our workers are arrested, it does not matter, provided our directions are vigorous and clear. The movement can never weaken this way. But it is bound to weaken if we show a weak front or compromise or avoid trouble. Therefore we must take up a strong line on the no-tax issue. It is impossible to conceive of a more favourable economic condition from this point of view than now. To pay under pressure and in fear of trouble although we have started a no-tax campaign is one thing. But it is a totally different thing for us to agree to any taxes being paid. This way lies our downfall.

Besides, for an independence campaign, right in the midst of a critical struggle, to agree to payment of taxes is deplorable weakness and bad tactics.

It has been stated above that everything depends on the attitude. If it is defiant enough the rest will follow. The boycott will succeed even without any picketing. With defiance absent the boycott will automatically vanish, for everyone will feel that the movement was weakening. So far as the cloth boycott is concerned it should be remembered that the greatest and the most ruthless strictness is essential. There can be no compromise, no weakness on any single point. It is better that we remain strict even though we are powerless to enforce our will. At least we give then the right lead to the people. A compromising spirit means a wrong lead to the people.

Those people who come back from jail must remember that a great deal depends on their readiness to return. For if it appears to the government and the people that such persons are not prepared to return to jail, then the government wins. Only when it sees that there is terrible determination will it realise that it must own defeat. The government itself has been laying stress on the fact that in many places people who have returned from jail keep at a safe distance from it! This kind of thing has a bad psychological effect.

Lately the government has declared that the movement is moribund in the towns of the U.P. This may be an exaggeration but anyhow it is not a compliment to those who direct the movement in the U.P. and the fact certainly appears to be that the leaders of the movement in the U.P. are showing terrible caution. There is no verve—no dash—no jumping into the fire—no gambling for big stakes—no reliance on the masses and specially the peasantry. There is a very middle-class

cautious approach to problems and no striking decisions. The U.P. P.C.C. is in a rut. Till it gets out of it, little will be done.

In the course of every revolution a time comes when the revolutionary ardour of the principal workers lessens and when, instead of being in the vanguard, they drop behind and try to keep back others from advancing. This is the tragedy of revolutions. Let the U.P. not experience it.

The above is written from a purely political standpoint. From the socialistic standpoint, much greater stress would necessarily be laid on the peasants and workers and on an agrarian movement. Unless we have such an agrarian movement there is grave danger of our relapsing into a sect of civil resisters and the country going on merrily in spite of us!

The Congress has not definitely adopted a socialistic viewpoint although it favours it. The U.P. committee favours it still more and has declared generally but definitely in favour of it. At this stage it is not possible to outline on behalf of the Congress a definite economic and agrarian programme. None the less it may be necessary to put forward some such programme tentatively so that those concerned may know what the intentions of Congress workers and some leaders are today. It should be pointed out, however, that the final decision will rest with the Congress sessions and everybody will have a right to have his say there.

A tentative agrarian programme is suggested below. This is not from a purely socialistic standpoint but from a Congress viewpoint with some leanings towards socialism.

1. The Congress is definitely opposed to the present land tenure system in the U.P. and considers it unjust and unsocial. It will seek to change it as soon as it has the power to do so, and will endeavour to establish direct contact between the cultivator and the state and to have a kind of peasant proprietorship as exists today in Gujarat, Punjab, Madras, etc. In particular, the Congress is opposed to big zamindars and considers them most harmful to the social order. The objective aimed at will be to have peasant proprietors and also to have large state farms where big agricultural experiments can be tried by the cultivators to whom the lands would be leased out and who would own them jointly.

2. In order to have peasant proprietorship it will be necessary to acquire the big zamindaris. The petty zamindars can well remain. The Congress is not against them, nor does it seek to injure them in any way. The big zamindaris should be acquired by the state and compensation given. What this compensation should be is to

be determined later but it is clear that full compensation is impossible.

3. It should be clearly stated that zamindars who side with the enemy in this national campaign forfeit any right to compensation.

4. There should be a graduated land tax, like income-tax, instead of the present land revenue. There should also be an inheritance tax.

It appears that indirect or direct encouragement has been given in some districts to kisans appealing to the government for remission of rent or revenue. This is very wrong from the Congress viewpoint. Indeed, it is playing into the hands of the government. This is the very policy adopted by the government in Gujarat. Congressmen should stick to the no-tax campaign and not temporise or compromise on this issue. Sometimes it is stated that enquiry committees should be appointed to find out where and when to have a no-tax campaign. This also is absurd. The time is now. There is no room for an enquiry. It can only be a cloak for not doing anything. Another suggestion has been made that the agrarian movement should be organised on behalf of a 'Kisan Sabha'. If a powerful kisan sabha had been in existence, it would of course have taken the lead without waiting for outside help. But there is no such sabha and it is merely exploiting the kisans to call a few persons a 'Kisan Sabha'. Besides, the principal movement and the Congress are bound to suffer by these tactics. It is the Congress that is fighting and it is the Congress, therefore, that should stand out for any action. The real centres of activity should indeed be villages and *manda*l panchayats. They can be called Congress or Kisan Panchayats or both.

It would be desirable if stress was laid now on a Constituent Assembly. So far we have had a negative programme. It would help if there was some positive side to it. On the government side there is the Round Table Conference. The Congress ignores it and will ignore its decisions. Who then will fix up our constitution for free India? It might be said that the Congress itself. But it would be better if the Congress undertook for the purpose to convene a Constitutent Assembly properly elected. The method of election of this Constituent Assembly should be laid down by the Congress and should provide for representation of minorities and specially of peasants' panchayats, etc. This method will, of course, be for the Constituent Assembly only. The permanent constitution will be determined later by this Assembly itself. This idea might be put forward by the U.P.P.C.C. Council or by individuals. It would be a positive suggestion which will do great

good. Even in case of a compromise with England our terms can be that a Constituent Assembly should decide our constitution as well as the question of any future relation or none with England.

It occasionally happens that some local Congress committee is declared 'dissolved'. How exactly this is done it is not clear as there is no provision in the Congress constitution for it. If any office-bearer or others are in a funk they can resign. They have no right or authority to dissolve the committee. Nobody can dissolve it except a superior authority. From the point of view of expediency also, it is most objectionable to do so, specially when a committee is declared illegal. That is just the time when it must not be dissolved. A declaration of illegality must not be allowed to make the slightest difference to our work, except insofar as it should make us more aggressive or defiant. The A.I.C.C. office has already circularised P.C.Cs on this subject but still some cowards and weaklings are humiliating the Congress by declaring local committees dissolved (e.g., Kashipur). It should be clearly announced that this cannot be done and any person offending must be turned out and disciplinary measures taken against him. No weakness should be tolerated in the Congress movement. Weakness, like courage, is catching. Therefore it must be ruthlessly suppressed.

The value of liquor-picketing at this stage is perhaps not so great as it was, as the government auctions have already taken place. Much depends on circumstances but on the whole it is far better to concentrate on cloth, and, above all, on the campaign.

For the last three years the last Sunday of every month has been observed as Flag Day. This continues to be observed in Bombay and elsewhere in spite of lathi charges, etc., but it seems to have been dropped in the U.P. Regular observance of this day is very desirable, specially as the government has repeatedly insulted and removed our flag.

New Year's Day 1931

Kamala arrested!—a good beginning for the New Year.[36] She will be happy now and it is quite possible that she may profit by the rest in prison—Poor Indu alone—What impressions must be produced on a growing child's mind by all these events?

Narmada Prasad discharged today on completion of his sentence of 9 months. He ought to have gone a week ago, but we have all been

36. She had delivered speeches urging people not to pay taxes.

Punished for the fast (?) by our remission period being reduced by 6 or 7 days. It makes no difference to Ranjit or me but it made a week's difference at the last moment to the Sardar.

My last interview with Kamala was on the 27th Dec.—wonder when I shall meet her again. Father, mother, Nan & Betty are all near Calcutta still—no prospect of their return.

Kamala's message on being taken to prison on Jan. 1st:

I am happy beyond measure and proud to follow in the footsteps of my husband. I hope the people will keep the flag flying.

Jan. 3rd Saturday

Kamala sentenced to 6 months S.I. on each of two counts—concurrent.

Jan. 12th Monday

Had interview today with father, mother, Nan, Betty, Indu, Chand & Tara. Father looking ill and weak. I had a shock on seeing him. He told me he was much better than he had been.

Kamala sent to Lucknow District Jail on Jan. 10th.

12-1-31[37]

My dear Father,

As suggested by you I am sending you my letter for Kamala. Kindly forward it to her was good to see you after nearly two months. But it was sad to find you looking no better. I do hope that you have got the trouble under full control and are marching rapidly to recovery. I feel it is a pity that you could not after all leave the shores of India for a while. I should have liked you to breathe another atmosphere and above all not to have to worry about things and persons here. To worry about anything is a waste of good energy and is profitless. Yet one cannot help it at times, when one comes into contact with persons whom I have described as having a perpetual hartal of the mind. You do not suffer fools gladly, and unhappily there are a fair number of this breed about. They are even more aggravating than knaves. Hence I can well understand your being put out and worrying occasionally. But really such people make little difference to the larger scheme of things and can well be ignored. Prison life has one sovereign virtue. It teaches one detachment to some extent and the capacity to see

37. M. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.

things in their proper perspective. And I have felt here how utterly unimportant were many things which worried me in the past. They looked big only because I was near to them.

We shall look forward to seeing you at our next interview looking much better and stronger and with more weight on. For the first time in our lives, I think, I am now more in weight than you are. You must not permit me to be so.

Love,

Your loving son,
Jawahar

After our interview I learnt from Ranjit that a young lady named Kishori has made Anand Bhawan her residence. She had done so previously also, I understand, and has now reverted to it. I do not know her, but from various reports, which appear to be worthy of credence, I feel that it is not desirable for her to stay in Anand Bhawan. May I suggest for your consideration—it is, of course, for you to decide—that she should be politely but firmly requested to depart?

A NOTE[38]

I think some notice should be taken by the Working Committee of the announcement which Macdonald will make today.[39] The text of the announcement will be received in India at about midnight. No advance report has yet been received. It is not likely to be out in tomorrow's papers, but will be heard by those who possess radio sets.

My only fear is that if the Working Committee does not give any lead in the matter some Congressmen will rush into print with their individual views and thus embarrass the Congress to a certain extent. Even if individual Congressmen say nothing the moderate element is sure to applaud the announcement and a body of Indian opinion, whatever its real value, will come into existence in support of the declaration of British policy. In the absence of a resolution or a statement

38. Clearly written on 19 January 1931. J. N. Miscellaneous Papers, NMML.
39. At the end of the Round Table Conference on 19 January 1931, Ramsay MacDonald declared that central and provincial legislatures would be given the responsibility for governing India, under a federal constitution, with cer tain safeguards, reservations and guarantees during the transitional period, and that discussion on the constitution would be continued, for which if in the meantime there is response to the Viceroy's appeal from those engaged at present in civil disobedience, steps will be taken to enlist their services.

by the Working Committee that body of opinion will hold the field and the silence of the Working Committee will be construed against the Congress. I am, therefore, clear that the Working Committee must pass a suitable resolution. What that resolution is going to be will depend upon the terms of the announcement, but whatever the terms, it may safely be assumed that they will not come anywhere near the Congress demand. That they will have to be rejected admits of no doubt and the only question is how, when and by whom the rejection has to be made. If the Working Committee says 'no' at once, repression will continue, perhaps in more intensified form, and there will be no question of amnesty, general or limited. If, however, the Working Committee refers the matter to the Congress without expressing any opinion of its own the holding of the Congress session and some sort of an amnesty will become a practical certainty. At the same time a reference to the Congress without any recommendation from the Working Committee will have a great demoralising effect on the country. The question is solely one of tactics. Whatever we do we must not, in my opinion, create any hopes in the minds of the people which would tend to relax the intensity of the campaign. In fact, no relaxation is conceivable unless all the repression is stopped and ordinances withdrawn. Before doing this the government is sure to insist on calling off civil disobedience. This, in my opinion, will be suicidal. A truce till the session of the Congress can be held, involving suspension of hostilities on both sides, will in my opinion be equally dangerous. The only safe course to adopt, therefore, is for the Working Committee to express its opinion boldly and say that the announcement is entirely unsatisfactory and that it is not prepared to relax the present campaign of civil disobedience or even to refer the matter to the Congress, which would in the circumstances be a sheer waste of time. The Congress can only consider a definite offer made to it directly by the British Government and cannot act upon public statements and announcement by officials.[40]

TO FATHER[41]

My dear Father,
I was somewhat confused the other day and could not give a clear answer. There was little time, and the kind of questions that were put

40. in a speech on 17 January 1931, the Viceroy appealed to Mahatma Gandhi to stop civil disobedience.
41. Presumably written on 22 January 1931. M. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.

to me filled me with anxiety and clouded my brain for a while. I am therefore writing this to make my viewpoint clear as similar occasions are likely to arise again. Of course I have no business from here to interfere in the decisions outside. But I should like my point of view to be considered and I am sure you will forgive me for troubling you with it. A major reason for my doing so is that the main burden of decision must fall on you as you are the only person outside jail who counts. Indirectly I gathered from your note that there were forces in the Working Committee which were for a very weak and temporising attitude and that you were trying to stiffen them up.

I agreed largely with your note, but the procedure suggested seemed to me not good tactics. The proposed interview would have been, I think, an unfortunate error. The suggestion that a reference be made to the Congress would, if adopted, have been almost fatal. It was really this mere suggestion which troubled me greatly and made me rather incoherent in my reply. I do not know what the Working Committee has done.[42] I have just seen MacDonald's statement hurriedly. I could have almost written it out word for word for him. Anyone who was following what was happening could have done so. The statement is as vague as anything could be. It does not and cannot make the slightest difference.

I should like to say something about (1) the fundamental basis governing our struggle and (2) the 'immediate tactics'.

(1) I have always laid stress on the psychological character of our fight-on morale. We have to produce an impression of morale and strength on our own minds, on our people and, thirdly, on our enemy. If we are quite clear in our own minds what we must have and what we are going to have despite all obstacles, we are bound to produce the impression of strength on our own people and on the enemy. The day we convince the enemy that we are immovable like the Himalayas and as difficult to crush—that nothing in the world can make us bend—that we shall put up with all that they may inflict on us—that day the enemy will crumple up. A really strong-minded man makes the other party realise his strength by his very attitude. He need not shout. Indeed, to shout is usually the way of the weak. If our country is strong then of necessity the enemy gives way. Our job is to go on making the country stronger and making the enemy think that we shall

42. On 21 January, the Working Committee resolved that MacDonald's declaration of 19 January was too vague and general to justify any change in the policy of the Congress. This resolution, however, was not published.

never give in except on our terms. The country as a whole is very big. It is difficult to consider it as an entity. But we may say that if a sufficient number of persons are firm as a rock in the country, they will set the tone for the whole country. Now there is no doubt that there are thousands in the country who will not bend though they may break. Gandhiji and a thousand or so, I am sure, are quite enough to win through in this struggle—provided our own Congress brethren do not rend us. Therefore it does not matter much how many persons get tired or want to rest, or how a certain city or province cannot keep up to the mark. I am absolutely confident of the strength of the country. I would be confident if I was told tomorrow that the Bombay Congress had crumpled up or that the Gujarat peasantry had given in. My confidence is based on Gandhiji, on my own strength, on the strength of many colleagues. Nothing that may happen to the hobbled and the lame and the weak in the country will affect that confidence. But apart from this personal view, the business of the Working Committee must be to keep the objective fixed before the people as an unchangeable one. Like the law of the Medes and the Persians, it remains whatever happens. You will remember that during the Great War, one of the greatest of the English statesmen, Lord Lansdowne,[43] had to retire into oblivion, simply because he mildly suggested that there might be an honourable peace.

Now if the people think that we are not sure in our own minds about our objective—that we are haggling and bargaining and waiting for the Round Table Conference to give us something—how will their minds be affected by this? All the fixity of purpose, the rock-like will, will go and be replaced by fluidity of mind. Nothing is more fatal in a campaign than a fluid temperament and outlook. Our meeting to consider the P.M.'s statement is bound to make people think that after all there was in our opinion something to be considered. Even if we condemn it, we produce this impression of fluidity. Of course any temporising with it, like a reference to the Congress, is abject surrender, even though we may clothe it in brave language. But even consideration has a dangerous side, specially when we decide to consider it even before it is made. An average man is bound to think that we are over-eager to find an excuse to compromise—even our subsequent condemnation will not clear our position completely. There will always be a suspicion left in people's minds that behind the barrage of words

43. Marquess of Lansdowne (1843-1927); Viceroy of India. 1888-93. As a Minister in Asquith's cabinet in 1916, he advocated a negotiated peace to end the war.

and condemnation there is preparation for compromise. All this, whether we condemn or not, will lead to fluidity of mind which is dangerous for us.

On the government also it will have the effect of making them believe that we are cracking up. Why else this hurry to consider a thing which is still to come? They will feel that we are rapidly approaching our limit and that we are bound to break up under further strain. So even if their morale was near breaking point they would pull together and carry on as if nothing had happened and wait for us to crack or exercise more pressure on us.

I fully appreciate what you say—that at a critical moment the Working Committee should give a lead to the country. There must undoubtedly have been a danger of various persons saying the wrong thing. But I would not attach much importance to what odd persons might say. The Liberals might be excluded entirely from our calculations. As for Congressmen so-called, who misbehave, I would welcome such persons to be outside the Congress rather than inside. They are more dangerous with us than against us. I am quite sure there are very few who would do so publicly as they know the strength of public opinion. But even if there were many it would make little difference. So far as the general public is concerned, it judges by action not words. Words have a way of substituting themselves for action. If we fight on, that is a sufficient enough indication to the country as to where we stand.

Therefore I would say that it should be the function of the Working Committee never to do anything which produces doubt in the minds of anyone that we are weakening. That should be the fundamental idea governing it. And this, regardless of the position in the country regardless of strength or weakness. Our struggle is not a military struggle which may collapse because of the loss of a battle. Our struggle is such that a complete defeat is an utter and absolute impossibility if even a handful of strong men carry on. Therefore if the Working Committee has to the through government action, its last message should be 'Don't budge an inch carry on!

(2) Coming to the immediate tactics. The position as I understand it is that the British Government will move heaven and earth to get into touch with the Congress leaders and to try to win them over. If it cannot win all of them over, at least to break their ranks sensibly. In effect it comes to this that they will try their utmost to win Gandhiji. Let us leave out what might happen afterwards. For the moment the British Government must get into touch with the Congress leaders in jail. How can they do so? Not easily while they are

in jail. Of course non-official emissaries may go, but even this is doubtful. If they really want to get into touch with Congress leaders they are bound to release them, more or less, generally, There is no other way for them, unless of course they have decided to fight the Congress and not approach it at all. And this I do not believe, and indeed the Viceroy and others are clear on the subject. There is going to be one more—probably many more—efforts to get at the Congress. This will lead to the discharge of prisoners in all probability, unless something intervenes. If Wedgwood Benn is coming here, surely he is not coming to meet Sapru and Co.[44] And surely he would not like to come just to be greeted with black flags and to be the occasion for lathi blows and charges. He will only come when he thinks that the atmosphere is at least partly favourable. It cannot be even partly favourable unless there is a general gaol delivery. Therefore, again I come to the conclusion that some time or other the government is bound to have an amnesty. Also, Irwin would not like to go and Willingdon[45] would not like to come without an attempt being made to make conditions less abnormal.

Now if this is the attitude of the government how are we to meet it? Why not take full advantage of it? That is to say, let them take the initiative, discharge prisoners etc., without any understanding or undertaking on our part. We do not ask anything—either discharge of prisoners, or removal of ordinances or anything else. We simply carry on calmly and quietly, and leave the government to take action. Personally, I would rather that there was no amnesty for some months. But if it is to come, let it come unasked for and unbargained for, leaving us free to do what we like.

From this point of view, a meeting of the Working Committee to consider the P.M.,s announcement was tactically wrong. Having con-sidered it you must pass judgment on it and the only judgment is one of condemnation. This means first of all that the acting Working Committee is empowered to accept or reject terms (but that is a detail) and secondly that this condemnation really makes it more difficult for the government to take any action in regard to the amnesty. From the government point of view it would have been better if the Working Committee had refused to consider the question formally.

44. Wedgwood Benn had suggested that a British deputation visit India to prepare the ground for the next Round Table Conference but the proposal was later dropped.
45. Earl of Willingdon (1866-1941); Governor of Bombay, 1913-19, and of Madras, 1919-24; succeeded Irwin as Viceroy in April 1931.

If the government choose to declare the Working Committee illegal they must stand by the consequences of their declaration and not expect the consideration of this question by the Working Committee. If the Working Committee ignored the question and merely carried on, the government would be hard put to it what to do. They could hardly ask for a decision of an illegal body; and they could hardly get into touch with people in gaol. And so they would be forced to take action—which would probably be an amnesty, etc.

I think that it was unfortunate that publicity was given to the fact that the Congress Working Committee was considering the P.M.'s declaration. However that has been done and the Working Committee might have come to some decision also. I am writing at length about things that have happened. It really does not matter much now that they have happened. No great harm can follow either way. I am too much of an optimist to attach importance to minor incidents. I am writing really for the future and not so much for the past.

I should like the Working Committee to bear in mind one or two other matters. One is that the larger world situation demands that England make peace with India. I cannot develop this argument here. But I am quite sure of it. This is working entirely in our favour. Even the prospect of a war in the future with India anyway is a terrible one for England. They *must* come to terms with India and cannot risk anything else. Of course, this does not mean that they are bound to do what we tell them. Our terms may be too heavy for them and this risk may be greater than the others. All I wish to say is that this is an important factor which goes to strengthen us. So far as we are concerned, we have of course to rely on ourselves only.

The second matter is that there is grave danger of the Working Committee landing us all into the fire from the frying pan. Coquetting with compromise in any way is playing with fire—and fire which is far more dangerous for our country than any martial law of the British Government can be. The danger is one of a fratricidal conflict. The Working Committee is a changing body. You are the one solid rock in it. But you may not be able to attend to it always, and others may come to unfortunate decisions. Such decisions, e.g., the suggestion to refer to the Congress, are fraught with the gravest consequences. Because whatever the form of such a reference might be, however bravely it may condemn and criticise, any such reference is surrender, and the people will know it as such.

The P.M.'s statement is as vague and futile as anything can be. The fellow seems to think that he is talking to schoolboys, whenever

he addresses Indians! But even if the statement went very much further, even if he had said that he agreed to Indian independence—even then I would say that the Working Committee should hold its hand and say nothing and carry on. There is no more slippery customer than the British Government. They are past masters in the art of political chicanery and fraud and we are babes at the game. We can never in future listen to any declaration unless action follows. The British actually gave independence to Egypt. What of it? It is almost worse today than India. Therefore, whatever the Irwins and the MacDonalds may say we can ignore it utterly and wait for action. What action? Let them, if they are serious, go to Gandhi and Co. and discuss. Let them approach them s*uo motu*, officially and without any conditions and qualifications. That at least will be some indication that they are serious. When that stage arrives we can all consult and consider together.

Before that stage arrives I feel that the acting Working Committee should do nothing but carry on the campaign. It should be the war council only giving no thought to peace. It should not bother itself about any talks with the government or about *pourparlers* with anyone else. Its sole answer should be that all these things are outside its separate competence. This is the only safe attitude to take up. Thus you will force the hands of the government.

The Working Committee today may be a good one. Your presence itself in it is enough to inspire the people with confidence and make the government feel that they can deal with you. But you may not be able to attend to it all the time. The Committee may change. And it may come to pass that it lands us into serious difficulties by agreeing to compromises and terms. Without meaning any disrespect for the present or any subsequent Working Committees I would say that for them to negotiate any compromise would be wrong tactics. Refer all negotiations to the original Committee. Let the government take action then. I would also suggest that it is somewhat derogatory for the Working Committee to consider public speeches. Only direct communications should be considered. I would suggest therefore:

> (1) If an official or demi-official approach is made to the Working Committee or to any of its members the answer should be that 'We regret we are not in a position to give any definite answer. Only the original Working Committee can consider and answer questions regarding the civil disobedience campaign. We are only a war council carrying on the campaign. This we shall do till the original Working Committee tells us to desist.'

(2) Absolutely no demand should be made for the release of prisoners or about the ordinances, etc. Indeed, no demand of any kind should be made.
(3) If a private approach is made, say by Sapru and Co., exactly the same attitude should be taken up.
(4) Thus the acting Working Committee should definitely deprive itself of the authority to negotiate even, except of course in conjunction with the original Committee. This will save the acting Working Committee from shouldering the great responsibility of acceptance or rejection of any terms, and will force the government to take the initiative in approaching us. The members of the Working Committee individually might also adopt a similar attitude. I suggest this specially as it would save you a lot of troubles. I do not want you to bother overmuch about these matters in your present state of health.

Forgive this long rigmarole. I have written it in the hope that it may help in lessening your burden in the immediate future. I have no doubt that you will be approached repeatedly. I hope the people and the government will be made to realise that our fight will go on not for months but for years if necessary, and that we shall not and will not give in except on our terms. I am a bit of a diehard but I have not written this from that attitude. I have tried to consider the situation as a moderate Congressman!

Your loving son,
Jawahar

Since writing the above, I have seen MacDonald's full speech. The whole thing is sound without substance. Having kept back everything important, they have magnanimously given the rest. But it is clear that they have been won over. They were already there—always willing (as Chloe the Faithful Shepherdess about whom I told you two or three times in jail). So it makes no difference! Even after writing all this, I hesitate to send it to you. It seems presumptuous to interfere in outside decisions with very imperfect and insufficient knowledge of happenings—and specially to presume to advise on tactics! But still I think I shall send it as I shall feel the lighter for it. Please treat this for what it is worth and no more.

Jan. 26th-Independence Day

Discharged suddenly in forenoon owing father's serious condition.

Other Working Committee members—original & substitutes—also discharged this day.[46]

JAIL NOTES[47]

Fifth Term October 1930

1.	Baldwin's *Liberty Under the Soviets*	
2.	Swinburne's *Collected Poems* Vol 1	
3.	Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*	
4.	" *Merchant of Venice*	
5.	" *As You Like it*.	
6.	Kropotkin's *Great French Revolution* 2 vols.	8/11/30
7.	Collum's *Dance of Civa*	9/11
8.	Barber's *Imprisonment*	11/11
9.	Meredith's *Poems*	
10.	Radhakrishnan's *Hindu View of Life*	14/11
11.	Thornton Wilder: *The Woman of Andros*	17/11
12.	Maeterlinck's *Life of the Bee*	21/11
13.	Trotsky: *My Life*	26/11
14.	*Le Prof, danglais par Regis Gignoux* (P.I)	
15.	Aldous Huxley: *Point Counter Point*	3/12
16.	Maeterlinck's *Life of the White Ant*	5/12
17.	Ernest Dimnett: *Art of Thinking*	7/12
18.	Shakespeare: *Taming of the Shrew &c.* 4 plays (Vol III)	
19.	L. MacManus: *White Light and Flame*	18/12
20.	G.B.S. *Socialism & Capitalism*	25/12
21.	Anatole France: *Le Revolte des Angcs*	27/12
22.	Gilbert Baquani's *Rome & the Papacy*	29/12
23.	Carlyle: *Heroes*	2/1/31
24.	Maeterlinck: *Life of the Ant*	5/1/31
25.	A.E.W. Mason—Nouvelles—in P. III (*Le Clif, Le Saphir-La loc de Finte*)	8/1
26.	Shaw's *Apple Cart*	12/1
27.	Kevserling's *Travel Diary* Vol 1	14/1
28.	— Do —Do— Vol II	24/1
	[*Arthashastra* of Kautilya Firdausi's Shahnamah]	

46. They were released before expiry of their sentences to enable them to consider MacDonald's declaration of 19 January.
47. Jail Note Book No. 11, pp. 5-7.

11

THE GANDHI-IRWIN SETTLEMENT

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1. Speech on His Release[1]

Friends, I must thank you all for the rare welcome. I should have been happier to have received it along with my revered father but, as you all know, he is laid up with severe illness and unable to move out, a fact, as you all might well be aware, which necessitated our release ten hours sooner than we anticipated.

I am particularly glad that today, on Independence Day, I am among you all but as we meet here today, freed from the captivity we did not seek, let us remember the year that has gone by. Let us remember and bring to our minds once more the sights that others have seen and you and I know, and all the other terrible things that have happened. Let us not in the moment of our joy and freedom forget those who have poured out their lives in this cause like water on the thirsty soil. Let us remember the martyrs of Midnapur,[2] of Sholapur and a hundred other places. Let us render thanks unto our women, who have shown by their magnificent example their devotion, loyalty and capacity to serve. It is most necessary that we must remember all this today. Friends, you will join with me in passing a resolution of thanks and gratitude for those that have struggled and are in many cases no more.

Let us not forget, too, that one person who has seldom been men-tioned in the newspapers, who has seldom been praised, but for whom all this terrible struggle we have been witnessing for the year could not have been continued. That person is 'the volunteer'. If any one is worthy of praise and deserves the nation's great gratitude today it is the poor unostentatious volunteer, who received lathi blows with patience and who walked so gallantly to his cell. Therefore, it is necessary to remember him above all things when we take stock of the year's struggle.

1. Allahabad, 26 January 1931. From *The Hindu*, 27 January 1931. The speech was delivered in Hindi.
2. There had been severe repression in Midnapur district. On 3 June 1930, police opened fire and killed 12 persons in Daspur village. At Contai, on 7 June, the police fired on a crowd watching the preparation of salt and injured 25 persons.

2. On His Father's Illness[1]

A large number of friends all over India, anxious about my father's condition are sending me telegrams of enquiry. It is very difficult for me to cope with all these individual enquiries. Friends who do not receive a separate answer will therefore forgive me. I realise my father's health is not merely a matter of anxious concern for us who are near and dear to him, but to the whole nation. Frequent bulletins are therefore being issued for public information by eminent doctors who are devoting themselves with all loving care to my father's treatment. Their constant attention and good wishes and the prayers of the nation are bearing us up in the hour of trial and anxiety.

1. Statement to the press, Allahabad, 30 January 1931. *The Hindu*, 31 January 1931.

3. Acknowledgement of Messages on His Father's Death[1]

To all those friends in India and distant countries who have sent messages of condolence and all those millions of my countrymen and countrywomen who have shared our sorrow in our hour of trial, I tender my grateful thanks on behalf of my grief-stricken mother, my sisters, my wife and myself. I am unable to thank them all separately. To the eminent physicians[2] who tended my father with all loving care and did all that was humanly possible to relieve him of his suffering, I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude. And to him, our beloved friend and leader, carrying the burden of a nation's suffering and longing for freedom but still ever ready to share and lighten the burdens of others, what words of mine can convey our feelings? He has been to us a solace and inspiration, and has given us strength and courage when the blow came and darkened our horizon.

1. Statement to the press, Allahabad, 9 February 1931. *The Hindu*. 10 February 1931. Motilal Nehru passed away at Lucknow on 6 February 1931.
2. M.A. Ansari, Jivraj Mehta and B. C. Roy.

4. To Khan Sahib[1]

February 11, 1931

My dear Khan,[2]

Your little note introducing two friends was very welcome. During the past few months, the Frontier Province has been very much in the public eye and we have to admire greatly its magnificent spirit and sacrifice. I have often thought of you in these days and I had wished greatly that I could visit you and meet you again after so many years. But I am afraid my visit to your province must be delayed till India is free.

I have had a good talk with our friends who came with your letter and I am very glad to find that the Frontier Province is as strong as ever. We have to carry on for a long time yet and it may be that the struggle ahead of us will be fiercer than the one we had left behind. But whatever it may be, one thing is certain, that we shall not end it till we gain freedom. And it is a great solace and a comfort to know that the brave men of the north are fighting in the struggle so gallantly. Give my greetings to our workers there and my warmest congratulations.

Father's death has been a great blow for us. He died the death of a great warrior. As he had lived he died. The legacy he has left behind is one of continuous struggle till freedom is achieved, and, God willing, we shall be true to this.

I do not know how long I am likely to remain out of prison but I should like to hear from you and to have news of you and your family. Give my love to Mrs. Khan and the children.

Ever yours,
Jawanarlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(KW) (ii)/1931 (Pt. II), p. 219, N.M.M.L.
2. Khan Sahib (1882-1958); brother of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and friend of Javvaharlal during his student days in London; physician and leading Congressman of the N.W.F.P.; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; Prime Minister, N.W.F.P., 1937-39 and 1945-47; Chief Minister, West Pakistan, 1955-57; assassinated in Pakistan on 9 May 1958.

5. To Jaffar Shah and Abdulla Shah[1]

February 11, 1931

Dear Friends,[2]

I am in receipt of your letter.[3] When I was in Naini prison I heard with pride and pleasure of the gallant part which the people of the Frontier Province had taken in the national struggle. It is difficult for news of the outside world to enter the walls of the prison but enough of it managed to reach me to give me some idea of the great sacrifice of the Frontier people for the national cause. As the days went by and I found that in spite of martial law and all manner of terrorism the Frontier people were bravely carrying on the great struggle, I marvelled at their sacrifice and their endurance. On my coming out of jail in October, I took an early opportunity of congratulating them and expressing the deep appreciation of the nation to them.[4] Again on returning from jail I find that the Frontier people continue to remain in the vanguard of our struggle, and again I take this opportunity through you to congratulate them.

In a statement I issued in October last to the men and women of the Frontier Province,[5] I assured them that so far as the Congress is concerned all of us stood shoulder to shoulder with the Frontier people and together we were fighting for the freedom of the whole of India, including, of course, the Frontier Province. Common justice demanded that the same freedom which the rest of India desired should also be given to the Frontier Province. This has been the Congress viewpoint all along even apart from the great sacrifices which the people of the Frontier Province have undergone in the course of the last year. But these sacrifices and the brave part that these people have played in the struggle for freedom have drawn the attention of the whole of India to them and to their demands and it is inconceivable that we can agree to any limitation of our joint freedom for them. I hope, therefore, that you will assure our friends and comrades of the

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(KW) (ii)/1931 (Pt. II), pp. 221-225, N.M.M.L.
2. Two Afghan leaders of the Khudai Khidmatgars.
3. They had stressed the contribution of the N.W.F.P. to the freedom movement and asked for an assurance that their fundamental interests would be safeguarded in any settlement with the British Government.
4. See *ante*, section 9, item 2.
5. See *ante*, section 9, item 8.

Frontier Province that we stand or fall together and that they must be equal sharers with us in the freedom that we are going to achieve for our common motherland. Please tell them that any propaganda to the contrary is the work not of the Congress but of our opponents who want to mislead them. The Congress has never stood for any unfair treatment of the Frontier Province which would keep it in a backward position in India. We have always maintained that every province and every group and community in India must share equally in our freedom.

As you rightly say, the problem of the defence of India from any external aggression is one that is common to all of us and the people of your province are as interested in it as the people of other provinces. This problem we shall have to face in consultation with our comrades from various parts of the country, including your province, as soon as the struggle for freedom ends in our victory. I have no doubt that we shall solve this problem satisfactorily. We have no quarrel with our neighbours on any of our frontiers. We seek freedom for our country and friendship with other countries, specially those that are near us. I feel that we shall have no difficulty in arriving at friendly settlements with all our neighbouring countries, which will conduce to the peaceful progress of both India and these countries and will increase the contacts between us. In the past, as you know, there were innumerable contacts between India, Afghanistan, Central Asia, Tibet and China. These countries were largely cut off by the coming of the British in India and we have been isolated from our neighbours. We shall have to resume these contacts and make them even closer than they were before. We shall have to put an end to the policy of continuous conflict which prevails in the regions of the N.W. Frontier and which is often called the "forward policy".

A free India is going to be a strong India for freedom brings strength and self-confidence. Our country will not, of course, tolerate any interference from outside. At the same time we shall wish well to all our neighbours. We shall have no desire to seek domination over others or to interfere with the liberties of others. On this basis I have no doubt that we shall find an abiding peace in the Frontier and all of us in India and in the neighbouring countries will jointly help in the peaceful progress of Asia and of humanity.

I trust you will convey my greetings to our comrades of the Frontier Province.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

6. To Tej Bahadur Sapru[1]

Anand Bhawan
February 12th, 1931

My dear Tejbahadurji,
Mr. Sastri and Mr. Jayakar are coming here tomorrow afternoon again for consultation. I do hope you will also be able to come and join in our informal talks. Gandhiji will also be glad if you could make it convenient to come. We have fixed 2 O'clock in the afternoon for the meeting.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

1. Sapru Papers, National Library, Calcutta.

7. Draft Communique of the Working Committee[1]

The Working Committee has considered the declaration made by the Premier on behalf of the British Government on the 19th January 1931, and the appeal made by him and the Viceroy to the Indian National Congress, and has conferred with Syts. Sastri, Sapru and Jayakar at whose request the Committee had suspended publication of its resolution of January 1931.

After careful consideration of everything that has hap pened since the date of the said Resolution, the Working Committee has formed the opinion that, far from the decisions so far arrived at by the recent conference

T.B.S. disapproves

1. Written on or before 16 February 1931. J. N. Miscellaneous Papers, N.M.M.L. This draft was prepared by Jawaharlal but was not published as in the meantime Mahatma Gandhi had been invited by the Viceroy for talks. The marginal comments are also by Jawaharlal.

held in London promising India the immediate attainment of complete national government responsible to her people, including control of the defence forces and economic control, to which the Indian National Congress is pledged, they seem to put off the event to a distant future.

Nevertheless, if the assurance given by Syts. Sastri, Sapru and Jayakar that the decisions of the said con

disapproves

ference, being only provisional and tentative, are open to revision and amendment be officially confirmed, and if it is officially made clear to the public that it is open to the Indian National Congress at the meetings of the conference now to be held to consider the whole question of the future Indian constitution in the light of the decision of the Lahore Congress and the joint letter of Gandhiji, Pandit Motilal Nehru and others, dated the 15th August 1930,[2] written from the Yeravda Central Prison, and in particular :

delete de novo partly closed.

(i) to consider de novo the whole question of defence and foreign affairs and services;

delete middle clause

(ii) to examine with a view to their total removal the reservations as to finance and fiscal policy;

T.B.S. strongly opposed to whole of this. Not open?

(iii) to raise the question of and insist upon submitting the public debt account and British claims, concessions and the like to examination by an independent tribunal in order to settle the quantum of obligation to be borne by the new government of India;

Certain states have granted these rights but not agreeable to Brit. India demanding.

(iv) to secure the freedom and the protection of the fundamental citizen rights of the people of the Indian states and their adequate representation in any federal legislature that may be evolved;

Not open

(v) to insist, in regard to the connection between Great Britain and India, on a declaration that either party has the right to sever this connection

2. See *ante*, pp. 375-377.

and dissolve the partnership, subject to the discharge of the then existing obligations;

the Working Committee of the Congress will be prepared to enter any conference for the purpose of settling the constitution for India, provided:

1) the Congress is given adequate representation at such conference;
2) an atmosphere productive of mutual trust and suitable for calm discussion free from any coercion is produced by the British Government

Agrees but recommends leaving out Meerut people in their own intersts

a) releasing satyagrahi prisoners and under trials, including the Meerut case prisoners, and with—drawing externment orders under the Foreigners Act;

b) withdrawing the ordinances and other repressive measures;

Requires very careful drafting —agrees to part of it-not rest.

c) ordering restoration of properties confiscated or occupied, refund of fines or securities realised, and also awarding compensation for properties unlawfully destroyed by the authorities during the civil disobedience movement;

Serious difficulties—not likely to agree as a condition precedent—could be pressed in personal talk.

d) instituting an enquiry into alleged police and prison excesses by a committee acceptable to the Congress;

Viceroy's statement on last occasion-do his best but not at cost of others.

e) reinstating, on application, officers who were dismissed or who resigned in connection with civil disobedience.

In the event of the Government of India being agreeable to the foregoing proposals, the Working Committee will simultaneously suspend the civil disobedience movement, including:

If based on economic considerations.

a) suspension of the movement for non-payment of taxes, it being understood that, pending full settlement, no measures for collection of taxes within the areas where the movement has already commenced will be taken;
b) the breaking en masse of the salt laws, e.g., raid on salt pans, mass manufacture of salt;
c) the breaking of the forest laws;
d) the breaking of any other existing specific law for civil disobedience.

Why raise question of peaceful picketing? It is allowed.

(N.B. This suspension does not preclude peaceful picketing, without obstruction to the public, of foreign cloth shops and drink and drug shops, and manufacture of salt by individuals.)

8. Note for the Working Committee[1]

1. The British Govt. to recognise the right of the Indian people to independent nationhood and to sever their connection from the British Empire.

2. Full control of the defence forces (army, navy and air), police and finances to be handed over to representatives of India as soon as possible, and in no event later than six months from the date of this agreement. The process of transfer of power and control to begin almost immediately, the British troops being gradually withdrawn.

3. Right of India to develop diplomatic and commercial relations directly with foreign powers to be recognised by the British Govt.

4. Adjustment of financial relations between Great Britain and India, including consideration of past obligations and claims, to be referred to a committee consisting of an equal number of representatives of Great Britain and India. In the event of there being disagreement between the two, the matter in dispute to be referred to an impartial third party or parties agreed upon between the two countries.

5. Gandhiji's 2nd and 3rd points.[2]

1. Written on or before 16 February 1931. J. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L. This note represents Jawaharlal's minimum conditions for a settlement with the government.
2. Of 23 July 1930. See *ante*, p. 369.

6. Such political prisoners as are not let off on the plea of their having been guilty of violence should be tried by the ordinary courts in accordance with the ordinary criminal law. No such trials to take place or to continue by procedure laid down in any of the recent. ordinances.

7. During the period of this truce between the parties, no political prisoner to suffer the death penalty even though he has been convicted and sentenced by a court.

8. Officers of the British Govt. in India, whether in the army, police or the civil services, who are proved to have been guilty of having used an excessive and an illegal amount of force against the people in their attempts to repress the national movement, must retire immediately from service and will not be entitled to any pension or other monetary help from the Indian revenues. In special cases of outrageous behaviour, the officer concerned to be proceeded against and punished. In particular, enquiries be conducted in Peshawar, Sholapur, Bombay, Lucknow, etc., etc.

9. Interview to the Hartford Times[1]

Whether we win today or tomorrow, India will be a liability and not an asset to England. India has made a resolve to be free. England cannot revive its trade in India. It will henceforth spend more and more and earn less and ultimately go bankrupt.

QUESTION. Is it not possible to achieve the Congress end by constitutional means?

ANSWER. There is no constitution in India and unless there is one, it is absurd to talk of constitutional means.

Q. Do you not believe that with the help of England things will be right in time?

A. We do not want 'in—time', we want now. None who has usurped power has returned it by mere sweet reason.

Q. Do you not believe in England's generosity?

A. I have studied the whole of English history and have not come across a single instance of generosity in English history. And we don't want generosity.

1. Allahabad, before 16 February 1931. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16 February 1931. A newspaper in the United States.

Q. What reply will the Congress give to the British Prime Minister?
A. The Working Committee will decide it during the next two days.

10. Circular to P.C.Cs[1]

February 17, 1931

Dear Comrade,
I am writing these few lines to you to convey to you, and through you to all our friends and comrades of the Congress, my deep gratitude for the messages of sympathy and condolence which have poured upon me in our hour of grief and trial. My personal sorrow at the departure of a beloved person who was not only my father and my friend and colleague in the great cause of India's freedom, but a father and a friend to innumerable others, is softened by a nation's sympathy. Our hearts are empty without him and Anand Bhawan has lost its spirit and presiding genius. I feel lonely and weak. But when I think of his brave life and brave death, some part of his great courage comes to me and fills me with strength to face the ordeals before us. Like a happy warrior he lived, and like a warrior he died, serving to the last our common mother, India, whom he loved so well. But the gallant fight continues and the goal is yet to be reached. I pray that all of us who are left behind, and on whom the burden of the struggle falls, may be inspired by his example and may keep alight the torch of freedom till India attains independence.

There are talks of peace and compromise. Peace we shall always welcome whenever it may come with honour and freedom in her hands. No other peace can be a peace, nor can it be welcome to us. Therefore, let no. one be deluded into a false sense of peace or security. We have to carry on the struggle unabated as the resolution of the Working Committee says.[2] Our brothers and sisters are being shot down and beaten with lathis and made to suffer in inhuman and barbarous way's. Let us, on our side, go ahead with our campaign and meet this inhumanity with fortitude and resolution, and ever remember the pledge we took on Independence Day last year and repeated this year on

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-l/1931, p. 187, N.M.M.L.
2. This resolution was passed on 13 February 1931 at Allahabad.

January 26th. Peace will come to this long-suffering land when independence comes with freedom from exploitation. And not till then.

Your comrade
Jawaharlal Nehru

11. Interview to the Press[1]

Jawaharlal Nehru, questioned before leaving for Delhi, about the prospects of a settlement, said with a smile that so far as he was concerned the position was clear. He added :

In fact, our programme was already laid out in Yeravda jail. It has to be seen what attitude the opposite party takes.

1. Allahabad, 18 February 1931. *The Tribune*, 22 February 1931.

12. To Kiran Sankar Roy[1]

Camp Delhi
February 23, 1931

My dear Kiran,

I have read with considerable surprise the correspondence that has appeared in the papers regarding the Independence Day incident in Calcutta.[2] When I read the Home Member's speech in the Council, attacking the Congress, I was very indignant and we considered what step

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(KW)(ii)/1931(Pt. I), p. 171, N.M.M.L.
2. The Bengal Government had suggested that the Independence Day procession be called off, and the Congress leaders in Bengal had thought of negotiating abandonment of the procession in return for release of political prisoners. Nothing came of this, and the procession led by Subhas Bose was lathi-charged.

we might take in the matter. But the press correspondence has disclosed that in the main the facts narrated by him were correct. We have been very pained to find that any negotiations, even of an informal character, should have taken place with the commissioner of police and that even a possibility of an abandonment of the Independence Day celebrations should have been considered. Dr. Bidhan Roy casually mentioned to me on the 26th January soon after my release from jail that Tegart[3] had suggested that the celebrations be abandoned and that he had promised to ask the A.I.C.C. authorities in Allahabad. I was even then surprised at the presumption of Tegart and at the fact that prominent Congressmen should go within a thousand miles of him. However, I was too much worried about my father's illness and I attached little importance to the incident. It appears now that matters had gone much further. I shall be glad if you will kindly let me know what the correct version is. Of course it is possible that the newspaper accounts are exaggerated. The fact that our people more or less agreed to preventive arrests, thereby leaving the crowds to shift for themselves and may be face lathi charges, is one which is difficult to believe. Kindly write to me to Allahabad where I hope to return soon.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Sir Charles Tegart, the commissioner of police in Calcutta.

13. To B.C. Roy[1]

Camp Delhi
February 23, 1931

My dear Bidhan,
Gandhiji and most of us have been amazed to read the correspondence in the papers regarding the Independence Day incident. I must confess that even your statement is one which was painful reading. Why should we have such dealings with the police and specially with a man like Tegart ? I can only hope that the full version that has appeared

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(KW)(ii)/1931 (Pt. I), p. 169, N.M.M.L.

in the press is not correct. I have written to Kiran Sankar about it and I enclose a copy of my letter.

I do not yet know when I shall go back to Allahabad, may be in 2 or 3 days' time.

I have not received your reply yet about the Swaraj Bhawan Trust Deed.[2] Perhaps it is lying in Allahabad.

Ever yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Motilal Nehru had decided to offer his former house, renamed "Swaraj Bhawan", to the nation. See also *post*, section 15, item 23.

14. To Vijayafakshmi Pandit[1]

Delhi
28-2-31

Nan darling,
The long conversations are at last drawing to a close and we have to prepare again for jail or worse! This is all to the good. Only I should like a few days in Allahabad to set our house in order. I hope to return soon-perhaps on Monday.

I am trying to dispose of the Delage here. Please ask Ranjit to see that the car is in order.

More when we meet.

Love to the children.

Your loving
Jawahar

1. Vijayalakshmi Pandit Papers, N.M.M.L.

15. Note for the Working Committee[1]

The Working Committee has read and carefully considered the notes received by Mahatma Gandhi from H.E. the Viceroy regarding the peace negotiations, and is of opinion that the majority of the terms offered fall far short of the requirements of the situation.

In particular the *non possumus* attitude of the Government of India regarding picketing of foreign cloth and intoxicating drink and drugs, additional police,[2] demand for an enquiry into the alleged police excesses in well-defined cases, and for relief for the poorest in the matter of manufacture and sale of salt by them in their neighbourhood, presents insurmountable barriers in the way of the Congress suspending civil disobedience, and undertaking (in spite of grave doubts) to participate in the work of the proposed conference.

The Working Committee feels that the government attitude regarding the additional police ignores the realities. It is contended on behalf of the Congress that additional police, better and popularly known as punitive police, has been imposed to terrorise the people concerned and frighten them into submission. To compel payment of the expenses of the quartering and withdrawing of punitive police is a novel method of offering peace terms to the party that claims to have been seriously injured. The Committee challenges enquiry into the cases where punitive police has been imposed. The Committee is of opinion that such police, wherever imposed, must be immediately withdrawn and that all collections in that connection be stopped.

On a par with the Government of India's attitude on the question of removing the punitive police is its attitude on the demand for an acceptable enquiry into the cases of well defined excesses. What is offered is a kind of departmental enquiry in which the public have no faith. What is wanted is an open, judicial and impartial inquiry. If the police have done no wrong they should for the sake of their own honour warmly welcome such an enquiry. (It is impossible for the Congress, while Congressmen labour under the charge of committing offences and covering them by falsehoods, to approach with any degree of

1. Written some time between 28 February and 3 March 1931. A.I.C.C. File No. G-6(KW)(i)/1931(Pt. III), pp. 319-323, N.M.M.L.
2. To deal with the civil disobedience movement in 1930 the government had imposed additional police in certain areas and forced the inhabitants to bear the expenditure.

confidence and dignity the very responsible work of assisting at constitution-making.) The Working Committee holds that such an enquiry should be a preliminary condition of its participation in the conference proceedings.

As to picketing of foreign cloth and drink and drug shops, the Government of India seek to enunciate a doctrine, hitherto unknown, which would deprive the citizen of the common law right of picketing which he has hitherto enjoyed without let or hindrance. The note in question refers to foreign *goods*. The Congress has never sought to boycott all foreign goods. (If the mention of foreign goods, instead of foreign cloth is intentional, it can only be an attempt—scarcely honourable—to win the approbation of foreign powers for the policy of frightfulness which evidently the Government of India wish to pursue with greater vigour than heretofore.) But the Working Committee holds that the boycott of foreign cloth and intoxicating drink and drugs is the inalienable right of the nation. The boycott of foreign cloth is desired for the purpose of assisting the famishing millions to supplement their scanty resources by taking to the spinning-wheel and manufacturing khaddar in their cottages and with it replacing foreign cloth. The boycott of drink and drugs is intended to rebuild homes shattered through the drink and drug habits and to prevent the ruin of millions of other homes which may be going along the downward path. The Working Committee admits that both the boycotts have been used during the civil disobedience campaign as political weapons through picketing. But it was the Committee's intention, as would be clear from the note sent[3] by Mahatma Gandhi to the Viceroy with the Committee's approval, to confine picketing, on a truce being declared, predominantly to social and moral ends. It is common cause between the Government of India and the Working Committee that picketing should be free from all taint of violence. While the Working Committee recognises that stray cases of deviations from nonviolence have occurred, the Committee combats the sweeping charges of violence made in the note and is prepared to stand an enquiry.

As to salt, the note betrays callous disregard for the starving millions and ignorance of the true situation. Thousands of poor people are pledged to eat only tax-free salt or salt manufactured by themselves. Hundreds have during the past eight months bled for vindicating the right. The leaders are involved in the pledge taken by the people. Humiliation of the people and their leaders and invitation to them to break their pledge is hardly the way to approach peace. The

3. On 28 February 1931.

Working Committee cannot help pointing out that no popular government can possibly exist without sometimes having deliberately to connive at breaches of its laws. The Government of India are at the present moment conniving at the open breach of the Sarda Act.[4] But the Working Committee would be glad to have the Government of India countenancing or introducing an amendment of the Salt Act exempting from its operation manufacture and sale of salt in their neighbourhood by the poor people.

In view of the foregoing four insurmountable barriers the Working Committee considers it profitless to point out the niggardly spirit pervading the other terms. The terms take no note of the frightful sufferings to which, according to outside, unimpeachable, even English testimony, men, women and children have been subjected and the material losses sustained by the people for daring to love freedom and offer civil disobedience, which they have held to be their sacred duty, rather than take to methods of violence. The sum total of the terms is to the Working Committee an unmistakable indication that, however pleasing the words of British statesmen may be to the ear, India is not to expect through the conference the freedom she has bled for during the past 12 months.

4. The Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929, which laid down 18 years as the minimum age for marriage for boys and 14 years for girls. Provincial governments had however been confidentially directed to ignore violations of this law.

16. A Note on the Provisional Settlement[1]

In consequence of the provisional settlement[2] between the Working Committee and the Government of India a period of truce has been

1. Clearly written on 4 March 1931. A.I.C.C. File No. G-6(KW) (i)/1931, pp. 331-332, N.M.M.L.
2. Its main terms were : civil disobedience would be discontinued; the Congress would participate in the constitutional discussions with certain conditions; boycott of British goods as a political weapon would be discontinued but peaceful picketing to promote the sale of Indian goods was permitted; there would be no enquiry into allegations against the police; the government would withdraw the ordinances issued in connection with the civil disobedience, release nonviolent civil disobedience prisoners, remit unrealized fines and withdraw prosecutions against those not guilty of violence; persons living near the sea would be permitted to make salt for their consumption but not for sale outside their villages.

proclaimed. It is with deep regret that, on the morrow of this agreement, I have to strike a note of discord. I recognise that in many respects the terms of settlement are honourable and give evidence of the strength that the nation has gained by the sacrifice and suffering of the past year. I recognise also that the settlement is provisional leaving all the vital questions open, and the final settlement is yet to come. But I feel that there is a certain commitment in it regarding the scope of discussion and a certain limitation of our ideal as laid down at Lahore. Safeguards and reservations are referred to and, although these are said to be in the interests of India, they may be, and I fear will be, interpreted to mean a limitation of our freedom in regard to defence, external affairs, finances and the public debt.[3] The Congress and the Working Committee are pledged to the full control by the people of India of the defence services, the financial and economic policy, and the....[4] Many of my colleagues of the Working Committee are of opinion that the reference to safeguards and reservations does not limit their freedom in any way to work for the independence of India. I hope they are right and will prove their contention by their achievements in the coming conference. But as I cannot get over my doubts in regard to this phraseology, I am unable to accept or reconcile myself to any reference to safeguards and reservations. I do not desire, however, that any impediment should be placed in the way of those who interpret the words differently from me and who propose to extract independence out of them. Truce having been proclaimed by the Working Committee, I trust all of us will honour it and carry out the directions of the Working Committee in regard to it.

3. Clause 2 of the settlement stated that as regards constitutional questions, future discussion would pertain to the scheme of constitutional government discussed at the first Round Table Conference: of this, federation and Indian responsibility were essential parts, as also "reservations or safeguards in the interests of India" on such matters as defence, external affairs, minorities, the financial credit of India and the discharge of obligations.
4. Some words missing.

12

AFTER THE SETTLEMENT

1. Interview to the Press[1]

As a member of the Working Committee, I stand by the decision of the Committee. This has also been made clear in the resolution issued by the Committee at Delhi.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi has stated clearly the position of the Working Committee as regards clause 2 of the statement issued by the govern-ment embodying the provisional settlement.[3] The Working Committee has also issued a statement[4] with regard to this. I have nothing to add to these declarations except to repeat that if we continue the negotiations, we do so on the basis of the decision of the Lahore Congress, and in particular with the object of securing full control by India of the defence services and economic and financial policy, of getting admitted and acknowledged our right to sever our connection with Britain at our will and have our public debts and obligations examined by an impartial tribunal.

Under the agreement, boycott of foreign cloth and of liquor shops continues, and we are entitled to picket foreign cloth and liquor shops. Special care will be taken by us to ensure the perfectly peaceful character of this picketing. We shall try to approach the buyer more than the seller and thus cut at the root of the foreign cloth and liquor trade. Even so far, we have insisted on our picketing being peaceful and, apart from occasional lapses, it has been peaceful. But it has been of an aggressive character; in future it is going to be unaggressive.

So far as the no-tax movement among the tenants is concerned, we have undertaken to stop it as a part of the civil disobedience movement. That is to say, we shall not ask the tenantry to refrain from paying their taxes on purely political grounds. If they can pay, they should do so. But we know that owing to the terrible economic distress it is not possible for them to pay. We hope that now that a provisional agree-ment has been arrived at with the government, the latter will

1. Allahabad, 8 March 1931. From *The Hindu*, 9 March 1931.
2. On 5 March 1931, the Working Committee endorsed the provisional settlement and directed Congress committees to abide by its terms.
3. In a statement to the press on 5 March 1931, Mahatma Gandhi said: "It is open under that clause to either party to work along its own lines...."
4. On 6 March 1931.

see to it that ejectments made during the campaign are set aside and immediate attention is paid to the economic position of the tenantry. There should be remission of a large part of the revenue and rent. The Congress, I hope, will interest itself in the agrarian situation and help the peasantry to get their wrongs redressed.

2. Telegram to Roger Baldwin[1]

No final settlement yet. Truce terms only to enable negotiation. Our objective remains independence on basis which we negotiate. All civil disobedience prisoners discharged. Hope others follow soon.

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. 8 March 1931. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 16/1931, p. 41, N.M.M.L.

3. To Mulkraj Bhalla[1]

Allahabad
March 8, 1931

Dear Mr. Bhalla,[2]

I am writing to you about Pandit Radha Krishna Tiwari. On my return to Allahabad yesterday I was very much surprised to learn that his services have been dispensed with by your Cawnpore branch apparently because he had been to jail for six months as a Congress worker. It is no business of mine to interfere with the management of your affairs but an issue of some national importance has been raised by this action of your Cawnpore branch and I cannot refrain from drawing your attention to it.

1. J. N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.
2. Managing Director, Punjab National Bank, Lucknow.

Perhaps you know that we have been taking pledges from various Indian mills and other organisations to the effect that they must deal with Indian banks. We propose to carry on this campaign further and ultimately to break the power of the foreign banks in India. It would be a poor result of our endeavours in this behalf if national banks started behaving as badly as the foreign banks. The Punjab National Bank has a reputation of being a nationalist organisation and as such it has been patronised by the Congress and recommended by us to others. It cannot keep this reputation if it acts vindictively against those of its employees who have sympathy for the national movement and who have suffered for it. I know of many industries who have made a point of taking back their employees who have gone to jail.

I have known Pandit Radha Krishna Tiwari for many years but I would not have troubled you in this matter unless it did not raise important issues. I understand that he has been in your bank service since the opening of your branch in Allahabad in 1925. Later he was transferred to Cawnpore and it was in Cawnpore that he was convicted and sent to jail.

I trust you will understand my object in writing this letter. In a very few days' time it is my intention to issue an appeal in favour of Indian banks as opposed to foreign banks. Mr. Tiwari's case has surprised me exceedingly and made me wonder if there is really much difference between the two.

I shall be obliged if you will kindly let me have a reply at an early date.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. Truce but not Peace[1]

It is truce and not peace. Peace is an idle dream until and unless Swaraj is achieved. The Congress and the government have mutually agreed to give up aggressive activities on either side and discuss and settle the constitutional issues at the next Round Table Conference.

1. Speech at Lucknow, 9 March 1931. From *The Leader*, 11 March 1931.

If the constitutional questions are decided favourably, peace will be a reality; otherwise the struggle will begin afresh. Personally I do not cherish high hopes of a successful settlement. Swaraj implies control of Indian affairs by Indians and not substitution of a handful of British officers by Indian. Swaraj will be a farce if Indians have no control either over the army or the purse.

I admit that the truce terms are not all to my liking, but as a soldier my business is to obey and not to question the Congress decisions. I strongly feel that amnesty should have been extended to the prisoners jailed in connection with the conspiracy cases. Picketing of liquor shops, boycott of foreign cloth and preaching of *swadeshi* must be carried on, if anything more vigorously than before. The Congress has now suspended the no-tax campaign, but in places where the tenants are unable to pay rent owing to economic distress, as is really the case in parts of the United Provinces, the Congress does not expect them to pay.

There is an apprehension in certain quarters that the present truce will result in the Congress movement losing its momentum. I have no such fear and my advice to the released prisoners is that they should go back to their villages, work hard and work incessantly. The period of truce must not be wasted in idleness but utilized in gathering more strength.

5. To Secretaries, P.C.Cs[1]

Allahabad
March 10, 1931

Dear Comrade,

Our office has already informed you of the action to be taken in regard to the truce between the Congress and the Government of India.[2] I trust that you will carefully read the terms of this provisional settlement and will act up to it. The word of our great organisation has been given to our opponents and we are in honour bound to keep it.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. P-l/1931, p. 173, N.M.M.L.
2. On 5 March 1931, provincial Congress committees had been asked to discontinue civil disobedience.

The matter will no doubt be considered at the Karachi Congress and the general policy which would govern our future work will be laid down there. Those of us who may have any criticism to make in regard to this truce would have full liberty to express themselves there. You will agree with me that in any event it is highly undesirable that a debate on the merits of what was done in Delhi should take place outside Congress circles.

A certain amount of misapprehnsion regarding the interpretation of clause 2 of the agreement. This clause is unfortunately worded and can be interpreted in a variety of ways. But so far as the Working Committee is concerned they have given their interpietation in a statement issued to the public and Mahatma Gandhi has also interpreted it on the same lines. According to this interpretation we stand by the resolution of the Lahore Congress and by our subsequent pledges. There can be no change in these.

It is vitally necessary that you should take immediate steps to consolidate the position gained by the Congress during the last year and to strengthen it still further. The immediate action to be taken is to send out our workers, those who have been discharged from jails and others, to the villages to explain exactly what has been done in Delhi, further to see that there is no harassment or oppression of any kind in the rural areas. If such cases of harassment occur either on the part of police officials or the agents of landlords, our workers should immediately come to the help of the persons harassed and by negotiation try to get their difficulties removed. In case they find difficulty in doing so they should refer the matter to you. It might be desirable for you to appoint a sub-committee to look into this matter specially.

You will notice that our picketing programme continues, but stress should always be laid on its peaceful character.

If we now establish firmly definite centres of work and activity in rural areas we shall strengthen our organisation and prepare the people for any contingency that might arise. I need not tell you that the provisional settlement at Delhi means a truce only and no final peace. That peace can only come when we have gained our objective in its entirety.

Kindly keep this office informed in regard to the non-release of prisoners who you think should be released and also in regard to any aggression in your province on the part of the police or the agents of the landlords.

Delegates' certificates will be issued to you from Karachi but it may be that these do not reach you in time. Please, therefore, have your

own certificates printed. In these certificates it should be clearly stated whether the delegate has been elected in the normal way or by the new ex-prisoners' constituency.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. The Significance of the Settlement[1]

It was known at about 2 a.m. on March 4 that a settlement had been effected and all present there[2] were inwardly struck with a peculiar shock and sensation, not on account of any sort of grief or jubilation, but at the thought that the fight which they had been carrying on for a year to attain complete independence was to be stopped.

Over the temporary suspension of the fight, therefore, our hearts palpitated at the moment and our eyes were wet. But on a thoughtful consideration of the truce it was realised that there was no occasion for depression, for it had been repeatedly declared in clear terms that the compromise was effected only to provide an opportunity for friendly talks for a settlement, and there could be no question of a settlement until the country attained its goal of independence.

There are two parts of the agreement, one of which is a sort of preamble while the other contains the conditions of the truce, namely, what action the government should take and what action the Congress should take under the truce. You must have realised that it was not proper that the fight should have continued along with the talk for a compromise. If it was decided to enter into a talk for peace, it was necessary that hostilities on either side should cease.

As for the manufacture of salt, the condition set by Mahatma Gandhi has been accepted completely and everybody has the right to manufacture salt in his village and also sell it in his village and neighbouring places. It was not necessary to consider the question of the sale of salt manufactured everywhere as our fight about the right of people to manufacture salt was not initiated by any thought of commercial enterprise.

1. Speech at Allahabad, 10 March 1931. From *The Leader*, 12 March 1931.
2. At the Working Committee meeting in Delhi.

Regarding the campaign against the payment of rents and other dues, the Congress has agreed that the campaign will be withdrawn as part of the civil disobedience movement but it was made clear during the negotiations that owing to serious economic conditions it would not be possible for us to ask the tenants and zamindars to pay their dues. There were many things like this which were made quite clear during the negotiations but have not been embodied in the official document. You should remember that it is a government document.

Though some of the conditions are not to my liking also, they are, on the whole, honourable conditions and have proved our strength.

Many persons have complained to me about clause 2. I am not surprised at hearing these complaints for I also realise that the language of that clause can lead to many interpretations, and possibly the enemies of the country might interpret it against our interests.

There can be talk of a settlement only on the basis of the independence resolution of the Lahore Congress, as pointed out by Mahatma Gandhi and the Working Committee, about which you took pledges on the 26th January, last year and this year. The Working Committee has no power to act in contravention of the Congress resolution.

When I talk of complete independence or Purna Swaraj I mean independence not in name only. The country should have complete power to govern. It should have, for instance, complete control over its army. Egypt nominally enjoys independence but its people do not exercise effective control on the administration.

I have no objection against a connection with Britain but I am against Dominion Status because it implies that the system of British administration should be embodied in the constitution and the same economic structure adopted. That is to say, by having Dominion Status you bind your country to the same economic wheel which is run by the British people.

If the Congress has decided to participate in the next Round Table Conference it will do so only on the condition that the country will have complete independence and control over its army and finance. If these are not achieved the fight will be resumed with renewed vigour, and I for one doubt whether these will be achieved as a result of the conference.

We made every effort for the release of such prisoners as Bhagat Singh and we have every hope that our effort will be successful. If we had been obstinate in asking for the immediate release of Bhagat Singh he would perhaps have been hanged by now. If he is alive still, it is because of Mahatma Gandhi's effort, and if he and other prisoners

guilty of violence are eventually released it would be due to Mahatma Gandhi's effort.

I cannot say even now if the Congress will participate in the Round Table Conference, though for the present it has indicated its willingness. But if the Congress does join the conference, the intervening period will be very important and I hope that during this period you will strengthen your unity in order to be ready to resume the struggle with greater vigour if occasion arises for its resumption. I would appeal to women, particularly, to take up the work of organisation and to make every village a fort for India.

7. To Krishnanand[1]

March 10, 1931

Dear Krishnanandji,[2]
Rafi Ahmad Kidwai was telling me about the good work that Barabanki has done. Your district was somewhat backward in the past and I was very glad to learn that it came up to the mark during times of crisis. I hope you will continue to keep it at the right level. As you no doubt realise we have to keep on the alert and at any time we may have to revert to our struggle.

Rafi said to me that you wanted some help for khadi work as well as for political organisational work. In regard to the former, I understand that the Lucknow Charkha Pracharak Sangh or whatever it is called will probably help you. In regard to the help required for political activities, I have recommended to Babu Purushottamdas Tandon to send you Rs. 200. He has agreed to do so.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(KW)(ii)/1931 (Pt. I), p. 147, N.M.M.L.
2. An advocate and Congressman of Barabanki.

8. To Nripendra Chandra Bannerji[1]

March 12, 1931

My dear Professor,[2]
Thank you for your letter. I appreciate the difficulties which you mention.[3] We are all having to face all manner of difficulties. After all, that is the best training we can have.

Regarding the Chandernagore raid I think it will be a very good thing if you put the matter up before the Hague Court.[4] I do not know what the Congress can do in regard to it in Karachi. If I can be of help to you, you can utilise me. But I am not clear as to what I can do.

Hoping to see you in Karachi,

Yours very sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(KW)(ii)/1931 (Pt. I), p. III , N.M.M.L.
2. A leading Congressman of Bengal; resigned the principalship of Government College, Chittagong, to join the noncooperation movement of 1921.
3. These related to the release of satyagrahis in Bengal and the reinstatement of government employees who had participated in civil disobedience.
4. On 2 September 1930, the Calcutta police violated the international law of asylum by raiding Chandernagore, then a French possession, in search of persons involved in the Chittagong Armoury Case.

9. Puma Swaraj, not Dominion Status[1]

When I was released from jail last time Bombay invited me, but within a week I had again to go to jail. On my release this time I have come to fulfil my promise. I used to hear much about the achievements of Bombay even behind the prison bars. My heart was gladdened when-ever I heard that. But at the same time I would regret that I had

1. Speech at Bombay, 15 March 1931. From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16 March 1931. The speech was delivered in Hindi.

not the chance to be in the thick of the fight. I would then think that whenever I got a chance I would go to Bombay and see if a feeble man like myself could do what the women of Bombay did.[2] I am sorry that I am making a speech when I should be fighting the enemy. During the last year or so we have found out better ways of achieving our object than making speeches.

Our general has ordered us to stop the fight. Remember, he has merely asked us to stop our aggressive activities. It is not peace. Remember that this fight cannot be called off by anybody unless we achieve final victory.

I am sorry to see that we again seem to be engaged in a wordy warfare. Different interpretations are being put on the terms of the agreement. I am sorry that those terms are capable of different interpretations. There was a time when I was a lawyer, but I have now given up that parasitical profession and since then I dislike words with double meanings. However, I am constrained to say that before the ink of the agreement has dried, different meanings are being put on it. But I have given my consent to that agreement with a particular meaning. Our general has made it clear. It is the only meaning by which we will stand. If a settlement is arrived at in the light of that meaning, only then can it be acceptable to us.

I wish to make it clear that there should be absolutely no doubt as to what we desire, what our ambitions are and which way we have to adopt.

The Lahore independence resolution and the pledge that you took on January 26, 1930, and reiterated on January 26 this year, are a solemn resolve you made. Remember it, and if you have forgotten then go home and ponder over it. Remember that you cannot go back on that solemn resolve. It is that resolve by which India has to stand. No one can change that ideal. The Congress which fought the mighty government cannot change. Even Gandhiji with all his greatness has no right to change it. The final right to do so rests with the Indian nation.

On March 4, when I was informed by Gandhiji at 2 a.m. in the night that a provisional settlement had been arrived at, I confess that for some time I was embarrassed. I did not feel quite at ease when I realised that we would have to give up the fighting programme which had become our daily occupation. I could not decide for some time whether the noble sacrifices that the country had made were properly compensated.

2. The Rashtriya Stree Sabha and the Desh Sevika Sangh of Bombay had actively participated in the civil disobedience during 1930.

To the Congress there is only one interpretation of the truce. It must be considered in the light of the Lahore decision and the independence pledge reiterated by the nation twice during the last 15 months. As satyagrahis we must stick to that pledge. There can be no turning back. If, however, there is any Congressman who cannot go further because of his personal weakness, he has no right to retard the progress of the nation. He cannot thrust his weakness on the nation.

We fought the mightiest empire in the world. We were unarmed but our general had given us a weapon which, though nonviolent, brought our enemies to their knees. Personally I am not ashamed to confess that I would not mind using other weapons thousands of times. What I am ashamed of is not the use of weapons. I am ashamed of the bondage of my country. But before we use any weapon we have to think over its practicability. We have to see what the nation can do and what it cannot. Considering all that, we adopted the nonviolent method and the whole world has admitted that by that method we have achieved great things. This experience has convinced us all the more of the efficacy of that unique weapon.

But though we have decided to follow this method there are others who have adopted another method. They are our brave comrades. Most of them are in jail. I feel grieved and ashamed to see that they are rotting in jails while I am free. We could not free all our comrades. Do not think that it was due to lack of sympathy for them on our part. It was only due to our weakness. We had not enough strength to free them. But the moment we gather strength, we shall not fail to do our duty by them.

One of my brave brothers was recently shot dead. His name was Chandrashekhar Azad.[8] Ten years ago he was a boy of 15 reading in a school in Benares. He gave up his studies, joined the noncooperation movement and went to jail. There he was flogged for shouting "Mahatma Gandhi *ki jai*" but it did not deter him. For every lash that fell on his tender body he repeated the same cry. He did so till he fainted. Who can fail to appreciate the marvellous courage of that boy! He had adopted means other than ours. But he was not afraid of its result and ultimately he paid the highest penalty for it. Do not think even for a moment that we who do not agree with these comrades are superior to them.

3. (1906-1931); well known revolutionary involved in the Kakori Conspiracy Case, 1925, the shooting of a police officer at Lahore in 1928, and the bomb explosion in the Central Assembly, 1929; died on 27 February 1931 in an encounter with the police at Allahabad.

I must again emphasize the need for a clear understanding of the terms of the Delhi truce and the spirit in which the Congress agreed to it. I have been shocked to read some of the meanings put on those terms by some people and the press. There is a likelihood of the old controversy regarding Dominion Status and complete independence being revived. I am opposed to Dominion Status. I have no grudge against the British people or their country. But I do dislike and resent their attitude, their ways and their imperialist policy, and I am out to destroy and to put an end to the system.

Under Dominion Status, the army and the finances of the country are likely to remain in the hands of the foreigners and this would only mean a veiled form of slavery. Take the example of Australia. Though it is a 'white' dominion, it has been brought to the verge of bankruptcy by the Bank of England.[4] When this treatment is accorded to a 'white' dominion it is not difficult to imagine India's fate if it becomes a dominion. Egypt enjoys 'independence' theoretically, but actually it is still under Britain's heel because its army and police are in the hands of Britain. Dominion Status would mean that the present economic and social structure would remain intact, and I personally am not prepared to tolerate this.

I want that Indians must have full control over the army and every soldier of the British army must be immediately removed. The entire administration of the country must also be in Indian hands. Secondly, there should be no foreign interference in the finances of the country. The present economic structure must be changed and I would not personally mind even if the capitalists of Bombay were ruined in the reorganization. I do not want freedom for a handful of men. It must be for the masses. Because it cannot be had under Dominion Status I am opposed to it and want complete independence. Side by side with political independence I want one thing more and it is a socialistic order. There should not be so much disparity between the rich and the poor as there is at present.

With the heavy burden of debts Swaraj would not be worth having. You know how these debts have been piled on our head. Wars were declared on our neighbours without our consent. The brave Afghan race was harassed. The Burmese were persecuted. And we are asked to pay those debts and the interest on them. Is this not the height of stupidity? It is impossible that we should agree to pay all those debts. Justice demands that it is Britain who should pay something every year to India as a meagre compensation for the injustices heaped on us.

4. Following the Exchange Mobilisation Agreement of 1930, the value of the Australian pound had fallen appreciably in relation to the pound sterling.

If you want figures I can only refer to the sum of 150 crores which is said to have been given as a free gift to Britain during the Great War.[6] India cannot afford to forgo such sums. It must be written up against Britain and every pie of it must be recovered. Those who attended the Round Table Conference have mortgaged India to Britain and are now saying that they have brought freedom for this country. The country cannot agree to pay the debts. But we do not want to decide this ourselves. It can be examined by an independent tribunal.

The Congress Working Committee accepted the truce as it did not want to be accused of intransigence, especially when it was the opponent who offered peace tenns. Soon the Karachi Congress will meet to decide momentous questions. I would ask you to shed the hair-splitting mentality and have a clear idea of our demand, which is Purna Swaraj, and resolve to work incessantly for its achievement.

The negotiations that Gandhiji carried on with Lord Irwin at Delhi were a contrast to the visit of the Round Table Conference delegation to London. When Gandhiji went to the Viceregal Lodge, Lord Irwin could see behind him millions of Indians. I want you to lend the same support to the Congress.

Lastly, I wish to remind you of one thing. This is not final peace. The war is not yet over. The contending parties have merely agreed to suspend their aggressive activities. But you must keep yourself ready to resume the fight whenever there is occasion for it. Besides carrying on the constructive programme of the Congress like the boycott of foreign cloth, etc., you must keep up the 'war mentality' in the country, so that if there is to be another fight we must be able to carry it on more vigorously and achieve our final goal. If you do that I assure you Swaraj is yours.

5. During the First World War the government gave Britain a "gift" of about £150 million raised through rupee loans.

10. Speech at Ghatkopar[1]

There is a great stir throughout India about the Delhi agreement. But people should stick to the programme of the Congress. Many interpretations have been put on the wording of the settlement. I agree

1. 16 March 1931. From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 18 March 1931.

to its implications in the way they were explained to me. You should follow the meaning understood by us. If the government thinks that our interpretation is wrong, they may end the truce.

You should continue the boycott of foreign cloth and liquor shops. The time is sure to come when we will have to fight again. We will have to force the government to give us all the powers. The fight is not between the Indians and the English. It is between imperialism and socialism. We are not prepared to have any connection with imperialism.

So long as we do not achieve Purna Swaraj, we will not sit silent. I cannot say when we will achieve victory. It might come in eight to ten months or it might take two, three or more years.

People living in the cities might do some brave deeds but in the end they are likely to tire. Peasants are superior to city dwellers in that they are the bravest fighters and they will fight unstintingly to the very end. The peasants of Gujarat are better off than those of my province who are very poor.

The people want Swaraj, but it is not an article or thing which we can snatch. To the peasants, Swaraj is food and drink. I believe in socialism through which wealth may be properly distributed.

11. Tribute to Mahatma Gandhi[1]

Many a time during the last twelve months we have shouted "Inqilab Zindabad". We have also done a little to bring about that revolution. But the man who preached that revolution, who is the father and apostle of that revolution, is among us this evening.

You remember what a tremendous revolution it was that we witnessed in this country in 1921. Who was the originator of that revolution? Every one of us did something for it. We might have sometimes gone the wrong way, but the leader of this revolt has always tried to and has succeeded in bringing us together and keeping us on the right path.

By sheer force of his personality and intense patriotism he has always commanded our obedience. We are like children to him. What we

1. Speech at Bombay, 17 March 1931. From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 18 March 1931. Jawaharlal presided over this meeting which was later addressed by Mahatma Gandhi.

have to do is to carry on this struggle for completing that revolution and making the complete freedom of this country a reality.

12. Speech at Volunteers Rally[1]

From the time the Seva Dal was started I have been closely associated with it. At that time I hoped that when the big battle of India's freedom began the Seva Dal would take a great part in it and render full service to the nation.

I do not know exactly how much national work they have done in this campaign as I have just come out of jail and have not had the time to learn all about it. But I know some of the great work they have done in the past and I am very glad that since the beginning of the Dal six years ago, it has achieved very good results.

The volunteers should know that this is only the beginning of the fight and, whether there has been a truce or no truce, they should always be ready to render full service and the Seva Dal should be so ready that they will be able to go ahead at any time. One way to fight is through satyagraha and the other is by quiet constructive preparation.

Originally volunteers were recruited at the time of each session of the All India Congress and they would cease functioning as such soon after the session was over. The Seva Dal is a fully disciplined army of volunteers and will have to work at any time and, therefore, they should be soldiers in every respect. If there is any defect in them then they are not fit to be volunteers.

At present I have not much time but I may come again when I will have the occasion of seeing more. All should remember the object with which the Seva Dal was started and that the prestige and honour of the Dal rest in their hands.

1. Bombay, 18 March 1931. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 19 March 1931.

13. To Secretary, Agra District Congress Committee[1]

Camp Delhi
March 22, 1931

Dear Sir,
The attention of Mahatma Gandhi has been drawn by the Government

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(KW)(iv)/1931, p. 277, N.M.M.L.

of India to the following report from the commissioner of the Agra Division to the U.P. Government:

> On the 8th of March a purchaser from a foreign cloth shop in Agra city was attacked by Congress volunteers who wanted to haul him before the Boycott Committee and tried to seize the cloth which he had purchased. He escaped after a fight and made a report at the *thana*.. Three of the accused are now being prosecuted under Sec. 342.

I shall be glad to know what truth there is in this report. You must be aware that our picketing must in any event be peaceful and no force of any kind can be used. After the agreement regarding a truce, the peaceful character of picketing has been emphasised still more. If it is not possible to carry on peaceful picketing in a particular area picketing should even be suspended. I should not like to form any opinion in regard to what happened at Agra on the 8th of March merely from the report of the commissioner but I do trust that you will not give any occasion to the opposite party to think that we have in any way broken the terms of the truce. Please send me your reply to Karachi.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

14. On the Execution of Bhagat Singh[1]

I have remained absolutely silent during their last days lest a word of mine may injure the prospect of commutation. I have remained silent though I felt like bursting, and now all is over. Not all of us could save him who was so dear to us and whose magnificent courage and sacrifice have been an inspiration to the youth of India. India today cannot even save her dearly loved children from the gallows.

There will be hartals and mourning processions everywhere. There will be sorrow in the land at our utter helplessness but there will also be pride in him who is no more, and when England speaks to us and talks of a settlement there will be the corpse of Bhagat Singh between us, lest we forget.

1. New Delhi, 24 March 1931. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 25 March 1931.
On 23 March 1931, Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukhdev were executed at Lahore for involvement in the Lahore Conspiracy Case.

13

THE KARACHI CONGRESS

1. Speech at All India Students Convention[1]

Friends,

I am greatly perturbed by the recent happenings in the country. The execution of Bhagat Singh and his comrades is a reminder of our inability to protect brave and patriotic young men. I have also heard in the afternoon of the tragic happenings at Cawnpore, culminating in a large number of deaths.[2] It is reported that one of my very dear friends, Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, president of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee, has been killed in the course of the rioting. Like the true brave Congressman that he was, he must have rushed to the point of danger and tried to pacify the people who were killing each other. If he has met his death in this manner, it is as a true Indian should meet it.

The tragedy of Cawnpore is an object lesson that violence, though we may use it with the best of motives, is apt to recoil on us and lead to internecine conflict. The only people who profit by it are our opponents. Today, we cannot settle any vital problem in the country, much less the communal problem, by violence; nor can we settle it by temporary pacts or arrangements. Only by attacking the root of the disease can we eradicate it. Young men must envisage a new order of things and remove the evils which make progress impossible. Young men must remember that 'freedom' and 'independence' are mere words till a new order is fashioned which ends inequalities, exploitation and religious bigotry.

There is, a great deal of discussion about the truce today, but I should like the youth to remember that no living country can accept a settlement which is anything less than complete independence. Any settlement, which barters away any part of freedom, must necessarily fail, and the struggle will have to be continued.

Therefore you should be quite clear about the ideal of complete freedom and social equality. The time for shouting slogans has passed, and you must act, for action alone counts.

1. Karachi, 27 March 1931. From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28 March 1931.
2. At Kanpur, on 24 March, 166 persons were killed and 480 wounded in a communal riot caused by differences over a hartal to mourn the execution of Bhagat Singh and others.

2. The Release of Political Prisoners[1]

I second the resolution.[2] The specification of particular classes of prisoners in the resolution is only illustrative and I am aware that certain omissions exist. If the substantive part of the resolution is discussed and adopted, the Working Committee will further consider the lists of prisoners and of other persons that have to be included. The cases of the Sholapur prisoners and certain other cases have been omitted as they come within the terms of the truce which the government are bound to carry out. It is therefore unnecessary to mention these cases in the resolution; it would only weaken them.

Members should mention all cases for release, that they have in mind, to the Working Committee which will then be in a position to know which come under the truce and which under the present resolution. Please give full particulars of all cases in both the categories, including details regarding name, occupation, age, offence, and place, so as to enable the Committee to take suitable action.

1. Speech at the Subjects Committee, Karachi, 27 March 1931. From *The Hindu*, 28 March 1931.
2. On the release of political prisoners.

3. Message to The Bombay Chronicle[1]

India has passed through many a crisis in the course of the memorable year that has just ended and she has successfully surmounted them all, and advanced from strength to strength. Again she faces a critical situation.

May the people of India, who have suffered and done so much in the national struggle, keep the ideal of complete freedom ever before them and not rest content till they have achieved it.

1. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 29 March 1931.

4. On the Lahore Executions[1]

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
It would have been better if someone else had moved this resolution.[2] It would have been more appropriate if he who holds the reins of the Congress and represents the Congress in the real sense of the term, and who has drafted the resolution, had moved it. He is the greatest apostle of nonviolence in the world. He would have come before you and praised through this resolution the brave lad who rightly deserves that honour. But he is busy day and night with Congress work. That is why I have been asked to move this resolution.

Since the news of the execution at Lahore reached us, we have all been strangely disturbed. We had hoped that the government would definitely consider the public demand. But it has done exactly the opposite. We have become so sad and frustrated that we do not know what to do. In the wake of this tragedy came news of another tragedy at Cawnpore. You would have read in the newspapers that hundreds have died in communal riots in Cawnpore. Have we all gone mad? Shall we gain Swaraj by these quarrels? We have also learnt of the tragic end of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi; his body is still untraceable. All the time I see his face before me. Such a tragedy has occurred after many of our men have been killed in the firings during last year's struggle at Peshawar, Sholapur and other places. The government was unrelenting in its repression at that time.

Now the hanging of Bhagat Singh has caused a strange reaction in the country. Why is everyone thinking of Bhagat Singh today? Even children in villages know about him. Many before him have made sacrifices and many more are still doing so. But why is the name of Bhagat Singh on every tongue? Why is his picture adorning walls and why are buttons studded with it? There must be some reason for this. He was a clean fighter who faced his enemy in the open field. He was a young boy full of burning zeal for the country. He was like a spark which became a flame in a short time and spread from

1. Speech at the Congress Session, Karachi, 29 March 1931. From *Report of the 45th Session of the Indian National Congress*, pp. 33-40. Original in Hindi.
2. The resolution expressed admiration for the bravery of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev ind Raj Guru, but disapproved of political violence.

one end of the country to the other dispelling the prevailing darkness everywhere.

Will not the execution of Bhagat Singh cause tupiult in the country and hamper our work which we have resolved to carry on by peaceful means?

We have always rejected violent means and we shall continue to do so. The resolution says that in honouring Bhagat Singh and his companions for their brave deeds we have nothing to do with their methods. The Congress does not approve of the path they took. We have not met here for fun. We are going to decide as to what is and what will be our programme. Our way is not Bhagat Singh's way. We have always declared that we cannot free our country by the use of bombs. Some may favour this method and advocate it. But Mahatma Gandhi has shown us the path of nonviolence. We have progressed considerably along that path. There was a struggle last year throughout the country and even women and children went happily to prison. This success has proved that there is only one way for us—the way shown by Mahatma Gandhi, the way of nonviolence. The most suitable method for our struggle is nonviolence. Bhagat Singh's way was altogether different. But we respect him, and what the Congress did for him is well known to you. We tried to get his sentence reduced to life imprisonment but we did not succeed. My regard for Bhagat Singh is no less than that of any of you.

I shall not conceal anything from you. I declare openly that only by the method of Mahatma Gandhi will we gain freedom and if we leave the path of nonviolence we shall not be free for years to come. This is my opinion. I honestly believe that we cannot gain independence by violence. I am fully confident that those who think violent means would solve the problem are wrong. The way of violence is a dangerous way for our country. It will ruin the country and set brother against brother and, God forbid, they may start killing each other. That is why I insist that you should accept this resolution. If you approve of it, it means that you accept the way of noncooperation. I consider noncooperation to be the noblest way to fight.

I also consider it below human dignity to say one thing now and act differently later. If we want our country to progress then we shall have to adopt open methods. Our journey is very long. We have been covering the distance in stages and who knows how many stages still lie ahead. We may falter several times before reaching the destination. If we fall, it is our duty to clear the path for others and show them the correct way. Let us prove that ours is a country of brave men.

5. On the Gandhi Irwin Settlement[1]

A year ago we unfurled the flag of complete independence at Lahore, and to achieve that end also fought a battle during the last eleven months, in which lakhs of women, men and children participated.

I am now going to move a resolution which may create some doubt in your minds.[2] It is said that this resolution is less than complete independence. But I want to remove that doubt. We have already decided to win complete freedom and we shall not rest in peace till that is achieved.

We took a vow at Lahore that we would not have any relations with the British. When the truce talks were going on in Delhi, our hearts were full of pain. I wondered, and you too would have wondered, whether we were not going against our pledged word. After the glorious year that had passed, should we now agree to such a half-way house? We thought deeply over this and concluded that we would compel the government to give us complete independence, and if we did not get it, we would fight.

Last year we have done much. In the beginning we had many doubts. We felt that we would not be able to achieve anything. But the promptness with which the people have acted has shown that we can fight for freedom. The wiseacres in Parliament are labouring under the illusion that the Congress will be easily satisfied and so they have been making one promise after the other. But we want to make it clear to them that now no tricks will work. We cannot go to the Round Table Conference unless we are able to state our chief aim there. What should your representatives say there? In this resolution you are telling them to place the Lahore resolution before the conference.

1. Speech at the Congress Session, Karachi, 30 March 1931. From *Report of the 45th Session of the Indian National Congress*, pp. 63-64. Original in Hindi.
2. The resolution endorsed the provisional settlement, reiterated Purna Swaraj as the goal of the Congress and authorised Mahatma Gandhi to represent the Congress at the second Round Table Conference.

6. The Future of Burma[1]

Respected President, Sisters and Brothers,

I am here to support the resolution[2] that has been moved by Shri Maung Maung. The resolution is very necessary. The responsibility for this resolution should have actually been on our Burmese brothers for it is stated in the proposal that the Burmese have every right to do what they think is good for them. The fact is that the Burmese are being instigated against India and lots of rumours are being spread among them. They are told that their welfare lies in separation from India. The Congress, however, gives them freedom to do whatever they think is proper for their country. We do not want to compel them to agree to what we say.

If the Burmese want to remain as equal partners in India, they are welcome. But they may do as they think best. Whether Burma does or does not remain a member of the Indian federation, whether she should secede from India or not—the responsibility for this rests with the Burmese. It is they who have to decide all these matters for they alone can know what is best for them. This resolution only states what the Congress thinks on this issue; it states that the Congress leaves it to our Burmese brothers to decide what they think proper.

The British administration has decided to exploit Burma by all possible means, and they have devised novel methods for this. Sometimes they say that it will be good for the Burmese to separate themselves from India; sometimes they say that India is exploiting Burma. But is this charge true of Indians or of the British ? It is being widely propagated that if Burma wants to progress it is essential that she should at once secede from India. Who will profit from this? Who will benefit from the British cry that Burma should be separated from India? The British want to separate Burma so that they may be free to exploit it, with none to stop them.

Do you know why the British are so fascinated by Burma? There are several reasons for this. The first is that the British have clearly

1. Speech at the Congress Session, Karachi, 31 March 1931. From *Report of the 45th Session of the Indian National Congress*, pp. 123-126. Original in Hindi.
2. It recognized the right of the Burmese to separate from India, should they so wish, but condemned British exploitation of Burma and attempts to impose a separation from India.

understood that they will have to leave India very soon. When they do so, they must have some other place in their possession. They are making Singapore a big naval base. So they think that if they have to leave India, they will at least have a foothold in Burma.

You know that the mighty kingdoms of the world which are making progress these days are floating on oil. Burma's oil is a great attraction for everyone. The oil wells of Burma are all in the hands of British industrialists, and they are reaping the maximum possible gains from these. That is why they are anxious not to let Burma slip out of their hand. They fear that if Burma is not separated from India then Indian industrialists may also share in their spoils.

We want to make it very clear that all the propaganda that they are doing is for their own benefit. The Congress wants to state clearly that it gives full freedom to the Burmese to do as they think proper. The abundant oil wells of Burma are a greater headache to the British than to the Burmese themselves. It is also said that the Indians are against the separation of Burma. This resolution clearly says that Indians are not at all against this and that the question is solely for the Burmese people to decide. All these problems are due to oil. That country which has possession of this oil is considered to be the mightiest.

The British want to keep their empire intact. If they leave India they will have a place to dig their toes in—Burma. But if the British sway continues over Burma, it will be dangerous not only for India but for all the countries of the East. China and Japan also realise that the British hold over Singapore and Burma is very dangerous for them.

These are the dangers of which we are fully conscious. The Congress wants to declare clearly that the Burmese are completely free to do what they like.

7. On the Forward Policy in the Frontier1

Gentlemen,

For the last so many years, and more so since last year, we have heard a lot about the inhabitants of the Frontier region. We are told such

1. Speech at the Congress Session, Karachi, 31 March 1931. From *Report of the 45th Session of the Indian National Congress*, pp. 129-132. Original in Hindi.
   The resolution moved by Jawaharlal disapproved of the government's "forward policy" on the North West Frontier and demanded that British occupation of tribal territory should be terminated.

strange stories about the Frontier people—that they are cruel and inhuman barbarians and that but for the British they would have devoured us all. For long we have been told that India is safe from the hands of these barbarians only because of the British army. Their propaganda is that it is the British who protect India from their raids. They have been dinning it into our ears for so long and have been repeating it so frequently that we have really begun thinking that whatever they say is true. So much so that we have really begun to believe that if the British leave our country we shall not be safe, that the Frontier is really full of dangers for us.

People outside the Congress say that it is only the British arms and guns that protect India. They consider the presence of the British to be essential for the protection of India.

Now, who teaches us all these lessons? Was India not adequately protected before the arrival of the British? Did only thieves and dacoits then enter this country ? Put the idea propagated by the British out of your heads. I am confident that there is none among you who will think in that way.

I live in the interior of India but I do have some experience of the border areas. I can testify as to how very peace-loving the races living in the Frontier are. If they have any complaint or quarrel, it is not with India. They can be at loggerheads only with the British, not with us. When bullets are showered on these people, for how long will they remain without attempting to defend themselves? Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan will corroborate this. I can confidently declare that under the leadership of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan the Pathans have become more patriotic.

Why has the Frontier bogey been raised at all? We were taught that so long as the British armies are here we are safe, but once they are removed the Pathans will ravage our land. It is not only in the Hindus that this fear was instilled. The Muslims have also been filled with fear by the government—the fear that if the British go, China and Japan will overpower us. Please ponder on this matter and try to see the hidden motive beneath it. Enmity is created with our neighbours and battles are fought with them in our name. But we state very clearly, here and now, that we have enmity with none. We have already announced, and again do so, that the Congress is friendly with all the neighbouring countries.

Since we are slaves, we are helpless. With China, Burma, Afghanistan and other countries, we have no enmity. Let them not be misled into believing that if Indian armies are sent somewhere to fight, it is on our behalf that they are fighting. We want to make it very clear

that we have no hand in it. We are sure that when India becomes free then it will truly be for us to decide with whom to fight and with whom not to fight. We are confident that when we gain independence, we will be in no danger of invasion from any quarter, for we have enmity with none. We have been slaves long enough. If we want to be free again, we will have to cast off this fear.

Our country is staggering under the burden of the expenditure on such a huge army. We are fighting for others. There is no enmity between Afghanistan and India. The fact is that the British are all the time bombing and shelling them; so they too sometimes give the British some trouble. They are a brave race and they cherish their independence. If they are given full opportunity to enjoy their freedom, they will be hostile to none.

It has been the policy of the British sometimes to harass them and at other times to appease them. The encroachment by the British into their territory is a long story. The Afridis have some trade with India. The British stopped it and prevented the essentials of life from reaching them. They have put them to great distress and also occupied some of their territory. So, firstly the British do not let them live in peace, and secondly they are making them our enemies for the future. But we declare today that we have no enmity with the Frontier people and also that we do not want that anyone should arouse their enmity in our name.

8. Resolution on Fundamental Rights[1]

This Congress is of opinion that in order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom of the starving millions. In order, therefore, that the masses may appreciate what Swaraj, as conceived by the Congress, will mean to them, it is desirable to state the position of the Congress in a manner easily understood by them. The Congress therefore declares that any constitution that may be agreed to on its behalf, should include the following items, or should give the ability to the Swaraj government to provide for them.

1. Karachi, 31 March 1931. *Report of the 45th Session of the Indian National Congress*, pp. 139-141. Drafted by Jawaharlal with changes by Mahatma Gandhi.

1. Fundamental rights of the people such as:
   (i) Freedom of association and combination.
   (ii) Freedom of speech and press.
   (iii) Freedom of conscience and the free profession and practice of religion, subject to public order and morality.
   (iv) No disability to attach to any person of religion, caste or creed in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and the exercise of any trade or calling.
   (v) Equal rights and obligations of all citizens. No civic bar on account of sex.
   (vi) Equal rights to all citizens of access to, and use of, public roads, public wells and all other places of public resort.
   (vii) Their right to keep and bear arms in accordance with regulations made in that behalf and such reservations as may be required for public safety.
2. Religious neutrality on the part of the state.
3. A living wage for industrial workers; limited hours of labour; healthy conditions of work; protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment.
4. Labour to be freed from serfdom or conditions bordering on serfdom.
5. Protection of women workers and, specially, adequate provisions for leave during the maternity period.
6. Prohibition against employment of children of school-going age in factories.
7. The right of labour to form unions to protect their interests, with suitable machinery for settlement of disputes by arbitration.
8. Substantial reduction of land revenue and rent and, in the case of uneconomic holdings, exemption from rent for such period as may be necessary.
9. Imposition of a progressive income-tax on agricultural income above a fixed income.
10. A graduated inheritance tax.
11. Adult suffrage.
12. Free primary education.
13. Military expenditure to be reduced by at least one-half of the present scale.
14. Expenditure and salaries in civil departments to be largely reduced. No servant of the state, other than specially employed experts and the like, to be paid above a certain fixed figure which should not ordinarily exceed Rs. 500/- per month.

15. Protection of indigenous cloth by exclusion of foreign cloth and foreign yarn from the country.
16. Total prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs.
17. No duty on salt.
18. State regulation of the exchange ratio so as to help the Indian industries and bring relief to the masses.
19. Control, by the state, of the key industries and mineral resources.
20. Control of usury—direct or indirect.

NOTE : It will be open to the All India Congress Committee to revise, amend or add to the foregoing so far as such revision, amendment or addition is not inconsistent with the policy and principles thereof.

14

TRIP TO THE SOUTH

1. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit[1]

Allahabad
15.4.31

Nan darling,
Kamala and I are going off tomorrow to Bombay. Where I shall go to from there I do not yet know. Perhaps Ceylon. Perhaps I might come back very soon as I dislike missing our provincial conference[2] at Mirzapur, which will come off early in May. If I come back soon we shall go to the Himalayas. Mussoorie frightens me. I would prefer some out of the way place above Almora. I shall write to you from Bombay.

I am so sorry to miss you. But we shall meet later. Meanwhile get strong. There is heavy work ahead.

The United Motors people claim something between 300/- and 400/-as the balance on the exchange of the cars. I have told them that I shall only pay this if you pass their bill. I know nothing of the conditions of the exchange.

I have written a business letter to Ranjit. Tell him I am very glad he will undertake the preparation of last year's report.[3] By the time I come back all the material should be ready and then we shall jointly revise it. Ranjit's letter has just come. I shall be glad to see Manmatha Ram in Bombay. But there are no secretaryships going, and no trips to Europe.

Love,

Your loving brother,
Jawahar

1. Vijayalakshmi Pandit Papers, N.M.M.L.
   In the summer of 1931, Jawaharlal, accompanied by his wife and daughter, toured Sri Lanka and South India.
2. The U.P. Political Conference, held from 5 to 7 May 1931.
3. The Congress General Secretaries' report for 1930.

2. To Indira Nehru[1]

S.S. Cracovia
April 21, 1931

Darling Indu,

It is long since I wrote to you. Nearly three months have gone by—three months of sorrow and difficulty and strain; three months of change in India, and change above all in our family circle. India has stopped for a while the campaign of satyagraha, or civil disobedience, but the problems that face us are not easier of solution; and our family has lost its dearly loved head, who gave us strength and inspiration, and under whose sheltering care we grew up and learnt to do our bit for India, our common mother.

How well I remember that day in Naini Prison! It was the 26th of January, and I sat down, as was my usual practice, to write to you about the days that have gone by. Only the day before I had written[2] about Chandragupta and of the Mauryan Empire which he founded. And I had promised to carry on the story and to tell you of those who followed Chandragupta Maurya, of Ashoka the Great, beloved of the gods, who shone like a bright star in the Indian sky and passed away, leaving a deathless memory. As I thought of Ashoka, my mind wandered and came back to the present, to the 26th of January, the day I sat with pen and paper to write to you. That day was a great day for us, for a year ago we had celebrated that very day all over India, in city and in village, as Independence Day, Purna Swaraj day, and all of us in our millions had taken the pledge of independence. Since then a year had passed by, a year of struggle and suffering and triumph, and again India was going to celebrate that great day. And as I sat in barrack No. 6 of Naini Prison, I thought of the meetings and processions and the lathi charges and arrests that would take place that day all over the country. I thought of this with pride and joy and anguish, when suddenly my meeting was cut short. A message was brought to me from the outside world that Dadu[3] was very ill and I was to be released immediately to go to him. Full of anxiety, I forgot my musings, and put away the letter to you I had just begun, and left Naini Prison for Anand Bhawan.

1. *Glimpses of World History* (Asia Publishing House, 1962, Second Edition), pp. 54-56.
2. Letter not printed; for the text see *Glimpses of World History*, pp. 51-54.
3. Motilal Nehru.

Ten days I was with Dadu before he left us. Ten days and nights we watched his suffering and agony and his brave fight with the Angel of Death. Many a fight had he fought during his life, and many a victory won. He did not know how to surrender, and even face to face with Death, he would not give in. As I watched this last struggle of his, full of anguish at my inability to help him whom I loved so much, I thought of some lines which I had read long ago in a tale of Edgar Allan Poe:[4] "Man doth not yield himself to the angels, nor even unto death utterly, save by the weakness of his feeble will."

It was on the 6th of February, in the early morning, that he left us. We brought his body, wrapped in the flag he loved so well, from Lucknow to Anand Bhawan. Within a few hours it was reduced to a handful of ashes and the Ganga carried away this precious burden to the sea.

Millions have sorrowed for hirn; but what of us, children of his, flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone! And what of the new Anand Bhawan, child of his also, even as we are, fashioned by him so lovingly and carefully. It is lonely and deserted and its spirit seems to have gone; and we walk along its verandahs with light steps, lest we disturb, thinking ever of him who made it.

We sorrow for him and miss him at every step. And as the days go by the sorrow does not seem to grow less or his absence more tolerable. But, then, I think that he would not have us so. He would not like us to give in to grief, but to face it, as he faced his troubles, and conquer it. He would like us to go on with the work he left unfinished. How can we rest or give in to futile grief when work beckons and the cause of India's freedom demands our service? For that cause he died. For that cause we will live and strive and, if necessary, die. After all, we are his children and have something of his fire and strength and determination in us.

The deep blue Arabian Sea stretches out before me as I write; and on the other side, in the far distance, is the coast of India, passing by. I think of this vast and almost immeasurable expanse and compare it to the little barrack, with its high walls, in Naini Prison, from where I wrote my previous letters to you. The sharp outline of the horizon stands out before me, where the sea seems to meet the sky; but in gaol, a prisoner's horizon is the top of the wall surrounding him. Many of us who were in prison are out of it today and can breathe the freer air outside. But many of our colleagues remain still in their narrow cells deprived of the sight of the sea and the land and the horizon.

4. (1809-1849); American poet and story writer.

And India herself is still in prison and her freedom is yet to come. What is our freedom worth if India is not free?

Your loving
Papu

3. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit[1]

22.4.31

Nan darling,
Strange that we should be travelling by the "Cracovia"—it has few passengers and life is quiet, which is to my liking. We sleep a lot! There is a Japanese consul and his wife with whom we spent a fair amount of time. Tomorrow we reach Colombo. I have no idea what fate will await us there. I wanted to go away immediately to Nuwara Eliya but it seems that I am not going to have such an easy time. A radio message has just come conveying the welcome of a reception committee which has just been formed in my honour! I feel better already after two days of sea. I am sure I shall be as fit as a fiddle after three or four weeks. All I want is sleep and a different atmosphere. I hope to have both in Ceylon.

We are passing quite near the Indian coast. It must be Cochin or Travancore. It is thickly wooded and looks like Juhu from a distance.

In Bombay I gave a letter of introduction to a Dutchman, Dr. Spykman,[2] for Ranjit. He is likely to go to Allahabad early in May. Probably Ranjit will not be there then. But if he is there I shall be glad if he will cheer him up by inviting him to a meal or some such thing. Spykman is an interesting person. I met him in Geneva. He is now a professor at Yale in America.

I hope you are well now. Write to me from time to time. Address: C/o Thos. Cook & Son, Colombo. But a better address will be communicated to Anand Bhawan by wire.

Love,

Your loving
Jawahar

1. Vijayalakshmi Pandit Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Nicholas John Spykman (1893-1943); a scholar of international politics.

4. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit1

Kandy
25.4.1931

Nan dear,
I sent Betty some press cuttings yesterday which will give you some idea of our adventures here. We have not had a very restful time so far but it has been interesting and even the crowds have not been such a burden as they are in India. In India one has to face responsibility. Here there is no such problem and so the mind has rest even though the body is occasionally tired. The three days on board ship and the three days in Ceylon have already done Kamala and me a lot of good.

I am changing my opinion of Ceylon. It is indeed a beautiful place. The amazing loveliness of some of its views and aspects takes one's breath away. We reached Kandy by car at noon today and have had a fairly strenuous day meeting the local Sinhalese gentry. Kandy is a charming place. It is full of beauty spots and the climate is agreeable. Tomorrow we proceed to Nuwara Eliya.

Now that the beauty of Ceylon has taken possession of me there is little chance of our leaving the island before our month of holiday is up. We shall therefore remain here till the end of our trip and then perhaps return overland to Allahabad.

The local reception committee has very sensibly put us up for the night in this hotel. It is clean and cosy and up to date and reminds one of an average Swiss hotel.

I enclose a picture of ours in a Colombo Tamil paper. It is rather good—only Indu looks very ancient and very wise.

My love to mother and the children.

I suppose you are in Mussoorie but I am sending this to 9, Cawnpore Road.

Love,

Your loving
Jawahar

1. Vijayalakshmi Pandit Papers, N.M.M.L.

Bernard Aluwihare[2] is here and is going strong. He is greatly excited about things in general and about our visit in particular. In his excitement he forgot and ignored certain important persons accompanying us and thereby offended them deeply. Having committed this error he subsequently went and abased himself before them in order to appease their wrath!

Quite a number of people are insisting on placing their cars at our disposal. If I took the lot of them we would have a fleet of them. Some of them are fine cars—one was a huge limousine Daimler with all manner of luxurious fittings. But accepting one car and not another means giving offence to the owner of the latter! What is to be done?

2. A Sinhalese friend whom Jawaharlal first met at Allahabad in 1929; for some time Minister for Education in Sri Lanka; d. 1961.

5. To Syed Mahmud[1]

Kandy
25.4.31

My dear Mahmud,
I have been three days in Ceylon and I must say that I am fascinated by its beauty. Tomorrow we are going to Nuwara Eliya where perhaps we shall stay for a fortnight.

I have been cut off from news of India. But in a paper I saw something about the Muslim Nationalist Conference.[2] I can't say that I am enthusiastic about its proceedings. But this I do not know much about and I have no material to judge.

We are likely to spend a full month in Ceylon. Both Kamala and I are feeling better already.

1. Syed Mahmud Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Held at Lucknow on 18 and 19 April 1931. It recommended that the future constitution of India should be federal with residuary powers vesting with the federating units.

Raghavachari[3] must have gone off to Ahmedabad. I have written to Upadhyaya to work in the A.I.C.C. office whenever necessary. Make him do so.

You will always get my latest address at Anand Bhawan.

Love,

Yours affly.,
Jawahar

3. A stenographer in the Congress office at Allahabad.

6. To Syed Mahmud[1]

Nuwara Eliya
30/4/31

My dear Mahmud,

Your two letters reached me yesterday. I sent you a telegram which I hope you received.

I am very glad to learn of the success of this Lucknow Conference. I have not seen the resolutions passed by it in full but from your account I can form some idea of these. They seem to be all right. About the residuaiy powers vesting in the provinces, I do not agree. This is bound to encourage provincialism and this is even now a bane of India. My own idea is, as I have told you before, that the present provinces should be cut up and divided. We have too big provinces. As a matter of fact the real question is the division of functions between the central government and the provinces. The question of residuary powers hardly arises. Where it arises, under modern constitutional practice, the powers vest in the centre. The tendency today all over the world is for the centre to increase its powers as the modern world is too complicated to function separately in units. In the United States the residuary powers, I believe, vest in the component states. But the centre has been forced to encroach on them. As a matter of fact there

1. Syed Mahmud Papers, N.M.M.L.

are many proposals today that even independent nations should part with power to a central international authority to prevent economic and political chaos.

I am sorry to learn of the rumours about Bhopal, etc., becoming arbitrators. I have seen a report of an interview which Ansari is supposed to have given on the subject.[2] I was surprised to read it. But I think that the rumours are exaggerated so far as Gandhiji is concerned. Simply because he sees Shaukat Ali people begin to talk. As a matter of fact I was in Bombay when he met Shaukat. The meeting was none of his seeking. Sarojini brought Shaukat alone. I have written to Gandhiji today on the subject.[3] Don't bother about rumours etc., but carry on the way you have been doing. We must continue taking a strong line regardless of what others may do.

Don't trouble yourself about my health. I am a worshipper at the shrine of bodily fitness and I shall take jolly good care to get fit. As a matter of fact doctors are agreed now that there is nothing fundamentally wrong with me. All I wanted was a little rest and I am getting it here. I shall return fit and strong for the fray which cannot be delayed long.

About the Gorakhpur D.C.C. secretary, please speak to Tandon. He should take strong action in the matter.

I hope Ranjit is preparing the annual report for last year. Upadhyaya should work in the A.I.C.C. office.

I understand that a boy named Shamshere Bahadur is living in Swaraj Bhawan. He should be asked to quit.

You know that I am not demonstrating or sentimental. But you should also know how I value your affection and friendship and how this has helped me on many an occasion. I am sure that our comradeship will bear rich fruit for both of us.

I propose to remain in Ceylon till about the 25th May and then to return via Malabar, reaching Bombay early in June.

My address here is: C/o S. Somasundaram,[4] 27, New Chetty Street, Colombo.

Love,

Yours affly.,
Jawahar

2. On 22 April 1931, Ansari had suggested arbitration to settle the communal problem and proposed Mahatma Gandhi and the Nawab of Bhopal, among others, as arbitrators. Soon after, it was rumoured that Mahatma Gandhi had settled the problem and the Nawab of Bhopal had arranged a compromise.
3. This letter is not available.
4. A lawyer of Colombo.

7. Speech at Kandy[1]

Political parties are not purely political parties but parties with an economic programme, with economic viewpoints, and they fight each other on economic issues. That is to say, today the questions that trouble the world are social questions in the larger sense and include economic issues, not so much purely political issues.

India is at present in a stage of transition. I would draw your atten-tion to the Karachi Congress resolution dealing with various fundamental rights and certain economic changes. I do not propose to go into the merits of the resolution, which are immaterial, but the point is that the Congress has been forced almost unwillingly to face the issues.

The Congress is primarily a political organisation, and necessarily so because it has to face national issues first, but it has found that it cannot move on purely political lines. The Congress, therefore, has had to consider other matters because they are so bound up with the future well-being of the people of the country.

The Karachi resolution gives an inkling of the kind of freedom which the Congress wants. The resolution may be criticised; indeed, it has been criticised. May be it was hasty, may be it is imperfect, but the point is that the Congress and the people of India are gradually beginning to think on economic lines and of politics in terms of social and economic change.

The change has been coming for some time—in fact, ever since Mahatma Gandhi came into Indian politics a dozen years ago. It may be that the kind of change the Mahatma wanted was not what other people wanted, but the point is that any change must solve social and economic problems—in a nutshell, it must solve poverty and must place power in the hands of those who represent the masses.

Everybody understands, or should understand, that nothing is more futile than a purely political change which removes, say, a few English persons dominating the country and replaces them by a few indigenous products but otherwise does not change the political structure of the country. In my opinion this changed viewpoint is the principal achievement of the Karachi Congress, because I have always felt deeply on this

1. From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 2 May 1931.

subject and believe that unless and until these tremendous economic changes take place there is no future for India.

I cannot envisage, and I probably would not care to spend any time or energy or be prepared for what in a loose way is called 'sacrifice' for a purely political change. Why should I take any trouble simply for the sake of a number of individuals?

But there is no question of trouble or sacrifice in working for an end one intensely desires. If I take trouble it is for something worthwhile, not trivial. Do you imagine India has gone through the fiery furnace of the past year for something trivial? Do you imagine that India is prepared to go through the same fiery ordeal or worse, again, for something trivial, some change in superstructure?

If India has gained a great deal of strength in the past year it is because the vast masses of India participated in the movement. It was not the movement of a few, not the movement of such great persons as Mahatma Gandhi, greatly as he is responsible for the movement. It was a movement of the masses of India—a movement of the masses because the masses felt deeply the suffering they were undergoing, and because they felt equally the need for a change.

They hoped the campaign would give that change and bring some relief at the end of the movement. And because the feeling was so widespread at the Karachi Congress their aspirations found vent in a somewhat imperfect resolution on fundamental rights and economic change.

There is a large number of young men present here and, without presuming to say anything about politics in Ceylon, I should like you to think about your future in terms of social and economic change. Come to any conclusion you like: it is immaterial; but I want you to get a move on and not enter into ruts, because nothing is more terrible than mental ruts from which you cannot emerge.

If anything is a sign of youth, it is its elasticity of body and of mind. As soon as the body becomes rigid you are verging on age. I hope you will make an attempt not to become mentally rigid but keep the windows of your mind open for all new ideas, discuss them, come to some conclusion and act upon them.

The centre of world history has shifted. The might of England had dominated the world for several generations. America can play a very important part but, potentially, world history is taking shape in Asia. There is not the shadow of a doubt that the future history of the world will be fashioned far more in Asia and America than in Europe. Nationalism in the narrow sense is a thing of the past.

When we speak of Indian independence we do not mean isolation. As soon as India is free, her first business will be to cultivate as many foreign relations as possible with the rest of the world.

Nationalism must be a part of world internationalism—that intense internationalism into which is woven nationalism and the social structure of the country with other nations of the world.

8. To Syed Mahmud[1]

Nuwara Eliya
5.5.31

My dear Mahmud,
Your letter has just come. I was not delighted to learn that a bundle of papers was coming to me from the office. As it is I have to write about 25 letters and cards a day and, having no typist or secretary, it is quite a job.

Raghavachari had to go. He is far more useful with Gandhiji than in the office at present.

About Raghubir Sahai,[2] it is strange that he did not reply. If he has not turned up already you can drop him.

I am very glad to learn of your activities on behalf of the Nationalist Muslim party. Carry on and do not mind rumours of compromise, etc.

I have not yet received from office papers except a few which I have disposed of. Regarding the auditing of P.C.Cs' accounts, consult Jairamdas who can discuss the matter with Vallabhbhai. You might find out if Tewari, who did some work for us two years ago, is available. He will be in Allahabad or Cawnpore. Radha Krishna Tewari is his name.

We propose to leave Colombo by boat for Tuticorin on the 22nd May. From there we go to Cape Comorin, Travancore, Cochin, Malabar, Mysore, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Bombay. But this programme

1. Syed Mahmud Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. A Congressman of U.P. who had helped in collecting material for the report of the General Secretaries for 1930.

is not certain yet. My address here is: C/o S. Somasundaram, 27, New Chetty Street, Colombo. Telegraphic address—C/o Jalatharg Colombo.

Love.

Yours affly.,
Jawahar

9. To Valiabhbhal Patel[1]

Nuwara Eliya
5.5.1931

My dear Vallabhbhai,

Many thanks for your letter. I am glad you sent me some bits of news about the situation in Gujarat. I learn from the U.P. that the position there is also difficult.

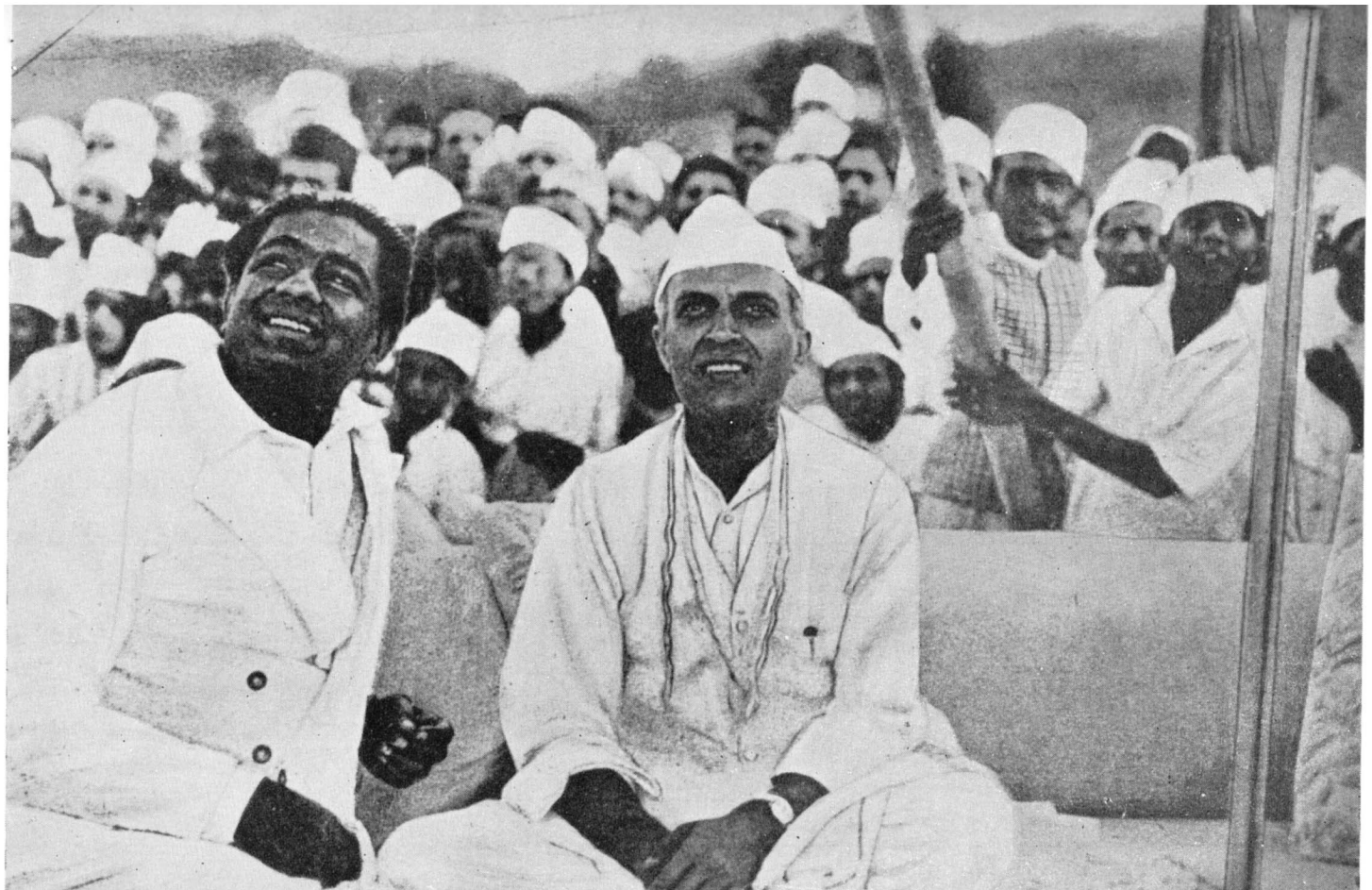
I am glad Raghavachari is with Bapu. Bapu must always have a stenotypist with him.

Mahmud writes to me that he is having some difficulty in fixing up auditors for the P.C.C. (Provincial Congress Committee). P.C.Cs also are not anxious to have auditing done soon as they say their accounts are not ready. I have asked Mahmud to write to Jairamdas about it. I think the auditing should be hurried up in spite of the P.C.Cs' objections. For the last two years we have been helped by the A.I.S.A. auditors but apparently there is some difficulty this year. There is a good man available probably in Allahabad. His name is R. K. Tewari.

We forgot at Karachi to appoint auditors. So I suppose the old auditors continue. They are in Bombay. I forgot their names. They might be asked to help.

The Reception Committee people in Karachi have been asked to hurry up the report of the Congress. I have suggested to them that they should send proof copies of all principal speeches to the speakers for correction. Also that they should have a chapter describing the arrangements. I propose to write a short preface as General Secretary.

1. Maharashtra Government, Home Department (Special) Intercepted Letters.



AT A MEETING IN BOMBAY, 1931



IN SRI LANKA, 1931

If you have any further suggestions to make, will you please communicate them direct to Karachi.

Please ask Jairamdas to remind the Reception Committee to put out half of the surplus for the A.I.C.C. Also to hurry up with the auditing of Karachi Congress accounts.

We hope to sail on the 22nd May for Tuticorin. From there, we shall probably go to Travancore, Cochin, Malabar, Mysore, Bangalore, Hyderabad and back to Bombay—reaching Bombay early in June. If I can do anything in any of these places, please let me know. My address is: C/o S. Somasundaram, 27, New Chetty Street, Colombo. Telegraphic address—C/o Jalatharg Colombo.

On return to Bombay the first thing I want to do is to see you and Bapu. If you are in Gujarat, I shall run up there.

I have not been very well here. Colds and the like have proved troublesome. But my rest is certainly doing me good. I feel better.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal

10. Speech at Civic Reception, Colombo[1]

The gods have been good to me in many ways, and my country and my people in India have honoured me beyond measure. They have shown me kindness which I could never, however much I may try, repay even in a small fraction. I have grown vain, I am afraid, by that kindness which has been showered on me, and it seems to have somewhat spoilt me and made me somewhat conceited and somewhat expectant of welcome and goodwill wherever I may go.

When I decided to come to this pleasant island of Lanka, I expected, let me confess to you, I expected welcome, goodwill and friendship. I expected them. But my vanity, my conceit was humbled by you. The welcome which you gave, the hospitality which was showered on me, both in Colombo and elsewhere in this island, and the goodwill that came in such ample measure humbled my pride and conceit.

1. 16 May 1931. From *The Hindu*, 21 May 1931.

I wondered as to what had happened that I should be considered worthy of the welcome. I thought that it could not possibly be because of the small part I played in India's national struggle. I was but one of the many millions who took part in that glorious struggle, whose names were not known to you—men and women who had made strenuous sacrifice. And the realisation came to me, and has grown, that for the moment I stand here or elsewhere I become not Jawaharlal Nehru but the emblem or the symbol of something else for you that you wish to honour in the great national movement—that you wish to honour the millions of people with whom it has been my honour and privilege to fight the great fight which we have fought in India.

The great march from Sabarmati was led by that indomitable captain, Mahatma Gandhi, little more than a year ago. An army of men, women and children followed the leader—father, mother, daughter, wife and husband, forgetting their relationship, fighting only as comrades and soldiers in the battle-line, taking counsel together and marching with an exhilaration indescribable. The sufferings undergone by them were, after all, not sufferings because they were in a good cause, and they were in such a state of exhilaration all the time that they did not mind the lathi blows showered on them. Their blood tingled with joy and the British realised that it was not possible by their crude methods of warfare—lathis, guns and the jail—to suppress that great movement.

They put their last ounce of energy into the fray and went on and on. Among those who died on the march were many great souls who had gone to rest. I could not see them all, but I wish to mention the name of Ganesh Shankar who died in saving his brothers at Cawnpore a month or so ago. There were many others who had gone on their march. Men may come and men may go, but India will go on. Then what else matters? If India lives they all live. If India dies who lives then? What does it profit, then, for those who live after?

Friends, it is right that you show your welcome to us. But don't waste your sympathy for the suffering and the sacrifice that India has undergone. We want no sympathy from anyone on earth. We want no sympathy even from our brothers or cousins. Sympathy is a thing that we are sorry for. We are not sorry for what has happened. India is proud of it. Therefore why call for sympathy?

We came here about three weeks ago. We have wandered about your pleasant island. I have wondered at the goodwill showered on us. I belong to what may be called the northern or central part of India. I might go still to my mother's home in Kashmir, the land of eternal winter, with snow-capped hills, overlooking the plains of southern India.

The gift[2] offered by India some two thousand years ago is still preserved by you here. It was a little more than a gift. It has been an indissoluble bond between the peoples of India and of Ceylon. In a few days we will be going away from this land and its verdure. We would be delighted to stay here, but India beckons to us and we have got to go. It is not possible to disobey that call, so we shall leave in a few days to shoulder our task and the burden of the fray in that great struggle.

In that work of ours, sometimes a little despair assails our hearts on our weary way. At that time of despair we shall think of Ceylon and the memory of your pleasant island. The memory of your hospitality that we have enjoyed will hearten us in our task and lighten the work and strengthen us in our duty.

2. A tooth of the Buddha preserved in a temple at Kandy.

SOUTHERN INDIA

11. To Krishna Nehru[1]

S.S. Something
22.531

Betty dear,
Our month of holiday in Lanka is over and as I write the shores of the island recede in the distance and the coconut trees become little specks on the horizon. It has been a strenuous holiday, specially the last part of it, but it has been a wonderful one, for Lanka is an enchanted place, beautiful till the eyes get satisfied with its beauty and nature's prodigality. It is ever afternoon there and the summer breezes blow and rustle through the graceful palm trees. And the great blue sea kisses lightly its pleasant green shores and sings a lullaby which soothes and intoxicates. One forgets almost the struggle and misery of the world of action.

We have had a welcome everywhere, magnificent and amazing. And as I went from one great crowd to another and passed numberless people waiting for hours by the wayside, I wondered at this miracle and tried to fathom its meaning. I realized that there must be something behind it, something obviously more than individual preference. And I felt suddenly that it was the glory of India and of our great fight that they were honouring and we were just the poor symbols and embodiments of that glory. There was a time, not so long ago, when an Indian had to hang his head in shame in foreign countries. But something has happened and that shame seems to be a thing of the past, a painful dream that has passed away. Today it is a proud privilege to be an Indian, and specially one who has borne his share in the heat and burden of the fray, and wherever anyone of us may go, he or she carries a bit of the glory of the new India.

I could write to you so much about our experiences. They have been rich and various and we are carrying away a host of memories. After we left Nuwara Eliya we visited the ancient cities in ruins and

1. *Nehru's Letters to His Sister* (London, 1963), pp. 21-26.

dreamt of the great days of Lanka. We visited Sigiriya with its great rock fortress and a cobra confronted us on the narrow rocky path up the hill and held us up for a long time till we managed to cajole it away. We went to Pollonarrua with its extensive remains of old palaces and temples and admired great statues of the Buddha and frescoes of the gods set in a lotus pond carved out in the shape of a lotus flower. We had a dip in the sea at Trincomalee and saw its beautiful harbour. In Anuradhapura we saw the widespread ruins of the sacred city built when the message of the Buddha was brought two thousand years ago by Mahindra and Sanghamitra, son and daughter of Ashoka. We saw there the ancient peepul tree, brought from Gaya 2000 years ago and said to be the oldest tree in the world.[2] And we wondered at the beauty and serenity of a statue of the Buddha. In Dambulla we saw the big temples and statues carved out of the solid rock and frescoes on the rock roof which we mistook to be paintings on canvas. In beautiful Kandy I addressed a great gathering almost under the shadow of the Temple of the Tooth. And then we returned to Colombo, to a whirl of engagements, addresses, meetings, receptions, crowds and enthusiasm, till my head felt giddy and my mind wandered and my body threatened to collapse. One night an amazing thing happened to me. I fell off my bed and woke up on the floor with my face all covered with blood. How this happened is still a mystery to me for my bed was a great big bed and I had not even a recollection of falling out of it or of hurting myself. But then I was on the floor in the dark with the unpleasant taste of blood in my mouth. All manner of strange thoughts came into my mind—thoughts of attacks and the like. I woke up Kamala, who was in the next room, and as she was washing my head, she fainted away and I had to carry her and look after her. The memory of the anonymous letters I had received in Allahabad had come to her and the sight of blood completed her collapse.[3] Hari[4] was then found and he washed me, and Kamala later dressed my head. There was just a small cut on the head about ¾ of an inch long—nothing much to speak of. It was quite superficial and I must have got it as I fell from the bed on the hard floor.

2. A branch of the pipal tree under which the Buddha attained enlightenment had been planted at Anuradhapura.
3. Before he left for Sri Lanka, Jawaharlal had received two anonymous letters threatening his life.
4. Harilal, Motilal Nehru's personal servant who later, up to his death in 1961, served Jawaharlal.

The hurt was nothing—it has quite healed up—but the circumstances of the hurt were peculiar and eminent doctors came to see me. A heart specialist thumped me about a great deal and ultimately pronounced my heart and lungs and every part of me perfectly sound. The only possible explanation was that I was thoroughly exhausted and my brain was in a bit of a whirl when I brought off this strange fall. Please do not worry about it. It was a momentary lapse and I am thoroughly ashamed of it.

From Colombo we went south, hugging the coast and passing through splendid scenery. Every few moments we had to stop for addresses and short visits to schools and colleges. We passed through Kalutara and Galle and reached Matara in the far south. On the way we paid a visit to a French count who has built a charming house for himself on a tiny island just off the mainland. As it was high tide we had to take a catamaran boat and most of us got soaked. Just before we reached Matara we were stopped and told that the Motor Lorry Drivers' Association had organised a procession of a few lorries—just a paltry 75 or so—and we were to join this. There were many other private cars also and so we had this procession of a hundred cars, mostly lorries decorated and full of people. On reaching Matara we found a great crowd waiting for us and the lorries lined up all round the crowd. It was a fine sight.

In Matara a strange incident occurred. I had been invited by the municipality to accept an address and I had agreed. Not knowing where I was to go to I went to the public meeting. This upset the municipal council very much. They were waiting for me elsewhere. I offered to go there later but they turned up their noses. The chairman came to me in the evening and began telling me in a somewhat offensive tone—probably unintentional—that I had insulted him. This was a bit too much for my frayed nerves and I told him to go to hell and take his council with him. I made certain other similar polite remarks. There was an audience watching. Early next morning we found that the whole city was placarded with huge posters announcing to all and sundry: "Matara apologizes to Pandit Nehru for ill manners of U.D.C. Chairman"-U.D.C. meaning Urban District Council. Smart work, done overnight. A rival political faction had taken advantage of the incident to rub it in. On my return from Matara, I received frantic apologies from the chairman and in my turn I apologized also. So everything ended happily.

From Matara we went to Dondia Head nearby—the southernmost point of Ceylon—and looked to the south and felt exhilarated at the thought that there was no land between us and the South Pole.

On return to Colombo we left our cars and for the first time took to the railway train. We had sleeping cars—bedding, linen, etc., provided. Indeed, we have not required our bedding anywhere here. In private houses or the government rest-houses—corresponding to our dak bungalows, but far better—linen and pillows were always provided.

We went to Jaffna in the far north by train and had a tumultuous welcome. Jaffna is the centre of the Tamil and of the aggressive youth leagues. We had a heavy programme, motored all over the neighbourhood, and had a dip in the sea and swam out towards India—she was only 16 miles across. And so back again to Colombo this morning. A visit to a Buddhist temple and college for monks, blessings from the venerable head and my respectful reply to the venerable one, visits and short speeches at three different colleges, private visits to bid farewell to a number of friends, meetings and photographs with the reception committees and the volunteers, large numbers of people to say good-bye to us, a crowd at the jetty—and here we are And so ends the story of our visit to Lanka.

Bernard Aluwihare has asked me to rub it in when I write to you—to make you feel sorrier and sorrier that you did not come. I hope I have done so sufficiently. Bernard belongs to a well-known and historical family here. They consider themselves among the chosen and do not approve of Bernard hobnobbing with Indians and the like! Bernard has the distinction of having a grandfather or great-great-grandfather who was beheaded for rebellion against the British.

Christians and Buddhists seem to mix well here. Bernard would curtsey deeply whenever he met a Buddhist priest and would treat him with all reverence.

Kamala has often been taken for my daughter. But what do you say to Indu being taken for the mother! This has happened repeatedly.

I am tired—we have just come back from dinner. We are the only first-class passengers on board. So Kamala sat on the right of the captain and Indu to the left. Tomorrow morning we reach Tuticorin. I do not know when I shall be able to write to you or anybody again—show this to Nan and Ranjit and tell mother we are all well and flourishing.

Love,

Your brother,
Jawahar
Tuticorin
23.5.31

One interesting thing I forgot to write to you. In Ceylon a great

banquet was being organized in my honour at a big hotel. At the last moment I was asked if I would have any objection to formal toasts of the king and the government. As I did object the whole affair fell through!

12. Interview to the Press at Tuticorin[1]

QUESTION. What are your impressions of Ceylon?

ANSWER. It is a beautiful and charming country and its people gave me a wonderful welcome.

Q. What is the attitude of the Ceylonese people towards their new constitution?[2]

A. There are many strong movements there which have boycotted this constitution, and even those who are accepting it are doing it in order to change it. But I have not studied the question myself and can't say whether that constitution would work well.

Q. What is the condition of Indian labourers in Ceylon?

A. It appears to be highly unsatisfactory. I did not investigate the conditions in detail but I saw hundreds of Indian labourers in the tea estates, especially women, and almost all of them complained to me of the hard life they had to lead. It was obvious enough from their faces. In spite of an effort that is being made to reduce their wages on the ground that prices have gone down, any national government in India would oppose it by all means in their power.[3] Unfortunately, the Indian labourers are not organised. I think it would be a good thing if all emigration of Indian labour were stopped until their conditions are bettered.

The first thing to be done is that people in India should understand that such an attempt has to be made. In this, newspapers and public

1. Given some time between 23 and 25 May 1931 to *The Ceylon Independent*. From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 2 June 1931.
2. Introduced early in 1931, the constitution did not satisfy the people who wanted full self-government.
3. In May 1931, the Ceylon government had, with the concurrence of the Indian government, reduced the wages of Indian labourers.

organisations can help. The other day I read a report of the shareholders' meeting of a Ceylon tea company in London. A thirty-five per cent dividend had been declared and yet the chairman of the board of directors said that they were trying, with the consent of the Ceylon government, to reduce the wages of Indian labourers. No argument is needed to show the monstrosity of the procedure. Unfortunately there is no cooperation between the Sinhalese and the Indian labourers in Ceylon. The former feel that Indians lower their standards of living and hence Indian labour and emigration should be stopped.

I think that the Sinhalese and their leaders are somewhat short-sighted in their labour policy, but I am perfectly prepared to support their demand for stoppage of Indian labour and emigration. As a matter of fact, if this were done the Ceylon planters and the Ceylon Government would come to terms soon enough with Indians. Reduction is sought of the legal minimum wage fixed by law. I have no doubt that the Government of India, if they so choose, can improve the condition of Indian labour.

Q. Will you go to England if Mahatma Gandhi goes to the second Round Table Conference?

A. The Congress Working Committee has definitely decided that only Mahatmaji should represent the Congress and I have therefore no business to go. Members of the Committee can go only as delegates and organised representatives of the Congress. As Mahatmaji is the sole representative, the question of other members of the Working Committee going does not arise.

13. Reply to Addresses at Tinnevelly[1]

It was a great time that we had last year, in this ancient country of ours. Although we have not achieved political freedom, the whole world knows, and you and I know, what we have achieved. There was a time not long ago, when any Indian going to a foreign country had to hang down his head in shame and everywhere he was looked down upon because we belonged to a subject country. Things have now changed. Let constitutional lawyers note this.

1. 27 May 1931. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 30 May 1931.

If you want to know and appreciate this altered status that has come upon us, go out of India and see how Indians are treated in foreign countries. For today in foreign countries, Indians, and especially those who took part in last year's movement, go about with the glory of India.

We have grown conscious of our strength. Though there may still be foreign domination, we have now the will and the strength to remove it. We know that England also knows that.

The position is now different. You know that at present there has been a truce between the Indian National Congress and the British Government and there is a provisional settlement. I hope that you know that this provisional settlement is very much provisional and cannot signify any permanent settlement. Of course, we want peace and everybody wants peace but the peace we want must be a peace that must bring freedom to India. Otherwise, there cannot be any peace.

We have given our word to honour the terms of the provisional settlement. We shall do our best to honour them. But, year by year, we shall not compromise except on terms which will bring independence to this country. We shall do our best to come to our objective by means of negotiations, but if these fail, and if there is a certainty that they will fail, there is no alternative except to start our campaign again in right earnest.

Therefore, I would in all humility suggest to you to leave the negotiations to Mahatmaji and the Working Committee. Don't bother about them. Get ready for action when the time comes for it.

I want to remind you that there are two or three things which are essential. You must bring about a complete boycott of all foreign cloth. Secondly, there must be a boycott of liquor. Thirdly, you must have as many trained and efficient volunteers as possible.

We have learnt very many lessons from the last year's struggle and the biggest lesson is that you can't carry on a struggle without trained and efficient volunteers. Take steps to build up a strong volunteer corps, not only of men but also of women, to serve the nation efficiently.

A time will come when you will be tested in a manner you have not been tested last year. When we entered with doubt into this valley of shadow, we found that it was full of glorious sunlight. Let us not worry, for there cannot be a shadow for those who work for a great cause. The real joy of life is to throw ourselves into a great cause and work on till we are exhausted. Many of us felt that real joy of life last year. Thousands of us felt it. When again the opportunity occurs, I hope hundreds of thousands will come forward.

14. Reply to Addresses at Trichur[1]

I would like to thank the organisers of the several institutions which have honoured me and my wife this evening, particularly the Desh Sevikas, because their address reminded me of the wonderfully marvellous activities and driving force of women during the last civil disobedience movement.

I have greatly appreciated the spirit of enthusiasm and perseverance that marked the activities of the Yuvajana Samithi and the Youth League. As a result of the civil disobedience movement we are nearer to Swaraj. We have the capacity in us to free ourselves. I cannot say whether India can win Swaraj within one year or two years, but I am sure that India will be free very shortly.

Indians cannot be considered as unintelligent and incapable of independent administrative capacity but the administrative machinery has been so devised by the imperialistic authorities that they have put wrong and weak persons in responsible posts, so as to point out their incapacity and thus draw Indians into ridicule. It is this system of jobbery against which I protest and rebel.

The last Round Table Conference was a failure because everyone who went there as a member did not know his real function. It is not that they did not have the intelligence to know their duty, not that they were unpatriotic, but that they were mere puppets.

As regards untouchability, the Congress cannot and will not tolerate untouchability or any inhuman system. The Congress stands for a new social order of things, wherein a healthy and more rosy structure will prevail.

We have entered into a truce with the British. If we get what we want, we shall not fight any more. If we do not, we must go to war again. I cannot, therefore, say whether a time may not come when we may have to be again forward in war. We have had to suffer and sacrifice to an inordinate extent. This is going to be a tough fight and we must not think that we are going to put an end to British imperialism by slogans. I doubt very much if the British have eagerness enough to fight it out. India is not going to be divided despite the Butler Committee and a hundred other committees. Mahatma Gandhi,

1. 30 May 1931. From *The Hindu,* 2 June 1931.

who is going to the Round Table Conference as the sole representative of the Congress, carries with him the support of 330 millions. There must be some tangible result from the negotiations. Otherwise, the entire 330 millions will launch a greater fight.

15. Message to Travancore[1]

We have spent a few days in Travancore and we have had a delightful time. It has been a strenuous time also and the very affection that was showered on us by the people all along the route and wherever we went, welcome as it was, became a strain. This little strain or trouble that we had to undergo was soon forgotten, but the memory of the loving welcome lingered in our minds and strengthened and cheered us. We shall long remember this visit of ours to the southern tip of India.

The large number of schools that we passed was in itself a good enough indication of the spread of education in the state, a pleasant contrast to the desert of ignorance that prevails in the greater part of what is known as British India.

And so we passed on, and everywhere there were signs of a new life, of a new awakening, of a feeling that India was one and all of us had a share in the great national movement and in the freedom to come. But one big blot covers this fair landscape-the blot of untouchability. Where nature has been so generous, man has been so narrow and selfish and has denied his brother even the ordinary rights of a human being. I hope this blot will go soon—there are signs of its going already—and untouchability and the denial of the right to enter the public temples and go along public roads will soon become an evil dream which has passed.

We go back with pleasant memories of a beautiful land and of a charming people.

1. Alleppey, 30 May 1931. *The Hindu*, 1 June 1931.

16. Reply to Addresses at Calicut[1]

After a tour lasting nearly a week, we are leaving Kerala tonight. In the course of this short stay we have been overpowered by the affection shown to us by the people of Kerala in every village we visited. To be honest, I am sure I do not deserve so much honour. The people who have honoured me have spoken highly of my poor contribution to national service. In fact, the idle talk of sacrifice is insulting. Men and women who are made for service and sacrifice have no other option hut to satisfy the purpose of their lives. A soldier who has actually taken his place in the battle-field has no courage to retreat for fear of being court-martialled. The same is the case with our national workers and sufferers.

When at Cape Comorin I sat on the cape proper, I felt as if I was sitting at the feet of Mother India. As I watched the junction at which the waters from the east and the west met, I felt a throbbing in my heart which shook me like a storm. My thoughts were riveted on the very stubborn unity of the Indian masses, though it has been mischievously and outrageously disputed. A strong emotion pervaded my senses and I was quite confident that from the snowy peaks of Kashmir down to the beautiful plains of Kerala there were no two individuals who were not brothers or sisters or were not engaged in the common pursuit of freedom.

I went to Ceylon in order to have a look at India from outside. Even in that small island I realised how much shame had been piled up on poor India. Every foreigner has the most offensive contempt for the 330 millions of Indians who are kept under control by a handful of Englishmen. No Indian can walk with head upright in any foreign country. But now, just at the end of the great agitation for freedom, Indians have demonstrated their capacity to think and do, to assert their independence and self-respect and to walk with an upright head and fearless mind through any foreign country.

Indians are now in an atmosphere of truce. If real peace is coming, it is well and good and everybody will welcome it. I cannot tell when real peace will be attained. Until real peace comes or until the government forces the people to make a breach of the truce, Indians have to

1. 30 May 1931. From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 4 June 1931.

observe the terms of the truce whether or not the government maintains it in spirit and word. At Lahore, Purna Swaraj was resolved upon as the ideal. It has to be borne in mind that this oft-repeated ideal must be kept in view throughout the struggle. No worker can go back upon this most sacred and solemn vow. It has to be fulfilled in right religious fervour. Everybody knows that a Round Table Conference was held in London some time ago. Those who attended the conference were patriotic and competent enough. But they were sorely in need of public support. They were not particularly concerned with what Great Britain would give to India, but their only helpless request was that unless something was granted a section of the Indian people, who were more fierce and patriotic than themselves, would rise in revolt against the British Government. But what occurred as a result of the Irwin-Gandhi *pourparlers*? Through the frail body of the "half-naked fakir" Lord Irwin did see the strength of 330 million souls and readily agreed to the safest move within reach.[2] That mentality of the Englishman who realised the tremendous strength of united India must be kept going by actions which will prove the irresistible capacity and courage of the Indian masses.

The question of the depressed classes is especially peculiar and poignant in Kerala. I have been terribly shocked and agitated to hear about the prevalence and recrudescence of untouchability. The uplift of the untouchables is a prominent item of the Congress programme. The vow of independence taken a year and a half ago well defines the Congress ideal of Swaraj. The resolution on fundamental rights passed at the Karachi Congress also explains the Congress view of Swaraj. The Congress is fighting not only for political freedom but for economic and social freedom also. The Congress will never approve of a Swaraj scheme where social liberty does not attain as large a degree as it ought to. Can anybody show that Mahatma Gandhi, or I, or any other Congress worker is content with a Swaraj where there is no freedom for untouchables? If I am fighting for a particular cause, it is in accordance with the dictates of my inner spirit. If that cause is not satisfied by the Swaraj government, I will never hesitate to fight even with the Swaraj government. But I have something special to tell the untouchables. They should never keep brooding over their fate. Weeping and wailing will not achieve freedom. They should stand up and fight out

2. On 18 February 1931, Winston Churchill had described the talks between Mahatma Gandhi and Irwin as a "nauseating and humiliating spectacle" of "this one-time Inner Temple lawyer, now seditious fakir, striding half-naked up the steps of the Viceroy's Palace, there to negotiate and to parley on equal terms with the representative of the King Emperor".

their cause to a finish. If, otherwise, they keep aloof from the national struggle, saying that their demands are not satisfied, they are doomed for ever.

I congratulate you, the people of Kerala, on the very successful manner in which the picketing campaign is being carried on in your province, and I regret the charge that appeared in the General Secretaries' Report[3] that South India lagged behind North India in political activity.

3. For 1930, placed before the Working Committee at Karachi in March 1931; this was however withdrawn.

17. Speech at Calicut[1]

It is almost a week now since we entered the land of Kerala and tonight we propose to leave it. It has been a very pleasant week, a somewhat strenuous week, but none the less a very delightful week. When I was asked by my friends in Kerala to go over here and there and address public meetings in various parts of Malabar I told them that I could not do so but merely wished to pass through Malabar on my way to Bombay, but in my attempt to pass through, the very call of your affection was so great that it was impossible for me not to stop and receive the honour which you are good enough to show us today.

When I landed at Tuticorin I had almost a feeling as if I was going on a pilgrimage. When I went to the southernmost part of India, to Cape Comorin, and when I sat there, I felt that I was sitting at the feet of India, and as I waited, the waters of the eastern and western seas washed gently over the feet of India. At that time I had a feeling which I shall remember for many years to come. When I, who hail from a place in Kashmir, travelled in these parts I found a feeling among everyone that we are all brothers belonging to the same land and tradition and marching together side by side towards the same goal. It is a feeling of unity among everyone in India. Wherever I see, I find only brothers, sisters and comrades. You are showing your affection towards us in a lavish manner. After all we are human beings

1. 31 May 1931. From *The Hindu*, 2 June 1931.

and by the honour you shower on us we feel how greatly one is honoured for the sacrifice he has made. Those who took part in the last campaign did not think about their service as sacrifice but they considered it as a joy in their life. So, if you want to get real joy, I tell you, you can get it only if you get yourself interested in the mighty cause of India.

I would like to pay a tribute to the part played by the women of India during the last fight and to congratulate the people of Kerala for keeping up the fight to the last. I feel extremely sorry for the remarks in the Congress Secretaries' report regarding South India. The southern provinces did their utmost and some from the very beginning had to face repression. So far as you, the people of Kerala, are concerned, from all accounts you have taken a leading part in the movement. I congratulate you for this, and appeal to you to strengthen the Congress and be ready for action.

18. Speech at Civic Reception, Coimbatore[1]

I regret that I am unable to stay in your midst for a longer time. But I would like to pay my tribute to you, the people of Coimbatore, who have so nobly responded to the call of the country. The sight of such a mighty gathering gives me some idea of the enthusiasm of the people in the district, which no amount of newspaper accounts could have given. Wherever I have gone I have found the same enthusiasm—a new spirit, a new quality and a new mission—at work, and anybody who has eyes to see can say that the country is bent on achieving complete freedom and also that the country knows that it has got the strength to get it. You should remember that the Swaraj you are fighting for means not only freedom from foreign domination but also freedom for every caste, creed and individual in the community. Our Swaraj is going to be a Swaraj in which every Indian will have equal liberty.

In our fight last year, we succeeded in a large measure not because every group had joined us but specially because the women of India played a great part in it. We did well last year but let us remember

1. 31 May 1931. From *The Hindu*, 1 June 1931.

that we are still far off from what we set out to achieve. The present truce does not mean that our struggle has ended. Nobody like[5] to see his friends going to jail in thousands and suffering lathi blows. But if there is no alternative to freedom, we have to face that also as we did in the past.

Therefore, it is necessary not to slacken our efforts but to utilize them to strengthen our organization and to keep ourselves in readiness to start the struggle for freedom, if necessary. We must carry on the boycott of foreign cloth and liquor shops. The boycott is not a political weapon for the moment but is a thing that is going to stay. Therefore we must have these boycotts and complete them. We must also get rid of the curse of untouchability and raise up our brothers.

I would like to thank the municipal chairman and you, the citizens of Coimbatore, for the addresses of welcome you have presented to me. I have also been presented here on the platform with a purse of Rs 3,821. This purse, I take it, is meant for national work. Therefore I propose to hand over the money to the office-bearers of your district Congress committee. Finally, I think you all for having sat in considerable discomfort to hear me.

19. Address at Civic Reception, Mysore[1]

I am most thankful to you for your address of welcome and kind words and for this very beautiful casket which you have presented to me. In your address, you have stated something to the effect that it has been a sacrifice on my part in coming to Mysore and you have mentioned the numerous virtues I am supposed to possess and the numerous sacrifices I have made in coming to Mysore. As a matter of fact, coming to Mysore has been something I have looked forward to for a long time and I come here with a very high sense of giving effect to an ancient wish of mine. After all, a person does what it pleases him to do.

1. 1 June 1931. *The Hindu*, 2 June 1931

People find pleasure in different ways. Sacrifice or no sacrifice, it has been a great joy for those of us who have been connected with this national movement to have done what we have done and to have had the satisfaction of having served a mighty cause. To call that 'sacrifice' is a misnomer. It is a real joy in life. It was not I alone but it was the thousands and tens of thousands of people who had the privilege to have experienced this joy. For them the other joys are feeble, futile and passing. Therefore, you need not talk of any sacrifices on my part.

I thank you for your welcome. It is good to go to a place and to find that a welcome awaits one who goes. I envy you, the members of the municipal council, that you have in your charge and keeping a beautiful city to be looked after and to improve. It is a great thing to see beauty grow by your efforts and to create a city, beautiful with public gardens and other amenities. I have not seen much of your city, yet the little I have seen impresses me by its beauty and I have felt envious of those who have made this beauty. The parks at any rate are beautiful and I hope you will make them more and more beautiful. After all this, one fact I would submit for your consideration, and that is that the beauty of a city is to be judged fundamentally and primarily not by the beauty of the mansions of the rich but by the beauty of the houses of the poor. The best of a city's life is not the sanitary condition of the parks and the places inhabited by the rich but the condition of the slums. When you think of the beauty of Mysore city you have always to think of the poorest parts of the city and see whether those places are beautiful, healthy and sanitary, or not. After all, the fundamental beauty of a city, as the beauty of a country, depends much more on flesh and blood and less on brick and mortar. The primary function of a municipal council is to see that the poorer residents are well-housed, well-fed, and well-clothed. That, after all, is the ultimate test of life in a municipality. That is a tremendous ideal to be put before any municipality or country and it will be long before a municipality can reach such an ideal. But that is the ideal that a municipality should always have. There is no use of a municipality saying that they have no funds to do this thing and that thing. You have to see whether the poorest of the city are keeping health, both mentally and physically. I hope that your council will always keep this ideal before it, and even if the municipality may not succeed in all efforts to reach the ideal you will have done much towards reaching it ultimately.

I thank you very much once again for the welcome and the address.

20. Reply to Addresses at Mysore[1]

It seems to have become a custom in these addresses that are presented to a person to often praise the person, in whose honour the addresses are presented, beyond all measure. I must confess to a strange feeling of going from place to place and of being welcomed by large crowds and replying to addresses—on an average, six to ten a day—which I may say in passing are done by people who have no idea of the consequences of presenting addresses in wooden frames. I realise that I would be buried in wooden frames. What would I do with about 200 of these wooden frames? A friend of mine asked me if I am interested in any furniture shop in Allahabad!

Having heard so much fulsome praise, I must confess to feeling a kind of nausea because I am neither used to this nor do I like it. It is not good for the soul of either party. I beg of you not to take my words in any sarcastic or jocular sense. Whatever my failings are, I do not suffer from modesty. I have a full knowledge of my virtues, and modesty is not one of my failings. I would however ask you not to indulge, in your public and private work, in this laxity of language in regard to individuals. One finds it all the more in Indian states and regrets it all the more.

Fundamentally it is a wrong outlook on life, if in national matters you look upon individuals and not upon the movement and forget the environment in which they work and look upon them as makers of a great national movement. No great movement can be built up by individuals alone. It has been our pride and privilege to have had in India during the last few years individuals of note of whom any country can be proud. We have had captains than whom we could wish no better. Can you think of only captains and captains-general and not thousands and tens of thousands who, without really expecting any reward or receiving any address or garlands, have suffered and worked for. the national cause? I recall to you what happened last year. When our general started his march to Dandi village there were people who laughed at his futile adventure. Gradually they felt the strength of the call and there was a tremor in the Indian continent. People who heard the call considered that it was a call from India herself and even those who hesitated and doubted at first felt a strange feeling in their hearts

1. 1 June 1931. *The Hindu*, 4 June 1931.

and could not say 'no' to the call. Millions of Indians marched in response to the call and thousands of them were removed to prisons. Our women, you know, are not used to the market-place and they were not capable of facing police lathi charges. Most of them lead a life of sheltered ease. But they could not say 'no' to the national call when they saw that their husbands, brothers and fathers were fighting in this struggle, and they showedthat they could also suffer and sacrifice. Not only did they show themselves capable of suffering and sacrifice but they showed that they had powers of organisation and endurance and that even if the men of India failed the women of India could not fail. The movement went on and developed and you who talk of suffering and sacrifice need not waste your sympathy for those who suffered and sacrificed because they who sacrificed suffered and enjoyed doing so.

What kind of life do most of us live in this country? Do we live like live persons? We live more like vegetables. We go round the same routine like potatoes and cabbages. We are always worried by the petty worries of the world. We are full of grievances and troubles and we carry on our life in that routine fashion until we deservedly die. For some time, at any rate, we got out of that vegetable state of existence. We felt the joy of life just then. Do we want sympathy for such a feeling of joy? No, we do not want to be turned again to potatoes and cabbages. There were some things said in the addresses about suffering and sacrifice. Those whom you have loved marched forward and were faced with lathi blows. Some of you might have heard of it. Have you ever heard the soft thud of a lathi falling on soft flesh? It angers you when you hear it or see it. We, some of us, who saw it happening in front of us—what do you think were our feelings then? We learnt the lesson of discipline, imposed by our captain. Without discipline the bravest man is a useless soldier. Therefore, whatever we saw, and however much it angered us and induced us to retaliate, we restrained and controlled ourselves and only strengthened our resolve to resist till we could put an end to such a happening.

Its mark is left not only on India but on England and on the entire world. It has left its mark on us and today in India we feel we have something in us which we did not realise before. We feel that we have also something in us which will knock down the mighty British Empire. We cannot prophesy how long it will take us to win our freedom. We are at any rate conscious today of strength enough to win and we are confident and optimistic of success. We do not very much care what happens in conferences and the like. The fundamental question is always one of the inner strength and of the sanction we have

behind us. If you and I have strength we shall go forward and we shall get the results of our strength. If our nation is not strong enough to get what it deserves, do you think we shall win by our lawyers' quibbles and arguments? We have been engaged in doing real work in building up the strength of India and we know we shall build it enough in a large measure, and because we know the process now of building it we shall go forward and do not very much care what happens in the near future. We have to keep ourselves prepared, and those who have gathered here in such a large number should consider what they are prepared to do to help this movement and those persons who are connected with this movement. You must put that question and try to answer it yourselves. The future depends on your answer to such a question. That is why I have a horror of demonstrations, processions and shouting of slogans. Very often people who shout do nothing else. We are in for a big thing in this country. India has started something which is going to make a lot of difference not only for India but for the whole world. We are in for a big thing and we intend to see it through. Take it from me that there are men and women determined to see it through. It will be folly to imagine that the work before us is easy work. It is dangerous work and it has risks. But we have qualities of grit and endurance which can be compared to that of the bulldog. We embarked on this struggle because there was no other way for it. Now it all depends on the measure of response that we get from the men and women of India. I hope the answer will be one which will induce you to do something solid and to prepare yourselves for more action. I hope you will therefore at the present moment strengthen in every way that national movement and the national organisation and also help in the boycott of foreign cloth and liquor. We must eliminate foreign cloth from India and we have included this in the terms of the truce. You have to help us in these things. Above all, get ready in mind and body for a greater call that may come. Get clear ideas and be in a fit condition, like an athlete, to face the pistol.

21. Address to Bar Association, Mysore[1]

Though it is nearly twelve years since I ceased to take any interest in law, it is for the first time that I have had the good fortune now of

1. 1 June, 1931. *The Hindu*, 4 June 1931.

being invited by persons who are members of the profession to which I originally belonged. I have on many an occasion given expression to very severe criticism about the profession in general and about the members of the bar in India because the lawyer is generally prone to lose sight of the vital facts of life and be sordidly ridden by precedents and sections of law. That has been so. Yet one must admit that a large portion of public life has been shared by lawyers, and there might be cases when law has been helpful to them in solving the riddles of life. It is, however, a fact that the brightest of our intellectuals have chosen the profession for want of any other opening. The lawyer is apt to be parochial in his outlook and I fear that any system of law which does not receive the sanction of the community to which it applies is bound to be retrograde in its operation. You all know that within the brief space of one to one and a half years there has not been any change either of the legal or the constitutional aspect of India, but still the status of India has tremendously increased and Indians are held in higher esteem than they have ever been before. Even persons who had worked against the Congress are being, since the last one or one and a half years, held high in esteem because of the fact that the national movement has enveloped them also. This is a point which all lawyers may now and then seriously ponder over and contribute their mite towards the national upheaval.

22. Reply to Addresses at Bangalore[1]

I thank you for your welcome, for your reception and for your addresses of welcome. I thank my comrades and co-workers of the district and city Congress committees, the Youth League, the Mysore State Congress and the Arya Samaj, and in thanking you, I should like you to r-member, as I have no doubt you do remember, that when you present address to individuals whose names you are acquainted with, when you welcome them, you should always remember that the real credit for the good campaign that we had last year, for the great fight that we had last year—the real credit does not belong to an individual here and an individual there. You know that the credit belongs to the women, and thousands of volunteers and workers, who worked and worked, not to

1. 2 June 1931. From *The Hindu*, 3 June 1931.

catch the public eye but behind the scenes, without any expectation of congratulations given to them. They worked because they wanted to do their best for the cause of the country. Do not imagine that the mighty movement that we had last year was the making of only a few leaders. The movement was in a large measure due to the great captain, Mahatmaji. The movement was the Indian people in action, millions of people in action. Therefore we produced the great results, not so much the political results, but the moral and psychological results, which have made for India a place in the world and an influence which we have not had for some generations past. Now Indians go out of India not with so much of degradation and slavery about them as they went before. Today you go out of India with something of the glory of India about you. People respect you, people honour you and people are interested in you and ask you to tell them all about India and ask all about Mahatmaji. Such is the wonderful force of that mighty personality, such is the power of the man whom we have got as our leader.

You have also to honour the womanhood of India, who really might be said to have shouldered the greatest burden in this movement. They came out of their homes at the time of the greatest crisis when most of the workers in thousands had gone to prison. There was some risk of the movement slackening but the women came out and faced the heat of the fray. This movement has set the example for the rest of India. So wonderful have been its effects that it is impossible to put down the people of India. Again, if in the campaign some people played a promi-nent part, how did they do so? It was their privilege to play a prominent part because of the tremendous spirit they derived from the rank and file, because after all a leader is ultimately made by his following. The strongest of leaders become weak, when the following becomes weak. If you want to be strong and want your leaders to be strong, be strong yourselves. We know that today there is that spirit in the nation. India today is strong because millions of people are prepared to go ahead. Leader after leader came forward and even when 70,000 people, men and women, went to jail there was no lack of leaders. Leadership was rightly vested in the nation as a whole. Therefore we know that there is no danger to India. Nothing can happen which can upset our movement.

But, there is the problem of the future. One does not want to look back in the past. Greater than the past is going to be the future. Today we are in a period of truce. The Congress has given its word to the government that it will observe the conditions of the truce. We have agreed to a provisional settlement, and having given our word, we shall all stand by that word and honour its conditions rigorously. But remember, it is only a provisional settlement. If we can get peace on

terms of India's freedom in accordance with the National Congress, well and good. Nobody wants to suffer unnecessarily and go through a tremendous campaign. But we want freedom more than peace. We cannot make any peace which does not bring with it complete freedom for India—not only political but also social and economic freedom as well, because the National Congress stands today not only for political freedom, but even more so for economic and social freedom. If peace comes with freedom, well and good. If peace cannot be obtained with freedom, then there will be no real peace and there will be war.

Therefore, it is up to us to keep ready both for peace and also for a breakdown of the negotiations. It is up to us all to observe the terms of the truce. Boycott of foreign cloth and picketing of liquor shops have to continue. We must concentrate our attention on the strengthening of the Congress organisation. We must train volunteers and discipline them. We must concentrate on getting ourselves ready for the great movement of action whenever it comes. India is going to play a big part and our movement is going to be an even bigger one than the big one which we had. Do not get left behind when the stream of India's freedom goes forward.

India is one and India is going to remain one. So there can be no question of a division as Indian India and Indian states. This is one fundamental fact of which you need not have the slightest doubt. India is not going to be divided, for India is going to have a federation, as probably she will have. But it does not mean that the kind of federation is the one suggested by the Round Table Conference, because in my opinion it is a ridiculous and absurd kind of federation. What manner of federation we will have, I cannot say offhand. But you cannot have different units in the federation with different positions and status. There might be some transitional arrangement. In any event it must be certain that even if there is any kind of compromise on this issue, it can be subject only to certain fundamental rights in the states. An assurance that these rights will be protected properly is absolutely necessary. Also, there should be recognition of the fact that the people of the states cannot be ignored but must be represented in the federation. The ideal is identical both to the Indian states and to the rest of India. In the ultimate ideal, both of them must have the same status. Now we want to concentrate our fight against the outsider. We want peaceful negotiations. If peace comes to us in that way, well and good.

I hope that the welcome addresses and the reception indicate that the people of the Indian states are prepared for anything that might come in the future.

Organisation and discipline are the symbols of preparation. Therefore it is best for us to utilise the time we have now to train ourselves to become soldiers of India.

23. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit[1]

Bardoli
8.6.31

Nan darling,
Our wanderings are over, and although we are far from home, we are back again in the field of our labours and in more familiar surroundings than we found in the far south. Yesterday we reached Bombay, thinking that we would stay there some days. But on arrival I found a summons from Bapu awaiting me and to Bardoli I came. Tonight I travel back with him to Bombay. Probably I shall be in Bombay some three or four days and then I may go to Poona with Kamala and Indu. It will be the middle of June before we get back to Allahabad.

I had your letter and Betty's at Hyderabad. I wanted to write to you from there but even the 'social' programme arranged by Sarojini—politics, of course, are not encouraged in the dominions of H.E.H.—was heavy enough and left no leisure. Indeed ever since we landed at Tuticorin on the 23rd of last month we have been rushing along from place to place and function to function with little rest and less peace. It has been a pleasant enough tour, we have had a cordial welcome everywhere, and we have seen many places worth seeing. Impressions crowd in upon me as I write and yet they are beginning to fade already, and soon what is vivid now will be but a memory. Practically all our touring from Tuticorin to Mysore was done by motor car. It was only at Mysore that we finally took to the railway.

From Tuticorin we went to Tinnevelly and then to Cape Comorin or Kanya Kumari as the name should be. Kumari has been corrupted to Comorin. Right at the tip of India stands the shrine of Kanya Kumari, the Virgin Goddess, and so virgin and inaccessible is she that the likes of us, who had crossed the seas, were not admitted to her holy presence. But right up till midnight we sat by the sea and watched the meeting of the eastern with the western waters. And it seemed to us as if we

1. Vijayalakshmi Pandit Papers, N.M.M.L.

were literally sitting at the feet of India, and the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal were competing with each other in paying homage to the old lady. It was a peaceful spot, this southern tip of India, and the noise and the tumult seemed very far.

From Comorin we went to Nagercoil, the southernmost town in India—for Comorin is just a village—and then we proceeded to Trivandrum. There were crowds and addresses of welcome at frequent stages, and triumphal arches and pavilions erected across the road. So much trouble and expense, and we stopped there barely two minutes to be garlanded. Our motor journey through Travancore State threatened almost to become one continuous procession. There were so many stoppages, and at many places music and a short procession had been arranged. We passed scores of schools on the way. There seemed to be a school every mile or even less and all the little children from Tara's age upwards stood in lines along the road to see us pass by. Thus even a motor journey made us realise how advanced Travancore was in the matter of education. It is stated that 100% of the school-going age go to school. And Cochin State has about the same percentage.

We reached Trivandrum late on the 25th night, but late as it was there was a huge crowd waiting for us. They surrounded our car and became so excited that it became impossible for the car to move. So I decided to get down and mix with the crowd and lead it away. I succeeded but the young men in the crowd became even more worked up by my presence and started shouting and dancing. Something of the spirit of the crowd took possession of me also, and so we marched along the main streets of Trivandrum with the shopkeepers and others gaping at us and not knowing what was happening. I was getting tired and wanted the car, but the cars had all disappeared. We sat down, many hundreds of us, by the roadside and I addressed them but still no car. So we decided to walk on. A short cut to our place of abode lay through the fort area which was a public area containing the palaces, shops, etc. We tried to go through this but were stopped by the Travancore Army! Mind you, not one or two men, but quite a crowd of men with muskets barred our way, imagining perhaps that we intended storming the fort or the palace. Every gate was similarly guarded and we had to take a long round before we reached our house.

The next morning I received an address from the municipality and in my reply I referred to the incidents of the day before in a manner not complimentary to the State of Travancore. Soon after I had a call from high police officials to aplogise and to make it clear that they had nothing to do with the stoppage and that it was all the fault of the army people.

From Trivandrum we went to Quilon where we spent a pleasant hour on the backwaters; and then to Alleppey—strange names for India. From Alleppey we went by boat via the backwaters to Kottayam. They are very beautiful, the backwaters of Malabar, and to travel along them on a moonlit evening is a delightful experience. But beautiful as they are, they grow monstrous, and one wearies a little of them in the day time. In Alleppey we met an old Syrian Bishop, the head of the Nestorian Christians today. The once powerful Nestorian church which extended all over Central Asia and parts of Europe and Africa, is now confined to a small corner of South India. Kottayam is a centre of Syrian Christians—not Nestorians. George Joseph lived somewhere in the neighbourhood. The Syrian Christians are supposed to have come to India in the first century or two of the Christian era.

From Kottayam we went to Ernakulam by boat again from midnight to six in the morning. It was not a very comfortable journey. A crowd of Gujarati volunteers, who had come to do us honour, crowded the boat and made the night a trial to us by their conversation and movements. At Ernakulam we went straight to Tatapuram and met Jal.[2] In the director's bungalow at Tatapuram we came across again, to our joy, modern sanitary arrangements in the bathrooms, etc. The south of India may be very beautiful, but their ideas on the subjects of lavatories and bathrooms are extraordinary.

From Tatapuram we paid a short visit to Cochin which is just half an hour by motor boat. After meetings and addresses and various visits we went to see an old Jewish synagogue which belongs to a very curious crowd—the white jews of Cochin. These white Jews keep quite apart from the black Jews; mostly they marry among themselves and as they are a very small community now—about a hundred-—they are getting pale and yellow and sickly. As we went through the white Jew quarter which we were told was like old Jerusalem (!) we saw the Jewish women and children going towards their temple in gala attire. We found that we had come just when the whole community was gathering together to witness a circumcision. A tremendous row was going on inside the synagogue. It was difficult to make out if the people there were quarrelling or weeping or wailing. But our conjectures were quite mistaken. What was happening was merely a recitation from the Talmud, suitable for the occasion. Everyone present—man, woman or child—was reciting

2. Jal Naoroji; grandson of Dadabhai Naoroji and a close friend of the Nehru family; d. 1938.

or shouting at the top of his or her voice and the din was hardly bearable. We were proudly informed, however, that the method of recitation and intonation had been carefully preserved for several thousand years and was identical with that of Abraham or some other ancient gentleman. His novelty of the place held us in spite of the din. The women seemed to wear anything they could lay their hands upon. There were some in saris and some in European dresses and some in loose pyjamas and some in a kind of तह बंद.[3] Plenty of silks and satins and कारचोब.[4] It was a curious medley and the whole thing seemed a pantomime.

We would not have stayed for the ceremony itself but we were pressed by our companion, a white Jew himself, to stay on. Probably they would have been offended if we came away without seeing it. So we stayed on and saw a babe about a month old circumcised. Ordinarily we were told this took place within a week or so of birth.

I felt tired out at Ernakulam and so we decided to steal a day and rest there. This enabled us to inspect the Tata factories, the Cocogem plant and the wonderful new soap with which Jal expects to astonish India in the course of the next few months. It is to be called the 'Jai' soap.

From Ernakulam we went to Trichur where we had a mighty meeting. Here we saw Malabar dancing and specially their famous Kathakali, a mute play supposed to resemble greatly the Java mute plays. I liked the Kathakali very much.

Then to Calicut where a strange incident took place. Always, something happens if people take me out in procession. I can't stand being dragged about and usually I jump out of the car. At Calicut I got fed up with the rate of progress-I jumped out of the car and started walking ahead of it briskly. This was not very successful, so I seized hold of a bicycle from a volunteer and cycled away, the poor volunteer running on in front to show me the way! It was a curious sight and the assembled multitude was much taken aback and did not know what to make of it. Their garlands remained unused, except for one adventurous youth who made a successful attempt to lassoo me with his garland.

From Calicut to Coimbatore, where we had perhaps the biggest of our meetings. And then away by car to Ooty—two hours stop there, a visit to the botanical gardens, etc.,— and off again—stops and addresses

3. Loin-cloth.
4. Embroidered cloth.

on the way. At one place a procession and a big meeting and a municipal reception, and at last at about 10 p.m., Mysore, after having motored about 195 miles that day. We were the guests of the Maharaja and were comfortably installed in a guest house. We spent a busy day in Mysore, which included several meetings and addresses, visits to the Cauvery dam and to the Art and Technological Institutes—a short interview with the Maharaja and dinner with the Dewan, Sir Mirza Ismail,[5] who tried to induce me to agree to go to the Round Table Conference. My companion at dinner was Sir H.S. Gour's[6] daughter—the father was also somewhere at the dinner table. The young lady seems to have undergone some beauty treatment which has brightened up her complexion. She seemed to be a little more intelligent than her father.

Then Bangalore—vast crowds and an amazing programme from early morning to night. The flowers and garlands and bouquets we received in Bangalore and Mysore must have cost many hundreds of rupees, perhaps a thousand. We got enormous and most beautiful garlands by the hundred. In our car we were almost in flowers and our railway compartment became a bowser or a florist's shop, whichever way you like to put it.

A long twenty-four-hour railway journey from Bangalore took us to Hyderabad. We were surprised to find Sarojini, Padmaja and Leilamani[7] ooarding our train at a previous station. I did not expect Padmaja would be well enough, but she is a funny girl. She looks well and almost immediately after, all her healthy look vanishes and she looks terribly ill. Some pushing about at Hyderabad station was too much for her and she fainted in our car which she reached with difficulty.

The Hyderabad government was much exercised as to what to do with me. There had been talk of serving me with an order not to indulge in political work but wiser counsels prevailed and nothing was said to me. But probably a hint was dropped to Sarojini to keep me away from mischief. She was keen on my not mixing myself up in public functions. I wanted to rest myself but any inhibition or prohibition

5. (1883-1959); Dewan of Mysore, 1926-41, delegate to the three Round Table Conferences; Prime Minister of Jaipur, 1942-46; Prime Minister of Hyderabad 1946-47.
6. (1872-1949); leader of the opposition in the Central Assembly, 1927-34, first Vice-Chancellor of Delhi University; founder and Vice-Chancellor of Saugor University; Member of the Constituent Assembly.
7. Leilamani Naidu (1903-1959); daughter of Sarojini Naidu; member of the Indian Foreign Service, 1948-58.

rubs me up the wrong way. If a formal order had been served on me I would probably have broken it, technically at least, or else I would not have gone to Hyderabad. Socially, we had a busy time—Sarojini arranged a number of gatherings. I met all the big officials to the accompaniment of 'Mahatma Gandhi *ki jai*' which was being shouted by large crowds surrounding our house. I met younger people also and found that there was still some little spirit in them. But Hyderabad is a miserable place to live in. Only a worm can stand it for any length of time, but even a worm turns and so far the Hyderabadis have given no exhibition of turning.

On my arrival at the Golden Threshold[8] my first visitors were the Superintendent of Police and the Kotwal of Hyderabad. They offered me their services! A gentle way of telling me that they were interested in me.

And so on to Bombay, with midnight meetings on the way and a great gathering at Sholapur station at 1.30 a.m. and a big crowd at Victoria Terminus.

It has been a great tour, full of incident and interest. Do not judge of it by this letter which is apt to read like an abstract from a guidebook. Everywhere the crowds and the welcomes were overwhelming, and everywhere the welcome was not so much to me as to the Nehru family. Our family has captured the imagination of the millions in this country and 'Nehru' has become a magic word with which you can conjure. It is a great honour and a great responsibility. I feel a little frightened and overwhelmed by my own popularity. It is a great burden to shoulder. So much is expected of one, and one can do so little.

I have utilised part of the afternoon in writing this letter to you. It is Bapu's मौन[9] day and I have to wait till he speaks. The time is drawing near now and my letter must also therefore end. I wonder if the letter is readable. I dosed at several places. However it will give you some idea of our doings.

Give my love to Betty and share this letter with her.

Love,

Your loving
Jawahar

8. Sarojini Naidu's residence at Hyderabad.
9. Silence.

24. On Indian Labour in Ceylon[1]

Sir,

I am far from Lanka but distant echoes from it manage to reach me even here. I am told that some remarks of mine about labour conditions in the Ceylon plantations have been resented and criticised by some people who have described me as a maker of mischief. I am accused of trying to upset the harmony that prevails between the employer and the employed, and sometimes, taking pity on my ignorance, my critics have pointed out to me the many benefits that have come to Indian labourers in Ceylon. In particular, stress is laid on the fact that Indian labour is better off in Ceylon than in its homelands in South India, and a sufficient proof of this is the continuous stream of Indian humanity to Ceylon. Further, it is said that labour conditions in the plantations have vastly improved during the last decade and employers have spent large sums of money in building labour lines and providing other amenities.

I do not deny this. I am well aware that labour conditions have greatly improved in the last few years. I know well also that conditions in South India are bad and starvation drives thousands to seek a living in Ceylon. India has been exploited and misgoverned for generations past and it is no wonder that millions starve here and are driven to accept even a bare pittance so that they may carry on a miserable existence. That is fundamentally the basis and *raison d'etre* of our urge for political and economic freedom.

But admitting all this, I ventured to describe the attempt that is being made to lower the wage of the Indian labourer as a scandalous thing. In the past years, when dividends of 80 per cent or 100 per cent were declared, what part of them went to the labour that created them? And when the slump comes, the first to suffer must be the labourer. Even in these days of economic depression, to declare a dividend of 35 per cent and in the same breath to talk of lowering the minimum wage seems to me to indicate a mentality that is a danger to society. It is this mentality which always tries to pay the least possible wage to keep body and soul together and at the same time seeks to wring out the biggest dividends from the labour of these wage slaves.

1. Letter to the Editor, *The Ceylon Daily News*. Republished in *The Hindu*, 11 July 1931.

Labour must have a living wage whatever the conditions of industry might be and even before a dividend is thought of. If this cannot be paid by any industrial undertaking, the sooner it shuts up shop the better. Personally I should like labour to be a sharer in the dividends and the prosperity. I doubt if anyone will venture to say that the present wage of the Indian labourer in Ceylon is up to the living wage standard. It is obviously far below it and every effort should be made to raise it. To talk of lowering it is amazing and monstrous.

From the point of view of international labour and that is the only viewpoint labour can have—the lowering of the wages of Indian labour will ultimately bring down to some extent the wages of others, not only in Ceylon but in distant countries. Therefore it is to the interest of all labour organisations—Sinhalese or British or Japanese to resist any and every attempt to lower wages.

From the point of view of an Indian nationalist I am not prepared to encourage the emigration of Indian labour to other countries unless I am satisfied that it is well treated there. I would sooner see my countrymen and countrywomen starve and die in their homelands rather than face humiliation and ill-treatment elsewhere. Hence my desire to restrict or even stop emigration wherever there is any danger of this happening.

Jawaharlal Nehru

15

MISCELLANEOUS

1. To Gopal Singh Khalsa[1]

July 1st, 1929

Dear Mr. Gopal Singh,[2]
Your two letters dated April 24th and May 17th have reached me almost simultaneously thus demonstrating the interest that our government takes in our correspondence. I shall gladly send you such literature as we may publish.

I have noted what you say about Miss Grace Boroughs.[3] You know well the kind of persons that our rajas and maharajas are. How can you expect the Congress to improve them? If we did not have a number of people who are always trying to ape the foreigner not in matters of science and intellect but in the foolish things of life we would not be quite so far from freedom.

Yours very sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 16/1929, p. 33, N.M.M.L.
2. He was then general secretary, Hindustan National Party, San Francisco, U.S.A.
3. An American tourist who was the guest of some Indian princes.

2. To K. T. Shah[1]

July 12th, 1929

My dear Mr. Shah,
Your letter of the 1st July reached me rather late owing to my absence from Allahabad. I now enclose, as desired by you, a copy of the draft you had sent me.[2]

I agree with you that with an editorial board in command it may be possible to fit in various contributions and to reduce angularities a great deal. My chief difficulty is that I do not quite see how the various persons you have mentioned are going to cooperate or collaborate together. My father is not likely to be of much help. He is not a

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-61/1929, pp. 1-3, N.M.M.L.
2. For a compilation on Indian politics, economics and culture that Shah proposed to publish for propagating the Indian cause abroad.

man who likes to do much writing and he is generally busy with a number of things. So I doubt if he will agree. Ansari is also a man whose time is taken up by various things and he is not likely to agree. I cannot say anything about Mukul Dey[3] and Raman.[4] But very probably they would be valuable contributors. Kamaladevi might also be useful in a limited way. I do not see exactly how Jinnah will fit in. I find there is not very much in common between him and me so far as our outlooks are concerned. Do you think he accepts your economic interpretation of history? Or, for the matter of that, that he has ever given any thought to it or knows much about it? Brelvi ought to help. I agree that Ramanand Chatterji[5] is cast in too ancient a mould to look at things from a modern viewpoint. Tagore is, I suppose, too 'eminent' a person for us even to approach and Mrs. Naidu might contribute a poetic chapter but would otherwise not fit in with your argument. Sivaswami Aiyar,[6] I do not know well. Probably he is good in his own way. Is he not rather stodgy and exceedingly moderate in his outlook? Dange[7] is in jail and likely to remain there. So you might leave him out. Dr. Sumant Mehta ought to be helpful. Sir Jagdish Bose[8] and Subhas Bose are both in their own way very good but I am not sure if they will fit in with your scheme. There is just a possibility of their doing so to a certain extent. As for Satyamurti, it is difficult to say what his viewpoint is in anything. He changes so often. Radhakrishnan,[9] of course, we have already approached. We have sent him a copy of your draft for his suggestions.

I shall write to you more later.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Mukul Chandra Dey (b. 1895); well known artist; principal. Government School of Art, Calcutta, 1928-43; curator, National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, 1955-57.
4. C. V. Raman (1888-1970); professor of physics, Calcutta University, 1917-33; director, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, 1933-43; awarded the Nobel Prize for physics in 1930.
5. (1865-1943); Editor of the Modern Review for several years.
6. P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar (1864-1946); Advocate General, Madras, 1907-12; member of the Executive Council, Madras, 1912-17; a leading Liberal politician.
7. S. A. Dange (b. 1899); member, A.I.C.C., 1928, 1929 and 1936; member, Lok Sabha, 1957-62 and 1967-71; one of the founders of the communist movement in India and chairman of the Communist Party of India since 1962.
8. Jagdish Chandra Bose (1858-1937); an eminent botanist famous for his researches establishing that plants are not inanimate.
9. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (b. 1888); professor of philosophy at Calcutta and Oxford; ambassador to the Soviet Union, 1949-52; Vice-President of India, 1952-62; President of India, 1962-67.

3. To S. A. Brelvi[1]

July 16th, 1929

My dear Brelvi,
I have your letter of the 14th July. Of course, your Congress Muslim Party has my fullest support and goodwill.[2] I am not sure, however, if the support of a person like me who, I am told, is secretly conspiring against the Muslims and in the interests of the Hindu Mahasabha, is likely to be of much value. Such value as it has, you are welcome to it.

Personally, I am a little doubtful of the desirability of fighting communalism through communal organisations but it may be a necessary step. Of that you are the judge. In any event, any attempt to fight communalism, in whatever shape or form, must be welcomed.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-5/1929 (Pt. II), p. 273, N.M.M.L.
2. Brelvi was the chairman of the Bombay branch of the All India Nationalist Muslim Party which had been formed in July 1929.

4. To S. A. Brelvi[1]

July 23, 1929

My dear Brelvi,
Mr. T. Braganca Cunha, the secretary of the Congress committee in Goa, desires me to write to you about him. He is at present interested in getting back a large number of people who had been taken under false pretences from Goa to the Assam plantations. I know personally how terrible is the condition of the people in these plantations. It is real slavery of the worst kind. I wish we could raise the matter on a big scale in India. Events however force our hands and crisis after crisis comes, which prevents attention being given to such matters.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. A-4/1929-31, p. 35, N.M.M.L.

I understand that a new governor is coming to Portuguese India. He has announced that he is coming to suppress the nationalist movement here. The gentleman is a military man responsible for the ruthless suppression of a revolt in Porto[2] last year. His advent has been preceded by Indians in the Portuguese services in Goa being replaced by Portuguese. It may be that you will get communications on this subject from Braganca Cunha. He is a tolerably reliable individual. His English is weak. If they are worthy of publication, I hope you will publish them. The press in Goa, as you perhaps know, has been gagged by a stiff censorship.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. A town in Portugal.

5. To Dan Singh[1]

August 14th, 1929

Dear Mr. Dan Singh,[2]
I have your letter of the 12th July. I agree with you that it serves little purpose to talk about India's message to the world so long as India is unfree. Our job is to get free first and then to talk of messages. I do not personally believe in any country being the chosen of the Lord. I think that all countries have some message for the rest of humanity and none have a monopoly of this.

I thank you for your good wishes. As for your imagining that I am going to do great things in the future, I would only say that you and our friends abroad should not put too much faith on any individual. The task is too big for anyone single-handed. What the future will bring the future alone will show.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. F.D. 16/1929, p. 39, N.M.M.L.
2. Then a resident of New York, he later became a leader of the Methodist Church in India.

6. To Rash Mohan Roy[1]

August 16th, 1929

Dear Sir,[2]

I have received your letter of the 5th August together with your note on the Hindu Mission.[3] I have read your note with interest. It seems to me from reading your note that the people of the Khasi and the Jaintia hills are not in any need of outside missions. Their ideals seem to be of the highest and they have the advantage of having no caste system or untouchability. Further, the women seem to be econofnically free.

Personally, I do not believe in proselytising missions. Of course, any person who gives education or medicine or otherwise helps the people should be welcome.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1929 (Pt. Ill), p. 487, N.M.M.L.
2. A resident of Mawkhar in Assam.
3. Members of this mission, led by Swami Satyananda, were then active in Assam.

7. To the Editor, The Scholar[1]

Camp Calcutta
August 19th, 1929

Dear Sir,

I have your letter of the 10th August. I am sorry I am wholly unable to send you a contribution for your annual. I should have liked to do so as I appreciate the good work that your journal is doing.

I should like to send you, however, my best wishes. During the few days I had the privilege of spending in Kerala last year I was charmed

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1929 (Pt. III), p. 517, N.M.M.L.
A journal published from Palghat.

by the beauty of the land and I felt how, in many ways, it was an ideal place to live in. At the same time I received many shocks when I saw or heard of the treatment of man by man in this beautiful land. Today all over the world men who think at all aspire to social equality in the widest sense of the term, including as far as is possible, economic equality; but in Kerala there is the very opposite of social equality. Every newspaper and magazine must therefore make it its first business to join the crusade against this relic of an ancient past which is unjust in itself and is holding back India from her onward march. I trust that your monthly will also help in this crusade.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

8. To Shambu Nath Hakhu[1]

Camp Calcutta
August 25th, 1929

Dear Shambunathji,[2]
Your letter has been forwarded to me here. I am sorry to learn of your difficulties. I am afraid, however, that I am wholly unable to write to the various gentlemen you have named. I am very strongly opposed to this method of securing appointments by personal recommendations and I have not written any such letters in the past in spite of great pressure.

I really cannot understand why a strapping young person like you should go about begging for appointments. I feel you have gone to work the wrong way. If you had attached yourself to any municipality as an unpaid apprentice you would have found it much easier to get on later.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1929 (Pt. IV), p. 597, N.M.M.L.
2. A resident of Srinagar, Kashmir.

9. To Devi Das Vaid[1]

Camp Gorakhpore
October 7 th, 1929

Dear Sir,[2]

I have your letter. I do not know how I can be of help to you. Do you not think that it is not very fair to try one's luck in the usual channels opened by the government and having failed therein to turn towards national service? Still, I am glad that you desire to do public work. But please remember that public work does not consist of speaking at meetings or writing in the press. That is only the show part of it and the least important part of it. Indeed, it would be a good thing if our young men paid no attention to it. An intellectual person who wants to do public work must qualify for it by an ardent study of politics and economics and sociology and the many theories for the betterment of society that are being discussed today. From your letter it appears that you have not made any such study yet. You yourself say that you know very little of politics. How then can you expect to help?

You seem to be afraid of working as an ordinary volunteer. Of course, it is good that you do not desire to be a mere demonstrator but you must not imagine that because of a little intellectual training you are superior to the average volunteer or the manual worker. In our country there is a strange idea that a person with a little literary training is superior to the manual worker. The result is a large number of unemployed in our educated classes.

I am afraid I cannot help you to get a suitable training. I do not know what you think about me. Evidently you have a very wrong conception when you talk of my "train of followers". I do not carry about a train or even a single individual with me. I do not believe in this system of people having followers of this kind. A young man like you, who has gone through college, should surely have learnt enough to carry your own education further and to train yourself.

It is wholly immaterial what the dominating public men of the Punjab may or may not be. If they lack in intelligence or independence

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(ii)/1929(Pt. III), pp. 495-497, N.M.M.L.
2. A resident of Lahore.

or sincerity, it is all the more reason for energetic young men to do honest public service. There is always room for such a young man if he has got enough go in him.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

10. To Nripendra Chandra Bannerji[1]

October 7th, 1929

My dear Bannerji,
Thank you for your letter. When in Lucknow I got a telegram from Subhas asking me for my consent to the inclusion of my name in the All India Memorial Committee for Jatin Das. I consented. I could not do otherwise. I did not know in what relation this committee stood to your committee. It is very unfortunate that there should always be the element of competition in our national activities. There is so much work to be done and so few workers. Yet somehow each one of us wants to take the credit for work oneself and not to allow others to do anything important.

The names you mention for your Board of Eleven are good. Youth leagues will of course help you.

I am afraid you are not likely to remain out of jail for long. The government seems to be bent on having you. Perhaps most of us will follow you a little later. It is a funny world.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-64/1929, p. 61, N.M.M.L.

11. To T. L. Ahobalacharya[1]

Camp Gorakhpore
October 7th, 1929

Dear Sir,[2]

I have received a copy of your open letter addressed to me. The letter raises so many interesting questions that it is impossible for me to answer it with any satisfaction unless I write a long essay or a little book on the subject. One thing, however, I should like to suggest to you. Either the various men and women in our country who are working in the political as well as in other fields and who do not happen to be working exactly in the manner you would like them to do are are all knaves or fools or else they may have sufficient justification for the kind of work they may be doing. I suppose you would agree with me that there are a fair number of intelligent and honest people in the public life of our country. Some of them, at any rate, have taken the trouble of studying social, economic and political questions. Some of them also have taken the trouble of studying the cooperative movement of which you are such an advocate. If this is so then it does not help at all to be imagining that everybody else except oneself is mistaken.

I may inform you that so far as I am personally concerned I am a very firm believer in the cooperative principle. I believe in it so much that I would like to introduce it in all departments of the state, including the whole structure of government. I would like to have a cooperative commonwealth and even to extend it on an international scale. If that is the ideal, the problem before us is how we can reach it. Cooperation has made a most tremendous progress in some of the Western countries. It has made very little progress in India. Why is this so ? Partly because the government is not really desirous of increasing the cooperative spirit of the people. The whole structure of cooperation in India is an official-ridden structure.

It is of course possible to some extent to encourage private cooperative organisations and no doubt this should be done wherever possible.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-64/1929, pp. 63-64, N.M.M.L.
2. (b. 1906); a journalist associated with labour organizations.

But it cannot be done on any large scale except by the state or with state help. It becomes necessary, therefore, to have political control before we can advance rapidly in any direction, whether that direction is cooperation or education or sanitation or anything else. What is necessary really is the development of the spirit of cooperation which is singularly absent in India. That can only come with proper education which is wholly lacking.

While, therefore, we can in our own way try to help by means of cooperation or otherwise, real help can only come on a nation-wide scale after political control is gained. That control, I agree with you, should be gained by the peasantry. Let the peasants control the destinies of India, and I have no doubt that the peasantry will flourish exceedingly. The problem before us is—how is the peasantry going to control India? To that we have to address ourselves. To ignore the political problem is to waste our energies in a fruitless effort.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

12. To Master Tara Singh[1]

10/10/29

Dear Master Tara Singh,[2]

I have to thank you for your kind invitation to attend the session of the Sikh League at Lyallpur. I would have very much liked to attend but unhappily it is hardly possible for me to do so now...

I have no doubt that under your able guidance the Sikh League will lay down a brave and forward policy for the future. Unhappily, during the past year there has been a great deal of misapprehension and mistrust and many Sikh friends have expressed their disagreement with certain provisions in the All Parties Report.[3] The recent statement on

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-93/1929, p. 5, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. (1885-1967); prominent Sikh leader of the Punjab; a supporter after 1947 of the 'Punjabi Suba'.
3. The annual session of the Sikh League held at Gujranwala on 22 October 1928 passed a resolution objecting to the communal representation proposed in the Nehru Report and demanding instead reservation of at least 30% of the seats in the local legislature and the same proportion of representation from the Punjab to the central legislature on a system of joint electorates and plural constituencies.

this subject by Pandit Motilal Nehru, I hope, has gone a long way in allaying these suspicions and removing the mistrust.[4] The suggestions made in the All Parties Report obviously cannot be considered final and irrevocable. It is for all of us to meet together in a spirit of mutual confidence and forbearance and try to find other and better solutions of the problems that confront us, if the proposals already made are inadequate.

Personally, as you know, I am opposed to the idea of political or economic rights being given to an individual or a group on the basis of religion. In other words, I am entirely opposed to what is now usually called 'communalism'. The profession and practice of a religion ought to give cultural rights, if there is a separate culture, and of course religious rights. But beyond that, I feel, is an invasion of another domain. I have no doubt that when India is free these communal troubles and friction will automatically disappear. The country will then have to face more vital issues which affect the community as a whole and not merely a small part of it.

The Sikhs have, during the past eight years, by their disciplined courage, earned an honourable position in the struggle for national freedom. The struggle is entering a new and more critical phase and soon may absorb all our energy and vitality. Already the blood tingles in the veins and the call to the field of action becomes louder and louder. Brave men and women cannot say 'no' to that call, and the Sikhs do not lack brave men and women.

I earnestly trust that at this critical moment in our nation's history your League will take a broad and national view and will throw its full weight on the side of those who seek to put an end to all exploitation in India.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. In his letter of 27 August 1929 to Sardul Singh Caveeshar, Motilal Nehru assured the Sikhs that their legitimate interests would be safeguarded but warned them that boycott of the Congress would be harmful.

13. To K. P. Choubey[1]

Camp Mussoorie
October 21st, 1929

Dear Sir,
I have received your letter and am exceedingly sorry to learn of your difficulties. As you say yourself such cases are not uncommon in our country and it is really not possible to give any kind of individual help I cannot cure poverty by giving alms but by removing the cause of poverty. It is obvious that you cannot continue borrowing money from your friends and relatives. Probably you will be inclined to get work of a clerical kind and have failed to do so. I would suggest that you should try work which involves manual labour. This is easier to obtain than clerical work. For some foolish reason it is considered below one's dignity to do manual work although living on others' charity is so considered.

You are young and I would strongly advise you to search for some manual labour which will be good training for you and will help you for the present at least.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1929 (Pt. IV), p. 711, N.M.M.L.

14. To S. E. Stokes[1]

December 5th, 1929

Dear Stokes,[2]
It was a great pleasure to hear from you again. During the last few years I have often thought of you and spoken of you to friends. But *sanyasis* of old you had retired so effectively in the mountains that it was difficult to have news of you.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(i)/1929(Pt. III), p. 301, N.M.M.L.
2. A resident of Kotgarh in the Simla hills. His sympathy for the Indian nationalist movement led to his imprisonment in 1921.

It was very good of you to send me your long note. I have read it once already and I hope to do so again. I must confess that I do not for the moment agree with your viewpoint. I think that the course you suggest will be injurious for us and will delay the day of our freedom. The problem is difficult enough and I do not pretend to know of any ready-made solution. I shall certainly think hard about your suggestions. If even so I do not see my way to agree with them or with any of them, you will, I am sure, understand. We have to steer ourselves by our own lights, however dim they may be. In my case they are dim enough; but what am I to do?

I hope you have been keeping well.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

15. To Jahangir Vakil[1]

December 6th, 1929

My dear Jahangir,

.... As for the Congress, I cannot say what will happen to it after a year or more. It is quite conceivable that it may become a respectable and sober body doing nothing. For the moment, however, it is undoubtedly the most powerful political organisation in the country and it would be folly to ignore it or to break it....

Don't be distressed overmuch and in future do not write to me only a tenth part of what you would like to. Give it hot. It will do me good and you will feel relieved afterwards.

Ever yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(i)/1929(Pt. III), p. 311, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

16. Message to The Light of the World[1]

The name of the new magazine is very ambitious. I can only hope that it will derive some inspiration from its name, and will take the torch of freedom to the many dark corners in this country where sorrow dwells and misery is a constant companion.

1. 9 December 1929. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(i)/1929(Pt. III), p. 373, N.M.M.L. A magazine started in Bombay.

17. To R. V. Dhuiekar[1]

Allahabad
January 16th, 1930

My dear Dhulekar,[2]
Thank you for a copy of your open letter to me. I have read it carefully.

Regarding the framing of the constitution I am afraid I do not agree with you that it is necessary at this stage. When the All Parties Committee was constituted they were criticised on the ground that constitutions are framed after the struggle and not before. I think the criticism was justified. India will find no difficulty in evolving her constitution at the right moment. Any present attempt to do so is bound to divert attention from the real struggle.

This does not mean that we should not lay down certain general principles. The first principle that we may take it that the Congress has laid down is the severance of the British connection. The second principle which it has laid down, though not absolutely unequivocally, is that in an independent India there should be no communalism. The third principle, which I should like it to lay down, is the rights of the

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1930, pp. 141-143, N.M.M.L.
2. Raghunath Vinayak Dhulekar (b. 1891); Congressman from Jhansi; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; member of the U.P. Legislative Assembly, 1937-39 and 1946-50, of the Constituent Assembly, 1946-50, and the Lok Sabha, 1952-57.

peasants and workers. I should like the Congress to adopt an economic programme for them.

I do not quite understand how the Congress as an organisation can interfere with the youth organisation. The two organisations are both necessary to the country and there is no inherent conflict though occasionally there may be criticism of each other. Many of the leading personalities in the youth movement are Congressmen. That is right. But how the Congress as such can start youth movements, I fail to see.

Regarding the national service fund that you suggest, the Working Committee had actually recommended a resolution encouraging provinces to do so on the lines of the U.P. But when the Subjects Committee defeated the resolutions regarding autonomous committees of the Congress we did not put forward the national service resolution. The Working Committee thought that a national service in order to be efficient must keep apart from the party intrigues in Congress committees and should therefore be put in charge of trustees appointed by the provincial committee. When this principle of autonomy was not accepted by the Subjects Committee it was not thought necessary to bring forward a similar resolution regarding national service. I propose, however, to circularise the provincial committees on the subject and recommend to them the example of the U.P. I do not think it is possible at this moment to start any all-India service; provinces must have their particular services.

Regarding the organisation of peasants and labour I have already hinted above as I stated in my presidential address,[3] that the Congress must lay down an economic programme for them. This programme is not likely to go as far as, for instance, the programme of the T.U.C., but it should go far enough. Apart from laying down this programme and providing for the inclusion of direct representatives of labour organisations on Congress committees I do not think the Congress can do much. I do not think Congress committees as such can start labour unions. As one interested in labour I would object to this because it would mean that committees consisting of all kinds of people are exploiting labour. Labour can only grow on its own feet. Other people coming in will tone it down, and not up. Of course, this does not mean that Congressmen should not identify themselves with labour and help in its organisation. That they must do. Also, the executives of labour organisations and the Congress must cooperate with each other in both the national struggle and the economic struggle.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. See *ante*, section 5, item 2.

18. To C. V. J. Chetty[1]

January 27th, 1930

Dear Sir,[2]

I have your letter of the 20th January. It is difficult for me to deal with the points you raise. It is for the secretary of the All India Spinners' Association to consider them. He will no doubt write to you on the subject. I might say however that I entirely agree with you that we should follow the principle of small profits and quick returns. This is good business. That principle had been adopted by the A.I.S.A. I am not sure how far they can enforce it on semi-independent concerns.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1930, p. 273, N.M.M.L.
2. A khaddar merchant of Salem, Tamil Nadu.

19. To K. S. Venkatramani[1]

February 1st, 1930

Dear Mr. Venkatramani,[2]

I have to thank you for your book Renascent India3 which you were good enough to send me some little time ago. Unfortunately I have not had much time to read books recently but your books are so charmingly written that it is a pleasure to read them. I am afraid I do not agree with the solutions offered by you. I doubt very much that India can ever be free unless it goes through the whirlpool.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1930, p. 321, N.M.M.L.
2. A well known writer who wrote *Renascent India*, *Paper Boats*, *A Day with Sambhu* and other books.
3. Published in 1928.

20. To Durbar Secretary, Rewa State[1]

February 25th, 1930

Dear Sir,

We have received many complaints in our office about conditions in Rewa State, We are informed *inter alia* that no meetings of any kind are permitted in the state without the special permission of the district magistrate, and meetings of a political kind or in criticism of the administration are never permitted. There is thus no freedom of association in your state; nor, we understand, is there any freedom of speech or press.

Further, we are told that recently a new settlement took place whereunder an enhancement of 50% revenue was made.

It is also stated that Madhusudan Prasad Dixit, a resident and zamindar of Rewa, was arrested about the 10th August 1926, and was secretly sentenced for some offence to 20 years' imprisonment. Attempts made to get a copy of the judgement in the case or to get any particulars about him have entirely failed. The records of the case have not been shown to the lawyers engaged on his behalf.

I mention some allegations made to us here. As a matter of fact many other serious allegations have been made. It is not the custom of this office to give publicity to any such matter without finding out its correctness. I am therefore writing to you to request you if the facts mentioned above are correct or not. On hearing from you the matter will be referred to in the *Congress Bulletin* that is issued from this office from time to time.

I should also like to know if it is possible for people to be sent to your state to carry on personal investigations in regard to the complaints made and if such persons can expect the cooperation of the state authorities in their work.

Yours faithfully,

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No, G-17/1930-1931, pp. 23-25, N.M.M.L.

21. Statement to the Press[1]

I have read the report of the Patiala Enquiry Committee appointed by the Indian States Peoples Conference.[2] To say that I have read it with amazement, is to put it mildly. It has produced a feeling of disgust and nausea in me. Admittedlythe enquiry was one-sided and the report is an *ex parte* document, and as such its conclusions cannot be considered as final. But, as it is pointed out, under the circumstances it could not have been otherwise. The evidence that is given certainly supports the conclusion that a strong *prima facie* case has been made out. It is a monstrous thing that such charges should be made and no attempt to disprove them should be made by one who has autocratic control over the lives and property of large numbers of persons. No person, whoever he may be, can honourably remain silent under this accusation; much less can a prince or a public man. For, those who are in charge of public affairs must be like Caesar's wife, above suspicion.

1. Allahabad, 8 March 1930. *The Hindu*, 10 March 1930.
2. This committee was appointed in August 1929 following government inaction on a memorial to the Viceroy from the citizens of Patiala charging the Maharaja with misconduct, misappropriation of public funds and other malpractices. Its report, published in February 1930, upheld the charges.

22. To Sri Prakasa[1]

March 13th, 1930

Dear Sir,

With reference to the resolution of your committee imposing an income-tax of 1% on your members I have to inform you that my personal income is about Rs. 150/- per month. This is a rough estimate only as the income is variable, chiefly depending on royalties. As I have not to pay out of this income for my board and lodging and other necessaries, I can give a much larger percentage than 1% for Congress work.

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40/1930, p. 443, N.M.M.L.

I have so far this year given Rs. 210/- to the local Congress committees. To your committee I gave the minimum sum of Rs. 2/- some time ago. I now enclose a cheque for Rs. 98/- thus making the total sum given to your committee, Rs. 100/-. These payments, totalling Rs. 310/-, may be considered the tax for the full year. But I hope to pay more, specially to the local committees, in the course of the year.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

23. To Motilal Nehru[1]

March 28th, 1930

Dear Sir,

Permit me to offer you my grateful thanks for the generous offer you have made of the old Anand Bhawan. It is fitting that this house, which has been associated with the national movement for so many years, should become the property of the nation. It is also in the fitness of things that this dedication to the nation should take place at the auspicious moment when the country is launching on a great national struggle for independence. I am communicating your offer to the members of the Working Committee and, on receipt of their answers, I shall write to you. Meanwhile allow me to express the hope that the old Anand Bhawan, appropriately renamed "Swaraj Bhawan", will play a worthy part in the struggle for freedom and will before long see the establishment of independence in India.

Jawaharlal Nehru
President

1. Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Serial No. 16731.

24. To Members of the Working Committee[1]

Allahabad
March 28th, 1930

Dear Comrade,

I enclose a copy of a letter dated March 27th from our colleague, Pandit Motilal Nehru, offering his house, the old Anand Bhawan, to the nation. I also enclose a copy of my reply to him.

I think the offer should be accepted. This does not mean that we can take possession of the house soon. In any event it will take a few weeks for Pandit Motilal Nehru to vacate the house, and for us to leave our present office buildings.

I should like, however, members to consider one aspect of this matter. Anand Bhawan is a big rambling house, in some ways particularly fitted for a public institution but at the same time a somewhat expensive house to keep in good condition. The taxes are also fairly heavy. It may be possible to induce the municipality to remit or reduce these taxes on the ground that the building is a national possession, but I cannot be sure of this. Thus the house may become a financial burden on us to some extent at least. It is possible, however, to reduce this burden by suitable arrangements. Anyway, every big house is a burden in this sense.

On the whole I am clearly of opinion that the offer of Pandit Motilal Nehru should be accepted. The Working Committee can consider later to what use we can put such parts of the building as are not occupied by the office.

I shall thank you if you will kindly send me an early answer.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Serial No. 16730.

25. To Father[1]

Allahabad
5/4/30

My dear Father,

I received your letter with its enclosures at Rae Bareli station.

I do not think there is any question of the Working Committee or any members of it accepting your offer patronisingly. Jamnalalji, as you know, is a cautious bania and he was probably afraid, as I was at the beginning, that the property though valuable and desirable may prove a white elephant for the Congress. I have no doubt that the Working Committee will accept your offer. But in view of Jamnalalji's telegram it will be necessary to put the matter up at the next meeting of the Working Committee.

I was a little surprised yesterday on my return to Allahabad to learn the details of the dedication ceremony. I had not looked forward to any such dedication at this stage. My idea was that the national flag should be hoisted by you on the 6th April in token of the resolve on your part that the building should be given to the nation. The question of the transfer of the building at this stage did not arise, nor need we have waited for any acceptance or otherwise. This hoisting would have certainly meant that in future the building would be used for a national purpose. What this purpose would be, would depend on the Working Committee and on you. If the Committee was not willing to accept on your terms then it would be open to you to suggest some other national purpose.

Whatever the Working Committee may or may not do, it seems to me clear that Anand Bhawan must in future be used for a public or national purpose. It is right that this should be so, and after your public offer it would not be desirable to treat it as private property.

I would suggest that the dedication ceremony should be proceeded with. In the course of it you might state that owing to shortness of time your offer has not yet been considered by the Working Committee as a whole and so you cannot say definitely whether they agree to your proposals. But whatever their answer might be, so far as you

1. J.N. Correspondence, N.M.M.L.

are concerned you have decided that Anand Bhawan should be given to the nation in some form or other. This form can be decided later—meanwhile, in token of your resolve to give the house to the nation, you were performing the dedication ceremony.

Personally, I am convinced that the Working Committee will gratefully accept your offer.

The only other alternative is postponing the dedication as you suggest. This might be done, though personally I prefer the course I have suggested.

The limitations in your gift are three:

1. The house must be used for the headquarters of the Indian National Congress.
2. The trustees should consist of yourself, Gandhiji and I and the members of the Working Committee.
3. The house must not be sold or mortgaged.

I do not think there is likely to be any marked objection to any of these. I do not very much care for the second limitation.

The very fact that you value the house greatly for sentimental reasons is a strong reason why the house should be used for some national purpose and should not be sold to a private owner.

Some of the Working Committee members have already sent their views to the office. If you have not seen these letters, please send for them.

Sri Prakasa is going to Allahabad tonight. You might discuss the matter with him. I have not been able to show him your letter.

Sri Prakasa will also tell you of the happenings in Rae Bareli.

I reach Allahabad by the down mail on Monday the 7th.

Your loving son,
Jawahar

26. To Krishna Nehru[1]

Delhi
21.2.31

Betty darling,

I seem to be hung up here indefinitely and I do not know when I shall return. This is rather disconcerting as there are so many things

1. *Nehru's Letters to His Sister* (London, 1963), pp. 19-20.

which I want to do in Allahabad. I had hoped to get a clear week there to settle in consultation with the family our domestic affairs. So far the whole burden had fallen on father and all of us were relieved by his loving care and foresight of a host of difficulties. His amazing love for his children enveloped us and protected us and we lived our lives freed in a large measure from the care and anxiety which most people have to face. The very thought of him was a comfort and he was a tower of strength and a refuge whenever the hard facts of life confronted us. We have to do without him now and as every day passes I feel his absence the more and a terrible loneliness takes hold of me. But we are children of our father and have something of his great strength and courage, and whatever the trials and difficulties that may come our way we shall face them with resolution and with the determination to overcome them. I want so much to discuss the future with all the members of the family. But circumstances have driven me here and I do not know when I shall go back. If I get even a couple of days off I shall go to Allahabad. Meanwhile, I am writing to you, but this letter is a poor substitute for a talk. Soon I hope I shall supplement it with a long talk.

I have not been able to examine father's papers yet. But probably he has not left a will or any directions in regard to the property he has left. It was not necessary for him to leave a formal will as even a hint of his wishes would have had the force of law for us. We have therefore to do without any direction from him and have to decide for ourselves what we should do.

Technically, in law, I suppose I am the heir of his property. But my own inclination is against inheriting property or at any rate living on inherited or unearned increment. Circumstances today are such, however, that if I have to devote myself to public work I cannot at the same time earn a livelihood. After considering the matter impersonally and dispassionately I think it will not be right for me to stop my public activities at this stage and direct my attention to money-making. I have no doubt that I can earn enough, if I so choose, to live in tolerable comfort. But it would not have been father's wish that I should turn to money-making now.

In any event, however, I can only consider myself as a joint sharer in father's property, the other sharers being mother and you. I am not including Nan as she stands in no need of money. I would like you, therefore, to consider yourself as an equal sharer with mother and me of father's property. Indeed, mother and you are the real sharers. I am a trustee for the family property. We shall discuss this matter more when we meet. But I want you to be clear about one thing. You are

in no way dependent on me. You have as much right, indeed more, to father's property as I have.

We have also to discuss other matters—your future programme—what you propose to do. I promised some months back to give you plenty of work. You shall have it if you so desire. But the main thing is to be perfectly clear in one's own mind as to what one wants to do.

Look after mother and yourself.

Your loving brother,
Jawahar

27. To Khwaja Ahmad Abbas[1]

March 12, 1931

My dear Friend,[2]

Thank you for your letter of the 7th. You owe me no apology for the letter you sent me to Delhi. I was quite pleased to read it. I like spirit in a young man and it delighted me to find that you were full of it. You are perfectly right in feeling that our opponents are masters in the art of diplomacy and they might mislead us.

I could not remain in Delhi for further discussions as I had to come back to Allahabad for certain ceremonies in connection with my father's death. I shall be back in Delhi in a few days' time when I understand further talks on the question of Hindu-Muslim unity will take place.

Regarding the Indian states and their rulers I have no doubt whatever in my mind that the rulers will have to go completely. Whether it is possible to dispose of them soon or late depends on circumstances.

I am sorry I have not got any photograph of mine at present which I can send you. When 1 have one, I shall do so.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. A.I.C.C. File No. G-40(KW) (ii)/1931 (Pt. I), p. 103, N.M.M.L.
2. (b. 1914); well known journalist and film producer.

28. To Chairman, Allahabad Municipal Board[1]

Sir,

It has been brought to my knowledge on my return to Allahabad, after a lengthy absence, that a controversy has arisen in the Board regarding the naming of a park or building. I would not have troubled you or the Board with this letter, if I had not learnt to my surprise that my name was involved in this controversy. I am writing as it is extremely distasteful to me that I should become the subject of a controversy in such a matter.

I do not know exactly what the question at issue is. I gather that some member has proposed that a street or park be named after me. I further understand that some other member has proposed that the late Maulana Mohamed Ali's name should be given either to the same street or park or to another. I am grateful for the kind thought which prompted this conferment of civic immortality on me, but for two reasons I am very much averse to it. The first reason is one of principle. I am strongly of opinion that streets, parks and public buildings should never be named after living persons. When I had the honour of being chairman of your Municipal Board, it was my intention to bring this matter up formally before the Board and to get a resolution passed, if the Board agreed with me, to the effect that no name of a living person be given to any public thoroughfare or building or place of resort. Owing to my resignation, I could not do so, but I have continued to hold the same opinion, and with all respect I would like to bring this before you and the Board that such a resolution would give a very desirable lead to other boards and would eliminate a great deal of personal controversy in future. We are apt to exaggerate the importance of living persons. It is far safer to permit history to judge of their importance before we try to perpetuate it. For this fundamental reason, I would beg you and the Board not to consider my name in this connection. I hope I have many years yet to live, and the time to judge of my work or services is not yet.

My second reason is a personal one. The Maulana was a true comrade of mine with whom I had the honour of standing shoulder to shoulder in many national struggles. It is inconceivable to me that my

1. Written before 14 March 1931. *The Hindu*, 16 March 1931.

name should be pitted against his in any matter, and it would be a matter of grief for me should my own Board, with which I have had such intimate relations, do so. The Allahabad Municipal Board and the city of Allahabad will honour themselves if they perpetuate the name of Maulana Mohamed Ali in our city. I would beg of you, therefore, as well as the Board that my name should not be considered in regard to the naming of any public way or place of resort. Should you desire it, you can place this letter before the members of the Board informally or formally.

Jawaharlal Nehru

29. The Economic Exploitation of India[1]

INSURANCE AND BANKING

For the past ten years India has worked for the boycott of foreign cloth. The exploitation of India has been carried on for long in a variety of ways, some obvious enough, many others veiled and deceptive. Cloth was chosen as the major item of our boycott not only because it represents a great drain from India but also because it has been the classic example of exploitation in India. On the boycott of cloth, therefore, the nation concentrated specially in the course of the last year and met with very great success. The Congress stood primarily for khaddar so that millions of spinners and weavers might profit by the boycott and develop their ancient subsidiary industry again. But in order to make the boycott a complete success every effort was made by the Congress to secure the cooperation of Indian cloth manufacturers, and to this cooperation was due largely the success of the boycott of foreign cloth. Indian manufacturers of cloth have naturally profited by this boycott which was to their advantage. The Congress had hoped that the profits secured by them would not be used for personal advantage but would go towards the betterment of labour which so sorely needs better conditions. The Congress also hoped to induce them to promise to assist in every way in freeing India from other forms of foreign exploitation. It must be realised that cloth is not the only form of this exploitation although, for historical as well as practical reasons, we have

1. *The Hindu*, 24 March 1931.

laid the greatest stress on cloth. If we are to free the country from the burden of foreign exploitation and vested interests, we must pay sufficient attention to these other forms also and specially to the hidden and veiled forms which take the life-blood from the country without our people realising it.

With this object in view a form of undertaking was circulated on behalf of the Congress to Indian cloth manufacturers and they were asked to sign it. In this they undertook to assist Indian enterprises in the fields of insurance, banking and the like. I am glad to say that a very large number of cloth manufacturers agreed to this undertaking. Some who did not were placed on the ban by the Congress. It is hoped that before long every firm manufacturing cloth in India will agree to this undertaking and we shall carry on our campaign with redoubled energy for the elimination of foreign domination in the economic sphere.

FOREIGN INSURANCE BUSINESS

One of the directions in which leakage of national resources is taking place is the field of insurance. I understand that under this head alone there is a net drain from this country of something like Rs 5 crores a year. It is deplorable that this should be so in spite of the fact that several very reputable insurance institutions exist in this country. It is further deplorable that in this drain many an Indian assists the foreigner, and reputable and otherwise patriotic firms of Indians are acting as the agents or, rather, as the brokers of alien insurance companies. For the sake of some personal advantage, the economic and political freedom of the country is thus put in jeopardy. I hope that all Indians will realise the importance of stopping this drain of insurance money and patronise only Indian institutions. If there are not enough Indian institutions to undertake all the work that exists in India today, it should be easy enough for our industrial and commercial people to start additional companies. Every rupee which an Indian spends must be spent with discrimination and with a definite desire for creating work in India for our own people, so that the savings of our people may remain in the country and may help nascent enterprises.

BANKING

Insurance and shipping and various kinds of trade drain money from this country. But the place of honour in the field of foreign exploitation must be given to the alien banking institutions. In any country

the banks play a very important part. Behind the democratic structure of parliaments it is really the great banks that dictate policy and largely control it. It has become a recognised axiom that unless the state controls the banks for the public good, the banks will control the state for their own good. In India the position is, however, a far more difficult one than that which prevails in free countries. Foreign banks work in this country as a part of the commercial operations of their own nationals. The British banks are members of the British Chamber of Commerce and they share their outlook. British trade helps British banking, and British banking helps British trade. There are at present as many as 19 foreign banks in India. They have a monopoly in the field of foreign exchange and the financing of foreign trade. They work in this country in a closed ring through an association of their own. They have developed such strength that it is impossible for any Indian institution to come on the scene and to expect to operate without heavy losses being inflicted on it. Not being content with their activities at the ports and in the field of foreign, trade, the foreign banks have invaded the interior of India and they are now engaged in the operations of ordinary commercial banking with reference to internal trade. They have opened more branches and have increased their activities at the older branches in such a manner that they not only compete seriously with all Indian institutions, but have also inflicted a definite setback to the Imperial Bank of India. Towards Indian institutions they have been notoriously hostile. They refuse all cooperation and they have shown a spirit of intolerance of Indians not only in the field of banking but also in shipping and insurance. Before giving assistance to their clients they demand assurances that the shipping and insurance would be effected through foreign institutions. In their personnel no Indian finds a place either of honour or dignity. It is very doubtful if they are even paying proper taxes in this country on the heavy profits which they should be making.

INDIAN SUPPORT

The tragedy of the whole situation appears to be that their people operate in India not from monies which they bring over from abroad but from money deposited with them by our own people. The amount of such deposits, I understand, has increased in the last 30 years by over 700 per cent, and they have today between Rs. 70 to Rs. 80 crores of Indian money in their hands. With this money they have helped the effective transfer of trading operations from Indian hands into

foreign hands. The continued existence in this country of these foreign banks in their present position must result in the continued exclusion of Indians from the legitimate handling of the trade of their own country. With resources which they gather in India they are in a position to secure not only banking profits but trading profits for their own nationals, with all the harmful effects on Indian aspirations and Indian enterprise. This is a monstrous situation calling for immediate notice and action. No free country would permit this for any length of time. The foreign banks have found a ready and over-generous hospitality in India but many of them have not scrupled to abuse it by a systematic weakening of Indian institutions and by engineering attacks on them.

It is stranger still that monies are deposited by Indians with these foreign banks actually at a rate lower than they are able to obtain from Indian institutions. Apart from an item of profit of Rs. 80 lakhs on this account alone, these foreign institutions levy a charge on the entire foreign trade of this country ranging from Rs. 500 to Rs. 600 crores. Through their monopoly they are able to make the Indian exporter and the Indian importer, i.e., the Indian producer and the Indian consumer, pay on every item that is taken out of this country and on every item that is imported into this country. This profit on the exchange transaction alone is reckoned at something well over a crore of rupees. In addition, these banks render all kinds of services to their clients and charge for them. They earn interest and they make their ordinary banking profits, inflicting a collective drain on this country, which, as a whole, it would be difficult to estimate at anything less than Rs. 5 crores. The indirect losses to India, not merely in money but in morale, cannot be estimated.

'Some of these foreign banking institutions are so powerful that they attempt to buy out the best established banking institutions in India. Is this a position which any Indian can contemplate with a sense of safety or security? Under these circumstances Indian enterprise must languish. And yet, because Indian institutions do not always flourish as they should, our opponents preach to us and tell us that we are unable to look after our own affairs and must therefore leave it to them to run our country and its business.

NEED FOR ECONOMIC FREEDOM

We are carrying on a great struggle for political freedom. It is well to realise, however, that political freedom is a delusion without economic freedom. If we merely concentrate on that political side of freedom we shall find that our exploitation will continue and our last state will

be worse than the first. A time will come, I hope, when a politically free India will control her economic resources and will not permit anyone to exploit them for the benefit of a few. The key industries, I hope, will be controlled by the state. Today even the state is not ours, so there can be no question of its controlling them. But even today we must be clear that economic exploitation is the real thing to be aimed at and put an end to. And in this economic exploitation, banks play a dominating part. Even now we can observe an interaction of economic forces on political thoughts and events. The attempts being made by foreign exploiters to retain their present privileged position in the economic field in India, under cover of phrases like 'equal rights and opportunities', throws a lurid light on the realities of the situation. It would be a poor gain to us, if gain at all, if in our removing the political disabilities of India we confirm her financial and economic disabilities. I would therefore beg of the country to ponder over these questions and to set itself out to put an end to all foreign exploitation. Every Indian should give undoubted preference to an Indian institution and should lay stress on the fact that it is run for the good of the many and not merely for the good of the few. No foreign institution should be allowed to function in India to the detriment of the Indian people.

GLOSSARY

Aghan Badi	the fortnight of the ninth month of the Hindu lunar calendar when the moon is waning
Ashram	hermitage
Azadi	independence
Barat	a bridegroom's wedding procession
Bare Mian	respectful Urdu appellation for an elderly person
Bela	jasmine
Chaprasi	peon, attendant
Choldari	small tent
Chowk	city square, street crossing
Chowkidar	watchman
Chowkidari	the watchman's occupation or wages
Dahi	curds
Dallia	broken wheat boiled with milk or water
Darshan	view of a person
Durrie	mat woven from cotton yarn
Ghar	house
Inqilab	revolution
Inqilab Zindabad	long live revolution
Jaykars	Cheers
Khatta	a sour fruit
Kotwali	police-station
Lambardar (Numberdar)	convict overseer; cultivator responsible for collection of government dues from his village
Magh	eleventh month of the Hindu lunar calendar
Mainas	mynas
Masala	spices
Murraba	sweet pickle, preserve, jam
Namda	woollen rug

Naoroz	the New Year Day observed by Kashmiri pundits, which falls on 1 Vaisakh; also the name for the Parsi New Year Day
Newar	thick white cotton tape used in weaving a bed
Pagli	alarm raised in jail to signify an emergency
Panna	cold drink made from green mangoes; a sweet made from milk
Safayas	cleaners
Sanyasi	ascetic
Sattu	cold drink made from ground wheat, gram or barley
Surai	long-necked earthen pitcher
Takli	spindle with disc at the bottom for drawing thread from cotton slivers
Tulsi	basil
V aisakh	second month of the Hindu lunar calendar
Vaisakh Badi	the fortnight of Vaisakh when the moon is waning

INDEX

(Biographical footnotes are italicized)

Abbas, Khwaja Ahmad, 586 & *fn*
A.B.C. of Relativity (Bertrand Russell), 337, 387
Abhyudaya, 318 fn
Abraham, 556
Acharya, N.N., 91 & fn
A Day with Sambhu (K.S. Venkatramani), 578 fn
Adhikari, J., 254
Afghanistan, 241
____, Amir of (Amanullah), 293 fn
Aga Khan, 363 fn
Aga, Rup Kishan, 341
Agra, 21 & fn, 143, 309, 330, 342, 349 & fn, 353, 360, 442, 443, 499, 500
Ahmad, Shamsuddin, 67 & fn, 77
Ahmedabad, 6 fn, 22 fn, 251 fn, 276, 280, 282, 285, 304, 327 fn, 401, 523
Ahobalacharya, T.L., 571 & fn
Aiyar, P.S. Sivaswarni, 564 & fn
Akbarpur (U.P.), 283
Alexandria, 52 & fn
Ali, Manzar, 357, 421, Miaz,100 & fn
____, Maulana Mohamed, 98 & fn, 99, 335, 587, 588,
____, Sadiq, 310 & fn,
____, Maulana Shaukat, 524
Allahabad. 5-7, 10 fn, 14, 34, 38, 40, 68, 103 fn, 111, 120, 121, 143, 148, 155, 156, 159, 164, 167 fn, 206, 209 fn, 211, 213, 214, 219, 223, 224, 230, 231, 240, 244, 246, 253, 255 fn, 266, 271, 273, 276, 279, 280, 290, 295, 297, 303-308, 310-314, 320, 321 fn, 322 fn, 323, 325, 328 fn, 330 fn, 331, 336 fn, 337, 344 fn-348, 351, 360, 364, 374 fn, 379, 385, 387, 395, 397, 401, 408 fn, 420, 421 & fn, 424-426, 428-430, 433, 434, 436, 447, 477, 478, 486, 487-488, 495 fn, 517, 520, 521, 523 fn, 528, 533, 547, 553, 563, 576, 582-588
Allahabad Municipal Board, 587, 588
Allahabad Youth League, 6, 16, 17
All Bengal Students Conference, 5
All Ceylon Trade Union Congress, 42 fn, 86 fn
Alleppey (Kerala), 555
All India Congress Committee, 16, 20, 22, 35, 95, 115-117, 122-126, 155, 157, 159, 160, 162, 167, 169, 178, 196, 199, 203, 205 & fn, 208, 218, 219, 227, 231, 239 fn, 251, 265, 271, 276, 279, 280, 282 & fn, 284-288, 304, 310 fn, 324, 351 fn, 371, 376, 391, 392, 399, 403, 436, 439, 451, 477, 513, 523, 524, 529, 564 fn
All India Kisan Sabha, 367 fn
All India Nationalist Muslim Party, 565 & fn
All India Panchayat Parishad, 10 fn
All India Peace Council, 368 fn
All India Posts and Telegraph Employees Union, 305 fn
All India Railwaymens Federation, 36 fn, 305 fn
All India Sikh League, 80, 97 fn, 572 & fn, 573
All India Spinners Association, 92, 93, 105, 137, 276, 283, 349, 395-397, 407, 528, 578

All India States Peoples Conference, 10 fn, 580
All India Trade Union Congress, 29 fn, 33, 36 & fn, 40, 44, 45 & fn, 49, 55 & fn, 56, 58 & fn, 63 fn, 77, 166, 257
All India Trade Union Federation, 55 fn
All India Women's Conference, 379 fn
All Parties Committee, 175, 187, 191, 194,
____, report of, 188, 261, 335, 439, 572 & fn, 573
Almora (U.P.), 137 fn, 517
Aluwihare, Bernard, 522 & *fn*, 535
Amir Khusrau (Mohamed Habib), 337 & fn, 387
Amritsar, 93, 137, 139, 405
Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions, 71, 77
Anand, 384
Aney, M.S., 282 & fn
A New Way with Crime (Fenner Brockway), 364 & fn
Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, 52 & fn
An Indian Journey, 388
Ansari, M.A., 119, 129, 169, 377, 378, 391, 466 fn, 524 fn, 564
Anti-Intimidation Ordinance, 357 fn
Anuradhapura (Sri Lanka), 533 & fn
Apple Cart (Bernard Shaw), 462
Apurna Devi, 363
Ariel ou la Vie de Shelley (Andre Maurois), 337, 387
Arthashastra (Kautilya), 462
Art of Thinking (Ernest Dimnett), 462
Arya Samaj, 550
Arya Sevak Ashram, 112 fn
Ashoka, the Great, 518, 533
Asquith, H. H., 456 fn
As You Like It (Shakespeare), 462
Atal, Madan, 338 & *fn*, 373
Attlee, C.R., later Earl, 52 fn
Attock (Pakistan), 213 fn, 335 fn
Avadh, 442, 443
Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam, 68, 336 & fn, 367, 374, 377, 391
____, Chandrashekhar 495 & fn
Azamgarh (U.P.), 384, 385

Bachha Saqqa, 318 & fn
Backward Classes Commission, 384 fn
Bahraich (U.P.), 220 fn
Bajaj, Jamnalal, 583
Bajpai, R.B., 122 & fn, 123, 126, 127
Bakhale, R.R., 42 & fn, 47, 48, 55, 58, 62
Baksh, Hayat, 76 & fn
Baldwin, 462
_____, Roger, 298, 486
_____, Stanley, 52
Ballia (U.P.), 180 fn
Ballo, 347
Banaras—see Varanasi
____, Conspiracy Case, 20 fn, 209 fn
____, Hindu University, 13 fn, 88 fn, 303 fn, 367 fn
Bangalore, 113 fn, 527, 529, 550, 557, 564 fn
Banker, Shankarlal, 327
Bannerji, Nripendra Chandra, 493 & fn, 570
Bansgopal, 240 & fn
Bappi, 378
Baquani, Gilbert, 462
Barabanki (U.P.), 492 fn
Bardoli (Gujarat), 134, 277, 287, 399 fn, 553
Bareilly, 21 & fn, 118 fn, 137 fn, 143, 155, 322
Bari, Professor Abdul, 61 fn, 80
Baroda, 344 fn
____, University of, 379 fn
____, State Peoples Conference, 258 & fn
____, State Prajamandal, 258 fn
____, State Subjects Conference, 22 fn
Basti (U.P.), 367
Bauria (Bengal), 27
_____, jute mills, strike in, 28 & fn, 29
Beal, Samuel, 356 & *fn*, 388
Beaslay, P., 280 fn
Bengal Jute Workers Union, 62 fn
Bengal Ordinance, 382
Benn, Wedgwood, 102 fn, 189, 357, 458 & fn
Berlin, 105 fn, 131, 267
Bernstein, Henry, 337, 387
Betul (Mysore), 221 fn
Bex (Switzerland), 355, 356

Bhagalpur (Bihar), 417
Bhagat Singh, 8 &*fn*, 9 fn, 13, 14, 20, 35, 157, 395, 491, 503 & fn, 505 & fn, 506
_____, execution of, 8 fn, 500 & fn, 503 & fn, 505, 506
Bhagawad Gita, 327, 355
Bhalla, Mulkraj, 486 & fn
Bhandari, 220 & fn
Bharat, 321 & fn, 325, 327 & fn, 330, 333, 335, 341, 344, 345, 353, 359, 363
Bhargava, Gopichand, 178 &*fn*
Bhattacharji, Profullo, 74
_____, Suresh Chandra, 209 & fn
Bhavnagar, 10 fn
Bhopal, Nawab of, 524 & fn
Bhuwerji, 324 &*fn*, 338
Bijnor (U.P.), 119
Bikaner, Maharaja of (Ganga Singh), 192 fn
Bismarck (Emil Ludwig), 356 & fn, 360, 388
Biswas, 74
Bojer, Johan, 337 &*fn*, 387
Bombay, 2, 4, 29, 30, 32, 38-40, 62, 92, 110 fn, 115 fn, 124, 135, 149, 150, 169 fn, 231, 232 & fn, 250, 300, 317, 332, 360, 361, 364, 367, 374, 391 & fn, 392, 400, 405, 408, 413, 439, 456, 493, 494 & fn, 517, 520, 524, 528, 529, 543, 558, 576 fn
____, Congress offices raided at, 405 & fn
____, general strike in, 31 & fn
____, riots in, 4 & fn
Bombay Presidency Youth Conference, 5, 22 & fn
Bombay Youth League, 19 fn, 23
Boroughs, Grace, 563 & fn
Bose, Jagdish Chandra, 564 & fn
____, Subhas Chandra, 29, 34, 55, 56, 69, 77, 78, 97 fn, 129, 130, 177 fn, 205, 207 fn, 226, 227, 228 fn, 476 fn, 564, 570
Botha, General, 24 &*fn*
Bradley, 346
Braganca-Cunha, T., 94, 565, 566
Brailsford, H.N., 421, 447
Breen, Dan, 71
Brelvi, S.A., 161, 564, 565 & fn
Bridgeman, R., 35, 43, 44, 160, 174, 207
British Chamber of Commerce, 590
British Medical Council, 268
British Trade Union Congress (Council), 71, 77
Broach (Gujarat), 112 fn
Brockway, Fenner, 107, 364
Buddha, Gautama, 531. fn, 533 & fn
Buddhist Records of the Western World (Samuel Beal), 356 & fn, 388
Budge Budge (Calcutta), 71, 79
Bukharin, 388
Bulandshahr (U.P.), 120
Burli, B.V., 172 & fn
Burma Oil Company, 60 & fn, 71-74, 79
Burns, M.E., 89 & fn
Butler Committee, 539

Calcutta, 4 & fn, 27, 37, 61, 63 fn, 64, 68, 69, 87, 92, 120, 138, 139, 158, 160, 164 fn, 177, 178, 207, 214, 230 fn, 231, 250, 263 & fn, 264, 266, 281 fn, 285, 333, 336 fn, 378 fn, 399 fn, 405, 421, 431, 433-435, 452, 476, 564 fn, 567, 568,
_____, Congress session at, 99, 105 fn, 175, 176, 188, 189, 198
_____, Corporation of, 263-266
_____, University of, 378 fn,
_____, Youth Congress at, 4
Calicut (Kerala), 541, 543, 556
Cambridge, University of, 317 fn
Cambridge History of India, 334
Cape Comorin—see Kanya Kumari
Carlyle, 462
Caveeshar, Sardul Singh, 97 & fn, 98, 349, 573 fn
Cawnpore—see Kanpur
Ceylon, 42, 63 fn, 517, 522, 559
Chagla, M.C., 39
Chalisgaon, (Maharashtra), 33
Chamanlal, Dewan, 239 fn, 240
Chamberlain, Sir Austen, 51
Chanda (Maharashtra), 209 fn
Chandragupta Maurya, 518
Chandernagore, 493 & fn
Chanson de ma Vie (Yvette Guilbert), 344, 387

Charles I, 18
Chatterji, Ramanand, 564 & *fn*
Chattopadhyaya, Kamaladevi, 349 & *fn*, 564
_____, V, 36, 159, 175 & fn, 232, 234 fn, 253
Chelmsford, Lord, 102
Chesterton, G.K. (G.K.C.), 388
Chetty, C.V.J., 578 & fn
Chhatari, Nawab of, 374 & *fn*
Chheoki (U.P.), 317
Chiang kai Shek, 52 *fn*
Child Marriage Restraint Act, 481 & fn
China and the Manchus (H.A. Giles), 387
Chiniot (Pakistan), 180 fn
Chittagong Armoury Case, 493 fn
Choubey, K.P., 574
Churchill, Winston, 52 & fn, 384, 388, 542 fn
Citrine, Walter, 35 & fn, 43
Coastal Tariff Reservation Bill, 370 fn
Cochin (Kerala), 555
Coimbatore (Tamilnadu), 544, 545, 556
Collins, Michael, 71 & *fn*, 280
Collum, 462
Colombo, 86 fn, 520, 521, 524 & fn, 528, 529, 533-535
Comedy of Errois (Shakespeare), 388
Communist Party of India, 564 fn
Congress Bulletin, 107, 110, 124, 157, 241, 275, 279, 285, 579
Congress, Indian National, 16, 23, 27, 32, 36, 39, 48, 55, 62, 63, 65, 67, 80, 85-91, 93-95, 97, 98, 100, 102-107, 109, 111-113, 115, 116, 122-126, 128, 130, 131, 133, 135, 140-143, 149, 151, 155-158, 160, 162, 163, 165-168, 170, 171, 173- 180, 183, 184, 191-199, 203-208, 210, 212, 217, 219, 220 & fn, 222, 223, 225, 228, 230, 231, 234-243, 245, 247-249, 251, 253 & fn, 254, 257, 261-263, 265-267, 271, 272, 279, 281, 282 & fn, 286, 290-292 & fn, 294, 300, 308, 309, 330 fn, 335, 338 fn, 344 fn, 345 fn, 354, 357 & fn, 371, 372, 375, 376, 380, 391 fn, 393-395, 398, 399, 402, 403, 405, 406, 408, 415, 434, 437-441, 445, 449-451, 453-459, 468, 469, 471, 485 fn-488, 490-497, 499, 500, 505-511, 517 fn, 523 fn, 525, 529, 537-540, 542, 544, 550-552, 563, 565, 573 fn, 575, 577, 580, 581, 583, 588, 589
_____session at Calcutta, 99, 105 fn, 175
_____session at Gaya, 197
_____session at Karachi, 489, 497, 503-513, 525, 526, 529, 542
_____session at Lahore, 10, 95, 126, 132, 172, 174, 207 fn, 210, 221, 225 & fn, 226, 231, 235, 241-243, 261, 284, 485, 489, 491
Congress Working Committee, 29, 63, 72, 88, 99, 103, 122, 125-128, 155, 162-164, 168, 169, 172, 175, 176, 203, 205, 212, 215, 217, 223, 225-227, 235, 236, 239, 251 & fn, 253, 258, 262, 265, 267, 271, 272, 276, 278, 282-285, 287, 304, 305 fn, 344 & fn, 345, 349, 367 & fn, 371, 373, 376, 377, 380 & fn, 383, 398, 399 fn, 401 fn, 403, 436, 453-462, 470, 472, 475, 479-482, 485 & fn, 489-491, 497, 504, 537, 538, 543 fn, 577, 581-584
_____meeting at Delhi, 485, 490; resolution on truce issued by, 485; and statement, 489
Congress Socialist Party, 305 fn, 349 fn, 351 fn
Contai (Bengal), 465 fn
C. P. Hindustani Provincial Political Conference, 317 & fn
Coolus, Romain, 388
Coppier, Andre-Charles, 324

Dain, J.R., 77 & *fn*
Dakshineshwar (Bengal), 434 & fn
Dalton (U.S.A.), 346 & fn, 347
Dambulla (Sri Lanka), 533
Dance of Civa (Collum), 462
Dandekar, V.S., 11 & fn, 108 fn, 330
Dandi (Gujarat), 286 fn, 292, 293, 301, 547
Dange, S.A., 346, 564 & *fn*
Danton, 400 & fn
Darbhanga, Maharaja of, 332 & fn
D(h) arsana, 345 fn, 349

Das, Seth Govind, 317 fn
_____, Jatindranath, 13 & *fn*, 15, 19 fn, 20, 21 fn, 22, 108 fn, 184, 354, 570
_____, Nilakantha, 48 & *fn*, 77, 79 fn
_____, Raghava, 114 & *fn*
Das (s) Gupta, J. M., 227, 228 fn
Dashera, Ganesh Lal, 304
Daspur (Bengal), 465 fn
Datta, Bhupendra Nath, 47
Daud, Muhammad, 63 & *fn*, 67, 69, 75, 77
Dayal, Bhagwat, 5 & *fn*
Decline of the West (Oswald Spengler), 322 & fn, 345, 348, 349, 352, 360, 388
Dehra Dun (U.P.), 385, 408 fn
Delhi, 2, 29, 48, 97, 119-121, 129, 137-139, 149, 155, 157, 163, 167 fn, 168, 169, 229, 246, 380 & fn, 405, 413, 476, 478, 490 fn, 497, 499, 507, 584, 586
_____, Congress Working Committee meeting at, 485, 490
_____, manifesto issued at, 165, 167 fn, 170, 172, 175, 207, 236
_____, resolution on truce issued at, 485, and statement, 489
Delhi Settlement—see Gandhi-Irwin Settlement
Democratic Congress Party, 205 fn, 206
Deoki Prasad, 70
Desai, M., 169 & fn
_____, Mahadeva, 280, 327, 421
Desk Bhagat Case, 118 fn
Desh Sevika Sangh, 494 fn
Destiny of a Continent (Manuel Ugarte), 388
Detroit (U.S.A.), 100 fn
Dey, Mukul Chandra, 564 & *fn*
Dhampur, 119
Dhanraj, 357
Dhulekar, R.V., 576 & *fn*
Dikshit, Shri Krishna, 293 & fn
Dimnett, Ernest, 462
Din Dayal, 312 & fn
Divekar, D.V., 170 & fn
Dixit, Madhusudan Prasad, 579
Dondia Head (Sri Lanka), 534
Doulatram, Jairamdas, 136 & *fn*, 137 138, 140, 146, 377, 382, 528, 529,
Dover, Cedric, 333 & fn
Do We Agree (Bernard Shaw & Chesterton), 388
Dunthanya Case, 349 & fn
Dutt, B.K., 8 & fn, 9 & *fn*, 13, 15, 20 35, 157

East Africa, 197
Ebreichsdorf (Austria), 363 fn
Edib, Halide, 388
_____, Memoirs of, 388,
England, general election in, 101 & fn
Enigmas, 388
Ernakulam (Kerala), 555, 556
Etah (U.P.), 145
Etawah (U.P.), 118, 144, 293 fn, 310
Exchange Mobilisation Agreement, 496 fn

Fatehpur (U.P.), 231 fn, 240 fn
Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, 273
Fiji, 197
Fimmen, Edo, 256
Firdausi, 462
Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee, 137, 140
Forward Bloc, 97 fn
France, Anatole, 462
Frankfurt, 36, 124 fn, 234, 235
Fyzabad (U.P.), 373, 426

Gadag (Mysore), 148
Galle (Sri Lanka), 534
Gandhi Ashram, 303 fn
Gandhi-Irwin Settlement, 485-490, 494-498
Gandhi, Kasturba, 421
_____, Mahatma, 34, 91-93, 114-116, 119-121, 123, 127, 128 135, 137 fn, 155, 156, 158-160, 162-164, 166, 206, 207 fn, 211, 214, 215 & fn, 227-229, 234 fn, 235, 238, 245, 248-250, 251 fn, 262, 271, 273-275 & fn, 277-281, 283, 284 286-288, 292, 295, 297, 299, 301, 302,

304, 314 & fn, 317 fn, 324, 327, 333, 338, 341, 342, 344 fn, 349 fn, 351 fn, 363 fn, 369 & fn, 371-375, 377-379, 393, 394, 402, 408, 419, 424, 434, 440, 441, 447, 454 fn, 456, 457, 460, 470 & fn, 471, 479, 480, 485 & fn, 489-492, 494, 497-499, 506, 507 fn, 524-528, 530, 537-539, 542 & fn, 553, 558, 584
Garg, Lakshmi Narain, 21 fn
Garibaldi, Giuseppe, 423 & *fn*
Garibaldi's Defence of the Roman Republic (Trevelyan), 423 & fn
Gautam, Mohanlal, 351 & *fn*
Gaya, Congress session at, 197
Geneva, 36 fn, 48, 51, 63 fn, 520
Genius and Character (Emil Ludwig), 364 & fn, 384, 388
Ghanshiam Singh (of Murshan), 241 fn
Ghatkopar (Bombay), 497
Ghazipur (U.P.), 145, 426, 428, 430
Ghose, Sailendranath, 95, 124, 125, 127
Gibran, Khalil, 388
Gignoux, Regis, 462
Giles, H.A., 387
Ginwala, F.J., 33 & fn, 34, 38
G.I.P. Railway Kamgar Union, 33 fn
____, split in, 33 fn, 34 fn
G.I.P. Railwayman, 39
G.I.P. Railwaymens Union, 38-40, 43
G.I.P. Railway strike, 254 & fn, 256
Giri; V.V., 63 & *fn*, 64, 67, 69, 77
Gladstone, William Ewart, 350 & *fn*
Goa, 94, 111, 565, 566
Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs, 113 fn
Golden Threshold, 558 & fn
Golmuri (Bihar), 59, 72, 77-80
_____, strike in, 42, 57
_____, Tinplate Workers Union, 57, 58, 63, 65, 69, 76 fn
Gonda (U.P.), 103 & fn, 291 & fn
Gopal, 404
Gorakhpore (Gorakhpur) (U.P.), 43, 110, 114 & fn, 115, 161
Goune Sinha, 86 & fn
Gour, Hari Singh, 557 & *fn*
Government School of Art (Calcutta), 564 fn
Great French Revolution, (Kropotkin), 462
Great War, the, 2
Guilbert, Yvette, 344, 387
Gujarat College, strike in, 6 fn
Gujarat Vidyapith, 288, 384 fn
Gujranwala (Punjab), 285 fn, 302, 572 fn
Gundappa, D.V., 113 & *fn*
Gupta, Shiva Prasad, 160, 234, 253, 334, 345, 367
Gur Narain, 421
Guzders, 347

Habib, Mohamcd, 337, 387
Haemmerlin, Mile., 355, 356
Hague, the, 51
Hague Court, 493
Hailey, Sir Malcolm, 308
Hakhu, Shambu Nath, 568
Half Caste (Cedric Dover), 333 fn
Hallowes, B.J.K., 103 & fn
Handia (U.P.), 307, 322 & fn, 324, 327, 328 & fn, 330, 350, 351, 373
Hanif Ullah, 75
Harda, 378
Hardikar, N.S., 129, 130, 367
Hardoi (U.P.), 13 fn
Haridewat, 91 fn
Harilal, 360, 533 & fn
Hartford Times, 474 & fn
Hartshorn, Vernon, 52 fn
Hathras (U.P.), 151
Henderson, Arthur, 101 & *fn*
Heroes (Carlyle), 462
Hieun Tsang—see Hiuen Tsang
Higginbotham, 365
Himmat, 386
Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, 330 fn
Hind Mazdoor Sabha, 45 fn
Hindu Mahasabha, 99, 225 fn, 565
Hindu Mission, 567 & fn
Hindustan Association of America, 127, 179 fn
Hindustani Seva Dal, 93, 130, 132, 133, 144, 150, 172 fn, 218, 252, 279, 284, 290, 291, 307 fn, 499
Hindustani Talimi Sangh, 384 fn
Hindustan National Party, 563 fn
Hindustan Socialist Republican Association, 13 fn

Hindustan Times, 308
Hindu View of Life (S. Radhakrishnan), 462
Historical Materialism and Economic Theory of Leisure Class (Bukharin), 388
History of the Orient (Steijer-Beyer-Benitez), 344, 387
Hiuen Tsang, 388, 417 & *fn*
Homi, Manek, 67 & fn, 75, 76
Hooghly Mills Co., 60
Howrah (Calcutta), 27
Hsi yu chi (Hiuen Tsang), 417
Hubli (Mysore), 172 fn
Husain, Fazl-i-, 373
Hussain, M. Vilayat, 343
Huxley, Aldous, 462
Hyderabad (A.P.), 62 fn, 527, 529, 553, 557 & fn, 558 & fn
_____, Nizam of, 553

Illustrated Times, 321
Independence for India League, 88, 131, 156, 166, 221 & fn
India, Gandhi and World Peace (Reginald Reynolds), 351 fn
India in Bondage (Sunderland), 206 fn
Indian Institute of Science, 564 fn
Indian Medical Association, 268
Indian Medical Service, 268
Indian National Trade Union Congress, 61 fn, 309 fn
Indian Press Ordinance, 338 fn
Indian Seamens Association, 63 fn
Indian Seamens Union, 37
Indo-China, 336
Inner Temple, 542 fn
Indra, Professor, 148 fn
International Labour Conference, 36 fn, 48, 63 fn
International, Second, 53, 54
_____, Third, 54
International Transport Federation, 256 & fn
Ireland, 442
Irwin, Lord, 357, 372, 379-382, 392-394, 458, 460, 497
Ismail, Mirza, 557 & *fn*
Itarsi, 378
Iyengar, S. Srinivasa, 34, 46 & fn, 106, 112, 171

Jaffna (Sri Lanka), 535
Jaipur, 557 fn
Jallianwala Bagh, 189, 286 fn
Jamshedpur (Bihar), 57 & fn, 58 fn, 60, 62, 67 fn-69, 76 fn, 77
Jamshedpur Labour Association, 36 fn
Jawahar Day, 421, 422
Jawahar Week, 421
Jawahar, M.R., 369 & fn, 371-373, 375, 377-383, 393, 470, 471
Jean Christophe (Romain Rolland), 351 & fn
Jeanne d'Arc (Joan of Arc), 418 & *fn*
Jhabvala, S.H., 33
Jhansi (U.P.), 576 fn
_____, U.P. Provincial Conference at, 440
Jharia (Bengal), 40, 55
Jinnah, M.A., 373, 564
Johannesburg, 89 fn
John, Michael, 61 & fn
Johnston, 123
Johri, C.B., 33 & fn, 34 fn, 37-39, 43
Joseph, George, 555
Joshi, N.M., 29, 30 & fn, 33 & fn, 43, 44, 48, 55
_____, P.C., 6
Jugal Kishore, Acharya, 330 & *fn*
Juhu (Bombay), 520
Jullundur, 98 & fn

Kabul, 241, 318
Kaiser Wilhelm (Emil Ludwig), 364
Kaithamal, 350 fn
Kakori Conspiracy Case, 20 fn, 21 fn, 209 fn, 495 fn
_____, prisoners, treatment of, 20, 21 & fn, 209
Kalakankar, Raja of, 336
Kalappa, V.R., 36 & fn
Kalelkar, D.B., 384 & *fn*
Kalutara (Sri Lanka), 534
Kandy (Sri Lanka), 521, 525, 533
Kannada Sahitya Sammelan, 113 fn
Kanpur, 13 fn, 41, 138, 143, 159, 209 fn,

213, 244, 307, 311-313, 324, 405, 486, 487, 503 & fn, 528, 530
_____, tragedy in, 503 & fn, 505
Kanpur University, 330 fn
Kanya Kumari (Tamilnadu), 527, 541, 543, 553, 554
Kapra Committee, 139
Karachi, 405, 489, 493, 528, 529
_____, Congress session at, 489, 497, 503-513, 525, 526, 529, 542
Karadi (Gujarat), 286 fn
Karnasuvarna, 417
Kashi Vidyapitha, 143, 310, 350 & fn, 351, 354
Kashipur (U.P.), 451
Kasuri, Abdul Qadir, 349 & fn
Kathiawar (Gujarat), 18, 19
_____, Youth Conference, 10 fn
Katju, Kailas Nath, 307, 312
Kautilya, 462
Kesari, 170 fn, 225 fn
Ketkar, G. V., 225 & *fn*
Keyserling, 462
Khadi Fund, 114 fn
Khaliquzzaman, Chaudhri, 344, 383, 391
Khalsa, Gopal Singh, 563 & fn
Khan, Khan Abdul Ghaffar, 293 & *fn*, 467 fn, 510
Khan, Maulana Mir, 293 & fn
Khan Sahib, Dr., 293 fn, 467 & fn
Khan, Shyam Kumari—see Nehru, Shyam Kumari
Khatri, Ramkrishna, 209 & fn
Khera, S.S., 351 & *fn*
Khilafat Committee, 293 fn
Khudai Khidmatgars, 293 fn, 468 fn
Khwaja, Abdul Majid, 349, 421
Kidderpore (Calcutta), 37 fn
Kidwai, Rafi Ahmad, 311, 349 & fn, 492
Kirkee (Poona), 374, 375
Kishori, 453
Komagata Maru, 77 fn
Kotgarh (Simla Hills), 574 fn
Kottayam (Kerala), 555
Kripalani, J.B., 119, 303
Krishnanand, 492 & fn
Krishna Narayan, 180 & fn
Kropotkin, 462
Kulkarni, D.B., 29 & fn, 32, 38, 43
Kuomintang and the Future of Chinese Revolution (T.C. Woo), 337 & fn, 387

La Double Passion (Auguste Villeroy), 388
La Griffe (Henry Bernstein), 337 & fn, 387
Lahore, 4, 14, 35, 48, 56, 93-97, 107, 118, 179 & fn, 199 fn, 203, 205, 207, 209, 211, 212, 219, 228, 229, 241, 250, 263, 360, 364, 376, 391, 394, 399 fn, 402, 482, 494, 495, 505, 507, 569 fn
_____, Congress session at, 10, 95, 126, 132, 172, 174, 207 fn, 210, 221, 225, 226, 231, 235, 241-243, 261, 485, 489, 491
_____, Conspiracy Case, 8 fn, 9 fn, 13 fn, 14, 35, 209 fn, 382, 500 fp
Lahore Students Union, 4
Lajpat Rai, Lala, 15, 34 & fn, 97, 206 fn, 243
Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund, 131
Lakhimpur-Kheri (U.P.), 117 & fn, 429, 430
Lakshmi Insurance Company, 179 & fn
Lakshmipathi, Rukmini, 349 & *fn*
La loc de Finte (A.E.W. Mason), 462
La Marche (Henry Bernstein), 337 & fn, 387
Lambert, G.B., 430
Landaur, 120
Lansdowne, Marquess of, 456 & fn
Lansbury, George, 52 fn
La Vie de Disraeli (Andre Maurois), 350, 388
Leader, 308, 357
Leaders Conference, 167 & fn, 236
League against Imperialism, 87, 89 fn, 103 fn, 104, 123-126, 232-235, 237, 253 & fn, 256, 258
_____, second World Congress of, 36, 124 & fn, 234, 235
League of Nations, 24
Le Clif (A.E.W. Mason), 462
Le Detour (Henry Bernstein), 337 & fn, 387

Legal Practitioners Act, 220 fn
Lenin, 241 fn, 419
Le Prof, d'anglais (Regis Gignoux), 462
Le Reyolte des Anges (Anatole France), 462
Les Alpes (Hans Schmithals), 324
Le Saphir (A.E.W. Mason), 462
Les Chef d'Oeuvres de la Langue Francaise—Poesie, 387
Les Chef—d'Oeuvres de m la Langue Francaise-Prose, 388
Les Miettes et L'Elastique (Edmund See), 388
Le Trois Henry, 388
Leyshom, J., 72
Liberal Party, 318 fn, 343
Liberty Under the Soviets (Baldwin), 462
Life of the Ant (Maeterlinck), 462
Life of the Bee (Maeterlinck), 462
Life of the White Ant (Maeterlinck), 462
Light of the World, 576 & fn
Linlithgow, first Marquess of, 41 fn
Lloyd George, David, 52 & fn, 101 388
Lokhare, B.G., 276
London, 43, 89 & fn, 395, 467 fn, 471, 497, 537
Love's Labour Lost (Shakespeare), 388
Lucknow, 5, 20 fn, 143, 159, 160, 246, 250, 322, 324, 330 fn, 338 fn, 358, 368, 383, 386, 406, 452, 466 fn, 486 fn, 519, 522 fn, 570
_____, firing in, 352 & fn
_____, U.P. Youth Conference at, 5
_____, University of, 367 fn
Lucknow Charkha Pracharak Sangh, 492
Lucknow Conference—see Muslim Nationalist Conference
Ludwig, Emil, 356, 360, 364, 384, 388
Lyallpur, 572

MacDonald, Ramsay, 3, 51-53, 101, 453 & fn, 455 fn, 460, 461, 462 fn
MacManus, L., 462
Madras, 2, 34, 46 & fn, 92, 292 fn
Madras Youth League, 349 fn
Maeterlinck, 462
Mahabharata, 243
Mahabharati, Alokananda, 88
Maharaj Kishore, 322 & fn, 324
Maharaj Singh, 319 & *fn*, 321, 328, 334, 373
Mahmud, Syed, 213, 222, 337 & fn, 338, 349, 360, 367, 377, 379, 383, 386, 387, 421, 429-431, 436, 522, 523, 527, 528
Mahratta, 225 fn
Mainpuri (U.P), 12
Malacca jail (Allahabad), 422, 430, 432
Malaviya, Chandrakant, 373
_____, Govind, 420, 430
_____, Kesho, 373
_____, Madan Mohan, 167, 336, 374, 378, 384, 385, 430, 435
_____, Padmakant, 373
Malaysia, 336
Malik, Lal Khan, 285 fn
Malta, 52 fn
Manga, 75
Manmatha Ram, 517
Mann, Tom, 86 & *fn*
Martial Law, 134, 189, 286 fn, 349
Mason, A.E.W., 462
Matara (Sri Lanka), 534
Mathura, 145
Maung Maung, 508
Maurois, Andre, 337 & fn, 350, 387, 388
Mawkhar (Assam), 567 fn
Measure for Measure (Shakespeare), 388
Meerut, 53, 70, 103 fn, 118, 120, 121, 159, 303 fn, 472
Meerut Case, 33, 39, 43, 45, 159, 346. 382
Meerut Prisoners Defence Committee, 107
Meherally, Yusuf, 4, 7 & fn, 19
Mehta, Balvantray, 10 & *fn*
_____, Hansa, 379 & fn
_____, Jivraj, 379 fn, 466 fn
_____, Sumant, 22 & fn, 564
Memoirs of Halide Edib, 388
Merchant of Venice (Shakespeare), 462
Meredith, 462
Merry Wives of Windsor (Shakespeare), 388
Michael Collins and the Making of a New Ireland (P. Beaslay), 280 fn
Midnapore (Midnapur) (Bengal), 465 & fn

Midsummer Night's Dream (Shakespeare), 462
Mira Ben (Mira bai), 363 & fn
Mirza, Bakar Ali, 62 & fn
Mirzapur (Mirzapore) (U.P.), 144, 428, 430, 517
Mishra, Bhagwan Din, 220 & fn
Misra, B.D., 117 & *fn*
_____, Mata Prasad, 309
_____, R.S., 221 & fn
Mitra, 76, 77
_____, B.N., 77 & *fn*
_____, Jatindranath, 58 & fn 61
Modern Review, 564 fn
Modern School (Delhi), 347
Mohamad, Jan, 74
Mohanganj (U.P.), 307
Mohani, Hasrat, 337 & fn
Montessori, 346
Moradabad (U.P.), 151
Much Ado about Nothing (Shakespeare), 388
Mukerjee, A.N., 143 & fn
Mukerji, 338, 373
Mukherji, Dhan Gopal, 347, 404
_____, Prafulla C., 179 & fn
_____, R.N., 16 fn
Mumbai Girni Kamgar Union, 31 fn, 32
Munzenberg, Willi, 234 fn
Murshan, 241 fn
Muslim leaders' manifesto, 98 fn
Muslim Nationalist Conference, 522, 523
Mussorie, 44-46, 119, 120, 383, 385, 387, 400, 402, 404, 517, 521, 574
Muttra—see Mathura
Muzaffar, 357
Muzaffarnagar, 120
Muzaffarpur, 298 fn
My Life (Trotsky), 462
Mysore, 529, 545, 547, 549, 553, 557
_____, Maharaja of, 557

Nadvi, Masud Ali, 384, 436
_____, Syed Sulaiman, 384
Nagercoil (Tamilnadu), 554
Nagina, 119
Nagpur, 55, 175
Naidu, Leilamani, 557 & fn
_____, Padmaja, 422, 557
_____, Sarojini, 125, 349, 377, 382, 422, 524, 553, 557 & fn, 558 & fn, 564
_____, T.V.K., 220 & fn
Naik, B.R., 258 fn
Naini (Allahabad), 317, 331, 334, 336, 337, 339, 341, 343, 351, 354, 360, 366, 367, 378, 384, 393, 395, 396, 413, 417, 420, 423, 424, 425, 428, 444, 468, 518, 519
Naini Tal, 137 fn, 151, 306, 331, 346, 358
Najibabad, 119
Nalanda, 417
Nambiar, A.C.N., 36, 105
Naoroji, Dadabhai, 555 fn
_____Jal, 555 & *fn*, 556
Napoleon (Emil Ludwig), 388
Narayan, Jayaprakash, 305 & *fn*, 332 & fn, 349
Narendra Dev, Acharya, 367 & *fn*
National Federation of Indian Raihvaymen, 309 fn
National Gallery of Modern Art, 564 fn
National Minority Movement, 86 & fn
National Service Fund, 118
National Week, 286 & fn, 288, 297, 298
Naujawan Bharati Sabha, 1
Navsari (Gujarat), 258 fn
Nawakot, 133
Nawanagar, Jam Saheb of, 18 fn
Nehru Award for International Understanding, 293 fn
Nehru, Indira, 178, 323, 324, 331, 338, 346, 355, 364, 367, 368, 373, 374, 378, 384, 417 & fn, 420, 421, 433, 451, 452, 518, 535, 553
_____, Jawaharlal, 5, 7 & fn, 9, 10 fn, 12, 16 fn, 21, 23, 27, 29 & fn, 30, 33, 35 & fn, 37, 38, 40, 44, 45, 47, 48, 52 fn, 59, 61, 62, 64, 68-71, 77, 85-91, 94, 95, 98 & fn, 100, 103 fn, 105, 106, 109-113, 115-124, 126-131, 134-140, 141 fn, 143, 148 fn-151, 155, 157-164, 168-172, 174, 175, 179, 180, 204, 205 fn-208, 212, 213 & fn, 215 & fn, 218-221, 223, 224, 227, 230, 231, 233, 239-241, 253-255, 258, 263, 266, 267, 273, 274, 276, 277, 279, 280, 282, 283, 286, 290, 292, 294, 296, 298-300, 303-305, 307, 310-

314, 317 fn, 335, 338 fn, 340, 348, 356, 365, 371, 372, 377, 379, 383, 384 & fn, 385, 387, 392, 396, 397, 400, 401, 403, 404, 408 fn, 416 & fn, 423-425, 428, 429, 435, 436, 440, 441, 453, 461, 467, 469, 470 & fn, 486, 487, 490, 492, 498 fn, 500, 509 fn, 511 fn, 517 & fn, 520, 521, 522 fn, 523, 524, 528-530, 534, 535, 558, 560, 563-568, 570, 572-575, 577-579, 581, 582, 584, 586, 588

____, presides at Lahore Congress, 184-199; advocates launching no-tax campaign, 399; advocates nonpayment of *chowkidari*, 399; desires to work in villages, 156; dislikes office work, 156; dislikes the word 'vernacular' 9; expresses regret to Joshi, 44; nominates successor to presidentship, 304, 409; on provisional settlement, 481, 482, 489, 490, 491, 494, 496, 497, 503, 507, 538, 539, 545, 551, 552; resigns from League against Imperialism, 238, 267; upset by flogging of prisoners, 423; visits Sri Lanka, 517-531

_____, in jail, 317-388, 413-462; arrested and imprisoned (fourth time), 313, 314, 317; arrested and imprisoned (fifth time), 413, 414, 420; dislikes differentiation in treatment of political prisoners, 336, 339; drafts agrarian and economic programme, 437-444; fasts for three days, 427, 429, 430; interviewed by Brailsford, 421; treated for shoulder pain, 326, 334

_____, on Anglo-Indians and Congress, 109; on behaviour of volun teers on arrest, 295, 296; on Bengal Congress disputes, 230, 263-266; on boycott of foreign cloth, 134-139; on British Labour Party, 86, 89, 102; on Calcutta Congress, 99; on China's freedom, 85 & fn; on communalism, 186, 187, 503, 505, 573; on communism, 7; on Congress, 99, 125, 127; on Congress presidentship, 155, 161, 164; on Constituent Assembly, 444, 450, 451; on dignity of manual labour, 569; on discipline, 166; on duties of municipalities, 546; on economic distress of peasants, 243-251; on economic programme, 255, 256; on efficient work, 118, 149; on father's death, 466, 519; on fundamental rights, 511, 512; on foreign banks in India, 487, 589, 590; on forward policy, 469, 509-511; on independence, 191, 198, 199, 228, 229; on Independence Day, 204, 218, 224, 225, 230, 231, 285; on Indian labour in Sri Lanka, 536, 559, 560; on Indian states, 192, 193, 258, 259; on India's poverty, 104; on journalism, 8; on khadi, 134-136; on kingship, 18; on literacy in Cochin and Travancore, 554; on minorities, 99, 259-261; on national flag, 131, 183, 232; on national language, 24; on nonviolence, 506; on conduct in life, 419; on parallel government, 205, 226; on political prisoners, 210; on prohibition, 110; on psychology of political move- ments, 445-447, 455—461; on public debt of India, 196, 197; on relations with neighbours, 469, 510, 511, 527; on release of political prisoners, 504; on separation of Burma, 508, 509; on socialism, 2, 3; on Swaraj, 2; on trade unionism, 32, 49, 50; on unity of India, 541, 543; on untouchability, 539, 540, 542; on violence, 12, 195, 495, 503, 505; on youth, 2, 3, 6, 7, 222, 503, 526

_____, Kamala, 120, 157, 160, 310, 318, 320, 323, 324, 334, 336, 338 & fn, 341, 348, 349, 353, 358-361, 367-369, 373, 374, 378, 379, 404, 421, 426, 431, 432, 435, 451, 452, 517, 521, 522, 533, 535, 553

_____, Krishna Kumari, 106, 310, 318, 336, 338, 343, 347-349, 357, 358, 360, 364, 365, 367, 368, 373, 374, 378, 384, 421, 422 & fn, 435, 452, 521, 532, 553,

558, 584
____, Motilal, 117 fn, 122, 135, 304, 314 fn, 331 fn, 338 fn, 344 fn, 349 fn, 371, 372, 377, 383, 391, 393, 408, 409, 466 fn, 471, 478 fn, 518 & fn, 519, 533 fn, 573 & fn, 581, 582; offers Swaraj Bhawan to the nation, 478 fn, 581
____, Shamlal, 357, 374 fn
____, Shyam Kumari, 374 & *fn*, 384
____, Uma, 323, 357, 374 & fn
Nehru Report—see All Parties Committee Report
Nepal, 91
New Delhi, 120 fn, 208, 246
New Temple (Johan Bojer), 337, 387
New Testament, 365
New York, 170 fn, 347, 566 fn
North West Frontier Province, 335 & fn, 401, 402
Nuwara Eliya (Sri Lanka), 520, 522, 523, 527, 528, 532

Oberoi, Major, 318 & fn, 423, 426
Olivier, Lord, 102 & fn
Ooty (Ootacamund) (Tamilnadu), 556
Orleans (France), 418 fn
Oudh—see Avadh

Palghat (Kerala), 567 *fn*
Paliwal, 330
_____, Sri Krishna Datt, 309 & *fn*, 330
Pandey, Bindeshwari Prasad, 118 & fn
_____, Ram Nath, 209 & fn
Pandit, Chandralekha, 331 & fn, 346, 364, 378, 452
_____, Nayantara, 331 & fn, 360, 363, 452, 554
_____, R.S., 178, 323, 338, 349, 365, 369, 373, 374, 385-387, 404, 420, 429-431, 433-435, 452, 453, 478, 517, 524, 535
_____, Vijayalakshmi, 331 & fn, 336, 338, 348, 349, 352, 357, 358, 360, 361, 366-369, 373, 374, 378, 386, 421, 432, 434, 436, 452, 478, 517, 520, 535, 553
Pandya, H.M., 10 & fn
Pant, Govind Ballabh, 161
Paper Boats (K.S. Venkatramani), 578 fn
Pardon Madame (Romain Coolus & Andre Rivoire), 388
Parkhurst, Helen, 346 fn
Partabgarh, 244
Pataliputra (Patna), 417
Patel, Vallabhbhai, 34, 277, 281, 287, 373, 374, 377, 382, 391, 399 fn, 409 & fn, 421, 441, 446, 527, 528
Patel, Vithalbhai, 336 & fn, 378, 401 fn
Patel Enquiry Committee—see Peshawar Enquiry Committee Patiala, Maharaja of, 580 fn
Patiala Enquiry Committee, 580 & fn
Patna, 343
Paul, L., 110
Perhipunan Indonesia, 87 & fn
Peshawar, 213 fn, 293 & fn, 335 & fn, 337 fn, 344 fn, 345 fn, 391, 392, 401 fn, 406, 413, 505
Peshawar Day, 344 fn, 348
Peshawar Enquiry Committee, 401 & fn
Picketing Ordinance, 382
Pioneer, 386
Pittsburg (U.S.A.), 179 fn
Poe, Edgar Allan, 519 & *fn*
Point Counter Point (Aldous Huxley), 462
Pollonarrua (Sri Lanka), 533
Poona, 114 fn, 146, 148, 553
Porto (Portugal), 566 & fn
Port Said, 52 fn
Potter-Wilson, J.E., 27 & fn
Prabha, 357
Prabhavati Devi, 332 & fn
Praja Socialist Party, 305 fn, 367 fn
Prasad, Bindhyabasini, 115
_____, Mata, 242
_____, Rajendra, 77
Pratap, Raja Mahendra, 241 & *fn*
Pratt, Frances J., 170 & fn
Press Act, 377
Profits of Religion (Upton Sinclair), 388
Prophet (Khalil Gibran), 388
Public Safety Bill, 1, 42, 53
Punjab National Bank, 487
Punya Deva, 324
Purandare, V.B., 32
Puri, Major N.D., 108 fn

Pyarelal, 155

Quilon (Kerala), 555

Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli, 462, 564 & *fn*
Rae Bareli, 145, 244, 251, 298 fn, 307 -309, 311-313, 342, 349 fn, 350 & fn, 351
Raghavachari, 523, 527, 528
Rahim, Abdur, 205 & fn, 219
Rai, Nand Kumar, 180 & fn
Raipur (M.P.), 307, 311-313, 317 & fn
____, C.P. Hindustani Provincial Conference at, 317 & fn
Rajagopalachari, C., 110, 207 & fn, 400
Raj Guru, 500 fn, 505 fn
Rajkot (Gujarat), 10, 11, 38, 39, 159
Rajpur, 385
Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, 434 fn
Raman, C.V., 564 & fn
Ramkumar, 360
Ranchi, 77
Rangoon, 281 fn, 287, 421
Ranu Bala Debi, 299
Rao, Raja, 332, 333, 338
_____, B. Shiva, 36, 42
Ras (Gujarat), 277 fn, 399 fn
Rashtriya Stree Sabha, 494 fn
Ratnagiri (Maharashtra), 317 fn
Pveinemann, Otto, 90 & fn
Renascent India (K.S. Venkatramani), 578 & fn
Revenue Act, 377
Rewa, 579
Reynolds, Reginald, 351 & *fn*
Rivoire, Andre, 388
Rohtak, 96, 134, 141
_____, Punjab Provincial Conference at, 96 fn
Rolland, Romain, 351 fn, 355
Rome and the Papacy (Gilbert Baquani), 462
Romier, Lucien, 388
Round Table Conferences, 47, 113, 165 fn, 170, 369 fn, 372, 444, 453 fn, 456, 458 fn, 482 fn, 487, 491, 492, 497, 507 & fn, 537, 539, 540, 542, 557 & fn
Rowlatt Act, 293 fn, 301
Roy, B.C., 230 & *fn*, 263 fn-265, 367, 378, 466 fn, 477
_____, Kiran Sankar, 228 fn, 476, 478
_____, Rash Mohan, 567 & fn
Royal Commission, on Agriculture, 41 & *fn*, on Indian Labour, 30 & fn, 39-42, 44, 45, 46 fn, 47, 51, 53
Ruikar R.S., 45 & *fn*, 46 & fn, 48
Ruskin, John, 364
Russell, Bertrand, 337, 387
Russia, 54, 419
_____, revolution in, 2, 18, 419

Sabarmati, 158, 212, 215, 277, 280, 287, 324 fn, 352, 356, 360, 363 & fn, 396, 397, 530
Sahai, Raghubir, 527
_____, Sitla, 14, 305, 307, 309
Saharanpur (U.P.), 120
Salem (Tamilnadu), 578 fn,
Salt Act, 325, 330, 416 fn, 420, 481
_____, violation of, 272, 288, 290, 294, 302, 306, 398
Sambamurti, B., 176 fn
Samed, Abdul, 75, 76
Sampurnanand, S., 300
San Francisco (U.S.A.), 563 fn
Sanghamitra, 533
Santanam, Pandit K., 178, 179 fn
Sanyal, Bhupendra Nath, 209 fn
_____, Sachindra Nath, 209 & fn, 322, 328
Sapru, T.B., 369 & fn, 371-375, 378- 383, 458, 461, 470, 471
Saran (Bihar), 311
Sarda Act—see Child Marriage Restraint Act
Sarkar, Nilratan, 378 & *fn*, 434
Sastri, V.S., Srinivasa, 470, 471
Satyagraha Samachar, 308
Satyamurti, S., 206, 564
Satyananda, Swami, 567 fn
Satyapal, Dr., 96 & fn, 173
Saxena, Jia Ram, 21 fn
_____, Mohanlal, 324
Sayeed, Basheer Ahmed, 292 & *fn*
Schmithals, Hans, 324
Scholar, 567 & fn
See, Edmond, 388

Sen, B.N., 164 & fn
Sen Gupta, J.M., 207 *fn*, 263 fn, 281 & fn, 287
Servants of India Society, 30 fn
Servants of the People Society, 34 fn
Sesame and Lilies (Ruskin), 364
Seth, Damodar Swarup, 20 & fn, 118
Sethi, R.G., 36 & fn
Shah, Abdulla, 468
_____, Jaffar, 468
_____, K.T., 387, 563 & fn
Shakespeare, William, 355, 356, 364, 388, 462
Shamshere Bahadur, 524
Shahnamah (Firdausi), 462
Shanghai, 52 & fn
Shankarlal, Lala, 148 & fn
Sharma, Murari, 215
_____, Vichitra Narain, 303 & *fn*
Shastri, Hariharnath, 309 & *fn*
Shaw, George Bernard, 388, 462
Shaw Wallace and Company, 60, 64, 69, 71, 72, 78
Sherwani, T.A.K., 349, 357, 374
Shiromani Akali Dal, 80 fn
Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, 80 fn
Sholapur, 349 & fn, 391, 392, 406, 465, 504, 505, 558
Siberia, 419
Sigiriya (Sri Lanka), 533
Sikh League—see All India Sikh League
Simla, 68, 336 fn, 379, 382, 392, 393 fn
Simon Commission, 4 fn, 6 fn, 52, 86, 89
_____, boycott of, 4 fn
Sinclair, Upton, 388
Singapore, 421, 509
Singh, Bhagat-see Bhagat Sirgh
_____, Chhatar, 342
_____, Dan, 566 & fn
_____, Gurdial-see Singh, Puran
_____, Baba Gurdit, 77, 78
_____, Sardar Kharak, 80 & *fn*
_____, Sardar Narmada Prasad, 330 & fn, 336, 337 fn, 340, 341, 345, 347, 348, 351, 352, 365-368, 386, 387, 429, 430, 431, 434-436, 451, 452
_____, Puran, 343
_____, Raghubir, 120 fn
_____, Rajkumar, 209 & fn
_____, Shiva Murti, 328 & fn, 338
_____, Shyamvir, 322
_____, Sultan, 120 & fn
_____, Master Tara, 572 & fn
Sinha, Deoki Prasad, 346
Sinn Fein, 107
Sitapur (U.P.), 351, 367 fn
Slade, Admiral, 363 fn
Slings and Arrows (Lloyd George), 388
Snowden, Viscount Philip, 51 & *fn*, 101
Socialism and Capitalism (Bernard Shaw), 462
Socialist Party of India, 367 fn
Socialist Youth Congress, 4
Sohagpur, 378
Somasundaram, S., 524 & fn, 528, 529
South African Federation of Non-European Trade Unions, 89 fn
Soviet Russia (Jawaharlal Nehru), 33
Spengler, Oswald, 322 & fn, 345, 348, 349, 351, 352, 388
Splendour that was Ind (K.T. Shah), 337 & fn, 387
Spykman, Nicholas John, 520 & *fn*
Sri Lanka, 517 fn, 522 fn, 529, 532, 533 & fn, 559; also see Ceylon
Srinagar (Kashmir), 568 fn
Sri Prakasa, 11, 117 & fn, 119, 300, 307, 311, 312, 580, 584
St. Anne's Vicarage, 384
Steel Protection Act, 79 fn
Steijer-Beyer-Benitez, 387
Stokes, S.E., 574 & fn
Sukhdev, 500 fn, 505 fn
Sundarlal (Sunder Lal), 368 & *fn*, 373, 421
Sunderland, J.T., 206 fn
Sun Yat Sen, Madam, 85
Swaraj Party, 70 fn
Swinburne, A.C., 462

Tagore, Rabindranath, 564
Talmud, the, 555
Taming of the Shrew (Shakespeare), 462
Tandon, Lai Behari, 291 & *fn*

_____, Purushottamdas, 97, 338, 346, 357, 367, 426, 432, 492
Tangan (U.P.), 242
Tanner, Jocelyn, 384 & fn
Tata Iron and Steel Company, 67 fn, 72, 73
Tatapuram (Kerala), 555
Tata Workers Union, 61 fn
Tegart, Sir Charles, 477 & fn
Tempest (Shakespeare), 388
Temple of the Tooth (Sri Lanka), 533
Tendulkar, D.G., 317 & *fn*
Tewari—see Tiwari and Tivary
Thailand, 5 fn
Thomas, J.H., 101
Thompson, 338
Tilak Day, 391 fn
Tilak, Lokmanya, 228, 243
Tinnevelly (Tirunelveli) (Tamilnadu), 537, 553
Tivary, Venkatesh Narayan, 318 & *fn*, 321, 327, 333, 340, 342
Tiwari, Radha Krishna, 486, 487, 527, 528
To Live in Mankind (Reginald Reynolds), 351 fn
Trades Disputes Act, 42, 53, 81
Transvaal, 24 fn
Travel Diary (Keyserling), 462
Trevelyan, Charles Edward, 212 & *fn*
_____, G.M., 423 fn
Trichur (Kerala), 539, 556
_____, Youth League at, 539
_____, Yuvajana Samithi at, 539
Trincomalee (Sri Lanka), 533
Tripathi, Rup Narain, 322 & fn, 324, 350
_____, Tika Ram, 345 & fn
Trivandrum, 554, 555
Trivedi, P.N., 88 & fn
Trotsky, 462
Tuticorin (Tamilnadu), 529, 535, 543, 553
Two Gentlemen of Verona (Shakespeare), 388
Tyabji, Abbas, 344 & *fn*
Tyne (Teyen), 318

Uberoi—see Oberoi
Ugarte, Manuel, 388
Uma Shankar, 231 & fn
Unhappy India (Lajpat Rai), 206 fn
Union of South Africa, 24 fn, 190, 197
Unlawful Associations Ordinance, 392 fn
Unlawful Instigation Ordinance, 357 fn,
U.N. Human Rights Commission, 379 fn
United Forward Republican Bloc, 309 fn
United India League (Detroit), 100 fn
United States of America, 51, 92, 95, 96, 100 fn, 122, 125, 126, 216, 346 fn
Unto This Last (Ruskin), 364
Upadhyaya, S.D., 338 & *fn*, 523, 524
U.P. Jails Enquiry Committee, 209
U.P. Provincial Political Conference, 307 fn, 368 fn, 517 & fn
U.P. Trade Union Conference, 40, 41

Vaid, Devi Das, 569 & fn
Vakil, Jahangir, 575
Vanguard, 7 & fn
Varanasi, 7, 88 fn, 143, 145, 146, 159, 209 fn, 250, 299, 300, 310, 363, 399 fn
Varma, L. Shiv 13 & *fn*
Vasishta, Nand Kumar Dev, 307 & fn
Venkatramani, K.S., 578 & fn
Verlaine, Paul, 365 & *fn*
Victoria Terminus (Bombay), 558
Vidyarthi, Ganesh Shankar, 352, 503, 505, 530
Villeroy, Auguste, 388
Vyas, Sakarben K., 112 & fn

Waheed, 357, 360
Washington, 122 fn
_____, Congress Legation in, 122 fn
Weinbren, B., 89 & fn
Welsh Plate and Sheet Manufacturers Association, 74
White Sahibs of India (Reginald Reynolds), 351 fn
Whitley, J.H., 30 fn
Whitley Commission—see Royal Commission on Agriculture
White Light and Flame (MacManus), 462

Who will be Master—Europe or America? (Lucien Romier), 388
Wilder, Thornton, 462
Willingdon, Earl of, 458 & *fn*
Winterton, Lord, 278
Wizaya, 184 & fn
Woman of Andros (Thomton Wilder), 462
Woo, T.C., 337, 387
Workers Welfare League of India (London), 27 fn
World Crisis (Churchill), 384 & fn, 388
World Federation of Youth for Peace, 90 & fn
Yale (U.S.A.), 520
Yatzdani, S.Y., 37 & fn
Yeravda (Poona), 342, 369 fn, 374, 375, 384, 396, 422, 471, 476
Young India, 214, 215, 227, 273, 280, 297
Young Liberator, 169 fn
Youth Congress, 4 & fn

Zutshi, Lado Rani, 356