

blished a peaceful atmosphere, i.e., to have attained by our non-violence sufficient control over the people to keep their violence under check. We have failed when we ought to have succeeded, for yesterday was a day of our trial. We were under our pledge bound to protect the person of the Prince from any harm or insult and we broke that pledge inasmuch as any one of us insulted or injured a single European or any other who took part in the welcome to the Prince. They were as much entitled to take part in the welcome as we were to refrain.

Nor can I shirk my own personal responsibility. I am more instrumental than any other in bringing into being the spirit of revolt. I find myself not fully capable of controlling and disciplining that spirit. I must do penance for it. For me the struggle is essentially religious. I believe in fasting and prayer and I propose henceforth to observe every Monday a 24 hour's fast till Swaraj is obtained.

The Working Committee will have to devote its attention to the situation and consider in the light thereof, whether mass civil disobedience can be at all encouraged, until we have obtained complete control over the masses. I have personally come deliberately to the conclusion that mass civil disobedience cannot be started for the present. I contess my inability to conduct a campaign of Civil disobedience to a successful issue unless a completely non-violent spirit is generated among the people.

I am sorry for the conclusion. It is a humiliating confession of my incapacity, but I know that I shall appear more pleasing to my Maker by being what I am instead of appearing to be what I am not. If I can have



ment, I can have less to do with the unorganised violence of the people. I would prefer to be cursed between the two.

II .- MESSAGE TO THE CITIZENS OF BOMBAY.

Shocked at the riot and bloodshed that he witnessed in Bombay, Mr. Gandhi issued the following appeal to the men and women of Bombay on the morning of the 19th November.

Men and Women of Bombay,-It is not possible to describe the agony I have suffered during the past two days. I am writing this now at 3-30 A,M. in perfect peace. After 2 hours of prayer and meditation I have found it. I must refuse to eat or drink anything but water, till the Hindus and Mahomedans of Bombay have made peace with the Parsis, Christians and Jews and till Non-Co-operators have made peace with co-operators. Swaraj that I have witnessed during the last two days has stunk in my nostrils. Hindu-Muslim unity had been a menace to the handful of Parsis, Christians and Tews. The non-violence of the Non-Co-operators has been worse than violence of co-operators. For with non-violence on our lips we have terrorised those who have differed from us and in so doing we have denied our God. There is only one God for us all whether we find him through Koran, Bible, Zend Avesta, Talmud or Gita, and he is the God of Truth and Love.

I have no interest in living save for this faith in me. I cannot hate the Englishman or anyone else. I have spoken and written much against his institutions, especially the one he has set up in India. I shall



continue to do so if I live; but we must not mistake my condemnation of the system for the man. My religionrequired me to love him as I love myself. I would deny God if I did not attempt to prove it at this critical moment. And the Parsis-I have meant every word I have said about them. Hindus and Mussalmans would be unworthy of freedom if they do not defend them and their honour with their lives. They have only recently proved their liberality and friendship. Mussalmans are specially beholden to them, for Parsis have, compared to their numbers, given more than they themselves to the Khilafat funds. I cannot face again the appealing eyes of Parsi men and women that I saw on the 17th inst., as I passed through them, unless Hindus and Mussalmans have expressed full and free repentance, nor can I face Mr. Andrews when he returns from East Africa, if we have done no reparation to Indian-born Christians whom we are bound to protect as our own brothers and sisters. We may not think of what they in self-defence or by way of reprisals have done to some of us. You can see quite clearly that I must do the utmost reparation to this handful of men and women, who have been the victims of forces that have come into being largely through my instrumentality. I invite every Hindu and Mussalman to do likewise, but I do not want anyone to fast, which is only good when it comes in answer to prayer and as a felt yearning of the soul. I invite every Hindu and Mussalman to retire to his home and ask God for forgiveness and to befriend the injured communities from the bottom of their hearts. I invite my fellow workers not to waste a word of sympathy on me. I need or deserve none. But I invite them to make

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ceaseless effort to regain control over the turbulent elements. This is a terribly true struggle. There is no room for sham or humbug in it. Before we can make any further progress without struggle we must cleanse our hearts.

One special word to my Mussalman brothers. I have approached Khilafat as a sacred cause. I have striven for Hindu Muslim unity because India cannot live free without it, and because we would both deny God if we considered one another as natural enemies. I have thrown myself into the arms of the Ali brothers, because I believe them to be true and God-fearing men. The Mussalmans have to my knowledge played a leading part during the two days of carnage. It has deeply hurt me. I ask every Mussalman worker to rise to his full height to realise his duty to his faith and see that the carnage stops. May God bless everyone of us with wisdom and courage to do the right at any cost!

I am, Your Servant, M. K. Gandhi.

III. APPEAL TO THE HOOLIGANS OF BOMBAY.

[Mr. Gandhi issued another appeal, this time to the Hooligans of Bombay who brought about the terrible scenes of murder. The following is the full text of the appeal which was circulated broadcast in all vernaculars on Nov. 21.]

To Hooligans of Bombay.—The most terrible mistake I have made is that I thought non-co-operators had acquired influence over you, and that you had understood the relative value of political wisdom of non-violence though not the moral necessity of it. I had thought that you had sufficiently understood the interests of your country not to meddle with the movement to its detri-



ment and that, therefore, you would have wisdom enough not to give way to your worst passions, but it cuts me to the quick to find that you have used mass awakening for your own lust for plunder, rapine and even indulging in your worst animal appetite. Whether you call yourself a Hindu. Mahomedan, Parsi, Christian or Jew, you have certainly failed to consider even your own religious interests. Some of my friends would, I know, accuse me of ignorance of human nature. If I believed the charge, I would plead guilty and retire from human assemblies and return only after acquiring knowledge of human nature, but I know that I had no difficulty in controlling even Indian hooligans in South Africa. I was able because I had succeeded in approaching them through co-workers where I had no personal contact with them. In your case, I see we have failed to reach you. I do not believe you to be incapaple of responding to the noble call of religion and country. See what you have done. Hindu-Mussalman hooligaus have violated the sanctity of Parsi temples, and they have exposed their own to similar risk from the wrath of Parsi hooligans. Because some Parsis have chosen to partake in the welcome to the Prince, Hindu and Mussalman hooligans have roughly handled every Parsi they have met. The result has been that Parsi hooligans are less to blame. Hindu and Mussalman hooligans have rudely, roughly and insolently removed foreign clothes worn by some Parsis and Christians, forgetting that not all Hindus and all Mussalmans, nor by any means even a majority of them have religiously discarded the use of foreign ciothes. Parsi and Christian hooligans are. therefore, interfering with Hindu and Mussalman wearers of Khaddar.

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Thus, we are all moving in a vicious circle and the country suffers. I write this not to blame, but to warn you and to confess that we have grievously neglected you. I am doing penance in one way, other workers are doing in another way. Messrs, Azad Sobhani, Jaykar, Jamnadas, Mitha, Sathe, Moazam Ali and many others have been risking their lives in bringing under control this unfortunate ebullition. Srimati Sarojini Naidu has fearlessly gone in your midst to reason with you, and to appeal to you. Our work in your midst has only just begun. Will you not give us a chance by stopping the mad process of retaliation? Hindus and Mussalmans should be ashamed to take reprisals against the Parsis or Christians. The latter must know it to be suicidal to battle against the Hindu and Mussalman ferocity by brute strength. The result is they must seek assistance of an alien Government, i.e., sell their freedom. Surely the best course for them is to realise their nationality and believe that reasoning Hindus and Mussalmans must and will protect the interests of the minorities before their own. Anyway, the problem before Bombay is to ensure absolute protection of the minorities and acquisition of control over the rowdy element, and I shall trust that you, hooligans of Bombay, will now restrain your hand and give a chance to the workers who are desirous of serving you. May God help you. I am, your friend. M. K. Gandhi.

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IV .- APPEAL TO HIS CO-WORKERS.

THE PERSON NAMED IN COLUMN TWO

[Late on the 22nd evening, Mr. Gandhi issued the following manifesto to his co-workers:—]

Comrades,-The past few days had been a fiery ordeal for me, and God is to be thanked that some of ushad not been found wanting. The broken heads before me and the dead bodies of which I have heard from an unimpeachable authority, are sufficient evidence of the fact. Workers have lost their limbs, or their lives, or have suffered bruises in the act of preserving peace, of weaning mad countrymen from their wrath. These deaths and injuries show that, in spite of the error of many of our countrymen, some of us are prepared to die for the attainment of our goal. If all of us had imbibed the spirit of non-violence, or if some had, and others had remained passive, no blood need have been spilt, but it was not to be. Some must, therefore, voluntarily give their blood in order that a bloodless atmosphere may be created, so long as there are people weak enough to seek the aid of those who have superior skill or means for doing it. And that is why the Parsis and Christians sought and received assistance of the Government, so that the Government openly took sides and armed and aided the latter in retaliatory madness and criminally neglected to protect a single life among those who, though undoubtedly guilty in the first instance, were victims of unparadonable wrath of the Parsis. Christians and Jews. The Government have thus appeared in their nakedness as party doing violence not merely to preserve the peace but to sustain aggressive





violence of its injured supporters. The police and military looked on with callous indifference, whilst the Christians in their justifiable indignation deprived innocent men of their white cap, and hammered those who would not surrender them, or whilst the Parsis assaulted or shot not in self-defence, but because the victims happened to be Hindus or Mussalmans, or nonco-operators. I can excuse the aggrieved Parsis or Christians, but can find no excuse for the military and police for taking sides. So the task before the workers is to take the blow from the Government, and our erring countrymen. This is the only way open to us of steri lizing the forces of violence. The way to immediate swaraj lies through our gaining control over the forces of violence, and that not by greater violence, but by moral influence. We must see as clearly as daylight that it is impossible for us to be trained and armed for violence if active enugh for displacing the existing Government.

Some people imagine that after all we would not have better advertised our indignation against the welcome to the Prince of Wales than by letting loose the mob frenzy on the fateful 17th. The reasoning betrays at once ignorance and weakness—ignorance of the fact that our goal was not injury to the welcome, and weakness because we still hanker after advertising our strength to others instead of being satisfied with the conciousness of its possession.

I wish I could convince everyone that we have materially retarded our progress to our triple goal. But all is not lost if the workers realise and act up to their responsibility. We must secure the full cooperation of the rowdies of Bombay. We must know



the millhands. They must either work for Government or for us i.e., for violence or against it. There' is no middle way. They must not interfere with us. Either they must be amenable to our love or helplessly submit it to the bayonet. They must not seek shelter under the banner of non-violence for the purpose of doing violence. And in order to carry our message to them we must reach every millhand individually and let him understand and appreciate the struggle.

Similarly we must reach the rowdy elements, be friend them and help them to understand the religious. character of the struggle. We must neither neglect them nor pander to them. We must become true servants. The peace that we are aiming at is not a patched up peace. We must have fair guarantees of its continuance without the aid of Government, and sometimes, even in spite of its activity to the contrary. There must be a heart union between the Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians and Jews. The three latter communities may and will distrust the other two. The recent occurrences must strenghthen that distrust. We must go out of our way to conquer their distrust. We must not molest them if they do not become non-co-operators, or do not adopt swadeshi or white khaddar cap, which has become its symbol. We must not be irritated against them even if they side with the Government on every occasion. We have to make them ours by loving service.

This is the necessity of the situation. The alternative is a civil war and a civil war with a third party consolidating itself by siding now with one and then with the other, must be held an impossibility for the near future. And what is true of smaller communities is also true of co-operators. We must not be impatient



with or intolerant to them. We are bound to recognise their freedom to co-operate with the Government if we claim freedom to non-co-operate. What would we have felt if we are in a minority, and co-operators being a majority, had used violence against us. Non-co-operation and non-violence is the most expeditious method known in the world of winning our opponents. And our struggle consists in winning our opponents, including the Englishmen, over to our side. We can only do so by being free from ill-will against the weakest or strongest of them, and that we can only do by being prepared to die for truth within us and not by killing those who do not see the truth we enunciate. I am your grateful comrade.—M. K. Gandhi."

Y. PEACE AT LAST

[Mr. Gandhi broke his fast in the midst of a gathering of co-operators, non-co-operators, Hindus, Musalmans, Ohristians and Parsis. There were speeches of goodwill by a representative of each community. The members of the Working Committee were also present. Mr. Gandhi made a statement in Gujarati before breaking his fast. The following is its translation:—]
Friends,

It delights my heart to see Hindus, Musalmans, Parsis and Christians met together in this little assembly. I hope that our frugal fruit-repast of this morning will be a sign of our permanent friendship. Though a born optimist, I am not in the habit of building castles in the air. This meeting therefore cannot deceive me. We shall be able to realize the hope of permanent friendship between all communities.



only if we who have assembled together will incessantly strive to build it up. I am breaking my fast upon the strength of your assurances. I have not been unmindful of the affection with which innumerable friends have surrounded me during these four days. I shall ever remain grateful to them. Being drawn by them I am plunging into this stormy ocean out of the haven of peace in which I have been during these few days. I assure you that, in spite of the tales of misery that have been poured into my ears, I have enjoyed peace because of a hungry stomach. I know that I cannot enjoy it after breaking the fast. I am too human not to be touched by the sorrows of others, and when I find no remedy for alleviating them, my human nature so agitates me that I pine to embrace death like a long-lost dear friend. Therefore I warn all the friends here that if real peace is not established in Bombay and if disturbances break out again and if as a result they find me driven to a still severer ordeal, they must not be surprised or troubled. If they have any doubt about peace having been established, if each community has still bitterness of feeling and suspicion and if we are all not prepared to forget and forgive past wrongs, I would much rather that they did not press me to break the fast. Such a restraint I would regard as a test of true friendship.

I venture to saddle special responsibility upon Hindus and Musalmans. The majority of them are non-co-operators. Non-violence is the creed they have accepted for the time being. They have the strength of numbers. They can stand in spite of the opposition of the smaller communities without Government aid. If, therefore, they will remain friendly and charitable to-

Is the smaller communities, all will be well. I will

beseech the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews to bear in mind the new awakening in India. They will see many-coloured waters in the ocean of Hindu and Musalman humanity. They will see dirty waters on the shore. I would ask them to bear with their Hindu or Musalman neighbours who may misbehave with them and immediately report to the Hindu and Musalman leaders through their own leaders with a view to gerting justice. Indeed I am hoping that as a result of the unfortunate discord a Mahajan will come into being for the disposal of all inter-racial disputes.

The value of this assembly in my opinion consists in the fact that worshippers of the same one God we are enabled to partake of this harmless repast together in spite of our differences of opinion. We have not assembled with the object to-day of reducing such differences, certainly not of surrendering a single principle we may hold dear, but we have met in order to demonstrate that we can remain true to our principles and yet also remain free from ill-will towards one another

May God bless our effort.

VI.-THE MORAL ISSUE.

[Mr. Gandhi, writing in Young India of Dec. 24, pointed out the lesson of the tragedy and wrote on the moral issue before the country.]

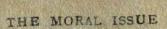
As soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion overriding morality. Man for instance cannot be untruthful, cruel or incontinent and claim to have God on his side. In Bombay the sympathisers of non-co-operation lost their



moral balance. They were enraged against the Parsis and the Christians who took part in the welcome to the Prince and sought to 'teach them a lesson'. They invited reprisals and got them. It became after the 17th a game of seesaw in which no one really gained and everybody lost.

Swaraj does not lie that way. India does not want Bolshevism. The people are too peaceful to stand anarchy. They will bow the knee to any one whorestores so-called order. Let us recognise the Indian phychology. We need not stop to inquire whether such hankering after peace is a virtue or a vice. The average Musalman of India is quite different from the average Musalman of the other parts of the world. His Indian associations have made him more docile than his co-religiouists outside India. He will not stand tangible insecurity of life and property for any length of time. The Hindu is, proverbially, almost contemptibly mild. The Parsi and the Christian love peace more than strife. Indeed we have almost made religion subservient to peace. This mentality is at once our weakness and our strength.

Let us nurse the better, the religious part of of this mentality of ours. 'Let there be no compulsion in religion.' Is it not religion with us to observe Swadeshi and therefore wear Khadi? But if the religion of others does not require them to adopt Swadeshi, we may not compel them. We broke the universal law restated in the Quran. And the law does not mean that there may be compulsion in other matters. The verse means that, if it is bad to use compulsion in religion about which we have definite convictions, it is worse to resort to it in matters of less moment.



We can only therefore argue and reason with our opponents. The extreme to which we may go is nonviolent non-co-operation with them even as with the Government. But we may not non-co-operate with them in private life, for we do not non-co-operate with the men composing the Government. We are non co-operating with the system they administer. We decline to render official service to Sir George Lloyd the Governor, we dare not withold social service from Sir George Lloyd, the Englishman.

The mischief, I am sorry to say, began among the Hindus and the Musalmans themselves. There was social persecution, there was coercion. I must confess that I did not always condemn it as strongly as I might have. I might have dissociated myself from the movement when it became at all general. We soon mended our ways, we became more tolerant but the subtlecoercion was there. I passed it by as I thought it would die a natural death. I saw in Bombay that it had not. It assumed a virulent form on the 17th.

We damaged the Khilafat cause and with it that of the Punjab and Swaraj. We must retrace our steps and scrupulously insure minorities against the least molestation. If the Christian wishes to wear the European hat and unmentionables, he must be free to do so. If a Parsi wishes to stick to his Fenta, he has every right to do so. If they both see their safety in associating themselves with the Government, we may only wean them from their error by appealing to their reason, not by breaking their heads. The greater the coercion we use, the greater the security we give to the Government, if only because the latter has more effective weapons of coercion than we have. For us to resort



to greater corcion than the Government will be to make India more slave than she is now.

Swaraj is freedom for every one, the smallest among us, to do as he likes without any physical internerence with his liberty. Non-violent non-co-operation is the method whereby we cultivate the freest public opinion and get it enforced. When there is complete freedom of opinion, that of the majority must prevail. If we are in a minority, we can prove worthy of our religion by remaining true to it in the fact of coercion. The Prophet submitted to the coercion of the majority and remained true to his faith. And when he found himself in a majority he declared to his followers that there should be no compulsion in religion. Let us not again either by verbal or physical violence depart from the injunction, and by our own folly further cut back the hands of the clock of progress.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE.

[Though the author of the Civil Disobedience movement in India, Mr. Gandhi was always alive to its dangers. He therefore insisted that his conditions should be fulfilled in toto before any Taluka could embar? On a sompaign of Civil Disobedience. He was always very cautious in permitting Civil Disobedience as will be seen from the following article in Young India. He restrained at a certain stage, the majority of the Congress Committee from a rushing and perilous programme.

Civil disobedience was on the lips of every one of the members of the All-India Congress Committee. Not having really over tried it, every one appeared to be enamoured of it from a mistaken belief in it as a soverign remedy for present day ills. I feel sure that it can be made such if we can produce the necessary atmosphere for it. For individuals there always is that atmosphere except when their civil disobedience is certain to lead to bloodshed. I discovered this exception during the Satyagraha days. But even so a call may come which one dare not neglect, cost it what it may. I can clearly see that time is coming to me when I must refuse obedience to every single State-made-law even though there may be a certainty of bloodshed. When neglect of the call means a denial of God, civil disobedience becomes a peremptory duty.

Mass civil disobedience stands on a different footing. It can only be tried in a calm atmosphere. It must be the calmness of strength not weakness, knowledge not ignorance. Individual civil disobedience may be and often is vicarious. Mass civil disobedience may be and often is selfish in the sense that individuals expect personal gain from their disobedience. Thus in South Africa, Kallenbach and Polak offered vicarious civil disobedience. They had nothing to gain. Thousands offered it because they expected personal gain also in the shape say of the removal of the annual poll-tax levied upon ex-indentured men and their wives and grown up children. It is sufficient in mass civil disobedience if the resisters understand the working of the doctrine.

It was in a practically uninhabited tract of country that I was arrested in South Africa when I was marching into prohibited area with over two to three-thousand men and some women. The company included several Pathans and others who were able bodied men-It was the greatest testimony of merit the Government





of South Africa gave to the movement. They know that we were as harmless as we were determined. It was easy enough for that body of men to cut to pieces those who arrested me. It would have not only been a most cowardly thing to do, but it would have been a treacherous breach of their own pledge, and it would have meant ruin to the struggle for freedom and the forcible deportation of every Indian from South Africa. But the men were no rabble. They were disciplined soldiers and all the better for being unarmed. Though I was to inform them, they did not disperse, nor did they turn back. They marched on to their destination till they were every one of them arrested and imprisoned. So far as I am aware, this was one instance of discipline and nonviolence for which there is no parallel in history. Without such restraint I see no hope of successful mass civil disobedience here,

We must dismiss the idea of overawing the Government by huge demonstrations every time some one is arrested. On the contrary we must treat arrest as the normal condition of the life of a non-co-operator. To, we must seek arrest and imprisonment as a soldier who goes to a battle to seek death. We expect to bear down the opposition of the Government by courting and not by avoiding imprisonment even though it be by showing our supposed readiness to be arrested and imprisoned. Civil disobedience then emphatically means our desire to surrender to a single unarmed policeman. Our triumph consists in thousands being led to the prisons like lambs to the slaughter house. If the lambs of the world had been willingly led they had long ago saved themselves from the butcher's knife.



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Our triumph consists again in being imprisoned for no wrong whatever. The greater our innocence, the greater our strength and the swifter our victory.

As it is, this Government is cowardly. We are afraid of imprisonment. The Government takes advantage of our fear of gaols. If only our men and women welcome gaols as health-resorts, we will cease to worry about the dear ones put in gaols which our countrymen in South Africa need to nickname, His Majesty's Hotels.

We have too long been mentally disobedient to the laws of the State and have too often surreptiously evaded them, to be fired all of a sudden for civil disobedience. Disobedience to be civil has to be open and non-violent.

Complete civil disobedience is a state of peaceful rebellion—a refusal to obey every single State-made law. It is certainly more dangerous than an armed rebellion. For it can never be down if the civil resisters are prepared to face extreme hardship. It is based upon an implicit belief in the absolute efficacy of innocent suffering. By noiselessly going to prison a civil resister ensures a calm atmosphere. The wrongdoer wearies of wrong-doing in the absence of resistance. All pleasure is lost when the victim betrays no resistance. A full grasp of the conditions of successful civil resistance is necessary at least on the part of the representatives of the people before we can launch out on an enterprise of such magnitude. The quickest remedies are always fraught with the greatest danger and require the utmost skill in handling them. It is my firm conviction that if we bring about a successful boycott of foreign cloth we shall have produced an atmosphere that would enable us to inaugurate civil disobedience on a scale that no Government can resist. I would therefore



urge patience and determined concentration on Swadeship upon those who are impatient to embark on mass civil disobedience.

THE MOPLAH OUTBREAK.

[Mr. Gandhi addressed the following appeal to the Liberals on Nov. 27:—]

Friends,-We are so preoccupied with our affairsthat the events in Malabar hardly attract the attention they deserve. The ending of the trouble has become a matter of great urgency. It is one of simple humanity. Be the Moplahs ever so bad, they deserve to be treated as human beings. Their wives and children demand our sympathy. Nor are they all bad and yet there can be no doubt that many innocent men must have been adjudged guilty. Forcible conversions are terrible but Moplah bravery must command admiration. These Malabaris are not fighting for the love of it. They are fighting for what they consider as religion and in a manner they consider themselves religious. A vast majority of them have nothing personal to gain by continuing their defiance. Their sin is not of deliberation but of ignorance. If we permit the extermination of such brave people, it will be remembered against us and will be accounted as Indian cowardice

I make bold to say that, had Mr. Yakub Hassan been allowed to go to Malabar, had I not been warned against entering Malabar, had Mussamans of real interest been invited to go, the long-drawn out-agony could have been obviated, but it is not yet too late. The sword has been tried for three months and it has failed to answer its purpose. It has not bent the proud



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Moplah nor has it saved Hindus from his depredation and lust, the sword has merely prevented the Moplas from overrunning the whole of Madras Presidency. It has exhibited no protective power. I am sure you will not plead incapacity. It is true that police and military are not transferred subjects, but you cannot escape moral responsibility. You are supporting the policy of Government regarding Malabar.

Nor, I hope, will you retort by blaming the Non-Co operators. They cannot admit any responsibility for the trouble at all, unless all agitation is to be held blameworthy. I admit, however, that non-co-operators were not able to reach their message to the Moplah homes. That would be reason for more, not less agitation, but I have not taken my pen to argue away the Non-Co-operator's blame.

I ask you to consider the broad humanities of the question, compel the Government to suspend hostilities, issue promise of freedom for past depredations upon the undertaking to surrender and to permit Non-Co-operators to enter Malabar to persuade Moplahs to surrender.

I know the last suggestion means giving of importance to Non-Co-operators. Surely you do not doubt their number. As to their influence, if you do, you should find other means of dealing with the trouble than that of extermination. I am merely concerned with the termination of the shameful inhumanity proceeding in Malabar with both Liberals and Non-Co-operators as helpless witnesses. I have chosen to address this letter not to the Government but to you, because the Government could not have taken the inhuman course of destruction without your moral support. I beseech you to give heed to my prayer as of a dear friend.

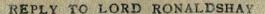


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REPLY TO LORD RONALDSHAY

[The hartal organised by non-co-operators in connection with the Prince's visit was more or less successful in many places. It was alleged that by intimidation and otherwise, the hartal in Calcutta on the day of the Prince's landing in Bombay was phenomenally complete. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the Anglo-Indian press took an alarmist view of the situation and expressed grave indignation against the passivity of the Government. With a view to suppress the activity of the Congress in this direction Government resuscitated part II of the Criminal Law Amendment Act which was then literally under a sentence of death. When volunteering was declared unlawful Congress leaders took up the challenge and called on the people to disobey the order and seek imprisonment in their thousands. Men like Messrs C. R. Das in Calcutta and Motilal Nehru in Allahabad openly defied the order and canvassed volunteers in total disregard of legal consequences. They sought imprisonment and called on their countrymen to follow them to prison. The situation was grave. It was then that Pandit Madan Mohan Malavya, Sir P. C. Ray and others thought that the time had come when they should step into the breach and try to bring about a reconciliation between Government and nonco-operators. With this view Pandit Madan Mohan and others interviewed leading non-co-operators and those in authority. Lord Ronaldshay, in his speech at the Legislative Council referred to the gravity of the situation and defined the firm attitude of Government. Replying to His Excellency, Mr. Gandhi made the following statement on the 21st December, 1921.]

I have read Lord Ronaldshay's speech in the Bengal Legislative Council. Whilst I appreciate the note of conciliation about it, I cannot help saying that it is most misleading. I do not want to criticise those parts of the speech which lend themselves to criticism. I simply want to say that the present situation is entirely his own and the Viceroy's doing. In spite of my





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strong desire to avoid suspecting the Government of India and the Local Government of a wish to precipitate a conflict with the people, up to now all that I have heard and read leads me to the conclusion that my suspicion is justified. Whilst I do not wish to denv the existence of some sort of pressure, even intimidation on the part of individuals, I do wish emphatically to deny that in connection with the phenomenal hartal on the 17th November in Calcutta, there was any intimidation, organised or initiated by or on behalf of the Local Congress or the Khilafat Committes. On the contrary, I am certain that the influence exerted by both these bodies was in the direction of avoiding all intimidation. Moral pressure there certainly was and will always be in all big movements, but it must be clear to the simplest understanding that a complete hartal such as Calcutta witnessed on the 17th November would be an impossibility by mere intimidation. But assume that there was intimidation. Was there any reason for disbanding Volunteer Corps, prohibiting public meetings and enforcing laws which are under promise of repeal? Why has no attempt been made to prove a single case of intimidation? It grieves me to have to say the Governor of Bengal has brought in the discovery of sword or sword-sticks in one place in Calcutta to discredit large public organisations. Who intimidated the people into observing a complete hartal in Allahabad after all the leaders were arrested and in spite of the reported undue official pressure that was exercised upon shop-keepers and gharivallas at that place? Again His Lordship says, "If we are to assume that this development means there is genuine desire to bring about improvement there must be a favourable atmosphere. In other



words, it will be generally agreed that there must be an essential preliminary to any possible conference. If responsible leaders of non-co-operation now come forward with definite assurance that this is the correct interpretation I should then say we were in sight of such a change of circumstances as would justify Government in reconsidering the position. But words must be backed by deeds. If I were satisfied only that there was general desire for the conference and that responsible non-co-operation leaders were prepared to take action, then I should be prepared to recommend my Government to take steps in consonance with the altered situation." This is highly misleading. If wherever words "non-co-operation leaders" occur, the word "Government" were put in and if the whole of the statement came from a non-co-operator it would represent the correct situation. Non co-operators have really to do nothing, for they have precipitated nothing. They are over-cautious. The disturbance in Bombay was allowed to override their keen desire to take up aggressive Civil Disobedince but in the present circumstances the phrase "Civil Disobedience" is really a musnomer. What non-co-operators are doing to-day, I claim, every co-operator would do to-morrow under similar circumtances. When the Government of India or the Local Governments attempt to make our political existence or agitation, no matter how peaceful, an utter impossibility, may we not resist such attempt by every lawful means at our disposal? I cannot immagine anything more lawful or more natural than that we should continue our volunteer orgaisations purging them of every tendency to become violent and continue alsoto hold public meetings taking the consequences of such



a step. Is it no proof of the law abiding instinct of hundreds of young men and old men that they have meekly, without offering any defence and without complaining, accepted imprisonment for having dared to exercise their elementary rights in the face of Govern ment persecution? And so it is the Government which is to prove its genuine desire for a conference and an ultimate settlement. It is the Government which has to arrest the fatal course along which repression is taking it. It is the Government that is to prove to non-co-operators its bona fides before it can expect them to take part in any conference. When the Government does that, it will find that there is an absolutely peaceful atmosphere. Non-co-operation, when the Government is not resisting anything except violence, is a most harmless thing. There is really nothing for us to suspend. We cannot be expected, until there is actual settlement or guarantee of settlement, to ask schoolboys to return to Government schools or lawyers to resume practice or public men to become candidates for the Coucils or title-holders to ask for return of titles. In the nature of things, it is therefore clear that non-co-opeators have to do nothing. Speaking personally I can certainly say that if there is is a genuine desire for a conference, I would be the last person to advise precipitating aggressive Civil Disobe-Sience, which certainly it is my intention to do immediately I am entirely satisfied that the people have understood the secret of non-violence; and let me say the last ten days' events have shown that the people seem clearly to understand its inestimable value. If then the Government recognises that non-co-operators mean business and intend to suffer limitlessly for the attainment of their goal, let the Government uncondi-



tionally retrace its steps, cancel the notifications about disbandment of volunteer organisations and prohibition of public meetings and release all those men in the different provinces who have been arrested and sentenced for so-called Civil Disobedience or for any other purpose given under the definition of non-co-operation but excluding acts of violence, actual or intended. Let the Government come down with a heavy hand on every act of violence or incitement to it, but we must claim the right for all time of expressing our opinionsfreely and educating public opinion by every legitimate and non-violent means. It is therefore the Government. who have really to undo the grave wrong they have perpetrated and they can have the conference they wish in a favourable atmosphere. Let me also say that so far as I am concerned, I want no conference to consider the ways and means of dealing with non-co-operation. The only conference that can at all avail at this stage is a conference called to deal with the causes of the present discontent, namely, the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and Swaraj. Any conference again which can usefully sit at the present stage must be a conference that is really representative and not a conference towhich only those whom the Government desire are invited.

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THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE.

[A Deputation headed by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya waited on His Excellency the Vicercy at Calcutta on December 21 and requested His Excellency to call a Round Table Conference of representatives of people of all shades of opinion with a view to bring about a final settlement. Lord Reading replied at some length and defined the attitude of the Government. He regretted that " it is impossible even to consider the convening of a conference if agitation in open and avowed defiance of law is meanwhile to be continued." Mr. Gandhi's refusal to call off the hartal in connection with H.R.H. the Prince of Wales' visit to Calcutta on December 24, apparently stiffened the attitude of the Government. Interviewed by the Associated Press, Mr. Gandhi made the following statement regarding the Viceroy's reply to the Deputation:-1

I must confess that I have read the Viceregal utterance with deep pain. I was totally unprepared for what I must respectfully call his mischievous misrepresentation of the attitude of the Congress and the Khilafat organisations in connection with the visit of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. Every resolution passed by either organisation and every speaker has laid the greatest stress upon the fact that there was no question of showing the slightest ill-will against the Prince or exposing him to any affront. The boycott was purely a question of principle and directed against what we have held to be unscrupulous methods of bureaucracy. I have always held, as I hold even now.





that the Prince has been brought to India in order to strengthen the hold of the Civil Service corporation which has brought India into a state of abject pauperism and political serfdom. If I am proved to be wrong in my supposition that the visit has that sinister meaning, I shall gladly apologise.

It is equally unfortunate for the Viceroy to say that the boycott of the welcome means an affront to the British people. His Excellency does not realise what grievous wrong he is doing to his own people by confusing them with the British administrators in India. Does he wish India to infer that the British administrators here represent the British people and that agitation directed against their methods is an agitation against the British people? And if such is the Viceregal contention and if to conduct a vigorous and effective agitation against the methods of bureaucracy and to describe them in their true colours is an affront to the British people, then I am afraid I must plead guilty. But then I must also say in all humility, the Viceroy has entirely misread and misunderstood the great national awakening that is taking place in India. I repeat for the thousandth time that it is not hostile to any nation or any body of men but it is deliberately aimed at the system under which Government of India is being to-day conducted, and I promise that no threats and no enforcement of threats by the Viceroy or any body of men will strangle that agitation or send to rest that awakening.

I have said in my reply to Lord Ronaldshay's speech that we have not taken the offensive. We are not the aggressors, we have not got to stop any single



activity. It is the Government that is to stop its aggravatingly offensive activity aimed not at violence but a lawful, disciplined, stern but absoluely nonviolent agitation. It is for the Government of India and for it alone to bring about a peaceful atmosphere, if it so desires. It has hurled a bomb shell in the midst of material rendered inflammable by its own action and wonders that the material is still not inflammable enough to explode. The immediate issue is not now the redress of the three wrongs; the immediate issue is the right of holding public meetings and the right of forming associations for peaceful purpose. And in vindicating this right we are fighting the battle not merely on behalf of non-co-operators but we are fighting the battle for all schools of politics. It is the condition of any organic growth, and I see in the Viceregal pronouncement an insistence upon submission to a contrary doctrine which an erstwhile exponent of the law of liberty has seen fit to lay down upon finding himself in an atmosphere where there is little regard for law and order on the part of those very men who are supposed to be custodians of law and order. I have only to joint to the unprovoked assaults being committed not in isolated cases, not in one place, but in Bengal the Punjab, in Delhi are in the United Provinces. I have no doubt that as repression goes on in its mad career, the reign of terrorism will ever take the whole of this unhappy land. But whether the campaign is conducted on civilised or uncivilised lines, so far as I can see, there is only one way open to non-co operators, indeed I contend, even to the people of India. On this question of the right of holding public meetings and forming associations there can be no yielding. We





have burnt our boats and we must sail onward till that primary right of human beings is vindicated.

Let me make my own position clear. I am most anxious for a settlement. I want a Round Table-Conference. I want our position to be clearly known-by everybody who wants to understand it. I impose no conditions but when conditions are imposed upon me-prior to the holding of a conference, I must be allowed to examine those conditions, and if I find that they are suicidal, I must be excused if I don't accept them. The amount of tension that is created can be regulated solely by the Government of India, for the offensive has been taken by that Government.

THE AHMEDABAD CONGRESS SPEECH.

The Ahmedabad Congress of December, 1921, was above all a Gandhi Session. The President-elect, Mr. C. R. Das, was in prison and so were many other leaders besides. Hakim Ajmal Khan was elected to take the chair and the proceedings were all in Hindi and Gujarati. Mr. Gandhi was invested with full dictatorial powers by the Congress and the central resolution of the session, which he moved, ran as follows:

"This Congress, whilst requiring the ordinary machinery to remain intact and to be utilised in the ordinary manner whenever feasible, hereby appoints, until further instructions, Mahatma Gandhi as the sole executive authority of the Congress and invests him with the full power to convene a special session of the Congress or of the All-India Congress Committee or the Working Committee and also with the power to appoint a successor in emergency.



"This Congress hereby confers upon the said successor and all subsequent successors appointed in turn by their predecessors, all his aforesaid powers, provided that nothing in this resolution shall be deemed to authorise Mahatma Gandhi or any of the aforesaid successors to conclude any terms of peace with the Government of India or the British Government without the previous sanction of the All-India Congress Committee, to be finally ratified by the Congress specially convened for the purpose, and provided also that the present creed of the Congress shall in no case be altered by Mahatma Gandhi or, his successor except

with the leave of the Congress first obtained." The following is the full text of Mr. Gandhi's speech:—]

I shall hope, if I can at all avoid it, not to take even the 30 minutes that Hakim Sahib has allotted tome. And I do not propose, if I can help it to take all that time, because I feel that the resolution explains itself. If at the end of 15 months' incessant activity, you, the delegates assembled in this Congress do not know your own minds, I am positive that I cannot possibly carry conviction to you even in a two hours speech and, what is more, if I could carry conviction to you to-day because of my speech, I am afraid I would lose all faith in my countrymen, because it would demonstrate their incapacity to observe things and events, it would demonstrate their incapacity to think coherently, because I submit there is absolutely nothing new in this resolution that we have not been doing all this time, that we have not been thinking all this time. There is absolutety nothing new in this resolution which is at all startling. Those of you who have followed the proceedings from month to month of the Working





Committee of the All-India Congress Committee for two months or for three months and have studied the resolutions can but come to one conclusion that this resolution is absolutely the natural result of the national activities during the past 15 months. And if you have at all followed the course, the downward course, that the repression policy of the Government has been taking, you can only come to the conclusion that the Subjects Committee has come to through this resolution, that the only answer that a self-respecting nation can return to the Viceregal pronouncements and to the repression that is overtaking this land is the course mapped out in this resolution.

I am not going to take the time of our English knowing friends over the religious subtleties of the pledge that the volunteers have to take. I wish to confine my remark on that subject to Hindustani. But I want this assembly to understand the bearing of this resolution. This resolution means that we have grown the stage of helplessness and dependence upon anybody. This resolution means that the nation through its representatives is determined to have its own way without the assistance of any single human being on earth, except from God above (applause). This resolution, whilst it shows the indomitable sourage and the determination of the nation to vindicate its rights and to be able to stare the world in the face, also says in all humility to the Government, "No matter what you do, no matter how you repress us, we shall one day wring the reluctant repentence from you and we warn you to think betime, take care what you are doing and see that you do not make 300 millions of India your eternal enemy."



This resolution, if the Government sincerely wants an open door, leaves the door wide open for the Government. If Moderate friends wish to rally round the standard of the Khilafat, round the standard of the liberties of the Punjab and therefore of India, if this Government is sincerely anxious to do justice and nothing but justice, if Lord Reading has really come to India to do justice and nothing less-and we want nothing more-if he is really anixous to do all those things, then I inform him from this platform, with God as my witness, with all the earnestness that I can command that he has got an open door in this resolution. if he means well, but the door is closed in his face if he means ill. There is every chance for him to hold a Round Table Conference, but it must be a real Conference. If he wants a Conference at a table where only equals are to sit and where there is not to be a single beggar, then there is an open door and that door will always remain open no, matter how many people go to their graves, no matter what wild career this repression is to go through. So far as I am concerned, and if I can take the nation with me, I inform him, again that the door will always remain wide open.

There is nothing in this resolution which any one who has modesty and humility need be ashamed of. This resolution is not an arrogant challenge to any body, but this is a challenge to an authority that is enthroned on arrogance. It is a challenge to the authority which disregards the considered opinion of millions of thinking human beings. It is an humble challenge and an irrevocable challenge to authority which, in order to save itself, wants to crush freedom of opinion, freedom of forming associations, the two lungs



that are absolutely necessary for a man to breathe the oxygen of liberty. And if there is any authority in this country that wants to crub the freedom of speech and freedom of association. I want to be able to say, in your name, from this platform, that that authority will perish and that authority will have to repent before an India that is steeled with high courage, noble purpose and determination till every man and woman who chose to call themselves Indians are blotted out of the earth. It combines courage and humility. God only knows, if I could possibly have advised you to go to the Round Table Conference, if I could possibly have advised you not to undertake this resolution of civil disobedience, I would have done so. I am a man of peace. I believe in peace. But I do not want peace at any price. I do not want the peace that you find in stone. I do not want the peace that you find in grain. But I do want that peace which you find embedded in the human breast, which is exposed to the arrows of a whole world but which is protected from all harm by the Almighty Power of the Almighty God.

I do not want to take any more time of the delegates, I do not want to say a word more. I do not want to insult your intelligence by saying a word more in connexion with this resolution in English.



THE INDEPENDENCE RESOLUTION.

[Mr. Hasrat Mohani, President of the Moslem League, opposed Mr. Gandhi's resolution in the Congress and brought in various amendments which sought to lay down the object of the Congress as the attainment of complete independence, free from all foreign control. Mr. Gandhi opposed all the amendments and spoke as follows in defence of his own resolution:—]

Friends, I have said only a few words (in Hindi) in connecxion with the proposition of Mr. Hasrat Mohani. All I want to say to you in English is that proposition and the manner, the levity, with which that proposition has been taken up by so many of you, or some of you, I hope, has grieved me. It has grieved me, because it shows a lack of responsibility. As responsible men and women we should go back to the ways of Nagpur and Calcutta and we should remember what we did only an hour ago. An hour ago we passed a resolution which actually contemplates a final settlement of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and transference of the power from the hands of the bureaucracy into the hands of the people by certain definite means. Are you going to rub the whole of that condition from the mind by raising a false issue and by throwing a bombshell in the midst of the Indian atmosphere. I hope that those of you who have voted for the previous resolution will think fifty times before taking up this resolution and voting for it with levity. We shall be charged by the thinking portion of the world that we did not know really where we are. Let





us not be charged with that and let us understand ourlimitations. Let Hindus and Mussalmans have absolute indissoluble unity. Who is here who can say to-day with confidence, "Yes, Hindu-Muslim unity has becomeand has become an indissoluble factor of Indian nationalism." Who is here who can tell me that the Parsees and the Sikhs and the Christians and the Jewsand the untouchables, about whom you heard this afternoon, who is here, I ask, who will tell me that those very people will not rise against any such idea?

Think, therefore, fifty times before you take a step which will redound not to your credit, not toyour advantage, but which may cause irreparable injury. Let us first of all gather up our strength. let us first of all sound our own depths, but let us not go into waters whose depths we do not know and this proposition of Mr. Hasrat Mohani lands you to a depth unfathomable. I ask you in all confidence that you will reject that proposition if your believe in the proposition that you passed only an hour ago. The proposition now before you robs away the whole of the effect of the proposition that you passed a moment ago. Are creeds such simple things like clothes which a man can change at will and put on at will? Creeds are such for which people live for ages and ages. Are you going to change your creed which, with all deliberations and after great debates in Nagpur you accepted. There was no limitation of one year when you accepted that creed. It is an extensive creed. It takes in all the weakest and the strongest and you will deny yourselves the privilege of clothing the weakest among yourselves with protection if you accept this limited creed of Maulana Hasrat Mohani, which does not admit the weakest of your brethren. I therefore ask you in all confidence to reject this proposition.

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THE BOMBAY CONFERENCE.

[A conference of representatives of various shades of political opinion convened by Pandit Malaviya, Mr. Jinnah, and others assembled at Bombay on the 14th January, 1922, with Sir O. Sankaran Nair, in the Chair. On the second day Sir Sankaran withdrew and Sir M. Visveswarya took up his place. Over two-hundred leading men from different provinces attended. Mr. Gandhi was present throughout and though he refused to be officially connected with the resolutions he took part in the debates and helped the conference in framing the resolutions which were also ratified by the Congress Working Committee. The following account of the Conference by Mr. Gandhi himself is taken from 'Young India' of January, 1919.]

The Conferences was both a success and a failure. It was a success in that it showed an earnest desire on the part of those who attended to secure a peaceful solution of the present trouble, and in that it brought under one roof people possessing divergent views. It was a failure in that, though certain resolutions have been adopted, the Conference did not leave on my mind the impression that those who assembled together as a whole realised the gravity of the real issue. The mind of the Conference seemed to be centred more on a Round Table Conference than upon asserting the popular right of free speech, free association and free press which are more than a round table conference. I had expected on the part of the independents to declare their firm attitude that no matter how much they might differ



regarding the method of Non-Co-operation, the freedom of the people was a common heritage and that the assertion of that right was three-fourths of Swaraj; that therefore they would defend that right even with civil disobedience, if need be.

However, as the attention of the Conference could not be rivetted on that point but on a Round Table Conference, the discussion turned upon the essentials of such a conference.

My own position was clear. I would attend any conference as an individual, without any conditions. My purpose as a reformer is to convert people to the view I hold to be right and therefore to see everybody who would care to listen to me. But when I was asked to mention the conditions necessary for an atmosphere favourable for a successful conference, I had to press some certain conditions. And I must own that the Resolutions Committee approached my viewpoint with the greatest sympathy and showed every anxiety to accommodate me. But side by side with this, I observed an admirable disposition on its part to consider the Government's difficulties. Indeed the Government's case could not have been better presented, if it had been directly and officially represented in the Conference.

The result was a compromise. The withdrawal of notification and the discharge of prisoners coming under the notifications and of the fatwa prisoners, i.e., the Ali Brothers and others who have been convicted in respect of the fatwas regarding military service, was common cause. The Committee saw the force of the suggestions that the distress warrants should be discharged, the fines imposed upon the Press, etc., should be refunded and that the prisoners convicted for non-





violent or otherwise innocent activities under cover of the ordinary laws should be discharged upon the proof of their non-violence. For this purpose I had suggested the committee appointed by the conference. But on the Resolutions Committee showing that it would be difficult for the Government to accept such an uncontrolled recommendation, I agreed to the principle of arbitration now imported in the resolution. The second compromise is regarding picketing. My suggestion was that in the event of the round table conference being decided upon, Non-Co-operation activities of a hostile nature should be suspended and that all picketing except bona fide peaceful picketing should also be suspended, pending result of the conference. As the implications of hostile activities appeared to me to be too dangerous to be acceptable, I hastily withdrew my own wording and gladly threw over even bona fide peaceful picketing, much though I regretted it. I felt that the friends interested in liquor picketing for the sake of temperance would not mind the temporary sacrifice.

I agreed too to advise the Working Committee to postpone general mass civil disobedience contemplated by the Congress to the 31st instant in order to enable the Committee and the Conference to enter into negotiations with the Government. This, I felt, was essential to show our bona fides. We could not take up new offensives whilst negotiations for a conference were being conducted by responsible men. I further undertook to advise the Committee, in the event of the proposed conference coming off, to stop all harals pending the conference. This I hold to be inevitable. Harals are a demonstration against bureaucracy. We cannot



continue them, if we are conferring with them for peace. Workers will bear in mind that as yet no activity of the Congress stops save general civil disobedience. On the contrary, enlistment of volunteers and Swadeshi propaganda must continue without abatement. Liquor shop picketing may continue where it is absolutely peaceful. It should certainly continue where notices unnecessarily prohibiting picketing have been issued. So may picketing continue regarding schools or foreign cloth shops. But whilst all our activities should be zealously continued, there should be the greatest restraint exercised and every trace of violence or discourtesy avoided. When restraint and courtesy are added to strength, the latter becomes irresistible. Civil disobedience being an indefeasible right, the preparations for it will continue even if the conference comes off. And the preparations for civil disobedience consist in :----

- 1. the enlistment of volunteers,
- 2. the propaganda of Swadeshi,
- 3. the removal of untouchability,
- 4. the training in non-violence in word, deed and thought,
 - 5. unity between diverse creeds and classes.

I hear that many are enrolled as volunteers in various parts of India, although they do not wear Khadi, do not believe in complete non-violence, or, if they are Hindus, do not believe in untouchability as a crime against humanity. I cannot too often warn the people that every deviation from our own rules retards our progress. It is the quality of our work which will place God and not quantity. Not all the lip Mussulmans and the lip Hindus will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Islam



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is no stronger than the best Mussulman. Thousands of nominal followers of Hinduism believe their faith and discredit it. One true and perfect follower of Hinduism is enough to protect it for all time and against the whole world. Similarly, one true and perfect Non-Co-operator is any day better than a million Non-Co-operators so called. The best preparation for civil disobedience is to cultivate civility, that is truth and non-violence, amongst ourselves and our surroundings.

In order that all may approach the round table conference with perfect knowledge of the Congress demands, I laid all our cards on the table and reiterated the claims regarding the Khilafat, the Punjab and Swaraj. Let me repeat them here:

- (1) So far as I can write from memory, full restoration to the Turks of Constantinople, Adrianople, Anatolia including Symrna and Thrace. Complete withdrawal of non-Muslim influence from Arabia, Mesopotamia, Palestine and Syria and therefore withdrawal of British troops whether English or Indian from these territories.
- (2) Full enforcement of the report of the Congress Sub-committee and therefore the stopping of the pensions of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, General Dyer and other officers named in the report for dismissal.
- (3) Swaraj means, in the event of the foregoing demands being granted, full dominion status. The scheme of such Swaraj should be framed by representatives duly elected in terms of the Congress constitution. That means four anna franchise. Every Indian adult, male or female, paying four annas and signing the Congress creed, will be entitled to be placed on the electoral roll. These electors would elect delegates who





would frame the Swaraj constitution. This shall be given effect to without any change by the British Parliament.

If the Congress programme is so cut and dried, where is the necessity for a conference?—asks the critic. I hold that there is and there always will be.

The method of execution of the demands has to be considered. The Government may have a reasonable and a convincing answer on the claims. The Congressmen have fixed their minimum, but the fixing of the minimum means no more than confidence in the justice of one's cause. It further means that there is no room for bargaining. There can, therefore, be no appeal to one's weakness or incapacity. The appeal can only be addressed to reason. If the Viceroy summons the conference it means either that he recognises the justice of the claims or hopes to satisfy the Congressmen, among others, of the injustice thereof. He must be confident of the justice of his proposals for a rejection or reduction of the claim. That is my meaning of a meeting of equals who eliminate the idea of force, and instantly shift their ground as they appreciate the injustice of their position. I assure His Excellency the Viceroy and everybody concerned that the Congressmen or Non-Cooperators are as reasonable beings as may be found on earth or in India. They have every incentive to be so for theirs is the duty of suffering as a result of rejection of any just offer.

I have heard iturged that on the Khilafat the Imperial Government is powerless. I should like to be convinced of this. In that case and if the Imperial Government make common cause with the Mussulmans of India, I should be quite satisfied and take the chance





with the Imperial Government's genuine assistance of convincing the other powers of the justice of the Khilafat claim. And even when the claim is admitted much requires to be discussed regarding the execution.

Similarly regarding the Punjab. The principle being granted, the details have to be settled. Legal difficulties have been urged about stopping the pensions to the dismissed officials. The reader may not know that Maulana Shaukat Ali's pension (I suppose he occupied the same status as Sir Michael O'Dwyer) was stopped without any inquiry or previous notice to him. I believe that service regulations do provide for removing officers and officials from the pensions list on proof of gross neglect of duty or disloyal service. Anyway, let the Government prove a case for refusal to grant the Punjab demand save the plea of the past services of these officials. I must refuse to weigh their service to the Empire against their disservice to India, assuming the possibility of two such things co-existing.

Swaraj scheme is undoubtedly a matter on which there will be as many minds as there are men and women. And it is eminently a thing to be debated in a conference. But here again there must be a clean mind and no mental reservations. India's freedom must be the supreme interest in every body's mind. There should be no obstruction such as the preoccupation of the British elector or the indifference of the House of Commons or the hostility of the House of Lords. No lover of India can possibly take into account these extraneous matters. The only question to consider will be is India ready for what she wants? Or does she ask like a child for food she has no stomach





for? That can be determined not by outsiders but by Indians themselves.

From that standpoint, I do consider the idea of the conference for devising a scheme of full Swaraj premature. India has not yet incontestably proved her strength. Her suffering is great indeed, but nothing and not prolonged enough for the object in view. She has to go through greater discipline. I was punctiliously careful not to make Non-Co-operators party to the conference resolutions, because we are still so weak. When India has evolved disciplined strength. I would knock myself at the Viceregal door for a conference, and I know that the Viceroy will gladly embrace the opportunity whether he be an eminent lawyer or a distinguished militarist. I do not approach directly because I am conscious of our weakness. But being humble I make it clear through Moderate or other friends that I would miss not a single opportunity of having honest conferences or consultations. And so I have not hesitated to advise Non-Co-operators thankfully to meet the Independents and place our services at their disposal to make such use of them as they may deem fit. And if the Viceroy or a party desires a conference, it would be foolish for Non-Co-operators not to respond. The case of Non-Co-operators depends for success on cultivation of public opinion and public support. They have no other force to back them. If they forfeit public opinion they have lost the voice of God for the time being.

For the manner of preparing the scheme too I have simply suggested what appears to me to be a most feasible method. The All-India Congress Committee has not considered it nor has the Working



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Committee. The adoption of the Congress franchise is

my own suggestion. But what I have laid down as the guiding principle is really unassailable. The scheme of Swaraj is that scheme which popular representatives frame. What happens then to the experts in administration and others who may not be popularly elected? In my opinion, they also should attend and bave the vote even, but they must necessarily be in a minority. They must expect to influence the majority by a constant appeal to the logic of facts. Given mutual trust and mutual respect, a round table conference cannot but

result in a satisfactory and honourable peace.

The abrupt withdrawal of Sir Sankaran Nair was an unfortunate incident. In my opinion, he had nothing to do with my, or later, with Mr. Jinah's opinions. As Speaker, especially, he was exempt from any implied or express identification with anybody's views. I cannot help feeling that Sir Sankaran erred in the conception of his duty as speaker. But as we progress towards democracy, we must be prepared even for such erroneous exercise of independence. I congratulate Sir Sankaran Nair upon his boldly exercising his independence, which I have not hesitated to call cussedness in private conversation and upon the independence of the Committee in not suffering a nervous collapse but quietly electing Sir Visveswarya and voting thanks to the retiring Speaker for the services rendered.

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LETTER TO H. E. THE VICEROY.

THE INAUGURATION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN BARDOLI.

[While negotiations were going on between the representatives of the Malaviya Conference and H. E. the Viceroy, Mr. Gandhi addressed the following open letter to Lord Reading. The letter was in effect an ultimatum and the efforts of the Conference ended in failure.]

To His Excellency the Viceroy, Delhi. Sir,

Bardoli is a small Tehsil in the Surat District in the Bombay Presidency, having a population of about 87,000 all told.

On the 29th ultimo, it decided under the Presidency of Mr. Vithalbhai Patel to embark on Mass Civil Disobedience, having proved its fitness for it in terms of the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee which met at Delhi during the first week of November last. But as I am, perhaps, chiefly responsible for Bardoli's decision, I owe it to your Excellency and the public to explain the situation under which the decision has been taken.

It was intended under the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee before referred too to make Bardoli the first unit for Mass Civil Disobedience in order to mark the national revolt against the Government for its consistently criminal refusal to appreciate India's resolve regarding the Khilafat, the Punjab and Swaraj.





Then followed the unfortunate and regrettable riots on the 17th November last in Bombay resulting in the postponement of the step contemplated by Bardoli.

Meantime repression of a virulent type has taken place with the concurrence of the Government of India, in Bengal, Assam, the United Provinces, the Punjab, the Province of Delhi and in a way in Bihar and Orissa and elsewhere. I know that you have objected to the use of the word "repression" for describing the action of the authorities in these Provinces. In my opinion, when an action is taken which is in excess of the requirements of the situation, it is undoubtedly repression. The looting of property, assaults on innocent people, brutal treatment of the prisoners in jails, including flogging, can in no sense be described as legal, civilized or in any way necessary. This official law-lessness cannot be described by any other term but lawless repression.

Intimidation by Non-Co-operators or their sympathisers to a certain extent in connection with hartals and picketing may be admitted, but in no case can it be held to justify the wholesale suppression of peaceful volunteering or equally peaceful public meetings under a distorted use of an extraordinary law which was passed in order to deal with activities which were manifestly violent both in intention and action, nor is it possible to designate as otherwise than repression action taken against innocent people under what has appeared to many of us as an illegal use of the ordinary law nor again can the administrative interference with the liberty of the Press under a law that is under promise of repeal be regarded as anything but repression.

The immediate task before the country, therefore,





is to rescue from paralysis freedom of speech, freedom of association and freedom of Press.

In the present mood of the Government of India and in the present unprepared state of the country in respect of complete control of the forces of violence, Non-Co-operators were unwilling to have anything to do with the Malaviya Conference whose object was to induce. Your Excellency to convene a Round Table Conference. But as I was anxious to avoid all avoidable suffering, I had no hesitation in advising the Working Committee of the Congress to accept the recommendations of that Conference.

Although, in my opinion, the terms were quite in keeping with your own requirements, as I understood them through your Calcutta speech and otherwise, you have summarily rejected the proposal.

In the circumstances, there is nothing before the country but to adopt some non-violent method for the enforcement of its demands, including the elementary rights of free speech, free association and free Press. In my humble opinion, the recent events are a clear departure from the civilized policy laid down by Your Excellency at the time of the generous, manly and unconditional apology of the Ali Brothers, viz., that the Government of India should not interfere with the activities of Non-Co-operation so long as they remained non-violent in word and deed. Had the Government policy remained neutral and allowed public opinion to ripen and have its full effect, it would have been possible to advise postponement of the adoption of Civil Disobedience of an aggressive type till the Congress had acquired fuller control over the forces of violence

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the country and enforced greater discipline among the millions of its adherents. But the lawless repression (in a way unparalleled in the history of this unfortunate country) has made immediate adoption of mass Civil Disobedience, an imperative duty. The Working Committee of the Congress has restricted it only to certain areas to be selected by me from time to time and at present it is confined only to Bardoli. I may under said authority give my consent at once in respect of a group of 100 villages in Guntur in the Madras Presidency, provided they can strictly conform to the conditions of non-violence, unity among different classes, the adoption and manufacture of handspun Khaddar and untouchability.

But before the people of Bardoli actually commence mass Civil Disobedience, I would respectfully urge you as the head of the Government of India finally to revise your policy and set free all the Non-Co-operating prisoners who are convicted or under trial for nonviolent activities and declare in clear terms the policy of absolute non-interference with all non-violent activities in the country whether they be regarding the redress of the Khilafat or the Punjab wrongs or Swaraj or any other purpose and even though they fall within the repressive sections of the Penal Code or the Criminal Procedure Code or other repressive laws, subject always to the condition of non-violence. I would further urge you to free the Press from all administrative control and restore all the fines and forfeitures recently imposed. In thus urging I am asking Your Excellency to do what is to-day being done in every country which is deemed to be under civilized Government. If you can see your way to make the necessary declaration within seven





days of the date of publication of this manifesto, I shall be prepared to advise postponement of Civil Disobedience of an aggressive character till the imprisoned workers, have after their discharge reviewed the whole situation and considered the position de novo. If the Government make the requested declaration, I shall regard it as an honest desire on its part to give effect to public opinion and shall, therefore, have no hesitation in advising the country to be engaged in further moulding the public opinion without violent retraint from either side and trust to its working to secure the fulfilment of its unalterable demands, Aggressive Civil Disobedience in that case will be taken up only when the Government departs from its policy of strictest neutrality or refuses to yield to the clearly expressed opinion of the vast majority of the people of India.

REPLY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

[The Government of India in a Communique published on the 6th February in reply to Mr. Gandhi's letter, repudiated his assertions and urged that the issue before the country was no longer between this or that programme of political advance, but between lawlessness with all its consequences on the one hand and the maintenance of those principles which lie at the root of all civilised Governments. Mr. Gandhi in a further rejoinder issued on the very next day pointed out that the choice before the people was mass civil disobedience with all its undoubted dangers and lawless repression of the lawful activities of the people. The following is the full text of Mr. Gandhi's rejoinder.]

I have very carefully read the Government's reply to my letter. I confess that I was totally unprepared for such an evasion of the realities of the case as the reply betrays.

I will take the very first repudiation. The reply says they (the Govt.) emphatically repudiate the statement that they have embarked on a policy of lawless repression and also the suggestion that the present campaign of civil disobedience has been forced on the Non-Co-operation party in order to secure the elementary rights of free association, free speech and free press. Even a cursory glance at my letter would show that whilst civil disobedience was authorised by the All-India Congress Committe meeting held on the 4th November at Delhi, it had not commenced. I have made it clear in my letter that the contemplated mass disobedience was indefinitely postponed on account of the regrettable events of the 17th November in Bombay. That decision was duly published and it is within the knowledge of the Government as also the public that herculean efforts were being made to combat the still lingering violent tendency amongst the people. It is also within the knowledge of the Government and the public that a special form of pledge was devised with the deliberate to be signed by volunteers purpose of keeping out all but men of proved character. The primary object of these volunteers' associations was to inculcate amongst the masses the lessons of non-violence and to keep the peace at all Non-Cooperation functions. Unfortunately the Government of Ind a lost its head completely over the Bombay events and, perhaps, still more over the very complete hartal on the same date at Calcutta. I do not wish to deny that there might have been some intimidation practiced in Calcutta, but it was not, I venture to submit, the fact of intimidation, but the irritation caused by the completeness of the hartal that maddened the Government