

BOMBAY AND CONGRESS MOVEMENT

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Bombay

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T.K.TOPE
SHERIFF OF BOMBAY



MAHARASHTRA STATE BOARD FOR LITERATURE AND CULTURE
BOMBAY

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Dedicated respectfully to the holy memory
of my ancestor
Senapati Tatya Tope'
of
1857 'War of Independence'

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FOREWORD

The Maharashtra State Board for Literature and Culture had decided to publish books on peoples' History of Maharashtra, History of freedom struggle and History of India. Fortunately, our resolution coincided with the Centenary Celebration of the Indian National Congress. This made our task relatively easy. To accomplish it however, it was necessary to collect and publish the source material of all such histories. It is needless to say that the two books written by Dr. T. K. Tope come under this projected scheme of ours. I have always thought that the two books : Bombay and Congress Presidents (already published) and Bombay and Congress movement (which is being published now), should be written by Dr. Tope only. He belongs to hoary tradition of Bombay. He was a student of the city, a Professor in the University of Bombay, a Vice-Chancellor of the University and is now Sheriff of Bombay. In all these capacities he has carefully observed and collected in his memory the activities which made the history of Bombay. In fact he is one of the makers of the history of Bombay. I am glad that he accepted our invitation and agreed to write the present book. Bombay has played a major role in the Congress movement. As Dr. Tope points out “ The role of the City of Bombay in Congress movement is unique. It was here in 1885 that the Indian National Congress was born. It was from this city that Gandhiji gave the call for Non-cooperation. It was again here in Bombay, that the Civil disobedience movement was systematically carried on a very large and systematic scale. It was again Bombay that hosted the A.I.C.C. Session in 1942, when Gandhiji gave the call ‘ Quit India’. The Naval Ratings in Bombay in 1946 unfurled the flag of hostilities towards the Britishers. The present President of the Congress and the Prime Minister of India Shri Rajiv Gandhi was born in Bombay”.

The History of Modern India begins with the battle of Plassi. It was a turning point in India History. It is on this day, that the seeds of the British Empire were sown in India. In fact, it was at this time that Mughal power had already collapsed and in 1761, in the 3rd battle of Panipat, Maratha power also received a great blow. By 1818 the Peshwas had surrendered and by 1854-55 the last Maratha Kingdom of Bhosala's of Nagpur was annexed. The other States like those of Holkars, Sindias and Nizam were subjugated though they were allowed to remain as principalities in the British Empire. There was bound to be a reaction to this and in 1857 the forces of Nationalism and Feudalism expressed themselves in a revolt almost throughout India. As a result of this revolt the rule of East India Company came to an end and India became a part of the Empire of the Queen of England: she became the Empress of India.

Establishment of Indian National Congress was itself a landmark in the history of our freedom struggle. Before that, there were, indeed, political revolts almost every year and in every part of the country. But these struggles were mostly of the select few. The common man of the country had not risen in revolt and no one could have in fact fought the British with traditional weapons. Although establishment of the British rule in India was in itself a miracle, a small size trading company coming from 10 thousand miles away and bringing under its wings, the whole of the country, the military mite of the British was far superior to

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ours and if the British rule had to be resisted, it had to be resisted with a different kind of organisation and weapons. The liberals among the British had also realised that it would not be possible to rule the dissatisfied and disgruntled people and that the establishment of order depended on the peoples' co-operation. So, seeking co-operation of the leaders of the society was in the air and it resulted in the establishment of the Indian National Congress. The architects of this event were Hume, Wedderburn, Dadabhoy Naoroji, Sir Henry Cotton amongst others. A few of them wanted this Institution to be social, but a few of them definitely wanted it to be political, so that it could become a forum of people for demanding political reforms. However, from the very beginning Congress has always remained the main political forum and the history of freedom struggle can be generally identified with the history of the Congress. Not that, there were not other extremist groups, struggling for our independence, but directly or indirectly, they were also connected with the Congress. In the beginning the role of the Congress was, so to say, very minor, that of making certain resolutions and requesting the Government to make some reforms necessary for the welfare of the people.

It must be admitted that the British rule also brought with it a new awareness for the common man, who was being educated in the British way of thinking but gradually the awareness also made clear the real importance of bondage and the intelligent class gradually started asserting itself. This asserting developed in different directions Mahatma Jyotiba Phule tried to awaken the common man. Justice Ranade and Agarkar pleaded for social changes and Dadabhoy Naoroji Lokmanya Tilak. G. K. Gokhale tried to bring about political changes. Of course. Tilak was a hardliner and very soon he could gather young men around him, not only from Maharashtra, but also from other parts of India. He gave a four point programme-(1) Boycott of foreign goods ; (2) Promotion of Swadeshi : (3) National Education and (4) Swarajya. The struggle between the moderates and Tilak gives us another important phase in the history of our freedom struggle, "Swaraj is my birth-right and I will have it" was his basic slogan and he could gather strength, because of the ways of the Britishers. For example when Lord Curzon divided Bengal, even the terrorists looked to Tilak for a moral support, which he did give and but for him the activities of Savarkar. Senapati Bapat and revolutionaries of Bengal would not have gathered the momentum. Tilak's policy naturally resulted in splitting the Congress at Surat between two camps, the younger element gathering around Tilak. This I think was the beginning of the second phase of our freedom movement. It was also a landmark in a sense, for , Tilak had by this time introduced a new weapon in the struggle, a weapon of mass movement, which later on was very effectively used by Mahatma Gandhi. Lokmanya Tilak obeyed the British law, but fought for our constitutional rights like an opposition leader. His going to Jail had also a different significance. Till then only robbers and brigands, and at the most the extremists were put in jail and the jail was regarded as a place to be abhorred. When Tilak went to jail, the situation changed. Tilak was arrested in 1908 and was released in 1914. By this time, Mrs. Annie Besant had also started the Home Rule Movement. But when Tilak came back to India the political scene was completely dominated by Tilak and from Lucknow Congress till about 1920 Tilak was the policy maker of Indian peoples' demands.

Mahatma Gandhi returned from Africa by about 1915, but for about a year he travelled in all parts of India, watching and studying what was happening. He started as a follower of Gokhale, who was moderate. But the Jallianwala massacre in 1919 completely changed Gandhiji. The Jallianwalla Episode, I regard, as an important landmark in our freedom struggle. It was the emergence of a new leadership, that of Gandhiji, a leadership which ultimately led us to Swaraj. It is at this time, that Montague-Chemesford reforms were announced. We had three alternatives before us-(1) of completely cooperating with the British. (2) of conditionally cooperating with the British and (3) of completely non-cooperating with the British. The moderates chose the first way, Tilak and his followers chose the second and called it responsive cooperatition and Gandhiji chose the third that of non-cooperation. Gandhiji qualified it by calling it non-violent non-cooperation. In 1920, Tilak died. It was synchronised with emergence of Gandhi as National leader. He gave a call of non-cooperation movement. He said he would give Swaraj in a year, provided all lawyers left their practice, all Government servants left their service, all students left the schools and colleges and, in fact, everything was to be brought to standstill. This did not happen, but thousands of lawyers, Government servants and students left their practice, jobs, and education. They formed the cadre for the later Congress movements. Congress immediately became a great power and there was unforeseen awakening in the people. This was also the beginning of the establishment of National Institutions of Education. The non-cooperation movement gave rise to scenes of violence at a few places e.g. at Chaurichaura. The Police Chowki was attacked and burnt. Gandhiji did not want that the movement should go a violent way and immediately withdrew the movement.

The withdrawal of the movement was also, in my opinion, an important phase in the history of our freedom struggle. A leader must know when to launch a movement and when to withdraw it. Gandhiji knew it. Gandhiji was however arrested by this time, which again resulted in a split in Congress, C. R. Das, Motilal Nehru and others pleading for working out the Montegul-Chemsford reforms establishing, Swaraj party and others known as no-changers, wanted to continue the non-cooperation movement. Swaraj party succeeded for some time. But when the British announced that a Commission known as Simon Commission would visit India to recommend some more reforms, the Congress opposed the move tooth and nail and in every part of India, there were bon fires of British goods and wherever the Commission visited, Hartals and processions were organised. There were Lathicharges and firings and Lala Lajpatrai died in one such Lathicharge at Lahore. In Allahbbad Pandit Motilal Nehru flew a kite, bearing the banner 'Simon Go Back' from the house of a Government official, taking him unwares. The awakening was tremendous. Again there were two camps in Congress, the younger camp, the youth league led by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Subashchandra Bose and the older camp led by older leaders of Congress. The youth league movement became so important that in 1929 at Lahore Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was elected as President. In his historical speech he announced that our goal was complete independence. Till then we had only asked for Dominion status of West Minister Type. Pandit Nehru's speech at Lahore Congress, thus, was a great landmark in the history of our freedom struggle. The years 1929. 30, 31, 32 and 33 were remarkable in several ways. In 1930. Gandhiji launched his civil dis-obedience movement. He started from Sabarmati and

went to Dandi to do salt Satyagraha. Gandhiji's action led people to do salt Satyagraha or Jungle-Satyagrah in every part of India. Thousands of people went to jail. Government had to come to terms and the famous Gandhi-Irvin pact was signed. It was an achievement and a landmark in our freedom struggle. It was followed by Round Table Conference, hanging of Sardar Bhagatsing and others and no-tax campaign movement by Pandit Nehru in U.P. which in turn resulted in the movement of 1932. The Government repression reached the high pitch and lakhs of people courted arrest. For some time, it appeared that the repression was successful but Gandhiji in Yerwada jail started his famous fast for removing untouchability and now to our political struggle another dimension was added, the social dimension. 1935 reforms giving us provincial autonomy were announced by the British. The Congress decided to fight out elections and in large number of provinces, Congress was elected and ministries were formed. But in 1939, when the Second World War broke out, the Congress came out of office. The period between 1939 and 15th August, 1947 is the most eventful period in our history. In 1940-41, Gandhiji launched the individual Satyagraha. It was again during this period that Subhashchandra Bose escaped from India and finally established Indian National Army which for the first time hoisted Indian National flag on Indian soil in Manipur.

The Congress leaders had declared again and again that they would enthusiastically help the British in the war effort and would fight against the fascists, provided they were declared as independent and equal associates in the war effort. But the Britishers were not prepared to leave the imperialist motives. In the A.I.C.C meeting at Gwalior on 7th and 8th August 1942, the situation was reviewed. Japan had completely paralysed Pearl Harbour and Germans and conquered the whole of Western Europe and had attacked the Soviet Union. Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru thought that in order to be able to help the anti-fascist movement, we must first throw away the yoke of Imperialism. But the negotiations were abortive, so Mahatma Gandhi declared in his two famous speeches on 7th and 8th August 1942, that people of India had to fight for their own cause, that they were their own leaders, that they had either to do or die. Mahatma Gandhi also advised the British Government that they should quit India. This resolution was accepted almost unanimously. Gandhiji waited for a reply from the British Government but instead Gandhiji and the whole of the working committee were arrested on the night of the 8th August and the morning of 9th August. The second line leadership consisting of Achyut Patwardhan, Aruna Asafali, Ram Manohar Lohia, Jayaprakash Narayan, immediately took up the challenge. Most of them went underground. Bulletins were issued that people were their own leaders and they should do whatever they liked, to throw the British out of India. There were Circulars supposed to be issued from the Congress Office that the people should cut telephones and telegraph lines, obstruct the railways and sabotage all lines of communications, and also face the Repression. When the leaders reached their Home Town and when the common man knew that Mahatma Gandhi wanted the people to be their own leaders, they spontaneously re-acted without indulging in the deliberations of violence or non-violence.

Next 8 days between 9th August and 17th August have to be regarded as days which shook the British Empire. The British rule in India did not exist for these 7 days. People voluntarily marched to the Railway Stations, Law Courts, Police Stations, Educational

Institutions and destroyed them. They removed the fish-plates, destroyed the bridges, paralysed communications and in some cases even killed authorities. This was a reaction to the severe repression of the Government and their atrocities. The first phase of the struggle was over by 17th or 18th August.

Yusuf Meheralli had addressed the secret meeting of Congress Socialist Workers and students in Poona as early as in July, 1942 and has given detailed instructions as to how revolution had to be accomplished. It consists of running trains, ticketless travel by all public transport, obstruction of every form of every Government transport. cutting telegraph wires and picketing at recruitment centres. This was the programme given by him. Some members of the A.I.C.C. office had also, it is told, issued a similar programme on the eve of 9th August, 1942. Although, whether this programme was the official Congress programme, was not known. But instructions on similar lines were also circulated to students by Rajkumari Amrit kaur, Annasahib Sahasrabuddhe.

Our Congress and Socialist leaders had told us that during the first week starting with 9th August, the capture of power in the cities would be complete and by the second week we should fan out in the villages and rural areas. This guess of the leaders did not come true. By 18th August, the revolutionary activities, to be culminated in the capture of power completely collapsed and the whole nation was under the British roller of repression. Lakhs of people were arrested throughout India and even in the city of Bombay more than 10,000 were sent to jail. In addition, in Bombay itself 1028 were killed and 3,214 were wounded. Similar was the case with most of the cities like Delhi, Calcutta, Kanpur, Allahabad, Lucknow, Madras, Lahore, Patna, and Nagpur etc. As a result of this repression, however, the movement did not stop. It did enter, the second phase though in a different manner. From 18th August, 1942, till the end of the 1945 and as a matter of fact, even after that till August 1947 the movement took different turns and erupted from time to time in different garbs and forms. Either it was the parallel Government of Satara or Balia or the Rebellion of the Ratings in the Navy or Strike of the Posts or Railways, or the struggle of the I.N.A, and other army units or the strike of the Air-force.

The establishment of the parallel Government in Satara was an achievement of the under-ground movement in Maharashtra, as also in other parts of India. It started with evading arrests, but very soon, hundreds of young men who were not known to the police entered the movement. Perhaps, there is some wrong understanding of the concept of going underground. Going underground does not merely mean evading warrants. It really means working in the movement without allowing his identity known to the police and avoiding arrest. Thus thousands of workers who really worked in the movement and organised different actions did not reveal their identity assumed different names and worked even in different parts of the country. Shri S.M.Joshi, for example, assumed the name of Imam moved in Muslim attire and was not located by police for a very long time. Achyut Patwardhan and Aruna Asafalli also moved inognito, very soon as the movement got organised people broke open the jails, looted Government treasuries, prevented communications by destroying the bridges and sometimes even some pitched the battles with

the police and the army. Bards and poets like Shankarrao Nikam openly sung the National song and in open meetings lakhs and lakhs rupees were collected on account of the gifts or ornaments donated by women. Sometimes police had no courage to break open the cordon or fire when such meetings in rural areas were being addressed, and thousands of people moved openly because their identity was not known. Hundreds of people, for example, were given shelter even in public places like Mulji Jetha Market, by those who worked in the market itself. The police officers were also very sympathetic. I know the incidence of one sergeant Dixit who came to search my room in Amalner and when I told him that in the room were stored several objectionable things like handgranades and the like, he silently made an about-turn and asked the police party to go back, informing that I should immediately remove the things elsewhere, Kundal, in Satara, was the centre of such underground movement. But the whole of Walve Taluka was also determined to drive away the British from the India, Jayprakash Narayan fled from Hajaribaug prison and even in Maharashtra Nagnath Naikavadi, Vasantdada Patil, Ganpatrao Koli in Western Maharashtra, Thakur Niranjana Singh and Dr. Gaur from Nagpur broke open the jail. What I have given is only a very small list. In those enchanted days almost everyone was thrilled with the idea of doing something. Hundreds of people including young boys and girls, became martyrs. Bhai Kotval, Hemu Kalani, Shirishkumar of Nandurbar and even a young boy like Shankar at Nagpur embraced Martyrdom. Women did not lag behind. Late Leelatai Patil was actively associated with this struggle along with her husband Dr. Uttamrao Patil and her brother-in-law Shri Shivajirao Patil who had assumed the name of Govind Mane for sometime. Shri Vyankatrao Randhir of Boradi also played a very important role in this struggle. This phase was the struggle of a common man, Even in Nagpur and Berar. Places like Chimur. Ashti, Ramtek, Yavali and places in Morshi showed great valour. Congress had given the call for this struggle, but it must be admitted that although other parties had not given such a call, the rank and file of every party spontaneously Participated in the struggle and although, in a sense, the struggle was unsuccessful and had to be given up, it paved the way for future negotiations and gave us independence on 15th August, 1947.

The Quit India movement thus is a great land-mark in the history of India. It awakened not only the people of India and cleared the way for India's independence but it became the symbol of all oppressed people and opened the way for the people of all colonies. It made the British Empire breakdown and helped the people to assert their right of autonomy.

The present generation may not be quite aware of the sacrifices that previous generations have made in accomplishing freedom of this country. Dr. Tope quotes in his introduction, "The dew is dried up, and the star is short. The fight is past and men forgot," The present book written by Dr. Tope, however would give a glimpse of what past generations have done for the present and the future generations. I have always regarded history as memory of the society. The history of Bombay Congress is not only the memory of Bombay but the memory of whole of the India for the last more than 100 years. I am happy that Dr. Tope has given in his book a detailed account of what has happened in the whole of India, in general, and in the city of Bombay in particular, during these years. On behalf of the

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State Board for Literature and Culture, I am very grateful to him. I am also grateful to Officers and staff of Government Press and staff of Maharashtra State Board for Literature and Culture, in bringing out this book in a very short time.

S. S. BARLINGAY

PREFACE

This is the second Part of 'Bombay and the Congress'. The first Part contains an account of the birth of the Indian National Congress and selected passages from the speeches of the Presidents of the Congress who belonged to the City of Bombay and of the Presidents who presided over the sessions of the Congress held in Bombay. As the Part was published on the eve of the Centenary celebration of the Congress, it did not contain the speech of Shri Rajiv Gandhi who presided over that session of the Congress. Shri Rajiv Gandhi's speech is included in this part.

The second Part contains an account of the Congress movement in the City of Bombay from 1885 to 1947. This account is not exhaustive. The idea is to give merely broad outlines of the movement and the Part played by some distinguished leaders from Bombay. This is not the history of the movement.

I have relied upon all available, sources in writing this book. A few persons who had participated in the movement had narrated their experiences to me. I have drawn upon these narrations also.

I would like to express my sense of gratitude to Prof. Tikekar, the Librarian of the Bombay University Library and his staff for the co-operation they extended to me. I would also like to thank Dr. Usha Mehta of Mani Bhavan, Bombay, for making certain books available to me.

I would like to specially thank Dr. Sisir Bose, nephew of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose for making available to me a copy of the original resolution drafted by Gandhiji for August 42 session of the AICC and also copies of Netaji's broadcasts. Dr. Bose had invited me for Netaji's oration for the year 1986.

I would also like to make a reference to my elder brother, late Shri Vasudeo Krishnarao Tope who inspired in me the sentiments of patriotism and dedication. He was connected with the Communist Party of India and was a Co-worker of Lalaji Pendse, Mirajkar and Nimbkar. Unfortunately he died very young in 1929.

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I have been a Congressman for the last fifty-eight years; hence, I have a sense of fulfilment in completing this work 'Bombay and the Congress' in two Parts. While working on these two Parts, old memories of freedom struggle from my school days at Yeola [Yeola was also the birth place of Senapati Tatya Tope of the 1857 struggle.] (Nasik District, Maharashtra) to the 1942 August revolution in Bombay were revived. Many of the events in the freedom struggle appeared before my mental eye as if they are happening to-day. The most memorable event that lingers, is the evening of August 8, 1942 in the AICC pendal at the Gowalia Tank, Maidan, when the historical 'Quit India' resolution was passed and the slogan 'do or die' was given. These memories bring with them a sense of pride and pleasure and remind me of the following lines of poet Wordsworth :

*Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven*

T. K. TOPE

15th August 1986.

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PROLOGUE

This part contains an account of the Congress movement in the City of Bombay. Bombay was not only the birth place of the Congress, but it also responded generously to the call of the Congress leaders and undertook whatever mission was assigned to it. The history as narrated in the following pages indicates the various ideologies that influenced the movement.

During the period of 1885 to 1920, Congress leaders concentrated their energies on creating awareness in the minds of the Indian people about their rights and the miseries brought about by the British rule. There was no all India mass movement during this period. However the partition of Bengal and the massacre of Jalianwalabagh released certain revolutionary forces of tremendous strength, in the Congress ranks. Even outside the Congress, many revolutionaries had captured the imagination of young men and woman and revolutionary activities both in India and abroad played an effective role in the freedom struggle. Though they were not Congressmen, their sense of patriotism and sacrifice was admirable. India owes a deep debt of gratitude to them also.

1920 saw the dawn of Gandhian era and the Congress movement became a mass movement. Gandhi dominated the Congress platform from 1920 to 1942 and gave new weapons to the Congressmen to carry on the freedom struggle. These weapons were Satyagraha and non-violence. The non-cooperation movement of 1920 was not a negative movement. For, the programme included boycott of foreign cloth wearing of Swadeshi etc. This programme demanded a new spirit in the Congressmen. Politics under the Congress flag ceased to be 'arm-chair' Politics. It was politics of involvement and sacrifice. Hence, the following statement of K. M. Munshi is not correct. Munshi writes:

“When Gandhi forced Jinnah and his followers out of the Home Rule League and later the Congress, we felt with Jinnah that a movement of unconstitutional nature, sponsored by Gandhiji with the tremendous influence he has acquired over the masses would inevitably result in widespread violence, barring the progressive development of self-governing institutions based on a partnership between educated Hindus and Muslims. To generate coercive power in the masses would only provide mass conflict between the two communities as in fact it did. With his keen sense of realities Jinnah firmly set his face against with any dialogue Gandhi on this point.”[[Munshi K. M. : *Pilgrimage to Freedom*, p. 18.](#)]

Munshi is wrong in stating that Gandhi forced Jinnah to leave the Congress. The Congress had accepted Gandhi's programme. Jinnah thought it was not possible for him to work the programme. For, he was accustomed to adopt only constitutional methods. Hence, he left the Congress. Moreover, it is doubtful whether the pre-1920 constitutional agitational method would have enabled India to attain freedom. Looking to the subsequent history even the Congress in 1942 was required to abandon the principle of non-violence and sanction

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violence if it that was necessary. This is corroborated by the observations of Maulana Azad quoted below.

Gandhi continued to dominate the Congress and carried on the programme of Civil Disobedience movement in a manner which the world had not witnessed before. Non-violence was his weapon and Satyagraha was the strategy. Thousands of men and women all over India faced the hardships and carried on the movement successfully. It was this movement which ultimately compelled the British Parliament to adopt the Government of India Act 1935. But, more important was the mass awakening and the determination on the part of the Indians both educated and illiterate, men and women to resist the foreign rule. Gandhiji's contribution of this new weapon of Satyagraha and non-violence evoked interest in other parts of the world and subsequent history of some countries, including the United States of America indicates the successful use these weapons.

The third period begins with the August revolution. This movement though under the leadership of Gandhi was not strictly non-violent movement. It appears that Gandhi made the use of the Congress-Socialist Party in implementing the programme of this movement. The leaders of this party openly advocated means which were not peaceful. It also appears that Gandhi wanted to stick to the principle of non-violence. His draft of the August revolution makes it clear. The Congress however, had given up the principle of non-violence. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who was the President of the Congress in 1942 and who presided over the AICC session when it adopted the Quit India resolution observes as follows: [\[Abul kalam Azad : India wins Freedom, p. 96.\]](#)

“From 14th July to 5th August my time was taken up in a series of meeting with Congress leaders from different parts of the country. I wanted to impress on them that if the Government accepted our demand or at least allowed us to function, the movement must develop strictly according to Gandhiji's instructions. *If however the Government arrested Gandhi and other Congress leaders, the people would be free to adopt any method violent or non-violent to oppose the violence of the Government in every possible way.....Naturally these instructions were secret and never made public,*” (Empphasis added).

These observations are corroborated by the utterances of Yusuf Maheraly and an account given by Sadiq Ali (See pages 126. 141) who were witnesses to 1942 struggle. The expression used by Gandhi ‘do or die ’ on August 8, 1942, it is said indicates that Gandhi also supported the use of violence. Whether this belief is true or not, it does appear that Gandhi in 1942 was not as keen on non-violence as he was in the non-co-operation movement and the Civil disobedience movement. Congress definitely permitted violence if it was necessary. However, it was made clear that there was to be no violence to the person of any one.

From the above short history, it appears that the claim made by some sections of the Congressmen that Congress won freedom by complete non-violence it not corroborated by history.



Shri Rajiv Gandhi, President of 78th Session of the Indian National Congress held in Bombay in December 1985

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INTRODUCTION

The role of the city of Bombay in Congress movement is unique. It was here in 1885 that the Indian National Congress was born. It was from this city that Gandhiji gave the call for Non-cooperation. It was again here in Bombay, that the civil disobedience movement was systematically carried on, on a very large and systematic scale. It was again Bombay that hosted the A. I. C. C. session in 1942, when Gandhiji gave the call 'quit India'. The Naval Ratings in Bombay in 1946 unfurled the flag of hostilities towards the Britishers. The present President of the Congress and the Prime Minister of India Shri Rajiv Gandhi was born in Bombay. In 1920 Gandhiji described Bombay in the following words:

“Bombay which is the first city of India which was the capital of Pherozeshah’s empire, the field of Dadabhai’s activity, the place where Ranade, Baddruddin and others achieved fame.”

In 1920, S.A. Dange participated in the Congress movement in Bombay.

Bombay, alone, had the honour of having a separate Provincial Congress Committee since 1922. In 1930 a Satyagraha Ashram was opened in Vile-Parle by Shankarrao Deo. In 1930 following leaders among others participated in Civil disobedience movement ; Balasaheb Kher, Ashok Mehta, Minoo Masani, Yusuf Meherally, Soli Batliwalla, Shantilal Shah, Jivaraj Mehta, Dr. Gilder, Baloo Kaka Kanitkar, Dr. Narayanrao Savarkar, Dr. Govande, Jamnadas Mehta, Vandrekhar, Bhanu Shankar Yajnik, S. K. Patil etc.

It was from Bombay that Gandhiji sailed for England to attend the Round Table conference and returned on 28th December 1932. Subhash Chandra Bose who was in Bombay was arrested on 2nd January 1932.

Mani Bhavan in Bombay was sanctified by Gandhiji association for a period of 17 years. This Mani Bhavan witnessed a number of important meetings of Congress leaders and it was here that many important resolutions were drafted.

It was in Bombay in 1934, Gandhiji left Congress. 1969 saw the rebirth of Congress in Bombay after the split. In 1985 Bombay witnessed the celebration of the Centenary of the Indian National Congress when it held its 78th session under the Presidentship of Shri Rajiv Gandhi.

Bombay Provincial Committee

The Congress movement in Bombay has been ably directed by the B. P. C. C. from 1930 onwards. B. P. C. C. had a well built organisation. The credit of this goes to S. K. Patl who during the Presidentship of Bhulabai Desai was the defecto President. B. P .C. C. had distinguished persons as President till 1947.They were Sarojini Naidu, K. F. Nariman,

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Bhulabhai Desai, Nagindas T. Master and S. K. Patil. Some of those who occupied the chair of the President of B.P.C.C. subsequent to partition had participated in the Congress movement, Mention may be made of K. K. Shah, Bhanushankar Yajnik, B. A. Khimji, P. G. Kher and S. L. Silam. Later on B.P.C.C. became Bombay Regional Congress Committee and had distinguished persons as Prof. Anant NamJoshi. Rajni Patel as its Presidents. The present President of B.P.C.C. is Murli Deora.

The real achievement of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee was the success in enrolling the co-operation of people from various stratas of Bombay life. The office of B.P.C.C. in those pre-independence days was a centre of various activities and was always crowded. Presidents of B.P.C.C. mixed freely with volunteers and others who visited the office and moved in various parts of the city to educate the masses.

Special mention deserves to be made of Mrs. Perin Captain. She was President of B.P.C.C. in May 1930. She was a dedicated worker in the cause of Swadeshi and was one of the founders of Rashtriya Stree Sabha. She suffered imprisonment on several occasions.

In this book, the part, the city of Bombay played has been described. However, no reference is made to political negotiations which started with Cripps Mission and concluded when Lord Mountbatten declared the decision of the British Government in his broadcast on June 3, 1947 about the partition of India. Discussion on these topics is not directly related to the Congress movement In Bombay.

In addition to the Congress movement, there were other movements in the city of Bombay which also contributed to the winning of freedom. The Communist movement in Bombay was also in a sense mass movement in which particularly the working classes participated on a large scale. The doyen of the communist S. A. Dange belongs to Bombay. Many cities in India had the privilege of throwing up revolutionary leaders. Nashik gave birth to Savarkar Brothers. Bombay cannot claim that privilege. However special mention must be made of Madame Bhikhaiji Rustom Cama. She was born on September 24. 1861. She started her career as a follower of Dadabhai. By 1901 she went to Paris for health treatment, but finally settled in London. There, she came in contact with Veer Savarkar, Shyamji Krishna Varma, Ranji, Virendra Chattopadhyaya, Mukund Desai and others. In 1905 she started 'Bande Mataram' an English weekly from Geneva and ran it for two years. Her revolutionary fame spread in Europe and Socialists on the Continent used to flock to her residence in Paris. Giants like Veer Savarkar, Hardayal rallied round this lady. She attended the World Socialist Congress at Stuttgart (Germany) and moved a resolution for India's independence. It was in this Congress that Madame Cama unfurled the Indian National Flag, prepared according to her ideas. She observed :

"The flag is of Indian Independence-behold it is born-it is already sanctioned by the blood of the martyred Indian youth. I call upon you gentlemen to rise and salute this flag of Indian Independence." The entire audience rose, bowed and greeted the flag.

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It may be noted that long before the Indian National Congress accepted a flag for the Congress this lady from Bombay in 1907 presented to the World Socialist Congress, India's National Flag. While moving the resolution, Madame Cama observed :

“The continuance of British rule in India is positively disastrous and extremely injurious to the best interest of Indians. And lovers of Freedom all over the world ought to co-operate in freeing one fifth of the human race inhabiting that oppressed country.” It deserves to be noted that these words were uttered in 1907.

Madame Cama was an active member of Abhinava Bharat, a revolutionary organisation. She was popularly known as the high priestess of Indian nationalism and was compared to ‘Joan of Arc’. From Europe she went to the United States of America. Her revolutionary fervour made some persons regard her as an incarnation of goddess Kali. Madame Cama was not allowed to come to India as both the British and Fresh Government refused permission to her. However, ultimately she was allowed to come to India in 1935 when her health was completely broken. She died in Bombay on August 13, 1936 at Parsi General Hospital, unwept and unsung. She shared the same fate as thousands of other Indian patriots shared. The structure of our independence is built on bones, marrow and blood of thousands of persons like Madame Cama. Following lines appear to be apt-

*The wind blows, the bubbles die,
The spring entombed in autumn lies
The dew is dried up, the star is shot
The fight is past and men forgot.*

[The above short note is based on ‘Life sketch of Madame Cama’ her 125th Birth and 50th Death Anniversary, Published by Asian book Trust 1985.]

-Henry Kings

like the Falling of a Star.

In the first volume, Bombay and Congress Presidents, the speech of W. C. Banerjee the President of the first sessions of the Congress is included. In this volume, the speech of Rajiv Gandhi the President of the Congress session when it celebrated its birth centenary in 1985 is included. Rajiv Gandhi's speech deserves to be studied closely by all Indians who wish to analyse the present situation and take India of to-day to the path of prosperity and glory.

Rajiv Gandhi pointed in his Presidential speech, some of the evil of the present society. He observed :

“Turn to the great institutions of our country and you will see that too often, behind their imposing facades, the spirit and substance lack vitality. The work they do sometimes seems strangely irrelevant to the primary concerns of the masses. Attempts are made to taint the electoral process at its very source. Issues of crucial national

importance are frequently subordinated to individual sectional and regional interest. Our legislatures do not set standards for other groups to follow ;they magnify manifold the conspicuous lack of a social ethic. A convenient conscience compels individuals to meander from ideology to ideology seeking power, influence and riches. Political parties twist their tenets enticed by opportunism. “The best lack all conviction and the worst are full of passionate intensity.”

He further said,

“In the field of education, the nation has much to be proud of. Access to education has been widened immeasurably. Indian scholars are in the front rank of creative endeavour in the best institutions across the world. But the schools, the universities and the academies of the Republic, which should fill our minds with hope for tomorrow, cause us great concern. Teachers seldom teach and students seldom learn. Strikes, mass copying, agitations are more attractive alternatives. Where there should be experiment and innovation, there is obeisance to dead ritual and custom, smothering creativity and the quest for knowledge and truth. Where there should be independence and integrity, there is the heavy hand of politics, caste and corruption. Where there should be a new integration between modern science and our heritage, there is a dull repetition of lifeless formulae. Millions are illiterate. Millions of children have never been inside a school.”

About Bureaucracy he said,

“And what of the iron frame of the system, the administrative and the technical services, the police and the myriad functionaries of the State ? They have done so much and can do so much more, but as the proverb says, ‘there can be no protection if the fence starts eating the crop.’ This is what has happened. The fence has started eating the crop. We have Government servants who do serve but oppress the poor and the helpless, police who do not uphold the law but shield the guilty, tax collectors who do not collect taxes but connive with those who cheat the State, and whole legions whose only concern is their private welfare at the cost of society. They have no work ethic, no feeling for the public cause, no involvement in the future of the nation, no comprehension of national goals, no commitment to the values of modern India. They have only grasping, mercenary outlook, devoid of competence, integrity and commitment.”

About the Congress itself, he observed :

“We have looked at others. Now let us look at ourselves. What has become of our great organisation? Instead of a party that fired the imagination of the masses throughout the length and breadth of India, we have shrunk, losing touch with the toiling millions. It is not a question of victories and defeats in elections. For a democratic party, victories and defeats are part of its continuing political existence. But what does matter is whether or not we work among the masses, whether or not we are in tune with their struggles, their hopes and aspirations. We are a party of social transformation, but in our preoccupation with

governance we are drifting away from the people. Thereby, we have weakened ourselves and fallen prey to the ills that the loss of invigorating mass contact brings.

Millions of ordinary Congress workers throughout the country are full of enthusiasm for, the Congress policies and programmes. But they are handicapped, for, on their backs ride the brokers of power and influence, who dispense patronage to convert a mass movement into a feudal oligarchy. They are self-perpetuating cliques who thrive by invoking the slogans of caste and religion and by enmeshing the living body of the Congress in their net of avarice.

For such persons, the masses do not count. Their life style, their thinking-or lack of it, their self-aggrandisement, their corrupt ways, their linkages with the vested interests in society, and their sanctimonious posturing are wholly incompatible with work among the people. They are reducing the Congress organisation to a shell from which the spirit of service and sacrifice has been emptied.

As we have distanced ourselves from the masses, basic issues of national unity and integrity, social change and economic development recede into the background. Instead, phoney issues, shrouded in medieval obscurantism, occupy the centre of the stage. Our Congress workers, who faced the bullets of British imperialism, run for shelter at the slightest manifestation of caste and communal tension. Is this the path that Gandhiji, Panditji and Indiraji showed to a secular, democratic India?

We talk of the high principles and lofty ideals needed to build a strong and prosperous India. But we obey no discipline, no rule follow no principle of public morality, display no sense of social awareness, show no concern for the public weal. Corruption is not only tolerated but even regarded as the hallmark of leadership. Flagrant contradiction between what we say and what we do has become our way of life. At every step, our aims and actions conflict. At every stage, our private self crushes our social commitment.

As action has diverged from precept. The ideology of the Congress has acquired the status of an heirloom to be polished and brought out on special occasions. It must be living force to animate the Congress workers in their day-to-day activity. Our ideology of nationalism, secularism, democracy and socialism is the only relevant ideology for our great country. But we are forgetting that we must take it to the masses, interpret its content in changing circumstances, and defend it against the attacks of our opponents.

Mahatma Gandhi visualised the Congress as a fighting machine. Time and again we have demonstrated our fighting qualities—in the great non-co-operation movements of the twenties and thirties, in the Quit India movement of 1942, in the fifties and sixties when we carried the message of socialism to every door, in 1969-71 when the vested interests had to be fought in Parliament, in the courts and in the streets and in 1977-79 when persecution and calumny were answered by thousands of brave satyagrahis throughout the country. This is our tradition; we have to revive this tradition to fight for the poor and the oppressed. Only by doing so shall we gain the strength to create the India of our dreams.”

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President Rajiv Gandhi rightly exhorted:

“We must once more operate a mass movement based on Congress ideology to fulfil this momentous task. Only with such a movement can we cleanse the party and the nation. The inner strength of our people, their unbounded patriotism, their unshakable commitment to social justice and their aspiration for a strong and prosperous India, will destroy the ugliness and enrich the creative ground of India’s greatness.”

In concluding the speech he said:

“A century of achievements ends. A century of endeavour beckons us, our resplendent civilization with unbroken continuity from the third millennium B. C. looks head to peaks of excellence in the third millennium A.D.

It falls to us to work for India’s greatness. A great country is not one which merely has a great past. Out of that past must arise a glorious future?

Let us build an India:

- proud of her independence;
 - powerful in defence of her freedom; strong, selfreliant in agriculture, industry and front rank technology;
 - united by bonds transcending barriers of caste, creed and religion;
 - liberated from the bondage of poverty, and of social and economic inequality.
- An India —disciplined and efficient;
- fortified by ethical and spiritual values;
 - a fearless force for peace on earth;
 - the school of the world, blending the inner repose of the spirit with material progress. A new civilization, with the strength of our heritage, the creativity of the spring time of youth and the unconquerable spirit of our people. Great achievements demand great sacrifices.

Sacrifices not only from our generation and the generations gone by, but also from the generations to come.

Civilizations are not built by just one or two generations. Civilizations are built by the ceaseless toil of a succession of generations. With softness and sloth, civilizations succumb. Let us beware of decadence

We must commit ourselves to the demanding task of making India a mighty power in the world, with all the strength and the compassion of her great culture.”

The spirit which Indians possessed during the freedom struggle and the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders during those days are required more to-day than they were required at that time. A strong nation is built only by hard work and willingness of its

people to follow the path of sacrifice. The spirit of dedication and devotion a deep sense of patriotism, a sincere commitment to the goals enshrined in the Constitution regarding securing of socio-economic justice to all, a strong determination to preserve the unity and integrity of India and a commitment on the part of all Indians to work hard for achievement of these goals are required today. Indian youths of today have to imbibe the spirit of sacrifice. They have to value character and create a generation of workers with integrity. They have to admit the great work done by previous generations. A sense of gratitude is a half mark of culture not only in an individual but also in a nation. Indian youth, today has to make his life “sublime”. This can be achieved only by remembering the lives of great men. The demands on Indian youth today are for heavier than what they were during. The period of freedom struggle. He has to contribute to India’s progress in various fields—administration, social service, scientific research, national integration, education advancement, establishment of socio-economic justice, respect of for woman-hood, bettering the lives of the have nots in the economic and social sphere and eradication of poverty. We have won political freedom in 1947 and that battle was over. But at the same time a gigantic war on the above mentioned various fronts have commenced. In this war once again we have to appeal to old spirit of service and sacrifice and create a generation of men and women with character and integrity. Only such men and women would create a strong, united and prosperous India wherein equality will prevail among all Indians. Long before India became independent Ravindranath Thgore prayed:-

*Into the heaven of freedom,
My father, Let my country awake.*

The prayer has been responded to, thanks to the sacrifice of thousands of men and women during the long years of freedom struggle. These men and women had something of divinity in them. India remembers them with a sense of deep gratitude and deep reverence.

CHAPTER I - FIRST PHASE

In earlier days, the activities of the Indian National Congress were practically restricted to holding annual sessions at different places in India and adopting certain resolutions relating to the reforms in administration, cut in Government expenditure and demanding a few more rights for Indians. This was so because the composition of the Congress was such as to ensure that there would not be any conflict between the Congress were also great patriots, many of them in their individual capacity participated in social life in different ways in a manner that upheld the greatness of India. Telang was a great Oriental Scholar. He wrote on Bhagvad Geeta and Ramayana. His essay, “ Was Ramayana copied from Iliad” was a befitting reply to a Western Orientalist who put forward the theory that Ramayana was copied from Iliad. Telang participated in educational activities and was responsible for the establishment of Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute and Students’ Scientific and Literary Society in Bombay. He also participated in social reform movement and was a staunch supporter of the Age of Consent Bill moved by Malabari. Ranade who participated in Congress Sessions, wrote on history, economics and many other subjects. In the field of social reform he referred to “Telang’s School of Thought”. Dadabhai Naoroji was a keen student of economics and wrote on ‘India’s poverty and Famine’. In the year 1870 he put forth his Drain Theory and in 1871 wrote essays, (1) Wants and Means of India” and “England’s Duty to India”. In 1901 he published his book, “Poverty and Un-British Rule in India”. This book, as a matter of fact laid the foundation of India’s economic nationalism. Malabari who attended the First Session of the Congress was a moving spirit behind certain important social reforms. Chandavarkar’s activities embraced education, social reform, Prarthana Samaj and Students Brotherhood. Phirozshah Mehta devoted considerable time to the work of Bombay Municipal Corporation and the University of Bombay in addition to his dedication to Congress cause. Thus, Bombay leaders of the Congress in its earlier days were not merely politicians nor were they mere legal practitioners devoted to legal practise only. They were leaders of the Society. They had imbibed the spirit of Western education and liberal ideas from Western culture and were fired with intense desire to create a new India possessed of self-respect and dignity. Dadabhai was particularly moved by poverty of Indians. The significance of Dadabhai’s insistence on Indian poverty can be realised if one looks to the economic position in India in 17th Century. Following passage is eloquent in this behalf :

“The supremacy of India in the industrial field reached its high-watermark towards the end of the seventeenth century when there was a sudden spurt in the demand for Indian cotton goods in England induced by a remarkable change in English fashions and modes of dress. The English people developed a preference for light cotton garments in place of the coarse woollens that they had worn for centuries. Among the ladies there was a craze for Indian chintzes and calicoes. ‘On a sudden’ report a publication of the early eighteenth century, ‘We saw all our women, rich and poor, clothed in calico, printed and painted, the gayer and the more tawdry the better’. Coarse varieties of Indian cloth had been imported into England in the past, but they

were little used for purposes of dress-making. The change in the fashion of dress led to the chintzes being 'advanced from lying upon their floors to their backs, from the foot-cloth to the petty-coats'.

Defoe bewailed the fact that 'it (Indian cotton cloth) crept into our houses our closets and bed chambers; curtains, cushions, chairs and at last beds themselves were nothing but calicoes or Indian stuffs'. The effect was that 'almost everything that used to be made of wool or silk relating either to dress of the women or the furniture of our houses was supplied by the Indian Trade'.

The East India Company seized the opportunity offered by this new demand and began to import large quantities of cotton cloth from India.....

"About 1670 there was a sudden increase in the demand for textiles and this was immediately reflected in the orders placed by the Directors for purchases in India. In view of their popularity import duties on them were abolished in England in 1684 and this gave further impetus to the demand. Finally with the prohibition of imports from France in 1688, the Indian calicoes emerged as the biggest item of the Company's imports from India." [*History of the freedom Movement in India, Vol. I, by Tarachand, p. 359.*]

Congress, practically in every Session, passed resolutions demanding reduction in military expenditure and recruitment to ICS of Indians. It is rightly pointed out, "It was only the genius of Dadabhai Naoroji and his marvellous insight into the too many of British connection in relation to the growing poverty of India that brought the economic issue into prominence. When the work done by William Digby and Dadabhai had been made published and the facts had been proved by an increasing volume of statistics this subject took its rightful place atleast in the minds of all political spokesmen. Later on, when Mahatma Gandhi became the recognised Congress leader, the poverty of India's villages became his primary concern and it has remained as such ever since." [*Rise and Growth of the Congress by Andrew and Mukherjee, p. 167.*]

Thus, it is clear that though the earlier leaders came from only big cities, they were conscious of the poverty of India and some of the resolutions suggesting reduction of military expenditure etc. are to be viewed from the point of view of India's economic condition.

The earlier resolutions of the Congress indicated loyalty of the Congress leaders to the British Crown. This sentiment is to be understood on the background of political situation in India before 1858, the advantages Indians received by the establishment of 3 Universities and the 3 High Courts, the new spirit of freedom and free expression enjoyed by the educated Indians and the possibility of influencing the administration in India with a view to securing atleast some voice for Indians in it. It must be remembered that expression of the sentiment of loyalty was not an indication of servility at all. The Congress leaders at that time were men of great self-respect and pride. The expression of loyalty was an expression of a sense of relief

at the passing away of the feudal and chaotic political order and the emergence of the new order which promised a better life for Indians. That is why the establishment of British rule was called “Divine Dispensation”. Hence, it must be remembered that Dadabhai, Telang and Ranade were as great patriots of their time as Gandhiji, Nehru and Subhash Bose and others who came after them. One has to remember that the later generations of Congressmen were standing on the shoulders of the pioneers of the Congress and had initial advantage which the earlier generation did not have. The earlier generation was required to write on a clean slate.

Bombay was the Gangotri of the Congress. The source of the mighty river Ganga at Gangotri is small. But, it is the same Ganga that has become a mighty and the great river and by its continuous flow has given rise to a new civilisation and enriched the life of the people on its banks for generations. Ganga flows on. Similarly, the source of Congress at its birth place at Gokuldas Tejpal Pathashala, which is the Gangotri, was very modest. But the Congress has assumed great force during the years and enriched the life of the people of India and given rise to new awakening among Indians. Like the river Ganga, flows on the Congress movement.

In the earlier days, Congress has neither a Constitution nor a permanent office. Dinshaw Wachha was looking after the Congress work in Bombay. The only tangible evidence of the Congress work of the earlier days was the expression of the aspirations of the educated Indians at the Annual Sessions of the Congress as reflected in the resolutions and writings of the Congress leaders either through newspapers or independently and the speeches delivered by them throughout India. Occasionally, masses were involved in the Congress work, such as the textile workers strike in Bombay when Lokmanya Tilak was sentenced to imprisonment. That was the first strike in Bombay and probably in India too. The plague epidemic in Pune in 1897 involved Congress leaders in Pune and Bombay in a kind of agitation against the authorities for the excesses committed by them in adopting antiplague measures. The Assassination of Rand by Chapekar Brothers evoked condemnation of the act from Congress leaders though some youngmen in their hearts were happy at the expression of the rightful anger of the people of Pune as reflected in the act of Chapekar Brothers. Pro-Congress press in Bombay, while condemning the act of assassination, blamed the authorities for not respecting the sentiments of the people of Pune. On such occasions, Congress leaders identified themselves with the sentiments of the people, at the same time maintaining their allegiance to the British Sovereign. However, they did not spare the bureaucracy in India for its anti Indian attitude and autocratic behaviour.

There was no Constitution for the Congress in the earlier days and the Congress work was carried on in Bombay primarily by Dinshaw Wachha. It was only at Calcutta session in 1906 that the decision was taken to organise the country for Congress work. Each Province was to organise at its capital the Provincial Congress Committee in such a manner as may be determined at a meeting of the Provincial Conference or at a special meeting held for that purpose and the representatives of different Districts. Provincial Committee was to act for the Province in all Congress matters and to organise District Associations throughout the Provinces, to sustain and continue political work in the provinces. Similarly, the method of

electing the Congress President was revised. The Reception Committee was to elect one from those nominated by the Provincial Congress Committees by 3/4th majority of its members failing which the Central Congress Committee (a Committee newly created of 49 members) was to make the final decision. [*History of the Indian National Congress, by Pattabhi Sitaramaiah, pp.55-57.*]

“The next phase of the development of the Congress Constitution was really epoch-making. The Surat split naturally led those who organised the Convention at Allahabad to frame a rigid constitution. So the first step taken was to declare that the election of the duly chosen President of the Congress could not be challenged, for the Surat dispute and the causes belli centered round Dr. Rash Behari Ghose’s election. Next the real interest centered round the ‘Creed’ of the Congress. When the Surat Congress was split, the Convention that met a day after, i.e. on the 28th December, 1907, at Surat was composed only of those who subscribed to a view which afterwards materialised into Article 1 of the Congress Constitution. We quote the Article as finally passed.

“The objects of the Indian National Congress are the attainment by the people of India of a system of Government similar to that enjoyed by the Self-Governing members of the British Empire, and a participation by them in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members.”

Under the Constitution of 1908, the All-India Congress Committee was to consist of-

- 15 Representatives of Madras
- 14 Representatives of Bombay
- 20 Representatives of United Bengal (including Assam)
- 15 Representatives of United Provinces
- 13 Representatives of the Punjab (including N. W Frontier Province).
- 7 Representatives of Central Provinces
- 15 Representatives of Bihar and Orissa
- 5 Representatives of Berar
- 2 Representatives of Burma

provided as far as possible that one-fifth of the total number of representatives shall be Muslims.

The Presidents of the Congress residing or present in India, and the General Secretaries of the Congress who shall also be ex-officio General Secretaries of the All India Congress Committee, shall be ex-officio members in addition.

The Subjects Committee was to be composed of the Members of the A.I.C.C. plus a small elected element, the electors being the delegates assembled at the Congress from each Province.

The objects of the Congress “are to be achieved by constitutional means by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration, and by promoting national unity, fostering public spirit and developing and organising the intellectual, moral, economic and industrial resources of the country,” It was in the Constitution of 1908 that a clause appeared for the first time, under which any resolution that was repugnant to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Hindu or Muslim delegates was to be given up. On looking up old records we come across a curious application of this restrictive measures. A resolution was passed in 1899 at the 15th session of the Congress (Lucknow) condemning the Punjab Land Alienation Bill which was then before the Supreme Legislative Council with a view to restricting the alienation of land either by sale or by mortgage. We find however that at the succeeding session (16th Lahore, 1900) the Subjects Committee decided to postpone the discussion of the Punjab Land Alienation Act (apparently the Bill had been passed into Law) so as to watch its working for a year, since the Hindu and Muslim delegates disagreed on it.

Further amendments to the Constitution came in from the United Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and these were referred to a Sub-committee in 1910 (Allahabad). The recommendations of this Committee were accepted at the 26th Congress (1911, Calcutta) and the AICC was charged to send in further amendments. No material changes, however, took place for a time. From 1910 to 1915 the Congress was merely marking time. When the Great War broke out in 1914 and Mrs. Besant inaugurated her great political movement, it was done under the auspices of the All-India Home Rule League. It may be noted that by that time Lokamanya Tilak had organised a separate Home Rule League in Maharashtra on the 23rd of April, 1916. It was not till the Congress of 1920 (Nagpur) after the Special Congress at Calcutta (September, 1920) had accepted Non-cooperation, that the Congress revised the Constitution, replacing the ‘Creed’ of 1908 by the simple statement in which it stands embodied today, and reorganised the whole plan of Congress work, including the redistribution of Congress Provinces on linguistic basis. The question of a separate Andhra Congress Province was indeed mooted earlier in 1915 and 1916 and was accepted in 1917 at the Calcutta session, after vehement opposition from the President (Dr. Besant) and from some of the leading South Indian (Tamil) delegates from Madras. Even Gandhi thought in 1917 that the question might await the Reforms, but it was the foresight of Tilak that gave the Andhras a separate Congress Circle, and in consequence a sub-committee was appointed in December, 1917, to revise and settle the extent of representation of each Congress Circle on the A.I.C.C. This was followed by Sind asking for and getting a separate Congress Circle for itself in 1918, but the demands of Karnataka and Kerala had to wait till the general redistribution of Congress Provinces in India into twenty-one after the Nagpur-session of 1920.”

The above short account of the framing of the Constitution for the Congress is given with a view to showing that till 1920, Congress work, in India and therefore in Bombay also, was carried on by public spirited men. Now we turn to the Congress work in Bombay.

The establishment of the Indian National Congress was due to the efforts of the emerging middle class in India. Bombay had a large section of the enlightened middle class

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as a result of the establishment of Bombay University in 1857 and also on account of its earlier traditions of social reform. Although the Congress was a middle class organisation, it took interest in the needs of all classes. It asked the Government to extend opportunities of employment especially in the higher ranks to the middle class. It also championed the cause of agricultural class by demanding permanent settlement of land revenue paid by the landlords and of rent paid to landlords by their tenants. The Congress protested against Forest Laws which created hardships for the poor villagers and against Salt Tax which made inroads into their slender income.

Bombay had the honour of hosting the first Session of the Indian National Congress in December 1885. In his Presidential address, Mr. W. C. Bannerjee referred *inter alia* following two objects of the Congress:

- (1) The Promotion of personal intimacy and friendship amongst all the organised workers in our country's cause in different parts of the Empire.
- (2) The eradication by direct friendly personal intercourse of all possible race, creeds or provincial prejudices among all lovers of our country and the full development and consolidation of those sentiments of national unity that had their origin in our beloved Lord Roppon's ever memorial reign.

This, it will be clear that right from the beginning, the Congress aimed at sentiments of national unity. It is true that at that time the Congress had no organisation. But the fact that people from various parts of India came together and thought of national unity, itself is very eloquent. This sentiment of national unity was not imposed from above but was the expression of the deliberate will of the people. The Congress was the central organ of the new society which had evolved as a result of economic, social and cultural changes taking shape during the hundred years before its birth.

Bombay hosted the second Session of the Congress in 1889. It was a memorable Session. Mr. Charles Bradlaugh had attended this Sessions. A huge pendal was erected on the open grounds of "Sans Soucie" at Byculla, Bombay, where the Masina Hospital is located. There were nearly 100 people including delegates and visitors in the pendal. Sir William Wederrburn presided over this Session. Telang was elected Chairman of the Reception Committee but as he was appointed a Judge of the High Court of Bombay on the death of Justice Nanabhoy Haridas, the responsibility of the Chairmanship of the Reception Committee fell on Pherozechah Mehta. Bradlaugh had a towering commanding personality. Numerous addresses were presented to him. In reply he spoke with a loud and clear voice which was heard not only in every corner of the pendal but also by the larger audience on the road outside and on the Byculla Bridge. Bradlaugh said, "For whom should I work if not for the people? Born of the people, trusted by the people, I will die for the people."

From the point of view of city of Bombay, it was a matter of pride to know that Dadabhai was elected a member of the House of Commons in June 1893. Soon afterwards, he succeeded in influencing the House of Commons to adopt a resolution in favour of holding simultaneous examinations in England and in India for the Indian Civil Service. Dadabhai came to India on December 2, 1893 in order to preside over the Session of the Indian National Congress to be held at Lahore in that year. On his arrival in Bombay he got a grand reception which was in a sense unequalled in the annals of Bombay City. The whole City appeared to be rejoicing and the road from the “Bunder” to his residence in Khetwadi was bedecked with flags and banners. Lord Harris the then Governor of Bombay, congratulated Dadabhai and the two members of the Council Mr. H. M. Berdwood, Mr. A. C. Trevor and the Chief Justice Sir Charles Sargent called on him. On December 18 in the Town Hall, numerous addresses were presented to him from various towns in the Bombay Presidency. His travel from Bombay to Lahore to preside over the Indian National Congress Session was a memorable procession. The citizens of various places on the way presented addresses to him. In the Golden Temple at Amritsar, the Sikhs invested him with the Robe of Honour according to Sikh rites. At this Congress, Dadabhai read out a message from the Irish members to the following effect:

“Don’t forget to tell your colleagues at the Congress that every one of Ireland’s Home Rule members in Parliament is at your back in the cause of Indian people.”

In his presidential address, Dadabhai referred to the poverty of India and pointed out that the poverty was the result of the system of Government. The following statement from his speech delivered in 1893 is very significant:

“The day, I hope is not distant when the world will see the noblest spectacle of a great nation like the British holding out the hand of true fellow citizenship and of justice to the vast masses of humanity of this great and ancient land of India with benefits and blessing to the human race.”

In 1896 a Englishman, Rand by name was assassinated in Poona for the means he adopted to control the plague epidemic. Tilak had written articles on this subject in his newspaper ‘Kesari’. He was arrested and prosecuted for these articles. The prosecution took place in Bombay.

The case was heard by Magistrate Sleter. The Magistrate refused to grant bail to him. Hence, against his order, a petition was moved in the High Court. The petition came for hearing before Justices Parson and Ranado who on technical ground refused the bail. Dinshaw Wachha and Davar appeared for Tilak. The case of Tilak was committed to the Sesions. Davar once again applied for bail. This time the petition came before Justice Badruddin Tyabji who granted bail on certain condition. Tilak was to provide surety. It may be mentioned that at one stage Dr. Bhalchandra Bhatvadekar whose family house is in Girgaon even today was ready to give a surety even to the extent of Rs.5 lakhs. However, actually Yeshwant Vishnu Nene and Shet Dwarakdas Dharamsee each one produced

Promissory Notes of Rs. 25,000 in the court and the bail was granted. The case ultimately came before Justice Startchy. Here, Tilak's defence was looked after by Bhaishankar Kanga firm. In those days the Advocate General himself conducted the prosecution on behalf of the Government. For defence of Tilak, one England born Barrister from Calcutta was brought. The trial was with the help of Jury. The Jury found Tilak guilty and Justice Startchy sentenced Tilak to 18 months' rigorous imprisonment. Tilak appealed to the Privy Council. In the Privy Council, Asquith, Maine and W. C. Bannerjee appeared for Tilak. The Privy Council dismissed Tilak's appeal. It may be noted that a petition was addressed to Secretary of State for release of Tilak by leading men among whom were Dadabhai and Rameshchandra Dutt.

The 3rd Session of the Congress was held in Madras in 1887. Baddrudin Tyabjee presided. One of the resolutions before the Session was the repeal of the Arms Act. Telang and Chandavarkar objected to the repeal. However, Pherozechah supported the resolution for the repeal of the Arms Act.

In 1889 the Session of the Congress was held in Bombay. Sir William Wedderburn was the President of the Session. Sir William Wedderburn has retired from his services two years previously. He was a fine English gentleman loved and honoured by all who had come in contact with him. Pherozechah was the Chairman of the Reception Committee. The number of delegates was also 1889 corresponding curiously to the year in which the Session was held. Wedderburn in his Presidential address referred to the awakening of the national spirit fostered by the Congress. The Session also decided to send delegation to England to explain the Congress viewpoint to the English people. An amount of Rs. 45,000 was to be collected for the Congress work. The deputation was to consist of M/s George Yule, Adam, Manmohan Ghosh, Surfuddin, J. E. Howard Pherozechah, Surendranath Bannerjee, W. C. Bannerjee, Eardley Norton and Hume.

In 1890 the Congress session was held in Calcutta. Pherozechah Mehta was the President. In his speech, Pherozechah pointed out as follows:

“If the masses were capable of giving articulate expression to definite political demands, then the time would have arrived not for Consultative Councils but for Representative Institutions. It is because they are still unable to do so that the function and the duty revolve upon their educated and enlightened compatriots to feel, to understand and to interpret their grievances and requirements and to suggest and to indicate how these can be best redressed and met. History teaches us that such has been the law of widening progress, in all ages, all countries, notably in England itself.”

In 1892 many Congressmen were elected to Legislative Councils. There they found a new sphere for oratory and brilliance. They spoke fearlessly in the Council. The Tribune of Lahore on 30th January 1895 wrote as follows:

“There is one voice in the Imperial Legislative Council which has struck a note not yet heard inside the walls of the Council’s Chamber.”

This was a reference to Pherozeshah. As a result of the performance in the Imperial Legislative Council it was suggested that Pherozeshah should enter the House of Commons.

The 17th Indian National Congress was held at Calcutta in the year 1901. Dinshaw Wacha was the President of this Congress session. His speech was primarily devoted to the economic conditions in India. He dealt with the cause of famine and pleaded for lightening the debt on the cultivators. He demanded a full enquiry into the agrarian conditions existing at that time. *He pointed that irrigation work was essential and that they should be preferred to railways. Agricultural banks were to be recognised as useful.* He put a question to England in the following words:

“Was not England pauperised when the Papacy was rampant and abstracted millions from it annually as history has recorded? Would England refrain from complaining, supposing that the position of India and England was today reversed?”

Various resolutions were passed at the Session with the encouragement from Mr. Dinshaw Wacha.

The 20th Session of the Congress was held in Bombay in 1904. Sir Henry Cotton presided over this Session. In his speech he pointed out that public opinion of England needed to be moved. He dealt with the economic problems and condemned the drain and the exploitation of the country by English capitalist and urged the substitution of Indians for European officials. He then referred to reactionary policy of Lord Curzon. Various resolutions were passed at this Session. One of them referred to education. *It is interesting to note that even in 1904, the Congress insisted upon (a) spread of primary education more widely among the masses of people and making a beginning in the direction of free and compulsory education (b) making due provision for imparting instructions in manual training and scientific agriculture, and (c) establishing atleast one central fully equipped Polytechnic Institute in country with minor technical schools and colleges in different Provinces.* Congress referred to the death of J.N. Tata and to the great service he had rendered to industry and his enlightened philosophy and patriotism. A resolution was passed on partition of Bengal. The Congress recorded its emphatic protest against the proposal of the Government of India for the partition of Bengal in any manner whatsoever.

After this Session of the Congress, Lord Curzon went ahead with his plan of partition of Bengal and that created a countrywide agitation. In order to understand the future development of the Congress it is necessary to remember that in 1905 the Congress went through a period of Constitutional agitation.

Before the agitation on the question of partition of Bengal, there were two schools of thought in the Presidency of Bombay. One was headed by Pherozeshah and others including

Gokhale and the other was headed by Tilak and his followers. The schools were later known as Liberals and Nationalists or as Moderates and Extremists. The differences were expressed through the columns of press and also at the Annual Sessions of the Congress. These differences however became very acute in the name of social reforms. In the earlier days along with Annual Sessions of the Congress, the Annual Sessions of the Social Reform Conference were also held, for, those were the days when leaders in public life in Bombay and also in India were leaders both in political field as well as in social field. They were leaders of the entire society and their efforts were to create a new society. There was no departmentalisation in those days. On matters of social reform, the Bombay school had more advanced views than the Poona school headed by Tilak. But in the political sphere, the Poona school was more advanced than the Bombay school.

It is on this background that the most important political issues that the Congress faced after 20 years of its existence were analysed by the leaders in Bombay and in Poona. The issue of partition of Bengal was one of such issues. As a matter of fact, Curzon was to a certain extent responsible for creating disturbances in the calm and placid waters of Congress which was flowing undisturbed. The partition of Bengal became a national issue. In Bengal, Bipin Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh emerged as great leaders agitating against partition. It may be noted that this Aurobindo Ghosh later on became Yogi Aurobindo of Pondicherry. Immediately after the partition, Aurobindo Ghosh rose like a bright star. As a matter of fact he shot up like a meteor. As a result of the agitation against partition, 9 leaders from Bengal were deported. Kudiram Bose and other young men threw bombs. Hence, they were executed. Yugantar which was edited by Bhupendranath Dutt preached openly the cult of violence. He was given a long sentence. Aurobindo Ghosh was also prosecuted. In Poona, Tilak carried on agitation against the partition of Bengal and ultimately he was prosecuted in 1908 and sentenced to 6 years imprisonment. Tilak's trial was held in Bombay and it created curiosity in the whole country. In Bombay, however the partition of Bengal did not create the same reaction as it did in some other parts of India. It appears that Lord Morley was trying to rally the Liberal on his side from 1906 to 1909. This explains the importance of the Liberals during this period in the Indian National Congress and consequently the absence of some type of agitation against partition of Bengal in the city of Bombay.

Before we turn to Tilak's trial in detail, we may refer to the Calcutta Session of the Congress held in 1906 under the Chairmanship of Dadabhai Naoroji.

Dadabhai Naoroji presided over the Calcutta Session of the Congress held in the year 1906. The Liberals and the Nationalists were very keen to ensure that the President of their choice would be selected for the Calcutta Session. The Nationalists were keen on Tilak as President in view of the fact that Tilak had opposed partition of Bengal and had carried on agitation against the partition. Liberals however did not want Tilak for the reasons that he might take Congress to the extreme path. Therefore the name of Dadabhai Naoroji was suggested by the Liberals. The Nationalists accepted the name and Dadabhai was the unanimous choice of all Congressmen in that year. Dadabhai returned to India from England to preside over this Session. It may be mentioned that Dadabhai was at that time 82 years of

age. He was however very young in spirit. It was here for the first time that Dadabhai spoke of Swaraj from the Congress platform. In a sense his Presidential address was really revolutionary. The Congress passed resolutions on Swaraj, national education, boycott of British goods, etc. Dadabhai was not able to read his speech because of age. Hence, his speech was read by Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Dadabhai looked like a Rishi on the Congress platform. On his right was Pherozeshah Mehta and on his left Surendranath Banerjee. In his concluding address Dadabhai observed:

“Be united, persevere and achieve self-Government so that the millions now perishing by poverty, famine and plague and the section of millions that are starving on the scanty subsistence may be saved. India once more occupy her proud position of yore among the greatest and civilized nations of the world.” (Emphasis added).

It may be noted that, for Dadabhai self-Government for India was only a means for eradicating poverty, famine, plague and saving millions of people who were starving.

The Surat Session of Congress held at 1907 was a historic session in many respects. However, it had very little importance from the point of view of the city of Bombay except that Pherozeshah Mehta’s authority was for the first time challenged in the Congress Session.

The year 1908 was important as far as the city of Bombay is concerned because of the trial of Lokmanya Tilak for sedition. An article written by Tilak on May 15, 1908 was the cause of this trial. The trial was by Jury and the Jury gave the verdict of guilty and Lokmanya Tilak was sentenced to six years’ imprisonment. Before his sentence was pronounced, the Judge had asked Tilak if he had any-thing to say. Tilak replied as follows:

“All I wish to say is that in spite of the verdict to the Jury, I maintain that I am innocent. There are higher powers that rule the destiny of things that it may be the will of the Providence that the cause which I represent may prosper more by my suffering than my remaining free.”

These words have become historic. It may be mentioned that on the occasion of the birth Centenary of Tilak, a marble tablet was unveiled outside the court room in the High Court in which Tilak was sentenced to six years’ imprisonment by Justice Davar. Chief Justice M.C. Chagla, who was Chief Justice in 1955 unveiled the tablet and paid rich tributes to Tilak’s patriotism and services to the nation.

In the same year two more political prosecutions were conducted in Bombay. One was of Shivram Mahadev Paranjpe, the Editor of ‘Kaal’ and the other was of Ganesh Damodar Savarkar, elder brother of Swatantrya Veer Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. In addition to these, there were also prosecutions of Bhalakar Bhopatkar from Poona and some others. It may be mentioned here that Jinnah appeared on behalf of Tilak in Tilak’s trial at some stage.

In Bombay at that time, there was a body named “Students Brotherhood” and Narayan Ganesh Chandavarkar was at the helm of the affairs. Lectures were delivered on political matters by prominent speakers. Sarojini Naidu was one of the speakers. The Brotherhood also requested eminent professors from Bombay to speak to the students under its auspice. Dr. Scott and Prof. P.A. Wadia from Wilson College, Mirza, later a Judge of the Bombay High Court, addressed the students. Thus, the Students Brotherhood contributed to the political awakening among the young people in the city of Bombay.

The Congress Sessions till 1911 passed every time resolutions protesting against the Bengal partition and calling upon the Government to annul the partition. In 1911 partition of Bengal was annulled and the Congress passed resolution thanking the Government for the annulment of partition:

“The 30th Session of the Indian National Congress was held in Bombay. This was in a sense a historic session, for, at the same time the All-India Muslim League was also to meet for the first time in the history of that body at Bombay and the opportunity which this event afforded for comaraderie between Hindus and Muslims and for cordial cooperation between that body and the Indian National Congress for the promotion of their common political aspirations had attracted to Bombay a large number of members of both the Communities from the different Provinces. The younger men conceived the idea of drawing the two bodies together during their eventful sessions and they gradually attracted the support of the older men. Their efforts succeeded, and, for the first time in the history of the Congress, the representatives of the All India Muslim League attended the Congress session. They were allotted a conspicuous position in the Congress pendal in front of the Congress delegates and were received by the vast assemblage with hearty applause and cordiality as they entered the pendal and took their seats in the prominent places reserved for them.”

“Events during the past few years had gradually led up to a fraternal coalition on the part of the two bodies. Definite advance in that direction had been made by the All India Muslim League since 1912, which was responded to by the Indian National Congress in its sessions after year and consequently the desire grew in both these bodies for fellowship and concerted action in all matters affecting the national welfare. In this year, the leaders of the Muslim League made up their minds to grasp the hand of comradeship which the Congress had been offering since 1913 and to take steps for concerted action by formulating a scheme of reforms calculated to secure for the people of India a substantial step forward in the direction of self-government. The younger men were very prominent in making successful this entente between the two bodies and, as the Congress official report said: “The effect of the two bodies holding their sessions in Bombay was especially noteworthy in the case of the rising generations of the educated youth of the Hindu-Muslim communities.” A genuine feeling of brotherhood prevailed which manifested itself in various ways. The Congress Volunteers and the Muslim Volunteers arrived at a joint session and worked

shoulder to shoulder. A joint dinner was organized by some of the younger men. As the Congress Report remarked, “it was a gratifying and inspiring sight to see the organizers wearing a brilliant badge which combined the Crescent with the Lotus, symbolizing the union of the two faiths in the service of their motherland and invoking the eye of the thinker to see therein the realization of Akbar’s dream in the not distant future.” [*Jaykar M.R.: Story of My Life, pp.139-140.*]

“While the Congress session was being held, rumours were not wanting that the proposed entente between the Congress and progressive Muslims had been viewed with suspicion and dislike by some reactionary and autocratic officials of the Bombay Government who were secretly planning, chiefly with the aid of Muslims from outside Bombay, the complete dispersion of the session of the Muslim League which was proposed to be held at the conclusion of the Congress Session to obtain Muslim support for the demands by the Congress in the resolutions of the session. These rumours grew wilder and wilder. Ultimately the promoters of the Muslim League session found it necessary, as a precautionary measure, to seek the help of the police officials of the Bombay Government to prevent what they thought was likely to be a violent and rowdy attack upon the Muslim League. Ultimately the rumours proved to be true and on the fateful day when the Muslim League session was held under the presidency of Mahzar-ul-Huq. Muslim hooligans, mostly outsiders, helped by some local reactionary Muslims, created a disturbance which necessitated an adjournment of the session and thus the threat of the police officials to disperse the entire Session was averted. The incident was regarded as a great catastrophe and was strongly resented by the Indian public and journals. The Anglo-Indian papers of Bombay of course preserved a show of lip sympathy and fairness. Finding excuses for the occurrence.” [*Jaykar M.R.; Story of My Life, pp. 142-143.*]

Thus, it will be seen that Bombay took a leading part in establishing Hindu-Muslim comradeship at that time.

The subsequent history of the Congress till 1920 is not very material as far as the city of Bombay is concerned. Only one thing which has to be mentioned and that is the Lucknow Pact. Jinnah from Bombay, who was in congress till 1920, took a leading part in concluding the Lucknow Pact which was an attempt to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem. It may be also noted that Tilak also blessed the Lucknow Pact. As far as the city of Bombay is concerned, the period from 1915 onwards saw the loss of two great leaders of the congress. Pherozeshah Mehta in 1915 and Dadabhai Naoroji in 1917.

The Home Rule League movement had also started in Bombay and Dadabhai was Vice-President of the Home Rule League in Bombay. The British Government looked upon Home Rule League also with suspicion and therefore leaders of Home Rule League, Mrs. Annie Besant, George Arundel and D.P. Wadia were arrested. As a result of the imprisonment of Mrs. Besant, a few leaders in Bombay including Jinnah and Jayakar met in the bungalow of Bahadurji with a view to starting the movement for Home Rule without

equivocation or disguise and in 1917 the Home Rule League was brought into service for arranging meetings lamenting the death of Dadabhai Naoroji which took place on June 30, 1917. Mrs. Besant was released on October 10, 1917 and she arrived in Bombay. Her active supporters in Bombay were Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Ratansey Dharamsee and Kanji Dwarakadas. Kanji Dwarakadas has written a book “India’s Fight for Freedom” and “Jamnadas Dwarakadas (Political Memoirs)”. These two books contain detailed information about the Home Rule League. It may also be mentioned that Umar Sobhani, S.R. Bomanji, M.A. Jinnah, M.R. Jayakar, Govindlal S. Pittie, B.G. Horniman, Shankarlal Bankar, Sayed Hussain, Gilder, Ratansey D. Morarji, L.R. Tairsee and N. Purushottam were members of the Home Rule Committee in Bombay.

On August 20, 1917 Mr. Montagu made an important announcement on the floor of the House of Commons regarding future Constitutional development of India. The announcement indicated a policy of increasing associations of Indians in every branch of administration and the gradual development of self-Governing institutions with a view to progressive realisation of the responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. Mr. Montagu arrived in Bombay on November 1917. Great expectations were created by the announcement.

The congress Session at Calcutta was held in 1917 and Mrs. Besant was the President of this Session. Almost all prominent leaders of Congress were present and reconciliation begun at Lucknow was carried a step further at this Session. The Congress welcomed the pronouncement made by Montagu and strongly urged the necessity of immediate enactment of a Parliamentary Statute providing for the establishment of a responsible Government in India.

Jayakar and Jinnah spoke on the resolutions. S.R. Bomanji from Bombay also spoke on the occasion.

On April 22, 1918 Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford published their report on Indian Constitutional Reform. The report created great stir in India and was an apple of discord. There schools of thought emerged. One school dominated by Nationalists expressed complete abhorrence of the report on the ground that it did not go far enough and was an empty sham. Another school of Moderates was anxious to accept it without criticism or difference. The Congress held a midway position with criticism of the report with a view to making it more acceptable to Indian public opinion. Accordingly a special session of the Indian National Congress was held in Bombay on August 29, 30 and 31 and September 1, 1918 in spacious pavilion erected on the Marine Lines Maidan. Hasan Imam was the President of the session.

The Session created great stir in Bombay. It was very well attended, there being no less than 500 lady delegates present. Vithalbhai Patel was the Chairman of the Reception Committee and Syed Hasan Imam was the the President. Many prominent Congressmen attended, among them may be mentioned the names of Annie Besant, Sarojini Naidu, Madan

Mohan Malviya, Motilal Nehru, B. G. Tilak, C. R. Das, Motilal Ghosh, B. C. Pal, Harkisanlal, Vijayaraghavacharya of Salem, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Harchandrai Bishindas, C. Rajagopalachari, Gokarnath Mishra, Satyamurti, and M. S. Aney. Among the Muslim leaders may be mentioned the Raja of Mahamudabad, Yaqub Hasan, Abbas Tayabji, Abdul Cassam, Fazlul Haq, Wazir Husain and S.A. Brelvi. Jayakar participated in this Congress session fully and had the privilege of being one of the ten speakers on the main resolution relating to the Reform Scheme. The Congress-League Scheme was the main basis of the proposals of Reform and a note justifying and supplementing that scheme had been prepared by Wacha and nine others and submitted to the Secretary of State and the Viceroy while the enquiry into the question of Indian Constitutional Reforms was in progress. The note stated, *inter alia*:

If the goal announced is not to be a mere pious wish but is to be treated as an end attainable within a reasonable time and to be strenuously striven for the immediate substantial steps to be taken in that direction, at the close of the war, can scarcely fall short of the essential features of the Congress-League Scheme, which contains devolution of powers, this devolution being necessarily accompanied by a reform of the Legislative and Executive machinery of the Government of India and of the Provincial Government, so as to invest

subject, in all cases, to a reasonably restricted veto of Government, the elected representatives of the people with effective control of the administration in so far only as domestic matters are concerned, leaving altogether untouched the present powers of the Government of India in regard to the direction of the Military affairs and the foreign and political relations of India, including the declaration of war, the making of peace and the entering into treaties; as also in respect of Military Charges for the defence of the country and Tributes from Indian States, that is to say, confining popular control, under proper safeguards, to matters of internal administration only, leaving unimpaired the authority of the Central Executive Government to hold the country in subjection and to protect it against external aggression.

The note went on to say:

A graceful and dispassionate consideration of the proposals embodied in the Congress-League Scheme will thus show that there is nothing in them to cause alarm to those who are anxious to preserve in tact the power of the Government of India to maintain Law and Order Within and avert aggression from the borders of India.

Mrs. Besant in her speech at the special Session in Bombay expressed in very strong terms the necessity of sending deputation to England to agitate for the adoption of the Congress and Muslim League scheme and to have necessary modifications introduced in the Montford Report. Accordingly, it was decided to send deputations and personnel of deputations were also finalised. On April 16, 1918 a communication was received from the Secretary of State for India intimating the Passports would be refused to Home Rule and Congress deputations wishing to proceed to England.

In June 1918 a meeting of the citizens of Bombay was held in Bombay town Hall under the Presidentship of Lord Willingdon, the then Governor of Bombay in connection with the War affairs. Jamnadas Dwarkadas describes the proceedings of the meeting as under:

“When Lord Willingdon rose to speak at the Conference, although he made no reference to the attitude of the Home Rulers, he indulged in a subtle but cheap attack on the foremost political party. Immediately after he finished, Tilak walked up to the platform and in the first few sentences expressed the willingness of the Home Rulers to give their support to the British Government, but on Conditions that he would beg leave to declare from the platform. He had hardly stated any condition when Lord Willingdon called him to order and said that he would not allow that platform to be used for ventilating the political views either of an individual or of a party. All appeals to reason failed with the result that Tilak, Karandikar, Kelkar, Banerjee, Omar, Shankarlal and I immediately staged a walk-out in protest against Lord Willingdon’s behaviour. Jinnah, however, changed his mind at the last moment and did not walk out with us. Vithalbhai Patel who never was in our party remained in his seat. Gandhiji also did not budge an inch from his seat through he felt very strongly, as we came to know later, the insult hurled at Lokmanya Tilak and others. When Jinnah’s turn came to speak he castigated the Governor in very strong language for his failure to win over the foremost party in the land because of his most absurd and ill-conceived attitude towards them. He told Lord Willingdon that the British Government would hardly offer thanks to him for allowing his prejudice against a certain party to get the better of his duty to mobilise people of every political colour to the side of the British Government. I must admit that Jinnah’s speech made many who were present at the Conference thoroughly enjoy the discomfiture of Lord Willingdon and his bureaucratic entourage.” [\[Jamnadas Dwarkadas: *Political Memories*, p. 243.\]](#)

Sometime afterwards a meeting was held regarding South African question. This meeting was also to be held under the Presidentship of Lord Willingdon and invitations were sent to 4 persons representing Bombay Home Rule League, viz., Jinnah, Jayakar, Bhulabhai Desai and Horniman to speak on the occasion. As Tilak was not allowed to speak on the previous occasion the Committee of the Home Rule League decided that as a protest against that action, none of the Home Rule League leaders should attend the meeting. Bhulabhai did not agree and therefore he resigned his membership of the League. Thus, there was a split in the Home Rule League. On April 24, 1918 a public meeting of the citizens of Bombay was held under the auspice of the Home Rule League to hear a statement from Gandhi in regard to the situation of Kaira in Gujarat and the passive resistance movement inaugurated there to express sympathy with resisters who have suffered. This was one of Gandhi’s rare utterances before the Bombay audience at that time. Tilak moved a resolution at the meeting expressing sympathy and support to the Kaira cultivators against injustice on the part of the local authority and urging the Government either to grant the request of the people for suspension in connection with the revenue assessment for one year or to grant an impartial enquiry to investigate the question of the extent of the failure of the crop.

The Government of India had prepared two Bills for the Legislative Council. They were known as Rowlatt Bills. The object was to displace as much of the ordinary procedure for the trial of a person accused of as possible and to secure a speedy conviction. A Special Court from whose judgment there will be no appeal; trial in camera and consideration of evidence not admissible by Law of evidence were provided for this purpose. Extraordinary powers of search, arrest, demand of security, etc. were conferred on the Provincial Governments. Indians felt that such repressive measures were uncalled for. But in spite of protest from almost all sides, the Assembly passed the Bill into Law which came into operation from March 21, 1919. This was known as Rowlatt Act. Jinnah from Bombay who was in Assembly at that time had opposed the passage of the Bill. Hence, after passage of the Bill, Jinnah resigned from the Assembly. In the letter of resignation, Jinnah *inter alia* stated:

“The fundamental principles of justice have been uprooted and the Constitutional rights of the people have been violated at a time when there will be no real danger to the State In my opinion, a Government that passes or sanctions such a Law in times of peace forfeits its claim to be called a Civil Government.”

There was agitation all over the country against the Rowlatt Act. In Bombay on April 26, 1919 Benjamin Guy Horniman, Editor of Bombay Chronicle was suddenly arrested and removed to a steamship in the harbour and summarily deported to England. Horniman had grown very popular for his courageous support and advocacy of Indian freedom and for his independence in his editorials of the Bombay Chronicle. Hence, there was a great commotion in Bombay. After his deportation, Bombay remained tense until Mr. Montagu spoke in the House of Commons and referred to Horniman's deportation. Horniman wrote an article in Bombay Chronicle on September 5, 1919 under the caption “How I was deported” and explained the circumstances of his deportation. Public meetings were held in Bombay demanding the withdrawal orders against Horniman. On the removal of Horniman, the Bombay Chronicle paper and press were placed with dramatic suddenness under official's censorship. Subsequently, the order of pre-censorship was followed by another order forfeiting the security of the press. Efforts were made by the Chairman and the Board of Directors of the Bombay Chronicle to lift the order of pre-censorship. The Board of Directors also issued suitable instructions to S. A. Brelvi, the Editor of the Bombay Chronicle so that its pre-censorship order may be removed. Accordingly it was removed on June 18, 1919.

As pointed earlier, a Special Session of Congress was held in Bombay in August 1918 to decide the attitude towards the Constitutional reforms announced by Mr. Montagu. The Congress reaffirmed its principle of reform contained in the Congress-League Scheme and declared that nothing less than self-Government within the Empire would satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the Indian people. The Congress also pointed out that earnest attempt made by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State to inaugurate the system of responsible Government were however disappointing and unsatisfactory and suggested certain modifications which were considered necessary and desirable in the country's interest. However, all Congressmen were not prepared to accept these modifications and some of them formed a separate organisation which was styled as “The National Liberal Federation of

India.” The first session of this Federation was held in Bombay in November 1918. Thus, the Liberals who controlled the Congress upto 1915 were ultimately required to leave the Congress and form a separate body in order to work in the spirit of moderation which was the practice followed by them in the Congress till 1915.

The establishment of National Liberal Federation of India removed some old Congressmen from the Congress. Thus, the old generation of Congressmen disappeared from Congress platform though a few of them continued in Congress. The question of Swadeshi brought members of commercial community in Congress. The Congress slowly under Gandhi’s leadership was to usher a new era in Indian politics.

Before concluding this Chapter, following passage from Political Memoirs by Jamnadas Dwarkadas deserves to be quoted:

“The first time I saw Gandhiji was at a party given soon after his arrival, by the Imperial Citizenship Association of India in the late Mr. Jehangir Petit’s palatial gardens in Bombay. I have already referred to his garb which was an attraction to many of us. But it was when he saluted the tall figure of Sir Pherozshah Mehta on his arrival at the party by prostrating in the traditional or ancient fashion that some of us wondered what great change this man was going to bring into the life of India. His humility despite his own greatness and his respect for the elders whose sacrifice did not equal his own were uncommon in the political life of India in those days.”
[Jamnadas Dwarkadas: Political Memories, p. 3]

CHAPTER II - DAWN OF GANDHIAN ERA

[Gandhi was closely associated with Bombay from 1917 to 1934. During the period his headquarters in Bombay were Mani Bhavan on the Laburnum Road, Gamdevi. This building is now a Gandhi Memorial.]

(See- Gandhi and Mani Bhavan, Published by Mani Bhavan, Gandhi Sangrahalaya Bombay.)

The history of Indian National Congress from 1919 onwards indicates departure from the old traditional principles and acceptance of new principles. Gandhi came to Bombay for the first time in the year 1915. He wanted to join the Servants of India Society as a worker. Gopal Krishna Gokhale the President of the Society also wanted Gandhi to join Servants of India Society, Gokhale came to Bombay from Poona as Gandhi was not able to travel to Poona on account of his ill-health. However, as Gandhi's joining Servants of India Society was opposed by some of the colleagues of Gokhale, Gandhi gave up the idea of being a member of the Servants of India Society. He however slowly emerged as a powerful figure on the Congress horizon. The political conditions in the country at that time also helped Gandhi in his emergence. Rowlatt Act and the Jalianwala Bagh massacre in Punjab created countrywide agitation against the British Government. The Government resorted to repressive measures throughout the country. Hence, Gandhi started the Satyagraha campaign in February 1919 at Ahmedabad. The Governor General, in addition to the various repressive measures, also proclaimed Martial Law in Lahore and other places in the Punjab between April 15 and 20, 1919. Various Martial Law Ordinances were issued. A number of Commissions were set up for trial of offences. Information regarding what was happening in the Punjab under Martial Law Administration was very strictly censored. But, even then, news filtered through about the oppressive nature of the various measures taken under Martial Law. In Bombay, several meetings were held to express strong disapproval. Bombay had already expressed disapproval of the Rowlatt legislation and the Bombay Committee consisting of Jinnah, Jayakar, Jamnadas, Dwarkadas, Horniman, C.V. Vaidya, Umar Sobani and others was set up to carry on concerted agitation against the Rowlatt legislation. On account of countrywide agitation against the Rowlatt Act and Jalianwala Bagh incident and Martial law incidents, the Government of India appointed a Committee under the Chairmanship of Lord Hunter to investigate the disturbances in Bombay, Delhi and the Punjab, their causes and the measures taken to cope with them. Chimanlal Setalvad from Bombay was a member of this Committee.

The enquiries were to be conducted in public though any part of proceedings would be conducted in camera if the President considered such a course desirable in public interest.

The Congress had already decided to appoint a Committee.

The All India Congress Committee held its meeting in Bombay on 20th and 21st April 1919 and appointed a Committee consisting the following persons:

1. President, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.
2. M.A. Jinnah.
3. M.R. Jayakar.
4. R. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar.
5. Pandit Motilal Nehru.
6. Vithalbhai J. Patel.

The terms of reference of the Committee were—

- (a) replying to the communiqué issued by the Government of India dated the 14th instant in which they justified the Rowlatt Act, condemned the agitation against it and characterised it as calculated to mislead people;
- (b) stating the various causes that have led up to the present grave and deplorable state of things all over the country; and
- (c) making a demand for a public inquiry into the events that have happened in Delhi, the Punjab, Bombay and Calcutta, drawing particular attention to certain measures reported to have been taken by the Executive, which seem obviously objectionable, such as the dropping of bombs from aeroplanes, use of machine guns and whipping, and submit it to the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for India, the Under-Secretary of State and the Viceroy.

The Committee accordingly prepared the following statement and cabled it to the parties mentioned above in England, including Lord Sinha, the then Under-Secretary of State for India.

All-India Congress Committee desire most earnestly to represent to His Majesty's Government intense gravity of present situation in India, real causes and need for change of policy pursued at present. While deploring and condemning popular excesses which have occurred in some parts of country, and which popular leaders have everywhere used their influence not unsuccessfully to restrain, Committee urge impartial consideration of circumstances which have so aggravated and embittered feelings of people throughout the country as to make such outbreaks possible. Resolution of the Government of India dated 14th instant describing present situation as arising out of Rowlatt Act agitation makes only partial statement of the case. Undoubtedly intense universal bitterness of opposition to Rowlatt Act forced through Legislature by official votes against unanimous protest of all non-official Indian members and in face of unparalleled opposition throughout the country was immediate cause of recent popular peaceful demonstrations but subsequent excesses were provoked by needless and unjustifiable action of Government of India and Punjab and Delhi Governments against so revered a personality as that of Mr. Gandhi and against other popular leaders. For complete understanding however of present discontent and its causes, other important factors must be considered.”

In Bombay a Satyagraha Sabha was already formed and the Sabha canvassed actively for obtaining signatures and educating the people in the principles of Satyagraha by publishing number of bulletins and wall-posters. The Satyagrahi's pledge was drafted by Gandhi. It ran as follows:

“Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bills known as Indian Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill No. 1 of 1919, and Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill No. 2 of 1919 are unjust, subversive of the principles of liberty and justice and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals on which the safety of the community as a whole and the State itself is based, we solemnly affirm that in the event of this Bill becoming Law and until they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey these Laws and such other Laws as a Committee to be hereafter appointed may think fit. We further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person and property.”

The Executive Committee for carrying on the Satyagraha was appointed in Bombay and the personnel were as follows:

President, M. K. Gandhi, Vice-President, B. G. Horniman, Members of the Committee: Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Dr. Erulkar, M. Subedar, L.R. Tairsee, Azad, Dr. M. B. Velkar, Jamnadas M. Mehta, L. G. Khare, V.A. Desai, Mrs. Avantikabai Gokhale, Chunilal Ujamsi, R. N. Mandlik, Jethamal Narayandas, Hansraj P. Thackersey, and Vithaldas V. Jerajani with powers to add; Secretaries: Dr. Sathye, Shankarlal Banker and Umar Sobhani, L. R. Tairsees and Hansraj Thackersey were elected Hon. Treasurers and P. K. Telang, Dr. G. N. Desai and Kanji Dwarakadas were added to the Executive Committee. As part of the work of the Committee there was a meeting of the textile workers near Elphinstone Mill at which Raut, Gandhi, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Horniman and Dr. Savarkar spoke. At Danabunder, Gandhi addressed a meeting and pointed out that,—

“Satyagraha is a new principle in politics aimed at reaching the goal and of no acceptance of anything else. We have resolved to fight for our goal on the strength of truth until we are overpowered by death. We shall die but we shall fight for our goal.”

On April 6, 1919, a Black Sunday was observed in Bombay. Women of Bombay came out of their seclusion to join the demonstration; they fasted and marched in procession to Chowpatty, clad in black sarees. Gandhi was one of the first arrivals in Chowpatty with several volunteers. There were about 100 Satyagrahis around him. People kept pouring in and there was a huge mass of people in Chowpatty. The whole of Sandhurst Bridge swarmed with people. There must have been approximately 11/2 lakh of people. All communities were represented including one Englishman. As Gandhi was not keeping good health, his speech was read by Jamnadas Mehta. After the meeting a procession to Madhav Bagh Temple was taken to offer prayers. Gandhi afterwards was taken to a Mosque in Grant Road where he

addressed a large meeting attended by Hindus and Muslims. In the afternoon there was a ladies meeting presided over by Mrs. Jayakar at which Gandhi spoke that the Hartal in Bombay was a complete success. Full preparation has been made for starting civil disobedience. As a protest against the Rowlatt Act, on the day following the Black Sunday, Gandhi issued unregistered newspaper named 'Satyagraha'. He also sent a copy of the same to the Police Commissioner. Detailed instructions were included about the manner of committing civil disobedience. Gandhi on his way to Delhi was arrested and brought back to Bombay by the Police and released. But the news of his arrest excited the people and there was rioting. When Gandhi reached Bombay, Umar Sobhani and Anasuyaben took him to Pydhoni where a huge crowd gathered and was full of joy at seeing him. A procession was formed. As the procession was proceeding a body of mounted police appeared and brickbats rained from above. As the procession emerged from Abdul Rahaman Street into Crawford Market Square, it was faced with wild charge by the mounted police brandishing their lances. The procession was broken. Some people were trampled under foot, others were badly mauled and crushed. Gandhi went to Police Headquarters to complain to the Commissioner Griffith about conduct of the police. Gandhi returned to Mani Bhavan, Gamdevi and was unhappy at the violence indulged in by the people in spite of his and all co-workers' direction to them to observe complete non-violence.

Gandhi afterwards went to Ahmedabad, returned to Bombay and suspended civil disobedience. He sent a letter to the Secretary of the Satyagraha Sabha conveying his decision to suspend civil disobedience. Then there was an informal conference of Satyagrahis from different parts of India at the end of May 1919. It appears that at this conference Gandhi was criticised both by the Extremists and the Moderates. There was an idea in the mind of Gandhi to despatch from Bombay a number of trusted men who were sufficiently well-known to be objected to, to introduce into Punjab the principles of passive resistance. Jamnadas Dwarkadas protested vigorously against any such scheme. Jamnadas formally resigned from Satyagraha Sabha on June 3, 1919. Further there was a large number of resignations from Satyagraha Sabha.

Gandhi then restructured his plan of campaign and drafted detailed instructions to guide Sabha during his absence. For Bombay, he appointed Mrs. Naidu, Umar Sobhani, Shankarlal Banker, I. K. Yagnik successively as leaders to carry on the civil disobedience. In a letter to the Secretaries of Satyagraha Sabha, Gandhi wrote. "I would like the Executive Committee to consider and decide upon the question of the renewal of the civil disobedience which I think should take place in the beginning of July next."

On June 18 Gandhi gave a notice of civil disobedience in a letter to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy. On July 1, Gandhi issued a statement from Bombay giving detailed instructions about civil disobedience movement. The Government of Bombay conveyed grave warning of the consequences which must inevitably be anticipated from the resumption of any action involving disobedience of the law. Gandhi then on the advice of some of his friends suspended civil resistance movement for the time being. This suspension was severely

criticised by many Satygrahis. ‘Hindustan’ a Gujarati newspaper described Gandhi as ‘Khuni’ (murderer).

In Bombay, Gandhi presided over many meetings. One was organised by Bhagini Samaj. Another at Excelsior Theatre was held to celebrate the 73rd birthday of Dr. Annie Besant. A meeting was held to collect funds for presenting a Purse to Tilak who was fighting the case against Sir Valentine Chirol. In March 1920 Gandhi was requested to accept the Presidentship of Home Rule League. From early March 1920 Gandhi began to organise from Bombay first national week from 6 to 13 of April. Bombay responded generously for financial help for the Jalianwala Bagh memorial. Rs. 3 lakhs were already collected and Gandhi wanted Rs. 2 lakhs more. A public meeting of citizens of Bombay was held under the joint auspices of Presidency Association, Provincial Congress Committee, the Bombay Branch of Home Rule League and the National Union, near French Bridge, on April 6. D.M. Petit presided over the meeting. On the last day of the National Week a public meeting was held under the auspices of Bombay Branch of the Home Rule League and the National Union. Jinnah presided over the meeting. At another meeting over which Jinnah presided, the Hunter Committee Report was severely criticised and a resolution was passed against the Report. A resolution also called for impeachment of O’Dwyer and his fellow officers. Recall of Lord Chelmsford to England was also demanded.

Before we turn to the non-cooperation movement started by Gandhi, a reference deserves to be made to the Congress Enquiry Committee on Punjab atrocities. The Committee discussed the details of the Report day after day with Gandhi. He made many suggestions and modified the Report at many places. On certain points a draft made by Jayakar was changed substantially by Gandhi. It was because of Gandhi’s insistence on truth that Congress Enquiry Committee Report became a remarkable one. Following passage from Jayakar’s ‘Story of My Life’ indicates the strength of the report:

“No greater testimony to the accuracy and restraint of our Report could have been given than the verdict, as stated below, of one who was accustomed all his life to sift and weigh evidence before judicial tribunals.

When I returned to the High Court after six months’ absence in the Punjab, I met Inverarity, the then doyen of the Bombay Bar. He was then in his declining years. Yet the fire of his advocacy, his ripeness of judgment, his love of accuracy, were still his own and had remained undiminished. He asked me where I had disappeared all these months. I explained to him what I had been doing in the Punjab, and ended by mentioning that our deliberations had crystallised in a report which had then been published. He said he would like to read it. I gave him a copy. He finished it overnight, and next morning said to me, in his characteristic manner, “I should like to put a bullet through your head for writing such a report. It is a damaging document, and you know its effect is largely due to the very careful way in which you have presented your facts and the restraint with which you have drawn your conclusions. Who is responsible for such a Report?” I said, “Mainly Gandhi.” “You know.” he said

“its restraint makes the Report all the more damaging from the British point of view, because I have always thought that if the Indian case were presented with accuracy, truth and restraint, as your report does, it would cause far more damage to our rule in India than the rubbish some newspapers write from day to day and you can take it from me that, when this Report is read in England, it will produce a far greater effect than in India, where people delight in hyperboles.”

I am quoting Inverarity’s testimony because he happened to be, for many years, the doyen of the Bombay Bar, head and shoulders over every other member of it. His own advocacy was always inclined to be in the direction of under-statement, and he won his cases by the sheer force of his argument, without recourse to exaggeration, embellishment or equivocation.” [Jayakar M.R.: *The Story of My Life*, pp. 325-26.]

Non-Co-operation Movement

The idea of non-cooperation was entertained by Gandhi after the Punjab Enquiry Report. For long time, there was great vagueness in Gandhi’s utterances. But, he gradually began to develop his idea. His main utterance was,.....

“Let Indians take in their hands the Government machine so that it starts working automatically.” His chief centres of activity were (1) schools and colleges, and (2) Law courts. Gandhi attacked the British system of education as a part of non-cooperation movement and within a few months the British system of education became the target of severe attack, so also the legal profession.

At Calcutta Session the most important resolution was one dealing with non-cooperation which was moved by Gandhi. [ibid.. p. 392.] The resolution chalked out a programme of non-cooperation. Though, the non-cooperation programme was finally accepted by the Congress at Nagpur Session. Gandhi in his capacity as the President of the Home Rule League issued from Bombay a circular to all branches of the League on September 25, 1920. Final programme was as follows:

- “(a) surrender of titles and honorary offices and resignation from nominated seats in Local Bodies;
- (b) refusal to attend Government Levies, Durbars and other official and semi-official functions held by Government officials, and in their honour;
- (C) gradual withdrawal of children from schools and colleges owned, aided or controlled by Government, and, in place of such schools and colleges, the establishment of national schools and colleges in the various provinces;
- (d) gradual boycott of British Courts by lawyers and litigants. and the establishment of private Arbitration Courts by their aid for the settlement of private disputes;
- (e) refusal on the part of the military, clerical and labouring classes to offer themselves as recruits for service in Mesopotamia;

- (f) withdrawal by candidates of their candidature for election to the Reform Council, and refusal on the part of the voters to vote for any candidate who may, despite the Congress advice offer themselves for election;
- (g) boycott of foreign goods;

And inasmuch as non-cooperation has been conceived as a measure of discipline and self-sacrifice, without which no nation can make real progress, and inasmuch as an opportunity should be given, in the very first stage of non-cooperation, to every man, women and child for such discipline and sacrifice, this Congress advises adoption of Swadeshi in piecegoods on a vast scale and, inasmuch as the existing mills of India with indigenous capital and control do not manufacture sufficient yarn and sufficient cloth for the requirements of the Nation, and are not likely to do so for a long time to come, this Congress advises immediate stimulation of further manufacture on a large scale by means of reviving hand-spinning in every house and hand-weaving on the part of the millions of weavers who have abandoned their ancient and honourable calling for want of encouragement.”

Gandhi was to start non-cooperation on 1st August 1920. However, Tilak breathed his last in Bombay at Sardar Griha in early hours of the morning of that day. N. C. Kelkar and others wanted to take the body of Tilak to Poona for cremation. Efforts were made to dissuade them from this course of action. However, they were insisting on taking the body. Then Dr. Gopalrao V. Deshmukh, a leading Surgeon of Bombay who was attending on Tilak, took Kelkar to the balcony of Sardar Griha and pointed to the huge crowds spreading from Crawford Market to Dhobi Talao and suggested to Kelkar to take their permission before taking Tilak’s body to Poona. Kelkar realised the futility of his point of view and agreed to cremation of Tilak in Bombay. Special permission was already obtained from the authorities to cremate Tilak on Chowpatty sands through the good offices of Shri Vasantrao Dabholkar who was Sheriff of Bombay in 1916. The permission was granted on the condition that this will not be a precedent and no other cremation would be permitted in future. A huge funeral procession wended through the streets of Bombay. It may be mentioned that Gandhi, Shaikat Ali, Dr. Kitchlew shouldered the bire turn by turn along the route to Chowpatty.

Next day, Gandhi paid his tribute to Tilak in the following words:

“A giant among men has fallen. Though the roar of the lion is hushed, often he will go down in generation yet unborn as a maker of modern India. They will revive his memory as a self-man who lived for them and died for them. Let us erect for the only Lokmanya of India an imperishable monument by weaving into our own lives his bravery, his simplicity, his wonderful industry and his love for his country.”

On the Chowpatty sands where Lokmanya Tilak was cremated stands a statute of Tilak which was unveiled by one of his disciples, M.S. Aney in early thirties.

The non-cooperation movement was associated with Khilapat agitation. Gandhi while speaking on non-cooperation promised that if there was sufficient response to his plan, India can achieve Swarajya in the course of a year. Jinnah and Jayakar however voted against the resolution.

As a part of the non-cooperation movement, Gandhi addressed Students of the Wilson College and asked them to fulfil the non-cooperation programme. It may be stated that the non-cooperation programme of boycott of the educational institutions did not receive enthusiastic response in the city of Bombay. It was said that the Bombay University like the Calcutta University kept itself away from the non-cooperation programme. However, some national schools were established and Gandhi addressed one of such schools at Vile Parle. Uma Shankar Joshi famous Gujarati poet was a teacher in this school. The programme of the boycott of the courts by lawyers also did not receive enthusiastic support from legal profession though Jayakar did suspend his practice for some time. However, the programme of Khadi and the boycott and bonfire of foreign cloth received an enthusiastic support from people. It was in Bombay that Gandhi fully evolved the economics and philosophy of Khadi. Through the good offices of Umar Sobhani, Gandhi met a mill-owner who confessed that his tribe had exploited the wave of Swadeshi following in the wake of agitation against partition of Bengal. They even passed off foreign cloth as Swadeshi.

Leading workers of Home Rule League joined the Swadeshi Sabha after the activities of the League were discontinued. Chief among them were Sarojini Naidu, Umar Sobhani, L. R. Tairsee, Vithaldas Jerajani and Shankarlal Banker. Umar Sobhani arranged a meeting of Gandhi with Sir Fazalbhoy, a leading mill-owner. Fazalbhoy told Gandhi that for the sake of Swadeshi movement more production would be needed. Gandhi insisted on more production of Khadi. Vithaldas Jerajani was drafted by Gandhi for his work. Under his able management, Bombay Khadi Bhandar was established and made rapid strides. Jerajani dedicated his entire life to the Khadi work. He managed to meet the demand for Khadi. During 1931, Khadi worth Rs. 7,41,000 was sold in Bombay city alone. Gandhi appreciated the work done by Bombay for the spread of Khadi. He paid rich tributes to Bombay in the following words:

“In Bombay ladies of noted families have already taken up spinning. Their ranks have been joined by Dr. (Mrs.) Manekbai Bahadurji.”

In order to impress upon the mind of masses the importance of Swadeshi and the boycott of foreign cloth, bonfire of foreign cloth was arranged at various places in Bombay. Bonfire was held in Umar Sobhani's yard at Parel and was witnessed by a very large crowd. On 1st August 1921 a huge meeting was held on the Chowpatty sands where Tilak was cremated. Gandhi addressed the meeting and explained the importance of boycott of foreign clothes and use of Swadeshi.

Tilak's Swaraj Fund

The All India Congress Committee meeting was held in Bombay on October 2, 1920 in the Presidency Association room when it discussed the issue of raising Tilak Swaraj Fund, a resolution to that effect was passed at the Calcutta session. Gandhi devoted himself to the raising of Tilak Swaraj Fund between July 1920 and 1921. He addressed meetings in Bombay where ladies offered him their own jewelleries which were sold by public auction and credited the amount to Tilak Swaraj Fund. Various Wards in Bombay donated liberally to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Ghatkopar presented Gandhi an address and purse of Rs. 40,000. At Santa Cruz, Rs. 30,000 were given to Tilak Swaraj Fund. Rs. 60,000 were donated by Mandvi Ward. The Cotton Association, Bombay, presented Gandhi Rs.2,30,000. A. B. Godrej, a Parsee merchant prince went to see Gandhi on 2 or 3 days but said nothing to Gandhi. Finally, Gandhi asked him what he wanted. He replied, he wished to contribute to Tilak Swaraj Fund. Gandhi extended his hand and Rs. 3 lakhs were given. An interesting account of the Tilak Swaraj Fund was supplied to the author by his friend, Dr. Ramnath Anandilal Podar who has kindly sent a note on the completion of Tilak Swaraj Fund. The relevant part of the note is as follows:

“My late father Shri Anandilalji Podar was associated with the Indian National Congress, more as a donor to the Congress Funds for the national freedom movement, right from the time Mahatma Gandhi came on the political scene in India in 1916.

He was the ‘Secret Treasurer’ of Congress funds whenever the Congress Organisation was declared unlawful during the Freedom Movement.”

After the said demise of Lokmanya Tilak Maharaj in August 1920, Gandhiji announced on about 15th April 1921 his decision to create a special Fund of Rupees one crore in memory of the late Lokmanya, to be called the ‘Tilak Swaraj Fund’ (TSF). Gandhiji fixed the deadline for completing the collections as 30th June 1921, and announced that if the said amount would not be collected by the said date, he would retire from politics and go to the Himalayas. It was the period of post-war (First World War) boom, and any amount could have been collected on Gandhiji's appeal and looking to the public reverence for Tilak Maharaj. But in early 1921 Gandhiji had to withdraw the Congress non-violent agitation at Chauri Chaura in Bihar (which was started against suppression of the freedom movement by the British Government) when it turned violent because of the skirmishes between the Congress volunteers and the police. Consequently, people were afraid of British wrath if they donated for the cause of Independence.

Inspite of best efforts by the great national leaders of that time, including Pandit Madanmohanji Malaviya, Pandit Motilalji Nehru, Shri C.R. Das, Lala Lajpatrai and Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, who was the Treasurer of the Congress Party at that time, only Rs. 6 lacs could be collected for TSF upto 14th June 1921, which too was in the form of collections in the jholi at various public meetings through-ought India held by the INC. Except for the donation of about Rs. 25,000 openly given by Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, there were no donations of

more than Rs. 5,000. Only a few days were left before the deadline and not only the Congress leaders but even whole country was gripped by tension and fear about Gandhiji's determination of retiring to Himalayas if his conditions are not fulfilled. Nobody could think of any way out of either getting some more time from Gandhiji for collection for TSF, nor the method of collecting the funds.

On that fateful day of 15th June 1921 in the evening, Jamnalalji Bajaj phoned Anandilalji in a very desperate state of mind to discuss some ticklish problems of the impending calamity before the country. Jamnalalji came with a pale and depressed face which clearly showed his worry and tension. Jamnalalji was in tears and in brief stated that Gandhiji will go to Himalayas and the National Freedom Movement will receive a big setback. He did not know what to do, but came to Anandilalji only to lighten his heart before an elder brother. After hearing Jamnalalji, Anandilalji told him that there was no dearth of money for the national cause and that too donating money at Mahatmaji's appeal. But the main thing was that rich people were mortally afraid of the British anger because of withdrawal by Gandhiji of the Congress movement in Chauri Chaura, as referred to earlier.

Anandilalji however suggested to Jamnalalji that he is prepared to take a risk and would donate a sum of Rs. 1,01,000 to the TSF, on the condition that the said funds are to be utilised for spreading education in backward areas of Rajasthan by creating a separate Trust, with Mahatmaji as Chairman Trustee to guide the activities of the Trust. Anandilalji further told Jamnalalji that if his offer was accepted and nothing happened to him or his family, in the following 2/3 days people will be emboldened and the desired amount of Rs. One crore would be forthcoming from the people from various parts of India.

On Anandilalji's advice, Jamnalalji went for consultation about his offer to Pt. Madanmohanji Malaviya and Pt. Motilalji Nehru who were both in Bombay at that time. Both of them were very pleasantly surprised at this bold offer and decided to meet Gandhiji early next morning soon after his prayers, to get his consent. Accordingly the three of them, i.e. Malaviyaji, Motilalji and Jamnalalji went to Gandhiji's place in Bombay and persuaded him to agree to this slightly conditional offer of donation of such a large amount. After the meeting, Jamnalalji came and told Anandilalji that the offer has been accepted by Mahatmaji and he is going to the press to flash the big news.

At this stage Anandilalji told Jamnalalji the quantum of his donation is being increased from Rs. 1, 01,000 to Rs. 2, 01,000 which made Jamnalalji still more happy.

Jamnalalji took away with him a large size photograph of Anandilalji which was hanging in the hall and within an hour the big news was flashed in the old famous Nationalist English Daily, the 'Bombay Chronicle' (edited by the late nationalist Englishman, Mr. B. G. Horniman and published by the Bombay Samachar Group of Papers, belonging to the great nationalist 'Cama' family). Jamnalalji had earlier phoned Mr. Horniman to hold back for about an hour, the morning edition of Bombay Chronicle of 16th June 1921 saying that he

might have a very big news to be flashed that early morning. Thereafter, the news was also flashed on the Reuters throughout the country.

Various businessmen in the country, having noticed that no action was taken against Anandilalji for his initiative for openly announcing such a large donation to the TSF, promised and announced and sent cheques of lacs of rupees from 17th June onwards. On 16th June 1921 news appeared in all papers about the donation announced by Anandilalji, and on the following day a Muslim lady of Bombay who was highly devoted to Gandhiji announced a donation of Rs. 5 lacs to the TSF.

By 28th June, over one crore of rupee were collected. on 29th June there was a telegram from Shri C. R. Das from Calcutta to Motilaji Nehru about further promises of donations of Rs. 26 lacs for the TSF, from businessmen of Calcutta.

Several businessmen in Bombay phoned Anandilalji on 19th June. Some of them congratulating him for his bold step, but most of them indicating their disapproval saying that he should not have taken such a risk, which might put his whole family and business in great trouble. Anandilalji thanked those who congratulated him but smiled at those who chided him.”

The working Committee of the Congress which met on 14th and 15th June 1921 authorised Jamnalal Bajaj and Umar Sobhani to operate the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

It may be stated that after the death of Tilak, many of his followers who were also considered as revolutionaries, became the followers of Gandhi. Kakasaheb Khadilkar, a staunch follower of Tilak came to Bombay in 1920. He was editing a paper ‘Lokmanya’. He identified himself with the Congress movement under Gandhi’s leadership. He was against Council entry. But the management of ‘Lokmanya’ was in favour of Council entry. Hence, he resigned his editorship of ‘Lokmanya’. He started his own newspaper ‘Navakal’ which is at present edited by his grandson Neelkanth Khadilkar. ‘Navakal’ supported Gandhi’s programme fully and Kakasaheb Khadilkar through his editorial, preached Gandhi’s philosophy. Khadilkar appreciated merit. Hence, he encouraged young men, even though they had political views not favourable to Congress. Prof. N. R. Phatak was one of such young men. ‘Navakal’ was required to face many prosecutions for its editorials. Khadilkar was prosecuted and was sentenced to one year’s imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 2,000.

As a part of the Swadeshi agitation, attempts were made in Bombay to establish a National College by Jayakar. Jayakar also offered to Gandhi, as an alternative to boycott of the courts, his entire professional income from month to month, to begin with, for three years. However, that was not acceptable to Gandhi. So he suspended practice. As regards the National College that Jayakar wanted to establish, Gandhi sent Gidwani to meet Jayakar and conveyed to him certain conditions about financial help to the proposed college. As those conditions were not acceptable, the project failed. Though the College was already started, after few months it was required to be closed. The National Medical College however was

started in Bombay at that time. Dr. Sathe had taken lead in starting this college. Gandhi sometime later visited the National Medical College and expressed his joy on seeing the institution progressing satisfactorily. It may be mentioned that when Dr. Sathe had asked Gandhi's advice about starting the institution, Gandhi was rather different as the task was huge and beset with many difficulties.

But, now, he was pleased to see for himself that his fears were unfounded. The National Medical College in Maharashtra even today is one of the prestigious Medical Colleges. Jayakar also gave Gandhi Rs. 25,000 for popularising Khaddar. Gandhi addressed a number of meetings in Bombay during the period of non-cooperation. In one of the meetings, Gandhi recounted his experience of the extensive tour of the country and said that if they went on with their non-cooperation propaganda work, as peacefully as they in all parts of the country had done during the preceding few months, they were sure to get Swaraj within a year.

The Prince of Wales was to come to India in 1921 and the Congress resolved to boycott his visit. On the day of his arrival in Bombay, Gandhi lit a big bonfire of foreign cloth and congratulated crowds for their calmness. However, riots broke out in Bombay on a very large scale. That was one of the most unfortunate episodes in the history of Bombay. The riots were between the Parsees, the Anglo-Indians and Jews on the one side and Hindus and Muslims on the other. At Chauri Chaura too the infuriated mob attacked the police chowki and burnt alive 21 policemen on February 4, 1922. This gave a rude shock to Gandhi. Hence, at the meeting of the Working Committee on February 12, he suspended mass civil disobedience forthwith and instructed his followers to abandon any preparation of an offensive character.

The non-cooperation movement was no doubt suspended. But in the history of freedom movement of India, it is to be noted that the "declaration of non-cooperation with the Government was in fact a revolutionary step tantamount to proclamation of war with this difference that the war was non-violent. This was a unique kind of war which demanded greater discipline, greater bravery, greater endurance, greater sacrifice, greater patience than any bloody war. It admitted of no evil passion, anger or hatred even against the enemy. It required burning faith in righteousness of the cause and unflinching resolve in its pursuit whatever befall good or evil. [Tarachand: *History of Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. III, pp. 490-91.]

From 1st of August 1920 when the non-cooperation was started to 6th February 1922, when it was suspended, the movement moved in a crescendo. Tilak Fund was oversubscribed as a result of Umar Sobhani's self-sacrificing efforts, lakhs of spinning wheels were distributed and began plying, recruitment of families reached half the target, the educational boycott was quite effective in the beginning, the number of students in college was reduced from 52,482 in 1919-1920 to 43,993 in 1921-22 and in Secondary Schools 12,81,819 in 1919-20 to 12,39,522 in 1921-22. But the non-cooperation movement made little impression upon the British Rules and the settlement of the Khilapat question was as far as ever. The

result was that frustration and bitterness rose high.” [Tarachand: *History of Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. III, p. 494.]

The decision to suspend the non-cooperation movement was not appreciated by some members of the Congress. C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru differed from the decision and wrote angry letters questioning the propriety of the resolution of the Committee. Jawaharlal Nehru was equally puzzled and distressed. Tarachand summarises his views on non-cooperation movement as follows:

“The first unarmed revolt not only in the history of India but in all history, ended actually in March 22 but it lingered on till 1924. Its failure to achieve Swaraj was temporary. But the struggle had not been fought in vain. It awakened the masses to their political rights and privileges, it created total loss of faith in the system of Government, it created an awareness which was only through their efforts that Indians can hope to be free and that Congress was the only organisation which could properly direct national efforts to gain freedom. The psychological effect of the movement on the Indian mind was remarkable. But, it also set a reaction in the mind of British which was no less notable. It shook their confidence, the belief in the righteous nature of Imperial mission, doubts began to assail them which compelled reflection upon the justification of British rule, skepticism about the result of their policies—educational, cultural, economic and political—disturbed their self-complacency and equanimity. The future appeared dark. The consciousness that they were not wanted in India, distracted the mind of Rulers. Old members of Civil Service began resolving not to send their sons into what once was regarded as the heaven-born-services. The Secretary of State, Peel wrote to Reading, ‘But, of course, it is extremely difficult here to persuade young men of best quality to enter Indian Services’.”[Tarachand: *History of Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. III, pp.508-09.]

While the non-cooperation movement was on, efforts were made in Bombay to bring about reconciliation between Government and the Congress. On January 3, 1922, a representative Conference was held at the invitation over the signatures Pandit Malaviyaji, M.A. Jinnah, Purushottamdas Thakurdas, Jayakar and others. The conference was held on January 14, 15, 1922 at Sir Cawasji Jehangir Hall. The Conference supported the proposal for Round Table conference of Government and popular representatives and recommended that in order to provide a favourable atmosphere for the dispassionate consideration of the points of controversy, all repressive measures should be suspended and further, pending the resolution of the said conference, all Hartals, Pickets and civil disobedience should cease. Gandhi in his speech at the Conference insisted that before the conference suggested by the Viceroy can be held, it was essential that proper atmosphere must be created and Government should first redress wrongs which were resorted to by them. Immediately after the close of the conference, Jinnah and Jayakar as Secretaries of the Conference put themselves in communication with the Viceroy. The conference was attended by about 300 persons. Sir Shankaran Nair, presided over the Conference. He later on withdrew from the Conference in protest against Gandhi’s terms. The Conference continued under the Chairmanship of Sir

Vishveshwariah. The Congress Working Committee which met at Mani Bhavan where Gandhi used to stay when in Bombay, a couple of days later, adopted a resolution thanking Malaviya for convening all parties conference and declaring that the civil disobedience movement contemplated by Allahabad Congress may not be started till 31st of January 1922 or pending the result of the negotiations undertaken by the Committee of the Malaviya Conference for a Round Table Conference which may be the first duty. Notwithstanding the suspension of the civil disobedience, Gandhi was arrested in March 1922 and sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment. The news caused no surprise in Bombay and it was received with calmness. While Gandhi was still a prisoner, an emergency operation was performed on him on 12th January 1924. A large public meeting of citizens of Bombay was held at Chowpatty under the auspices of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee and other bodies to offer prayers for speedy recovery of Gandhi. Jayakar who presided over the meeting, emphasised the supreme need of setting Gandhi free, for Gandhi alone knew the secret of carrying on political controversies in an atmosphere of perfect peace and goodwill. Gandhi was subsequently released. There were thanksgiving meetings all over the city of Bombay. Umar Sobhani and V.A. Desai went round the city on the morrow of Gandhi's release with banners bearing the inscription "Illumine your houses today and attend the meeting in Chowpatty in the evening". Chowpatty beach was a scene of a very large meeting of citizens to rejoice over and over for the release of Gandhi. Kakasaheb Khadilkar presided over the meeting. At night at Chotha Kabrastan of Grant Road a largely attended public meeting of Muhammadans of Bombay was held under the Chairmanship of Shaukat Ali. Gandhi stayed in Bombay to recoupe his health after his operation. During this period, Gandhi was looked after by Doctors Jivraj, Guilder and Gajjar. An interesting incident happened when the Congress Working Committee met at Juhu. While the Committee was deliberating, a man came along with a Caparisoned God-Bull. At the end of the meeting, Gandhi called in 'the showman'. All leaders crowded around. Jamnalal Bajaj asked, "Among all of us, whom does Gandhi like most". The bull went round, stood before Jawaharlal and shook its head!.

CHAPTER III - CHANGES IN POLICIES

The entire Congress organisation in the country was reorganised at Gandhi's suggestion on linguistic basis. The idea was to ensure that the message of Congress reaches the masses. This could be achieved only if the Congress work was in the language of the people of that particular region. Hence, Maharashtra got Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee and Gujarat got Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee. As regards Bombay, a separate Congress Committee was created. Gandhi described Bombay as 'India in miniature' and, therefore, according to him, a separate P.C.C. for Bombay was necessary. Thus, the Bombay Pradesh Congress Committee was born. It may be noted that the first President of the BPCC was Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and she continued to be so for 7 years. Sarojini Naidu though, she was born in the then Bengal had special attachment to Bombay. Therefore even after Independence, wherever Sarojini was, she enrolled herself as the primary member from the city of Bombay.

The Central organisation of the old Congress functioned from Bombay. The Congress Library used to be located in Bombay at the office of the BPCC for more than 25 years. The Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress laid down the number of delegates to be sent to the Congress from each PCC. Bombay was authorised to send 25 delegates though the population of Bombay at that time was less than a million and ratio fixed was one delegate to lakh of population. This number of 25 was further increased.

In the Civil Disobedience movement in 1930, the contribution of BPCC, which was the smallest PCC, was equal to be biggest PCC in the country. In matter of winning elections BPCC had also shown a better record than many PCCs. It was also said that the Congress House which was headquarters of the BPCC, was the largest single institution of the Congress in the whole country. This House was purchased out of the funds collected for Tilak Swaraj Fund. It was declared open by Gandhi on 26th March 1925. On that occasion, Gandhi unfurled the National Flag amidst loud cries of 'Vande Mantaram'. This Congress House was later on turned into a charitable Trust. Some of the famous Presidents of BPCC were Sarojini Naidu, K.F. Nariman, Bhulabhai Desai and S.K. Patil. After the formation of the States of Maharashtra and Gujarat in the year 1960, the Bombay Pradesh Congress Committee was reorganised and became Bombay Regional Congress Committee as it is known at present. It may be mentioned here that Gandhi had described the city of Bombay as follows:

“Bombay is the first city of India which was the capital of Phirozeshah Mehta's empire, the field of Dadabhai's activity and the place where Ranade, Badruddin and others achieved fame.”

It may also be mentioned that Bombay also saw the birth of Congress Volunteers Movement in India.

On 12th February 1922 Congress Working Committee stopped Civil Disobedience movement and gave a constructive programme to the nation. “No Tax” campaign was abandoned. This decision of the Congress was not appreciated by some Congressmen who wanted the movement to continue. Gandhi was arrested and sentenced to 6 years’ imprisonment at Ahmedabad. After Gandhi’s conviction, the Working Committee considered the question whether Civil Disobedience movement in some form or some other measure of smaller character should be adopted. A Committee was to tour whole India for this purpose. The Committee made certain recommendations. It pointed out, “Country is not prepared at present to embark upon general mass civil disobedience of a limited character. On the question of entry to Legislative Council, it made the recommendation that the final decision on the Council entry should be taken at the Congress Session to be held at the end of 1923. As a matter of fact all loyal Congressmen and non-cooperators had already begun to contest elections to Municipalities and local boards and given pinpricks to Government by advocating the use of Khaddar in hospitals and for uniforms for servants, by urging the hoisting of National flags upon their offices, by recommending introduction of Charkha and Hindi in local and Municipal schools and occasionally by urging boycott of the visits of Governors and visits of Ministers.

As a matter of fact, after the sad experience of the failure of the non-cooperation movement, there were two groups amongst the Congressmen. They were known as ‘changers’ and ‘no changers’. The ‘changers’ wanted lifting the boycott of legislatures and entry into legislatures. ‘No changers’, however, wanted the boycott to continue. So, in the year 1923 in Bombay some Congressmen met and decided to form Swaraj Party. Swaraj Party was formed at the residence of M.R. Jayakar and those present on the occasion were M.R. Jayakar, U. Rama Rao, Ranga Swami Iyengar, Bhagwandas, C.R. Das, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Swami Satyadev, S. Satya Murthy, Moropant Abhyankar, M.K. Acharya, R.N. Mandlik, M.S. Aney and Baba Paranjpe. Swaraj Party was not blessed immediately by the Congress. This party contested elections to the Legislature and won many seats in the Legislature. Ultimately Congress was required to accept the programme of Swaraj Party. At that time there were two groups of Congressmen in the Legislature. One was led by Madan Mohan Malaviya and the other led by Motilal Nehru. Jayakar belonged to Malaviya’s party. Jayakar narrates an interesting incident in the Legislature about the Salt Act:

“I can recall a singular instance of such practical wisdom. I was then the deputy leader of the Nationalist Party, in the Legislative Assembly, next in rank to Lajpat Rai, Who was then in command. A question arose as regards our party supporting a motion, tabled by a member of Motilal’s Party, for a cut in the sale price of salt. Some members of my Party were of the opinion that the proposed reduction in the salt tax per maund was undesirable. They held that, however iniquitous the Salt Act might have been at one time, it had been digested by the country and that any tinkering with the rate of the tax would not benefit the consumer so much as the middleman. Ultimately, it was decided that I should see Motilal and find out from him what the attitude of his Party would be with reference to the cut motion. I saw him at his residence. He said, “Well, you see, my own opinion is that we should not disturb the

Salt Act now, but I realise that, as a popular Party, we cannot oppose the motion, nor even remain neutral. Personally, my own opinion is that we should not tinker with the Salt Act.” I said, “Your views surprise me. Supposing you were the Prime Minister, as you would be some day, I am sure, will you keep the Salt Act going?” He said, “Yes, it produces about six crores of revenue, and I would not like to forego this source of income.” I said, “But what about Gandhi? You know he is dead opposed to the Salt Act; he is sure to start Satyagraha against your Government, for you know Gandhi is weeded to principles and is not a respecter of persons. I am sure.” I added, “that if your Government publicly maintained the Salt Tax, Gandhi would start Satyagraha against you, with greater vigour than against a foreign Government.”

Motilal laughed derisively and said, “Do you think Gandhi would organise such agitation against my Government?” I said, “Yes.” “Well, all I can say,” said Motilal, “is that in that case my Government would take Gandhi to a place where this Government dare not take him.” We both laughed, and I returned to my Party meeting and we decided to join Motilal in supporting the cut. In all the variety of sensational occasions through which he led his Party with such success, his practical sense, stern level headedness and worldly wisdom never forsook him. It was deplorable that he never got, during his time, a chance of forming the Government, for I feel certain that his regime would have been courageous and firm, dealing with Indian problems with a tact, vision and steadfastness which would have surprised many of his colleagues and even his opponents, who knew him as the Leader of the Opposition. His great characteristic, which he ever maintained in any complex situation to which he was subjected, was that he was always wide-awake. He never lost his equipoise, never made a mistake of judgment,. Cold, calculating, precise, unimpulsive, with a thorough knowledge of men and a capacity to awe them into submission, he made an admirable leader. He had an unrivalled talent for suffering fools gladly. He also knew how to check sternly their outbursts. As the leader of the Swaraj Party, and a close associate of Gandhi and his co-workers, he had infinite opportunities of exercising this capacity. When Gandhi began his march from Dandi in the early part of the year 1930, Motilal was openly sceptical of the efficacy of the march and of the salt manufacturing activity. Nobody could perhaps recall more instances than his Congress associates, of the cool and balanced advice he often gave them in their secret conclaves.” [\[Jaykar M.R.: *The story of My Life* Vol.1, pp. 347-49.\]](#)

The AICC met in Bombay on 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th may, 1923 indirectly blessed Council entry. Resignations of the President and the members of the Working Committee were accepted and the new Working Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Ansari was appointed. C.R. Das was President of the Gaya Session of the Congress. Once again emphasis was given on constructive programme. C.R. Das however by this time has carved out a high position for himself in the halls of the Congress. Therefore, after the Gaya Session of the Congress, the politics largely centred around the Council work.As a matter of fact,an agreement between Gandhi and Swarajists was already reached earlier. The agreement came for endorsement before the meeting of the AICC held at Muzafferabad Hall, Bombay. Gandhi

admitted that Swarajists were a growing party and there was strong body of public opinion in favour of Council entry. The best intellects in the country favoured some kind of Council programme. But as Gandhi himself did not believe on the Council entry, he said, "The non-cooperators must remain "no-changers. But they must at the same time not criticise the Swarajists." In November 1924, Gandhi attended the conference of all party leaders convened by the Congress President to unite all the parties and induce those who in 1920 had retired from the Congress to join it and to meet the recrudescence of repression which was evidently aimed at Swarajiya party in Bengal. The Conference was held at Muzaffarabad Hall. The Conference passed resolution to set up a Committee of representatives of all shades of opinion to consider a best way of re-uniting all political parties in the Indian National Congress and to prepare a scheme of Swaraj.

The Swarajya Party worked satisfactorily in the Legislature. The leader of the Swarajya Party in the Assembly was Motilal Nehru. A group of members who recognised Jinnah as their leader joined the Swarajists and formed the Nationalist Party for working together in the Assembly. The views of the Swarajya Party as stated in the Manifesto caused much alarm. The Secretary of State, the Viceroy, the Liberals and others advised them to refrain from following their proclaimed negative course of obstructing the Government. In response, Motilal Nehru promised to cooperate if the Government would show a genuine desire to meet their demand. Though Swarajya Party was not blessed by the Congress to start with, in the year 1925, the Council entry was officially recognised as part of the Congress programme and elections were to be contested not by the Swarajya Party but by the Congress itself. Non-cooperation was virtually wound up and the political activity was taken by the Swarajya Party, thus leading to responsive cooperation later on. Swarajya Party however later on faced many internal problems. Jayakar and Kelkar resigned from the Executive Committee of the Swarajya Party and formed a new party of Responsive Cooperationists with the intention of giving a fillip to the Council entry programme by occupying every place of power, initiative and responsibility, giving no quarter to the bureaucracy. Swarajya Party later on walked out of the Assembly as a protest against the statement of Viceroy Lord Reading. On their walking out, President V. J. Patel took an extraordinary step of adjourning the House. The Swarajya Party withdrew from the Assembly. This withdrawal of the party was an indication that the end of the struggle for Swarajya from within the Council was not far off. The Swarajya Party further faced other problems, with the result that it split into three factions; (1) A party headed by Motilal Nehru; (2) Responsive Cooperationists Party led by Jayakar, Kelkar and Munje, and (3) Independent Congress Party founded by Malavia and Lajpat Rai.

Simon Commission

In December 1925, Lord Birkenhead, the then Secretary of State for India spoke in the House of Commons of the possibility of accelerating the appointment of the Commission ordinarily due in 1928. The whole object of Birkenhead and Conservative Government then in power was not to leave the Commission to be appointed by the Labour Government which it was felt would surely come into power. Another object was to disintegrate the Swarajists.

Accordingly, the appointment of Simon Commission was announced. The Commission consisted of seven members. There was no Indian on the Commission. This naturally created strong resentment in India against the Commission. All parties denounced the appointment of Simon Commission and the Congress decided to boycott the Simon Commission. Wherever the Commission went, it was greeted with slogans and placards, "Simon Go Back". At many places, lathi charges were made by the police on the demonstrators who showed black flags to the Simon Commission. A mass meeting of citizens of Bombay was held on November 19, 1927 at Cawasji Jehangir Hall. The meeting passed a resolution that the Commission was not acceptable to the people of India. On December 3, 1927 another public meeting was held on the requisition signed by leading citizens of Bombay who included Jayakar, Jinnah, Bhulabhai Desai and Purshottamdas Thakurdas. Authorities on the other hand were making serious efforts to seduce the Muslims and divide them from the Hindus as regards their opposition to the Commission. On February 3, 1928 a crowded meeting of the citizens of Bombay was held on the Chowpatty sands and the appointment of Commission was condemned. The Bombay Youth League had organised a demonstration against the Commission. A procession of 700 students assembled at the gate of Alexandra Docks. Yusuf Meherally was in-charge of the procession. The procession was subjected to lathi charges which caused considerable injury. Subsequently, prosecution was launched against Sergeant Carter who was responsible for lathi charge. Though the Magistrate found Carter guilty and fined him Rs. 50, the conviction was set aside by the High Court. It may be mentioned here that soon afterwards, Meherally who had passed his LL.B. examination, applied to the High Court for Sanad to practise on the appellate side. Meherally's application was turned down by the High Court without giving any reasons. Meherally applied again and his application was supported by the Bar Council. Even then, the High Court did not grant his request, and Mr. Pandit, the Magistrate who convicted Sergeant Carter was not confirmed in his post. While the Simon Commission was carrying on its work, an all parties conference was held in Bombay on May 19, 1928 over which Dr. M. A. Ansari presided. The conference appointed a Committee under the Chairmanship of Pandit Motilal Nehru to consider the principles of Constitution for India. The Committee toured the whole country, worked very hard and prepared a report which was called 'Motilal Nehru Committee Report'. The Report recommended *inter alia* that Indian States should come into the Commonwealth and thus the distinction between British-India and the Indian-India was to be obliterated. The Report was considered at Calcutta where the All Parties Conference met. As regards the national question, there was difference of opinion between Jinnah and Jayakar. But on the whole, the Report was considered favourably. The Congress at its Session in Culcutta on December 31, 1928, passed a comprehensive resolution on the Report of the Motilal Committee. The material part of the resolution is as under:

“Subject to the exigencies of political situation, this Congress will adopt the Constitution if it is accepted in its entirety by the British Parliament on or before December 31, 1929. But, in the event of its non-acceptance by that date, or its earlier rejection, the Congress will organise a campaign of non-violent non-cooperation by advising the country to refuse taxation and in such other manner as may be decided upon. Consistent with the above, nothing in this resolution shall interfere with the

carrying on in the name of the Congress of the propaganda for complete Independence”.

Before we turn to the Lahore Session which adopted Complete Independence resolution, it may be desirable to record the importance of the work of Swarajya Party in the Legislature.

The Swarajya Party brought home to the rulers the realisation of the great organisation, ability of the nationalist leaders and their organising capacity for electioneering and offering opposition to Government. The party exposed the basic weakness of the 1919 Constitution. As regards the impression the Swarajya Party created on Indian Government, following letter from Reading to Oliver in February 1924 is eloquent:

“For the present the Swarajist has his own way. There is none to withdraw him. There is none to compare with him. There is none to attack him and he proceeds on his victorious march largely because of the full-blooded programme he puts before the electorate as a remedy for all the ills and the means of disposing of a tyrannical Government. The moderates present a very dull and dreary appearance as compared to Swarajists. His programme is drab and uninteresting to the electorate after listening to the highly coloured and fiery denunciation of the Swarajist.”[[Tarachand: History of Freedom Movement, Vol. IV, pp.46-47.](#)]

In 1929 the labour in India faced a temptation to organise itself on Communist line. Congress however did not succumb to this temptation. For it, the programme was Independence by non-violent means.

The Calcutta Session of the Congress in 1928 had made it clear that if the Motilal Nehru Committee Report was not accepted by the British Government within one year, the Congress will be free to chalk out any other programme. The British Government did not accept the Report. On the other hand, the British Government introduced the Public Safety Bill in Assembly in January 1929. The Government also resorted to repression. On March 20, 1929, in Bombay hundreds of houses were searched. Many people were arrested. The Congress however wanted to prepare ground for the next step to be taken towards the goal of Swarajya. The Hindustan Seva Dal was carrying on their work with the help of volunteers in various parts of the country. It organised a National Flag Day every month. In Bombay, the Congress-Muslim party was also established with a view to attracting Muslims towards the Congress. The next Session of the Congress was to be held at Lahore and Jawaharlal Nehru was selected to preside over the Session. This was a very eventful Session. The nation expected something revolutionary emerging out of the Session. The Session adopted the Complete Independence Resolutions. The resolution is as follows:

“This Congress endorses the action of the Working Committee in connection with the Manifesto signed by party leaders, including Congressmen, on the Viceregal pronouncement of the 31st October relating to Dominion Status, and appreciates the

efforts of the Viceroy towards a settlement of the national movement for Swaraj. The Congress, however, having considered all that has since happened and the result of the meeting between Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru, and other leaders, and the Viceroy, is of opinion that nothing is to be gained in the existing circumstances by the Congress being represented at the proposed Round Table Conference. This Congress, therefore, in pursuance of the resolution passed at its session at Calcutta last year, declares that the word 'Swaraj' in Article 1 of the Congress Constitution shall mean Complete Independence, and further declares the entire scheme of the Nehru Committee's Report to have lapsed, and hopes that all Congressmen will henceforth devote their exclusive attention to the attainment of Complete Independence for India. As a preliminary step towards organising a campaign for Independence, and in order to make the Congress policy as consistent as possible with the change of Creed, this Congress calls upon Congressmen and others taking part in the national movement to abstain from participating directly or indirectly in future elections, and directs the present Congress members of the Legislatures and Committees to resign their seats. This Congress appeals to the Nation zealously to prosecute the constructive programme of the Congress, and authorises the All India Congress Committee, whenever it deems fit, to launch upon a programme of Civil Disobedience including non-payment of taxes, whether in selected areas or otherwise, and under such safeguards as it may consider necessary". [[Pattabhi Sitaramaiah: The History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. 1. p. 357.](#)]

The Working Committee then fixed 26 January 1930 as the day when the resolution was to be read all over the country. The resolution issued by the Working Committee was a lengthy resolution. The material part of that resolution is as follows:

"We believe that it is inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have 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 had ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe therefore that India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj or Complete Independence."

The next step undertaken by the Working Committee was to start Civil Disobedience Movement. The resolution to that effect was passed indicative of the programme of the Civil Disobedience Movement. Gandhi had already decided to raid salt depots to inaugurate Civil Disobedience Movement. The reason why Salt Satyagraha was resorted to by Gandhi were as follows:

"The genesis of salt duties was unearthed. It was pointed out that a Salt Commission had sat in 1836 and recommended that Indian salt should be taxed in

order to enable English salt to sell in India. The ships in Liverpool were lying idle in the dockyard for want of cargo, and without cargo to the extent of supplying at least the keel ballast, they could not sail safely on the high seas. So they had to carry some cargo, some load some weight. For some time they had brought earth to India, from the Strand in London, with which the Chowringhee Road in Calcutta, which was once a canal running from the Hughli to the Kalighat Temple, was filled up. The fact is that the exports of India have always been greater than her imports. In 1925, the exports were 316 crores and the imports were 249 crores. That was not all. The exports are more voluminous, being largely food products and raw materials. Thus the volume of shipping to take the Indian exports abroad would, all things considered, be at least four to five times greater than the volume required for the import of the manufactured articles resulting from those imports. Therefore the in-coming ships to India must be much more numerous than is justified by the import only, as they have to take the exports on their way back. That is, they must come empty. British shipping takes 72 per cent or roughly three-fourths of the total shipping of the Indian trade and, therefore, some British products must be carried to India by the in-coming ships to serve as keel ballast. What else could be thought of than Cheshire salt? Of course, there are other articles being brought to India such as old newspaper bales and broken porcelain chips. The Italian ships would bring Italian marbles and Italian potatoes under similar conditions as keel ballast. That is why they are able to beat the Indian articles in prices.” [4 Pattabhi Sitaramaiah: *The History of Indian National Congress*, Vol. I, p. 370.]

It may be noted that long before Gandhi thought of Salt Satyagraha, there was a demonstration against Salt Tax in Surat in 1844. A morcha was taken by some residents of Surat to the office of the authorities protesting against Salt Tax. Dadabhai had also referred to the Salt Tax in one of his presidential speeches.

Gandhi accordingly undertook the famous Dandi March from his Sabarmati Ashram on March 12, 1930 with 79 volunteers. This party of 79 people included representatives from Bombay also. The party reached Dandi on April 5 and on April 6 collected handful of salt to indicate the beginning of Civil Disobedience Movement. Gandhi’s Dandi March evoked great curiosity in various countries and highest admiration in the minds of all Indians.

A new epoch began in the history of Freedom Movement of India and also in the history of the Indian National Congress. It was for the first time in the history of the organisation that a mass movement was inaugurated. This movement has its effect in all parts in India. Great political awakening was created in the minds of common men. For the first time in the history of India, common man took not only interest in the Congress programme but also actually participated in the programme whole-heartedly. Gandhi’s influence was felt even in the remotest villages in India. The movement brought women---both educated and illiterate---into the freedom struggle and a new chapter in the history of womanhood in India was opened. Even illiterate men from distant parts of India participated in the movement and

courted arrest. As a matter of fact, this movement created a Gandhi practically in all towns in India.

There is no idea to give the entire history of this movement in this book as it is restricted to the city of Bombay. Bombay's contribution to this movement was unique as would be seen from pages that follow.

CHAPTER IV - CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT

Before turning to the Civil Disobedience Movement, the basic concept of such a movement must be clearly understood. The concept is as under:

The new stage in the Satyagraha campaign was Civil Disobedience. Gandhi believed that every system of government should reflect the system of divine moral government of the world. The laws of the state should embody the eternal moral laws. Gandhi's concept of moral law was similar to the concept of natural law familiar to political scientists. It is based on the principles of dignity of each individual and equality and brotherhood of all human beings. Gandhi preached that an unjust and immoral law has no legitimacy. Every citizen has a moral right, nay, a moral duty, to break such immoral laws. The thieves and murderers also break the law. They do not break them because they are immoral. They do so for their own selfish reasons. They are afraid of the punishment; so they break the law in a clandestine manner. A satyagrahi breaks the law openly by giving notice of his intention to disobey the government. He opposes only those laws which are immoral and gladly suffers the punishment for this deeds. Those who conscientiously obey all the laws of the society which are in public interest develop the capacity to realise which laws are unjust. They alone can lead the people as the people have faith in their judgment. Through their self-suffering, they appeal to the conscience of their opponent and by bringing the pressure of public opinion to bear upon him, make him undo the wrongs he was doing. Such moral action with the active cooperation of the people raises the moral standard of the community.

The discipline of the satyagrah

Gandhi put many restrictions on the Satyagrahi. A satyagrahi should work under strict discipline. He should be non-violent and never attack his adversary even under extreme provocation. He never aims at the conquest of power; his objective is to bring the opponent to the negotiating table through the pressure of public opinion. It always ends in a compromise. Therefore, the demands of the Satyagrahi should be such that they are within the power of the adversary to concede. In the case of mass Satyagraha, the leaders should take full responsibility to avoid any violence, open or concealed. "Non-violent attainment of self-government presupposes a non-violent control over the violent elements in the country. Non-violent non-cooperators can only succeed when they have succeeded in attaining control over the hooligans of India; in other words, when the latter have also learnt patriotically or religiously to refrain from their violent activities at least when the campaign of non-violence is going on.

A Satyagrahi will succeed in rousing public opinion and controlling goondaism only if he works amongst the masses and gains their love and respect. With this in

mind, Gandhi gave equal importance to political agitation and constructive programmes. He persuaded scores of his followers to go to the villages and implement the constructive programme. Through devoted and selfless service, they earned the confidence and support of the people. This mass contact stood the Congress in good stead both in times of political agitation and in general elections. [From a paper entitled *Gandhi's Contribution to Indian Nationalism* by Prof. Nalini Pandit submitted to a Bombay Seminar in 1985.]

The Civil Disobedience Movement was started by Gandhi at Dandi on April 6, 1930. Gandhi's march from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi evoked considerable interest not only in India but even abroad. Bombay Chronicle reported on this march as follows:

“The scenes that preceded, accompanied and followed this great national event were enthusiastic magnificent and soul-stirring that needed bigger description. Never was the way of patriotism so powerful in the hearts of mankind as it was on this great occasion which is bound to go down in the chapters of the history of India in the national movement as a great beginning of a great movement.”

Bombay Chronicle proved to be prophetic.

Gandhi broke the Salt Law by picking a handful of salt and issued the following statement to the press:

“Now that the technicality of the ceremony of breach of the Salt Law has been committed, it is now open to any one to take the risk of prosecution under the Salt Law to manufacture salt wherever he wishes and wherever it is convenient. My advice is that the worker should everywhere manufacture salt and where they know how to prepare clean salt make use of it and instruct the villagers likewise telling the villagers at the same time that there is a risk of being prosecuted..... It should be made absolutely clear to the villagers that the breach is open and in no way stealthy.”

This message of Gandhi reached all parts of India and the Salt Satyagraha started wherever it was possible. The movement created a new spirit of patriotism in the masses of India and surcharged the political atmosphere with great enthusiasm. In places where salt Satyagraha was not possible, Jungle Satyagraha was resorted to. The atmosphere in the country was full of enthusiasm for Civil Disobedience. The city of Bombay also rose to the occasion and started Civil Disobedience Movement in a very big way. As a matter of fact, the year 1930 was the year when for the first time in the history of city of Bombay masses were involved on a large-scale in Congress movement. Gandhi was arrested and taken by train to Borivli in order to be taken to Yeravda by car. The London Telegraph wrote on this event as follows:

“There was something intensely dramatic in the atmosphere while they were waiting for the train for we all felt we were sole eye-witness of a scene which may become historical..... this arrest of a Prophet false or true, for false or true Gandhi

is now regarded as a holy man and saint by millions of Indians. Who knows whether 100 years from now he may be worshipped as a supreme being by 300 million people! We would not shake off this thought and it seems incongruous to be at a level-crossing at down to take the Prophet into custody.”

How prophetic the words proved.

Smt. Kamladevi Chattopadhyaya who participated in the Salt Satyagraha has given a vivid description of the movement in Bombay:

“The launching of the Satyagraha was fixed for April 6 which is observed annually in memory of the terrible Jallianwalla Bagh massacre of 1919.

The front line unit to formally break the Salt Law in public in Bombay city was to consist of seven; five men, and two women. Avantikabai Gokhale, a wellknown local social worker, and myself (neither of us had any political background), with K. F. Nariman, Provincial Congress President as leader. Avantikabai, a seasoned public worker, was composed and serious. I was yet raw and felt privileged and self-conscious in my spotless khadi, conspicuously displaying the badge with the colour band of the national flag orange, white and green and proud to have got a place among the first batch of law-breakers!

The pearl grey April morning sky was brightening into crimson as I walked down the street. Already crowds were beginning to collect and line the roadside, their faces aglow with a new excitement. It was the 6th of April, the day on which India was launching her revolution. Mahatma Gandhi, the supreme leader, had decided to initiate it by breaking the Salt Law, the Black Law as it was called. To him the appropriation of this right was symbolic of protesting against the exploitation of the large masses of the country. Salt was about the only luxury the rapidly impoverished Indian peasant had got reduced to, and now even that was being snatched away from him. A wave of revolt swept through the land. The cry filled the air, “We shall defy the law”.

Although India has long tradition of women warriors, this was their first appearance in any modern militant political campaign and I could hardly suppress my excitement at the solemnity of the occasion and my own good fortune to be amongst the first. As I attached my name to the pledge to devote myself to my country’s freedom battle, my hand shook a little because of emotional strain. It seemed such a stupendous moment in my life, in the life of the women of my country. I felt I was tracing not the letters of my name but recording a historic event.

There was not much time for thought. The next instant we were filing out, taking the road to the sea, marching with quick steps. Great sky-rending cries of “Jai” filled the air. Heavy-scented flower-garlands almost smothered us. From the balconies and roofs unseen

hands showered rose-petals until the road became a carpet of flowers. Often our march was stopped and bright-eyed women sprinkled rose water from silver sprayers smeared our palms with sandalwood paste and perfume and blessed us by waving lights around our heads.

The long, narrow strip of sand that borders the city like a white ribbon was transformed that morning into another sea..... a sea of human faces that swayed and danced and bobbed up and down even as did the deep azure waves that rimmed the shore. The city seemed to have disgorged almost its entire population on to the sands. It was not the struggling batch of seven that was breaking the Salt Law, but hundreds and thousands now filling the water's edge. And still they kept coming, thousands of women amongst them, striding like proud warriors, gracefully balancing their pitchers of moroonred earth, and shimmering brass that scattered a thousand hues as the sunrays struck them. Even as I lit my little fire to boil the salt water, I saw thousands of fires aflame dancing in the wind. The copper pans sizzled in laughter as fire drank up the last drop of water, leaving behind the white grains of salt.

The sight of the sea of women's faces sent a spasm of shame through me..... Gandhiji knew the women and I did yet I had boasted that I knew them better. How many more such lessons I was to learn in the days to come!

The police who had looked on at this advancing avalanche of lawbreakers seemed almost stupefied and had to shake themselves up as from a trance and enter on the scene. Some of my Youth League friends joined me to form a separate salt pan of our own and formed a circle around to guard it. The police who found it hard to break through the deep circle, charged with their batons. The human wall was still unyielding. In the mean time police on horse back charged at the general crowd, but they sat silent and immovable. I could hear the dull thud as the blows fell and the faint moans as the wounded struck the ground. Still not a cry, not an angry snarl. Men and women, young and old, were all facing the attack with unbelievable composure, their faces alight with a strange composure.

We were still guarding our pans. The blows now rained like a blinding shower. They were directed either at the head or the legs, designed in either case to swiftly and effectively fell the people to the ground, and clear a pathway to the pans. I felt sick as I caught a youngster near me with a cracked skull. A rough boot pushed me aside and I came down with my arm right on the burning coals. For a while I seemed to remember nothing.

When I opened my eyes it was to look into a pair of kindly eyes. They belonged to a figure in a police uniform. "Can I take you to a hospital?". The words sounded genuinely solicitous, "I have a car here." I shook my head. "According to Mahatma Gandhi, you should not regard me as an enemy you know", he went on. I could hardly hold back a smile to find this police officer attempting to interpret Gandhian philosophy to me after perhaps having battered the heads of a good many people.

The Bombay seaside spectacle was but symbolic of the entire country which had become transformed into a battlefield with millions breaking iniquitous laws. A snowballing of law-breaking and repression, one leading to the other went on.” [*Bhavan's Journal*, Vol. 32, No. 10---Congress Centenary Issue, pp. 133-37.]

In Bombay, Salt Satyagraha was started on all beaches by Congress volunteers. On the Chowpatty beach volunteers used to bring sea water in small vessels and boil it on fire with a view to inviting arrest. At Wadala there was a salt depot. Successive raids were made on the salt depot. On 22, 188 volunteers were arrested and taken to Worli. On the 25th, 100 volunteers were accompanied by huge crowd of 2000 spectators. The police charged them with Lathis injuring 70 and later arrested 115. The rest of the crowd got off with the salt. On 26th afternoon 65 volunteers were afield and 43 of them were arrested when 18 more were injured. But the most demonstrative raid come on 1st June for which the War Council was diligently preparing. [During Civil Disobedience Movement as the BPCC was declared illegal, the leader of the Congress who remained out of jail was called a Dictator and he appointed a War Council to carry on the movement.]

On the morning of 1st nearly 15, 000 volunteers and non-volunteers participated in the great mass action at Wadala. Successive batches marched upto the Port Trust level crossing and the swelled crowds were held up there by police cordon. Soon the raiders among whom were women and children broke through the cordon, splashed through the slime mud and ran over the pans. Congress raiders number over 150 were slightly injured. The raiders were repulsed by the police. George Slocombe, the representative of Daily Herald, London, was an eye witness to some of the salt raids. He reported as follows:

“I watched the events from an Observation post on one of the rocky hills which ring in Wadala. It was humiliating for an Englishman to stand among the ardent friendly but deeply moved crowd of volunteers and sympathisers and watch the representatives of the country's administrators engaged in this ludicrous and embarrassing business.” [Patabhi Sitaramaiah: *History of the Congress*, Vol. I, p. 401.]

Serious troubles ending in two police charges and the calling of the military to cope with the situation occurred at Worli Detention Camp on 3 June. About 400 undertrial Wadala raiders were involved in a brush with the police resulting in about 90 casualties, 25 of them being very serious.

Salt Satyagraha was only one aspect of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The other was the boycott of British goods. As the attack was concentrated on textile goods the effect of the movement was most visibly felt. The Manchester Guardian Correspondent of the Daily Mail expressed,..... “The latest news from India about the boycott of the foreign textile goods is likely to bring Lancashire's Indian trade to a complete standstill. Already spinning mills and weaving sheds are closing down indefinitely and thousands of operators are joining the ranks of the unemployed. The message of Khadi was spreading all over India.”

Similarly the message of Swadeshi also caught the imagination of the masses. This impetus to Swadeshi goods brought the business and industrial community near the Congress. For this community knew fully well that their interest was safe in the hands of the Congress. It is from 1930 onwards that this remarkable change in the attitude of the business and industrial community is seen. The boycott of the foreign goods ultimately resulted in the martyrdom of an ordinary worker. A lorry full of foreign textiles was being taken out of the godown in Kalbadevi area. An ordinary worker, Babu Genu by name, asked the lorry driver to stop the lorry. Babu Genu stood in front of the lorry and threatened the driver that he would lie prostrate in front of the lorry if the lorry was not stopped. The driver stopped it. Being infuriated by this act of Babu Genu and the driver, a police officer who was standing by, threw the driver out of the seat, took charge of the wheel of the lorry and took the lorry over the body of Babu Genu. Babu Genu died instantaneously and became a martyr. Next day, a huge funeral procession of Babu Genu started from the spot where he died, a funeral procession which consisted of lakhs of people, like of which was never witnessed in the city of Bombay. Babu Genu's name has remained in the memory of all the Congress workers who participated in 1930 movement. [The present writer was present when this incident took place in the Kalbadevi area in the city of Bombay and still vividly recollects the huge funeral procession that paid homage to this little great man known as Babu Genu at that time. It may be mentioned that even in 1985 Congressmen remembered Babu Genu.]

Another part of the Civil Disobedience Movement was holding regular Flag Salutation meetings in different parts of the city. Sunday morning was chosen for such meetings and the venue was Chowpatty but more often the Azad Maidan which was at that time known as Esplanade Maidan. It came to be called 'Azad Maidan' on account of various historic battles for freedom fought by Congress volunteers on that Maidan. Sometimes the flag hoisting ceremony or *Zenda Vandan* was meant for ladies only and the present writer distinctly remembers an incident when ladies had gathered in Azad Maidan on one Sunday morning for the *Zenda Vandan*. They were singing patriotic songs. One of the songs was "*Zenda Uncha Rahe Hamara*". Some time after, a troop of policemen on the horseback approached the site where the *Zenda Vandan* was taking place. The leader of the troop asked the ladies to disperse. They refused to do so. The policemen on the horseback charged the crowd. Many ladies were trampled under the feet of the horses. But no one moved away from the spot. As men were not expected to participate in the *Zenda Vandan*, they stood away at a distance from the spot where the *Zenda Vandan* was taking place. Being infuriated by the attack on the ladies, some of the youngmen including the present writer picked stones to throw at the police. Immediately some one shouted, "Gandhiji had asked us to observe non-violence" and the stones dropped from the hands of the youngmen. The injured ladies were removed to one of the hospitals established by the Bombay Congress in different parts of the city.

As part of the Disobedience Movement, boycott of foreign cloth was major activity. It may be mentioned that a deputation of Indian Merchants consisting of Chunilal Mehta, Walchand Hirachand, Hemantbhai Lalji, J.K. Mehta, Shantikumar Morarji, Mansukhlal Master, K.S.R. Iyer and others met Gandhi. They explained to him the need for protecting

Indian industry against both British and foreign companies. Gandhi explained to them that Congress had to work on various other difficulties affecting more vital issues than those urged by the deputation. He advised them to carry on their agitation assuring them that Congress would do its best to support their case. Similarly a deputation of Mill Owners led by Victor Sassoon, H.P. Mody, C.R. Wadia, Lalji Narayanjee, A.P.Dinshaw, N.V.Saklatwala, G.D.Birla and a couple of magnets from Ahmedabad met Gandhi and laid before him the unfairness of the terms imposed by the Congress Boycott Committee on Indian Mills. They also brought to the notice the plight of the Foreign Piece Goods Dealers.

These two events indicate that the business community and the industrial community tried to take advantage of the Civil Disobedience Movement for securing their interest. A section of such a community came to Congress in 1920 at the time of the non-cooperation movement. But a large section from these communities supported Congress movement because they knew that the movement will benefit them considerably. It may be mentioned that the boycott of foreign cloth was really a great success. Hundreds of bales of foreign cloth were lying in the dockyard uncleared by the merchants. The importers gathered together and resolved that they should not take delivery of them. There was therefore a shortage of cloth in the country.

The normal programme of Civil Disobedience in 1930 in the city of Bombay consisted of taking Prabhat Ferries on every Sunday morning in the localities, with the Congress flag at the front. Certain songs were specially composed to suit the occasion. One of such songs was, -----“*Zenda Uncha Rahe Hamara. Vijayi Vishwa Tiranga Pyara*”.

Some time a portion from the poem of Swatantrya Veer Savarkar was also recited, “*Rana vina Swatantrya Kona Milale*”.

There used to be a kind of healthy competition among various Wadies or Maohullas for arranging Prabhat Ferries. People of all ages from children to old people participated in such Ferries. These Prabhat Ferries created an atmosphere of patriotism and kept up the tempo of the movement. In Dadar area the Prabhat Ferries arranged by Kale Guruji of the Samarth Vyayam Mandir were a great attraction. Another item of the Civil Disobedience movement was boycott of foreign cloth. Shops were picketed by Congress volunteers, both men and women some times during the whole day with a view to persuading people not to purchase foreign cloth. There used to be bonafires of black caps and foreign cloth in various parts of the city. There was boycott of crackers also during Diwali days. The third item of the movement was picketing wine shops with a view to enforcing prohibition of intoxicated liquors. As a matter of fact, the days of the civil disobedience movement in Bombay were the days of great excitement and enthusiasm. This movement created a new generation of young men and women who later on participated effectively in the 1942 movement.

The Salt Satyagraha gathered momentum in Bombay. Gokulbhai Bhatt points out that both MPCC and BPCC chose Vile-Parle as the headquarters for their Salt Satyagraha. Gandhi was requested to inaugurate the camp at Vile Parle before Gandhi undertook the Dandi

March. But Gandhi pleaded his inability because of Dandi March. Hence, Jamnalal Bajaj became the first Dictator of Satyagraha in Bombay. Kasturba was in this camp at Vile-Parle till it was declared unlawful in August 1930. Prominent among those who contravened the law and courted arrests were K.F. Nariman, BPCC President, Jamnalal Bajaj, Gokulbhai Bhatt, Kishorilal Mashruwala. Police raided the Satyagraha camp at Vile-Parle and destroyed the salt pans. As a protest against this action of the police, processions and demonstrations were arranged practically on every day. Yusuf Meherally organised a huge procession of youths and students. A campaign of law breaking was organised in Bombay with thoroughness. Arrests were expected and hence a list of 'Dictators' and 'War Councils' was prepared in advance to keep the movement going on. Smt. Kamladevi Chattopadhyaya and Prof. D.R. Gharpure and other members of the Bombay War Council marched to Chowpatty sea shore on the morning of April 8 and brought sea water to prepare salts. Contraband salts were sold at Vile Parle and several other places in Bombay. On April 10 the police raided the Congress House and arrested Meherally, Abid Ail Jaffarbai and M. Sadiq. They were sentenced to imprisonment on the next day. After sentences were passed they passed to the Magistrate packets of contraband salt with a request to retain them as mementos. On April 13, there was a mass meeting held at Chowpatty. The attendance was enormous. Vast crowds filled the beach and occupied all the approaches to the sea shore. Sarojini Naidu presided over the meeting. Kamladevi Chattopadhyaya and Smt. Lilavati Munshi with a few other lady volunteers visited the Bombay High Court Bar Library and sold a few packets of contraband salt to some members of the Bar. The police raided the Satyagraha camp at Vile Parle and arrested its prominent organisers---B.G. Kher, who later became Chief Minister of Bombay Province, Swami Ananda, D.N. Bandrekar. It may be mentioned that a young Australian by name Cyril Walter Thornton came to Bombay and participated in the Salt Satyagraha. As usual a huge procession of volunteers was led by Munshi and Kamladevi Chattopadhyaya from Congress House one morning and after taking water from sea at Chowpatty, went through various parts of the city of Bombay till they were stopped by the police at Bori Bunder. Munshi was arrested. Munshi, D.R. Gharpure, Ganpatishankar Desai and S.K. Patil were tried and sentenced. Gandhi was arrested on May 5. This arrest had its echoes in Bombay. The news of Gandhi's arrest spread like wild fire in Bombay and there was a complete Hartal in Bombay city and suburbs. Meetings of Bombay Municipal Corporation, Bombay Shroffs Association, Bombay Cotton Merchants Association, Bombay Seeds Merchants Association, Indian Merchants Chamber, Marvari Chamber of Commerce and other bodies were adjourned without transacting any business. Even after Gandhi's arrest Salt Law breaches and other acts of civil disobedience became a daily feature of Bombay's life. During the period of the movement, daily publication of cyclostyled Congress bulletins and distribution of its copies by lakhs was a noticeable feature of this movement in the city of Bombay.

Boycott of foreign cloth, liquors and all British goods was almost complete. Women dressed in Khadi sarees, picketed shops dealing in foreign goods, few even entered these shops. If any customer attempted to enter the shop, the woman volunteer joined her hands in supplication and pleaded not to buy foreign goods. If all else failed, she would throw herself across the threshold and dared him to walk over the body. The volunteers flung themselves

even in front of a car until its owner submitted and turned back from the shop of the forbidden goods. Only a few with printed permits issued by the Bombay Congress Committee passed the Congress volunteers who kept watch day and night in every lane and bylane of the business quarters. In Bombay alone 30 crores worth of foreign cloth was sealed by the Congress. By autumn of 1930 imports of cotton piece goods had gone down to between 3rd and 4th of what they were in the same month of the previous year. Sixteen British owned mills in Bombay had been close down. On the other hand the Indian owned mills which had given the pledge were working with double shifts. About 113 mills signed a declaration to which they agreed to eliminate compliance of mill cloth with Khadi, refrained from producing cloth below 18 counts.

The Government resorted to repressive policy and adopted brutal methods to disperse the meetings, to deal with the people indulging in picketing. Some methods of the Government were as under:

- (1) Confiscation of funds of the Congress and other disapproved organizations.
- (2) Arrests and imprisonment of leaders
- (3) Use of excessive force in dispersal of assemblies.
- (4) Ill-treatment in lock-up and jails.
- (5) Intimidation of villagers and crowds.
- (6) Mass punishments, punitive victimisation of neighbours, relatives, etc.
- (7) Confiscation of lands, cattles and personal belongings.
- (8) Ill-treatment of women and children.
- (9) Illegal police and executive action against flag hoisting and use of handspun clothes, closing of shops, pressurisation, etc.
- (10) Imprisonment after summary trials or without trials.
- (11) Searches without warrants.
- (12) Beating of picketeers and volunteers.
- (13) Destruction of property and closing down of social service and similar institutions.
- (14) Marching of troops to villages with Flag March and lathi charges and at few places even opening of fire.

It may be mentioned that ill-treatment meted to women included following acts:

- (i) Taking women resisters in police lorries leaving them for away in lonely places.
- (ii) Actual beating and threats of violence.
- (iii) Abuses and indecent suggestions and insults.
- (iv) Compulsion to travel as prisoners in male custody and rape and indecent assaults.

Mr. Brailsford wrote in Manchester Guardian as under:

“Though the speakers, quietly spoken, were seditious, they always condemned violence and the immense crowds squatting silent on the ground often spinning as they listened with a big proportion of women among them were gentle and passive as only Indians can be. If such meetings have always or usually been tolerated, there would have been no disorder and the audience would soon have grown bold. As it was the policy of rough dispersal, it moved the whole city to anger. They gave a display of disciplined courage. It is further pointed out within Bombay there were two Governments, a few loyalists obeyed the Government while the majority had transferred its allegiance to the Congress. Its slightest nod was enough to obey a minute’s proclaimed Hartal which it did every week as a protest against some acts of bureaucracy and silence descended upon the street.” [*Gandhi and Bombay* by K. Gopal Swami, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, p. 247.]

On the Tilak’s death anniversary in 1930 a huge procession was led by Hansa Mehta who was the dictator for the city of Bombay at that time:

“On the 31st July 1930, Lokamanya Tilak’s anniversary was celebrated in Bombay and a procession was led by Shrimati Hansa Mehta, who was the Congress dictator for the city at the time. The Working Committee of the Congress was assembled in the city, holding their meeting on three successive days. It was not as yet under ban, for Government was extending the ban on the Working Committee from Province to Province. Some of the members of the Committee joined the evening procession, and while they were marching, a notice was served on them under Section 144, Cr. P.C., prohibiting the procession, which had swelled by that time to thousands. When the order was served, the mammoth gathering squatted on the road near the Bombay Municipal Corporation, opposite the Bori Bunder station and would not budge an inch, in spite of the heavy rain pouring all the night. People literally sat in pools of water. It was expected that the procession would be allowed to proceed after midnight, as was the case on a previous occasion. But that was not to be. Mr. Healy was the Commissioner of Police,---an officer who, later, was considered not good enough or equal to executing Government policy. The Chief Presidency Magistrate wired about the situation to the Home Member in Poona. Mr. Hotson replied that nothing should be done till he came. He appeared on the scene in the early hours of the morning and began to watch the crowds from the gallery on a terrace of the Victoria Terminus Building. A few picked men were arrested in the morning, and with them a hundred ladies, and a lathi-charge was ordered to disperse the crowd. Among the members of the Working Committee present and arrested were Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Vallabhbhai J. Patel, Jairamdas Daulatram, and Mrs. Kamala Nehru, Shrimati Mani Ben, the daughter of Vallabhbhai, whose fame was widespread in the salt campaigns of Gujarat and the No-tax campaign of Borsad, was in the procession and was arrested. A hundred other ladies were arrested, including Shrimati Amrit Kaur of Punjab, and the dictator, Mrs. Hansa Mehta.” [(Present writer was a member of the procession and recalls vividly the entire scene today.) *The history of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. I, p. 413.]

The scenes and sights in Bombay blood-curdling, whenever a public meeting was convened against the prohibitory orders. The old Commissioner of Police was transferred, apparently because he was not sufficiently stern. A new one was brought ---- Mr. Wilson ---- who hoped to be able to disperse the crowds instantly. On the very first occasion after his taking over charge, the lathi hitherto flourished on the body was applied to the head, and when blood began to flow and volunteers fell reeling and rolling on the ground, the spectacle of suffering was so harrowing, and at the same time so infecting, that thousands gathered from the crowds of sight-seers in the neighbourhood and the audience swelled from five to twenty-five thousands. When the end of the movement came rather unexpectedly this failure to control non-violence by violence, and more violence, undoubtedly played its part in determining the termination. Almost the last big collision took place on the occasion of celebrating the anniversary of the passing of the Independence Resolution. A lac of people gathered at midnight, which was the time fixed for the demonstrations, and the event was marked by firing by the Police. [*The history of the Indian National Congress, Vol. I; pp. 413-14.*]

“The Azad Maidan in Bombay was the scene of battle. Throughout the campaign, the fourth of every month was observed as the Gandhi Day, ----- the day of his arrest in May 1930; then the last Sunday of each month was being observed as the Flag-hoisting Day. These demonstrations were attended by thousands who could only be dispersed by severe lathi-charges. But as people dispersed at one place, they gathered at another on the Maidan, and it was a job altogether for the Police to disperse the crowds. In Bombay, the beating of the volunteers was witnessed by a Prince, who thereupon remarked that Martial Law was much better than the lathi-charge and that a Nation which had withstood the lathi-charges would be much better able to stand Martial Law. The Prince was the Maharajah of Bikaner who went out to see a procession which was to be led in Bombay while Pandit Motilal was there, and before his arrest on the 30th June 1930. [*Present writer was also a member of the procession.*] The strange part of the occurrences was that while fathers and uncles were at the Round Table Conference, their daughters and nieces were shedding their blood in India”. [*The history of the Indian National Congress, Vol. I, p. 414.*]

The last big collision between the Congress volunteers and the police took place on the occasion of celebrating the anniversary of passing of the Independent resolution. Lakhs of people gathered at midnight which was a time fixed for demonstration and event was marked by firing by the police. Azad Maidan in Bombay was the scene of the battle.

While the state of affairs was continued till late summer 1930, Motilal Nehru gave an interview in Bombay to George Slocombe of the London Daily Herald which formed the basis of negotiation with Gandhi in jail. Then followed the correspondence between Sapru and Jayakar and the Viceroy. Sapru and Jayakar met Gandhi at Yeravda. Later on there was a conference between Congress leaders, Gandhi and Sapru and Jayakar in Yeravda jail. But no solution was found out. Government however released Gandhi and other leaders on January 25, 1931. But even after Gandhi's release the War Council in Bombay continued their activities peacefully until the Congress Working Committee called off civil disobedience movement pursuant to the terms of the Gandhi-Irwin Agreement signed by Gandhi on behalf

of Congress on March 5, 1931. This was the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. Two Bombay men Ibrahim Rahimtulla and Purshottamdas Thakurdas played an important part on some aspects of the Pact. Gandhi attended the Round Table Conference. But even while Gandhi was in England, repression raised its ugly head in India and Gandhi declared in London that he and the Government had come to the parting of ways and he returned home on December 28. This period of truce between March and December was fully used by the Government to prepare for a fresh wave of repression. Bombay gave a great welcome to Gandhi and there was a mammoth meeting at Azad Maidan.

Subsequent events such as Gandhi's fast against the communal award as far the Harijans were concerned, negotiations between Gandhi and Dr. Ambedkar etc. are more important for political history rather than for Congress movement.

Though after return of Gandhi from the Round Table Conference the Civil Disobedience Movement was revived, it could not assume the same proportion that it had in 1930. It appears Lord Willingdon's repressive measures were effective to a certain extent. Moreover, the tempo of the movement was lost as a result of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. It could not be revived.

Gandhi came to Bombay and was surrounded by large crowds at Victoria Terminus from where he drove to Mani Bhawan at Gamdevi. Mani Bhawan then became a place of pilgrimage. A public meeting was to take place at Azad Maidan but was abandoned owing to stampede by huge crowd in which a woman died of suffocation and 32 other persons were injured and admitted to hospital. This happened because though the meeting was announced to begin at 6-00 p.m., crowd begun to pour to the Maidan from 3-00 p.m. The entire Maidan as well as the roads leading to it presented the appearance of a huge mela. It took nearly half an hour for Gandhi to leave the platform through a narrow passage which was made by volunteers and other leaders. Dr. S. K. Vaidya was President of the War Council. He, Sarojini Naidu, Nariman and Munshi made repeated appeals to the crowd to observe discipline but all those appeals were in vain, particularly because the public address system had failed. The crowd started rushing towards the platform and the situation became very serious as Gandhi was escorted out of the Maidan and a huge cordon round the area where women and children assembled was put. Gandhi later went to the hospital and visited the injured.

The Gandhi-Irwin Truce was justified by the Congress. Gandhi arrived in Bombay after signing the Pact for a couple of days, was given a hearty welcome and had a hectic time interviewing leaders including Subhash Bose, meeting deputations and addressing meetings. In his public address he pointed out the importance of the Truce. He said, "The Satyagrahi while he is ready to fight, must be equally eager for peace. He must welcome any honourable opportunity for peace." The Congress working Committee saw such an opportunity and availed itself of it. The essential condition of a compromise is that there should be nothing humiliating, nothing panicky about it. Gandhi visited the Vile Parle Congress camp which has done splendidly work during the Satyagraha. They presented Gandhi a Purse of Rs. 52,465. Bombay observed Hartal on March 24, 1931 following the execution of Bhagat

Singh, Sukh Dev and Rajguru in the Lahore Jail. A procession of women with black flags in their hands marched through several localities of the city. Many schools, cloth markets and textile mills remained closed. A public meeting was held at Azad Maidan under the Presidentship of Nariman. Ganpatishankar Desai and Umashankar Dixit (the present Governor of West Bengal) expressed admiration at the patriotism of Bhagat Singh and his companion. A civil address was presented to Gandhi at the Bombay Municipal Corporation. Gandhi congratulated the citizens of Bombay and the representatives in the Corporation on the splendid part they had played in the struggle of Swarajya and appealed to them not to relax their efforts till the goal was reached. Gandhi also addressed public meetings of ladies at Madhav Baug on June 26, 1931 and received a deputation of depressed classes led by the wellknown cricketer Balu.

“Gandhi’s technique in dealing with and making the Pact with Lord Irwin was remarkable. Only after making this Pact he asked for its endorsement by the Congress Working Committee suggesting that if it did not endorse it he would consider it as a vote of noconfidence in him. This Pact put the Congress on a high pedestal and increased its prestige and status. The British conceded to the Congress a status and authority to speak for political India. This was a great gain for India. The reactionaries in the United Kingdom including Churchill realised that they had yielded ground and according to them this was a setback for British prestige.” [[Kanji Dwarkadas: *India's Fight for Freedom*, pp. 390.](#)]

In April 1931 Irwin left India and he was succeeded by Lord Willingdon. Willingdon’s arrival changed the attitude of the Viceroy towards the Congress. In April the Congress Working Committee met to decide, besides other things, the representation of the Congress at Round Table Conference. Most of the members were of the opinion that the representation should consist of about 15 members and the Government were quite willing to accommodate upto 20. Within 48 hours Gandhi received applications from about 150 Congress “Leaders suggesting that they should be included in the Round Table Conference. That could have meant selection of 15 out of these 150 and displeasing the remaining 135. So Gandhi decided to be the sole representative of the Congress. Kanji Dwarkadas states that it was great mistake. India has had to pay for the mistakes which Gandhi made in London. He was of the opinion that at least Vallabhbhai, Dr. Ansari, and Bhulabhai should have been taken by Gandhi with him.

While Gandhi was in London the bureaucracy in India resorted to naked repression of the popular movement and the Congress Working Committee which met in Bombay in first week of November 1931, came to the conclusion that Gandhi’s further participation in Round Table Conference was unnecessary but left it to his discretion when to return home. Gandhi returned to Bombay on December 28. Though Bombay Provincial Congress Committee had prepared an elaborate plan to receive him, it was given up owing to the arrests of various Congress leaders in various Provinces. The plan was that two steam launches with Desh Sevikas carrying Congress flags and singing national tunes were to meet ‘Gandhi Steamer’ in mid-stream and escort her to the harbour. Two aeroplanes were also to escort the ‘ship’ from

some distance. A procession was then to be formed with Gandhi and the Congress President seated in the carriage. But this plan was given up. However, a procession was formed with Gandhi seated in a decorated car. Crowds of citizens 5 to 10 deep lined the entire route of procession from Ballard Pier to Mani Bhawan. At Mani Bhawan many people met Gandhi who was also interviewed by journalists both Indian and foreign. In the evening Gandhi addressed a public meeting at Azad Maidan. The Government had already resorted to repression and though he wanted sincerely to carry on the negotiations with the Viceroy to improve the political situation and actually wrote to him to that effect, no useful purpose was served. In the early hours of January 4, 1932, Gandhi and Vallabhbhai were arrested and taken to Yeravda. Thus came the tragic end to Gandhi-Irwin Pact and the civil disobedience movement started afresh. Many Provincial and subordinate committees. Ashramas, national schools and other national institutions were declared unlawful and their houses, furniture and funds and other movables seized. Most of the leading Congressmen in the country were suddenly clamped into the jails. Ordinance was promulgated. As a part of this struggle, the Congress in Bombay invented new item of holding meetings. Special events such as Gandhi Day, Motilal Day, Frontier Day, Martyr Day, Flag Day and number of other Days were observed in order to keep up the tempo of the Civil Disobedience. Boycott took the most intensive form and special items were selected for concentrated work. In some places, weeks were devoted to intensify propaganda for boycott of British goods. The police as usual were dispersing crowds and processions by lathi-charges. Additional forces were posted at some places in order to create terror in the minds of the Congress workers. Newspapers were also harassed. Even when repression was all around and there was enough provocation to be violent, people never resorted to any serious act of violence which indicated that the lesson of non-violence had gone deep down into the minds of the people.

Bombay city observed a complete hartal on January 4, and a massive procession which thousands of men and women participated, started from the Congress House in the afternoon and after wending its way through important thoroughfares in the city, terminated at Azad Maidan. The meeting was presided over by K.F. Nariman who exhorted the citizens of Bombay to carry on non-violent struggle till freedom was won.

While Gandhi was in Yeravda, he resorted to fast in order to ensure that the Harijans are not be separated from the main Hindu community by giving them a separate electorate. Various attempts were made by Bombay leaders to avoid the impending fast. The prominent citizens of Bombay including Purushottamdas Thakurdas, Chunilal V. Mehta, Ghanshyamdas Birla. Mathurdas Vissanji visited Gandhi at Yeravda Jail. Ultimately the Yeravda Pact was signed and Gandhi's fast ended on September 26.

A conference of leaders of caste Hindus as well as untouchables was convened by Malaviya towards the end of the fast at Indian Merchants Chamber Hall, Bombay. Among those who were present, were Tej Bahadur Sapru, M.R. Jaykar, C. Rajgopalachari, Dr. Ambedkar, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Lallubhai Samaldas, D.S. Kamath, Lady Krishnabai Setalvad, Dr. Chovitram Gidwani, G.K. Deodhar, H.N. Kunzru, Amritlal Takar, Shankarlal

Banker, G.D. Madgaonkar, Walchand Hirachand, B.F. Barucha, Devlukar, Rao Bahadur Raja, and others.

The Congress Working Committee met in Bombay on June 17, 18, 1934. Gandhi was President at that time. The meeting adopted a resolution “Neither Accept Nor Reject” in respect of the communal award embodied in the White Paper. It may also be mentioned that in May 1934 a conference was held to revive the Swaraj Party and fight the forthcoming election. A fortnight later, All India Congress Committee endorsed the move and established a Parliamentary Board. While in Bombay, Gandhi spared his time for Harijan work visiting Harijan huts in the city. There was a large gathering of women at the Royal Opera House under the auspices of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, Bombay Branch. Later on, a mammoth meeting was organised by Harijan Sevak Sangh at Santa Cruz. On October 22, a public meeting was held at Azad Maidan to mark the first death anniversary of Vittalbhai Patel. Gandhi addressed the meeting. It may be stated that Gandhi’s acts and addresses in 1934 indicated that he had decided to leave the Congress and ultimately when the Congress Session was held in Bombay in October 1934, Gandhi left the Congress.

Sadiq Ali who was Permanent Secretary of AICC from 1934-35 for ten years writes about the functioning of the Congress Working Committee:

“The Congress Working Committee was not always a united and harmonious team. Apart from this impatience for action there emerged ideological differences, especially when Jawarlalji started talking about his socialist creed and the inevitable conflict between labour and capital and the Zamindar and the Kisan or the tiller of the soil and other disharmonies in the existing Indian society. These were his individual views and not explicit part of the Congress creed or programme. Those who did not go along with this approach tended to be looked upon as conservatives or reactionaries when the truth, in fact, was much more complex. All this created a very unpleasant situation even leading to the resignation or threatened resignation from the Working Committee on the part of Rajendra Babu, Sardar Vallabhbhai, Rajaji and a few others.

The crisis was overcome with the intervention of Gandhiji but a certain tenseness continued. It was in this atmosphere that there was a meeting of the Working Committee in Bombay, I believe, some time in 1938. After this meeting was over, I was collecting my papers and was looking into something when I found Gandhiji, Pandit Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai engaged in a serious conversation. The atmosphere was tense with both Gandhiji and Jawaharlal threatening retirement from the Congress and seriously advancing arguments why they should do so. Sardar Vallabhbhai did not utter a word and kept listening patiently when suddenly flared up and in grave tones remarked. “What is this talk of retirement going on? I can also retire and so can others. Then what will happen to the Congress and the country? Bapu, you are fool number one and Jawahar, you are fool number two. Stop this talk of retirement.” With this there was a loud peal of laughter in which all of them joined.

That was the end of the matter. There was no further talk of retirement. [*Bhavan's Journal*, Vol. 32, No. 10, Congress Centenary issue pp. 142-143.]

The Civil Disobedience movement was given up on May 20, 1934. It is interesting to note that before the movement was given up by the Congress, Srinivasa Sastry wrote a letter to Gandhi on August 27, 1933 and appealed to Gandhi to give up both mass and individual Civil Disobedience movement. He further wrote:

“The country looks to you to play a greater part than you have ever played. Save your individual conscience pursue Civil Disobedience, seek jail and embarrass Government as you like----but leave Congress free to evolve a new programme. The moment has come----in my opinion it came long ago---for you to say ‘I set Congress free to try other methods. I have plenty of God’s work to do for the nation’s welfare with Harijan.’”

Gandhi in reply wrote,-----

“I will gladly retire from the Congress and devote myself to development of Civil Disobedience outside the Congress and do the Harijan work.”

Thus, it appears that the thoughts of leaving Congress appeared in the mind of Gandhi in 1933. There was a proposal to change the nature of means to attain the goal of Congress from “Peaceful Legitimate” to “Truthful and Non-Violent”----on which Gandhi was keen. The proposal was turned down at the Subjects Committee of the Congress at its meeting on October 25, 1934. This ultimately decided the issue and Gandhi resigned from the membership of the Congress when the Congress met for its Annual Session at Worli in Bombay. A few members of the Congress including Madanmohan Malaviya tried their best to dissuade Gandhi from his decision. But, Gandhi was firm in his mind about leaving the Congress. He left the Congress camp at Worli on October 29, 1934. It may be mentioned that Bombay once again gained importance for another activity which was close to Gandhi’s heart, namely, Village Industries for it was at its instance that Congress in its Session in 1934 passed a resolution to start All India Village Industries Association. This body was to work under the guidance of the Indian National Congress.

The Congress policy after giving up Civil Disobedience movement centered around work in Legislatures. The Congress issued the Manifestoe explaining its policy in Legislatures when elected. It was also made clear in the Manifestoe to placate nationalist group led by Malaviya. M.S. Aney and N.C. Kelkar. Another important event in 1934 though not connected directly to the city of Bombay was the birth of the Congress Socialist Party in Nashik jail. It may be stated that some of the Congressmen from Bombay like Ashok Mehta, Minoo Masani and others played a decisive role in entertaining the idea of the Socialist Party. The party was officially established at Patna. This Party played very effective role in 1942 movement in the city of Bombay.

The Congress participated in the election under 1935 Government of India Act and secured majority in Bombay Provincial Legislature. When the question came about electing a leader of the Congress party in the Legislature instead of K.F. Nariman who was a very active Congress leader at that time, Mr. B.G. Kher who was comparatively unknown to Congress workers was elected as a leader and he became the first Premier of the Province of Bombay in 1937. This election created an unpleasant episode in the history of the Bombay Congress and the episode is known as Nariman Episode. But as this episode has nothing to do with the Congress movement, it is not discussed in details. (Those desirous of knowing the details may refer to “K. Gopalaswamy: Gandhi and Bombay” pp. 305 to 311). After the formation of the Congress Ministry, Congressmen of Vile Parle organised a camp in order to give a reception to the Congress MLAs. Gandhi addressed the MLAs at this camp.

England declared War against Germany on September 3, 1939 and the Viceroy of India involved India into the War. The Congress Working Committee demanded War aims from the British Government. As no categorical assurance was coming about India's freedom after the War was over, the Working Committee asked the Congress Ministries in seven Provinces to resign. The Bombay Legislature passed the following resolution:

“This Assembly regrets that the British Government have made India a participant in the war between Great Britain and Germany without the consent of the people of India and have further, in complete disregard of the Indian opinion, passed laws and adopted measures curtailing the powers and the activities of the provincial Governments. Hence, the Assembly recommends to the Government to convey to the Government of India and through them to the British Government that in consonance with the avowed aims of the present war, it is essential, in order to secure the cooperation of the Indian people, that the principle of democracy, with effective safeguards for the Muslim and the other minorities, be applied to India and her policy be guided by her own people; and that India should be regarded as an independent nation entitled to frame her own constitution and further that suitable action should be taken in so far as it is possible in the immediate present to give effect to that principle in regard to the present governance of India. This Assembly regrets that the situation in India has not been understood rightly by His Majesty's Government when authorizing the statement that has been made on their behalf in regard to India, and in view of this failure of the British Government to meet India's demand, this Assembly is of the opinion that the Government cannot associate itself with British policy.”

Differences between Gandhi and Congress Working Committee widened into a breach. In June 1940 the Working Committee refused to apply the principle of non-violence to National Defence. The All India Congress Committee met in Bombay on September 1940 and adopted the following resolution:

“The All-India Congress Committee cannot submit to a policy which is a denial of India's natural right to freedom, which suppresses the free expression of the public opinion, and which would lead to the degradation of her people and to their continued

enslavement. By following this policy, the British Government have created an intolerable situation, and are imposing upon the Congress a struggle for the preservation of the honour and the elementary rights of the people. The Congress is pledged under Gandhiji's leadership to non-violence for the vindication of India's freedom. At this grave crisis in the movement for our national freedom, the All India Congress Committee, therefore requests him to guide the Congress in the action that should be taken. The Delhi resolution confirmed by the AICC at Poona, which prevented him from so doing, no longer applies. It has lapsed.

"The AICC sympathize with the British people as well as the peoples of all other countries involved in the war. Congressmen cannot withhold their admiration for the bravery and endurance shown by the British nation in the face of danger and peril. They can have no illwill against them and the spirit of Satyagraha forbids the Congress from doing anything with a view to embarrass them. But this self-imposed restraint cannot be taken to the extent of self-extinction. The Congress must insist on the fullest freedom to pursue its policy, based on non-violence. The Congress, however, has no desire at the present moment to extend non-violent resistance, should this become necessary, beyond what is required for the preservation of the liberties of the people. "In view of certain misapprehensions that have arisen with regard to the Congress policy of non-violence, the AICC desire to state this afresh and to make it clear that this policy continues, notwithstanding anything contained in previous resolutions which may have led to these misapprehensions. This committee firmly believes in the policy and practice of non-violence not only in the struggle for swaraj, but also, in so far as this may be possible of application, in free India. The Committee is convinced and recent world events have demonstrated that complete world disarmament is necessary, and the establishment of a new and a juster political and economic order, if the world is not to destroy itself and revert to barbarism. A free India will throw all her weight in favour of world disarmament and should herself be prepared to give a lead in this. Such lead will inevitably depend on external factors and internal conditions, but the State would do its utmost to give effect to this policy of disarmament. Effective disarmament and establishment of world peace by the ending of national wars, depend ultimately on the removal of causes of wars and national conflicts. The causes must be rooted out by the ending of the domination of one country over another and the exploitation of one people or group by another. To that end India will peacefully labour, and it is with this objective in view that the people of India desire to attain the status of a free and independent nation. Such freedom will be the prelude to the close association with other countries within a comity of free nations for the peace and progress of the world."

As the Congress was not cooperating with the Government of India in their war efforts, Government policy of repression continued. Khursheedben was arrested and interned in Bombay. Gandhi pointed out that Khursheedben's action was no part of war resistance campaign. But even then she and many others were arrested and detained without trial by the authorities.

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The Congress started individual Satyagraha with the blessing of Gandhi. Vinobha Bhave was the first Satyagrahi. Afterwards Jawaharlal Nehru offered Satyagraha and he was arrested. Japan entered the war. This changed the entire political situation in the country and Gandhi started thinking in terms of some concrete programme to be adopted by the Congress, particularly after the failure of the Cripps Mission. Gandhi consulted his colleagues in Bombay on the best slogan for Independence. One of them suggested “Get out”. Gandhi rejected it being impolite. Rajagopalachari suggested “Retreat or withdraw”. That also did not appeal to Gandhi. Yusuf Mehrally presented Gandhi with a bow appearing the inscription “Quit India” and Gandhi said in approval, “Amen”.

CHAPTER V - THE 'QUIT INDIA' STRUGGLE

Background of the Quit India Movement

Various factors persuaded Gandhi and the Congress to undertake a national movement in 1942. The first factor was growing Japanese threat to India. The second was the defencelessness of the British position in India and their defeat in Singapore and Burma. The third factor was the alarming growth of excess propaganda which was having its effect on the minds of the Indian people because Subash Chandra Bose who was in Germany at that time was himself broadcasting from Berlin in Indian languages. Fourthly, Gandhi's mind was revolting against racial discrimination shown in the process of evacuation from Burma. The fifth factor was the suffering caused to the people of Bengal as a result of Scorch-Earth policy of the Government.

The Congress Working Committee was divided on the question of mass movement. Gandhi however was clear in his mind. He had, it appears decided to launch a movement even if the Congress did not bless it. He prepared a draft of resolution for the meeting of Working Committee to be held from April 27 to May 1, 1942. This draft was modified by Dr. Rajendra Prasad and then re-worded by Jawaharlal Nehru. C. Rajagopalachari did not agree with the proposed mass movement. However, as pointed out, Gandhi had made up his mind and he had deputed Mridula Sarabai to Bombay to carry on propaganda, and Khursheedben Naoroji to Bengal for similar purpose. It may be noted that Khursheedben was very much devoted to Gandhi though she was becoming impatient with non-violence as a practical policy. It also appears that Gandhi had talked to some people in Bombay that even if the Congress did not accept his proposal to start the movement he would do so of his own. Gandhi wrote in 'Harijan' on May 28, 1942 as follows:

"I feel that I cannot afford to wait. If I continue to wait, I might have to wait till Dooms Day, for the preparation that I have prepared for and worked for may never come and in the meantime I may be enveloped and overwhelmed by the flames that threaten all of us. This is why I have decided that even at certain risks which are eventually involved I must ask the people to resist slavery."

It may be noted that the Resolution originally drafted by Gandhi for consideration of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress at its meeting held in Allahabad from April 27 to May 1942 was different from the Resolution ultimately adopted by the AICC on August 8, 1942. The text of the Resolution drafted by Gandhi is as follows:

"WHEREAS the British War Cabinet's proposals sponsored by Sir Stafford Cripps have shown up British Imperialism in its nakedness as never before, the AICC has come to the following conclusions:

The AICC is of opinion that Britain is incapable of defending India. It is natural that whatever she does is for her own defence. There is an eternal conflict between Indian and British interests. It follows that their notions of defence would also differ. The British Government has no trust in India's political parties. The Indian army has been maintained up till now mainly to hold India in subjugation. It has been completely segregated from the general population who can in no sense regard it as their own. The policy of mistrust still continues and is the reason why national defence is not entrusted to India's elected representatives.

Japan's quarrel is not with India. She is warring against the British Empire. India's participation in the war has not been with the consent of the representatives of the Indian people. It was purely a British act. If India were freed her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan. The Congress is of opinion that if the British withdrew from India, India would be able to defend herself in the event of Japanese or any aggressor attacking India.

The AICC is, therefore, of opinion that the British should withdraw from India. The plea that they should remain in India for protecting the Indian Princess is wholly untenable. It is additional proof of their determination to maintain their hold over India. The Princess need have no fear from unarmed India.

The question of majority and minority is a creation of the British Government and would disappear on their withdrawal.

For all these reasons the Committee appeals to Britain for the sake of her own safety, for the sake of India's safety and for the cause of world peace to let go her hold on India even if she does not give up all Asiatic and African possessions.

The Committee desires to assure the Japanese Government and people that India bears no enmity either towards Japan or towards any other nation. India only desires freedom from all alien domination. But in this fight for freedom the Committee is of opinion that India while welcoming universal sympathy does not stand in need of foreign military aid. India will attain her freedom through her non-violent strength and will retain it likewise. Therefore the Committee hopes that Japan will not have any designs on India. But if Japan attacks India and Britain makes no response to its appeal the Committee would expect all those who look to Congress for guidance to offer complete non-violent non-cooperation to the Japanese forces and not render any assistance to them. It is no part of the duty of those who are attacked to render any assistance to the attacker. It is their duty to offer complete non-cooperation.

It is not difficult to understand the simple principle of non-violent non-cooperation:

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- (1) We may not bend the knee to the aggressor nor obey any of his orders.
- (2) We may not look to him for any favours nor fall to his bribes. But we may not bear him any malice nor wish him ill.
- (3) If he wishes to take possession of our fields we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the effort to resist him.
- (4) If he is attacked by disease or is dying of thirst and seeks our aid we may not refuse it.
- (5) In such places where the British and Japanese forces are fighting our non-cooperation will be fruitless and unnecessary. At present our non-cooperation with the British Government is limited. Were we to offer them complete non-cooperation when they are actually fighting, it would be tantamount to placing our country deliberately in Japanese hands. Therefore not to put any obstacle in the way of the British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-cooperation with the Japanese. Neither may we assist the British in any active manner. If we can judge from their recent attitude, the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our non-interference. They desire our help only as slaves---a position we can never accept.

It is necessary for the Committee to make a clear declaration in regard to the scorch earth policy. If in spite of our non-violent resistance, any part of the country falls into Japanese hands we may not destroy our crops, water supply, etc., if only because it will be our endeavour to regain them. The destruction of war material is another matter and may under certain circumstances be a military necessity. But it can never be the Congress policy to destroy what belongs to or is of use to the masses.

Whilst non-cooperation against the Japanese forces will necessarily be limited to a comparatively small number and must succeed if it is complete and genuine, the true building up of Swaraj consists in the millions of India wholeheartedly working the constructive programme. Without it the whole nation cannot rise from its age-long torpor. Whether the British remain or not it is our duty always to wipe out unemployment, to bridge the gulf between rich and poor, to banish communal strife, to exorcize the demon of untouchability, to reform dacoits and save the people from them. If crores of people do not take a living interest in this nation-building work, freedom must remain a dream and unattainable by either non-violence or violence.

Foreign Soldiers

The AICC is of opinion that it is harmful to India's interest and dangerous to the cause of India's freedom to introduce foreign soldiers in India. It therefore appeals to the British Government to remove these foreign legions and henceforth stop further introduction. It is a crying shame to bring foreign troops in spite of India's inexhaustible manpower and is a proof of the immorality that British imperialism is."

Meher Ali addressed a secret meeting of socialist workers and students in Poona on July 1942 and gave detailed instructions as to how a revolution was to be made. He advocated sabotage and told his audience not to consult Gandhi at each and every step. He indicated the programme of the 1942 movement as under:

“Pulling of connection cords, running trains, ticketless travel by all public transport, obstruction of every form of Government transport, cutting telegraph wires and picketing at recruitment centres.”

He addressed the students of Fergusson College, Poona on July 25, 1942 and told them “Do everything for liberating the country from bondage even if it be civil war, anarchy and revolution”. On July 31, 1942 he addressed the Bombay Congress in a manner which left no doubt about the revolutionary character of the movement. Similarly Shankarrao Deo also told the Bombay students that there would be national strike, in all factories and mills as part of the movement.

In 1930, Jayaprakash Narayan established an illegal underground office in Bombay. He was at that time also the Secretary of AICC. He was assisted by Lalji Mehrotra. Minoo Masani was also the underground Congress worker. Along with him were Ashok Mehta, Yusuf Meherally, Dantwala. Jayaprakash Narayan was in Arthur Road Jail in 1930. Purushottamdas Trikamdas worked as a private secretary to Gandhi since 1919 and was responsible for organising Congress Socialist Party with the help of Smt. Kamladevi Chattopadhyaya. Purushottamdas Trikamdas went to jail in 1942. Minoo Masani and Charles Mascarenhas organised in Bombay the Congress Socialist Party. It was a rule that no one could become a member of the Congress Socialist Party unless he was a member of the Congress. Ashok Mehta had organized Civil Defence against Japanese in 1942 movement. He had 15,000 volunteers in Bombay and he became the GOC. However Congress did not like this move. Hence the corps was disbanded.

It may be mentioned that in 1930 movement, following ladies took a prominent part in Bombay. Kusum Dhumatkar, Manibai Nanavati, Devayani Desai, Jishiben Captain. In 1942 movement, G. V. Parekh, Dr. Desai, C. C. Mehta and Dantwala, Shanti Patel and Raja Kulkarni participated.

Even non-Congressmen from Bombay helped the freedom struggle substantially. N. M. Joshi who was a member of the Central Legislative Assembly harassed the Government through his speeches. Barrister Pardivala appeared on behalf of the prisoners in a number of Habeas-Corpus petitions.

The year 1942 is a great landmark in the history of the City of Bombay as far as the Indian National Congress is concerned. It was on August 8, 1942 that the All India Congress Committee met at the Gowalia Tank Maidan in a spacious pandal and passed the historic resolution popularly known as Quit India Resolution. The AICC was presided over by Congress President, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad and among other present on the dais were

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Babu Rajendra Prasad and Mahatma Gandhi. There was great excitement in the pandal and quite a large number of people were also standing outside the pandal for listening to the speeches of the national leaders. These people also were able to hear the speeches as the microphone arrangements were very satisfactory and loudspeakers were installed outside the pandal. The present writer was in the pandal on the historic occasion. The speeches of Gandhiji and Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad were heard with rapt attention. Gandhiji's speech was slow, direct and without much rise and fall. Maulana's speech was however full of fire. The fair complexion of Maulana appeared red when he spoke with great passion and vigour. The resolution moved was passed with practical unanimity only 13 members dissenting. The text of the resolution is as follows:

“The All-India Congress Committee has given the most careful consideration to the reference made to it by the Working committee in their resolution dated July 14, 1942, and to subsequent events, including the development of the war situation, the utterances of responsible spokesmen of the British Government, and the comments and criticisms made in India and abroad. The Committee approves of and endorses the resolution and is of opinion that events subsequent to it have given it further justification, and have made it clear that the immediate ending of British rule in India is an urgent necessity, both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. The continuation of that rule is degrading and enfeebling India and making her progressively less capable of defending herself, and of contributing to the cause of world freedom.

“The Committee has viewed with dismay, the deterioration of the situation of the Russian and Chinese fronts and conveys to the Russian and Chinese peoples its high appreciation of their heroism in defence of their freedom. This increasing peril makes it incumbent on all those, who strive for freedom and who sympathise with the victims of aggression, to examine the foundation of the policy so far pursued by the Allied Nations, which have led to repeated and disastrous failures. It is not by adhering to such aims and policies and methods that failure can be converted into success, for past experience has shown that failure is inherent in them. These policies have been based not on freedom so much as on the domination of subject and colonial countries, and the continuation of the imperialist tradition and method. The possession of Empire, instead of adding to the strength of the ruling power, has become a burden and a curse. India, the classic land of modern imperialism, has become the crux of the question; for, by the freedom of India will Britain and the United Nations be judged, and the peoples of Asia and Africa be filled with hope and enthusiasm. The ending of British rule in this country is thus vital and immediate issue on which depends the future of the war and the success of freedom and democracy. A free India will assure this success by throwing all her great resources in the struggle for freedom against the aggression of Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism. This will not only affect materially the fortunes of the war but will bring all subject and oppressed humanity on the side of the United Nations and give these Nations, whose ally India would be, the moral and spiritual leadership of the world. India in bondage will continue to be the symbol

of British Imperialism and taint of that imperialism will affect the fortunes of all the United Nations.

“The peril of today, therefore, necessitates the independence of India and the ending of British domination. No future promise or guarantees can affect the present situation or meet that peril. They cannot produce the needed psychological effect on the mind of the masses. Only the glow of freedom now can release the energy and enthusiasm of millions of people which will immediately transform the nature of the war.

“The AICC therefore repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British Power from India. On the declaration of India’s independence, a Provisional Government will be formed and Free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The Provisional Government can only be formed by the cooperation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite Government representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the non-violent forces at its command, together with it’s Allied powers, and to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere, to whom essentially all power and authority must belong. The Provisional Government will evolve a scheme for a Constituent Assembly which will prepare a Constitution for the Government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. This Constitution, according to the Congress view, should be a federal one, with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units, and with residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied Nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their cooperation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people’s united will and strength behind it.

“The freedom of India must be the symbol of and prelude to this freedom of all other Asiatic nations under foreign domination. Burma, Malaya, Indo-China, Indonesia, Iran and Iraq must also attain their complete freedom. It must be clearly understood that such of these countries as are under Japanese control now, must not subsequently be placed under the rule or control of any other colonial Power.

“While the AICC must primarily be concerned with the independence and defence of India in this hour of danger, the committee is of opinion that the future peace, security and ordered progress of the world demand a World Federation of free nations, and on no other basis can the problems of the modern world be solved. Such a World Federation would ensure the freedom of its constituent nations, the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and people, and the

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pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all. On the establishment of such a World Federation, disarmament would be practicable in all countries; national armies, navies and air force would no longer be necessary and a World Federal Defence Force would keep the world peace and prevent aggression.

“An independent India would gladly join such a world Federation and cooperate on an equal basis with other countries in the solution of international problems.

“Such a Federation should be open to all nations who agree with its fundamental principles. In view of the war, however, the Federation must inevitably, to begin with, be confined to the United Nations. Such a step taken now will have a most powerful effect on the war on the peoples of the Axis countries, and on the peace to come.

“The Committee regretfully realises, however, that despite the tragic and overwhelming lessons of the war and the perils that overhang the world, the Governments of few countries are yet prepared to take this inevitable step towards World Federation. The reactions of the British Government and the misguided criticism of the foreign press also make it clear that even the obvious demand for India's independence is resisted, though this has been made essentially to meet the present peril and to enable India to defend herself and help China and Russia in their hour of need. The Committee is anxious not to embarrass in any way the defence of China or Russia whose freedom is precious and must be preserved, or to jeopardise the defensive capacity of the United Nations. But the peril grows both India and these nations, and inaction and submission to a foreign administration at this stage is not only degrading India and reducing her capacity to defend herself and resist aggression, but is no answer to that growing peril and is no service to the peoples of the United Nations. The earnest appeal of the Working Committee to Great Britain and the United Nations has so far met with no response and the criticisms made in many foreign quarters have shown an ignorance of India's and world's need and some time even hostility to India's freedom, which is significant of a mentality of domination and racial superiority which cannot be tolerated by a proud people conscious of their strength and of the justice of their cause.

“The AICC would yet again at this last moment, in the interest of the world freedom, renew this appeal to Britain and the United Nations. But the Committee feels that it is no longer justified in holding the nation back from endeavouring to assert its will against an imperialist and authoritarian government which dominates over it and prevents it from functioning in its own interest and in the interest of humanity. The Committee resolves therefore, to sanction for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale so that the country might utilize all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last twenty-two years of peaceful struggle. Such a struggle must inevitable be under the leadership of Gandhiji and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken.

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“The Committee appeals to the people of India to face the dangers and hardships that will fall to their lot with courage and endurance, and to hold together under the leadership of Gandhiji, and carry out his instructions as disciplined soldiers of India freedom. They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people and when no Congress Committees can function. When this happens, every man and women, who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India.

“Lastly whilst the AICC has stated its own view of the future governance under free India, the AICC wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on mass struggle it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power, when it comes, will belong to the whole people of India.”

There were certain amendments to the resolution particularly moved by the Communist members in the AICC. However, the amendments were lost. It was also decided in the session that the resolution passed by the AICC was to be sent to the international bodies. The AICC session was over some time at 10-30 at night on August 8, 1942. It appears that immediately after this session there was a meeting of the Working Committee to discuss the details of the future programme. For, in the resolution adopted by the AICC there was no mention of the programme to be undertaken by the Congress for implementing the resolution. It was also decided that Gandhi would address at 9 O' Clock in the morning of August 9 ; various Congress workers who had come from different Provinces and will give an idea of the programme to be undertaken. However, he along with the Working Committee Members were arrested in early hours of the morning of August 9, 1942. It appears that Gandhi and other members of the Working Committee knew about the impending arrests some time on August 5, 1942 itself.

Shantikumar Morarji narrates an incident that took place when the leaders were about to leave for the AICC pendal on August 8, 1942. Abdul Kalam Azad asked “What will be the position of the Congress after Independence ?” Gandhi replied, “Congress should always be outside the administration. Its duty is to bend the Government to the people's will and make administration serve the people's interest”. Jawaharlal Nehru insisted however, “Congress should assume the responsibility of administration and serve the people.”

It is interesting to note that Kanji Dwarkadas who at one time was a staunch Home Rule Leaguer looked at the forthcoming struggle with some doubts. In a letter written on August 5, 1942, to Sir Fredick Stone of Sassoon Mills in Bombay, he, after stating Vallabhbbhai's idea of struggle, concludes that Gandhi has become desperate. He is going to use his 25,000 workers of Gandhi Seva sangh, who are now out of politics, for his last

struggle. He is influenced By Vallabhbhai, Mahadevbhai, Bombay Businessman (Walchand & Company).

Even before the 1942 movement had started the British politicians were unnerved. Prime Minister Churchill gloomily disclosed to the King at one of their Tuesday luncheons in July 1942 that, “The idea of transfer of power in India had become an admitted inevitability in the minds of British party leaders.” The king noted in his diary on 28, July 1942 as follows

“He (Churchill) amazed me by saying that his colleagues and both or all the 3 parties in Parliament were quite prepared to give up India to the Indians after the War. He felt they had already been talked into giving up India. Crips, Press and the U.S. public opinions have all contributed to make their minds up and that our role in India is wrong and has always been wrong for India.”

Lord Linlithgow who was the Viceroy at that time wrote to Prime Minister Winston Churchill as follows :

“ I am engaged here in meeting by far the most serious rebellion since 1857, the gravity and extent of which we have so far concealed from the World for reasons of military security.” [P. N. Chopra : *Quit India Movement*, p. 1.]

The 1942 movement also marked in a sense the end of the Gandhian era.

The 9th August 1942 was unique day in the history of Bombay. For a brief spell Bombay was stunned by the news of the arrest of Gandhi and members of the Congress Working Committee. But by 8 o'clock in the morning, three hours after Gandhi's arrest, a large crowd gathered at Gowalia Tank and recorded its determination to carry on the struggle to the finish.

It was as a mark of protest against this assault on the nation that a huge crowd assembled at Gowalia Tank. A large number of volunteers, with Desh Sevikas attired in their 'Kesharia' (orange) uniforms, were assembling at Gowalia Tank but the police had occupied the Maidan and thus had forestalled the people. It was difficult to break through the cordons formed by the police; still a brave young man skillfully glided his car through the huge gathering and brought it near Mr. T. A. Avinashi Lingam Chettier M.L.A. and Mr. C. K. Govinda Nayer, M.L.A. from Coimbatore and Kerala respectively, and some other members of the A.I.C.C. hailing from the South. The youngman was the son of the late Bhulabhai Desai.

Immediately after, a European sergeant approached Mr. S. Nilkantha Ayer, President of Kochin State Prajamandal, the most conspicuous and outstanding personality at the occasion, and informed him that the Maidan was under Military control and should be cleared off at once, or else tear gas would be used against them. Mr. Nilkantha, with a smile and a jeer, said, 'I am not incharge of the function. You should inform the right person.' Then he

informed Shrimati Aruna Asaf Ali about the sergeant's order and suggested to her that the boys and girls who, as volunteers, had already taken up their positions must be marched out of the impending danger. It was soon done and as preliminary to the flag-hoisting ceremony Shrimati Aruna began her speech.

In the meantime, the police put on their hideous gas masks, taken out from the vehicles that had just arrived. They took in their hands the small gas-container and the officers ordered the people to clear out or face the consequences. But the people remained unmoved. Aruna had finished her speech by then and the National Flag had gone up on the pole and began to flutter high in the air.

The devilish policemen started their attack on the masses. The Bombay Police made the start by throwing gas-containers on the assembly of volunteers thronged in the Gowalia Tank Maidan. It was so swift an attack that the Pearl Harbour attack paled into insignificance. The volunteer's captain proved too clever for the police. "All lie down" he shouted. The army of volunteers and others obeyed him and lay prostrate on the ground. In two minutes the whole assembly was up on its feet again. There was a second attack by the police which also proved equally ineffective. About half a dozen attempts by the police to disperse the crowd with the use of tear gas having failed, the police changed their tactics. They gave up tear-gasing and took to lathis. Some volunteer leaders were taken into custody. The crowd that had stood firm and calm so far began to disperse under the weight of lathi blows. Shri Nilkantha Aiyer received two blows upon his upper arms as he was wiping the tears from his burning eyes. Mridula Ben or Mani Ben Patel was also present at the spot, and got her share of the blows. She advised Shri Aiyer not to get arrested at the moment, but to carry back the message of the Congress to the people of his province. The flag remained fluttering for a few moments, after which a British police officer pulled it down and tore it to pieces.

In the 1942 movement the underground Directorate was having its headquarters in Cathedral Street of Kalbadevi; then it was shifted to Govind Building. The office Bearers of the Directorate had assumed fictitious names such as Ramesh, Kusum, Doctor, Dadi, etc. Achyut Patwardhan was known as Kusum, Aruna Asaf Ali as Kadam, Lohia as Doctor, Sucheta Kripalani as Dadi, Baba Raghavadas as Didi and Balkrishna Kekar as Kikaji. In the Directorate, the Bombay leaders were Purshottamdas Trikamdas and Dr. Gilder. It may be mentioned that some Government servants also helped the underground leaders in a substantial way.

Yusuf Meherally probably knew that Gandhi was thinking on the lines of Quit India Movement. Hence, he was touring the Provinces with a message that in near future people should be ready for struggle and the struggle would be carried by second-rank leadership by remaining underground. The aim would be to obstruct War efforts. It appears that Yusuf Meherally knew on August 5, 1942 that Gandhi and other Congress leaders would be arrested. Hence the Congress Socialist Party decided to go underground to guide the movement when Gandhi would not be available for guidance. There was secret meeting of a small group at Sardar Griha and it was decided to work underground in Bihar, U.P. and M.P.

Their programme was to procure arms and ammunitions from non-British sources like Goa and India States where the Arms Act did not apply. Factories for preparing bombs and explosive materials were set up at Agra, Gwalior, Kanpur, etc. Nagpur supplied dynamite from its neighbouring mines. Efforts were made to get rifles and guns from North Western Frontier Province.

On August 9, Meherally, Ashok Mehta were arrested, S. M. Joshi was in Bombay and with a view to avoiding arrest he became Imam Ali and always moved in the Muslim dress. Barrister Purushottamdas Trikamdas was an active worker in the Movement. He also went underground. He along with other Socialists tried to establish an underground AICC. Following passage form an article written by Sadiq Ali is relevant in this behalf: [\[Bhavan's Journal, Vol. 32, No. 10, Congress Centenary issue, pp. 143-145.\]](#)

“The year 1942 was memorable in many ways. Soon after Gandhiji and members of Working Committee were arrested on the August 8th night or 9th early morning I found that I had an important role to play. I was present at all meetings of the Working Committee and knew how the mind of Gandhiji and the Congress Working Committee was working in regard to what was widely regarded as the last and final fight for freedom. It was not easy for men like Nehru and Maulana Azad to agree to the whole concept behind the “Do or Die” 1942 movement. They were anxious to do nothing which would help the facist powers, all their serious and legitimate grievances against Great Britain notwithstanding. But the Japanese victories in India’s neighbourhood and the prospect of an imminent Japanese invasion created a new situation in the country. Cripps Mission had failed and the Japanese were advancing. Could India remain a helpless spectator of a double tragedy being enacted in the country? The country was confused IN ITS REACTIONS. There were signs of demoralisation too in some sections of our people.

It was in this situation that Gandhiji came out with his 1942. “Do or Die” call. He felt so strongly that he was prepared to let the Congress stand aloof if important Congress leaders thought him wrong and did not wish to go along with him. He would carry on the fight with the help of such Congressmen as chose to join him in their individual capacity. This situation however was not allowed to arise. Ultimately all fell in line.

Gandhiji poured out his heart at the AICC meeting at Govalia Tank in Bombay. I think it was the longest speech he had made at any AICC meeting. He touched many issues in his speech. He had the world audience in mind. Before taking the final plunge he wished to meet the Viceroy and plead with him to do the right thing. The Viceroy answered by arresting him and the whole Working Committee barely a few hours after the AICC session was over.

This cast no small responsibility on some of us, who were left behind. Since I was present at all meetings of the Working Committee and knew what Gandhi and the

Working Committee thought and felt about the struggle which was becoming inevitable *I lost no time in drafting a set of instructions for the use of the AICC members.* I remember how we utilised K. Munshi's residence and with the members of his family made dozens and scores of copies of these instructions. These instructions were given to all members of the AICC who were present in Bombay. Armed with these instructions and the "Do or Die" message they had heard from Gandhiji and other leaders of the Congress, they went to their respective States. Not a few were arrested as soon as they had landed in their States, others went underground.

I was underground for some six months and visited a number of States. Many Congressmen, eminent and non-eminent, went underground and organised the campaign of resistance. *After the basic set of instructions we had issued on the very first day of the arrest of Gandhiji and Working Committee, we drafted instructions for every class of people, the peasants, the industrial labour, the students, the industrial and merchant community and others and managed to pass them on to all the States through messengers and whatever other means we could devise.* (emphasis added) We certainly emphasised the need for paralysing the whole administration but we used no word which would indicate any advocacy of open violence. Cutting of telegraph wires was not considered a violent activity even though it involved secrecy. The Indian administration was paralysed for no small stretch of time in Bihar and quite a few other areas. A good deal of the movement was non-violent but it was suppressed ruthlessly. Where people under some serious provocation took to some types of violence, heavy punishment including death was in store for them. It is quite possible that some 20,000 people were killed if the fatal casualties in various parts of the country were to be totalled up.

Purushottamdas Trikamdas suggested that parallel Government should be established and all efforts should be made to that end. Others did not agree with him. Annasaheb Sahastrabudhe was staying in Pallonji Sojpal Chawl, at Dadar. He along with other friends, Rangrao Divaker, Pundlik Katgade established a small arsenal with the help of some foreign experts and undertook to supply Bombs to underground workers. On April 18, 1943 Shirubhau Limaye, Sane Guruji, Nanasaheb Gore were arrested in Bombay. It was in Bombay that Sane Guruji wrote the booklet "On the Path of Revolution" cyclostyled copies of the booklet were distributed all over Maharashtra. Bombay was an ideal place for underground workers. Jayaprakash Narayan was also detained without trial in January 1941 under the Defence of India Rule and he was put in the Arthur Road prison.

Congress had decided on the lists of names to be submitted to the Viceroy for membership of the provincial Government. The two names that were suggested were Sir Ardeshir Dalal and G. L. Mehta.

In 1942 Movement tram tracks were rendered unworkable, rails of railways were fully greased with oil, Pardiwala was also arrested along with Purushottamdas Trikamdas, Mills were completely closed and the suburban trains both on the BCCI (now Western Railway),

and GIP (now Central Railway) were suspended. On August, 9, eight persons were killed and 169 were injured. On August 11 police opened fire on 13 times.

In may be mentioned that N. M. Joshi from Bombay harassed Government of India in Legislative Assembly. Bhulabhai Desai referred to the demand of National Government in the Central Assembly. Congress had instructed the members not to attend meetings except technically to keep their seats.

Following is the datewise account of the movement in Bombay. [*See Govind Sahai: 1942 Rebellian, 1947 Rajkamal Publications Ltd.*]

Shivaji Park Meeting, August 9.-Nine hours after the incident on the Gowalia tank Maidan, there was a mass public meeting at Shivaji Park. Around the meeting place, there was great show of the armed might of the Government. Tens of thousands had gathered at the place. Speakers sprang up from among them to address the gathering in the absence of Kasturba, who was arrested when she was about to proceed to the meeting place. There were again lathi charges and tear-gas attacks which the people faced in a resolute and cheerful spirit. Men and women in their tens of thousands gathered on their balconies, and dipping their handkerchiefs and towels in water threw them at the people to enable them to face the tear-gas. It was a remarkable sight to see. The British bureaucracy was determined to disperse the crowd by the use of tear-gas. The people were equally resolved to demonstrate their courage by neutralising the effects of the tear-gas. In this way on the 9th of August lathi charges were freely made at many places in Bombay, and firing was resorted to at many others. The police was forced to resort to firing about fifteen times and according to Government data 8 persons were killed and 169 wounded.

Bombay knew no rest even after the 9th of August. On the roads, houses, railways and walls were painted Gandhi's message, 'do or die' and other revolutionary slogans. Hundreds of small meeting were held in which the accumulated grievances of the people against the alien administration were ventilated. Hartals were organised in the city, and strikes in colleges, schools and mills. Even some of the railway workshops were closed. The people's activities included burning of trams, cars and buses, police-stations and other Government buildings cutting of telegraph and telephone wires ; dislodging of rails ; dislocating train services and damaging stations and post offices, and many other activities that could possibly be imagined by the people to express their resentment.

10th August

The Bombay police resorted to firing on ten occasions. The Military fired five times (nothing to say of tear gasing and lathi-charge). The result was 16 dead and 141 injured. A Government communiqué issued on the situation of the 10th August stated that the demonstrations which began on Sunday morning following the detention of the Congress leaders continued throughout Monday morning and afternoon. The areas worst affected were

around Girgaon and at Dadar. In both these areas and in other centres, numerous instances of mob-violence occurred. In the afternoon an attempt was made to set the B.B.C.I. Railway Station at Dadar on fire, which was foiled by the police. Elsewhere, six police Chowkis were set on fire and two of them were gutted. Some telephone wires were cut, post boxes removed, a municipal lorry over-turned and a tram upset. In some areas buses were immobilized through air being let out of their tyres. In the Fort areas many small roads and lanes were blocked during the morning with bricks, stones and rubble. As soon as these were cleared away by the police, they were replaced by the demonstrators. Other demonstrators picketed labour areas and persuaded mill and other workers to stay away. As a result, a certain amount of dislocation was caused in the textile and a few other industries.

11th and 12th August

In order to curb the high spirits of the people and calm the rising tempo of their bitterness the Government of Bombay introduced the infamous Emergency Whipping Act on the 11th August. Bonfires were started by the people in different parts of the city on 11th and 12th, and hats, neck-ties and other European articles of clothing were freely burnt. The Police opened fire twice before 10 a.m. on the 11th August. Tram, bus and other vehicular traffic was completely stopped. The G.I.P. and B.B. & C.I Railway lines were tampered with. The trains stopped working for full two hours. The Matunga Railway station was attacked by the people who also smashed lamp posts. Demonstrations were held at Parel. The schools and colleges remained closed. Most of the mill workers remained on strike. The city Corporation was adjourned as a protest against the arrest of the Mayor of Bombay [[Yusuf Meherali was the Mayor.](#)], and other prominent persons. The people cut telephone and telegraph wires, attacked post Offices, police chowkies, railway stations, etc, and the police made full use of fire-arms more than ten times, on the 11th and 12th, to disperse the crowds in front of K.E.M. and King George School at Dadar.

The 13th August

Post offices and post-boxes in Andheri and Vile-Parle were damaged, set to fire, and some articles removed from Andheri Post offices (Dadar). Vile-Parle and suburbs were plunged into complete darkness; all the electric lamps were completely smashed. Sydenham College students organised demonstrations. Traffic was disorganized in South Bombay.

Strikes

The City's markets observed complete hartal. The Stock Exchange remained closed, as also the Mangaldas and other Markets in the vicinity. The Municipal schools remained closed for a week.

Sabotages

Telephone and telegraph wires were damaged and one thousand arrests were made up to 13th August. According to the Government there persons were killed and 42 wounded.

14th August

Demonstrations were held and processions taken out in Kalbadevi and other places. Local Exchange, cotton and bullion markets, as also the seeds, yarn and cloth markets remained completely closed. 15 persons were arrested and 25 merchants detained under D.I.R. The police opened fire and made lathi charges. The people were slapped and caned. Two persons were killed and some injured.

The people kept on demonstrating their anger and bitterness against the British in some way or the other throughout the month of August. Curfew Order was enforced and police were instructed to shoot the law-breakers at sight. In the third week of August though some of the shops and markets were opened according to Government communiques; actually all business in the city remained at a standstill. As a mark of protest against the policy of suppression and oppression followed by the Government some prominent members of the Corporation tendered resignation. The Government strengthened its hands to effectively put down the rebellion. The strikers were intimidated and told that the demolition of their shops would be the only consequences if they continued striking. Naturally, therefore, faced with such terrible consequences the people desisted from openly rebelling against the Government, and the external manifestations of the movement seemed to disappear for the time being. But actually it was felt that the struggle would be a long one, necessitating the full use of the organised strength of the people. The new leaders had put up their own programme for the co-ordination of the power, courage, determination, anti-British feelings, and patriotic ideals of the people. They fixed some days in every month when people would assemble and hold protest meetings, organise demonstrations and take out processions. These were the 9th, 15th and the last Sunday in every month. The demonstrations were made in various manners. There was flag hoisting and salutation, protest-meetings and processions, and all this despite the Government ban. Special occasions like Independence Day. The Tilak Anniversary, the National Week and the Gandhi Jayanti were taken advantage of for popular demonstrations. This continued till the end of February 1944.

During Gandhi's fast in 1943 several batches of volunteers, about 50 in numbers went to Poona led by Mr. M. R. Masani. They were arrested and sentenced for a period of 3 months. Another batch of volunteers staged a similar march to Aga Khan Palace during August 1943. The total number of volunteers from Bombay who participated in this demonstration was about 100. Most of them were arrested either in Bombay while boarding a train or on the route. A few who could reach Poona were arrested there.

The underground movement of young men and women continued paralysing the Government machinery. Some of the colleges and schools in Bombay were reopened in September 1942, but thousands of students continued participating in public demonstrations, and picketing educational institutions. Five girl-students of Elphinstone College were arrested on the 1st of September in this connection.

The total number of arrests in Bombay Province throughout these two long years can roughly be estimated at 5000. Of these about 1000 persons were released after 2 months of detention, and 450-500 were convicted to various terms ranging from six weeks to five years. The maximum sentence passed for holding flag salutation was 2 ½ years. In the famous 'Radio Case' one Congress man and a young Congress girl got five and four years imprisonment respectively. The nature of arrests, and the classes under which the arrests were effected, may be given as follows:

- (1) For belonging to an unlawful association.
- (2) For participating in any kind of demonstration.
- (3) For striking and holding meeting.
- (4) For picketing shops and forcing the shop-keepers to close down their shops.
- (5) For printing, publishing, possessing or distributing prejudicial literature, and reading out bulletins to groups of persons.
- (6) For shouting slogans and writing them on walls and public highways.
- (7) For assisting mill-workers in going on strike.
- (8) For throwing stones or soda-water bottles.
- (9) For acts of sabotage, tampering with telephone and telegraph wires, and possession of explosive materials.
- (10) For violating the post, telegraph and radio Acts.
- (11) For breaking curfew orders, and police orders prohibiting the carrying of lethal weapons.
- (12) For giving shelter to absconders
- (13) For doing or proposing to do prejudicial acts."

The Quit India Movement in Bombay was carried on with great enthusiasm not only by the Congressmen but even by those who were not Congressmen. Bombay undertook various measures to implement the programme and also to circulate information about the programme to people not only in Bombay but even outside Bombay. This was necessary because the Congress organisation were declared illegal and there was strict censorship on newspapers. The methods adopted by Bombay agitators were of various types. It appears that there was a headquarters of the movement at Bombay and the headquarters was manned by leaders of the Congress-Socialist Party and Congressmen. It may be noted that the Congress-Socialist Party had decided earlier to go underground immediately after the AICC Session and therefore the headquarters of the movement were manned by people like Achyuth Patwardhan, Purushottamadas Trikamdas, Ashok Mehta, Dr. Lohia and others.

One of the programmes undertaken by the Bombay agitators was printing and circulating bulletins, leaflets meant for directing the movement. This was primarily a student's production. Bulletins and leaflets were cyclostyled and were distributed by students from house to house. These bulletins contained a request that the receiver should, after reading it, pass it on to other and if possible get more cyclostyled copies and distribute to others. Copies of some of the bulletins were seized on August 9, 1942. These bulletins paid lip service to non-violence and called for intensification of the movement.

The Bombay Congress issued three bulletins. They were known as bulletin Nos. 1, 2 and 3 dated 9, 10 and 12 August, 1942. The first bulletin congratulated the citizens of Bombay for the wonderful spirit shown in carrying out the resolution of the AICC and urged them to intensify and carry on the struggle. The second bulletin was worded in inflammatory language. However, there was no direct call to violent methods. The third bulletin contained careful instructions for implementing the AICC resolution. It called upon the agitators not to burn vehicles. However, the instructions contained in the third bulletin were withdrawn in later bulletins. Students practically from all colleges barring a few, played a very important role in cyclostyling and distribution of bulletins. Mention may be made of two colleges, the students of which were on the frontline of the struggle. They were Wilson College, Chowpatty, Bombay, Ramnarain Ruia College, Matunga, Bombay. One of the members of the teaching staff of the Ruia College, was arrested in connection with the movement and detained for a number of months. Similarly, a number of students from various colleges were also arrested and detained. Mention may be made of the fact that the present Chief Justice of India, Shri P. N. Bhagwati who was a student at that time was also arrested and imprisoned in connection with the movement. These bulletins were sent outside Bombay also, either by post or by messenger. One Mr. C. V. Varad had undertaken long journey in order to take the bulletins to different parts of India. In addition to the various types of bulletins mentioned above, bulletins called 'Azad', 'War of Independence' and 'Quit India' were also issued and circulated. These bulletins were to a very great extent responsible for keeping up the spirit of the people to carry on the struggle and implement the programme.

It appears that neither Gandhi nor AICC had time to prepare a programme for implementing the resolution. However, there was an Andhra circular which laid down the programme. The programme included 'felling of trees on road margins, to lie across the roads, march on offices and collect rent so that they cease to function, remove plates on railway lines, cutting of wires, etc.' The circular made clear that there should not be any danger to life. On August 28, 1942, Khurshedben sent a letter from Bombay to Abdul Ghafar Khan and expressed her hope that he will carry out the programme as per the instructions sent to him. Vallabhbhai on July 31, 1942 had given some idea of the programme in the meeting of the Congressmen which he addressed at Baroda. Later on a 12-point programme was circulated as the programme of the Congress. On August 9, 1942, at 9-00 a.m. when one Rajendranath went to the place where Gandhi was residing in Bombay. Pyarelal, his Secretary, gave a copy of instructions issued by the AICC. These instructions contained the 12-point programme.

The Method of Action

There were various methods indicated for implementing the programme : (1) Every man was to be a Congressman and every house a Congress house ; (2) Individuals had to decide their own line of action. This was made clear in the AICC Resolution itself. Hence, people were free to act as such. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad said it was for the people to make successful end. Purushottamdas Trikamdas, a Barrister from Bombay, told an audience in Bombay on July 12, 1942, that the leaders expect the movement to be Short and swift; (3)

Non-violence was to be observed but the movement was to be stepped up and it became near violent. However, there was a clear instruction that no physical violence to be resorted to. On August 10, Achyut Patwardhan and Dr. Lohia told in Bombay that Gandhi had approved of the uprooting of railway lines and cutting of wires as part of programme. These two Socialists were in close touch with Gandhi. Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali was a member of the Working Committee and she directed the underground movement from Bombay. She said, Gandhi left the question of sabotage to decision of those who embark upon the underground movement. Shankarrao Deo, a prominent Congress member from Maharashtra expressed similar view in July 1942; (4) the programme also included the scorch-earth policy. However, there were differences of opinion between Nehru and Gandhi on the question of scorch-earth policy.

Organisation and Directorate

The headquarters of the Quit India organisation and Directorate were in Bombay. It appears that Gandhi deliberately made use of the Congress-Socialist party for consultation and for other purposes. This has been clearly seen from the facts that Acharya Narendradev was appointed a member of the Working Committee to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Bhulabhai Desai who did not agree with the programme. The Congress-Socialist party played a very decisive role in the Struggle. The Congress has been declared illegal and prominent Congressmen were behind the bar and the Congress-Socialist party which decided to go underground had the responsibility of directing the struggle.

The Bombay office was located in rented rooms and on the staff of the headquarters was Sadiq Ali (who later on became Governor of Maharashtra). The man in actual charge of the office was known as Ramesh. This Ramesh was the brother of Ramsevak Pandey. This office used to collect information from the underground and incorporate suggestions in the propaganda literature. It would issue instructions, bulletins, etc. daily. On some days as many as 200 letters were sent. Sucheta Kripalani was in Bombay as much as possible and she kept contact with outside workers. She was the touring office Secretary of the underground headquarters. Khurshedben Naoroji was not a member of the underground headquarters. But she worked under it. She mostly in Bengal and Bihar. A special bulletin as from AICC was issued under her name in early part of September 1942. She refuted the Government accusation that Congress was responsible for the disturbances. The Underground Directorate at Bombay consisted of Achyut Patwardhan, Aruna Asaf Ali, Purushottamdas Trikamdas, Rammanohar Lohia, R. R. Diwakar, Dr. Gilder and tow U. P. Congressmen. The Directorate held atleast 3 meetings, (1) in November, (2) December, and (3) March 1943. It is interesting to note what the Wickenden Report has to say about the Congress-Socialist Party's role in 1942 movement. The reports points out that the movement was greatly intensified owing to the intervention of the Congress-Socialist Party, Forward Bloc, the Students and the other revolutionary parties. The Congress-Socialist Party had met in Bombay from August 5 to 8, 1942 and gave its full support to Gandhi and even decided actually to dissolve itself and merge completely with the Congress. A Committee consisting of Acharya Narendradeo. Meherally, Achyut Patwardhan met Gandhi on August 7, 1942 and pledged their full support to him.

The Quit India Movement was unparalleled Movement in the history of the Congress. The resolution of the AICC itself indicated that after the arrests of the leaders, the people themselves should choose the line of action to be adopted. The younger generation at that time was fired with a great ideal and enthusiasm. Some of them thought of establishing Congress Radio in order to convey to the people the news about the movement. This was necessary because there was strict press-censorship. Miss Usha Mehta, who was a student of Wilson Colleges at that time and others worked out a plan of the Congress Radio or the Freedom Radio. The full story of the Freedom Radio and the sentences imposed on two of the sponsors of Freedom Radio is given below in the words of Miss Usha Mehta. [\[It may be mentioned that Miss Usha Mehta later became Professor of Political Science in the University of Bombay and presently is the Director of the Gandhian Institute at Mani Bhawan.\]](#)

Freedom Radio

“On August 9, 1942, when all the beloved leaders were put behind prison bars, we began making preparations for the functioning of our own radio with the name of ‘VOICE OF FREEDOM’ speaking from somewhere in India.”

Some time before the “Quit India” struggle started, some of my colleagues and I were thinking of what to do in case the movement was launched, because it was our hearts’ desire to contribute our humble mite to the freedom cause. A perusal of the history of the past campaigns had convinced us that a transmitter of our own was perhaps one of the most important requirements for the success of the movement. When the Press is gaged and news banned, a transmitter helps a good deal in acquainting the public with the events that occur. So, Babubhai Khakhar and myself decided to work for a “Freedom Radio.”

Thrilling Prospect

We have realized the tremendous propaganda value of a transmitter and the idea that with a powerful transmitter we could also reach foreign countries thrilled us. But where to get the money from? A relative of mine volunteered to give all her ornaments, but it was rather difficult to decide whether to accept them or not. Ultimately, however, Babubhai got the money. He got one set built by an expert, who later turned an approver.

Side by side, another group led by Vithalbhai K. Jhaveri, maker of the monumental film ‘Mahatma’, was also trying to work another transmitter. Besides these two, several other groups were also working on these line. Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, who knew all these groups, tried to coordinate them. Other groups did not contribute much, but Babubhai’s and Vithalbhai’s started working in coordination until our arrest. These groups were jointly working in the name of “Congress Radio” which has been associated with many thrilling romances and mysteries.

The Congress Radio was not one only in name. It had its own transmitter, transmitting station, recording station, its own call sign and a distinct wave-length. We started broadcasting on August 14, 1942. "This is the Congress Radio Calling on 42-34 Meters from somewhere in India."

It was a Herculean task to get the necessary material for the transmitter. Babubhai had to stretch his imagination to the limit to get them. Both he and Vithalbhai banked on their resourcefulness. Many a time gadgets used to drop out of Babubhai's hat or from his pocket and quite often from his tiffin-carrier. It was so thrilling. It was no joke to evade the ever-hunting police and their detective van. Our transmitter and the detective van used to play a sort of hide-and-seek. We succeeded in evading the police after giving the false impression that our transmitter was well within their reach. Sometimes it used to be, but to their utter surprise it would be miles away just a few hours later.

Uncle from upcountry

Fortunately for us, an uncle landing from upcountry, or a sister or some other relative would come to our rescue. Uncle wanted a flat for one month and one of his nephews would go and hire it, take all the luggage there and would anxiously wait for him. But by that time another uncle we expected and another flat would have to be hired. Every time the process was to go from the existing broadcasting station to the railway station and from there to the new transmitting station. This had to be done every fortnight or so. Once Babubhai and I found a very good place, quite safe, according to us. We were extremely happy at the idea that we would be able to carry on at least for a month or two. We went to the owner to pay the rent. A queer apparatus was lying there. "Sethji, what is this supposed to be?" we asked, "A detecting machine to catch the illegal radios," came the reply. "A detecting machine!" I was taken aback, but took care to see that my face did not betray my alarm. Babubhai cleverly joined him in abusing all those who did such illegal acts and we were off. We thanked our stars for having been cautioned in time. The first words of Babubhai were: "Behn, we are saved from the tiger's jaws." He had warned me not to be in a white khadi sari that day but I had insisted on it. From that day, however, I changed my dress slightly so as to be less conspicuous.

Air gets it back

Another great obstacle in our way was the mischief played by AIR (Anti India Radio to us) to jam our broadcasts. When everything was ready and we were absolutely sure about a good reception they would start their trick. It was really disgusting! So, our technicians decided to try the same trick to jam A.I.R. and were partly successful.

Also keeping an only transmitting station was risky in itself. So, we thought of having a network of broadcasting stations throughout India so that the work might not suffer even if one of the sets was seized. For some time, we were working on two transmitters which worked alternatively. One of these belonged to Vithalbhai. It lessened our risk to a certain extent because the two transmitters were working from two different localities.

We used to relay news, speeches, instructions, appeals to different classes of people. For this, there was a batch of speakers and writers. It was not safe to take all of them to the broadcasting station and hence we thought of getting the speeches recorded. The recording place was different from the broadcasting station. Thus, the risk was lessened considerably. Vithalbhai Jhaveri was in charge of this section and Babubhai mainly in charge of the broadcasting section.

The news item was a daily feature of the programme. We used to receive news from all over India through special messenger. We were the first to give the news of the Chittagong bomb raid, of the Jamshedpur strike and of the happenings in Balia. We broadcast the full description of the atrocities in Ashti and Chimur. When the newspapers dared not touch these subjects under the prevailing conditions, only the Congress Radio could defy the orders and tell the people what was really happening. Our listeners helped us in spreading the news to the people at large.

Policy Clarification

In the speeches we mostly used to clarify and explain the Congress stand, both from the national and international points of view. The speeches were mainly delivered by Dr. Lohia and occasionally by Achyut Patwardhan. Some of the speeches were written by eminent journalists, teachers and Congress workers.

In the beginning, we used to broadcast once a day, but after sometime began to broadcast twice morning and evening, in English and in Hindustani.

After our call-sign the first song to be relayed was Iqbal's "Hindustan Hamara". We ended with "Vande Mataram".

On November 12, 1942, the day of our arrest, we held a meeting of the workers of our group to decide the stand to be taken in case of our arrest. It was decided that no one was to give out the name of any other colleague and that all the secrets were to be guarded.

A week before our arrest, a number of prominent radio dealers in the city were arrested. Through them the authorities learnt that Babubhai and Vithalbhai were the main persons behind the Congress Radio. On November 12 at noon, the police raided Babubhai's office. Many workers, including Chandrakantbai Jhaveri and I, were

there. When we knew that the police had arrived, Chandrakantbhai and others cleared the office of all the files-under the nose of a dozen watchful CID officers! After that, I asked Babubhai what I should tell the doctor about mother's health. He asked me to tell him that mother's condition was serious. So from the office I went to a place where Dr. Lohia, Vithalbhai and others were busy recording the day's programme, and acquainted them with the situation. In the meantime the news came that one of the technicians had also been arrested. At first we decided not to broadcast any programme that night but changed the decision on second thought. We strongly desired that the Congress Radio must not stop functioning even in adverse circumstances. We decided to run one station and change the other transmitter overnight. It was our duty as disciplined soldiers to stick our in the freedom fight, to face the obvious danger.

Fateful Night

The night when I was starting for the station as usual, Chandrakantbhai Jhaveri accompanied me, though he was fully aware of the risk. He came with me in spite of my repeated requests not to do so. This act of his touched me very deeply.

When the programme was almost over, we heard knocks at the door. We just ran the programme. Three bolted doors had to be broken open before the hunters could pounce upon their prey. Their expression showed what they thought: "So at last we have got you ! Yes, they thought three months' hard labour had been rewarded.

The Deputy Commissioner of Police, his military technicians and his troop of 50-odd policemen smiled triumphantly-and lost their sense. They asked, rather ordered, us to stop playing the record. Did they mistake us for mercenaries? We not only refused to obey. We didn't even get up from our seats. The "Vande Mataram" record was over. We wanted to announce the news of the spectacular raid, of the betrayal by one of our technicians who led the police to this station, of our arrest at the post of duty. But the traitor of a technician came to the rescue of the police by tampering with the fuse. Of course, our colleagues, who were listening to the radio, did get a hint of what was happening when they heard the breaking open of the doors. When the fuse was tampered with the room became dark and that made the police nervous as it afforded us an opportunity to escape and this made them more vigilant.

"Do or Die"

After about an hour the police could manage to get a hurricane lamp and then began the formalities. A list of all the things found on the premises was prepared and 'panchas' were called in.

After the formalities, which lasted nearly three hours and a half, Chandrakantbhai and I stepped out of the room and naturally felt elated at the idea that a troop of

policemen, one on every step and several others downstairs, were waiting for us. We took it as a 'guard of honour'. Instead of being perturbed, we went out happy and smiling, perhaps proud, too.

The police got many a missing clue and arrested Vithalbhai Jhaveri the next day. Then followed Nanik Motwani of the Chicago Radio Company

After months of investigation the police charged Babubhai Khakhar, Vithalbhai Jhaveri, Chandrakant Jhaveri, Nanik Motwani and myself with a conspiracy to do illegal acts like illegally working a transmitter, spreading prejudicial reports against the Government, causing disaffection among His Majesty's forces and other public servants, exciting disaffection towards the lawfully established Government, impeding and delaying the work necessary for the efficient prosecution of war, undermining public confidence in the national credit and the Government currency notes, instigating offences under the Indian Explosives Act, under the Indian Penal Code, Indian Telegraph Act and the Defence of India Act.

Though we were reluctant to engage lawyer for our defence ultimately, we had to yield to the pressure of friends and Congress coming into disrepute if we were not defended.

Hence, top-most lawyers of the country-Shri Kanaiyalal Munshi, Shri Motilal Setalvad, Shri S. R. Tendular and Shri Thakkar were engaged for our defence.

A special court presided over by Justice Lokur was instituted. The case against us began on April 8, 1943 and continued for full five weeks. In all, about 80 witnesses were examined and very ably cross-examined by the defence lawyers who left no stone unturned to see that we were acquitted. All possible evidence was produced. Vithalbhai and Nanikbhai were acquitted. Since Chandrakantbhai and I were caught red-handed, we were prepared for any punishment and Babubhai too could not escape. Chandrakantbhai was sentenced to 1 year's R.I., Babubhai to 5 years' R.I. and 1 to 4 years' R.I." [\[From an article which was kindly supplied by Dr. Usha Mehta.\]](#)

Sabotage Activities

"It was in the fourth week of September 1942 that the first bomb burst in Bombay. Thereafter a number of such explosions occurred till Gandhi's fast in February 1943. Cases of incendiarism were not infrequent. Fire in the Mazagon Police Court reducing the premises to ashes, on October 3, 1943 ; and in the paper godown of the Times of India at Argyle road resulting in damage to the extent of Rs. 2,00,000 are the major occurrences connected with sabotage activities with which the youthful patriots of the time busied themselves. The police made many arrests on suspicion or otherwise in this connection. Most of them were detained and a few placed before Magistrates to stand their trials. Of the latter almost all were acquitted for want of evidence. Those found guilty in the lower courts were acquitted by the

High Court. But the police re-arrested practically all of them and kept them under detention under D.I.R. The maximum sentence given under the Explosives Act was 5 years. Very harsh treatment was meted out to these people, and horrible atrocities perpetrated on them. There were reports of the use of third degree methods by the police to elicit information. In a few cases the police succeeded because the accused were too much tortured. There were two serious lathi charges on detenus and other prisoners in Worli Jail in Bombay. Several detenus were seriously injured.

The people at last desisted from participating openly in the rebellion, on account of the repressive measures adopted by the police, but secretly all their energies were harnessed to give a secret and determined fight to the British.

Local Press

By special order, the Central Government enforced certain prohibitory regulations on the press on the 10th of August 1942. Papers were strictly warned not to publish any news regarding the Movement, much less to give publicity to the mass-movement sanctioned by the All India Congress Committee. The press was entirely gagged. The securities of many papers were forfeited and many others were compelled to stop publication. Still the surviving papers gave full co-operation to the insurgents and published many bulletins pertaining to the Movement. The *press Hartal* in connection with Prof. Bhansali's fast was most successful. The Honours' list on the new year day, January 1943, was ignored by the local press. There was a *hartal* by the press (with the exception of the Times of India) on another occasion.

The Commercial and Business Community

Though the closing of shops and restaurants was forbidden by new Defence of India Rules yet the part that was played by the Commercial and Business associations and other important markets in the city was splendid and unique. There was a meeting of all the Commercial organisations affiliated to the Indian Merchants' Chamber to consider the abnormal conditions obtaining in the country, and the steps taken up by the Government to meet them. They took serious exception to the treatment meted out to responsible citizens by the police and the Military, by making them remove rubbish that lay scattered in the roads, specially in Bhuleshwar, Matunga and Dadar, and expressed their appreciation and approval of the Congress resolution and endorsed it. The local markets were with the Congress throughout, and observed *hartals* whenever called upon to do so.

Labour

Very little part was played by the Bombay labour in general and by textile labour in particular, in the movement. Far greater work in connection with the movement was done by the Ahmedabad labour. The Communist influence on the Bombay labour was greater and the communists had recorded their dissentient voice when the 'Quit India' resolution was put to the vote. Moreover a great majority of Muslim labourers, who secretly sympathised with the

movement could not for various reasons take active and open part in it. The textile mills except for the first week after the 9th August, when they were closed owing to serious disturbances in the City, remained working throughout the period. The general exodus of March 1942 was over and there was no question of unemployment. Lastly, with the arrest of all the workers of the Kamgar Seva Sangh in the very beginning, the last link between the Congress and the labour had been cut off and it was found very difficult later on to contact workers even for the purpose of distributing propaganda literature.

The students

The student community of Bombay had the opportunity of playing a noble role. They sacrificed their studies and ventured their future for a cause which was so dear to their heart. Their example was emulated by their brethren in other Provinces. About 80 per cent of the students participated in the Movement. They left their school and colleges, organised the demonstrations, led the mobs and most of them went underground. Many students were rusticated or prevented from appearing for their examinations in 1943. The attempts of the University authorities, as also of the Government, who warned the students, by a press note, against absenting themselves from schools and colleges, had no effect. Even the threat of striking off their names from school and college rolls was used, but with no better results. The students returned to their institutions after 3 or 4 months. Though the enthusiasm of many of them had very much cooled down at a later stage, they bore cheerfully the hardships of a true soldier's life.

The Municipal Corporation

The Municipal Corporation of Bombay was under Congress control in 1942. After the arrest of Congress leaders the Municipal Corporation denounced the Government for its surprise attacks on the Congress and as a mark of protest adjourned *sine die*. On the 10th April 1943 Shri Nagindas T. Master who was in jail was elected as Mayor of Bombay Corporation. Out of 63 Congressite city fathers 33 were in detention.

Legal Profession

The Bombay Bar also did remarkable service to the nation by actively promoting the movement. A Committee of 4 prominent Advocates was formed to defend the civil liberties of the people against the repressive policy followed by the Government Mr. D.N Bahadurji, Ex-advocate General, Mr. K.P. Kural Pao Wala, Ex-Judge, Bombay High Court, K.M. Munshi, Ex-Home Minister, were the members of the Committee. They also formed a Legal Aid Committee to fight for the rights of the citizens, which were being attacked by the Executive. They also tendered monetary assistance to the needy (to individuals and families connected with the Political activities) apart from the legal aid. Prominent citizens of Bombay co-operated with them and thus came into being the Political Sufferers' Aid Fund According to the B.P.C.C. the fund afforded monetary relief throughout India as follows:

Maharashtra	...	...	86	persons.
Gujarat	...	...	13	„
Karnataka	...	...	175	„
Tamil	...	...	9	„
Malabar	...	...	5	„
Andhra	...	...	87	„
Bhir	...	...	38	„
Bombay	...	...	15	„
Orissa	...	...	171	„
U.P.	...	...	163	„
C.P.	...	...	38	„

Thus the Committee tried to assist all the needy political sufferers without any provincial bias.

In 1942 movement a total of 1028 were killed, 3214 were seriously injured and at least 10,000 had been to jail, Congress funds were seized.

It is difficult to give with any degree of certainty the number of persons who actively participated in the Movement in Bombay. But in the initial stages of the Movement people from the majority of the towns and cities of the Province took part in it. They knew that Congress represented their ideals and objectives. They completely identified themselves with the Congress.” [[Govind Sahai: 42 Rebellion, pp. 87-91](#)]

The Quit India Movement now fizzled out. But the question was about the withdrawal of the Movement. Gandhi had no power to rescind the Quit India Resolution even if he wished to do so for there was no parallel between the 1942 situation and the 1922 situation when Gandhi was his own authority. There was no provision in the 1942 Resolution for withdrawal by Gandhi who had not been even authorised to nominate his successor if he were arrested. As a matter of fact there was no movement started officially by the Congress. Therefore there was no question of recalling it. All legal and constitutional experts and even liberal leaders like Srinivasa Sastry, Tej Bahadur Sapru and Jayakar concurred with the view that Gandhi could not rescind the Resolution. Many of the underground workers wanted to meet Gandhi in order to seek advice from him as to whether they should surrender. Among them were some in respect of whom Government had offered prize to informants. R.R. Divakar, Achyut Patwardhan and Aruna Asaf Ali were such persons.

A review of these facts, to which others may be added leave no doubt that the violent acts in the 1942 movement cannot be explained as insensate and mad acts of fury on the part of the people provoked by ruthless acts of the Government, but were really due to the fact that whatever might have been its original character, the movement of 1942 shortly merged itself into the revolutionary or terrorist movement which was always an active political force running on a parallel line with the non-violent policy of Gandhi. How strong this revolutionary feeling was may be judged by the fact that even a powerful section of the

Congress led by Jayaprakash Narayan openly repudiated the policy of Gandhi and preached the cult of violence and mass revolution—to fight Britain with arms—and regarded this course to be accord with the Congress resolution of Bombay though not with Gandhi's principle.

Though August Rebellion did not bring freedom for India, still it brought Indian freedom nearer, for, the Britishers realized for the first time that they could no longer rule India with the help of the army. Moreover, even the moderate leaders of the Congress who disagreed with violence, recognised that the Rebellion demonstrated popular determination to wrest power from the foreign hands. As on previous occasions in 1925 to 1935, after the August Rebellion, Congress turned to Parliamentary activities and decided to contest elections. In September 1942 Gandhi-Jinnah talks were held in Bombay. But as Gandhi held these talks in his individual capacity and not on behalf Congress, detailed history of these talks is not recorded here. The subsequent history of the Congress is the history of negotiation and acceptance, partially or wholly, of the offers made by the British Government. The convening of the Constituent Assembly, the subsequent political deadlock and the partition of India were not part of the Congress movement in Bombay. Hence they are not referred to here.

It must be noted that 1942 Movement was helped by the broadcast of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose made from Berlin Following are some of the passages from the broadcast:

“To make a compromise with England now, on the basis of co-operation in Britain's War effort, is converting India into an enemy of the Tripartite Powers and forcing these powers to attack not only Britain's military base in India but all those Indians who co-operate in Britain's war effort. Do those who are now seeking a compromise with Britain realise that they are really working for bringing the war into India? The immediate effect of a compromise will be bringing the war to Indian soil and the destruction of India's wealth and resources and the retarding of India's freedom. It will mean the immediate declaration of war on the Tripartite Powers by the compromise hunters in India and it will mean bearing England's imminent defeat and all the hate and humiliation that it will imply.

When the British flee the country on the eve of their defeat, just as General MacArthur and General Wavell have done elsewhere, they will burn and destroy everything in accordance with their new fangled scorch earth policy. When India is not in the warzone why are the British acting as war-mongers? Not only will the people have to experience the horrors of war at home but they will be fighting a war which can only end in abject defeat. Our countrymen will easily realize from a glance at a map how precarious Britain's position is today. Britain has been expelled from Europe. In Africa, after her preliminary victories, she is now on the retreat. In the Near and Middle East, which she had upto now held in subjugation, is like a powder magazine and only a spark is needed for an explosion. In the Far East, she has been liquidated and kicked out from everywhere by the Japanese. Her only hope is,

therefore, India, and that is why Sir Stafford Cripps is today at our door-steps. But, India cannot save the Empire from its inevitable doom. She can either go down with that Empire or maintain her neutrality. If Sir Stafford Cripps claims to be a friend of India the best service he can now render is to keep India out of this war. India will be able to look after herself and enjoy independence. The British have at long last realised that they do not any more enjoy complete authority in India, that is why they commanderred the services of Marshal Chiang Kai-shek and that is why Mr. Louis Johnson has been rushed to India carrying letters from the White House in his pocket. The Americans are warning the Indian people what dire disaster will overtake them if they do not respond to the offers made by Mr. Winston Churchill and Washington. I appeal to my countrymen not to be duped by British propaganda any longer. It will be the biggest disaster for India if they fall into the trap laid by Allied politicians. Our first duty is to prevent our land becoming the next theatre of war and we can do so only by refusing to co-operate in Britain's imperialist war. I can assert with a full sense of responsibility that if India is not used as a military base for Britain there is not the slightest possibility of India being attacked by the Tripartite Powers. My next appeal to my countrymen is that after keeping the war out of India, they should without the least delay renew the national struggle for independence in a more intensified way. Britain has turned down India's demand for immediate independence and it is now for India to fight for her own freedom. What better opportunity can one dream of for achieving India's emancipation?

“In conclusion I want to tell my countrymen that we, who happen to be outside India, have not been idle all these months. We have been following the international situation with the closest interest and have also been preparing ourselves for the coming struggle—the final struggle which will bring India to her cherished goal of liberty and freedom. We are aware that British sea-power, on which the Empire was built, has already become a legend of the past. We are aware that Britain has neither the air force nor the manpower for holding India against the Japanese. It is, therefore, clear that we shall have to march to India in order to participate in the last struggle for our national freedom. We will fight with all our might and all our resources; and with God's grace and the help of friends win our freedom.” [Broadcast over Azad Hind Radio (German) on April 10, 1942].

“Comrades! Since I spoke to you last, about two weeks ago, the movement in India has been continuing with unabated vigour, and has been spreading like wildfire from the towns to the country-side. The British propaganda machinery throughout the month has tried to give the impression that the campaign is now subsiding and that things are quietening down. But this attempt has completely failed, because in the same breath the B.B.C. and its agents have given, or rather have been forced to give, news of more shooting on unarmed men and women all over the country. I can assure you that in the year of grace 1942, India can no longer be isolated from the rest of the world, however much Britain may try to draw a veil over that land. As a matter of fact, every bit of news regarding India's national struggle, every incident in India

towns and villages, every case of shooting, whether in Ramnath or in Wardha, in Bikrampore or in Lucknow, is immediately flashed all over the world, is broadcast over the radio and published in the Press in all those countries that are either hostile to the Allied Powers or are neutral.

“Comrades, I should like to tell you further that while we have gained the moral sympathies of public opinion throughout the world, it is also possible for us to obtain from abroad any help that we may need for our emancipation. Therefore, in the fight against all the modern forms of terror and brutality, if you feel overwhelmed at any time and if you desire your friends abroad to give you the hand of assistance, you have only to say so. But, *these friends who are anxious to see India free, will not offer their help to you, so long as you do not need it, and for our national honour and self-interest, we should not ask for any assistance so long as we can do without it.*”

The British Empire will soon collapse and break up as a result of shattering defeats in all the theaters of war. And when the final dismemberment of the Empire takes place power will automatically come into the hands of the Indian people. *Our final victory will come as a result of our efforts alone.* Consequently, it does not matter in the least if we in India suffer temporary set-backs, especially when we are confronted with machine-guns, bombs, tanks and aeroplanes. Our task is to continue the national struggle inspite of all obstacles and set-backs till the hour of liberation arrives.

“Comrades, I have already assured you that whatever I have been doing abroad is in accordance with the wishes of a very large section of my countrymen. *I will not do anything which the whole India will not wholeheartedly endorse.*

The British Empire is in any case doomed, and the only question is as to what will happen to us when its final dissolution takes place. Shall we obtain our freedom as a right from other Powers or shall we win it by our own effort? I would request Mr. Jinnah, Mr. Savarkar and all those leaders who still think of a compromise with the British to realize once for all that in the world of tomorrow there will be no British Empire.

In this connection, I must remind you that in a non-violent guerrilla campaign the peasantry always plays a decisive part. I am glad to observe that in several provinces — in Bihar and in the Central Provinces — the peasants are already in the forefront. I earnestly hope the Swami Sahjanand Saraswati and other peasant leaders, who together with the ‘Forward Bloc’ started the fight long before Mahatma Gandhi, will now lead the campaign to a victorious conclusion. I will appeal to Swami Sahjanand and the leaders of the Kisan (peasant) Movement to come forward and fulfil their leading role in the last phase for the fight. *We want Swaraj for the masses, Swaraj for the workers and the peasants.*

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“In conclusion I would like to point out that this campaign should be carried out for weeks and if necessary for months. If this non-violent guerilla war should continue sufficiently long, freedom will come because British imperialism will ultimately break down owing to the cumulative effect of defeats sustained on different fronts. Do not forget for one moment that the British Empire is now on its last legs.”

“At the same time, be prepared for every suffering because the apostles of freedom and democracy and the authors of the Atlantic Charter may do their very worst in the days to come. Before dawn comes the darkest hour. Let your slogans be ‘Now or Never’; ‘Victory or Death’; ‘Inquilab Zindabad’.” [Broadcast from Azad Hind Radio (German) on August 31, 1942.].

Jayaprakash Narayan had described 1942 Movement as superior to the French Revolution of 1789 and the Russian Revolution of 1917. Probably he was thinking of the impact of 1942 movement on the masses of India. Such an impact was not created by the French Revolution. As regards the Russian Revolution it is said that it was restricted to the peasant class in the beginning. The 1942 Movement however, embraced all sections the Indian masses and practically all parts of India.

On February 18, 1946 the Ratings on Talwar placed their demands before the authorities. ‘Talwar’ was in Bombay harbour. The demands were rejected. Hence, the Ratings went on strike. They were 1,000 in number. They entered Bombay City on February 19. In sympathy with them 2,000 Ratings on War Ships hoisted Congress Flags on their ships. There were shouts of Jai Hind from the Ratings when they were moving in the streets of Bombay. On February 20, 1946, the Ratings were arrested. On February 21 some Ratings on the war-ships directed their guns on British Defence Forces on the shore and there was exchange of fire for nearly 7 to 8 hours. The Ratings threatened to bombard Bombay city if the defence patrol on the shore was not lifted. The defence patrol was later on removed.

It was reported that in this exchange of fire, 185 were the casualties and thousands were injured.

In sympathy with the ratings, there was a general strike and ‘hartal’ on February 22. This was the biggest ever ‘hartal’ in the city which had many proud patriotic memories. Everyone in Bombay irrespective of religion or caste responded to the call of the R.I.N. Ratings who fought in addition to the improvement of the conditions of service, against racial discrimination and for vindication of India’s self-respect. The nationalist press also supported the cause of the Ratings. The Bombay Chronicle highlighted the anti-national and anti-social act of the Police Force. Ultimately, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel intervened and the Ratings had to lay down their arms. [For details, See *Tataparya* (a Marathi journal, Feb. 86. P.9).]

It may be said that the revolt of the ratings was the last phase of the Congress movement as far as the City of Bombay is concerned. Subsequent events are a part of the Transfer of Power. Bombay had no special part to play in it. Bombay true to its tradition

celebrated the advent of independence on August 14 and 15 in most befitting manner. It paid homage to all those who sacrificed their lives in Congress movement. It must also be noted that the City of Bombay welcomed those unfortunate men and women who were required to leave their hearths and homes as a result of partition of India and extended to them all facilities for rehabilitation.

Epilogue

This volume deals with the part played by men and women in Bombay in the movements started from time to time by the Indian National Congress. Congress was primarily responsible for carrying on a sustained and organised movement against the British rulers, right from 1885 to 1947. This phenomenon is unique in the history of the world. However, it must also be noted that in addition to movement carried on by the Congress, there were other attempts from 1760 onwards which also aimed at the overthrow of the British rule. These attempts were mainly revolutionary attempts. These brave revolutionists sacrificed their lives, many of them went to gallows. Some of them organised movements to bring arms in India for raising an armed revolt. The establishment of Gaddar Party during the first world war is an instance of this type. A brief history of these attempts along with the Congress movement is contained in a book. [[Vasant Nagarkar: *Bharatiya Swatantrya Sangram* \(1981\). Prestige Publication, Pune.](#)]

The part played by the Indian National Army established by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose also must be noted. Prime Minister Atlee while speaking on Indian Independence Bill said that Britain is transferring power due to the fact that (1) the Indian Mercenary Army is no longer loyal to Britain and (2) British cannot afford to have a large Britain Army to hold down India. This statement points out the importance of the INA in the process of transfer of power.

The part played by some of the police officers during the 1942 movement, must also be mentioned. Many police officers helped indirectly the underground workers by giving them prior intimation of impending arrest. [[The present writer who was at that time on the teaching staff of the Ramnarain Ruia College, Matunga, recalls even to day the names of police officers some of whom were old students of the college gave prior information to the Principal about the impending action by the authorities against some staff members and students of the college.](#)] Some of the police officers, even on knowing the plans of underground workers, did not take any action.

The background of the birth of the Indian National Congress is significant. For the first time in the history of India, thanks to the British rule, there emerged a strong administration from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. This was a new phenomenon in Indian history. It was a united country ruled by a strong power. This was the reason why Mahadev Govind Ranade described British rule as 'divine dispensation'. Even Lokmanya Tilak described twelve advantages of the British rule. [[The present writer who was at that time on the teaching staff of the Ramnarain Ruia College, Matunga, recalls even to day the names of police officers some of whom were old students of the college gave prior information to the Principal about the impending action by the authorities against some staff members and students of the college.](#)]

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The establishment of the universities in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in 1857, opened the doors of western knowledge to the educated Indians. A new middle class with western education and with new concepts of freedom and progress emerged on Indian horizon. This class laid down the foundation of Indian National Congress in 1885. Earlier, 1857 saw the revolt by the Sepoys. This revolt is described by Veer Savarkar as the First War of Independence. The heroes of the war were Tatya Tope. [*Kesari*, dated August 9, 1892.] Rani Laxmibai, Nanasaheb Peshwa etc.

This revolt ended the rule of East India Company and brought India in direct contact with the British Crown and the Parliament. As a result of various representations made by the Congress and work done both in India and England, the British Government started the process of decentralisation of power. 1942 movement rang the bell of the death of British rule in India. The process culminated in 1947 with India's independence. Unfortunately, India of 1885 was not the India of 1947. The Divide and Rule policy of the British Government succeeded and India was partitioned. The Britishers were well aware of the inevitability of transfer of power to Indians as early as 1942. Churchill, the then Prime Minister of England disclosed to the King at one of their Tuesday luncheons in July 1942, that the idea of the transfer of power in India had become an admitted inevitability in the minds of the British Party Leaders. The king noted in his diary of July 28, 1942, 'He (Churchill) amazed me by saying that his colleagues and both or all the three parties in Parliament were quite prepared to give up India. Cripps, the Press and the U.S. public opinion have all contributed to make their minds up and that our role in India is wrong and has always been wrong for India [The present writer has the fortune of being "one of Tatya's descendants.]. It deserves to be noted that these entries were made before the starting of the Quit India movement. It further deserves to be noted that after the movement was started Viceroy Lord Linlithgow in a letter to Prime Minister Churchill on August 31, 1942 wrote 'I am engaged here in meeting by far the most serious rebellion since 1857, the gravity and extent of which we have so far concealed from the world for reasons of military security.' [P.N. Chopra: *Quit India Movement*, p. 1.]

These remarks clearly indicate the effect of 1942 movement. 'Quit India Movement' was in a sense a historical inevitability. Gandhi was the first man to realize this. He also probably knew that the movement would be of a different nature than the one in 1930. His close association with the Congress Socialists and some other leftists just before the movement is significant in this behalf. It also deserves to be noted that Wickendeon report came to similar conclusion. "The outstanding conclusions at which Wickendeon arrived Tottenham states and which we accept are that the movement (or rebellion) contemplated by Mr. Gandhi was one of the kind that actually took place that it was planned before hand, so far as there was time to do so and Mr. Gandhi was aware of these plans. [*Ibid.*]

Even Nehru who did not agree with Gandhi, to start with ultimately fell in line. Nehru justified his step when he said (M. Brecher, *Nehru—A Political Biography*). I don't think that action we took in 1942 could have been avoided. It might have been of slightly different form, this is a different matter. Circumstances drove us in a particular direction. If we had

been passive then, I think we would have lost all our strength'. [14 P. N. Chopra: *Quit India Movement*, p. 11.]

Government of India also changed its strategy towards Indian leaders. There were no open trials. The reason may be that the Government had not sufficient evidence with them to secure conviction. It is also possible that public trial would have created world-wide interest and stir popular feeling in the country to a dangerous pitch. It may also be mentioned that there was plans to take Gandhi out of India either to Eden or Uganda. But these plans were dropped because of the opposition of the Indian members of the Viceroy's Executive Council.

Though 1942 movement was crushed by the British Government, it did bring the end of the British rule in India nearer. The movement strangely enough brought also to an end the Gandhian era in Indian politics. After independence new challenges appeared before the leaders of the Congress. They faced these challenges bravely and after the inauguration of the Constitution gave a new turn to the Congress movement. It can rightly be said that the Congress which had a modest beginning in 1885, like the river Ganga at Gangotri, travelled through forests, hills, mountains and rocks during the last hundred years and still flows on.

Independent India, through the Constituent Assembly framed a democratic constitution which was fully inaugurated on January 26, 1950. It has worked some-what satisfactorily during the last thirty-six years. These have been years of tension and stress. The working of the Constitution has thrown up new pressure groups based on religion, castes and money-power. These pressure groups have made it difficult and in some cases even impossible for the leaders of India's political life to realise the ideals cherished in the days of freedom struggle and the ideals enshrined in the Constitution. Even then when many countries around India and in other parts of the world which also gained independence after the Second World War, have come under the spell of dictators, India continues to function as a democracy. Moreover in economic field India has great achievements to her credit. It has also achieved socio-economic justice to a certain extent. India is also on the way to become a world power. Every independent critic would agree that the achievements of India during the last thirty-six years have been primarily due to the policy adopted and the ideal cherished by the Indian National Congress during the long years of freedom struggle. This period of thirty-six years was dominated by men and women in various political parties, who had participated in the Congress movement. These men and women when called upon to shoulder the responsibilities of administration, tried their best to translate into action the ideals the Congress cherished. This enabled them to lay down strong foundation for the political and economic progress of India.

The handful intellectuals, who met in Bombay in the winter season in 1885, thus were the pioneers not only of a freedom movement but also pioneers in the field of administration. It is significant to note that early resolutions of the India National Congress centered around administrative reforms:

It would be appropriate to conclude the history of the Congress movement in the city of Bombay, with a quotation from the Speech of Dadabhai Naoroji. As a President of the Calcutta Sessions (1906) Dadabhai exhorted;

“Be united, persevere and achieve self-Government, so that millions now perishing by poverty, famine and plague now be saved and India may once more occupy her proud position of your among the greatest and civilised nations of the world.”

These words were uttered in 1906. We got independence in 1947. Have we achieved in 1986 this goal set up by Dadabhai in 1906?

It is true that the Congress of to-day is not the Congress of the days of freedom movement. Many undesirable elements have entered this body. No one realised it more than the President of the Congress session when it celebrated its centenary. Rajiv Gandhi, the President of the session was frank enough to admit the existence of undesirable elements in the Congress and the undesirable trends in the society. His speech in a sense is an honest appraisal of the present situation. It also indicates the new direction in which Congress must move. Hence the speech has been included in this volume.

Rajiv Gandhi exhorted—

Let us build a new India

- proud of her independence;
 - powerful in defence of her freedom; strong, self-reliant in agriculture, industry and front rank technology;
 - united by bonds transcending barriers of caste, creed and region;
 - liberated from the bondage of poverty, and of social and economic inequality.
- An India —disciplined and efficient;
- fortified by ethical and spiritual values;
 - A fearless force for peace on earth;
 - the school of the world, blending the inner repose of the spirit with material progress.

A new civilization, with the strength of our heritage, the creativity of the spring time of youth and the unconquerable spirit of our people. Great achievements demand great sacrifices.

Sacrifices not only from our generation and the generation gone by, but also from the generations to come.

Civilizations are not built by just one or two generations. Civilizations are built by the ceaseless toil of a succession of generations. With softness and sloth, civilizations succumb.

Let us beware of decadence.

We must commit ourselves to the demanding task of making India mighty power in the world, with all the strength and the compassion of her great culture.”.

To this cause I pledge myself.

JAI HIND !

APPENDIX A - ADDRESS DELIVERED BY RAJIV GANDHI, THE CONGRESS PRESIDENT AT THE CONGRESS CENTENARY SESSION HELD IN BOMBAY ON DECEMBER 28, 1985

Friends,

This is a moment consecrated by history. One hundred years have passed since the Indian National Congress first met in this great city. Between then and now, India and the world have witnessed profound historical changes—changes that have affected the very structure of human thought and action. In this epoch of radical change, the Indian National Congress brought the world to India and took India to the world. Its non-violent revolution has transformed our nation. Today, it charts the path to India's greatness.

Mixed jubiliations

We rejoice in this moment. We rejoice in the great achievements, the great deeds of the people of India. We rejoice in the noble expressions of the human intellect and spirit represented by Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and India Gandhi. We rejoice in the pledge redeemed. We rejoice that the honour is ours now to carry the torch of freedom and progress.

But our joy is mixed with sorrow. Indiraji should have been here today, speaking to you in her gentle, impassioned voice. One with Bharatmata's immortal spirit, she now shines as a lodestar not only for us but for all humanity.

As I recall the great women and men who have led the Indian National Congress—the Parliament of India Nationalism—I feel proud and humble. I draw strength from the glorious tradition of our party and from the overflowing affection of the people of India.

Gracious Bombay

May I thank dynamic Bombay and its gracious and hospitable people, for playing host to us, as they played host to our founding fathers in 1885. I, of course, have a sentimental relationship with Bombay. I was born here. Life-giving currents from every part of India flow into Bombay. It is India in microcosm.

Many distinguished delegates have come to this session from far and near, bringing to us the friendship and greetings of their parties and peoples. We appreciate this gesture. Through these honoured guests, we send our good wishes to the people of their countries.

Remembering the giants

As I stand before you this morning, my mind travels back to those fateful years when the Congress fought for India's freedom. And I think of those giants who made the Indian National Congress. Seldom has the world seen a nobler of women and men, so selfless in their devotion to the cause of freedom, so exalted in thought, so brave in action, so pure in spirit. To remember them is to live once again in those time 'when the world's great age seemed to begin anew'. A.O. Hume, Woomesh Chandra Bannerji, Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozechah Mehta, Mahadev Govind Ranade. Badruddin Tyabji. Lokmanya Tilak, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Surendra Nath Bannerjee, Annie Beasant, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Rajpat Rai, Mahatma Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das, Srinivasa Iyengar, Sarojini Naidu, M.A. Ansari, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, Mazharul Haque, Satyamurthi, Rajendra Prasad, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, Saifudin Kitchlew, Tristao de Braganza Cunha, Gopabandhu Das, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Gopinath Bordoloi, Bidhan Chandra Roy, Acharya Kripalani, Acharya Narendra Dev, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Acharya Vinobha Bhave, Jayaprakash Narayan, Indira Gandhi, Kamaraj, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Gurmukh Singh Musafir, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed and countless others. We bow in reverence to their memory. They awakened the spirit of freedom in the Indian people crushed under the oppressive burden of imperialism. Gurudev Tagore and Shri Aurobindo Ghosh were one with the leaders of our struggle for independence in reawakening India to its true destiny.

An august gathering

It is our fortune that one of our great freedom fighters, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan Sahib is with us today. His life is a saga of sacrifice and non-violence. He has asked nothing for himself and has given his all to the service of his fellow men. We greet him with respect, with love, and pray he may long be with us.

We are blessed with the presence of a large number of freedom fighters. We honour them for they made freedom a living reality. Their refusal to submit to the indignity of slavery, the very act of their defiance, and their luminous vision of a united and free India touched the imagination of millions. To the nameless and unsung heroes of our freedom struggle, we offer our humble tribute. Their life-blood nourishes the body of independent India.

How did the miracle of India's rebirth in freedom come about? And what did India do with this new life? The answers are to be found in the story of the Indian National Congress.

The amazing mahatma

How shall we remember Mahatma Gandhi, that eternal pilgrim of freedom? Born of the very spirit of India, steeped in the tradition, the song, the legend of our ancient land—and yet he was revolutionary. Unique among revolutionaries he marched for freedom, clad in the robe of truth, with non-violence for his staff.

He did not counter the violence of the oppressor with the violence of the oppressed. He met it by changing the oppressed from within. He freed them from fear and hatred. He ignited the greatest peaceful mass movement known to history. At his gentle summons, millions of Indians rose to assert their human dignity and walked upright with the spark of greatness in them.

Gandhiji—the peasant's hope

Gandhiji the revolutionary was concerned with nothing less than the total reconstruction of our society. In Champaran among the impoverished peasants, in Ahmedabad among the textile workers, and in hundreds of thousands of villages of India, he had seen the soul of India seared by the ruthless exploitation of the poor. He saw how India's social system had been vitiated by iniquitous practices—the oppression of the Harijans, of the women and of the poor.

To Mahatma Gandhi, the key to India's progress was the development of its villages. In his unified vision, education, agriculture, village industry, social reform, all came together to provide the basis for a vibrant rural society, free from exploitation and linked to the urban centres as equals. Our planning incorporates this basic insight.

An advocate of equality

His crusade against untouchability stirred an ossified system. His radical premises of human dignity and equality electrified millions who lived and struggle at the very margin of social existence. Independent India was to enshrine Mahatma Gandhi's war on untouchability in its Constitution.

The freedom movement transformed the status of women. Women fought along with men as comrades. In this process, the shackles that had bound them fell away. Legal safeguards and rights were to come later but Mahatma Gandhi emancipated women from slavery and oppression. What took centuries in other countries was accomplished in a matter of decades in our freedom struggle.

His concern for the weakest

The mark of a true revolutionary is that he sets new standards and values, Gandhiji did. Let us recall his words:

“I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test: Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any to him. Will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then you will find your doubts and your self melting away.”

We cannot, and will not, rest until we have won true swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions-until we have wiped our poverty from our land. Then and only then can we claim the privilege of being true disciples of the great Mahatma.

Pandit Nehru---another ‘Jewel on India’

Mahatma Gandhi called Jawaharlal Nehru ‘The Jewel of India’. Panditji added new dimensions to our concept of freedom. To a reawakened India, he brought intimations of mighty historical forces at work on the world stage. As the freedom struggle grew in intensity, he went out among the masses, unfolding his vision of the future : immemorial India rejuvenated by modern science, technology, and the cleansing moral force of socialism, yet retaining her identity and the age old wealth of her spiritual wisdom.

Jawaharlal Nehru destroyed the edifice of imperialism. For he knew he had the greater task of building a new society. He was a great builder. He gave India the enduring structure of democratic parliamentary institutions buttressed by the rule of law. Fundamental rights, directive principles of State policy, and safeguards for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes together make our Constitution one of humanity’s great charters of freedom and equality. We have passed through many a crisis, but democracy has continued to flourish---to the consternation of those who believed that democracy was for the rich, not for the poor. In India, democracy, with all its claimant contention, is alive and vibrant.

Building a modern India

Jawaharlal Nehru fashioned the planning process to reach the ultimate objective of a socialist society. Planning is now a part of the national consensus. It was not always so. It used to be described as the road to serfdom. Those who scoffed have stayed to praise. We have a strong economy. We are firmly set on the path of self-reliance, which means more freedom, not less. Our planning process has succeeded.

Panditji built the infrastructure of science and technology with loving care. Atomic Energy and Space Research stand out as symbols of this achievement, but no field was left untouched. Let us not forget that it was Panditji who established the great laboratories, the giant irrigation dams, the fertilizer plants the agricultural universities, gation dams, the fertilizer plants and the agricultural universities. This was the foundation of our self-sufficiency.

A man with immense vision

Immersed as he was in the thick of our freedom struggle, Pandit Nehru foresaw that, in the ultimate analysis, the linkages between modern agriculture and industrialisation offered the only lasting solution to the poverty of India's masses. With independence, the time came to translate into reality the dream of a vigorous, industrialised India. Panditji created the imposing structure of our history. Leading this mighty effort was the public sector, a strong and dependable lever for development. He envisioned for it the commanding heights of the economy. Under his inspiration, basic industries, infrastructure, machine building, oil exploration, metals and minerals and defence industries were established in the public sector. New technology was absorbed and nurtured. New skills came to those who had never turned a simple lathe. Centres of modern industry blossomed in backward and remote areas. With confidence, the Indian people wrote a new chapter in their long and tumultuous history. Through the instrument of the public sector, Jawaharlal Nehru made the decisive break with India's colonial de-industrialised stagnation.

Bringing the people closer

Panditji was the great unifier of the Indian people. India is the home of many great religions. Her many splendoured mansion of unity rests on the bedrock of secularism. Like a great teacher, he expounded in simple language the philosophy of secularism. He repeatedly warned the nation against communalism. To him, secularism was the beacon light when waves of passion threatened to submerge us.

Panditji looked at the world with the eyes of a humanist, in love with nature and with the works of man. He perceived before many others, that the splitting of the atom had changed for all time to come the universe of discourse among nations. War in a nuclear age was no longer policy by other means---it was mass suicide. He saw no meaning in military blocks. They did not guarantee security. They only guaranteed fear. He wanted nations to co-operate, not dominate. He evolved the philosophy of non-alignment. Non-alignment is the international expression of national resurgence. It is the extension of democracy to international relations. It means independence of thought and action. Panditji abjured entanglement with power blocks, because power blocks are based on conflict, and erode the independence of countries which join them. He put forward the positive concept of peaceful co-existence and co-operation to build a better, saner world free from anxiety, suspicion and fear. This vision of a co-operative world order even today guides the Non-aligned Movement, representing the vast majority of the family of nations. It is a powerful force for freedom, peace and justice in the world. In its centenary year, the Indian National Congress is proud that India has the honour to lead the Non-aligned Movement.

All this and more is the legacy of Jawaharlal Nehru, his imperishable bequest to us in the Indian National Congress.

The legacy passes on

The smooth succession of Lal Bahadur Shastri proved the inherent strength of our democratic system. He guided the country with steadfast devotion to the basic policies of the Congress. The Congress has always stood for patriotism, simplicity, selfless service and dedication to the cause of the underprivileged, shastriji epitomized these values.

With the sudden demise of Shastriji, once more the question arose with even greater urgency: Would a united India survive? Would its democracy endure? Would a food-deficit country be able to preserve its independence? Would the cry of social justice remain unheeded? Would India's voice for freedom, peace and justice remain as firm and resonant as in the past? Or would neo-colonialism claim yet another victim?

Would India once again become a petitioner in the chancelleries of the West?

The world was torn by anxiety and conflict. In Vietnam, war continued to rage. There were no signs of any lessening of East-West tensions. In India, food shortages and inflation bred serious unrest. There were intense pressures to abandon the path of planned development. It was a situation to daunt the most stout-hearted.

Indira's India---a nation on the move

Never known to flee from challenge, Indira Gandhi took up cudgels on behalf of the masses of India. She placed the removal of poverty at the very centre of the planning process. One radical step followed boldly upon another, establishing beyond doubt where the sympathies of the Indian National Congress lay. The nationalisation of banks, the abolition of privy-purses, the takeover of the coal mines, the promulgation of radical land reforms and the creation of constitutional safety-nets for them, the formulation of system of guaranteed prices to farmers, the setting up of a country-wide public distribution system, the large scale extension of modern technology to agriculture, the establishment of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission to curb concentration of economic power, the great impetus to the growth of the public sector, the tremendous fillip to indigenous science and technology, the Pokhran test for peaceful purposes, the Space programme and the launching of the massive 20-Point Programme and the Rural Landless Labour Employment Guarantee Programme---all these electrified the nation.

The Congress in the late sixties reminded one of Panditji's address to the 1936 Lucknow Congress, where he said:

“We have largely lost touch with the masses, and deprived of the life-giving energy that flows from them, we dry up and weaken and our organization shrinks and loses the power it had.”

Revitalizing Congress

The people were adrift. The policies of the Congress were in confusion. There was no programme of action. At this point of crisis, Indira Gandhi revitalised the party by restoring its organic link with the masses. The sap of action began to flow once again in the veins of the organisation. The vocabulary and the idiom of Indian politics were never to be the same again after her historic call for 'garibi hatao'.

Indiraji transformed the Congress from a party in which vested interests had gradually gained ascendancy into a party which identified itself totally with the hopes and aspirations of the poor. Through her unrelenting struggle against those who opposed radical change in our social and economic structure, she placed her indelible stamp on the history of our party. With unparalleled tenacity, she persuaded millions of Congresswomen and men to pursue the path of socialism to progress. She took the people into confidence on the nature of the issues which were convulsing the Congress and mobilised them behind her policies. The masses gave her the strength to face with unequalled courage the inner turmoil of the party. They manned the barricades. In 1969, the champions of the status quo had to retreat, relinquishing their control of our great organisation. The triumph of the Congress in the 1971 elections was a big blow to the forces that had thwarted social change from within the party. They were to re-group and challenge her again.

Indiraji---gallant in the face of destabilisation

India's unequivocal stand on major international issues had disturbed, even alarmed, forces who were exerting pressures on us to deflect us from our independent policy of non-alignment. The emergence of sovereign Bangladesh and Indira Gandhi's historic role in it were anathema to neo-imperialism. Almost immediately thereafter began the collusion between external and internal forces of destabilisation. The international economic crisis, widespread drought and inflation within the country put an intolerable strain on our system. National stability was in dire peril.

To meet an unprecedented threat to the nation's stability, an emergency was proclaimed in 1975. The process of socio-economic change gathered momentum with the promulgation of the bold and dynamic 20-Programme. A democrat to the core of her being, Indiraji called elections in 1977. She accepted the verdict of the people who defeated her and the Congress. She knew it was an angry reaction to some mistakes that had been committed, but that people were still with her and with the Congress. She stood by the people in their travail, they faced the tragic consequences of the reversal of nationally accepted policies. But many of her colleagues did not have her courage or conviction. Their vision faltered. They parted company with her. The Congress again emerged, with youth in the vanguard, as the sword arm of the poor. They voted her back in 1980, expressing their unbounded love for her and trust in her commitment to social justice.

India regains direction

In radicalising the Congress, Indira Gandhi also gave new strength and vitality to the democratic parliamentary institution of the Republic. She re-aligned our political process with the urges of the toiling masses. By translating the people's aspirations into epoch making legislation, policy innovations and programmes for the uplift of the poor, she made the legislatures watchful guardians of the rights and needs of the people. Elections and the parliamentary process acquired ideological and programmatic clarity, giving direction to national progress. She mobilised immense numbers of people from all strata, filling them with hope and deepening their allegiance to the democratic way of life. In victory, as in defeat, Indiraji was the prime mover of the people's emotions and endeavours. She ensured that India's democracy would never be the plaything of vested interests.

Giant stride in agriculture

Indira Gandhi knew, as did Jawaharlal Nehru, that social justice depended on the production and equitable distribution of wealth. She attended to the growth potential of our economy like a loving mother. The first to claim her attention was agriculture. Not just because an overwhelming majority derived their livelihood from agriculture, but because national independence and self-respect demanded that we do not stretch our hands before anyone for food. Many here will still recall the pain and the humiliation of the 'ship-to-mouth' days. She called upon our farmers and our agricultural scientists to apply modern technology to increase food production. Their heart-warming response is a matter of history. Thus were laid the impregnable foundations of self-reliance.

Technological advances

As she had faced not one but two oil crises, Indira Gandhi was determined to take India towards self-sufficiency in energy resources. The prodigious effort to raise oil production, trebling it in the short space of four years, is testimony to her far sighted vision.

Indiraji had a unique relationship with India's dedicated scientific community. She was their special friend to whom they turned for counsel and encouragement. Together they placed India in the front rank of international scientific communities. A few days ago I was in Kalpakkam to inaugurate the fast breeder test reactor. India is the seventh country in the world to have such a reactor. Indiraji's monumental work in furthering indigenous science and technology has greatly strengthened the base for self-reliance.

Generations will remember with gratitude the decisive direction Indira Gandhi gave to India's industrialisation and technological advance. She set exacting tasks for the public sector which responded with enthusiasm. Through the exertions of the working class and talented managers and technologists, it became the pivot of India's industrial progress. All branches and sectors of industry grew with speed, placing India among the major industrial nations of the world. The enormous range and depth of industrial progress, centred on the public sector,

has served the nation well. Today, if we are poised for faster technological growth, the credit goes to Indiraji who prepared the seed-bed of modernisation.

Indiraji's passion for a peaceful, secure India

In the international field, Indira Gandhi was the authentic voice of non-alignment of peace and peaceful co-existence, disarmament and development. She was bold and fearless, refusing to be cowed down by pressures, howsoever strong. Where the independence or sovereignty of India were in question, she never vacillated, never hesitated, never compromised. She stood like a rock in the defence of India.

The passion that ruled her was above all the passion for the unity and integrity of India. In the perspective of history, she knew now India had been subjugated because of its inability to rectify internal weaknesses and to unitedly confront external dangers. She turned the searchlight on the internal social malaise that weakened the nation---the deprivation of the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes, the social and economic backwardness of the minorities, communalism, casteism and narrow regional loyalties. Her effort throughout was to strengthen the national fabric. Her socio-economic programmes are her greatest contribution to national integration.

But she never forgot the threats to India, external and internal, direct and indirect, military and economic. She campaigned relentlessly to alert the nation to these dangers and toiled unremittingly to strengthen our defences. She had seen again and again how the independence and unity of nations had been suborned and subverted. She was determined not to let this happen to India. Nothing would induce her to accept the dilution of an iota of India's unity and sovereignty, even at the cost of her life. What of the future? Where do we go from here?

A need to keep the pace

There is no rest for us. As Jawaharlal Nehru had said. "We cannot rest, for rest is betrayal of those who have gone and in going handed the torch of freedom to us to keep alight, it is betrayal of the cause we have espoused and the pledge we have taken; it is betrayal of the millions who never rest." We cannot rest.

The history of our party tells us that, at each critical turning point, we took stock of our weakness and strengths to decide the direction we must take. The present situation demands a similar unsparing examination. Without self-introspection, without soul searching, movement will not be of much avail. We must see ourselves in the mirror of truth. What have we done with the legacy of our great leaders?

Understanding India

To answer this question, I must delve into my own political experience, short though it is. When I started my political work, it was only with the motive of being by the side of my mother. She bore with stoic fortitude the irreparable loss of a son who had been a tower of strength. She gave me no directions, no formulae, no prescriptions.

She just said, “Understand the real India, its people, its problems.” So I plunged into work. Millions of faces in varying moods of joy and sorrow, of eager expectation, of triumph and defeat filled my being, till they merged into the face of mother India, proud, defiant, confident but also full of sad perplexity. Always, the unspoken question haunting her face; Whither India?

I was exhilarated by what had been achieved in the short period since Independence. I was also saddened by what might have been but was not, because of weaknesses in government and in the party. I kept my counsel to myself as I was an apprentice in the great school of politics.

After two years of incessant travelling, meeting people, reading and reflection, I felt I could go to her with my perceptions. Listening to me, she thought I had gained some understanding of the complexities of our society. And then she began to unburden herself. She spoke of India’s enduring strength and of her hopes for India, but also of her apprehensions and anxieties. She analysed with clinical precision how the entire system had been weakened from within, how the party had once again been infiltrated by vested interests who would not allow us to move, how patronage and graft had affected the national institutional framework, how nationalism and patriotism had ebbed, how the pettiness and selfishness of persons in political position had ruptured the social fabric. She was clear that if India had to keep her ‘tryst with destiny’, so much had to change. And then, suddenly she left us. Indiraji’s thoughts and reflections on the state of the nation are an abiding influence.

The nation is above all

We have cherished our democracy. Democracy is our strength. In 1984, the people of India gave our party its largest ever majority. Their eloquent verdict strengthened the unity and integrity of India. A nation sorrowing over its beloved leader drew from its vast reserves of strength to protect the inheritance of its glorious freedom struggle.

We applied the lessons of the 1984 elections to the complex and difficult problems in Punjab and Assam. Our basic concern was to end any sense of alienation in the larger interests of national unity. We carried forward the process to reach understanding and harmony, to dispel mistrust and suspicion, and to seek the people’s mandate for progress through brotherhood. We had no narrow partisan considerations in view. The situation demanded that we rise above mere expediency. The Congress, with its century-old tradition of nationalism, put India first.

We have no illusions that all problems have been resolved. But the democratic way of nation-building requires patience, perseverance and a spirit of conciliation. Those who have been entrusted with responsibility have to constantly keep in view the larger perspective of unity. They have to act in the same spirit in which we have acted, the spirit of nationalism. Enduring unity comes from the willing co-operation of all.

We proclaim and celebrate the unity of India. It is a fact of transcending significance. But is it not also a fact that most of us, in our daily lives, do not think of ourselves as Indians? We see ourselves as Hindu, Muslims or Christians, or Malayalees, Maharashtrians, Bengalis, worse, we think of ourselves as Brahmins, Thakurs, Jats, Yadavas and so on and so forth. And we shed blood to uphold our narrow and selfish denominations. We are imprisoned by the narrow domestic walls of religion, language, caste and region, blocking out the clear view of a resurgent nation. Political parties, State Governments and social organisations promote policies, programmes and ideologies which divide brother from brother and sister from sister. Bonds of fraternity and solidarity yield to the onslaughts of meanness of mind and spirit. Is this the India for which Mahatma Gandhi and Indira Gandhi sacrificed their lives?

Institutions infiltrated by opportunists

[Turn to the great institutions of our country and you will see that too often, behind their imposing facades, the spirit and substance lack vitality. The work they do sometimes seems strangely irrelevant to the primary concerns of the masses. Attempts are made to taint the electoral process at its very source. Issues of crucial national importance are frequently subordinated to individual sectional and regional interest. Our legislatures do not set standards for other groups to follow: they magnify manifold the conspicuous lack of a social ethic. A convenient conscience compels individuals to meander from ideology to ideology seeking power, influence and riches. Political parties twist their tenets, enticed by opportunism. “The best lack all conviction and the worst are full of passionate intensity.”]

Judiciary

We are amongst the few to have the rule of law and an independent judiciary. But thousands wait for decades while an elaborate and arcane machinery grinds ever so slowly. The poor have little hope of timely redress.

Press

We value our free press. It made a magnificent contribution to our freedom struggle. After Independence, the national media have helped consolidate our unity and promote social and economic change. But the question the media needed to put to themselves is: Dose this contribution to nation building measure up to their role in the freedom struggle?

Industry

Our economy owes much to the enterprise of our industrialists. But there are some reputed business and industrial establishments which shelter battalions of law breakers and tax evaders. We have industrialists untouched by the thrusting spirit of the great risk—takers and innovators. The trader's instinct for quick profits prevails. They flourish on sick industries. Many have not cared to learn the fundamental lesson that industrialisation springs from the development of indigenous technology, not from dependence on others. Industrial empires built on the shaky foundations of excessive protection, social irresponsibility, import orientation and corruption may not last long.

Trade Unions

The trade unions have a glorious heritage of nationalism and of socially relevant radicalism. Today, they are a mere shadow of their past. They now protect the few who have, oblivious of millions who have not. They feel little concern for the creation of national wealth, only for a larger and larger share. Nothing is considered illegitimate if one marches under the right flag. Power without responsibility, rights without duties have come to be their prerogative. Will productivity arise from such stony soil? Let us not forget that the poor and the unemployed have to sacrifice their development programmes to subsidise inefficient industry.

Education

In the field of education, the nation has much to be proud of. Access to education has been widened immeasurably. Indian scholars are in the front rank of creative endeavour in the best institutions across the world. But the schools, the universities and the academies of the Republic, which should fill our minds with hope for tomorrow, cause us great concern. Teachers seldom teach and students seldom learn. Strikes, mass copying, agitations are more attractive alternatives. Where there should be experiment and innovation, there is obeisance to dead ritual and custom, smothering creativity and the quest for knowledge and truth. Where there should be independence and integrity, there is the heavy hand of politics, caste and corruption. Where there should be a new integration between modern science and our heritage, there is a dull repetition of lifeless formulae. Millions are illiterate. Millions of children have never been inside a school.

Bureaucracy

And what of the iron frame of the system, the administrative and the technical services, the police and the myriad functionaries of the State? They have done so much and can do so much more, but as the proverb says, 'there can be no protection if the fence starts eating the crop.' This is what has happened. The fence has started eating the crop. We have Government servants who do not serve but oppress the poor and the helpless, police who do not uphold the law but shield the guilty, tax collectors who do not collect taxes but connive with those who

cheat the State, and whole legions whose only concern is their private welfare at the cost of society. They have no work ethic, no feeling for the public cause, no involvement in the future of the nation, no comprehension of national goals, no commitment to the values of modern India. They have only a grasping, mercenary outlook, devoid of competence, integrity and commitment.

How have we come to this pass?

An honest appraisal of Congress

We have looked at others. Now let us look at ourselves. What has become of our great organisation? Instead of a party that fired the imagination of the masses throughout the length and breadth of India, we have shrunk, losing touch with the toiling millions. It is not a question of victories and defeats in elections. For a democratic party, victories and defeats are part of its continuing political existence. But what does matter is whether or not we work among the masses, whether or not we are in tune with their struggle, their hopes and aspirations. We are a party social transformation, but in our preoccupation with governance we are drifting away from the people. Thereby, we have weakened ourselves and fallen prey to the ills that the loss of invigorating mass contact brings.

Millions of ordinary Congress workers throughout the country are full of enthusiasm for the Congress policies and programmes. But they are handicapped, for on their backs ride the brokers of power and influence, who dispense patronage to convert a mass movement into a feudal oligarchy. They are self-perpetuating cliques who thrive by invoking the slogans of caste and religion and by enmeshing the living body of the Congress in their net of avarice.

For such persons, the masses do not count. Their life style, their thinking—or lack of it, their self-aggrandisement, their corrupt ways, their linkages with the vested interests in society, and their sanctimonious posturing are wholly incompatible with work among the people. They are reducing the Congress organisation to a shell from which the spirit of service and sacrifice has been emptied.

As we have distanced ourselves from the masses, basic issues of national unity integrity, social change and economic development recede into the background. Instead, phoney issues, shrouded in medieval, obscurantism, occupy the centre of the stage. Our Congress workers, who faced the bullets of British imperialism, run for shelter at the slightest manifestation of caste and communal tension. Is this the path that Gandhiji, Panditji and Indiraji showed to a secular, democratic India?

We talk of the high principles and lofty ideals needed to build a strong and prosperous India. But we obey no discipline no rule, follow no principle of public morality, display no sense of social awareness, show no concern for the public weal. Corruption is not only tolerated but even regarded as the hallmark of leadership. Flagrant contradiction

between what we say and what we do has become our way of life. At every step our aims and actions conflict. At every stage, our private self crushes our social commitment.

As action has diverged from precept, the ideology of the Congress has acquired the status of an heirloom, to be polished and brought out on special occasions. It must be a living force to animate the Congress workers in their day-to-day activity. Our ideology of nationalism, secularism, democracy and socialism is the only relevant ideology for our great country. But we are forgetting that we must take it to the masses, interpret its content in changing circumstances, and defend it against the attacks of our opponents.

Mahatma Gandhi visualised the Congress as a fighting machine. Time and again we have demonstrated our fighting qualities—in the great non-co-operation movements of the twenties and thirties, in the Quit India Movement of 1942, in the fifties and sixties when we carried the message of socialism to every door, in 1969-71 when the vested interests had to be fought in Parliament, in the courts and in the streets and in 1977-79 when persecution and calumny were answered by thousands of brave satyagrahis throughout the country. This is our tradition; we have to revive this tradition to fight for the poor and the oppressed. Only by doing so shall we gain the strength to create the India of our dreams.

Revival of Congress spirit in India's interest

The revitalisation of our organisation is a historical necessity. At this critical juncture, there is no other political party capable of defending the unity and integrity of the country. There is no other party capable of taking the country forward to progress and prosperity. All other parties are shot through and through with internal contradictions. The sorry, unedifying spectacle of their total incapacity, corruption, nepotism, hypocrisy has disfigured our political landscape. They have shown a cynical disregard for sensitive issues of national security. Some have not hesitated even to collude with anti-national elements. Their ideological roots are shallow, their political outlook circumscribed by region, caste and religion, wherever they have come to power, they have retarded social and economic progress. They have no sense of history. Those who campaign for a weak Centre, campaign against the unity and integrity of India. Their slogans of welfare are spurious because true welfare comes from growth, which they have been busy destroying. It is the responsibility of the Congress to ensure that India is not left to the mercy of such forces.

We must once more generate a mass movement based on Congress ideology to fulfil this momentous task. Only with such a movement can we cleanse the party and the nation. The inner strength of our people, their unbounded patriotism, their unshakable commitment to social justice, and their aspiration for a strong and prosperous India will destroy the ugliness and enrich the creative ground of India's greatness.

How will this mass movement of epic proportions arise? What are the essentials of the Build India Movement?

Cleansing the national structure

The country needs a politics of service to the poor. The country needs a politics based on ideology and programmes. To bring this about, we must break the nexus between political parties and vested interests. We will change the electoral laws to ensure cleaner elections. We will make political parties accountable for the funds they receive. We will wage an ideological war against those who exploit the poor in the name of caste and religion.

The congress, the custodian of the national will and the sentinel of India's freedom and unity, will be reorganised and revitalised. It will gather in its fold patriots of all sections and all communities, it will be the shield of the oppressed and the sword of the poor.

The war on corruption will go on without let or hindrance. The country needs a clean social and political environment, and the Congress is determined to give it.

Drastic changes needed

Any denial of justice to the poor and the weak is in itself a crime. Our-judicial institutions and legal systems have to be streamlined and strengthened. Sooner rather than later. We shall put our best brains to work on this problem.

Our administrative machinery is cumbersome, archaic and alien to the needs and aspirations of the people. It has successfully resisted the imperative of change. It must learn to serve the people. It must become accountable for results. We need structural changes at all levels. We shall have them.

The India of the future is growing in her schools and universities. But our schools and universities do not relate to the vision of the future. They continue to function in the old grooves. A new blueprint for education is being designed. It will not come out of the musty corridors of the educational establishments. It will only come from a movement involving teachers, students, parents, thinkers and philosophers. Not a movement to capture more privileges, but a movement that sees the future in relation to the present and the past, a movement that uses the vast untapped energy of millions to create a design suited to our needs.

Added impetus to national programmes

As we look back on what we have achieved, one thought keeps coming back to mind. How much faster we would have developed had we succeeded in restricting the growth of our population. Progress would have been greater not in material terms alone, but in the quality of human life. That makes the family planning programme so crucial to our future

development. We need a better strategy to achieve to national goal of a stable population, healthier and better educated.

The time has come to infuse new life into the struggle against poverty. Our anti-poverty programmes. Notably the 20-Point Programme, have to come out of the grip of bureaucratic sloth and inefficiency. They have to become people's programmes. All the elements—education, health and nutrition, family planning, land reforms and co-operatives, communications, agriculture, animal husbandry, industrial and rural crafts—all have to come together in an integrated programme to wipe out the age-old curse of poverty. The power to shape their own lives must lie with the people, not with bureaucrats and experts. Experts must help the people. Vibrant village panchayats must discuss, deliberate and decide the choices to be made. This is a challenge to the Congress cadres. It is up to us, the workers of this great organisation, spread in every village and every hamlet of India, to mobilise the people, to guide them, to stand by their side when they are denied their due, to fight for them and to see that resources are properly utilized, not frittered away on unproductive projects. This will keep our organisation in touch with the masses and will help us to become the true vehicle of change in rural India.

A role for every Indian

We are building an independent, self-reliant economy. We have already achieved much. But more hard work is required from everyone—from scientists and technologists, from the public sector, from the private sector, from industrial workers, from farmers, from public servants, from traders, from housewives and from each one of us. We have to work hard to accelerate our agricultural and industrial development on the basis of our own resources. We have to produce more than we are doing today to invest more in future progress, and to support anti-poverty programmes. We must remember that self-reliance and eradication of poverty demand, indeed compel, the present generation to bear hardship and make sacrifices. Those who are employed have a duty to the future of India. They have to be more productive and consume less so that resources can be made available for investment and for programmes to help the poor. This is a national duty—a patriotic duty.

Our life styles must change. Vulgar, conspicuous consumption must go. Simplicity, efficiency and commitment to national goals hold the key to self-reliance. The Congress Ministers, Members of Parliament, Members of state Assemblies, party functionaries and leaders at all levels must set the example. Millions of people will follow them. Austerity and swadeshi will galvanise the masses to grow more, to produce more and to serve more.

No compromise on unity

Above all, we need to create a mass movement for strengthening India's unity integrity, for deepening our Indianness. The Congress which won freedom for India, the Congress which has brought India to the threshold of greatness, is pre-eminently the party of

India's resurgent nationalism. Our nationalism is based on our rich diversity of cultures, languages and religions. The Congress represents the multi-faced splendor of India.

Today, communal, casteist and regional forces, sustained by external elements, are undermining our unity.

We have to be on our guard. We have to carry the message of nationalism and unity to all. We have to overcome divisive forces. Let the saga of our freedom struggle be our inspiration. Let thousands of Congress workers fan out into every village, every urban centre to revive the tradition of our glorious struggle for freedom in which all differences were transcended. We shall persuade. We shall educate. We shall bind people together. But let the divisive forces understand quite clearly that the Congress, with strength of the masses behind it, will crush with all its might the designs of anti-national elements.

Looking ahead

Friends,

A century of achievements ends. A century of endeavour beckons to us. Our resplendent civilization, with unbroken continuity from the third millennium B.C. looks ahead to peaks of excellence in the third millennium A.D.

It falls to us to work for India's greatness. A great country is not one which merely has a great past. Out of that must arise a glorious future.

Let us build an India—

- proud of her independence;
- powerful in defence of her freedom; strong, self-reliant in agriculture, industry and front rank technology;
- united by bonds, transcending barriers of caste, creed and region;
- liberated from the bondage of poverty, and of social and economic inequality.

An India—disciplined and efficient;

- fortified by ethical and spiritual values;
- a fearless force for peace on earth;
- the school of the world, blending the inner repose of the spirit with material progress. A new civilization, with the strength of our heritage, the creativity of the spring time of youth and the unconquerable spirit of our people. Great achievements demand great sacrifices.

Sacrifices not only from our generation and the generations gone by, but also from the generations to come.

Civilizations are not built by just one or two generations. Civilizations are built by the ceaseless toil of a succession of generations. With softness and sloth, civilizations succumb.

Let us beware of decadence.

We must commit ourselves to the demanding task of making India a mighty power in the world, with the strength and the compassion of her great culture.]
To this cause, I pledge myself.

JAI HIND!

APPENDIX B - SOME PROMINENT CONGRESS LEADERS FROM THE CITY OF BOMBAY

JOACHIM ALVA

Was a student leader in his days. He had command over the English language and could write in a facile way. He was associated with the Congress movement and was a member of the Executive Committee of the Bombay Congress Party. He was also a member of the All-India Congress Committee. During the 1920s he was arrested for his national activities on a number of occasions. He was a member of the Provincial Legislature during 1950-52. He edited the English Journal 'FORUM'.

BAPTISTA JOSEPH

He was born in Bombay on March 17, 1864. He was a personal friend and admirer of Lokmanya Tilak. As early as 1897 he declared at a meeting of the Cambridge Union that the policy of Government in regard to the imprisonment of Tilak was unwarranted and unwise. As he was a keen student of Irish Rule League, he suggested to Tilak the formation of Home Rule League in India. Baptista presided over the first conference of Home Rule League which was held in Poona in 1915. At the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress, Baptista made a powerful speech against the boycott of Councils. Baptista was a great champion of labour which earned him the sobriquet of 'Kaka', i.e. uncle, with the mill workers of Bombay in 1917.

SAYED ABDULLA BRELVI

Though Brelvi was born in U.P., he devoted all his energies in Bombay to the cause of Congress movement. Brelvi was attracted towards Gandhi. He was a member of the A.I.C.C. and during Civil Disobedience movement he served two terms of imprisonment in 1932. Brelvi was a firm believer in Hindu-Muslim unity. He was the Editor of Bombay Chronicle, through the columns of which he supported the Congress movement wholeheartedly. He was a fearless critic of Government and under his editorship, the Bombay Chronicle supported all nationalist causes. On account of his nationalist attitude, Brelvi was subjected to humiliation of Muslims in Bombay. It may be mentioned that Brelvi was influenced in his youth by Lallubhai Shamaldas, the father of Vaikuntbhai Mehta.

G.V.DESHMUKH

Dr. Deshmukh was a famous Surgeon in Bombay. He was attracted towards Tilak and Home Rule League. He was an admirer of Jinnah and took a leading part in setting up People's Jinnah Hall in Bombay in memory of Jinnah's fearless fight against Lord Willingdon Memorial Scheme. Deshmukh was elected to Central Assembly from the city of

Bombay on behalf of the Congress. He helped the Congress campaign for Tilak Fund. He participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930. In the Quit India Movement in 1942 he strove to secure treatment for political detainees in prisons and he gave shelters to many underground workers. Achyutrao Patwardhan and others used to stay with Deshmukh during those days.

AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE

She met Gandhi at Lucknow Session in 1916. Avantikabai later joined the Champaran Satyagraha. Avantikabai founded the Hind Mahila Samaj in Bombay and remained its President for 38 years. She participated in the nationalist activities of the Congress from 1920 to 1946 and courted imprisonment several times. Avantikabai was largely responsible for drawing women towards nationalist and social activities in Bombay and Maharashtra. She was one of the founders of the Desha Sevika Dal in Bombay in 1930.

YUSUF MEHERALLY

As a student leader in Bombay Meherally participated in all nationalist activities. He led a demonstration against Simon Commission and was convicted for this act. He was also refused the Sannad to practise in the High Court. Meherally's most important contribution was to the Quit India movement. When all the Congress leaders were arrested, Meherally who was a member of the Congress Socialist Party went underground along with other members of the Socialist Party and used to give messages to the workers. He adopted the slogan "Every man is a Congress man: Every house is a Congress House". He addressed on July 25, 1942 a secret camp of social workers and students in Poona and gave detailed instructions as to how the forthcoming revolution was to be made. He addressed a meeting and told his audience not to consult Gandhi at each and every stage. The details of the 1942 movement programme were laid down by him. On July 31, 1942 he addressed the Bombay Congress in a manner which left no doubt about the revolutionary character of 1942 movement. It may be mentioned that Meherally was the idol of the youth in those days. He was also the Mayor of Bombay.

S.K.PATIL

Patil hailed from Malvan from the present Sindhudurg District. He was studying in the Elphinstone College, Bombay in 1918. But, as there was influenza in Bombay, he went to Malvan. He returned to Bombay and joined the St. Xavier's College. He gave up his studies in 1921 to join the non-cooperation movement. After the Movement was stopped, he devoted 3 years of his life to national education. Afterwards he went to London School of Economics to study journalism. He was the Secretary of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee for 17 years and later its President from 1946 for a number of years. As a matter of fact since 1930 to 1967, Patil was the unquestioned leader of the Congress in the city of Bombay. He was elected to Bombay Legislative Assembly in 1946. He was the Mayor of Bombay for 3 consecutive terms. He was also a member of the Constituent Assembly of India.

After return from England he joined the Bombay Chronicle. He accompanied Gandhi on Dandi March to cover the events for the Bombay Chronicle. From 1930 to 1944, Patil was in jail for a period of 8 years. He began his public career in Bombay in the Bombay Municipal Corporation in the year 1935. At that time Mathuradas Trikamdas was the leader of the Congress group. Later Patil became the leader of the Bombay Congress Party.

In the Congress organisation he followed the leadership of Sardar Patel and made Bombay the most powerful stronghold of the Congress. He was a member of the Lok Sabha from 1952 to 1967 and in the Central Cabinet he was a Minister from 1957 to 1967. He was Treasurer of the All India Congress Committee from 1960-64. He was a member of the Congress Working Committee from 1955 till 1969. Patil was a fearless and effective speaker, both in Marathi and English.

SAROJINI NAIDU

Though Sarojini Naidu did not belong to Bombay, she was the first President of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee and continued to be President altogether for 7 years. It is also recorded by S.K. Patil that wherever Sarojini Naidu was, she always enrolled herself as the Primary Member of the Congress from the city of Bombay. It was rightly said about Sarojini Naidu that she was a Bengali by birth, Telugu by marriage and a complete Indian in every respect. She was rightly described as Nightingale of India because of her poetry. She could compose poems both in English and Hindi. She joined Gandhi and participated in the Freedom Struggle. She was with Gandhi at Dandi when Gandhi broke the Salt Law and resorted to Salt Satyagraha. In the year 1930 she was arrested for participating in the Civil Disobedience Movement and also later in 1942 movement. She was in jail with Gandhi and many others in Aga Khan Palace, Pune. During her Presidentship of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, B.P.C.C. purchased the building and the land on which the present Congress House in Girgaum stands. She had wonderful ability to solve disputes among Congressmen very easily. Right from the beginning she was a member of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress. She went to Round Table Conference along with Gandhi. She was the President of the Kanpur Session of the Indian National Congress. In 1935 the city of Bombay celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the Indian National Congress. Mrs. Naidu was invited to preside over this main function. It was at her commands that a tablet in Tejpal building was placed. The wordings of the Tablet were also composed by Sarojini Naidu. She presided in Bombay over the 70th birth anniversary of Sardar Patel. After Independence she became the Governor of U.P. In one of her poems she refers to freedom struggle and expressed her hope that India will become independent. The poem is as follows:

*Weak were our hands but our service
was tender.
In darkness we dreamed of the dawn
of your splendor.
In silence we strove for the joy
of the marrow.
And watered your seeds from the
wells of our sorrow,
We toiled to enrich the glad hour
of your waking,
Our vigil is done, lo: the daylight is
breaking.*

BAL GANGADHAR KHER

Kher was a Congressman from his early days of public life. He was a Solicitor by profession. As a Congressman when he took part in the Civil Disobedience movement he was arrested and imprisoned. Kher was elected to the Bombay Legislative Assembly and as a compromise candidate he was also elected leader of the Congress party in the Legislature, and become the first Premier of the State of Bombay. He possessed gentle manners and clear mind. His natural courtesy invested him with valour. He strove to spread his innate sweetness all around even among cobblers and shoe-makers and the down-castes. He courted jail in 1930 and again in 1932. He was again in prison in 1940 for Individual Satyagraha. After his release he again responded to the call of Gandhiji to go back to the jail. Kher was secular in his outlook. He had friends in all the communities and the members of the Muslim, Christian and European communities entertained highest regards for the nobility, integrity and his character. When Kher rose to speak in Assembly, the House was hushed to silence. He spoke with the voice of the nation with accents of dignified authority. Kher's Ministry was like a happy family. His colleagues included Morarji Desai, Dr. Gilder, Munshi, A.B. Latthe. Kher ended his public career as High Commissioner of India in U.K.

In 1940, B.G. Kher was arrested. However, Government issued instructions that every courtesy should be shown to him as he was a former Chief Minister of Bombay.

MUKUND RAMRAO JAYAKAR

Jayakar began his career as a lawyer. Like all other lawyers in Bombay at that time, he also took interest in various other activities in the city of Bombay. He was one of the founders of the Aryan Education Society which started a school. This school did not get any financial help from the Government for its aim was to give national education to the students at that time. Jayakar, though moderate by nature, took interest in the Indian National Congress and attended its various sessions. He was a member of the Punjab Wrong Enquiry Committee headed by Motilal Nehru. He played along with Jinnah significant role in bringing the Congress and the Muslim League together in the year 1912. After the non-co-operation

movement was stopped, a section of the Congressmen wanted to lift off the boycott of the Legislature, Jayakar along with C.R. Das took initiative in the establishment of the Swaraj Party. His work in the Legislature was commendable. When the Civil Disobedience movement was started in 1930. Jayakar along with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru tried his best to bring a kind of compromise between the Congress and the British Government. The Sapru Jayakar team was famous in those days in political sphere. He was appointed to the Round Table Conference. His contribution to discussions in the Round Table Conference were very useful. After the Round Table Conference was over and the communal award was given by Sir Ramsey MacDonald, Gandhiji started his fast against the principle of segregating the scheduled castes from the Hindu community. Here again Jayakar came on the political scene to find out a solution. Jayakar was appointed as a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. After his return to India, when the Constituent Assembly was formed, Jayakar was sent as a representative from Bombay as Congress member in the Constituent Assembly. Jayakar was fine speaker. His eloquence was pleasant and possessed great charm and other qualities. Jayakar was appointed as the First Vice Chancellor of Poona University and retired from the post after serving the University for 8 years.

BENJAMIN GUY HORNIMAN

Horniman was a journalist by profession. However, he was closely associated with the Indian National Congress. When in the year 1927 Horniman pleaded strongly against communal representation, Horniman revolutionised the public life in Bombay. He edited "The Bombay Chronicle". Thousands of his readers were fascinated because here was an Englishman in their camp with a radical outlook. The Europeans decried him. As the Editor of Chronicle, he became most powerful person in the city. Horniman's article on Amritsar Massacre wore out the patience of the authorities. He was deported from India. For seven long years, Horniman remained in exile. But, even during this period he carried on a vigorous campaign for India and flooded the British press and platform with Rowlatt Act wrongs in the Punjab and elsewhere. In 1926 he defied the orders of deportation and returned to India. Later he became the Editor of the Bombay Sentinel and carried on his work for the Indian National Congress. He attended various Sessions of the National Congress and participated fruitfully in those sessions. He fought against the Ordinance Raj during the Civil Disobedience Movement. His articles pointing out that the Magistracy and the Executive were allied agencies when the civil disobedience movement rose in the early months of the year 1932 brought a crisis in the affairs of his newspaper. He went back to Chronicle. Horniman was the one journalist who stood by Congress throughout the difficult days. His paper was not only a nationalist journal but was also at the same time an independent paper. Hence, he attacked Nehru Report for its dominion status basis. He also wanted the Gandhi-Irwin Pact to be consigned to a scrap. When the Civil Disobedience declined in 1933, the Chronicle under his editorship was the first organ in the country demanding the withdrawal of the movement. It was rightly said by prominent Congressmen that "Horniman has done the work of hundred leaders".

Sadanand, the Editor of the Free Press once said that Horniman was the greatest Indian journalist at this time. When Willingdon retired as the Governor of Bombay, there was a move to accord a farewell function. Horniman however initiated anti-Willingdon campaign with such vigour that ultimately the proposal was smashed. The Anti-Willingdon Committee wanted to raise a memorial to commemorate this notable agitation, offered Horniman to associate his name with it. Horniman humbly declined the offer. Jinnah was another vigorous opponent of Willingdon. Hence, when a hall was constructed as a result of the success of Anti-Willingdon campaign, the hall was named Peoples Jinnah Memorial Hall.

KHURSHED FRANG NARIMAN

Nariman was one of the fearless Congress leaders in his own days. He began his public career in his early days. He was the President of the Youth League. When the Lahore Congress adopted the Resolution of Independence, Nariman threw himself into the struggle. At that time Jamnadas Mehta was the President of the Bombay Congress but he resigned. Nariman accepted the responsibility of leading the Bombay Congress. He guided the Congress movement in the city of Bombay in 1930 onwards very ably. He was the most popular Bombay leader in his days. Whenever he stood for Election either to the Council or the Corporation, he topped the list of the elected ones. He was elected unanimously every time as the President of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee. As a tribute to his popularity, both the Left and Right amongst the Congressmen supported him. Nariman also led the Bombay contingent to the A.I.C.C. When the Congressmen were ordered out of the Legislature, Nariman instantly resigned his seat. As a leader of the Congress ranks in the Bombay Legislative Council, he was the model of discipline. Nariman's name is associated with the Backbay Reclamation Scheme in the city of Bombay. Nariman took cudgels against Mr. Harvey who was responsible for the Backbay Reclamation Scheme. The Harvey-Nariman libel case constitutes the finest episode in Nariman's career. Nariman ultimately won the case. Nariman was a lawyer. In 1937 when the Congress Party contested the elections and got majority in the Bombay Legislative Assembly, the leadership issue of the party arose. It was expected the Nariman would be elected as the leader of the party in Legislature. The Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee supported the claim of Nariman. However, the Gujarat Congress Committee wanted Munshi to become the leader. As a result a compromise was evolved. B.G. Kher was elected as the leader of the party.

BHULABHAI DESAI

Bhulabhai was one of the brilliant lawyers practising in the High Court of Bombay. He started taking interest in politics when Mrs. Annie Beasant launched her Home Rule League Movement. Later on, when a No Tax Campaign was started in Bardoli and an Enquiry Committee was appointed to enquire into the grievances of the peasants, Bhulabhai represented the peasants before the Committee. Bhulabhai participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement in the year 1930. For this purpose he resigned the membership of the Liberal Party and joined the Indian National Congress in 1930. He was arrested in July

1932 and sentenced to a year's imprisonment and fine. After his release, Bhulabhai left for Europe as he was unwell.

In May 1934 the Congress suspended the Satyagraha movement and accepted the principle of entry into Legislature as a part of the Congress movement. Thus, the Swaraj Party which was established in Bombay in 20's but which was defunct during the years of Civil Disobedience movement, was revived and Bhulabhai became the General Secretary of the Parliamentary Board of the party. In this capacity he addressed a number of meetings in different parts of India. He was elected to Central Assembly in 1934 from Gujarat. Bhulabhai was leader of the Congress Party in Assembly. Jinnah was also a member of the Central Assembly at this time. Bhulabhai was a great Parliamentarian. He had wonderful command over English and was a very persuasive orator. When the report of Joint Committee of Parliament on Indian Constitution Bill was moved by N.N. Sircar, Bhulabhai moved an amendment pointing out that "the acceptance of such Constitution will retard the political and economic progress of India and hence the bill may not be proceeded with." Though Bhulabhai's amendment was lost, it did create a great excitement in the House.

Bhulabhai continued to take interest in the affairs of the Congress After the Second World War was started, the Congress again resorted to agitation. Bhulabhai was once again arrested and kept in Yeravda Jail. He met Sir Stafford Cripps as he was asked to do so by Maulana Azad. When the Quit India movement started, once again the Congress leaders were in jail. Attempts were made to have an Interim Government at the Central consisting of representatives of the Congress and Muslim League. It appears that with the approval of Gandhiji, Bhulabhai saw Liaquat Ali Khan, the Secretary of the Muslim League. Bhulabhai was at that time leader of the Congress Party in the Central Assembly. Bhulabhai had several meetings with Liaquat Ali Khan and afterwards he met Gandhiji on a 3rd and 5th of June 1945. Bhulabhai-Liaquat Pact was finalised with a view to bringing the Congress and League together and form an Interim Government. An account of this Pact is already given earlier in this book. Bhulabhai also saw the Viceroy on this agreement. Bhulabhai's last speech in the Central Assembly was in March 1945. The speech was one of the finest orations of Bhulabhai. After his speech, some of the members of the Executive Council of Viceroy went to Bhulabhai and congratulated him.

After the conclusion of the War and the release of the Congress leaders, Simla Conference was held at which both the Congress and the League leaders were present. Bhulabhai was also present at the Conference. There was much misunderstanding about the Bhulabhai-Liaquat Pact in the Congress circle. But, it appears from the biography of Bhulabhai written by M.C. Setalved that Bhulabhai carried on the negotiations through not with the blessings of Gandhiji at least with the knowledge of Gandhiji. However, the last days of Bhulabhai's career were not happy. His name was not included in the list of members submitted by Congress for the Interim Government.

VITHALBHAI J. PATEL

Vithalbhai J. Patel began his public career in the civil and social sphere in Bombay. In 1922 he was elected a member of the Bombay Municipality. Later he funded the Bombay Nationalists Municipal Party and became its leader. He also became the President (now Mayor) of the Municipality. Patel belonged to Tilak School of politics and joined the Home Rule agitation. In 1918 he was elected Chairman of the reception committee of the National Congress held in Bombay and was elected the General Secretary of the Congress. On August 24, 1925 Patel was elected as the first non-official President of the Assembly. He occupied the Speaker's Chair in full wig and robe of his office. President Patel tendered his resignation of the office of the Presidentship in 1931 owing to the call of boycott of Assembly by the Congress at its Lahore session. In May 1937, he was arrested along with the members of the Working Committee and sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment under the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act. He returned to India along with Gandhi after being in England at the time of Round Table Conference. He was arrested on arrival in India.

GANPATISHANKAR N. DESAI

Ganpatishankar Desai participated in the freedom struggle in Bombay. He was a member of the BPCC for a long time. He was also its General Secretary. In 1934 he was elected as a General Secretary of the Indian National Congress. During Civil Disobedience Movement he courted imprisonment 5 times. Several times in his efforts to shield others, he was severely beaten. He was a member of the Bombay Municipal Corporation for a long time. Later he became Mayor of Bombay. He was one of the unassuming and honest Congressmen in Bombay at that time.

ASHOK MEHTA

Ashok Mehta plunged into political agitation for Independence at the age of 17 and since then he remained in the mainstream of the political upheaval till India got Independence. He was a student of Wilson College and later of the School of Economics of the University of Bombay. In Civil Disobedience Movement in 1932 while he was in jail he had intimate contact with his future friends Jayaprakash Narayan and Achyut Patwardhan. With their help and few others, Congress Socialist Party was established in the year 1934. Ashok Mehta edited the Congress Socialist Weekly from 1934 to 1939. Ashok Mehta's dedication to Socialist cause was unparalleled. As a Founder-member of the party he fought, inspired and guided the Indian socialism. He participated actively in the 1942 movement as an underground worker. Ashok Mehta was also a champion of the cause of the Indian labour and peasants. He suffered one year's imprisonment for supporting the cause of peasants in Gujarat. He was elected to Lok Sabha twice and proved there as competent parliamentarian. He was for short time Deputy Chairman of the Planning commission and subsequently Minister in the Union Cabinet. Ashok Mehta travelled abroad in order to present the Indian viewpoint on the great contemporary issues. In his later life he became enthusiastic worshipper of Harold Lasky and Karl Marx.

SHANTILAL HARJIVAN SHAH

Shantilal shah was born at Amor in Gujarat but was educated at Gujarat College and Elphinstone College. He participated in the Civil Disobedience movement and was sentenced to 18 months' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 200. He also participated in 1942 movement. He held many important positions in the Cabinet in the Province of Bombay and also in Maharashtra. He was a Director of Janmabhoomi, the Lallubhai Samaldas People's Co-operative Bank.

M. N. PAKWASA

Pakwasa was born in Bombay on May 7, 1882. He was educated in Bombay. He took an active part in the Civil Disobedience Movement and courted imprisonment. He was one of the Trustees of the Kasturba Seva Ashram and a leading member of All India Village Industries Association. He was elected to Bombay Assembly and became its President. Later he became the Governor of Madhya Pradesh.

NAGINDAS T. MASTER

Nagindas Master was born in 1875. In 1895 he was graduated from Bombay University and entered solicitors profession. He took interest in Home Rule movement also. He was a witness to the historic site of Gandhi's breaking the Salt Law at Dandi. As a Chairman of the boycott committee he took a leading part in the promotion of Swadeshi. He was appointed the president of the 10th War Council in Bombay when the Congress Committees were declared unlawful. He was arrested and sentenced to six months' imprisonment during the Civil Disobedience Movement. After his release he was elected the Vice President of the BPCC and later he became the President of the BPCC in 1936 and 1943 to 1948. He was the last President of the BPCC before Independence.

BHAVANJI ARJAN KHIMJI

Bhavanji Arjan Khimji was primarily a businessman. He was a President of the Bombay Cotton Merchants and Muccadams Association and Director of many other bodies. He was also a Trustee of several charitable institutions. In Civil Disobedience movement he urged the Cotton Merchants organisation to boycott the English firms and the trade. This led to his detention by the local Government. He continued to take interest in Congress movement and was the President of the Bombay Pradesh congress Committee from 1963 to 1965.

APPENDIX C - SOME IMPORTANT PLACES IN THE CITY OF BOMBAY CLOSELY CONNECTED WITH CONGRESS MOVEMENT

1. GOKULDAS TEJPAL PATHSHALA

(The present Mathuradas Vissanji Hall) at Gowalia Tank.)

This Pathshala was the venue of First Indian National Congress. It was a small modest building and it continued to be so for a number of years. In the year 1955, One Mr. Booch invited the attention of the Congressmen to the desolate and dilapidated condition of the Pathshala. He wrote in the Times of India dated January 16, 1955: “Indeed it is a tragic irony of fact that at a times when over-jealous Congress members and arm chair critics are raising a hue and cry about preserving national monuments on historic landmarks, this place (Pathshala) stands in a state of desolation.” After the article was published, the Trustees decided to keep the hall intact as they felt that it would serve as a rare monument of one of the greatest events (the birth place of Indian National Congress in 1885) in the annals of our national history. After Mr. Booch’s article appeared, the then Congress President, U. N. Dhebar assured Mr. Booch that he would do his best to preserve the birthplace of the Congress. But it appears he did nothing. In 1969 the hall was finally renovated and was named as Mathuradas Vissanji Memorial Hall. This hall is now available to public for functions. But the old Pathshala has disappeared and disappeared for ever. The centenary celebrations of the Congress were held in this hall in December 1985. Attempts are made to secure this Mathuradas Vissanji Memorial Hall from the Trustees for preserving it as a Congress monument.

2. SARDAR GRIHA

(Opposite the Police Commissioner Office) :

This place was the residence of Tilak whenever he visited Bombay. Hence, it was the centre of political activities with which Tilak was connected. It was here that Tilak breathed his last and a great funeral procession started from Sardar Griha. The Pall-Bearers of Tilak’s body included Saifuddin Kichlu and Gandhi. The body was cremated on the Chowpatty sands where at present a statue of Tilak stands. It may be stated that Tilak’s followers wanted his body to be taken to Poona for cremation. But lakhs of people who had gathered on the public streets down below Sardar Griha made it impossible for them to do so and therefore the cremation took place in Bombay. The hall in which Tilak breathed his last in Sardar Griha is named as the Tilak Hall and even now it contains beautiful oil-paintings depicting important events in Tilak’s life.

3. MANI BHAWAN

Mani Bhawan is a building on the Labernum Road in Gamdevi. This was the residence of a private gentleman, where Gandhi used to stay whenever he way in Bombay. Gandhi was associated with Mani Bhawan in this way for 17 years. Many of the important Congress Working Committee meetings were held in Mani Bhawan. This building is now purchased from the original owner by the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and it has become a national monument. Visitors from abroad who have heard about Gandhi and studied his philosophy pay visit to this place. Mani Bhawan has a good library and some educational activities also.

4. CHOWPATTY

This place has witnessed a number of public meetings from early days. The sands of this place were sanctified by the footprints of Tilak and Gandhi and many other national leaders. In 1930 movement, Congress Workers' Salt Satyagraha in Bombay started on the Chowpatty sands. That is the place where ultimately Tilak's body was cremated. The association of Chowpatty with freedom movement has been memorable and continuous. Chowpatty also has a statue of Vithalbhai Patel.

5. AZAD MAIDAN

This maidan stretches from Metro Theater on the one hand to Bombay Gymkhana on the other and Bori Bunder to the East. It was originally named as Esplanade Maidan. It is reported that sometime in the year 1859, two soldiers who had participated in the War of Independence, 1857 were hanged at a place opposite the Bombay Municipal Corporation. In the Civil Disobedience movement of 1930, this Maidan was a centre of many a heroic battle which Congressmen fought with the policeman. Practically at public meetings were held on this Maidan and during the Civil Disobedience movement every Sunday there used to be a flag salutation ceremony in the morning. In one of such Flag Salutation function, which was organised by ladies only and was meant for ladies only, the then Bombay police mounted on the horse back charged the meeting of the ladies. Many of them were trampled under the feet of horses but the ladies did not move away from the flag post. This is just one instance of the heroic courage showed by men and women in the Congress movement. As a result of the association of freedom movement with the Maidan, the public started calling the Maidan as the Azad Maidan.

6. TOWN HALL

(Near the Old Custom House).

It was a center of many a heroic battle fought by Congress leaders before 1920. It was in this Hall that Jinnah challenged Lord Willingdon, the then Governor of Bombay. It was as a result of this historic stand of Jinnah that a fund was collected and Jinnah's memory was commemorated by constructing People's Jinnah Hall adjacent to the Congress House in Girgaum.

7. CONGRESS HOSPITALS

In 1930-32 movement various places, particularly the Dharamshala in Bhuleshwar and Girgaum areas were turned into Congress Hospitals. People who were injured in Lathi charges were removed to these hospitals by Congress ambulance cars and doctors attended on them. The treatment given to the injured was as good as the treatment given in any private hospital. There was a band of doctors dedicated to the Congress cause who had to work day and night sometimes in these hospitals.

8. It may be noted that in 1923 it was in Bombay in Barrister M. R. Jayakar's house in Thakurdwar that Congress Swaraj Party was born. The old house at present unfortunately is no more. Similarly, there was a Muzafarabad Hall somewhere near Grant Road which had been the venue of the A.I.C.C. meeting on a number of occasions.

9. The High Court of Bombay had witnessed trials of number of patriots for sedition. It was in this High Court that Tilak was sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment in 1908. The trial of Tilak was held in the Central Hall opposite the central lift on the second floor of the High Court Building. In the year 1955 when the Birth Centenary of Tilak was celebrated all over India, the then Chief Justice of Bombay High Court, Justice M. C. Chagla unveiled a tablet outside this Central Hall. The tablet contains the famous words by Tilak on hearing the verdict 'guilty'.

10. AUGUST KRANTI MAIDAN (Gowalia Tank Maidan)

The meeting of the AICC on 7, and 8 August, 1942 were held in the specially erected pendal on this Maidan. The Quit India resolution was passed in that pendal. On August 9, 1942, a flag-hoisting ceremony was arranged and Aruna Asaf Ali hoisted the flag as other Congress leaders were arrested early in the morning. The police resorted to Lathi charge and tear-gas and tried to disperse the meeting. As the Quit India resolution was passed on this Maidan and a great revolution took place in India, the Maidan has been called August Kranti Maidan.

11. THE ROAD NEAR THE CORPORATION, OPPOSITE BORI BUNDER:

All Congress processions in 1930-32 used to start either from Kalbadevi or Girgaum for the purpose of marching towards the Fort area. These processions were stopped by the police near the statue of Pherozeshah Mehta, opposite Bori Bunder. As the movement was based on non-violence, the members of the procession sat on the street when the police stopped it. Some times the members used to sit for hours together. On August 1, 1930, the procession was led among others by Madan Mohan Malaviya, Sarojini Naidu. It was raining. Still, the leaders and the huge crowd sat on the street; it was only when in the early hours of the morning Malaviya and other congress leaders were arrested and the procession dispersed.

12. STATUES

It would also be proper to refer to statues of Congress leaders in the city of Bombay: (i) Dadabhai Naoroji's statue is near Flora Fountain. This is the only statue that is being looked after very carefully throughout the year : (ii) The statue of Pherozeshah Mehta is on the footpath of the Bombay Municipal Corporation building, opposite the Victoria Terminus or Bori Bunder : (iii) On the Chowpatty sands stands a majestic statue of Lokmanya Tilak. It was at this place that the body of Tilak was cremated in 1920. The statue was unveiled by M. S. Aney, a follower of Tilak, sometime in early 30s: (iv) Dinshaw Vachha's majestic statue stands near the Churchgate Station : (v) On the road to Churchgate where the Parsee Well is, on either side stand the statues of Mahadev Ranade and Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Both these are in white marble ; (vi) The busts of Telang and Chandavarkar are in the Convocation Hall of University of Bombay ; (vii) The Statue of Vithalbhai Patel is also on the sands of Chowpatty of Bombay near the statue of Tilak ; (viii) Vallabhai Patel's statue is near Mahalakshmi in the compound of the National Stadium ; (ix) At Dadar near Shushrusha Hospital stands the statue of Senapati Bapat who began his career as a revolutionary but later became a follower of Mahatma Gandhi: (x) A statue of Mahatma Gandhi is a near Mantralaya on Madame Cama Road.

There is a proposal to erect a statue of S. K. Patil in the S. K. Patil Garden near Thakurdwar.

This book contains an account of the Congress Movement in Bombay from 1885 to 1947. It also includes the full text of the speech of Shri Rajiv Gandhi who presided over the 78th Session of the Indian national Congress held in Bombay in 1985. The session celebrated the Centenary of the birth of the Congress in Bombay in 1985. Short life sketches of some of the prominent Congress Leaders in Bombay are included in the book. Similarly information about the places in Bombay sanctified by the Congress Movement and information about the Statutes of Congress Leaders is also given in this book.