LIFE AND WORK OF SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

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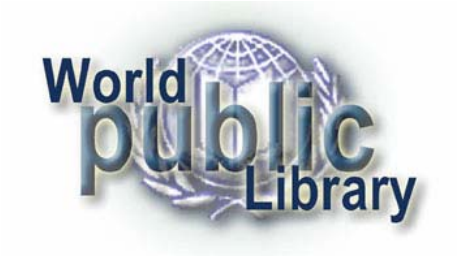

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1780

"..... Work is undoubtedly worship but laughter is life. Anyone who takes life too seriously must prepare himself for a miserable existence. Anyone who greets joys and sorrows with equal facility can really get the best of life."

—Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

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Sardar Patel, The Deputy Prime Minister of India.

A NATION'S HOMAGE

LIFE AND WORK OF SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

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P. D. SAGGI.

Foreword :

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI.

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Sardar Patel with Rajaji.

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FOREWORD

Vallabhbhai was to Gandhiji exactly what Lakshmana was to Shri Rama. There is nothing more to be said to those who worship Shri Ramchandra and Sita.

Vallabhbhai was born not a day too soon for India. But, alas, he died too soon. India wishes he had not found his rest in the mother's lap so hurriedly, when he was so much wanted for some time longer.

—C. Rajagopalachari.

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P. D. Saggi,

General Secretary.

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RECOLLECTIONS

The Editor has assigned to me one of the most difficult jobs which I have had to perform during a life of heavy responsibilities of various types in different positions. Sitting in this city of weird mixture of the old and the new, it is difficult to switch one's mind back more than three scores of years and recall one's life when one was a child. As a child it always pays to be either the eldest or the youngest. As the eldest, a child is the centre of paternal hopes; as the youngest, he is the object of paternal affection. It is the privilege of the eldest to order about all his younger brothers and sisters. As the youngest one has to wear the brunt of accumulated orders; but at the same time, unless one is particularly unfortunate, one gets accumulated blessings as well as showers of affection. Having been born between these two extremes, I naturally had the usual independence, initiative and resources of a middling. When the time came, I could exercise a will of my own. It was seldom, that I had to take into account the responsibilities which devolve upon the eldest child or the debt of affection which bends the back of the youngest.

TOWN LIFE RETARDS FREE GROWTH

My own view is that town life gives little scope for the display of all that is best in a child. It places restrictions and limitations which retard his free growth, cramp his style and make his mind revolve in a narrow groove; on the other hand, in the open space of a village, one can see infinity. The growth of a child is on terms of complete equality with his fellow-children. He has his share of the 'black eye' like any others. He rolls on dusty streets after a gentle severe push as well or as badly as any of his equals or seniors or juniors in age. He is pushed in the village pond with the same vigorous and unexpected wrap on the knuckles as any other child. It was in this atmosphere of equal 'give-and-take' that I grew up with all that sturdiness and determination which grow out of a healthy atmosphere of dare-devilry and juvenile buoyancy and of impish pranks, mirth and laughter.

THE CAPTAINCY OF MISCHIEF

As far as I can remember, I yielded to none in the captaincy of mischief or of sly attempts to hood-wink one's elders. I can

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Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel—Patriot, Statesman, and An Apostle of Reality.

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While he yielded to none in the captaincy of mischief or of sly attempts to hoodwink his elders, it was almost always in a good cause. He took to studies as he took to play cheerfully. He had no patience with an indifferent or lazy teacher. His maxim during his school days was: "If there is something to be done, why wait for others? Why not I?"

Vallabhbhai's character was a steady build from infancy to old age. He grew with all the zest in life a village child is endowed with. His sturdiness and determination grew out of the healthy atmosphere of dare-devilry, juvenile buoyancy and impish pranks and mirth which children in the villages alone are capable of. The native impulsiveness of his people he sublimated into supreme strength.

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL CAREER

After milling through the high school, Vallabhbhai passed the District Pleaders' Examination and followed his brother to the bar. Starting his practice at Godhra the two brothers joined together at Borsad and became a formidable pair in the law courts. They became the acknowledged leaders of the local bar and soon Borsad became too small a place for them.

The two brothers secretly formulated plans, each without the knowledge of the other, for proceeding to England. Without anybody knowing about it the Sardar arranged for a passport in the name of V. J. Patel. When the elder brother came to know of this he argued out his claim to proceed first. A quarrel between the two was unthinkable. And Vithalbhai went abroad first making use of Vallabhbhai's passport, who also followed him later.

Work has always been worship to Vallabhbhai and laughter life. This has been a great secret of his success in every sphere. At London, he used to work 16 hours a day and small wonder obtained a first class and topped the list of all the successful candidates.

Barrister Vallabhbhai found that the British Law in India was an ass and so he decided to be the ass-rider. He was a terror to the judiciary. He took a monstrous delight in wrestling with the intricacies of Criminal Law and duelled with the judges. To escape his hammering blows the Resident Magistrate's Court was once shifted from Borsad to Anand. When Vallabhbhai too moved to Anand the court was shifted back to Borsad Sir Basil Scott the then Chief Justice of Bombay understanding the dynamic nature of the young lawyer even tried to win him over by offering him the proffessorship of the Government Law College. But the Sardar, more anxious to fight the British law than teach it, declined the offer.

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Vallabhbhai did not practice law to make a fortune. A life of comfort was not his ideal. Born of the poor, he loved to serve the poor. He was in no haste to follow a political *guru* or a slogan. With a lawyer's mind he was critical of everything. While Gandhiji pitched the centre of his activities at Ahmedabad the Sardar kept aloof from him for two years.

The Barrister first got on, then got honour and then got honest. He went beyond honesty and took to National service. Even as a lawyer he had a deep vein of patriotism in him. In his professional capacity he won several victories against British Imperialists. It was customary in those days for all people attending courts to remove their shoes in the presence of judges and there were several other inhuman and disgraceful practices to humiliate the Indians. Patel fought against these in a unionist spirit, and got them abolished in the lower courts.

An interesting story is told of a judge who used to frighten criminals by compelling them to face a mirror while speaking in the court. Patel opposed this practice when his own clients were involved and got the judge concerned warned for this pernicious practice.

As a lawyer he excelled in cross-examination and thorough study of the facts. He took a lively interest in the opponent's case. Though he started his legal career by giving costly legal service for a petty price, he did not stay long in the field to give a petty legal advice for a costly sum.

ENTRY INTO PUBLIC LIFE

The year 1916 was a landmark in the history of the Congress and a turning point in the career of Sardar Patel. He placed his services at the disposal of the Mahatma and soon became one of his trusted lieutenants. He entered the Ahmedabad Municipality, the first step to his public career. It took him little time to make his mark. The thoroughness of his work as the Chairman of the Sanitary Committee won him universal applause. His duties were heavy but he stood at his post under all trying conditions.

He showed his mettle when plague broke out in the city in October 1917; he moved with the Municipal staff for taking effective preventive measures under his personal care. This was a new departure in the outlook and method of service of city fathers.

Vallabhbhai and Gandhiji came into close contact when the latter accepted the Presidentship of the Gujarat Sabha in 1917. The success of the Champaran campaign where the technique of non-violence was tried out for the first time electrified the members of the Club. The Sardar who for long had sat apart sneering at the new spiritual force in Indian politics began to accept the Gandhian creed.

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It was a red letter day for the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee when it elected him as its President in 1921. The same year he was chosen as the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the 36th session of the Indian National Congress. With his inimitable drive the Sardar collected a crore of rupees to conduct the historic struggle launched by Gandhiji at this time.

His example fired the imagination of many prominent lawyers who renounced their huge incomes and dedicated themselves to the service of the nation. Boys and girls emptied schools and colleges. Women flocked in thousands and poured their jewellery into Gandhiji's begging bowl. Such was the enthusiasm that had been generated for the cause of national liberty by the peasant leader of Gujarat.

The first success of Gandhiji's technique of non-violence at the Bardoli campaign, was due to the erstwhile sceptic lawyer who had become the most devout follower of the Mahatma, the perfect instrument, the vehicle supreme, of the Master. Before the Government knew what was happening 80,000 people had been organised into one compact unit which the Raj tried with desperate tricks to break up. But all in vain. From that day, the Sardar stands for efficiency of organisation, thoroughness in handling a situation and mastery in management of big things.

The British rulers stooped as low as they could at the Bardoli campaign—17,000 men and 40,000 buffaloes were locked up in a small insanitary house for over three months. Stench and disease ate into their vitals. Yet the call of the Iron Man strengthened their resolve to hold on. He had undermined British fortifications. He ran daggers into the heart of bureaucracy while dealing sledge-hammer blows to fifth columnists..... The Government was forced to come to peace with the Congress. The Governor offered terms to Sardar Patel who spurned them. But Gandhiji accepted the proposals and the Sardar had no way but to acquiesce. He was a great disciplinarian; he knew not only how to command but obey as well. His name stands for 'Discipline' not only in the Congress but in the whole theatre of Indian politics.

The technique adopted by Sardar Patel at Bardoli set the model for future campaigns and undermined the Imperial citadel. When the Congress organisation was banned, he made every home a Congress office and every soul a Congress organisation. He turned every village into an armed camp, and made the people cast off their fear. He taught them to be self-reliant, resourceful and patient. The art of managing men he knew very well. His sardonic humour goaded his listeners into action.

In the historic "Dandi March" launched by Gandhiji in March 1930, Sardar Patel was the Grand Commander. He delivered fiery speeches to

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the villagers all along his route and stirred up the masses to action. His arrest only electrified the atmosphere; the people of Ahmedabad took a solemn pledge to follow their leader to the dark cell. A mighty revolution swept over India. But the people declared that despite severe provocation to violence their salvation lay in Truth and non-violence.

Sardar Patel was released to relieve the situation but was again re-arrested along with his daughter Maniben. Gandhiji and Patel were imprisoned together, and the master, on his release, spoke of the glorious attributes of his disciple. The Sardar's motherly qualities became as much known as his bravery during his incarceration.

ARCHITECT OF FREE INDIA

The foundations for the future constitution of free India were laid by the Sardar when he was elected President of the Karachi session of the Congress in 1931, held under gloomy shadows. His Presidential address was short and business-like. His interest lay in helping the down-trodden to rise in level with the tallest in the land. He showed that mass satyagraha was no longer the idle dream of a visionary but a concrete idea rich in potentialities.

Sardar Patel, though not a Marxist, was not a lover of landlordism either. The Karachi Congress resolution on Fundamental Rights and economic programme was a combination of Jawaharlal's idealism and Sardar's practicalism. Vallabhbhai was prepared to go the extremest length for the unity of India and therefore called upon the Hindus to make the greatest sacrifices to win over the minorities.

He identified India with the peasantry, who form 80 per cent of the population of the country. He firmly believed that what was not for the peasants was really not "worth the candlelight." A made-in-England constitution for India was only worth the candle-fire.

With the Karachi session the Sardar gained prestige and popularity, which by his later arrests and imprisonments, enhanced. When the Gandhi-Irwin Pact ended in 1932 Sardar and Gandhiji were arrested and detained as State prisoners without trial. In the mass scale satyagraha that followed all the top-leaders were spirited away. When the Sardar was released after 30 months in 1934, the Congress was a house out of order. Factions were showing their ugly heads. Though seriously ill, it fell to his lot to reorganise the Congress machine, which he did with ruthlessness and a remarkable swiftness. Sardar Patel has been the General at every critical moment, when the Rubicon has been crossed and the boats burnt.

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When the premier political party decided to fight the elections in 1937 it was again Sardar Patel who organised the campaign everywhere. No wonder the Congress swept the polls in seven out of eleven provinces When the party came to power he sat majestically astride the saddle of authority on a charger of universal goodwill. As Chairman of the Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee he was pretty busy with the broom against nepotism and corruption. Graft and greed wherever he came across, he weeded out ruthlessly. Nariman in Bombay and Khare in Madhya Pradesh were sacked for abuse of power.

A LEADER BY MERIT

The Sardar has throughout been a leader by merit. He never craved for power for its own sake. It was always thrust into his hands. Until the last moment for the choice comes, he keeps himself in the background. But his is the last word before the battle of which he is made the General. His arguments go straight to the people and he makes every struggle sharp and swift. The "Quit India" movement launched in 1942 showed the man of action that he was. His fiery speeches had a tremendous effect on men and women all over the country. Even the conservative British and American press were perturbed.

Ultimately the Government had to yield. Lord Wavell on assuming office as Viceroy in 1945 ordered the release of all leaders to start negotiations for a settlement. Some people thought that the Congress would show a changed attitude; but the Sardar's voice rang loud and bold: "Not a word of the 'Quit India' resolution could be obliterated or altered. . . .If anything is to come next, it will be 'Quit Asia.'

What happened since is recent history. The Simla talks between the British and the Congress wherein the Muslim Leaguers and the Akalis were also included, paved the way for independence. The Sardar the shrewed politician that he was, quickly recognised that freedom was within grasp and he wanted the people to take full advantage of the mood of the Britishers who wanted to pack and go away. He exhorted the Socialists not to delay by an hour the day of India's attaining freedom, especially when the ship had almost reached the shore.

When the Interim Government was formed in the Autumn of 1946 the Sardar was chosen as the Minister for Home Affairs, a portfolio he held until his death. He was in charge of law and order in the most cititical days of the country. When India attained complete independence there were no two opinions he should be raised to the status of Deputy Prime Minister. Apart from the Home Portfolio he was to head the States Ministry where he solved super-human problems by recordering the shape of "Princely India."

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PLACE IN HISTORY

The Sardar has carved out a unique place for himself in the annals of free India as the statesman who cured the country of her several chronic ulcers and eliminated the 562 ulsters which were a disintegrating influence in the new Union. With remarkable speed he brought about the integration of the princely states and redrew the map of India. Hyderabad was his main problem. With astute patience and foresight, grim determination and firmness, so characteristic of him, he brought about the liquidation of the biggest and most troublesome of the princely pillars; but again displayed his great magnanimity and acute political sagacity by making the same Nizam who wanted to be an independent sovereign the constitutional Rajpramukh of Hyderabad, which he was to administer under the advice of Counsellors appointed by the States Ministry.

The Nawab of Junagadh too he dispensed with, without firing a single shot. He held out the example of the Nizam who had become a slave of his own Frankenstein. The Orissa state chiefs were the next trouble-makers: The Sardar was there again on the spot, to deal with them in a manner he alone was capable of. He impressed on them in no uncertain terms that they could be rulers only if the people recognised them as such. The days of democracy had dawned in India and everyone had to move with the times. He fostered mutual respect and understanding between the rulers and the people whom he exhorted to maintain and preserve the dignity of the institution of Princes, which had long traditions in India.

Death held no fear for Sardar Patel. In fact he revels in risks. He is never so composed as immediately after one of these incidents "which give him the spice of life." When the plane in which he proceeded to Jaipur to inaugurate the Rajasthan States Union crash-landed, he regarded it as "Just a variety entertainment."

Sardar Patel nearly completed the consolidation of India. A terror to his enemies and generous to his friends, he commanded universal love. He minced no words in counsel or controversy and enlivened politics with humour. He had his finger on the pulse of the people as he had his grip on administrators. He spared none who crossed his path and wielded the Congress Party machine with grind. Amidst the worst crises he wrought miracles. History will record them in many pages and stamp him as the foremost builder of new India, a tower of strength which revitalises wavering hearts.

Weary and worried, he battled against failing health and lurking death in performing the duties of State which always weighed heavily on him. As a Minister his anxiety was to leave behind an India united and strong. And to this end he dedicated every drop of his blood: this no doubt wrecked his health irreparably.

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THE IDOL OF MILLIONS

It was a tragic hour for the whole nation when on the morning of the 15th of December 1950 the life of the Iron Man of India was slowly ebbing away. The Birlas can rightly feel proud that both Gandhiji and Sardar Patel spent their last moments in their houses, one in Delhi, the other in Bombay. As the Sardar's body lay in state millions of people swarmed Birla House. An ocean of human heads bowed in sorrow bore testimony to the love and affection the people had for the departed leader.

The last journey was a mammoth procession; headed by a cross-section of the country's leadership, a surging mass of humanity chanting Gandhiji's favourite hymn "Raghupati Raghava Rajaram" wended their way to cremate the mortal remains of the unflinching freedom fighter and the architect of united India. The story of a great life had come to a close. As the President observed at the cremation, only his body could be consumed by fire; his fame would remain immortal.

He created men out of straw and not only emancipated a country in fetters but re-built it on firm foundations. He has ltfe his indelible imprint in the country's annals as the consolidator of the nation's hardwon freedom. He is the Bismarck of India. To millions of Indians brought up on a feeling of helplessness and inferiority, he is the symbol of self-confident strength, the champion who could pick up a gauntlet with an astounding audacity and gling it in the face of the challenger. The whole of India is proud of him. He is the model to every aspirant to political fame, for strategy and tactics. An indomitable man of action, a born leader of men, he has set such standards of courage, industry, honesty and above all, the capacity to undergo untold suffering for the cause one has espoused that we could do nothing beter than strive to live up to them.

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TRIBUTES

"As is a tale, so is life; not how long it is,
but how good it is."

—*Seneca.*

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Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Pandit Nehru and Shri Jai Prakash Narain.

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The achievements of Sardar Patel obtained in the field of Satyagraha in attaining freedom and his service to the nation in the first years of freedom will be written in letters of gold and will occupy an immortal place in the history of India.

—Rajendra Prasad.

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Of the late Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel one can say as was said of another famous man in history — "If thou seekest a monument, look around". Human vision is circumscribed in time and space, while the Sardar's work pervades and will for centuries continue to pervade the very fibre of the loom of India's political life. His political sagacity, intuitive judgment of men and affairs, courage and determination, capacity to inspire loyalty in followers and subordinates and, with it all, an affectionate nature masked by a taciturnity which could be disconcerting, formed a combination rare even among leaders of his gigantic stature. My collaboration with him from the beginning of 1950 was for me a period of unalloyed pleasure and inspiration.

—C. D. Deshmukh.

* * * *

In paying homage to the memory of one of India's great warriors and statesmen, the late Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, it is good for us all to remember the example which he has left behind. Mere lip service to his memory will be of no avail unless each one of us tries to emulate in his own sphere something of that spirit which made Vallabhbhai Patel a great man. The qualities of head and heart which the Sardar possessed are not given to everybody. Nevertheless, if we realise that each one of us has been sent into this world for a specific purpose, that it is within one's power to make our own environment a little better than we found it, to radiate a spirit of love and service for our fellow men, then surely India can forge ahead towards the goal which the great Sardar had envisaged for her. Gandhiji said that if the famous Bardoli Satyagraha had done nothing else but enabled Sardar Vallabhbhai to find himself, its contribution could be reckoned as memorable. Many Bardolis came the way of the Sardar during his life time and he always rose to the occasion. Personally I often wish he were at hand today for advice and guidance. However worried and depressed one was when one went to the Sardar, one came away from him cheerful and filled with courage. India needs single-eyed devotion from each one of us more than anything else today. In remembering the Sardar on his birthday let us not only thank God for having given him to us for all the years that he lived to serve India but let us also dedicate ourselves to try to follow in our humble way his glorious example.

—Amrit Kaur.

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Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was by common consent one of the chief architects of our Free India. He was chief of the devoted disciples and co-workers of Gandhiji, and in turn, he was one of his trusted associates throughout his long career of public endeavour in the struggle for National Freedom. He was a man of few words but of fixed determination, and when once he had made up his mind, he would set about his course of action without any faltering or deviation for any cause whatsoever. Long will his name be remembered for all that he did in the course of that great strugle. Again and again, he courted imprisonment, and again and again, he came out more and more strengthened and determined in the pursuit of his ideal, and when Independence was achieved, he showed to the world all his constructive abilities. He reshaped the map of India in the course of three years. I remember very well the fateful day in our National History, the 14th December, 1947, when in the Government House at Cuttack began the process of the merger of Indian States in the Indian Union, and slowly but surely, within the next 24th months, owing to Sardar Patel's consummate skill and wonderfully gentle way of handling the Indian Rulers, India emerged as one political and administrative unit, and a truely wonderful spectacle for the whole world. For this integration of India, the Nation shall always remain grateful to Sardar Patel. While he lived, many came to realise from personal knowledge the warmth and the tenderness of his heart that beat in the rugged frame, and generations to come will revere his memory as one who acted nobly indeed in difficult circumstances.

—Kailas Nath Katju.

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It is hardly possible to exaggerate the work done by Sardar Patel for the achievement of Indian freedom and even more for its consolidation. In the fateful years of 1947 to 1950, it was his strong will that maintained the peace of India, integrated the States and got the Constitution successfully through the Constituent Assembly.

I therefore feel it a high privilege to send my respectful homage to the great nation builder.

—K. Santhanam.

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I feel proud to associate myself with this attempt to pay homage to the memory of the great patriot and leader—Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Sardar Patel was one of the architects of free India. He has left an indelible mark on our country and its people which will live until memory lasts. May future generations follow the path shown by him.

—Ajit Prasad Jain.

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He performed a miracle in this country, both in winning freedom and, after freedom, in the cause of unification and consolidation of the country. It was a miracle of bloodless revolution unparalleled in the history of the world. His life will be a beacon light for us all and for future generations. His spirit will guide us for ever and aye.

—Ananthasayanam Ayyangar.

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The name of Sardar Patel will find an important place in the history of modern India. Even more valuable than his great contribution in the Independence Movement as a sturdy, indefatigable lieutenant of Mahatma Gandhi, was his service to the country and the nation in the post-Independence period.

The political unity of India, as we now see it, and the constitutional integration of the hundreds of Princely States, big and small, would ever remain a brilliant chapter in our national history, the credit for which will go to Sardar Patel. The British Rulers regarded the Indian States as the strong bulwark of reactionarism but under Sardar Patel's energetic and inspiring guidance, the Princes played a patriotic part in surrendering political power for the sake of national unity and progress.

It is only fit that we who were privileged to see this great man at work should pay our tribute to his qualities, his services and his achievements.

—Mohan Sinha Mehta.

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Sardar Patel was a worthy disciple of Mahatma Gandhi. From the very beginning of his public career he showed great independence of mind, fearlessness and resourcefulness in all his public work. His devotion to Mahatma Gandhi in political life was extremely touching. He was his right hand. He endeared himself so much to the common people of Gujarat that he earned the popular title of 'Sardar of Gujarat'. I had the good fortune of working under his guidance at the time of the 'No Tax Campaign' of Bardoli and later in the Satyagraha Campaign. His greatest service to India as Minister in charge of Home Affairs and States in Independent India was that by his remarkable statesmanship he welded the innumerable large and small States in India into one organic whole so that we have now one indivisible, integrated India. As Home Minister also he showed great wisdom in preserving peace in the country in spite of communal disturbances and fissiparous tendencies which were so rampant immediately after Independence and Partition. We would be honouring his memory best by working with the same singleness of purpose as he did for a strong, united India. India will remember him with gratitude and respect. I had the good fortune of working under him in an humble capacity and to know how statesmanlike, courageous and valuable his guidance was in the affairs of State.

—B. G. Kher.

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No greater contrast can be perceived between a personality latent and a personality functioning than what the Sardar's contemporaries could have discerned in that sturdy patriot. The Sardar was no saint nor was he a deaf mute, for though he appeared silent before his master, he was not deaf to all he had been hearing. The Sardar was a Bhaktha who combined faith with works—faith in Gandhi and work for the country. With Gandhi's death, his full personality came into play. Indeed it had begun even from the time of the Cabinet Mission (March-June 1946) to assert itself when the Sardar was blunt and outspoken in what he said to his master. The master's departure left the field free to him and his achievements, in bringing the Indian States under the aegis of one flag—the flag of the Sovereign Democratic Indian Republic. He has created history, for while he took barely six days to conclude the Police Action in Hyderabad, he had taken barely six hours to conclude agreements with each of the remaining 561 Princes of India. Like the discovery of America by Columbus, the discovery of the unity of these 'States' and their consolidation with the Provinces of India was a task which Destiny accomplished through the instrumentality of Sardar Vallabhbhai J. Patel. He had left to the nation two large sums aggregating to some 24 lakhs of rupees that he had had with him, and he died with no home, no property and no assets. His sole legacy—and that to the nation—must be the Bardoli Ashram and the mementoes presented to him by the public. The diaries sedulously maintained by his daughter, who played the 'virgin vigil' to her Divine Father, will, when published, constitute his personal estate again entrusted to the nation's care.

—B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

The late Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was an outstanding figure in the political life of India. Everyone who came into contact with him saw the sternness in his appearance but a kind heart. We, his countrymen, will miss him for ever, but he lives in our hearts and we still remember him with the same respect and affection as we did when he was alive. The work done by him in many directions will for ever stand as a monument to his skill, his perseverance, and his undying faith in the destiny of his country.

—Maharajadhiraj Rajpramukh of Patiala.

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Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel will be ranked by history as one of those few great men who steered the struggle for India's freedom and as one of those equally few great men who moulded free India's destiny during the most vital period of her new life. His iron will pushed India forward to progress during bondage and again after liberation. No difficulty, no hindrance, no hurdle turned him from his great objective. He had an unerring judgment about men and matters. He had the unusual gift of a strictly objective attitude of mind in regard to political situations and public affairs. This was the secret of his great success. He saw things as they actually were and his vision was never blurred by subjective assessment of events. He was a realist in every sense of the word. He wanted to make free India a united and powerful nation. The manner in which he won over for India the loyalty of the princes and the Services, so as to consolidate the new-born freedom, was a marvellous piece of statesmanship. Living in his own time we cannot see his great deeds in their true proportions. History alone will view and record them correctly.

—Jairamadas Doulatram.

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Sardar Patel's name will go down in history as one who created the unity of India without not only violence, but absolute willingness on the part of all. He was a man who saw years ahead, and had the organising abilities to prepare for years ahead, and had an unerring judgment of men and capacity to select them, the right one for the right job, and make every one feel that he had Sardar's confidence and was given responsibility, a sign of a truly great man.

I, of course, miss him immensely, as from the date he called me his younger brother, I always had the fullest measure of affection and care from him. The man was really great, as he always put the country before self, as proved by his actions throughout his life. From my point of view, he was a strong disciplinarian, and I often wonder what he would have done if he had military training, as the great military leaders of the past had before becoming famous Generals.

—Digvijayasinhji.

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Among the illustrious fighters and heroes in our struggle for Swarajya, the name of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel will stand out amongst the foremost. His dauntless courage, steadfast and penetrative vision, unflinching devotion and determination in the service of the mother country has enshrined his glory in the pages of our history. When the call of the nation came, he gave up a lucrative practice at the Bar and in close association with the Father of the Nation flung himself into the national struggle against the Imperialist power. The Bardoli Satyagraha conceived and led by him was the first acid test for the non-violent Satyagraha movement as a political weapon for the achievement of political freedom. The undisputed success which he attained, earned him the title of Sardar from his people and comrades, and Gandhiji always held him in the greatest respect.

After the attainment of independence the Sardar devoted all his time and energy to the consolidation of the Union and put to shame those who had confidently predicted that it would be an impossible job to bring together the Provinces and the numerous autonomous States in India under the control of an unfied and strong Central Government. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in fact worked a miracle in consolidating the nation, especially in bringing in the numerous Indian States, as active and willing partners, in a strong and closely woven pattern. He had a very keen interest in all affairs connected with Kashmir, and during his lifetime his advice and guidance were constantly sought by us all.

His death in 1950 was a severe blow to the entire Indian people, but his shining example has encouraged us all in the work of not only retaining our independence but devoting all our efforts to make India, our motherland, unified, strong and self-sufficient. If to-day our nation is one whose policies and counsel are respected and honoured by all the democratic and peace-loving nations of the world it is due, in no small measure, to the tremendous services rendered to it by the late Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

—Yuvaraj Karansingh.

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No tribute to Sardar can fully describe or reach his stature. No obstacle could ever hinder his path, no man or thing swerve his determination, no prejudice nor emotion rule his conduct, once he had made up his mind. He had thoughts for nothing else but to make India free and then strong. He did both. The epic Bardoli struggle, the superb statesmanship which painlessly shaped within so little a time a unified India out of a welter of more than 500 princely states, the stability which his personality gave to a post-partitioned administration can hardly be paralleled in achievement in any history. Congress Organization owes to him, more than to any one else, its strength and solidity. A man of acute intelligence, inflexible will, always burning with a passion for service of the masses, loving and lovable, Sardar has left a stamp of his personality in the making of modern India which will ever remain unique. I fondly cherish all the memories of my association with him, and pay him my homage.

—G. B. Pant.

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"I join millions of my fellow country-men in paying my tribute of love and admiration to the hallowed memory of Sardar Vallabhbhai. He was a veritable Colossus in our battle for freedom and a master-architect in the building of the national edifice. His name will stand carved in letters of gold in the annals of United India. May it inspire the generations to come—as it inspired us—with a burning desire to strive for the unity and greatness of our motherland!"

—Nabakrushna Chaudhari.

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Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was one of our greatest men. His leadership achieved freedom, unity and integration for India. His name will be cherished by posterity with gratitude.

—K. Hanumanthaiya.

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The life and work of the late Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is one of the many monuments to transmit to posterity the memory of one who lived, worked, struggled and sacrificed himself to make our country free and united. His miraculous achievement in unifying India by boldly and successfully solving the problem of the numerous States, has undoubtedly made his name eternal in the history of our Nation.

—A. J. John.

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Sardarji was rightly called the iron man of India. He was essentially a man of action. In the moments of national crises which called for supreme efforts he stood rock-like and his unflinching will and dogged determination always steered the nation out of difficulties. His sense of patriotism was of the highest order and all his actions were guided solely by what was best in the interest of the nation. He had an uncanny and unerring instinct to do the right thing at the right moment and he showed great foresight and imagination when the nation demanded great decisions from its leaders. The unification of India which he brought about will stand as the greatest monument to his constructive statesmanship and posterity will always remember him with gratitude as one of the architects of modern India.

—G. D. Tapase.

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The life of this illustrious son of India was cast in the mould of a great organiser, administrator and statesman. A valiant fighter that he was, he was always in the forefront of all the struggles that India led for her freedom. After the attainment of Independence, he guided the Country's destiny with wise statesmanship, unflinching determination, and rare courage. The unification of India which he brought about was his greatest contribution towards the emergence of the present day India which gave the nation its backbone. In all this, his great powers of organization and statesmanship shone to best advantage as they always did on every occasion that required firm handling. He was the most feared and yet the best loved leader of India and he would always be remembered for the unique services he rendered to the country with gratitude and reverence by the generations.

—Y. B. Chavan.

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From the way late Sardarji tackled the problem of Indian States, in which connection I had an occasion to discuss with him this intricate problem (which was all the more intricate because of the removal of Paramountcy,) I could say that his clearcut ideas contributed to a great extent in solving it. Free India will always be grateful to his great work for bringing homogeneity in the administration of our Nation and I feel that his name will always be remembered tor giving this Nation a solid foundation, administratively and politically.

—M. M. Naik-Nimbalkar.

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Among the few who could be considered as architects of India's destiny the name of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel will be remembered for all time to come. In shaping the destiny of this Country in a very constructive manner, through the peasantry of Bardoli, constructive workers' centres throughout Gujarat, Nation building institutions spread over the whole Country, maintaining through bonds of paternal affection an army of loyal and loving workers in all parts of the Country, he will perhaps remain unrivalled. He has acted as the Iron Man of the Country when the Nation's interests so demanded, and yet it is he who has acted as a loving mother, an unfailing friend, philosopher and guide to a large number of people who put their faith in him. Perhaps that is why he had a large band of faithful, dutiful and loving followers throughout the Country in all walks of life. That again may be the reason why the unification of this Country could be achieved by him without any bloodshed or even ill-feeling. That again explains the unfailing loyalty that the services offered him in his difficult task. It is meet that we offer our humble and affectionate homage to this great builder of modern India. If we succeed in shaping this Country in strength, unity, discipline and prosperity of the rural India accordiing to his ambition, perhaps that will be our fitting homage to this great General, Statesman and Architect.

—Babubhai J. Patel.

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The assassination of Gandhiji stunned the nation India was orphaned because he was the father of the nation and the main architect of her freedom. The death of Sardar Vallabhbhai has been an equally great calamity. He was one of the most trusted lieutenants of Gandhiji, and in the struggle for freedom he never looked behind. The British Government looked upon him as one of its most implacable opponents. His true greatness lay in this that when we achieved freedom the qualities he had displayed as a rebel, a non-co-operator, a destructive critic, helped him to become a wise statesman, a great administrator and a superb organiser. Free India had many problems to face, but the greatest was the problem of unity and consolidation. England took away Paramountcy with her, but left us the legacy of innumerable Indian States. Even a Bismarck or a Cavour would have trembled before so stupendous a problem. With consummate skill, with unfailing courage, with untiring patience he made one State after another part of the Indian Dominion. Like a great painter he spread the map of India before him as his canvass and immortalised his name by painting on it the configuration of modern India. Both domestically and internationally we are facing a great crisis to-day. We are fortunate in having our Prime Minister at the helm of affairs. But he must be feeling a little lonely and forlorn at the loss of one of his ablest comrade-at-arms. He will miss his practical and robust common sense, his wise and far seeing statesmanship and his iron determination to achieve the object on which he had set his heart.

The final and ultimate verdict on a statesman's achievements is the verdict given by the common man. The historian records true history to the extent that he interprets and explains this verdict. The verdict was given in no unmistakable terms on Sardar Vallabhbhai's achievements when a million people followed his funeral in Bombay and when millions more mourned his loss all over India.

—M. C. Chagla.

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I am happy to learn from your letter that your Committee proposes to bring out a memorial volume to mark the birthday anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. I wish you all success in your endeavour with which I feel deeply honoured to associate myself.

—Kasturi Srinivasan.

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I am very glad to know that you are going to observe October 31, 1953, as the day of the anniversary of the late Sardar Patel's birth. Your decision to bring out a commemoration volume on that occasion as a mark of respect to the memory of that great patriot and Statesman is, indeed, most welcome.

During the life-time of the Sardar, I was fortunate enough to have had occasions to come into close contact with him. But here I am not speaking from my personal point of view. I am speaking as a citizen of India.

I feel that it is time that the ideals for which Sardar Patel lived, fought and practically laid down his life are held up before the people. I hope the volume you intend to bring out will serve this purpose to a great extent.

I fully agree with you that the day of the late Sardar's birth is a memorable day in India's national calendar. One of the closest and most trusted associates of Gandhiji, the Sardar was an intrepid fighter for freedom. His life was a voluntary dedication to the cause of the country for which he considered no sacrifice and no suffering too great.

Independent India saw the Sardar in a different role. The soldier now became a Statesman, the very architect of the country's destiny. Through a bloodless revolution unprecedented in history, he welded the princely States together with the rest of the country and not only built up the unity of this great land of ours, but laid down the foundations of true democracy.

On this occasion, I, with the rest of his countrymen, pay my humble but sincere homage to the memory of the great Sardar who is no more in our midst.

—Tushar Kanti Ghosh.

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With the passing away of Sardar Patel, India has lost a towering personality which could silence the disruptive and disintegrating forces. His presence put a stop to the activities of political opportunists. It is a pity that both Mahatmaji and Sardar passed away when they were needed badly.

Sardar Patel was a born leader. His fearlessness, his high sense of sacrifice and his unique oratory struck terror in the hearts of his enemies. The versatile manner in which he organized the Bardoli No-Tax Campaign made the alien Government think for the first time, that their days in India were numbered. Besides being fearless he was a realist. He knew exactly what things needed priority. When he felt convinced of a particular line of action he did not care much about the means employed to follow the same. By nature being very shrewd, calculating and daring and being self-centred it took him some time to identify himself with Mahatmaji's ideology and outlook. Contact with Gandhiji sublimated Sardar's energies, and the vast storehouse of abundant energy in Sardar was harnessed and disciplined in the service of the motherland.

After independence the greatest achievement of Sardar was to disintegrate the princely order within a period of one or two years and bring India under one Central authority. The diplomacy and the tact with which he brought about the union, astounded the whole world.

Ultimately the old fire was slowly dying out and long years of strain and the hard and cruel jail life told upon his health and the veteran and respected leader breathed his last. The void created by his demise cannot be filled.

—Chimanlal B. Parikh.

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Sardar Patel devoted the best years of his life in the struggle for India's independence. After the attainment of freedom, it was Sardar Patel who built up the unity of India. It would require volumes to describe all the good work done by Sardar Patel. He is missed in every walk of life; he is missed by the Indian Parliament, by the Indian farmer, by the Indian industrialist, by the Services and by all those who stand for the unity and strength of India. It is in the fitness of things that your Committee is bringing out a volume to pay India's homage to this great and illustrious personality.

—R. G. Saraiya.

In the history of our country's fight for freedom Sardar Patel's name will occupy a very prominent place. An unrivalled organiser, he was richly endowed with strong will power, inflexible determination and courage of conviction. All these great qualities evoked the awe and admiration of his friends and foes alike.

Throughout the long years of his disinterested service in the cause of the country's advancement, Sardar Patel set up a high standard of probity and virtue characterised by complete absence of personal ambition for aggrandisement.

His strong personality helped to keep in check the divergent forces in Congress politics in the early years of our freedom. The title of Sardar was deservedly conferred on him by popular acclaim as a recognition of the great organisational ability he showed in the now historic Bardoli struggle. The greatest achievement of Sardar Patel was, however, the successful manner in which he handled the difficult and delicate problems in the country during those critical post-Independence years. By the integration of Princely States he has left an indelible mark on the country's political map. It was, indeed, our misfortune that he was not spared to us for a few more years.

A giant among men, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's life and work deserve to be admired, cherished and presented for younger people as a shining example to follow. I take this opportunity to pay my humble tribute of respect to the memory of the great patriot

—M. R. Ruia.

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It was at a Chamber of Commerce meeting, in Karachi in pre-partition days, of which I was then the President, that I had a glimpse of the true greatness of Sardar Patel. In reply to the several issues to which the people referred and which laid emphasis on narrow small points of personal, communal or sectional interests, the Sardar reminded them of the concentrated wisdom contained in the few simple words: "Small minds and big things never go together." Immediately ran before my mental eyes like a cinema film the shameful record of over thousand years of our slavery, because at critical times in our history our people could not rise above the petty considerations of their own, nor could our leaders disentangle themselves from petty jealousies and narrow personal rivalries. Since then I had the privilege of meeting him on several occasions for discussion on the many questions that faced our country, particularly after our independence; and I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that he saw them in a proper perspective.

The terrible sufferings which the Sardar underwent during the struggle for freedom had impaired his health. He had a very clear mind up to the last, but not the strength to carry on the heavy onerous tasks of fully shaping the post-freedom destiny of the country. Even then he made many valuable contributions of lasting value to the country's cause. He recognised the value and importance of the civil and defence services, of the great part which businessmen had played in supplying finance for the war of independence and the still greater part which they could play in quickly developing country's economic strength, how the integration of States into the Indian Union was vital for the country and how the conflicting tendencies in the policies of States would weaken our capacity to do large constructive work. He gave great value to discipline and hard work and regarded them fundamental and vital to our national progress and national policies. If he had been a younger man even by ten years, he would have been able to save the country from the great mess in which we seem to be now plunged.

Prophets and great men are rarely worshipped in their country or in their times. Although Sardar Patel's services to the country are recognised by all classes to be great, full appreciation of his achievements, or of the injury to our national interests due to non-acceptance of his advice or of the great loss due to his death, are matters to which only the future historian can do full justice. The only tribute which he would wish his countrymen to pay to him is to forget the narrow provincial or communal outlook, to give up personal jealousies and to concentrate on economic development. Without making the country economically strong we cannot solve any problem.

—B. T. Thakur.

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Though three years have passed since the Sardar left us, his memory remains not merely an inspiration but a real comfort to the business community whose interests he understood and advanced so successfully and strenuously. It is not surprising that the commercial community feels that with the passing of the Sardar they have lost a considerate and capable friend, one who could take a broad view of the requirements of the present as well as of the future. Naturally, the memorial fund to which business men forwarded contributions was but a measure of what they felt they owed to Sardar Patel. Though plain-speaking is very much in fashion, it was given to Sardar Patel to make his points clearly and briefly. Today, when verbiage dominates the political and economic scene and counsel is darkened by many voices, we wish that somebody like Sardar Patel should speak out calmly and unerringly. As the chief architect of India's post-war unification, Sardar Patel has an assured place in history. To many it will seem that the settlement of the Kashmir question has been delayed largely because the Sardar passed away without fulfilling one more of the tasks to which he was called.

The political map of India has been altered greatly in the last few years and, if India has become a constitutional entity, it is largely due to Sardar Patel. It is not the constitution but the States Ministry that regulated the status and functions of the Princes, and even if the embattled, privileged was overthrown, confusion was avoided quickly and precisely because Sardar Patel fortunately knew where he was going. He sensed his mission and carried it out. There can be no higher praise for one who followed Mahatma Gandhi closely but tempered his idealism by an appreciation of realities, political and economic. It is the grip of actuality that many miss today.

—A. M. M. Murugappa Chettiar.

Sardar Patel was rightly hailed as the Bismarck of Independent India who saved the infant State from the reactionary and disruptive forces stalking all over the land. The erstwhile leader of the peasants of Bardoli led Princes and Men, and the Map of India was redrawn with an iron hand which instilled confidence into the drooping heart of the comman man—the ultimate architect of the future India. Amidst the various fissiparous tendencies today which are still undermining the foundation of this glorious State of ours, we feel like crying—"Sardar Patel, India has need of thee".

—Pannalal Saraogi.

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I had the privilege of knowing Sardar Patel quite intimately and can say from personal knowledge that anyone who came in contact with him was impressed by his greatness in more spheres than one. He was quick in his decisions, adamant in his resolutions. After the Independence the way in which he eliminated the Princely India and brought them into the Indian Republic reflects the strong man he was. He realised and fully understood the important part played by industrialists and capitalists in the country and at the same time he fully knew the rising trend of labour. While giving the labour its due share, he acknowledged the role of industrialists in the building up of India—a fact which is being ignored to a great extent at present.

Sardar Patel's untimely death took aways a great soldier and fighter for the cause of the Nation, a statesman whose connsels were of great value and importance to India. There can be nothing better than a prayer that those whom he has left behind may follow his example and practice the firmness of his character and clarity of his thought and his unflinching determination to achieve his purpose.

—Dr. K. A. Hamied.

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Many people have occupied prominent places in the past history of this country but none has figured more prominently than Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel— the steel-framed Iron man of India; like his illustrious brother Shri Vithalbhai Patel, Sardar Vallabhbhai was born in a farmer's family but both the brothers by their services and sacrifices to the country have shown exceptional qualifications of a leader which few can excel. Starting from the days of the Bardoli Satyagraha which earned for him the title of a real Sardar of the people till the time he merged Princely India in the Republic of this country, he has created unprecedented history as a Social Reformer, Politician and Statesman and above all, a practical strong man of the world who by his wit and wisdom and practical insight and forethought of events to come, occupied a pre-eminent position among the makers of modern India. We feel the absence of this great man at the present juncture when India is passing through its teething troubles, but let us hope and pray that the leaders of our land who are guiding the destinies of the millions of this country, will keep before their eyes, the practical and effective methods adopted by this great departed soul in achieving the freedom of this land and solidifying it on firm basis."

—G. G. Morarji.

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The name of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel can rightly be said to shame antiquity, maim modernity and amaze posterity. The history of India has failed to produce such an abstraction of humanity in the past. He was the mighty colossus, towering over the galaxy of organizers, diciplinarians and valiant generals in the fold of the Indian National Congress, which wrung independence and freedom from the unwilling hands of the Lion of the British Empire. It was the Sardar who foiled the designs of the British imperialists to undermine our national unity by giving freedom to the princes to join India or Pakistan or to remain aloof from both.

The Sardar's unflinching devotion to duty is eloquently illustrated by the following two incidents from his life. The Sardar was cross-examining a witness belonging to the opposite side in a court in Godhra when a telegram was handed to him. It was from Bombay and carried the tragic news of the death of his wife, Zaverba. The Sardar read the message, and then proceeded with the examination as though nothing had happened. Not until the court adjourned did the Sardar show signs of grief.

The second incident happened in the 'thirtees. Congress Ministries were in office in the provinces and allegations were being freely hurled that the Ministers, instead of acting like the true servants of the people, were misusing the powers vested in them. The Sardar, while speaking at a public meeting in Bombay, told the audience that Congressmen were ruling by the sanction of the people and if they acted counter to the public weal, they were doing so at the risk being thrown out of power. The Sardar's actual words were: "Un logonko hamne vahan bithaya hai. Agar we ha nari bat nahi sunege to ham unko thokar markar nikaldenge" (We have placed them there. If they do not listen to us, we will kick them out.) Could such courageous, candid words have been addressed to his own party men by anyone except the Sardar?

His power of physical resistance and stamina were wellknown. He shouldered the onerous responsibilities of Free India's first Deputy Prime Minister although he was not in good health. It was his physical endurance coupled with mental fortitude that enabled him to change the map of our sub-continent. He was a great soul. Let us fervently hope that his spirit will guide us in our efforts to remove the foreign "pimples" from the face of Bharat.

—Dr. K. V. Mulabagala.

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Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was actually the Commander of the Independence Army.

As a trusted lieutenant of Mahatma Gandhi Sardar Patel waged the relentless war against the alien rule and played not only a leading but an outstanding role in winning freedom for our mother country.

He performed a miracle both in gaining independence and after it in the case of unification and consolidation of the country. His sound judgment and practical wisdom brought about a bloodless revolution unparalleled in the History of the World.

The country is infinitely unfortunate in that some foreign-pockets still in India are not only giving trouble but are developing into a great menace threatening to stir up the nation. Had the cruel hand of fate spared Sardar only a few years more, our country would have been saved from all sorts of internal dissensions which we are witnessing at present causing immense harm to our hard-earned freedom.

Let us sincerely wish that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru the Sardar's worthy colleague — who has been carrying on the work unaided — will ultimately triumph in his mission of economic emancipation. Let us all co-operate in the great task of building our country. That will be the only fitting tribute to the departed leader.

—Gordhandas Jadavji.

* * * *

The life and work of Sardar Patel will always remain a beacon light to enlighten the paths of all those of our countrymen, who are striving to do some service to our Nation, and it is but proper that we enshrine the memory of one of the greatest sons of India and strive to know what he did and what he stood for.

—J. N. Bhan.

* * * *

The nation will always cherish the memories of the great leader for his memorable achievements in consolidating the Union of India. But for his vision, tact and statesmanship the task of integrating five hundred and odd States with the Union of India would have been an impossibility. Sardar Patel will, therefore, be remembered for centuries to come as the Architect of a United India.

—S. N. Agarwal.

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Any words of tribute to the courage and sacrifice shown by the Sardar will be weak beside the fact of India's solidarity as a nation and her independent status, which are his testament to us.

Let us pay homage to our departed leader by making India strong and prosperous.

—K. R. Shausali.

* * * *

The name of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel will always remain written in golden letters in the history of Independent India. As one of the trustworthy disciples of Mahatma Gandhi, he has rendered a unique service to the cause of India's independence and after independence brought it to its full stature by integrating all the States into the Indian Union.

—Chunilal B. Mehta.

* * * *

Sardar Patel was one of the most outstanding statesmen of the Age. His deep scholarship, broad vision, innate goodness and lovable personality have made him immortal. It was Sardarji, who with his patriotic sense, was successful in integrating the whole of Bharat as it is today.

A clean and resolute fighter, he always fought hard and straight against the foreign government. The sincerity of his convictions, the breadth of his outlook, the clarity of his vision and the purity of his emotions—all these have brought to him the homage of millions in this country and outside.

It is obviously impossible to do justice to this great and pre-eminent personality in these few condensed words. The versatility of his character and attainments at once defy delimitation. His thoughts had sometimes a depth which it was not easy to fathom, but underlying them all was a transparent sincerity which endeared him to all.

—Hari Krishna Jhajharia.

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Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was a unique personality. His integrity as a politician and a leader of the country is well known. He was a man of a very strong will. He used to handle all matters with an iron grip and it is due to this that he was called an iron man. It was entirely due to his worthy, statesmanship that he succeeded in the unification of the entire Indian Union within no time which the Britishers could not achieve even within 300 years of their rule. This miraculous achievement of his will always be written in golden letters. After the partition of the country I had the opportunity to meet him personally on several occasions when I was very much impressed to find him very frank and straightforward. The country has suffered an irreparable loss in his passing away but his memory will always survive.

—Gur Pershad Kapoor.

* * * *

Sardar Patel gave his whole life for the cause of the Country. He played a very important part in bringing Independence to the Country. His work in unification of the Country by persuading the rulers of Indian States without any drop of blood is unique and most commendable.

—B. B. Joshi.

* * * *

We in Industry, however, feel that in him we have lost a champion of sincere hard work, and an advocate of production for prosperity. Time alone will prove the wisdom of nationalisation of industries and services as against their working by experienced individuals as trustees of nation's wealth.

—L. A. Bhatt.

* * * *

Sardarjee, though he is off from us in his physical form, is always present in every Indian mind as a living spirit of heroic sacrifice for the motherland.

—Ramchandra F. Pandya.

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Sardar Patel had been a towering personality in our political life for nearly four decades and had been a pillar of strength to the National Government after India got her independence. It was late Sardar Patel who, with his exceptional organising and administrative capacities, robust faith and rugged realism, consolidated the country into a united India and steered the country's boat, in the difficult days following partition, to its goal. To the Indian commercial community in general and the Cotton Textile Industry in this city in particular, his demise has been a grave loss. To them, he had always been a friend, philosopher and guide, due to his sympathetic understanding of their problems. It would be an apt homage to this great son of India, if we carry out his message and contribute our mite towards fulfilment of his dream of a progressive and prosperous Bharat.

—H. G. Acharya.

* * * *

In Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the country had a statesman of a great order, vision and foresight. He proved equal to the task, when commandeered to handle varied delicate and intricate problems facing the Country, which he solved resolutely from time to time with tact where tact was necessary, with courage where courage was necessary and with firmness where firmness was necessary. The Nation's major ills were doctored by him with drug where drug was required and with psychology where mere psychological treatment could do the trick. And this was the reason why the Sardar was held in great esteem and love by one and all, though he essentially was an iron man. The India of to-day, so strongly built up and consolidated owes much of her strength to this great beloved leader, whose life and work in the Nation building is indeed historic.

—B. G. Parikh.

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Amongst the names of the architects of free India the name of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel will rank one of the formest in the annals of history. Along with Gandhiji, Sardar planned and suffered to bring to fruition the dream of independence.

An indefatigable worker he led the politicians through the intricacies of diplomacy with the shrewdness of a "Sardar" in the field. Though stern where sternness was needed, he was an amiable personality and a staunch friend.

Had Providence spared him a few years more he would have set right the post-independence problems with an acumen that was his own and consolidated rapidly the fissiparous tendencies in which we find ourselves to-day.

He always liked to hear more and speak little. He was always firm in his opinions and he rarely changed them if he believed in them.

The most outstanding instance of his tact and sagacity was shown in handling the Princes' problem in India. I do not think any other person in his place would have succeeded as he did.

—Behram N. Karanjia.

* * * *

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was one of the foremost statesmen and administrators in India. As Deputy Prime Minister and Ministetr for Home Affairs and States in the Central Cabinet he was known for his firmness, strength and decision. He took a realistic view of most of the problems that confronted him and his country at a critical juncture in its history and he never wobbled or wavered in the path that he felt was the right one to take. Imbued with lofty patriotism, strength of will and determination of purpose, he came quickly to sound conclusions on many questions of vital importance to the nation. He rarely allowed grass to grow under his feet and he was well known for his drive. It could be said without exaggeration that he was the maker of modern India. His name and his work deserve to be cherished with gratitude by his countrymen.

—N. Chandasekhara Aiyar.

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One of the principle architects of India's freedom, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel had been a major and dynamic force for a period of nearly half a century in our struggle for independence. He was intimately associated with the events of history which he made in this period. To those whose minds might not go far back in the past, Sardar Patel would remain as a symbol of the consolidation of free India. The unification of the country brought about, with so little opposition and in so brief a span of time, has indeed been a phenomenon without any parallel in world history. The political integration of India has been of particular significance to us, insurance men. For insurance companies operating in different territories in the country were subject to different sets of legislation formerly obtaining in these territories with the result that over and above the various formalities prescribed under the Insurance Act for what was then known as British India, they were required to comply with similar provisions in the matter of registration etc., in these territories. Thanks to the merger of many of the States and their accession to the Indian Union, the crowning achievement of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, these separate legislations have been abolished and insurance companies are now able to carry on their activities without having to comply with any unnecessary formalities, as heretofore.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's association with insurance business was far closer than is generally known. There were a number of occasions when the leaders of Indian Insurance sought the benefit of the advice and guidance on vital problems of the business which were readily available and ungrudgingly given. Indian Insurance will always cherish his memory for the sympathetic understanding Sardar Patel brought to bear on the solution of the problems which faced the trade. It may not be easy to find men of equal stature among the living, possessing Sardar Patel's single-minded devotion to duty, sense of realism, indomitable courage and organising and administrative ability.

—Laxmidas P. Goculdas.

* * *

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was one of the foremost Indian leaders in the national movement. It is a matter of recent history with what foresight, tact and quiet firmness he liquidated scores of princely states and achieved the integration of the country. We need today, in the great task of reconstructing our country, men of his practical wisdom and concrete action.

—S. S. Yelamali.

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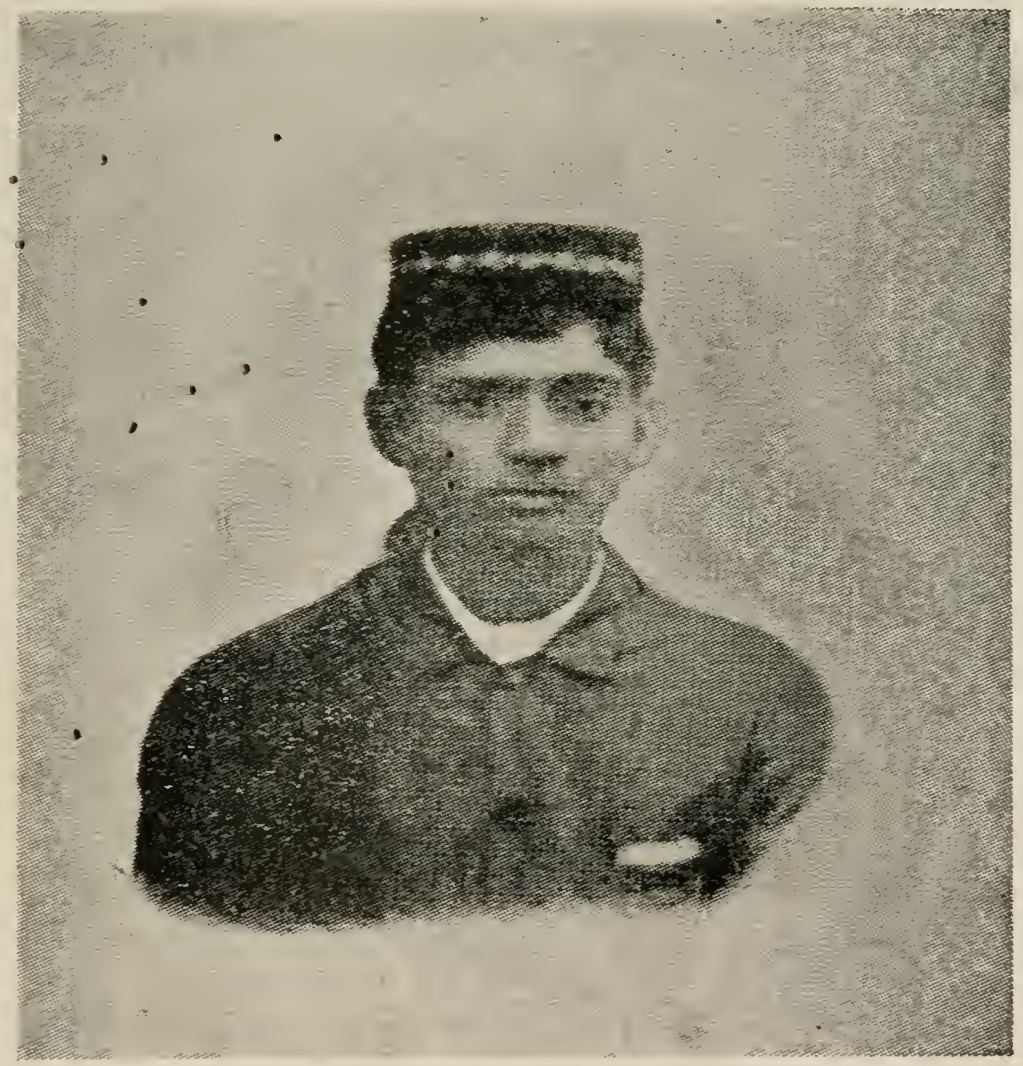

Vallabhbhai at an early age.

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Shrimati Ladbai Patel, mother of Vallabhbhai.

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A family group: In the centre is Vallabhbhai's mother; on the extrème left is his illustrious brother, Vithalbhai Patel.

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The famous Patel brothers in Western attire, on Sardar Patel's return from the U.K.

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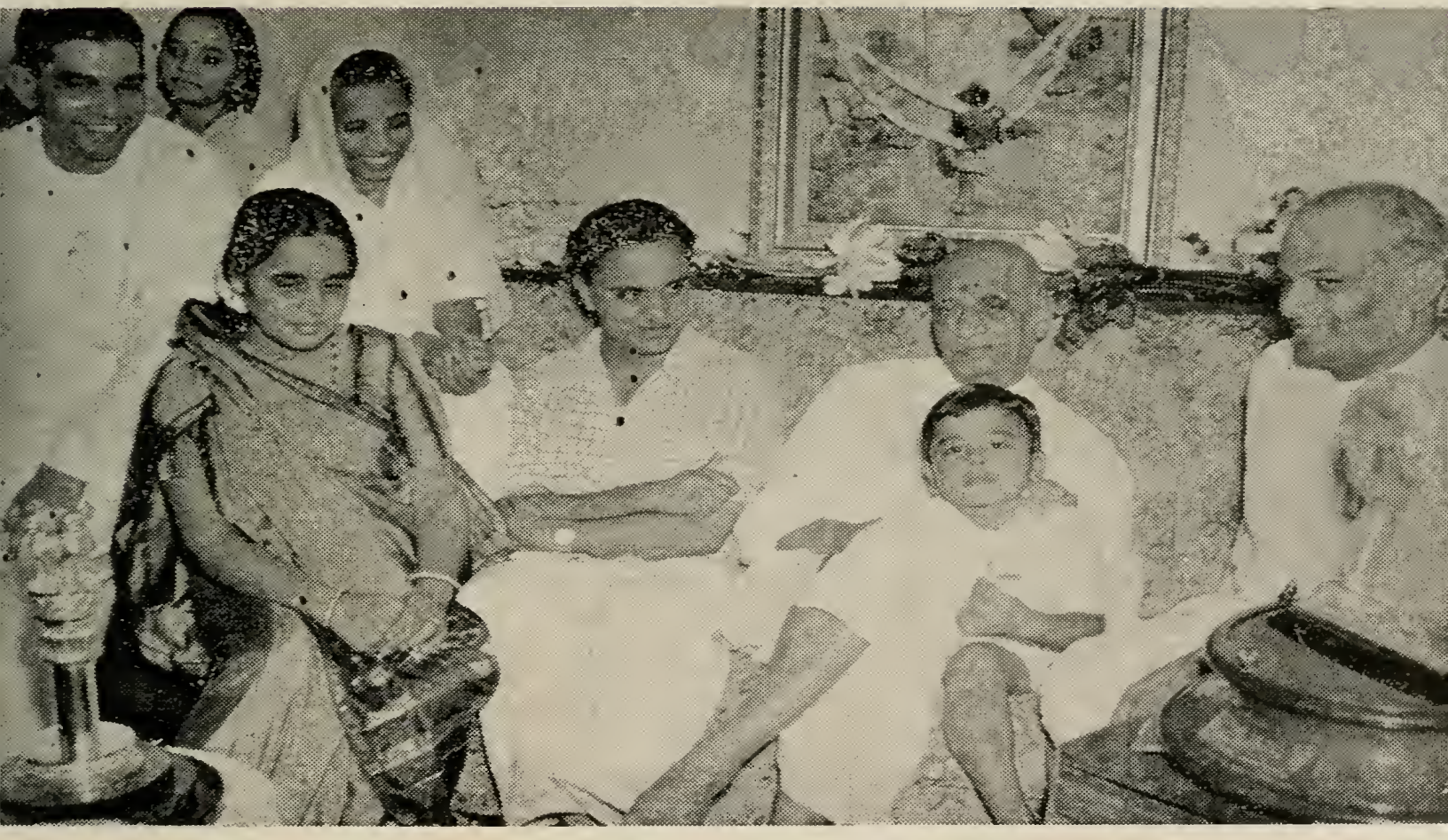

The Sardar with his son, daughter, grandson and daughter-in-law.

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The battle is on: Here is Sardar with N. C. Kelkar.

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Two of the Triumvirate: Sardar Patel and Mahatma Gandhi at the Congress session.

A Guard of honour to Sardar Patel.

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End of a Struggle: This photograph was taken immediately after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed in 1930. Shri Nehru is next to the Sardar.

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The Split and Quit Plan of the British did not strain the relationship between India and Britain. Here is Sardar with Lord and Lady Mountbatten.

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Affairs of State always engaged his attention. Lord Mountbatten and the Sardar engaged in a deep conversation.

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A portrait of Sardar: Years of ceaseless work have left unmistakable traces on his otherwise serene face.

The journey's end: Sardar's dead body borne in state by the Services.

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THOUGHTS

"Thoughts that breathe and
words that burn....."

GRAY.

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Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

ABOUT THE SARDAR

"It was a great privilege for me to have been with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. I was well aware of his matchless bravery, but I have never lived with him as I have had the good fortune during 16 months. The affection with which he covered me recalls to me that of my own dear mother. I never knew him to possess motherly qualities. If the slightest thing happened to me he would be out of his bed. He superintended every detail in connection with my comforts. He and my other associates conspired to let me do nothing and I hope that Government will believe me when I say that he always showed a remarkable comprehension of the difficulties of the Government whenever we discussed any political problem. His solicitude for the farmers of Bardoli and Kaira I can never forget.

—Gandhiji.

* * * *

Strong of will and purpose, a great organizer wholely devoted to the cause of India's freedom, he has inevitably roused powerful reactions. Some have disliked him because they could not fall in line with him. But far greater numbers of people have found in him the leader of their choice, and working with him and under him, have laid the stable foundations of Indian freedom.

—Nehru.

* * * *

He is a bold and untiring General of India's struggle for independence and is keeping the banner of India flying ..... with a young man's zeal and a soldier's alertness.

—Abul Kalam Azad.

* * * *

Those who think that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is a hard man are thoroughly mistaken. On the contrary, it would not be far from the truth if one were to say that his is the nature of a loving and jealous woman. His affection is exacting, and behind a cold and cynical exterior

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he holds a highly emotional and responsive soul and an untiring spirit for work. Masterful he is, but as a mother and not as a tyrant.

—C. Rajagopalachari.

* * * *

With his stern, rugged and grave exterior, he is like an iron casket that holds rare and hidden gems of devotion, sweetness, and charm.

—Sarojini Naidu.

* * * *

His rugged exterior hides a heart of gold and an affectionate and kindly nature.

—Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.

Almost immediately coming out of my detention camp, I greeted the 'Sardar of Bardoli' as the 'Sardar of India'. I did not do so at the impulse of the moment. The words that came out of me were the result of deep thinking during the last four years.

—Sarat Chandra Bose.

* * * *

When Vallabhbhai was moving in advance as Gandhi's forerunner, Government saw in him John the Baptist who was the forerunner of Jesus, nineteen hundred years ago, and forthwith they laid hands on him.

—Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

* * *

I saw Sardar's penetrating insight, his profound knowledge of human strength and weakness, his unerring grasp of essentials in the game. And behind it all I saw the Grand Rebel who under the leadership of Gandhiji, the Master, was fighting British Rule, not merely by words, but by mobilisation of human efforts and ambitions on the fields of open battle and unseen diplomacy.....

Ordinarily Sardar is a man of very few words. He can keep silence for hours in the midst of most exciting conversation; never speaks for the sake of speaking. He only becomes eloquent when action is in the air. But when he does speak, he speaks with an eloquence unrivalled. He can attack, he can appeal, he can heap ridicule; he can make an audience cry. Above all he is a master of winged words which like shafts pierce the heart.

—K. M. Munshi.

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His steel passed through the fire of the alchemists and came out with a finer edge. He had the great General's discerning eye for the true and the false. He stamped out rivalries among men with a strong hand. His finger gave the command. His word was law. The people of Gujerat listened to his message with fond devotion. His eloquence had immensely humane elements. He attacked the imperial fortifications with will and effectively. He could demolish British walls by a withering phrase. He could run a dagger in the heart of a stone-boiled bureaucrat by a picturesque smile. His words went straight to the heart of the villagers.

—Mavlankar.

* * * *

There are very few people who have done so much in so short a time and talked so little about it. He had undoubtedly been the architect of Indian Unity as Gandhiji had been the architect of Indian Freedom.

—N. V. Gadgil.

* * * *

He burns with rage when he talks of the system which has made the peasant what he is and of those responsible for the system.

—Mahadevbhai Desai.

* * * *

Sardar's genius for leadership and organization is marvellous.

—Govind Vallabh Pant.

* * * *

Sardar Patel played an outstanding part in the great events of his generation and his name will have a permanent place in the annals of India.

—Clement R. Attlee.

* * * *

I had not known Sardar Patel before I went to India in March 1947 and I was warned that I would find him a man of inflexible and iron will with whom negotiations would not be easy. I soon discovered that behind his stern and masterful exterior there beat a very warm and sympathetic heart. Since one had penetrated his armour plating one was dealing with an essentially friendly, human and lovable man.

—Lord Mountbatten.

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Once there was a riot at a meeting addressed by the Sardar at the Kamgar Maidan in Bombay. India was not yet free then. The white-collared workers of Bombay's Textile Directorate had organized a demonstration. A pandemonium followed. The audience were in a panic, women screamed; children cried. The police opened fire. The reporters ran away. Sardar Patel stared at the sky with a serene face.

* * * *

"Tell Churchill", said Sardar Patel, "to save England first before saving India." Someone asked, "But who will tell him that?" "Well, I am telling him, that it is time somebody told him that the world is changing rapidly. The Naked Fakir has got freedom now."

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BARDOLI SATYAGRAHA

If anyone is fit to walk with his head erect on this earth, it is the peasant. He is the producer, the others are parasites. But what a sorry plight he has been reduced to! The whole world depends on you two, the agriculturist and the labourer, and yet, you are the worst abused people on earth. I am grieved at the woeful state of helplessness to which you have been reduced..... Why are you so fear-stricken? Why are you so inarticulate?

* * * *

..... We must not do anything in resentment or anger. It is a sign of weakness. Our strength lies in cheerfully going through all sufferings that may be imposed on us. .... Let them break open your house and your locks, let them take away all your belongings, suffer them to do it smilingly. Do not lose your temper. Let them do what they like.....

* * * *

Challenge the Government to take up your land and carry it, if they can, to England. Challenge them to surround the taluka with machine guns and aeroplanes. We have no armed force, but we have a better and a purer force to pit against it—the force of truth, the force of our allegiance to our pledge.

* * * *

Give up your wedding festivities—a people at war with a mighty Government cannot afford to indulge in these pastimes. From tomorrow you might have to keep your doors closed and locked and betake to the fields, only to return in the evening. Throw off your lethargy and apathy. You have earned a reputation that you have yet much to do to deserve. Now the die is cast, and there is no turning back.....

* * * *

Tell the Government, "You can do what you like; but only by force you shall get us to agree to what we do not like. Cut me to pieces but I will not pay."

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You must be clear in mind that except your capacity for suffering and grim determination, you have nothing to fight the Government's brute strength with. The mightiest tyrant must bend if people are determined to put up with suffering.

* * * *

Why need you fear? If anything, the government has cause to fear. No civilized government can govern without the consent of the governed. At the present moment, they govern you because your eyes are blindfolded, you are deluded into the belief that they are keeping you in peace and prosperity. It is not a reign of peace but a reign of fear. You have lost the capacity of righteous indignation against wrong. The absence of it is cowardice ..... I want to inoculate you with fearlessness. I want to galvanize you into life.

* * * *

I still ask you to think twice before you take the plunge ..... Do not take the plunge lightly. If you miserably fail, you will fail not to rise again, for several years; but if you succeed you will have done much to lay the foundation of Swaraj.

* * * *

You are about to fight freedom's battle for India. You have now to fight a smaller battle and prove you are capable of fighting the bigger one.....

* * * *

Government has, like a wild elephant, run amok. It thinks it can trample anything and everything under its feet. Even so thinks the mad elephant priding itself on having trampled in the past even lions and tigers to death, and scorning the little gnat defying him. I am teaching the little gnat today to let the elephant go on in his mad career, and then to get into his trunk at the opportune moment. The gnat need not fear the elephant. The elephant can never trample it to death, but the gnat can certainly prove formidable to the elephant.

* * * *

Whatever happens, don't be alarmed. Let the Mahalkari chuckle. He will soon find his occupation gone.

* * * *

Hardship and miseries are not new things to you. Who puts up with heat, cold, rain, and all the inclemencies of the weather, as the tiller of the soil does? Who puts up with the mosquitoes and other pests of our countryside as the agriculturist does? I assure you, government cannot inflict on you any greater hardship than you are already suffering.....

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COMMUNAL AFFAIRS

There can be no communal feelings among the peasants. An agriculturist, a day-labourer, to whatever religion he may belong, is in the last analysis a peasant. All peasants are in the same boat: all of them will have to swim or be drowned together. Nature is no respector of religions. They are suffering from the same injustices. All are impoverished. We should forget our communal differences and work together for our national uplift.

* * * *

The Congress can be no party to any constitution which does not contain a solution of the communal question that is not designed to satisfy the respective parties. As a Hindu, I present the minorities a Swadeshi fountain-pen and paper and let them write out their demands. And, I should endorse them. I know that it is the quickest method. What we want is a heart unity, not patched-up paper-unity that will break under the slightest strain. That unity can only come when the majority takes courage in both hands and is prepared to change places with the minority. This would be the highest wisdom.

* * *

Butchery of innocent and defenceless men, women, and children does not behove brave men; it is the war of the jungle and the hall-mark of inhumanity and barbarity —— It is not dictated by any code of chivalry or honour. If others cast chivalry or honour to the winds, it does not justify us in debasing ourselves. If we have to fight, we have to fight clean.

* * * *

I am a true friend of the Muslims although I have been described as their greatest enemy. I believe in plain speaking..... I want to tell them frankly that mere declaration of loyalty to the Indian Union will not help them at this critical juncture. They must give practical proof of their declarations.

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EDUCATION

When Gandhiji came to India, he said that this education was miseducation, which makes us cowards morally. The Government's purpose in introducing this education was to get clerks who would servilely serve them. But neither has this served our purpose nor their purpose.

* * * *

With a view to perpetuate their rule, the Britishers made the constable the head of the village and the village teacher his subordinate. Formerly the teacher was the village's real ruler. He used to give courage to the distressed and advice to the unemployed. He used to give the children knowledge. Now you know why he has been demoted.

* * * *

It has been the experience during the last twenty-six years that the use of a foreign language as the medium of instruction is the greatest obstacle to the progress of education. The greater part of the time is spent in learning words and even then the student does not understand them well. Words are used to distinguish things. A child first sees things and later learns the words which indicate them. This starts in one's childhood and lasts up to one's death. Only when a child has understood one word for a thing, can it learn another word for the same thing, and this places a great strain on the child's mind. The obsession is so great that it robs its daily life of all its cheer. Many a time the child knows words without knowing what they really mean. As a result, the students cannot have a full grasp of the subjects they study.

* * * *

The introduction of Indian languages as media of instruction does not mean that we should stop the study of foreign languages altogether. In the modern world, there is no country which can confine itself to its four borders. It has to maintain relations with other countries, and this necessitates the study of foreign languages by some people.

* * * *

Tulsi says: "Regard the wealth of others as stones, the wives of

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others as your mother". If you understand this alone, you will have learnt all that you can learn in the greatest universities of the world.

* * * *

The world is a big university. It is not very easy to earn a degree in this university.

* * * *

Everyone admits that the educational system is deficient and outmoded, but so great is our degradation that no one is eager to change it. No courage is left in us. A revolution is badly wanted in this field.

* * * *

To the students I say: "The battle for freedom in which we wanted your help has been won. You should now devote yourself to the completion of your own education. If you still have some leisure, you should devote it to the cause of adult education and spread light to the illiterate masses. You can also work for village uplift."

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FREEDOM STRUGGLE

This (violence) is not our weapon. Our weapon is non-violence. This weapon may not be very effective, but it has raised our stature in the world during the last twenty-two years. We do not stipulate that there should be no place in our hearts for hatred, but there should be no hatred while in action. We should be wholly non-violent in our struggle.

* * * *

The Amaldars are not our enemies. They are the guardians of the law and the poor souls have not the courage to defy orders from the superiors. We should have no enmity towards them. To deprive anyone of necessities of life like milk, foodgrains, laundering and shaving is not **Satyagraha.** They should be able to buy them in the market like anyone else. To deprive a stranger of his daily necessities is not Satyagraha, but betrayal. Our fight is with the higher-ups, not with the poor servants. When the police are called, even they should be able to buy everything. It is not correct to fight with a starving army.

* * * *

We are being intimidated on all sides. People are reminding us of the methods of the Britishers. It is said that new ordinances and new black-lists are being prepared. I would like to ask the Britishers: where was the necessity for this? Won't the old ordinances and black-lists do?

* * * *

India alone in the whole world need not be afraid. We are not eager to attack any other country, nor do we aspire to keep another country in subjugation. We should be afraid of God alone.

* * * *

Our fight knows no defeat. We have never been vanquished, and never will be, because our fight is based on Truth. We are demanding the freedom of our own country. We are demanding our birth-rights.

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Don't stay at home like cowards saying you believe in non-violence. Gandhiji says that it is better to fight with a gun than to be a coward.

* * * *

Formerly we used to condemn the police and treat them with contempt. Then they were custodians of law, while today they are servants of the people. Some say that the police are the same. I would ask these to join the police and change it.

* * * *

Gandhiji says that non-violence and universal love is the message of India to the world. Before we give this message to the world we should ourselves imbibe it.

* * * *

The Government has the law, cannons and guns and brute force. You have your belief in Truth, your willingness to suffer. This is a conflict between two kinds of forces. The power of the Government will be of no avail if you are convinced that you are fighting against injustice and if you are willing to suffer for it.

* * * *

The man with a gun has to worry about loading it. We are non-violent. Others will have to worry about loading the guns.

* * * *

The Congress is an organisation which has no match in India Crores of people are behind it. It will fight anyone who rules over us. There is no place in it for dacoits and gangsters.

* * * *

If you remain united, if you are non-violent, if you abstain from alcoholic drinks, if you do all these things, you may not have to fight the Government even. This Government can be compared to a balloon or a bubble. The moment people realize this, it will burst.

* *

The Government has always stated that the Congress does not represent anyone except a handful of agitators. Nine crores of Muslims, seven crores of Harijans and seven crores of Rajasthanis do not support it. I would like to say that even if this were true and we were not recognised by anyone, the Government had at least to recognise us and they will have to deal with us.

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The British boast that they have established peace in India. But they have reduced India to a graveyard.

* * * *

Cripps is appealing to the American people for help to suppress the people of India. If Britain appeals to America, we appeal to God. Isn't it strange that a country armed to its teeth should appeal for help to suppress forty crores of unarmed India?

* * * *

We would like to tell the Government that the Congress is not a group of small children. We know that India cannot be free by simply asking the British to withdraw. We have to create conditions which will compel the Britishers to leave India.

* * * *

The Britishers' is the blackest record in History.

* * * *

Our only cry is "Quit India," "Quit Asia." There can be no dignity without freedom.

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GANDHIJI

Gandhiji has taught us to say "No" to the British Government.

* * * *

There is only one man in the world today who reminds it that those who fight with swords shall be victims of swords.

* * * *

Gandhiji has taken a definite stand . . . . . I have placed myself in the hands of Gandhiji. I feel he is instinctively right — the lead he gives in all critical situations.

* * * *

What if Gandhiji is in prison? He is making rigorous 'tapasya' for us even there!

* * * *

Gandhiji is Britain's sincerest friend in India. He has been serving the British like a sergeant.

* * * *

During the struggle, Gandhiji commands us; if he asks us to rise, we should rise; if he asks us to retreat, we should do so.

* * *

Gandhiji is our General. If the General is captured the soldiers can act as they think best.

* * * *

Many people still regard me as a blind follower of Gandhiji. I say: 'If I am, I am proud of it'. But you see I am not. Even today I say: 'If you are willing to lead, we will follow.' But Gandhiji insists on our opening our own eyes and using our commonsense.

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INDEPENDENCE

We want an independence in which thousands of people will not die for want of crumbs of dry bread; in which foodgrains produced by peasants after back-breaking toil will not be snatched from their mouths to be sent to foreign countries; in which our countrymen will not have to depend on imports for their cloth; in which respecting an individual's person will not depend on the sweet will of foreigners; in which we will regard it as our duty to wear Swadeshi cloth; in which the administration will not be carried on in a foreign tongue for the convenience of a few foreigners; in which a foreign language will not be the medium of teaching; in which the heads of our houses of learning will not be foreigners; in which the expenditure on the army will not be so much as to suck our economy dry; in which our armed forces will not be employed to suppress the freedom struggle at home and help the enslavement of other nations overseas; in which there will not be fantastic differences between the salaries of public servants; in which justice will not be beyond the reach of the common people, in which our nationals will not be looked down in other countries.

* * * *

We want the same independence and the same freedom as England enjoys today. We shall not be satisfied with anything less.

* * * *

Our primary duty is jealously to guard our freedom against dangers from without and from within. We have also to ensure that the humblest among us has the same stature as the tallest in the land, that labour gets its legitimate share of its product, that the toiling millions in villages obtain just return for the sweat of their brow, and that the State discharges adequately its elementary duty of feeding, clothing, housing and educating every son and daughter of the motherland.

* *

India is determined to be free and she shall be free very soon. The country has to get ready..... What is wanted is solid work and preparation and not talk. When the time for action comes, and the time for action may come soon, we must be able to act as one man.

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Give us our freedom; give it to the Congress or give it to the Muslim League; give it to an honest man or give it to thieves and dacoits, but for God's sake, give us our freedom.

* * * *

If you look at the history of India, you will find that for centuries India was steeped in slavery. What struggles, what sacrifices, what bitterness, and what sorrow we all had to face to rid India of that centuries-old malady that had eaten into the very vitals of nationhood. A great change has come about, indeed a great revolution has been brought into being. The greater the change, the more comprehensive the revolution, the more are the travails through which the country has to pass. We have already had more than a due share of troubles and travails. We are lucky we have survived so many of them, but many are still to be overcome. If we falter or fail we shall consign ourselves to eternal shame and disgrace.

* * * *

The ship has reached the shore and our freedom is near at hand. It is for us to take it and work it to our advantage or leave the opportunity.

* * * *

There is no receding from the Lahore Resolution of complete independence. This independence does not mean a churlish refusal to associate with Britain or any other power. Independence therefore does not exclude the possibility of equal partnership for mutual benefit dissolvable at the will of either party.

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MISCELLANEOUS

You cannot comprehened socialism by reading text books or listening to learned speeches. You must first understand what it means in practice and how the ground has to be prepared for it. Unlike many who indulge in the parrot-cry of socialism, I have no property of my own. Before you talk of socialism, you must ask yourselves how much wealth you have created by your own labour.... What is necessary for us is to learn how to produce wealth and thereafter to think what to do with it.....

* * * *

Yours is a land for gods to live in. Its air, its natural scenery, its pure atmosphere, its sweet water would attract even gods if our hearts were pure, but its population was lazy and did not know how to make the best of the resources. You must, therefore, get rid of your enemy which is laziness.

* * * *

Indeed no government can thrive without criticism. But the criticism that should be offered should be constructive in nature and helpful in its content. Destructive criticism or activities subversive of government are bound to recoil on the critics themselves and to make for disruption without in any way advancing the interests of the country.

* * * *

To concede the claim of Mr. Jinnah is for the Congress to commit suicide in the hope of being reborn as a Hindu organisation.

* * * *

Just as boycott of foreign cloth is an economic necessity for the sake of the starving millions, boycott of intoxicating drinks and drugs is a necessity for the moral welfare of the nation.

* * * *

When we come to power, we will decree that anyone who gives his daughter in marriage at twelve or thirteen should be either hanged or

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shot. Girls become mothers at fourteen or fifteen, and innumerable girls become widows at tender ages. How long is this to continue? Can't you see that you are murdering your daughters?

* * *

I appeal to you to implement Gandhiji's programme. Now is the time for testing your bravery and courage. Gandhiji has got us independence by his penance. I will tell you how you can have Ram Rajya as contemplated by him. The first thing to do is to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity. The second thing is the removal of untouchability. The third thing is to attain self-sufficiency..... Preserve the best thing in our culture, and live for selfless devotion to your ideas. If you can do this, you are sure to achieve your goal and establish Ram Rajya.

* * * *

We have to conduct governmental affairs in a way each one feels it is his own government. Times are such that government is of those who exert and not of those who sit idle. You should be certain how and for what purpose you use power. We have to utilize power for the welfare of the down-trodden.

* * * *

The future depends on whether we step up production of food, cloth, iron, steel, cement and other essential articles both for the civil population and defence needs. This is necessary not only for banishing hunger and disease from the country but also for consolidating the freedom which we have won after so many years of struggle.

* * * *

The workers should remember that they do not work only for their maintenance. They are not animals driven by the whip. They should realize their important role in the country and ask themselves what they are working for. On their efficiency and hard work depends the greatness of the country.

* * *

I have no doubt that the conflict between labour and capital, and may I say, also the Government at this stage would be nothing but ruinous to the country. We have just now finished our chapter of exploitation. We should see that we do not find ourselves entering into another chapter in which we are exploited by a different type of forces which nevertheless are destructive and even more dangerous because they are internal.

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STATES

This country with its institutions is the proud heritage of the people who inherit it. It is an accident that some live in the States and some in British India, but all alike partake of its culture and character. We are all knit together by bonds of blood and feeling, no less than self-interest. None can segregate us into segments; no impassable barriers can be set up between us.

* * * *

The Indian National Congress is pitched against British Imperialism and the states' people against the Princes. This struggle will proceed till such time the States people achieve their liberty and their legitimate demands. The states' people will not be satisfied with mere self-government and control over Local Boards. They demand rightly too, that they should have a voice in the monetary and administrative affairs of their states. The Congress cannot keep quiet when 25 million Indians are suffering under so many disabilities. It will be a formidable task for India to march ahead to her goal of independence with so many millions tethered to the Congress as a dead-weight.

* * * *

We have passed a number of harmless resolutions. We have requested them, because we do not harbour any ill-will towards them. If the rulers do not respect us, are not willing to listen to us, it is not because they are wicked, but because we lack sincerity and seriousness.

* * * *

Like beasts, people cannot be transferred without their consent. The Congress has refused to sit with the Princes on the Federation and will not think of it if the states people are not properly represented, and responsible Government installed in the States. The British Imperialism and the Princes are carrying on negotiations, not remembering the states' people. Federation is an absurd arrangement between plutocracy and imperialism and vested interests, and the people have nothing to do with that kind of thing. We want to bid good-bye

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to Princedom. We cannot allow our birth-right of self-determination to be encroached upon.

* * * *

A ruler is the trustee of his state's treasury and not its owner. The greater part of the state's income should be spent for its subjects' welfare. Some expenditure may be necessary to benefit the ruler's stature, but it should have its limits. The ruler may certainly appropriate a portion of the income for his personal expenses. In the case of some States, the interest accruing from the ruler's properties alone is enough for the administrative expenses. In such cases, the various taxes imposed on the people should be reduced.

* * *

The people must maintain and preserve the dignity of the institution of Rulers and not ridicule it.

* * * *

There appears a great deal of misunderstanding about the attitude of the Congress towards the states. I should like to make it clear that it is not the desire of the Congress to interfere in any manner whatever with the domestic affairs of the States. They are no enemies of the Princely order, but on the other hand, wish them and their people under their aegis all prosperity, contentment and happiness.

* *

I felt that rulers had acquired by heredity and history certain claims on the people which the latter must honour. Their dignities and privileges and their means of subsistence on a reasonable standard must be assured. I have always held to the belief that the future of the Princes lies in the service of their people and their country and not in the continued assertion of their autocracy.

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SWADESHI

True Socialism lies in the development of the village industries. We do not want to produce in our country the chaotic conditions prevalent in the Western countries consequent on mass production.

* * * *

We must intensify Swadeshi, which is the birth-right of every nation. Whatever we produce in our country we must encourage to the exclusion of foreign whether British or other. This is the condition of national growth. Thus we must encourage and carry on intensive propaganda on behalf of indigenous insurance companies, banking, shipping and the like. We may not belittle or neglect them on the ground of their inferiority or dearness. Only by wide use and helpful criticism may we make them cheaper and better.

* * * *

Throw away the foreign cloth you are wearing and that may be lying in your houses. You become slaves by wearing it. The Britishers send five crores of rupees worth of cotton to Britain and the same comes back in the form of cloth worth sixty crores of rupees. This way they drain the wealth of our country and send us Commissioners and Collectors, cannons and guns to terrorise us. The only way we can put an end to this situation is by consuming only as much cloth as is produced in our country. Further: the cotton should be grown in your own fields, ginned by your womenfolk and woven by the village weaver. If you do this, our money will remain in our own country. When the drainage of sixty crores of rupees every year stops, the British Government will be more reasonable. There will be no famines in India any more. When the poor people are satisfied, there will be no crime.

* * * *

Behind the **charka** is the whole philosophy of Satyagraha. If anyone of you disapprove of that cult, you should remain silent. When the struggle is on, the voice of the critic should be hushed; it is for the General to decide with what weapon he would fight.

* * * *

We have made much headway in the matter of the boycott of

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foreign cloth. It is a right as well as a duty. Without it the impoverished millions of India must continue to be dumped down in the villages of India; the **charka** cannot flourish. Foreign cloth must therefore be banished from the land. It is therefore want of easy employment in their own villages that leads to starvation. Incessant propaganda is necessary to rid the country of chronic unemployment which has become second nature with our peasantry. The best propaganda is to do sacrificial spinning and wear **khaddar.**

* * * *

Protection of Indian industries and enterprises to the exclusion of British or foreign is a condition of our national existence even under a state of partnership.

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UNTOUCHABILITY

Untouchability is a delusion. One does not have to bathe if one touches a cat or a dog; then why should one bathe when one touches another human being? Hindus awake! You are committing a mistake!

* * * *

We believe in selfpurification. If we are eager to be free from bondage, we should first see to it that all our countrymen are free from the bondage of untouchability. Untouchability is a blot on Hinduism. It is a travesty of religion.

* * * *

The recent (1930) heroic struggle on the part of the nation would have been more glorious if Hindus had purged Hinduism of this evil (Untouchability). But heroism and glory apart, no Swaraj would be worth having without this supreme act of self-purification, and even if Swaraj is won, whilst this stain continues to blacken Hinduism, it would be as insecure as a Swaraj without a complete boycott of foreign cloth.

* * * *

We should not regard people as high or low. All people who stay in a village, of whatever colour, are God's progeny.

* * * *

Gandhiji says that untouchability is a sin, but India is not willing to give it up. In South Africa, the Dutch and the English people regard Indians as untouchables. When the question of racial discrimination in South Africa came up before the United Nations, Smuts wanted it to deal with discrimination in India itself.

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WAR

Christ adjured his followers to turn their other cheek if one were hit. Today we see in Europe how Christians are following his teachings!

* * * *

The Congress has made it clear that it regards both Fascism and Nazism as the enemies of Democracy. These doctrines do not respect the opinion of the people. We believe that they are inimical to world progress. We had said this even before the outbreak of hostilities in Europe, but then Britain was busy with secret dealings with the Fascists and the Nazis..... The fate of Democracy is in the balance in the present war.

* * * *

Events are moving fast in the world. One great country after another is crumbling. France, which has been an inspiration to freedom-fighters all over the world, has lost her own freedom. This was something unforeseen, unthinkable.

* * * *

It is strange that a country with a fifth of the world's population has been dragged into the war without its consent. The Britishers say their war aims are clean. If they are fighting for noble aims or great principles, may we know them? We are eager to know them, but the Britishers have never cared to let us know. And from what they have told us, it is clear England and Germany are fighting for a new alignment of nations in Europe. It is obvious that the only issue is how to perpetuate the rule of the Whites over the countries in Asia and Africa.

* *

The Chinese people are valiant. But I would like to ask the Western nations why they have suddenly developed a love for China. What were they doing during the past five years? Wasn't it America which supplied arms to Japan to bleed China? When Manchukuo was attacked

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and we protested against it, Amery told in the British Parliament that it was a part of Japan's expansion: so great was Britain's love for China. We all know how Britain was conspiring against Russia before Russia joined the war. Today the British may be parading their affection for Russia. Today Britain may be overflowing with affection for Russia, but we will have to see what is the reason behind this.

* * * *

When hostilities commenced a year ago, India was dragged into the war. The British did this without taking us into confidence. They did not consult the Princes, or the Muslims or any Indian political party. The Congress withdrew its representatives from the Central Assembly as a protest against despatching Indian troops without the consent of the people. The British should know we are also opposed to the ideology they are fighting. We are willing to forget the past if they make their war objectives clear. If they want us to support the war, let them first convince us that they are safeguarding India's interest.

* * * *

The British will be victorious if only they convince the people of India that this is a people's war. The people should be convinced that they are fighting to preserve their freedom. Unless this mood seizes the people, no amount of propaganda through newspapers and radio will be of any use.

* * * *

The people of India can help other nations to be free only when they are free.

* * * *

To Holland, Poland, Belgium, Czechoslovakia and other countries, the British have promised that they will fight to the last man for their independence. But what about India, which you have been holding in bondage for a century? Bondage was the original cause of this war, and Nazism is only its offshoot.

* * * *

The Soviet people are fighting admirably. They know they are fighting for their motherland's independence. Why should India fight? Are we free?

* * * *

If India becomes free soon, she will make arrangements for her defence. We will conclude a treaty with the Allies and immediately

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join the war against Japan and Germany. But our independence brooks no delay.

* * * *

The Indians are convinced that they can defend themselves only when the Britishers leave India.

* * * *

It is said that the Congress wants the Japanese to conquer India. Nothing can be further than the truth. What we say is that the British should leave India and allow us to look after ourselves.

* * * *

You have read the Mahabharat. The Mahabharat war was nothing compared to the war raging today. The Mahabharat war was fought in a particular battlefield; today's war extends even to the atmosphere and the deep seas. The warring armies do not know what the consequences of their action will be. The soldiers are indifferent: they fight in the name of God. The nations of Europe boast that they have civilised the heathens. But history shows that those who call others heathens become heathens themselves.

* * * *

This war may even mean the end of the world. Whether there will be another war after this one, cannot be said. When the world comes to its senses, it will realize that the war can be stopped only by following the advice of Gandhiji. That day is fast coming.....

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SPEECHES

"Speech is the index of the mind."

—Seneca.

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Sardar Patel addressing a large gathering

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INTRODUCTION

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel enjoyed the reputation of being a man of few words. He was a man of action and whenever the situation demanded he could sway the public whichever way he liked—to smile, to cry or to act. Most of his important speeches were delivered in Gujarati. He was the master of the language, diction and delivery. He had a good command over Gujarati idioms and "patois", which made him easily understandable to the common people. The acidity of the sarcasm with which he treated his opponents had a demoralising effect.

While presenting this selection to the public we will request them to bear in mind that the selection is a translation from the originals in Gujarati. Even though every effort has been made to portray the feelings and sentiments of the speaker, the necessary vigour and punch may be wanting.

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ROWLATT BILL

India had participated in the First World War with full confidence in the promises of British Government. Sons of India laid down their lives together with troops of other countries in winning the war. Indian leaders had hoped that they would get freedom after the cessation of hostilities but what India got was the Rowlatt Act which finally ended in the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh at Amritsar on April 13, 1919. The tragedy shook the conscience of the world and woke up India to demand her freedom as nothing had done before.

During the war we were told by the Government that if we help them in the war effort, we will be granted freedom after the war. When the Viceroy came here, we presented him a memorandum on this matter. The Viceroy suggested a few improvements in the administration and we held meetings in connection with that, too. The war is over, but the changes have yet to be implemented. Instead of improvements in recognition of our help, we have been given the Rowlatt Bill. This kind of law does not exist in any part of the world. We had differences, but we unanimously appealed to the Government in the Council to postpone the Bill. The Government says that it has framed a bill after much consideration and it alone is responsible for it. One nominated member even went to the extent of suggesting that there is agitation only when the leaders want it. This is true and this is how it always happens. Many wonder how the Bill will affect the merchants. First of all this Bill bans all political activities. After this, it is immaterial whether any improvements are implemented. The police can arrest anyone who the Government thinks publishes seditious literature. You can be sentenced even if you prove that you had no seditious intention in publishing it, and you cannot appeal against the verdict! All popular representatives have opposed this Bill, but the Government is in no mood to pay any heed to us. But when the Government wanted Rs. 67½ crores, it had entrusted these very representatives with the task of collecting the amount. The Draft Bill has been referred to the Select Committee but it will not be much different when it is referred back. This is why we have to mobilize and, as the nominated members have implied, organise ourselves under the leaders.

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36th CONGRESS SESSION, AHMEDABAD

The 36th session of the Indian National Congress was held at Ahmedabad, with Sardar Patel as the President of the Reception Committee. The session was scheduled to be presided over by Deshbandhu C. R. Das, but as he was prevented by the Government from attending the session, a Nationalist Muslim leader, Hakimji Ajmal Khan, presided over the deliberations.

If we have to learn anything from the experiences of the year about to end, it is that leaders are only those who serve the people. Today many learned Hindus and Muslims are enjoying their well-deserved rest in jails. They have served us nay they have suffered for us....

We had hoped that our dreams of freedom will become realities soon, and we have made arrangements for the session as though freedom has already been achieved. But freedom is still very far. The Almighty has decided to give us privations so that we may be worthy to receive the present of freedom. We have regarded the physical assaults on our workers, the unwarranted searches, the breaking open of our offices and branches, as signs of the approaching freedom and have not altered the original programme in any way to soothe the injustices perpetrated on our Muslim and Punjabi brethren.

Our policy has always been to combine non-violence with the programme of constructive non-co-operation. We have decided to quit the Government machinery which, instead of basing itself on popular opinion, seeks to suppress it. We do not want to be in any way associated with the injustices of this Government. I sincerely say that we have always tried to adhere to non-violence; we have tried to rectify our other drawbacks. One sign of this is the Hindu-Muslim unity. We, who have distrusted each other for centuries, who have regarded each other as religious enemies, have begun to treat each other with affection. I may proudly declare that this is no temporary development, but one which is based on national interests. In the same way, we have developed closer ties with the Parsi, the Christian and other communities.

We have tried to maintain friendly relations with those who differ from us. We have seen that tolerance is the soul of non-violence. I

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news from every village must reach the taluka headquarters daily and punctually, and every instruction from the headquarters must promptly be obeyed. Discipline and organization mean half the battle. Government have at the most one Patel and one Talati to every village. For us every adult in the village must be a volunteer.

BE FEARLESS

I see that these 15 days have taught you to cast off fear from your hearts. You are, however, not completely free from it. Some traces of fear are still visible. Shake it off. Why need you fear? If anything, the Government has cause to fear. No civilized Government can govern without the consent of the governed. At the present moment they govern because your eyes are blind-folded, you are deluded into the belief that they are keeping you in peace and prosperity. It is not a reign of peace but a reign of fear. You have lost the capacity of righteous indignation against wrong. The absence of it is cowardice. I go about in your villages at the dead of night sometimes without even once being asked, "Halt"! Who goes there?" In these villages not a dog barks and not a buffalo flourishes its horns at a stranger. It is your aquiescence that has been your undoing. I want to inoculate you with fearlessness. I want to galvanize you into life. I miss in your eyes the flash of indignation against wrong.

It is not for you to give vent to wrath. Your pledge restricts you to non-violence and non-violence excludes anger. The defection of these unfortunate brethren should serve to stiffen your resolve and to warn you for the future. You must not be angry with these two friends who fell a prey to the official machinations. They deserve your pity rather than anger.

You fear that you will be called upon to assist in a Japti. Shake off that fear. You are men, you are not *dublas*. Spurn that appellation of degradation. *Dubla* means weak and cowardly. Weak and cowardly are they who would exact labour from you. You are strong enough to labour in the fields, strong enough to carry burdens for yourselves and for others; how can you be called weak? I am told that a Patel from a neighbouring village was threatened by the Mahalkari that he will have to carry attached property, if he failed to find men to do so. The Patel should not have swallowed the insult. He should have said: "It is none of my business. The men in charge refuse to do the dirty work. And so do I. You enjoy a high salary, sir. Rather than ask us to do the dirty job, why not do it yourself.

BANISH SLAVERY

Sisters, I do not like those signs of slavery on your hands and feet. Your heavy brass ornaments accumulate a lot of dirt, produce all

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sorts of skin diseases and interfere with your free movement. You must shed them. Look at those clean clad happy girls of your own community sitting opposite, singing satyagraha songs. Would you not love to look like them? They bathe every day and wash their clothes. They spin and have their own clothes. I am glad you understand the difference. Now that you have joined this movement you must be proper soldiers. These foreign clothes ill become soldiers. You have strong hands and feet like those Khadi-clad girls. Why should you not have wheels from the Ashram and start spinning? Within a few days you can have enough for your clothes. And you may not touch drink. Upto now you have remained aloof, not heeding our advice. But now that you have joined the movement, you ought to have the necessary fitness by abstaining from drink.

PEASANTS AND PARASITES

If any one is fit to walk with his head erect on this earth, it is the peasant. He is the producer, the others are parasites. But what a sorry plight he has been reduced to! The whole world depends on you two, the agriculturist and the labourer, and yet you are the worst abused people on earth. I am grieved at the woeful state of helplessness to which you have been reduced. You shudder at the sight of a worthless Government peon, who can compel you to do his bidding. The Government taxes you according to its sweet will, and you have no voice in it. There is a soil tax and a water tax, a special irrigation tax and a special subsoil water tax; even the improvements you make at your cost and by your labour are taxed. You toil in the fields even as your own bullocks do from morning till evening, in biting cold, in scorching heat and drenching rain. You grapple with scorpions and wade through mud and raise a crop of rice to feed yourselves and your children. But even that rice must be taxed. Why are you so fear-stricken? Why are you so inarticulate? I feel deeply ashamed and humiliated at your plight. I shall feel myself blessed and all my labours fulfilled when I see you come into your own and walk erect like men.

Where is another so honest as a peasant, so free from bad habits and vices, so guileless, so God fearing, living on the sweat of his brow? Why should such a man fear any mortal man? A seeming contradiction, is it not? A man who is so pure and guileless cannot but be fearless.

PRINCIPLES OF SATYAGRAHA

It is a struggle based essentially on truth and non-violence; we must not do anything in resentment or anger. It is a sign of weakness. Our strength lies in cheerfully going through all sufferings that may be imposed on us. I can understand your refusing to assist the officers in Japti work. In fact it is your duty to do so, but do not refuse them

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the ordinary amenities of life. They must get whatever they want at market rates.

Go on strengthening your caste organisation. No one can have anything to say against it. These handful of men, who come over here from a land 6,000 miles away, rule over us because they have a caste organisation of their own. Their close corporation? Their corporation always relying on brute force has as its object the exploitation of the weak; ours has the only object of self-protection.

Government wants disturbance, wants to provoke us into violence. Drums and conches have nothing to do with the question of revenue. Let us not quarrel with their notifications, they do not harm us, they cannot affect the issue. Refuse to be embarrassed, if they try to provoke you. Refuse to submit if they try to crush you. The Government has lost its balance. "The Iron can afford to fling thousands of sparks, not so the hammer. If the hammer got hot it would burn up its own handle." A Government may wax as red-hot as it likes. The people (the hammer) cannot afford to do so, and if they retain their equanimity, they are bound to cool the Government and beat it into submission and shape.

The Government is trying its level best to spread as much poison in the taluka as possible through our own men. These men are ours, but beware of them like thieves in the night, they are trying to create breaches in our ranks. They are always on the lookout for our weaknesses, they flourish on them. Don't go within miles of them.... And even if a handful from amongst you fall victim to their wiles, don't be alarmed, don't flinch from your resolve. Even a victorious army has its casualty list, and has its deserters. If blacklegs are discovered, understand that it is so much dirt and stain washed away. Challenge the Government to take up your land and carry it, if they can, to England. Challenge them to surround the taluka with machine guns and aeroplanes. We have no armed force, but we have better and a purer force to pit against it— the force of truth, the force of our allegiance to our pledge.

Let them capture your buffaloes and other property. They cannot capture your souls. The infatuation for possessions is no good. How much land does a man require? The Musalman not more than two cubits and a half and Hindus that much only for a couple of hours. God is always with the right. (*At a certain stage in the speech the bellowing of the buffaloes impounded in the thana closeby was heard, and that gave the Sardar an opportunity for his sardonic humour.*) "Reporters, please note it down, — the buffaloes are speaking. The Government thought that drums would subvert Government established by law. These buffaloes, I tell you, are as bad as the drums. (*Still louder*

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bellowing). They are bellowing themselves hoarse to tell you if you do not know yet that right and justice have vanished from the Empire.

If there are any amongst you who feel any misgivings, or are afraid of the fire of repression, they had better go on a piligrimage or betake themselves to some hill station or breezy seaside place while there is yet time. For let there be no mistake in the matter. As agriculturists you know, that the dark rain-laden clouds, so welcome to your sight, come only after you have passed through the parching heat of the summer months of Chaitra and Vaishakha, and descend only after we have had terrific storms and lightning and peals of thunder which send the skies. Similarly Government is not going to do you justice until it has put you through the fire. It will try to cajole you, if you are willing to be cajoled. But if you resist its advances, it has its iron fist ready with which to descend upon you. Similarly you have to realise on your part that it is not merely yourselves that you represent but you hold in your hands the honour of the whole of India.

What is this fear of this 'will-o'-the-wisp'? 'What is this Government? Has any one seen it? I have never seen it. Does Government mean the Mamlatdar or the Talati, or the Patel, or is it a combination of these all? There is no individual called the sarkar. Why then should we magnify individuals and make sarkars of them? Here is his definition of an 'amaldar' (official): 'He who stands by the side of the ryot in the hour of his need is an amaldar, all the rest are hawaldars (petty peons).'

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PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, was the President of the 46th Indian National Congress held in Karachi in 1931. At the outset he condoled the deaths of Pandit Motilal Nehru, Maulana Mohammed Ali and "those nameless heroes who, unknown to fame and never caring for it, laid down their lives in the non-violent struggle during the past 12 months".

You have called a simple farmer to the highest office, to which any Indian can aspire. I am conscious that your choice of me as first servant is not so much for what little I might have done, but it is the recognition of the amazing sacrifice made by Gujarat for the honour. But in truth every Province did its utmost during the year of the greatest national awakening that we have known in modern times.

NON-VIOLENCE—NO IDLE DREAM

Though there have been aberrations, it is a fact beyond challenge that India has given a singular proof to the world that mass non-violence is no longer the idle dream of a visionary or a mere human longing. It is a solid fact capable of infinite possiblities for humanity, which is groaning for want of faith, beneath the weight of violence of which it has almost made a fetish. The greatest proof that our movement was non-violent lies in the fact that the peasants falsified the fears of our worst sceptics. They were described as very difficult to organise for non-violent action and it is they who stood the test with a bravery and an endurance that was beyond all expectation. Women and children too contributed their great share in the fight. They responded to the call by instinct and played a part which we are too near the even adequately to measure. Looked at in the light of non-violence our struggle is a world struggle and it is a matter of great satisfaction that the nations of the earth, especially the United States of America, have heartened us by their sympathy.

The recent settlement however renders it unnecessary to dwell at greater length upon this heroic period in the national life. Your Working Committee has entered into the Settlement in anticipation of your approval. You are now invited formally to endorse it. The Committee having accepted it as your accredited representatives, it is not, I take it,

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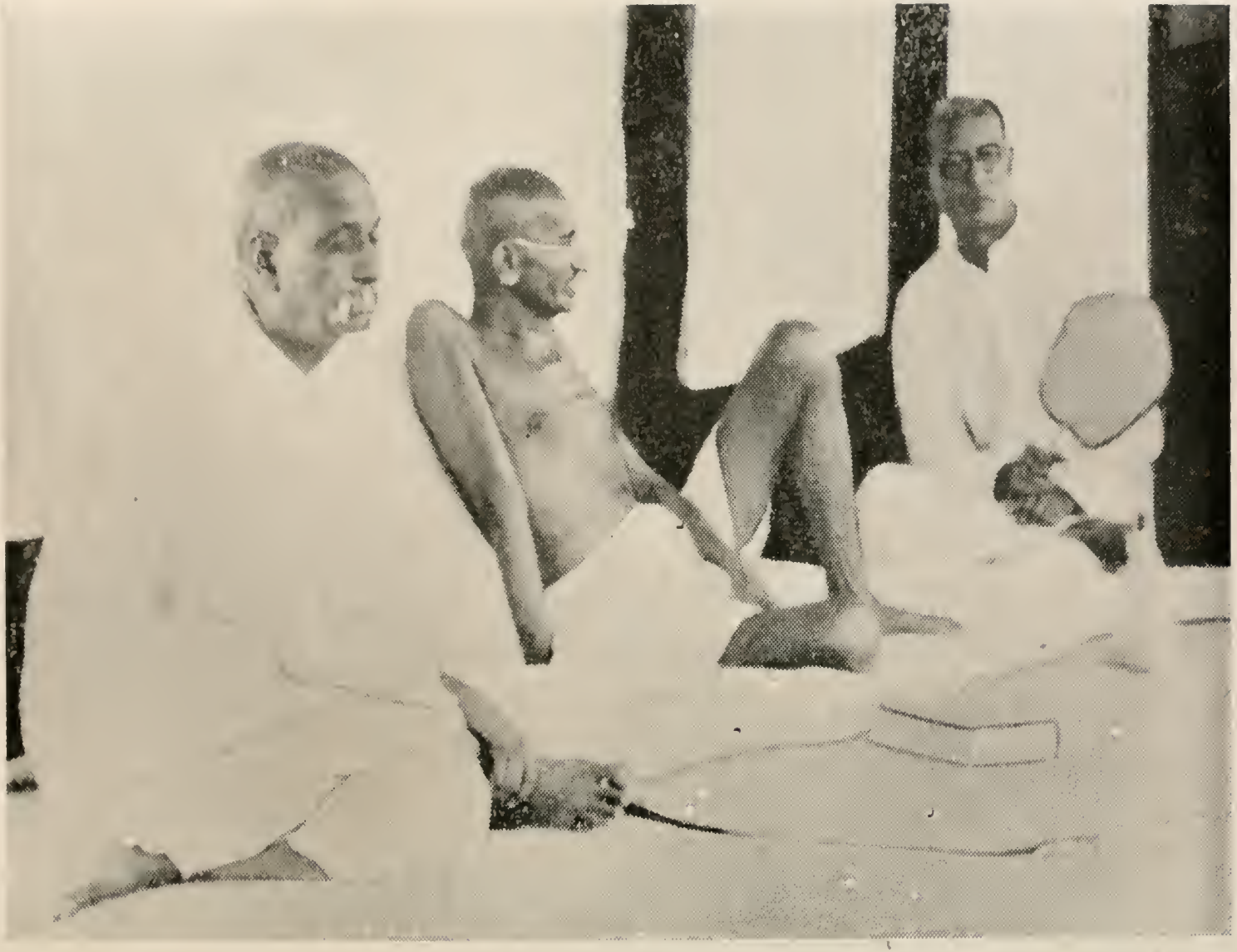

Sardar Patel with Gandhiji: To the extreme right is Mahadeobhai Desai.

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open to you to repudiate it; but it is open to you to pass a vote of no-confidence in the present executive and appoint better agents. But whilst it is but meet that I should draw your attention to the constitutional position, I have no doubt whatsoever that you will endorse the settlement which I hold to be perfectly honourable for both the parties. Had we not accepted the settlement we should have put ourselves in the wrong and thereby undone the effect of the sufferings of the past year. Indeed we had always claimed, as Satyagrahis must claim, to be ready and eager for peace. When therefore, the way seemed to be open for peace, we took it. In view of the clear demand on the part of the British Indian Delegation at the Round Table Conference for full responsibility, and in view of the British parties having accepted the position and in view of the appeal made to the Congress by the Premier, the Viceroy and many of our distinguished countrymen, the Working Committee thought that if an honourable truce could be arranged and if it was open to the Congress to press without any reservation for what is considered to be the best for the country, the Congress should, if invited, take part in the Conference and attempt to reach an agreed solution of the constitutional issue. If we failed in the attempt and there was no way open but that of suffering, then it was a privilege of which no power on earth could deprive us.

Under the constitution clause of the settlement it is open to us to press for Purna Swaraj, to ask for complete control over our defence forces, foreign affairs, finance, fiscal policy and the like. There would be safe-guards or reservations, or as the late Pandit Motilalji called them, adjustments, conceived in our own interest. When power passes from one to the other by agreement there are always safeguards in the interest of the party in need of reparation or help. The continued exploitation of India for close on two centuries renders it necessary for us to seek assistance in several respects from external sources. Thus we would need military skill and there is no reason why we may not receive English assistance in this direction. I have taken only one telling illustration out of others that may be suggested.

The defence safeguard may therefore be the retention of British Officers, or, as some would say, even privates, but we could never let our defence be controlled by the British. We must have full power to make mistakes. We may gratefully receive British advice, never dictation.

BRITISH ARMY OF OCCUPATION

The fact is that the British army in India is an army of occupation. Defence is a misnomer. Frankly, the army is for defending British interests and British men and women against any internal uprising. I cannot recall a single instance in which the Indian army was required for

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the protection of India to fight a foreign power. True, there have been expeditions on the Frontier, wars with Afghanistan. British historians have taught us that they were wars more of agression rather than of defence. We must not therefore be frightened by the bogey of foreign designs upon India. In my opinion if we need an army, we certainly do not need the octopus we are daily bleeeding to support. If the Congress has its way, the army will suffer immediate reduction to its reasonable proportion.

PURNA SWARAJ—OUR GOAL

Again we have been taught to think that our civil administration will be inefficient and corrupt if we give up the able assistance of highly paid British civilians. The administrative powers that the Congress has exhibited during recent years and the fact of its having on an ever-increasing scale drawn to its assistance some of the best young men and women either without pay or on a mere pittance should sufficiently dispose of the fear of corruption or inefficiency. It would be too great a strain upon our poor purse to have to pay, by way of insurance against corruption, a premium out of all proportion to the highest possible estimate of corruption that may ever take place. It will therefore be necessary if India is to come to her own, to demand a heavy reduction in the Civil Service expenditure and thus a consequent reduction in the emoluments of the Civil Service.

We have claimed that many of the charges laid upon India are wholly unjust. We have never suggested repudiation of a single obligation, but we have asked and must continue to ask for an impartial investigation into the debits against us wherever we cannot agree.

There is no receding from the Lahore resolution of complete Independence. This independence does not mean, was not intended to mean, a churlish refusal to associate with British or any other power. Independence therefore does not exclude the possibility of equal partnership for mutual benefit and dissolvable at the will of either party. If India is to reach her independence through consultation and agreement, it is reasonable to suppose that there is a strong body of opinion in the country to the effect that before partnership could possibly be conceived there must be a period of complete dissociation. I do not belong to that school. It is, as I think, a sign of weakness and of disbelief in human nature.

FEDERATION OF INDIA

Federation is a fascinating idea. But it introduces new embarrassments. Princes will not listen to severence? Is it severence of British connection. But if they will come in the true spirit it will be a great gain. Their association must not be to impede the progress of democracy. I hope therefore that they will not take up an

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uncompromising attitude that may be wholly inconsistent with the spirit of freedom. I wish they would, without any pressure, give us an earnest of their desire to march abreast of the time-spirit. Surely the fundamental rights of their subjects should be guaranteed as of the rest of the inhabitants of India. All the inhabitants of Federated India should enjoy some common elementary rights. And if there are rights, there must be a common court to give relief from any encroachment upon them. Nor can it be too much to expect that the subjects of the states should be to an extent directly represented on the federal legislature.

COMMUNAL UNITY ESSENTIAL

But before all else comes the question of Hindu Muslim or rather communal unity. The position of the Congress was defined at Lahore. Let me recite the resolution here :

In view of the lapse of the Nehru Report it is unnecessary to declare the policy of the Congress regarding communal questions, the Congress believing that in an independent India, communal questions can only be solved on strictly national lines. But as the Sikhs, in particular and Muslims and other minorities in general had expressed dissatisfaction over the solution of the communal question proposed in the Nehru Report, the Congress assures the Sikhs, Muslims and other minorities that no solution thereof in any future constitution, can be acceptable to the Congress that does not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned.

Therefore, the Congress, can be no party to any constitution which does not contain a solution of the Communal question that is not designed to satisfy the respective parties. As a Hindu, I adopt my predecessor's formula and present the minorities, with a Swadeshi fountain-pen and paper and let them write out their demands. And, I should endorse them. I know, that it is the quickest method. But it requires courage on the part of the Hindus. What we want is a heart unity, not parched-up paper-unity that will break under the slightest strain. That unity can only come when the majority takes courage in both the hands and is prepared to change places with the minority. This would be the highest wisdom. Whether the unity is reached that way or any other, it is becoming plainer day after day that it is useless to attend any conference unless that unity is achieved. ' The Conference, can give us an agreement between the British and us, it can perhaps help us to come nearer to the Princes; but it can never enable us to achieve unity. That must be hammered into shape by ourselves. The Congress must leave no stone unturned to realise this much-desired end.

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CALL TO PEOPLE

It must be clear to all of us that the Congress can be useful for attaining Purna Swaraj only to the extent that it has gained power. The past twelve months have undoubtedly given it a power which he who runs may see. But it is not enough and can be easily frittered away by hasty action, or by pride. He is a spendthrift who lives on his capital. We must therefore add to our power. One way to do so is on our part to fulfil to the letter the conditions of the settlement. The other is to consolidate our gains. I therefore propose to devote a few lines to this part of our activity.

We have made much headway in the matter of the boycott of foreign cloth. It is a right as well as a duty. Without it, the impoverished millions of India must continue to starve. For if cheap foreign cloth continues to be dumped down in the villages of India, the Charka cannot flourish. Foreign cloth must therefore be banished from the land. It is therefore want of easy employment in their own villages that leads to starvation. Incessant propaganda is necessary to rid the country of chronic unemployment, which has become second nature with our peasantry. The best propaganda is to do sacrificial spinning ourselves and wear khaddar (Khadi). The All-India Spinners' Association has done much valuable work. But it is for the Congress to create this spinning and the khaddar atmosphere. This to my mind is the best and the most effective propaganda of Boycott.

It has been suggested that the argument against foreign cloth applies to indigenous mill cloth. But our mills do not produce all the cloth we need. For years to come they may continue to supply the balance that may be required over and above hand-spun cloth. But even our mills may prove a hindrance, if they compete with khaddar or resort to questionable devices to push their wares. Fortunately many mills are patriotically working in co-operation with the Congress and are beginning to appreciate the virtue of khaddar in the interest of the toiling millions. But I can certainly say that if our mills unpatriotically hurt khaddar instead of complimenting it, they must face an opposition somewhat similar to that against foreign cloth.

The foreign cloth merchants will do well to bear the Congress attitude in mind in this regard. Foreign cloth boycott is a permanent thing, not conceived as a political but as an economic and social measure of permanent value for the welfare of the masses. These merchants, will do well to give up their foreign cloth trade. Everything possible is being done to help them but some very big sacrifice on their part is essential.

English, Japanese and other foreign merchants will, I hope, not misunderstand the Congress attitude. If they will help India, they will

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TO CONGRESS M. L. A.'s.

The following speech was made by the Sardar at a meeting of the Congress members of the Bombay Legislative Assembly, on June 16, 1940, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee. Only a few days earlier, the Congress Ministries in the provinces had resigned as a protest against the despatching of Indian troops overseas without obtaining the consent of the Central Assembly.

We (party) should meet, if necessary, every month in order to discuss our problems. No one should go away with the idea that in the coming months we would be doing nothing, while the British Government would be allowed to carry on the administration as it likes. In the very nature of things, British Imperialism cannot last long and the burden of administering our own country must fall on our own shoulders whether we are ready or not.

The Congress was not driven out of office; it retired by itself. It is no use praying to God for the resignation of Ministries; the credit, if any, is due to the Congress itself. We had given a pledge to our own electorates not to stick to office if by so doing the interests of the country suffer. Then a time came when the Congress felt that it could not continue in office any longer, without detriment to the cause for which it existed and you may rest assured that the Congress is not going back to office until it can wield the real power of governance in a free India.

When the war started, Gandhiji declared his sympathy with Britain. Pledged as we were to freedom, we could not have any sympathy for Nazism, though it must be confessed that it was the humiliating treaty of Versailles, which the Britishers and their friends imposed upon Germany that was responsible for Nazism. However, Gandhiji made it clear that the Congress did not agree with him on this question. The Congress had bitter memories of the Great War.

With this knowledge it is but natural that the Congress should ask the British Government whether it was prepared to declare that India would be free at the end of the war. The demand was natural and proper. The reply was that we were not united, that minorities need

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to be protected and that the Princes had to be placated. How could we have continued in office when such was the attitude of the British Government?

There can be no compromise. So long as we have a third party in our midst, there cannot be a compromise between the minorities and the Congress.

We have had ample experience in the past. The British statesmen, in order to win the sympathy of the world, now go on repeating that they are willing to give freedom to India when India is united.

"It is difficult to understand the position of the League. What does it want? The Congress has made friendly approaches repeatedly, but every time it has met with a rebuff. The League goes on rejecting whatever is offered, without formulating its own demands. The Anglo-Indian papers, which, for the moment, appear to represent the League's point of view, urge the formation of Coalition Ministries. The League has not made it clear whether it wants them and on what terms. Congress is anxious to make friends, but with who? That is the question. There cannot be a friendship unless there is a willing mind on both sides.

The condition, precedent to any negotiations, which Mr. Jinnah makes is that the Congress should accept the League as the sole representative of the Muslims in India. To concede the claim of Mr. Jinnah is for the Congress to commit suicide in the hope of being reborn a Hindu organisation. Even if we are a handful, we will not allow the Congress to commit political hara-kiri.

If the resignation of Ministries has brought real deliverance, it is to the Ministers, who had their daily worries. Our internal differences have disappeared. The Congress has again accepted the leadership of Gandhiji, the only man who can lead us to victory. He is the miracle worker. Under his guidance we must now work. If there are any among Congressmen who are impatient about his methods, they are welcome to try out their own experiments. But they will fail; success will depend only upon loyally following the lead of Gandhiji."

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HISTORIC STRUGGLE

The speech given below was made by the Sardar on August 7, 1942, two days before the historic "Quit India" resolution was passed by the Congress Working Committee..... The countries of South-East Asia were falling like nine-pin's to the Japanese hordes; the war-drums were approaching the borders of India. The British Government, in a desperate attempt to win the support of the Congress leaders, had sent the late Sir Stafford Cripps to India, but his efforts had failed.

During recent weeks many people have cultivated a sudden friendship for India. They have begun to take interest in Indian question although they never had anything to do with it all their lives. Some hold out threats and draw lurid pictures of the sufferings we may have to encounter; some would like to impress upon us what an injury our move would inflict upon allied war effort. I say, how am I to reply to all these friendly and unfriendly criticism gratuitously being offered. We have no press; we have no radio. Government have put strict censorship everywhere. Whatever news or views they choose to allow to go out of this country can alone reach the outside world. How are they going to know our agony?

The Government tells all the world outside that Congress is a clique; they are a handful of agitators; they have no influence whatsoever with the vast masses of Indian people; 90 millions of Muslims, 50 millions of Harijans, 70 millions of Indian States population are not with the Congress. The Radicals are not with them, the Democrats are not with them; nor are the Communists with them. I ask if nobody is with us, why worry about us so much? Again, if these people are not with us, the British authority in India certainly is, and this is enough for our purpose. We have to settle our accounts with them before every one else.

If Britain wants to delude herself and delude the world that they can carry on and conduct this war to victory without the hearty co-operation of 400 millions of Indians, she is bound to be disillusioned in the end. Neither India, nor the world outside is so gullible as to swallow all the misleading campaign through the press and the radio broadcasting on the part of Britain.

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For three years we held our patience. Gandhiji continuously spoke and wrote about non-embarrassment to Britain in her war efforts. But even his proverbial patience has, at last exhausted itself. The war is knocking at our doors. The Britishers claim that they have made every arrangement for defending India. But do we not know that they said the same about Burma, about Malaya? Without the hearty co-operation of Indians, it is impossible to defend India. In spite of Britain's protestations and her efforts, Burma was swallowed by Japan. We do not propose to allow our country to the same fate. That is why we are now out to act irrespective of all prudential consideration. Singapore they tom-tomed all the world over as the most invulnerable outpost. It was impregnable. Millions upon millions of pounds were poured over this construction. Mr. Amery boasted day in and day out about its invulnerability. But we all say that it crashed like a house of cards. Its fall was swifter than any other out-posts. Mr. Amery then began to tell the world that in Singapore no defence preparations were made on Malaya side. The Government had a compunction for taxing the poor Malaya population for a double defence, but that Malaya was not so important after all and in Burma they would smash the Japanese. Now Burma too has slipped out of their hands and the enemy is knocking on the Indian borders. Under these conditions, if Britain cannot show sufficient confidence in her own self, how are we to trust her capacity?

So if the Britishers are similarly beaten in India by Japan, it would be a case of King Log for King Stork and our slavery would remain. It is for this reason that we have now decided to stand and act as freemen.

The Congress has taught us to call a spade a spade, and we speak out our minds without reservation. But it is obvious that it is the Government of India who are playing the role of real friends of the Japanese. We are being promised complete freedom at the conclusion of the war. But are you sure, you would be there to bestow freedom upon us at that time? Where is the guarantee that you would not be so disabled as to render any such thing impossible? If India slips into the hands of others at the end of the war, where will you be to come forward and grant us our freedom? Where shall we go to search Mr. Churchill then. And assuming that you win, where is the guarantee, I ask again, that you who are so reluctant to part with power when red-ruin is staring you straight in the face to-day, where is the guarantee I ask that you will be generous and brave and honourable after victory is won? That is not your tradition at least. How can we forget the fate which befell the poor Prof. Woodrow Wilson at the end of the last world war? And how Lloyd George floored him? I tell you, nobody trusts the British statesmen and their promises to-day. You cannot show a single act of good grace on their part throughout their history.

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When Cripps' proposals came our people felt there may be some material in it to find a solution. But like Pandora's Box, nothing but sinister schemes to divide India and to perpetuate her divisions came out of it. Our communal differences, our internal quarrels were made an excuse against handing over power to us. Were there no quarrels in Burma? Were there no differences? Then why did you leave it? You never tarried there even for a while disputing on the question as to whom you were to hand over Burma. You left her to her fate and ran for life leaving her in the lurch—leaving all your imperial obligations and the rest to take care of themselves! The Governor of Burma now boasts in London that they left Burma only after reducing everything to dust as a result of scorch-earth policy, that not a single brick was left intact in any Burma town. So you promise the same thing in India if a like emergency arises? Who is going to lose and suffer more in that event? Pray! You the runaways or we the sons of the soil? You are dubbing the new Burma Government put up by the Japanese as a puppet Government—a quisling Government. What else I ask, is the toy show you have put up at Delhi?

The Congress agreement is only one. India cannot sit idle at such a time of crisis, depending upon Britain for her defence. We simply do not trust her capacity to defend us without our co-operation. And we shan't co-operate save as free men. We must, therefore, prepare ourselves and for this, we must first have our own freedom. If that is inconvenient to you and if that exasperates you, we are sorry.

The number of friends in England who claim to be the friends of India are upset over our attitude. Major Attlee of the British Labour Party is one of them. To-day having come to power, he has gone more reactionary even than Mr. Churchill. A Socialist of Mr. Cripps' position also has turned an imperialist to-day and the Labour organ like the **"Daily Herald"** is upset over the Wardha Resolution and indulges in threats. I say, if there is any real goodwill towards India in the British or American public opinion, this, the present resolution, is going to be the test of it. But I may tell you that the amount of anger and resentment with which our present attitude is being received and criticised in those countries does not indicate, and make us doubtful, that any such goodwill exists in those countries. The fact is that Britain does not want to defend India for the sake of Indian people but wants to defend her in order to retain her as a bond-slave and as a precious possession.

We are accused of inviting Japanese by our present move. This is an abominable lie and calumny. No one in India wants Japanese here, but every Indian wants the Britisher to quit India. There is nothing wrong or improper in this. We offered to fight shoulder to shoulder on equal terms along with the Britishers, American, Chinese but that evidently does not suit Britain. Why not then say plainly that you want

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the **status quo?** Why all this talk of free India as an act of grace, and negotiations and mutual adjustments? We do not seek safety as England's indentured slaves hereafter. That shall never be. Those in England who claim to be India's friends have to prove their **bona fides** and their sincerity to-day.

Now Sir Stafford Cripps misrepresents to America India's stand and wants America's help in suppressing the Indian movement. What a shame? It you want America's help to fight even an unarmed people pledged to non-violence, what stand are you going to make against Axis powers? Even the name of the brave industrious China is dragged in. India should make up her quarrel with Britain in order that China may not be neglected in the midst of her life's peril. May I ask how did you come to cultivate this sudden solicitude for China? China is fighting Japan for the last five years. Who helped Japan but America? When Congress protested against Manchukuo atrocities, Mr. Amery described it on the floor of Parliament as an incident in Japan's imperial scheme. How could England herself an imperial power interfere, he said? Such was British attitude towards China! Russia too was out of the fray then. And who does not know Britain's attitude towards the Bolsheviks till the very moment of Russia throwing herself against the Axis. They talk of forgetting the past. But how do you expect us to forget what happened during the present war itself? Then again they talk of People's War, war in defence of democracies. It is evident that it is a People's War with Russia and China. It is a total war. But is it so with England? If so, what response has England made to all our demands, repeated from time to time, to declare their war aims. If really it is a war in defence of democracies all over the world, what prevents them from saying so in respect of India? But no. That cannot be. India must accept her rulers' war as her own and help it to victory without questioning why! Are not the freedom and civilisation in peril? When France fell she too was exhorted to fight and fight on. England even offered her a single nationhood for both the countries overnight. Implored her, entreated her for such a merging of fates. Nothing impeded such a process. No time was necessary to conclude such vast changes as welding of two nations so different in culture different in temperament. But in India how can you think of constitutional changes in the midst of a total war. How can you think of changing horses in mid-stream.

Mr. Churchill found time to go across the Atlantic to confer with President Roosevelt. They met somewhere to draw the Atlantic Charter. Somebody asked where was India? Mr. Churchill's reply was that India cannot have a mention there. The Atlantic Charter was made for European countries. India was a domestic question. It was a show-down also of American sympathy.

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Then a fresh treaty was concluded with Russia for twenty years. Poor Russia fighting alone and unaided for two years with her back to the wall signed a fresh treaty with Britain. Herself hard pressed she would not demand a declaration from Britain in respect of India's place. She too repeated, when asked, the same answer: "India was Britain's domestic question. Russia cannot interfere". We know what hell Russia has suffered at the hands of the Axis and is suffering to-day. We have no quarrel with her for trying to suit England with reference to India. But after all that she has been still fighting alone. Her allies cannot establish contact with her. When her own freedom is in jeopardy, what can we expect from her to do for us?

Now I will make a few observations regarding the coming struggle. Gandhiji has already warned you. We have fought many campaigns in the past. But I may tell you, the coming struggle would be very different. We see how Russia and China are fighting for their freedom; with what grim determination they suffer and die. Do not delude yourselves with thoughts of a settlement. You will be sadly mistaken. There is no jail-filling also this time. This is going to be a different struggle altogether. The resolution before you has not been framed with a light-heart. If you feel that things should remain safe, the trade and industry should carry on normally, that at the most we shall go to jails, rest there and read there and write thesis, if you have any such notions as regards the coming struggle, please do not pass this resolution. But if you feel that you have an occasion to fight and die for the freedom of your country, to face utter ruin, if you feel that in the face of every contingency you are determined to achieve complete independence of your country, then I say good-luck and God-speed to you. Also mind you. Whatever again may accrue from the struggle and through your efforts and sacrifices, you are not to expect anything for yourselves. Only the country as a whole shall gain. Then alone you may join the struggle. This is not a game of power politics.

Somebody in the British Parliament referred to one of my statements saying that Congress does not want power for itself. Only Britain must part with power. Give it to any group or groups in India. The questioner was told that mine was an individual statement. It was not by the Congress. But then the Congress President Maulana Saheb, himself repeated the same saying, "Hand over power to whomsoever you like provided they are Indians; hand it to the Muslim League. We shall settle amongst ourselves afterwards."

The Britishers talk always of having given peace to India. I say it is the peace of the graveyard. But India is no longer agreed to that status! The bubble of your omnipotence has burst. We now know, you cannot protect us; we must free ourselves, and defend ourselves. We also know that you are not likely to give us power with good grace. You shall leave here as you had to leave elsewhere.

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We have not to free ourselves through voilence. That is not our way. Our weapon is non-voilence. Whatever its merits, it is this weapon of non-violence which has raised us in the eyes of the world during the last 22 years. But it is not necessary for the coming struggle that non-violence is indispensable even in thought. It would be enough if we remain perfectly non-violent in action. Everyone asks what is the programme. In all our campaigns, Gandhiji has given us programmes at the proper time. This time too, he may give or he may not give a programme. He is there to guide us and to command us. We are not to reason why. We must carry out his commands.—Be they hot or be they soft, a soldier knows only to obey his Commander.

We are being threatened from all quarters. We know the methods of the Government. They will round up the leaders; round up all; they will issue Communiques and Ordinances. They have prepared many and kept them ready. There is little that is new in all this. They must have got most of the Ordinance from their old files. We may not mind them. We may only mind the responsibility that falls on us. So long as Gandhiji remains on the scene, we have only to do his bidding. We must obey orders strictly and be disciplined. We must follow implicitly every step that he announces for us. But supposing they arrest Gandhiji and round up all leaders at the very start? In that event, there will then be left no question of step by step. Then it would be the duty of every Indian, born in this country to acquit himself by putting forth his utmost effort for furthering the cause of our country's deliverance. We shall carry out one and all programmes, individually, collectively, simultaneously—in whatever way it strikes us within non-violence. We are being weighed in the scale of freedom. The whole world is watching us. All the programmes that we followed since 1919 may be included and many more collectively and simultaneously, in the course of the coming struggle. Every one of us shall feel and behave as a citizen of Free India. No source is to be left untapped; no weapon untried. This is going to be the opportunity of our life-time. The struggle must be short and swift. Japan is hovering on our borders. We have to be free with the least possible delay and prepare ourselves to face the Japanese.

There is no room left for any negotiations. Every one who goes from here shall carry this message. So long as Gandhiji remains in our midst, he is our sole Commander. But if he is arrested and imprisoned, then no one will be responsible for what happens in India. Britain alone will be responsible for whatever happens here. If anarchy comes that too will be Britain's responsibility. For if anarchy shall no longer arrest India's march to full freedom, there is no other alternative.

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LOOKING BACK

The Sardar was released in 1945 after three years' detention in the Ahmednagar Jail. Many things had happened in the world since his arrest: The ruinous war in Europe and Asia had ended, with the forces of democracy victorious. In England, a Labour Government with a new leadership had come to power. There was an unprecedented upsurge for freedom in all the countries of Asia.....

During the last three years India has witnessed many changes and the entire world also has undergone some transformation. You yourself bear witness to the happenings in this very city. We were in absolute dark when we were in gaol, but now we have learnt a little of the happenings during these years. When we were put under arrest, we were not even told of our destination. Threats were uttered that a trial will be arranged for us. The Viceroy that has retired now wrote to us that we would be made to stand a trial for the disturbances of 1942. We welcomed the opportunity for a twofold reason. We thought we would have an opportunity to prove before the world the justice of the nation and simultaneously we would expose the real culprits. But that Viceroy sailed off. Many Viceroys have come and gone but their strategy has mostly remained uniform. India has witnessed many Secretaries of State coming and going. We were told, 'Forget and Forgive,' when we were released. It was gently said that mistakes have occurred on both sides. We believed them and felt that there was some change in their attitude, for they never owned their mistakes in the past. We thought there is nothing wrong in starting with a clean slate. If bygones are to be bygones, then the curtain should be dropped on both sides. But if one side alone is to be partially covered, then we shall have to expose the other side ruthlessly.

In the unprecedented havoc wrought by the atomic bomb in Japan, entire cities have been obliterated—infants, adults, aged, live-stock and all. That is the picture of the western civilization in its fullest vulgarity. It may be said that Japan was given sufficient notice. Maybe Japan would reap the harvest that she has sown. But if these people are to pursue that path of destruction, there will be no go for the world but to remember Gandhiji. Because the other mad course is to lead the world to destruction. It is said that the Big Three would never abuse their might and would herald a new World Order. But let humanity

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remember their history, and none would be convinced of the Big Three's claims. Let the record of the Two Bigs be set aside, but we know the English. They say one thing and act otherwise.

Some wise man may argue that the Indian administration is conducted by Governors and Secretaries and other countless functionaries. My answer is that if they the British Government are eager to rule over 400 million people without any responsibility, and from such a distance then they must relieve themselves of that burden and hand over the reigns to those who are capable.

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is anarchy and chaos which will overwhelm great and small in a common ruin if we are unable to act together in the minimum of common tasks. Let not the future generation curse us for having had the opportunity but failed to turn it to our mutual advantage. Instead, let it be our proud privilege to leave a legacy of mutually beneficial relationship which would raise this Sacred Land to its proper place amongst the nations of the world and turn it into an abode of peace and prosperity.

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ON THE EVE OF INDEPENDENCE

On August 15, 1947—ninety years after the First War of Independence—India became free. The Labour Government of Britain under Clement Attlee, as distinct from the Labour Government under Ramsay MacDonald, fulfilled Britain's promise to grant India independence after the cessation of hostilities. But the price that had to be paid for freedom was great: India was divided into two nations, the Indian Union and Pakistan, and the Princes were made free to act as they chose. While the rest of India was celebrating the achievement of independence, a communal orgy was in progress in the Punjab. Here is the text of the text of the Sardar's Message on the occasion:

"Let us not forget in the joy of the hour, the stupendous responsibilities and obligations which freedom has brought within in its wake. Our primary duty is zealously to guard our freedom against dangers from without and from within. We have also to ensure that the humblest among us has the same stature as the tallest in the land, that labour gets its legitimate share of its product, that the toiling millions in villages obtain just return for the sweat of their brow, and that the State discharges adequately its elementary duty of feeding, clothing, housing, and educating every son and daughter of the motherland. It has now been given to us by Providence to fashion our country's destiny according to our cherished ideals and aspirations. If we fail the Motherland, the blame will not lie at others' door. Indeed, there are enormous difficulties and almost insuperable obstacles in our way, but it is for us to overcome them".

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NO RETALIATION

The speech given below was made by the Sardar at Amritsar on September 30, 1947. The sufferings that befell the Hindus in Pakistani Punjab in the days preceding and following independence were still fresh in people's minds and some interested parties were appealing to Hindus to mete out a similiar treatment to Muslims in India. The Sardar asked his listeners to remember the glorious traditions of their ancestors in the freedom struggle and declared that the problems besetting India cannot be solved by the physical extermination of Muslims.

I remember how it is in this very same city, Amritsar, I held discussions a few years ago for raising a suitable memorial to the martyrs of Jallianwala Bagh and how at Lahore for the first time we all—Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims—took the pledge of winning complete independence. In the blood-bath of Jallianwala Bagh had mixed the blood of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims.

I am grieved to think that things have come to such a pass that no Muslim can go about in Amritsar and no Hindu or Sikh can even think of living in Lahore. The erection of a memorial to Jallianwala Bagh martyrs has become a painful memory and the hard-won freedom has been followed by such unspeakable tragedies. This is a situation which has brought dishonour and disgrace to all of us and India which looked forward to raising her stature in the eyes of the world after the attainment of independence, has now to hang her head in shame.

Butchery of innocent and defenceless men, women and children does not behove brave men; it is the war of the jungle and the hall-mark of inhumanity and barbarity. There will be occasions and opportunities for all of you to show your zest for fight; one must seek for it one's ground and suitable time. It is now time not to be foolhardy or desperate but time to reflect calmly on your course of action.

We have won our freedom to make our country great and prosperous, not to destroy what little has been vouchsafed to us by our alien rulers. If we are not careful, we shall lose even our long-cherished freedom which we have secured after such suffering and so many struggles. You must remember that the lives of millions are at stake; they cannot be gambled away to enable us to satisfy any spirit of vengeance or

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retaliation. It is essential that you must maintain peace and break the vicious circle of attack and retaliation and counter-retaliation and see to it that the refugees have safe transit. Any obstacle in the way of refugee movement will only worsen the plight of our refugees who are fighting the elements, hunger, disease and maltreatment, to come to a land where they hope to find peace, shelter and opportunities to lead a peaceful and civilized existence. We should do nothing to shatter this hope which is probably the only thing that is sustaining them.

I am quite certain that India's interest lies in getting all her men and women across the border and sending out all Muslims from East Punjab. We can then settle down to the tremendous task of repairing the damage done and to make this land by our labours the same fruitful garden as our refugees have left behind.

I deprecate the demand for police and military aid which people are putting forward. Such a demand may benefit the weak but it does not suit the brave able-bodied men of the Punjab. They should organize themselves on the right lines. The safety and defence of the frontiers are the concern of the Government but at the same time people should organize themselves. The Government will give them arms and equipment if they know how to use them on the right lines.

I have come to you with a specific appeal and that is to pledge the safety of Muslim refugees crossing the city. It is hardly creditable to us that we do not realize wherein our good lies. Muslim evacuees are going under agreed arrangements of exchange of population. They should really need no protection but should be allowed to go in peace. Bitterness fed by years of propaganda of hate has gone too deep to allow any Muslim to remain in the East Punjab and any Hindu or Sikh to live in West Punjab. It is, therefore, in the interest of everyone that this exchange should be effected peacefully and smoothly. Any obstacles or hindrances will only worsen the plight of our refugees who are already performing prodigious feats of valour and endurance.

It does not become a brave people to perpetrate deeds of brutality on defenceless men, women and children. This is not dictated by any code of chivalry or honour. If others cast chivalry and honour to the winds it does not justify us in debasing ourselves. If we have to fight we must fight clean. Such a fight must await appropriate time and conditions and you must be wary in choosing your ground.

To fight against the refugees is no fight at all. No laws of humanity or war among honourable men permit the murder of people who have sought shelter and protection. Such misdeeds on the other side can be left to be tackled at a more opportune time...

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I appeal to you to act with prudence and foresight. You should allow free and unmolested passage to the Muslim refugees.

Let there be a truce for three months in which both sides can exchange their refugees. This sort of truce is permitted even by laws of war. Let us take the initiative in breaking this vicious circle of attacks and counter-attacks. They do good to nobody; they can only do a great deal of harm to us.

If you do not have faith in the Pakistan Government or its people, you can hold your hands for a week and see what happens. If they do not observe the truce in the right spirit, the world will know who the breakers of the laws of humanity are. We shall then have every justification for holding them to account.

Make way for the refugees with your own force of volunteers and let them deliver the refugees safely at the frontier. Let the whole world see that we mean well and we mean business and it is they who have evil intentions and evil designs.

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SINCERE SUPPORT FOR INDONESIA

In the days of the freedom struggle, India's leaders used to say that a free India will extend every possible help to the other countries of Asia to become free. The defeat of Japan had seen the birth of powerful nationalist movements in all countries occupied by Japan. Independent Governments had emerged in Burma, Indo-China and Indonesia. From October 12, 1947, the External Services Division of the All-India Radio started a news broadcast on Indonesia. In a message on the occasion, the Sardar referred to India's cultural links with Indonesia which date back to remote times.

India's link with Indonesia dates back to remote times. Indonesia, even to this day, enshrines some of the cultural relics of ages in which our contact with Indonesia was close and intimate. Centuries of alien rule could not sever these bonds of friendship and countries to come closer together. This service, therefore, creates no new bonds, but merely revives and rejuvenates the old ones. I have every confidence that this ethereal link will draw us closer together in the common and arduous tasks that await us.

After years of heroic struggle, India has attained her full independence. Indonesia is still in the grip of foreign rule and we, who have known the agony and anguish of slavery, naturally turn with a feeling and sympathetic heart to Indonesia in the valiant struggle, which she is waging to shake off the foreign yoke. India knows that there can be no real freedom for her so long as there are manacles round Indonesia's wrists. We, therefore, send to you, Indonesians, the most sincere assurance of our support in your struggle for emancipation.

We assure you that we approach this venture purely from a spirit of service. All-India Radio will broadcast to you news without bias and without selfish motive. The Indonesian service will foster peace and amity and will rediscover things of common interest to the two countries. No propaganda or tendentiousness shall taint it. These broadcasts shall be a symbol of the spirit of resurgence which pervades the people of Asia today. I wish the service god-speed.

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FORGET YOUR MUTUAL QUARRELS

I myself took part in many a fight with Rulers in the past. But I always told them that my struggle lay not with the Rulers, but those agents of alien power who were propping them up against popular demand and popular forces. But the days of vilifying Princes, calling them names and maligning them are gone. It is not only wasteful energy to concentrate on them, but also needless irritation and profitless undertaking. Our methods now have to be guided by a more friendly approach and in a spirit of understanding and goodwill. No Government anywhere in India can be carried on without popular support. I am sure the Princes themselves realize that their interests lie in taking the people with them. Why should we, therefore, pick quarrels or choose the path of ill-will and hostility?

I appeal to you to cultivate a proper sense of moral values. I ask you to do a little heart-searching. We can only advise you, but you can act on that advice only according to your capacity. If you are selfless workers, you will get your reward. But if you become involved in mutual jealousies and internecine quarrels, you can only do damage to the cause which you profess to uphold. When we achieved independence, it was with a view to carving out for India a place in the world polity and so raising the stature and the standard of living of the people. Instead, we find ourselves fully pre-occupied with the task of meeting the most gigantic problem of refugee relief that has ever faced man in human history.

Remember, if a hungry man dies of starvation, he dies without a stain on his honour. But one who steals to feed himself virtually suffers from living death. He has not followed the path of honour and glory, but that of shame and disgrace. If we want popular Government, we must build up popular support and strength. Princes want respect and reverence. They will gracefully yield to popular demands if they find that a sense of responsibility and popular support prompts the popular organizations. I, therefore, ask such organizations to work selflessly and in a spirit of public service and thereby earn not only the gratitude of the people but also the confidence of the Rulers and achieve the object which is neither inimical to the interests of the Princes, nor inconsistent with their responsibilities. For, after all, no Prince can afford to treat popular support with contumely, nor popular grievances with impunity.

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The Maharaja of Jaipur taking the oath of accession to Indian Union.

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INTEGRATION AND DEMOCRATIZATION

Democratization of the administration which has long been the keynote of Congress policy towards the States, has become a pressing problem since August 15th. The Princes themselves have in many cases begun to realise the spirit of the times and have been gradually introducing measures in accordance with that spirit. The progress has been in some States slow, in others it has been swift, but everywhere it has been sure.

It should be obvious to everyone, however, that even democracy and democratic institutions can function effciently only where the unit to which these are applied can subsist in a fairly autonomous existence. Where, on account of smallness of its size, isolation of its situation, the inseparable link with a neighbouring autonomous territory, be it a Province or a bigger State, in practically all economic matters of everyday life, the inadequacy of resources to open up its economic potentialities, the backwardness of its people and the sheer incapacity to shoulder a self-contained administration, a State is unable to afford a modern system of Government, both democratization and integration are clearly and unmistakably indicated.

In the world of today where distances are fast shrinking and masses are being gradually brought into touch with latest administrative amenities, it is impossible to postpone for a day longer than necessary the introduction of measures which would make the people realise that their progress is also proceeding at least on the lines of their neighbouring areas. Delays inevitably lead to discontent, which in its turn results in lawlessness; the use of force may for a time check the popular urge for reform but it can never succeed in eradicating it altogether.

At the same time I felt that their Rulers had acquired by heredity and history certain claims on the people which the latter must honour. Their dignities and privileges and their means of subsistence on a reasonable standard must be assured. I have always held to the belief that the future of the Princes lies in the service of their people and their country and not in the continued assertion of their autocracy. In conformity with these ideas, I felt that on release from an increasingly

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onerous and awkward responsibility, but at the same time with their personal position and that of the ruling family fully safeguarded, they would have opportunities of service which have hitherto been denied to them and which many of them are genuinely longing for and genuinely anxious to secure, and they would cease to be the targets of continuous bitter attacks and ill-will.

The settlement which we have reached is actuated by these motives, prompted by these considerations and governed by these principles. I have no doubt that it is in the best interests of the Rulers, the people and the country at large. I am particularly grateful to the Rulers of the States who showed a commendable appreciation of the realities of the situation and a benevolent regard for public good. To all of them, undoubtedly the decisions they have taken have involved considerable sacrifice of powers and fortune. They have accepted this sacrifice cheerfully and voluntarily in the interests of their people and the country at large. I am sure their people will react favourably to this generous response to public interests.

Throughout my discussions with the Rulers I was careful to emphasise that the solution which we suggested for the difficult problems with which we and they were equally faced was for them to accept or reject of their own free will. There was no compulsion save that of events and of the circumstances and peculiar problems of their States. I also told them that in offering this solution we were actuated by nothing but the friendliest disposition towards them and had nothing but the ultimate good of the Princes and their people at heart. I also maintained that their voluntary surrender of most of the powers that they wielded so far would increase and not reduce the prestige that they have enjoyed and would create in the hearts of their people a place of lasting affection and regard which would redound to their glory. I am very glad that they all responded to these sentiments and would ask the people of these States to play their own part and to extend to each one of them unfailing cordiality and unstinted goodwill.

In future, if the people of these States have any grievances, they can only be against the popular representatives and leaders who would be charged with their interests and welfare, and not against the Princes. These Princes have by their act of abnegation purchased in perpetuity their right to claim the devotion of their people. I am sure that very soon the Provincial Governments who would be acting for the Dominion Government in discharging administrative functions in these States, will turn their thoughts and energies to ameliorating the conditions of the people and to devising ways and means of associating representatives of States with the fashioning of administrative measures. Let them all realise the stakes involved—some 56,000 square miles of territory with

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a population of about 8 million, a gross revenue of about 2 crores and immense potentialities for the future. It is the undisputable right of the people in these territories to modern amenities of Government which should be the governing consideration in everything that we do for them. It will also be the duty of the people concerned to help and co-operate wholeheartedly with the respective Provincial administrations in this process of unification and amelioration, so that they may derive the full benefit of this great achievement.

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GOOD OUT OF EVIL

More than half a million people had gathered at the Calcutta Maidan on January 3, 1948 to hear the Sardar speak on the problems facing their infant democracy. The Sardar was on his way back from Shillong. In his speech, the Sardar discounted the talk of a theoratic state in India on the lines of Pakistan, and appealed to the workers not to participate in the strike planned for the next day. The strike was an utter failure.

You all know how immediately after attaining independence India was overtaken by serious difficulties which taxed the energies of Government and people alike. We all wanted independence and we have secured it. Our life's mission has been fulfilled. I have no doubt, Asia will follow suit. Burma is gaining its independence tomorrow. But the overall question remains whether we realise that we have won independence and whether we appreciate the full significance of the event. This raises the issues: how we should utilise the freedom which we have won after such heroic struggles and how we should prepare for the enjoyment of its fruits. It is in this connection that I want to place a few thoughts before you, for seldom do such occasions arise when we can open out our hearts to you.

I sympathise deeply with the people of Bengal in the afflictions which the seperation of East and West Bengal has brought about. We have all been deeply affected by it, but it is profitless now to go into the questions as to why we accepted it. Our main task is and should be to extract good out of evil.

There is no reason why despite partition there should be a wall of hostility between East and West Bengal. You have one language, a common culture, common traditions and a comman way of life. All these inevitably draw people together. This also in a wider sphere, applies to Pakistan and India.

Nevertheless, I cannot disguise the fact that the situation is full of dangerous possibilities. But danger does not indicate panic. Instead it calls forth alertness to ensure that nothing is done to incur blame or reproof. India, as it has been left after partition, is not a small country.

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A population of 30 crores provides an immense field for constructive work.

Even though we were overwhelmed by disturbances after the Independence Day, we have accomplished a great deal. We have carried out successfully and effectively separation of armed services, stores, both civil and military, and of many other large undertakings incidental to partition.

We have settled all this out of court. In addition, we have carried out an exchange of 40 to 50 lakhs of people on each side. Any Government in the world would have been overwhelmed by such tremendous responsibilities, but thank God, we have weathered the storm and turned the corner.

This, however, emphasises the necessity of cleaning our decks for further action and purifying the atmosphere so that the task of reconstruction and rehabilitation can be carried out in a peaceful atmosphere.

If you reflect on the condition of India today, you will realise how critical the position is. India is short of food and has to pay a heavy price for imports to make up the deficiency. If we have to digest freedom we have to have a strong army which involves considerable equipment for the three services, Army, Navy and Air Force. If we do not do it or cannot do it, independence cannot be long sustained.

This involves a strong industrial support without which our armed forces cannot accomplish much, but the fact remains that despite the spurt and impetus given by the war, India is still backward in industrial development. Financially, India has turned from a debtor to a creditor country, but unfortunately that credit cannot be untilised, and, on the whole, the position is worse than before.

For an all-out industrial effort which is necessary in order to promote India's industries, support from labour is indisputably necessary, but labour has fallen on evil days. Its organisers know only one thing and believe only in one method. That is to prop up their leadership by strikes.

They do not seem to realise that if they killed industries, labour itself would cease to exist. This does not mean, however, that labour should not get its reward. What labour is entitled to, must be settled and settled satisfactorily and peacefully. But for that, the correct method is not stoppage of work, nor sabotage, but arbitration. It is only then that Government can see to it that labour gets its just reward. If the

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leaders of labour continue to follow their present methods, nothing but disaster awaits the country. Let them look around for guidance. Other countries have advanced industrially. In America there is no labour problem. In England there is a Socialist Government but it does not have to use force or resort to firing. Labour responds to its calls patriotically.

It is in this context that we must look into the recent incident in which some people attempted to force the hands of the Government of West Bengal in regard to the Public Safety Bill. If they felt that the Government was not doing the right thing, they should have represented to the Working Committee or could have appealed to the people's vote but instead they resorted to coercion, and coercion of a worst type.

It is not the democratic way but the goondas' way of doing things, and I deprecate that in the city of Calcutta such a thing should have been perpetrated.

In another small State worse things have happened. When we secured the merger of Kharswan State as an interim measure, we decided to give its administration to the province of Orissa. An agitation grew up that it should merge into Bihar. We made it plain that we would look into this question impartially and come to a final decision. In the meantime, let Orissa administer it. What was the result? An agitation was organised and innocent people were misled into taking the law into their own hands. The result was that the police had to open fire and some lives were lost. Eberybody must regard it as a bad thing, but it is worthwhile reflecting as to why it happened.

It was merely because we have forgotten so quickly what we strove to imbibe during so many years of struggle, so much so that in two provinces where our own Governments are functioning, a small dispute as to which province this small state should go, gave rise to such unfortunate occurrences.

This is not the way we should function. Those who are not satisfied with the way things are going on, have got the opportunity to remove the Ministry and to take over the reins of office.

Whatever else may be said against the present Ministry in Bengal, there is at least one thing about which there is no dispute, that after many years, Bengal has secured a band of workers whose honesty and incorruptibility are not in question. I have no doubt they will learn by experience, but if any of you feel that you are better equipped, I have already told you how to secure the removal of the Ministry. But goondaism cannot and will not be allowed to prevail. I sincerely tell you that we cannot afford it when we have such delicate tasks to fulfil.

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The country is saved from fragmentation by the accession of States. Otherwise, Rajasthan would have been something worse than Pakistan. There is all round scarcity of consumer goods. The moral is plain. You should have patience so that these stupendous responsibilities could be satisfactorily discharged by the Central and Provincial Governments.

You have been slaves for 200 years. Now that your own men are in office, why can't you have patience for a few years? Instead, we have the sickening spectacle of a so-called token one-day strike by Labour in Bombay after their representatives had subscribed to three years of non-strike truce. And what for was this strike organized? Admittedly to show that leadership of Labour is with the organisers. This is sheer nonsense. Holidays with pay are always welcome to anyone. A strike of this kind, which does not involve loss of wages, cannot, therefore, show with whom the leadership lies. Calcutta has had a taste of a general strike once. I hope you have not forgotten its lesson and in all humility I ask you to avoid its repetition.

I have been blamed that I am a friend of Rajas, capitalists and zamindars, but I claim to be a friend of Labour and the poor as well. Since I have followed Gandhiji, I have resolved not to own any property and I have none. But like Gandhiji I want to make the capitalists also understand which way their true duty lies. I cannot succumb to the prevalent fashion to pose as leaders or to attempt to gain leadership by abusing Princes, capitalists etc., without rhyme or reason.

Many said some time ago that by bringing in Princes I had harmed the cause of the people, but they were not prepared for the merger of 40 states into a neighbouring province in two days; nor did they seem to realise the elementary fact that if Princes wish to exist, they cannot do so without the people.

Then these gentlemen say we want to establish a Mazdoor Raj. There can be no quarrel about it. In the United Kingdom, they too have a Labour Government in office, but it has not assumed office by following the path of strikes. They realise that strikes ultimately harm the interests of the people and of Labour itself. If Labour does not see in which direction its interest lies, nothing but harm will come to this country, and Labour itself would cease to exist. If they want to carry on Government, there are only two ways of doing that. One is the path laid out by Mahatma Gandhi. That is the establishment of Ram Raj in which there is complete peace, freedom from crime and coercion of any kind.

All of you can try to achieve it, but there is no doubt that you cannot get it overnight. The alternative to this method is a firm

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Government, backed by a strong army, strong navy and strong air force and strong police, but ultimately governed by the will of the people.

Under such a system the Government in office is entitled to the support of the people unless it follows a wrong path. Prafulla Babu* is a servant of the people. They can place before him all their grievances, for he is not inaccessible like foreigners. Bengal should be proud of its Ministry, its police and its public services. It should teach them how to be good public servants. Similarly the Ministry cannot act in an irresponsible manner. The Public Safety Bill is being attacked, because it is taken to be an encroachment on civil liberties of the Bill to harass their political opponents, they cannot remain in office for a day. If, therefore, anybody wants to attack Government on this plank, he is making a great mistake.

They also say that the new Ministry is behaving like its predecessors. Even if they did so, where was the objection? After all, they are responsible and responsive men. They cannot harm anyone without paying the penalty for it.

It is in these circumstances that the Ministry has thought fit, placing before it the interest of the province, to ask for special powers and they are entitled to get them. Democracy has just been born. Let it be on its firm feet before taking it to task for its working.

Calcutta is the largest city of India. Formerly it commanded the leadership of this country. It should do so even now. But it is not the old Calcutta which wielded the torch of leadership in the olden days. Nevertheless, there is one thing of which Calcutta can be proud. It has escaped the storm which affected other parts of India after partition. For if Calcutta had also given itself up to bestiality, the whole country would have been in flames. The spark which was lit on the 16th August, 1946, when Calcutta had the taste of a general strike and direct action has not yet died down.

We are not out of the wood. We have to take out Hindus and Sikhs from Sind, for despite all assurances of protection, they cannot remain there for a day. Those assurances are empty words. Everybody knows that from peon right up to the Governor, there is not a Hindu or Sikh in the services.

Authorities in Pakistan wish to compel people to stay. The present situation is thus fraught with difficulties. Only this morning I saw a long statement of Mr. Mohammed Zafrullah Khan in which he had brought in Junagadh along with Kashmir, but there is no parallel. In regard to Kashmir we say it is better to have an open fight than to have

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disguised warfare such as has been going on. It is for this reason that we have gone to the U.N.O. to have the issue finally settled.

But in Junagadh things have settled themselves without a fight. The Dewan had asked for our intervention and the Nawab fled. The 'Provisional Government' started from the Junagadh territory itself and did not get any support either from the Indian Dominion or from its population. There is, therefore, nothing common between Junagadh and Kashmir. But even then we have made it plain that a plebiscite should be the deciding factor in the Kashmir situation.

But how can any plebiscite be held when fighting is going on? If we have ultimately to save Kashmir by the sword, where is the scope for plebiscite? I should like to make one thing clear, that we shall not surrender an inch of Kashmir territory to anybody.

As regards the controversy of a secular versus Hindu State, there can be no serious talk of a Hindu State. But one fact is indisputable. There are 4½ crores of Muslims in India many of whom helped the creation of Pakistan. How can one believe that they will change overnight.

The Muslims say that they are loyal citizens and therefore why should anybody doubt their bona fides? To them, I would say: "Why do you ask us? Search your own conscience."

India only wishes to be left alone. I would tell Pakistan, "you have now got Pakistan. I wish you joy of it. It is only when your teeth are soured that you need come back to us. You want to make Pakistan a heaven on earth. We ourselves welcome it, for after all, we shall also benefit from it."

But the Pakistan authorities say that their enemies are conspiring to destroy Pakistan. I would say to them that the enemies of Pakistan are not outside Pakistan but inside. We treated Pakistan generously in the matter of division of assets, but at the same time we could not obviously tolerate even a pie to be used for making bullets to shoot at us. The settlement is a consent decree. The decree will be executed when the outstanding points are satisfactorily settled. This they represent as repudiation. If we wish to repudiate it, why should we have come to any settlement at all.

I would, therefore, earnestly plead that Pakistan authorities should reflect on the course which they have adopted. I can assure them that we have nothing but their good at heart and we create conditions in which both the Governments can settle down to their responsibilities and to the tasks of amelioration which demand urgent attention.

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The need of the hour, it is commonly agreed, is that India must produce more in order to exist as an independent country. India also has an opportunity of assuming the leadership of Asia, but this opportunity will be missed if we cannot set our own economy in order and advance our industries to such an extent as to be able to meet the requirements of deficit countries in Asia.

Let us not act like the monkey who failed to appreciate the worth of a jewel. We old men have fulfilled our life's mission but the young men have now to shoulder the burden. If they fail, India will perish and along with it Labour will also go the way of ruin.

I thank you all for the warmth of reception you have accorded me. I recognize this as symbolic of the loyalty which the Congress still commands. Despite the shock which partition has given to Bengal you all have stood firm in your support to the Congress. I would assure you that we all have suffered low along with you, but it is no use eating the fruit when it is still unripe. We shall not ask Pakistan to come back to us until it has realized its error. You should think of the future and past will take care of itself.

I can tell you this that if we had not accepted partition India would have fallen into bits. Now that we have been able to salvage a major part of India and have been able to build it up into an extensive single unit, let us make it powerful. If we become prospreous and powerful, I have no doubt that small bits of territory round India would themselves seek our shelter.

If young men behave with discipline and if we unite our ranks, we shall certainly achieve that destiny. The world is looking at us to see how we avail ourselves of our hard-won freedom. Let us not do anything which would make us hang our heads in shame. Instead, let us act in a manner which would not only rehabilitate the prestige and reputation which we have lost by the recent unfortunate events, but also enhance it, and carve out for India a glorious place in the comity of nations.

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PRODUCE AND DISTRIBUTE EQUITABLY

When Sardar Patel visited Calcutta in January 1948, Shri Badr'das Goenka, a prominent business magnate of the city, arranged a luncheon in his honour at the luxurious Calcutta Club. In a speech on the occasion, the Sardar reminded the gathering, composed predominantly of businessmen, of their duty to the country and to their own employees.

I am most grateful to you for the opportunity that you have given me of meeting you all and understanding your respective points of view. You know very well that I do not generally go to such functions; nor am I used to them. It is not our country's custom to have speeches at lunches or dinners, but we are still carrying on the old traditions, and I am, therefore, utilising this opportunity of placing before you a few thoughts on matters which are causing you some concern. Whatever I may say represents my own personal views and not those of the Government. It is only the Minister in charge of Industry and Supply who can make any authoritative pronouncement, but I do claim to know the mind of my Government and to that extent I may at places be saying things which are in accord with Government policy. I should like to say this at the outset that I am going to tell you what I do feel about matters. I am not given to changing my views because I form them after mature consideration and the fullest possible realization of the various pros and cons. My convictions are firm and based not on any theories but on experience and a practical approach to the many problems.

Shri Badridas Goenka has mentioned the Budget. It is profitless to think of the past. Nevertheless the world knows its history: how the Budget was prepared and why. The framer of the Budget has now gone to Pakistan. He very well knew that it would be not for him to face the music. You are also probably aware of my views and the whole history of the proceedings before the Legislature in relation to this Budget. When I ask you to bury the past and not to bother at all about it, I should also like to remind you that our Finance Minister belongs to your own class. He knows his own mind, is able, clever and efficient. We deliberately appointed him to create confidence in the industrial future of India, the confidence which had been rudely shaken

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by the last Budget. Our Commerce Minister is also an experienced industrialist. Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, the Minister for Industry and Supply, is not a Congressman, but an able, painstaking and conscientious public servant. I am quite certain that all these Ministers would like to secure your co-operation in making India industrially great. You will also see from this that the Cabinet represents the various sections of India's political life. All the Ministers are popular representatives. They represent you as much as they represent the poor. You shoul, therefore, purge yourselves of any impression that the Cabinet is in any way hostile to your interests. We all realise that no country can prosper without industry; nor can labour in the modern sense survive without industry. We have a vast country with enormous potentialities. We have to see how we all can function effectively in her interests. We have given you as first evidence of our bonafides the appointments to which I have already referred. It is now for you and all of us not to mar but to make our future. In building it, it is obvious that you have to destroy also. In the process of building our future, therefore, we may have to do away with some of the appendages of the past. But there is no reason why any of us should be frightened of destruction.

You have asked why we accepted partition. It is a long story, but you should be able to appeciate matters better because Calcutta had fasted the experience of the League Ministry. Businessmen thought of leaving the City, but I advised them to stay on because I was certain that no power on earth could take away Calcutta from India. Although, therefore, we all have to suffer the blow and shock of partition, if we are able to extract good out of evil I have no doubt that we shall eventually profit and not lose in the transaction. We have now to settle down to the task of reconstruction. In the last few months we have had to shoulder a burden that would have broken the back of any Government, but we have, I feel confident, been able to acquit ourselves creditably in dealing with this critical time. In the task ahead we have to take labour and capital with us. If we fail to do so, we are doomed to disappointment. I have no doubt whatsoever that the conflict between labour and capital, and may I say, also the Government at this stage would be nothing but ruinous to the country. We have just now finished one chapter of exploitation. We should see that we do not find ourselves entering into another chapter in which we are exploited by a different type of forces which nevertheless are destructive and even more dangerous because they are internal. We must remember that Socialism in England came after England had advanced considerably on the road to industrialisation. I am convinced that any promotion of a conflict between labour and capital at this stage would deal a disastrous blow to India's industrial future. But that does not mean that Government would submit to the exploitation of labour. It will secure for labour its just share by the only civilised method of doing so,

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namely, arbitration. Arbitration had shown the way in Ahmedabad. There is no reason why it should not be successful elsewhere. After all democracy can never rule by force. It can only rule by the consent of the people. That consent, if forced, can only have adverse reactions. You have also asked for a clarification of our policy regarding nationalisation. The policy of the Government of India in regard to nationalisation will take sometime to shape. The cry of nationalisation is being entered into merely to cause panic. If you get panicky, you fall into the trap. You should yourself realise that industry is to be established before it can be nationalised. India is yet industrially in an infant stage. In England they have a Labour Government but despite the fact that they are so much industrially advanced they are not going ahead with nationalisation at any rapid pace. The result is that the Labour Government does not have to shoot people in order to maintain industrial peace and keep up the pace of production. By joint efforts of labour and capital and Government, production is increased. On the other hand in India we seem to believe in the miracle that labour should produce less and get more money. The result is strikes which retard production. Less production means more misery and privations. We have got to break this vicious circle. Take for instance the coal industry. There is demand for more coal for industrial as well as domestic consumption. In order to encourage labour to produce more we gave generous terms, but labour was given instructions to slow down. As regards wagons—in the bottleneck of transport—both Railway and Iudustry have to join to get over this obstacle.

You have also referred to the question of control. We realised that in the prevailing circumstances control had to be removed, but none dared to take the step. We then felt we must have an impartial survey. A committee was appointed which recommended decontrol. But the representatives of the Services were against it. We then thought over the matter afresh and came to the decision that controls must ultimately go. If transport is such a bottleneck, as you say it is, I would advise the Minister to have a similar enquiry by a Board, but I can assure you that whatever can be done to mend matters will be done both in this and other matters. I wish also to assure you that Government knows that it must take you with it if it is to succeed in its aim of increased production.

Regarding strikes, I feel that it is deplorable that they have been made so cheap. They are now props of leadership of labour and have ceased to be a legitimate means of redressing grievances of labour. In Ahmedabad we had resorted to arbitration with the result that both labour and employers had prospered to the advantage both of the city and the country at large. The maxim should be "produce and then distribute equitably". Instead they fight before even producing wealth. It is to restore sanity and a fair deal between labour and employers and

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to give correct lead to labour we set up the Indian National Trade Union Congress. But then some industrialists themselves do not realize wherein their good lies and purchase peace by submitting to the blackmail of Communists. It is clear that such peace can only be short-lived. Labour is not being properly led and must be rescued. It is a matter of patience and sympathy. Firmness in dealing with labour agitators and in restoring discipline among labour ranks is indisputably necessary. If we cannot be firm, we might cease to govern. Government cannot allow intimidators to function with immunity. All the three parties, Labour, Capital and Government, have common interests and common outlook in many a field. We must act with mutual consultation. All of us must have courage to face facts and deal with them in a practical way. Hesitancy is out of place; boldness is clearly indicated. But at the same time you should show understanding and sympathy to those whom you utilise as the means of production. It is only then that you can win labour round. You should educate labour into correct ways of conduct. Public opinion can never be won by following the path of least resistance.

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RIDING TWO HORSES

With some exceptions, the Muslims of India followed the League very largely in the elections till partition. With the establishment of Pakistan, how could it be taken for granted that those who had agitated for Pakistan till yesterday would transfer their loyalty to India overnight? This question was agitating many minds in India. When relations were getting strained between the two countries how could responsible leaders view without misgiving the possibility, indeed the strong probability of lurking loyalty in a large mass of the citizens of their country? The Sardar voiced this fear in the following speech at Lucknow on January 6, 1948.

Our achievements of the last four months have to some extent restored the country's prestige which it had lost in the eyes of the world because of the unfortunate happenings following partition. I appeal to the younger generation to assist us in consolidating India and making her impregnable.

The maintenance of communal and industrial peace is essential if the newly-born Independent Democratic State of India is to lead the Asian countries on the road to progress and emancipation from foreign domination.

I am a true friend of the Muslims although I have been described as their greatest enemy. I believe in plain speaking. I do not know how to mince matters. I want to tell them frankly that mere declarations of loyalty to the Indian Union will not help them at this critical juncture. They must give practical proof of their declarations.

I ask them why they do not unequivocally denounce Pakistan for attacking Indian territory with the connivance of Frontier tribesmen. Is it not their duty to condemn all acts of aggression against India?

I invite the R.S.S. to join the Congress and not to weaken the administration by creating unrest in the country. I realize that they are not actuated by selfish motives but the situation warrants that they should strengthen the hands of the Government and assist in maintaining peace. By using violence they cannot render true service to the country.

The ever-changing, undecisive and non-committal attitude of Pakistan must be changed. Pakistan should change policy in her own

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Sometimes they accuse the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Central Government of creating troubles. But I tell you that if Pakistan falls it will fall not on account of us but on account of her own enemies within.

The Muslim Leaguers call me their greatest enemy. Formerly they used to call Mahatma Gandhi as Enemy Number One. Now they think Gandhiji is their friend and have substituted me in his place, because I speak the truth. They believed if they got Pakistan, they would ensure full protection for the Muslims. But have they ever looked at the Muslims living in Hindustan? Have they ever sympathized with them?

When freedom was won, came the Punjab massacre which lowered our prestige. Then came the Junagdh issue followed by the Kashmir problem.

We raised the question with Pakistan. They replied: "We are not concerned." It was the Azad Government Dal in Kashmir and Kashmir Muslims who were responsible for aggression. But it is no secret that the Frontier tribesmen are receiving rations, war material, motor trucks and petrol.

As a last resort, the Indian Government referred the Kashmir issue to the U.N.O. Mr. Mohammed Zafrullah Khan says why we got out to wash the dirty linen. Are they not satisfied in washing their dirt in the Punjab in the last four months? It is a deliberate falsehood!

I want to ask the Indian Muslims only one question. In the recent All-India Muslim Conference why did you not open your mouth on the Kashmir issue? Why did you not condemn the action of Pakistan?

These things create doubt in the minds of the people. So I want to say a word as a friend of Muslims and it is the duty of a good friend to speak frankly. It is your duty now to sail in the same boat and sink or swim together. I want to tell you very clearly that you cannot ride on two horses. You select one horse, whichever you like best.

In the Constituent Assembly, one of the Lucknow Muslim Leaguers pleaded for separate electorates and rervation of seats. I had to open my mouth and say that he could not have it both ways. Now he is in Pakistan. Those who want to go to Pakistan can go there and live in peace. Let us live here in peace and work for ourselves.

The Muslim League Government in Pakistan declared that they would make suitable arrangements for the minorities living there. But ask the Sind Hindu refugees to-day. They say it is impossible to remain there. Pakistan is drifting towards lawlessness. There are about eight to ten lakhs of Muslims who should be driven out of Hindustan. But this is not a sound policy.

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Let them leave Pakistan alone and pursue their policy. We are not at all disturbed. If they want to fight, we are 34 crores here. We have also men, materials and resources. Pakistan is a baby of yesterday. But it is not wise to mete out the same treatment to the Muslims as the Hindus are receiving there.

I understand there is an urge for military training among the youth. Military training is good and there is a great need of it. You should now discard fighting with lathis, daggers and brickbats. I appeal to young men of India to unify India from all sides, because do not forget that India was lost on account of foolishness. That foolishness should not be repeated in future. But unfortunately I find the same foolishness prevailing everywhere.

If the States problem had not been properly handled, there would have been a Rajasthan. The screen of a Political Department between us and the States has been withdrawn. I contacted the Rajas of various States as soon as Paramountcy was over. Most of them are real patriots. I explained to them the present political situation and apprised them of the situation in Pakistan. I also stressed the point that India was lost on account of internal feuds. They have agreed with me and I am happy that they have understood me.

There are many who criticize us and complain that this has not been done, that has not been done. I have all along told them and still I say, let us have some time and see what we have done and what we are doing.

To critics I want to say that since August 15 when we took charge, we have done an enormous amount of work. What about the partition work, the smashing of the steel frame of bureaucracy, the division of assets and liabilities and the refugee problem? We called a meeting of the Constituent Assembly and settled with the States. I assure you that if so much burden had fallen all of a sudden on any Government's shoulder, it would have crashed. But we did not fail. As a matter of fact, the manner in which we have discharged our onerous duties has raised our prestige in the world.

Now two things are needed for the reconstruction of India—a strong Central Government and a formidable army. By army I mean all the branches—naval, air and land forces.

If the relation between Pakistan and Hindustan continues as at present, the consequences cannot be foreseen. I am not hiding anything but I am telling bare facts. I would not like anybody to throw dust into our eyes.

Those who are disloyal will have to go to Pakistan. Those who are still riding on two horses, will have to quit Hindustan.

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I appeal to Labour leaders not to foment strikes and create disturbances. There is no alien power. It is easy to approach us now. Why not Labour leaders come straight to us and tell about the grievances of Labour? The days of strike and *hartal* are gone. They were needed when we were fighting against a foreign Power. Those tactics must cease now. Give us time at least. Let us have three or four years' truce and see what we can do. For a strong army, industries for the production of necessary material are needed. And if there is Labour unrest, a strong and formidable army cannot be built up.

At the last Industrial Conference the Labour leaders agreed with us but still there was a one-day strike in Bombay. If we all proceed on these lines, India will meet a disastrous end. Unless you produce more, how will you share the profits? India is not an industrial country. She is to be industrialized first. This sort of foolishness will only put obstacles in the uplift of the country.

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REPLY TO A CIVIC ADDRESS

Sardar Patel visited Bombay for the first time after Independence in January, 1948. The people of Bombay had played a leading part in the freedom struggle. It was in Bombay that the historic "Quit India" Resolution was passed and it was also in Bombay that the heroic R.I.N. Revolt took place. The Municipal Corporation of this heroic city presented a civic address to the Sardar on January 16, and the Sardar addressed a workers' meeting at the Kamgar Maidan on the 20th. Below is the reply to the civic address.

I had accepted your kind invitation to receive an address from you in October, but owing to certain difficulties I could not come at the time. I again accepted it now but have come to Bombay with an anguished heart. When I left Delhi, Gandhiji was fasting, but I had accepted some unavoidable commitments which I had to fulfil. My heart is full of grief even now and I am not so happy as I would have ordinarily been, at the honour that you have done me by presenting me this address.

In the course of your address you have mentioned some things which I have achieved and some which I have not, but there is one thing which I accept without reservation, viz., that I served Ahmedabad Municipality to the best of my capacity. I had unalloyed happiness in the tasks which I performed then. After all, to all of us, to serve our own city must give unmitigated pleasure and mental satisfaction which we cannot get in any other sphere. Further to cleanse the dirt of the city is quite different from cleansing the dirt of politics. From the former you get a good night's rest while the latter keeps you worried and disturbed even at night.

Whatever also you have said is merely a proof of your love and I do not deserve your praise. You have mentioned about my having gone to jail several times. I was only one of the thousands who did so. We were all soldiers of freedom's army. I never realised that I was in prison. Actually it was the officers who watched us that felt that they were in prison. The only worry which afflicted us was what was happening outside. To tell you quite frankly, if as a result of what I have been doing at the Centre, I got imprisonment, I would welcome it, because from experience I have found imprisonment is much sweeter.

As a result of our freedom's struggle we have succeeded in eliminating foreign domination. But all that we had aspired for has not been

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achieved. We had hoped to achieve peace by getting rid of foreign domination. Actuated by the same motives we accepted partition, but subsequent events presented a different shape of things. Our prestige went up when we secured independence, but subsequent events have brought it down. If in spite of having achieved independence Gandhiji has to fast today in order to achieve real Hindu-Muslim unity, it is a standing shame to us. In brief, our happiness at having won freedom has received a rude shock.

We have just now heard people shouting that Muslims should be removed from India. Those who do so have gone mad with anger. A lunatic is something better than a person who is mad with rage. One can be treated, and perhaps cured, but the other loses complete control of himself. They do not realise that they stand to gain nothing by driving out a handful of Muslims. At the same time, we have to sympathise with those people who have lost their dear ones and their valuables. I have just now come from Rajkot. Thousands are coming to Kathiawar deprived of everything that they possessed. Anger rules their heart and turns their minds completely. But we have to tolerate all this. At the same time, so long as we are in Government, we have to govern. If we cannot act as trustees for the entire population, irrespective of religion, caste or creed, we do not deserve to be where we are. Shouts like these cause me worry and agony. I frankly ask myself, "Are we to admit before the world that we are not fit to rule?"

All sorts of conjectures have been made about Gandhiji's fast. The truth is that, while there is peace in Delhi, as you have in Bombay or elsewhere in India, Gandhiji says that this is the peace maintained by force and does not represent the unity of heart. Gandhiji speaks, thinks and acts on an eminence which we cannot attain. We long to reach there, but we simply do not have the capacity to do so. He reached a height where he is not swayed by anger or malice. He is full of love and affection. If we had such a pure heart as he has, we would have realised the difference. We cannot, therefore, govern as he would like us to do. Instead, we have to maintain the police and and a strong army. The guilty have to be punished and wrong-doers have to be censured. Those who indulge in such shoutings must, therefore, realise what the consequences of breaking the law would be.

I am a frank man. I say bitter things to Hindus and Muslims alike. At the same time, I maintain, as I have said a number of times, that I am a friend of Muslims. If Muslims do not accept me as such they also act like mad men. They do not seem to understand the right or the wrong. But, for this attitude, I cannot forsake truth. I cannot descend from the pedestal of duty. Some of them went to Gandhiji and complained about my Lucknow speech in which I had criticised them for not condemning Pakistan's attitude to Kashmir. They went

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and told Gandhiji many things and Gandhiji felt compelled to defend me. That also pained me, for after all, I am not a weak person who should be defended by others.

You have referred to what we have been able to achieve but I want you to realise that what we have achieved is incomplete. The real task is still in front of us, namely, the planning of the shape of things in the future of this country. Opportunities for doing so have come, but we do not seem to realise it. If we did so, we would not be acting in the manner in which we are doing at present.

The supreme task of the moment is to live up to the real spirit of what you have recounted in the address. It is in that spirit that we have decided to hand over Rs. 55 crores which we had agreed to allocate to Pakistan out of our cash balances. I can assure you that when we settled this sum we acted in a spirit of generosity and goodwill. The Financial Adviser of the Pakistan Government admitted that the settlement was generous; the *London Economist* was also of the same view. I made it clear then that not on any single item would I go before the Tribunal, but at the same time, I emphasised that the whole agreement would be implemented simultaneously with the settlement on other issues. I could never have agreed to the proposition that all gains were theirs and losses ours. They, however, claimed it in isolation. We all decided that this was entirely wrong, and it should be resisted. Pakistan papers and spokesmen, when they heard of it, emitted poison. When Gandhiji undertook the fast, we thought we could clear the atmosphere. For, after all, when we are throwing money like water, why should we cavil at the payment of Rs. 55 crores if it meant some relief to Gandhiji's mental agony? We hope it will evoke some response from Pakistan. But if it does not, the fault is of our fate. It is true we have to take the people with us. But we have also to think of Gandhiji. We take a short-range view, while he takes a long-range one.

To all outward appearance, there is peace in Bombay City, but it is not the peace which existed here ten years ago, when the poison that had spread during the last seven years had not spoiled the atmosphere. When that peace will return we do not know. We should, however, make efforts to that end. If we fail, we can only curse our stars. For it would be a misfortune of India.

Nevertheless, we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that we have achieved something by making India more united today than it was at any time during the past several centuries. We should unite more, but that requires a determined effort. In such united India, Muslims should feel as secure as the rest of the population. For this, however, Muslims will have also to change their outlook. They must forget the lesson which has been taught to them of the two-nation theory. We have to create

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an atmosphere in which Pakistan can go the way she likes, and India can follow her own course. In creating this atmosphere, Bombay must play a leading part. You are distant from the scene of misery, privation and devastation. The bloodshed in Pakistan flows down to Delhi, and turns people's mind. Here you can take a detached view. The nation's leader, Jawaharlal, has, during the last few months, aged by ten years. He is indescribably worried and anguished. I appeal to you to reflect on what is happening. Here you have taken strikes merely to test leadership. Why should they have recourse to it? We can give them in writing that they are the leaders. If we cannot set our own house in order, we can never achieve the destiny of this country. There was a time when India's message had gone to other countries. Gandhiji re-enacted those scenes when he sent out the message of *ahimsa*, but now we seem to have fallen on different ways. We have to get out of this mess.

You have also referred to the needs of your Corporation and the scheme of Greater Bombay. You have asked for Central assistance. But you should realize that the Central Government is not foreign to you. It is your own. Bombay contributes to the Centre. You get your own money back. I realize that Bombay has to bear the burden, but Bombay occupies a pre-eminent position. It is the centre of political activity. India looks to Bombay for assistance. You have reversed the process and wish now to look to the Centre for help. How can we resolve this conundrum? If we assist one city, others will claim similiar assistance. Bombay is only one city, but India is yours. We cannot live on the capital accumulated by our predecessors. We must increase our income. We cannot for ever subsist on the reputation of our giants of the past like Sir Phirozshah Mehta and Sir Dinshah Wacha. The old days, when they ruled the city, are no more. In those days people were easily satisfied. Now they are in a perennial state of unrest. You have therefore, to suffer criticism. But Bombay is fortunate that it has maintained its reputation, is proud of its achievement and jealously guards its interests. You should trade in those valuable commodities. Let the city be in the forefront of the cities of the world.

I had been to Calcutta. There I pointed out that the premier city of India did not deserve to be the dirtiest. But nobody dare amend the Corporation Act without which any improvement is impossible. Here you have a Constitution given by those old giants which has stood the test of time and proved to be an invaluable guide. You have now given franchise to all adults. Some are apprehensive, but you can take your voters with you by demonstrating your spirit of service and presenting them with solid achievements.

I once again thank you for your kindness in presenting me with this address and I assure you that I will always value this token of your affection and regard.

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LABOUR AT THE CROSSROADS

On January 20, 1948, Sardar Patel addressed a Workers' meeting at the Kamgar Maidan, Parel, Bombay, expressing his relief that there was a marked improvement in the communal situation. He asked the workers to spare no pains to make the nation happy and prosperous.

I was anxious for a long time to come to Bombay, but there were so many problems to tackle that I was not able to do so till four days ago. Bombay has always a soft corner in my heart because it has given the lead to the rest of India for many decades and I hope it will continue to do so.

The recent disturbances after partition caused me worry, but I am glad that now there is marked improvement in the communal situation and peace has been accomplished. Now that the country has achieved freedom, it is in our hands to make or mar our future; and, therefore, every effort should be made to make the nation happy and prosperous so that it might uplift itself and also rise in the estimation of the world.

The future depends on whether we step up production of food, cloth, iron, steel, cement, and other essential articles both for the civil population and defence needs. This is necessary not only for banishing hunger and disease from the country but also for consolidating the freedom which we have won after so many years of struggle.

Labour is today at the crossroads; if they take the right road and contribute all their energies to strengthen the country, India will have a glorious future; but if they are misled and take the wrong road, they will go down into the ditch and it will lead everyone, labourer as well as all others, to destruction and ruin.

The workers should remember that they do not work only for their maintenance. They are not animals who are driven by the whip. They should realize their important role in the country and ask themselves what they are working for. On their efficiency and hard work depends the greatness of the country. They should realize the effects of their action on crores of semi-starved and meagrely clothed countrymen in the

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villages. It is the workers' duty to think of them. Nothing should be done to harm their interests.

When the Socialist young men called for a token strike, the result was a tremendous loss in wages and production. To an average worker, it meant a day's holiday and the loss of one day's wage. But did they realize the collective losses in wages, the lakhs of yards of cloth which remained unproduced and the loss of much-needed essential goods? There is already acute scarcity of rationed cloth and what can be gained by reducing it further? True leadership lies in convincing labour to stand by the nation and deliver the goods and not in destructive efforts to assert their leadership.

The recent three-year industrial truce agreed upon in Delhi was meant for undertaking an all-out industrial drive for making India strong and prosperous. Pandit Nehru's fervent broadcast appeal, the previous day, also called upon them to avoid strikes at all costs. The Port Trust Workers' strike in Bombay is an illustration of the utter futility of such strikes prompted by reckless leadership. It was holding up of food imports which were urgently needed to avert hunger in many parts of the country and of lakhs of refugees pouring in from the Punjab and Sind. This was Government work where the profit-motive was not involved, unlike in the case of private enterprise. Consequently, in the interests of our own people, army units had to be employed and the full responsibility for unemployment of these labourers rested squarely on irresponsible leaders.

The workers must keep always before them the interests of crores of our countrymen and throw off the destructive leadership and muster strong to support the best interests of the country.

If the Socialists are bent upon snatching the leadership, there is no objection to handing it over to them. After all our mission has been accomplished. We do not want to hand over a ruined concern but a going concern for constructive progress, not for wrecking the future of the country. The Socialists threaten to break away from the Congress. The doors are open. But I would urge them not to mar the progress of the young nation which has after all got the rare opportunity to mould itself according to its dreams and desires after many hundreds of years.

I would repeatedly like to persuade you to keep away from this strike fever, since "produce or perish" is the crucial question facing us at this juncture. Otherwise you would yourselves stand to suffer the consequences. The freedom that we have secured is for regenerating the country and not for bringing it down. Tremendous natural resources lie hidden under our soil. Why not exploit them to the best advantage? Why not increase production in cloth, steel, cement, etc., and solve the

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housing and other acute problems. Why not produce more coal and other essential goods so that India may be great and strong and none dare challenge her security? Why not be self-sufficient in vital goods now imported at tremendous cost? If there is surplus production it can be exported to make the nation prosperous.

I, therefore, advise you that if you want more wages you should increase productivity and step up production. There is really no difference of opinion between the Congress and the Socialists over policy and programme as was illustrated at the last A.I.C.C. meeting. Why then all these disruptive and disintegrating activities? I would, therefore, request the Socialists to join hands with the Congress in formulating a five-year programme and carrying it out in a constructive spirit to make the nation strong. The country needs two things: firstly, peace on the basis of Hindu-Muslim amity and, secondly, consolidation as was exemplified by the merger of States.

When I say bitter things to Industrialists, Socialists and Labour, it is not my intention to hurt their feelings, but there is a fire raging in my heart which I want to impart to them. I am speaking to them so bluntly because I have their interests at heart; and I ask you not to be misled by the sweet words of those who are really your enemies. The proposed labour rally was intended to show the backing of ten lakh workers behind the Port Trust, but I would like you to remember that this rare opportunity of creating a strong and happy India is fast passing from their hands.

Bombay should see that there is no strike during the period of the industrial truce for the next three years and that production goes on full steam ahead. If there is any grievance it should be carried to the Government, which is their own, and I am sure, it would be satisfactorily solved. I myself am all for your getting the legitimate fruits of your labour. The Congress stands by them. Where then is the need for strikes, 'go slow' tactics or stoppage of work?

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NEED FOR PEACE

On January 22, 1948, in reply to an address presented to him by 87 leading Associations of Ahmedabad, Sardar Patel emphasised the need for industrial and communal peace in the country. He referred to the relation between Labour and Capital, as represented by the Textile Labour Association and the Mill-Owners' Association in Ahmedabad as unique, the credit for which belongs to Mahatma Gandhi.

The need for industrial and communal peace in the country is imperative. Peace is necessary for stabilizing the newly won freedom and for leading the country on the road to progress and prosperity.

With the achievement of freedom, the days of jail going and shooting and lathi charges are over. There is no longer any need to adopt those methods to coerce the Government, which is yours and which you can change, if you so desire.

The various associations of Ahmedabad including the Millowners' Association and the Textile Labour Association, are noted for their shrewd practical commonsense. The relations between Labour and Capital, as represented by the Textile Labour Association and Millowners' Association are unique in the whole country, and credit for that achievement should go to Mahatma Gandhi. There have been the least number of strikes in the city owing to the machinery of arbitration evolved by Mahatma Gandhi. Even the members of the Maskati Market, an organization of cloth merchants, settled the dispute of its members without going to a court of law. Workers should not fall a prey to the ways of agitators who use strikes to achieve their own selfish ends.

As regards the gradual withdrawal of all controls imposed by the previous Government, the Government of India seeks the co-operation of merchants in loosening the economic grip of foreign countries over India. They should place the interests of the country before their own self.

It is not the intention of the Government to enter the field of business and trade. It is the sole preserve of the business and commercial community. The reputation of the mercantile community of India has

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been lowered in the estimation of the ordinary people. They must endeavour to restore their good name.

I appeal to Labour and Capital to honour the industrial truce recently reached at the Delhi Conference. The truce does not mean there would be no justice done to labour, if it has a legitimate grievance. They should seek arbitration without resorting to strikes. If they failed to produce enough to meet the needs of the country, they would not be able to keep pace with the progressive nations of the world.

I regret that, after we have won freedom from foreign rule, the country is not as happy and prosperous as we hoped her to be. Unforeseen problems confront us and we are engaged in solving them. Any other Government in a similar plight would have collapsed.

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AWAKEN THE CONSCIENCE

One of the off-shoots of the communal troubles in the Punjab and elsewhere was the problem of abducted women. The Sardar dwelt on this problem in a speech at new Delhi on February 18, 1948.

I am taking this opportunity of adding a few words to the powerful appeals which have already been made on behalf of the thousands of distressed women. During the recent disturbances which overspread both the West and East Punjab and the Frontier and enmeshed a part of the beautiful Kashmir Valley and Jammu province, nothing has degraded us more than the foul crimes and barbarities which have been inflicted on innocent women and children who have been forcibly torn from their kith and kin and subjected to most inhuman indignities and violence. Even the law of the jungle does not countenance such insensate wrongs; these are completely alien to the traditions of any society and civilization. There should be no place, therefore, in this world for wrong doers of this type and it behoves us all to see that such transgressions of civilized conduct are put down with a strong and firm hand.

When I think of the sorrowful plight and miserable sufferings of these mothers and sisters, my heart fills with distress and grief. Women of education and breeding, many of whom had been nourished in the lap of luxury; all had led a peaceful and sheltered existence with those whom they had ties of blood and affection; many were valuable treasures of poor men's houses, which are now left desolate and ruined— all these have been uprooted from their natural surroundings and placed by the cruel hands of frenzied criminals into conditions of existance which shame humanity and all the virtues and qualities which go to make God's own creature—man.

To rescue them from these living conditions and restore them to their original environments is, therefore, an essential mission if men's reputation is to be rehabilitated as that of human beings. Failure in this mission would mean that we are not fit to face the bar of human history and must go down to the future ages as those who degraded humanity to depths lower than those of beasts.

Those who have braved adversity and challenged obstructions and

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Mr. Churchill is still seized by his favourite disease Hindu-phobia and is determined to wreck all that good work by his most unwise disregard of the proverbial virtue of silence.

It might well be expected of a man of his record of offices and positions of responsibility that he would exercise that discretion and restraint which are characteristic of sobriety and ripeness of official life. How far it was appropriate for him to have attacked in such terms the Government and the people of a sister Dominion, I shall leave to His Majesty's Government and the people of Great Britain to determine. I shall only say this, that we have been patient for too long with such unseemly, prejudiced and mischievous attacks by high-placed Britishers on our administration, our leaders and our people. I have not seen anything even remotely like this being said of any other member of the Commonwealth. One of them has outraged the world's conscience by a bare-faced and wanton policy of racial prejudice and an open disregard of fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter. But Mr. Churchill's elastic conscience, with his infinite capacity for bearing wrongs done to others by his own race, has never registered even a formal protest. I should like, therefore, to tell His Majesty's Government that if they wish India to maintain friendly relations with Great Britain they must see that India is in no way subjected to malicious and venomous attacks of this kind and that British statesmen and others learn to speak of this country in terms of friendship and goodwill. Owing to years of deep-seated prejudice and owing to ignorance, it may be difficult for some of them to do so but if future disasters are to be avoided, it has got to be done.

That Mr. Churchill's attack on India and its Government is both mischievous and venomous can be judged from the way in which he has disregarded the all-parties responsibility for the passage of the Indian Independence Act in July last year through the Parliament. We ourselves foresaw that if the final stage of the grant of freedom to India were made a party issue, it would enhance our difficulties manifold. We were fully aware of the machinations of the vested interests both in India and the United Kingdom to hand over as difficult a legacy to India as possible. Balkanisation of India being actively promoted. Large scale disturbances were being manufactured. Vandalism at the peak of impending departure from the scene of personal rule was actuating many of the Churchillion agents in power here. We, therefore, decided to drink the bitter cup and accept the lesser evil of partition; only on condition that it commanded all parties' support. That support was both promised and given. It was this agreement of all parties that secured the safe and speedy passage of the Indian Independence Act, for which there is no parallel in the history of the British Parliament. We thought Mr. Churchill was an honourable man and would abide by the obligations inherent in the agreement. But obviously he finds it hard to recognise that India is now a free and independent country.

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If proof of his deep-seated prejudice and his medieval mind were needed, it would be enough to show that whilst he refers to Kashmir as being four-fifth Muslim he has omitted to mention that Hyderabad is four-fifth Hindu; and a creation of the eighteenth century, as the Nizam's State is, is suddenly by the magic of Mr. Churchill's words transformed into an "ancient State". The fact of the matter is that, to vary the words of a British Statesman, whether Mr. Churchill roars like a lion or coos like a dove, it is his ignorance and blind prejudice that must come out prominently. We can well realise what a disaster the British public avoided by forcing Mr. Churchill to give up the seals of office. We had hoped that this blow to his personal fortune administered by his people at the height of his glory would make him a sadder but wiser man. But it appears that through his ancestors, Mr. Churchill has acquired the well-known characteristic of the Stuarts of not being able to learn or learn anything.

Mr. Churchill has referred, apparently with some self-satisfaction, to the large casualties that occurred during the disturbances more than nine months ago. Obviously it did not suit his purpose to mention that since then India had settled down to peaceful conditions with a speed and efficiency which had amazed many disinterested visitors. While not one of us would disclaim our due share of responsibility for these tragedies, and it is agreed that these have brought shame and disgrace to India, there can scarcely be any doubt that, in the ultimate analysis, a very large part of the blame must attach to the divide and rule policy followed with such masterly activity by Mr. Churchill himself and so faithfully implemented by his agents and Europeans of his way of thinking in this country, whether under his regime or that of his predecessors. No dispassionate student of recent history of India can fail to be convinced that the partition of the country and attendant disasters were brought about by the disruptive activities of the group of which Mr. Churchill was the inspiration and spokesman. Thus, for these tragedies it is Mr. Churchill and his henchmen who have also have to answer before the bar of history.

It is not clear how far the Tory Party is behind its leader in these acts of indiscretion and unwisdom. Mr. Butler's irrelevant reference to Hyderabad in the foreign affairs debate was the first indication of a section of the Tories still attempting to make capital out of India's troubles. Mr. Churchill's intervention in Parliament followed up by his speech at a Conservative rally seems to indicate that at least an attempt is being made to whip up enthusiasm in favour of Britain's one-time "faithful ally" against India. I should like to warn the British public against being taken in by these attempts. The question of Hyderabad can be solved peacefully if the Nizam would shed the uttterly medieval conception of his rule through a ruling caste chosen almost entirely from a militant minority, and accept the democratic method of consulting and

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acting in conformity with the wishes of his people expressed through their elected representatives and would recognise the inevitability of the consequences of action and interaction of geographical, economic and other compelling forces on the relationship between Hyderabad and India. But then in order to injure India's interest, these distinguished products of a democratic age would forget the lessons of history and the teachings of democracy and stoop to buttress a regime which still lives in the times that it was born. If therefore disaster overtakes the fortunes of the Nizam, the responsibility will be elsewhere than on the Indian Dominion. I am glad to know that His Majesty's Government have not fallen a prey to these machinations of Mr. Churchill and his henchmen and have refused to treat the Hyderabad issue otherwise than as one of domestic concern of the Indian Dominion. I would, therefore, appeal to the rank and file of the Tory Party not to be misled by these old-world ideas of some of their leaders, but to extend to the Indian Dominion that goodwill and friendship which are as essential in British interest as in India's and to sustain and uphold the fine gesture they made in transferring power to Indian hands. It is only in this spirit and not on the malice and venom of Mr. Churchill's tongue, that an enduring relationship of friendship, co-operation and collaboration can be built between India and Britain and other Members of the Commonwealth.

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THE FUTURE OF THE PEOPLE

A new chapter in the history of India is opening up before us. We have reason to congratulate ourselves that we are all participating in such an auspicious event; we have also occasion to be proud of it. But along with this pride and this celebration let us not be unmindful of our duties and obligations. We must cleanse our hearts and purify our minds and resolve to do pure deed by ourselves, by the New Union and by our country. We should harbour no evil, we should reflect who we are, what we have inherited and what we have achieved. If you look at the history of India, you will find that for centuries India was steeped in slavery. What struggles, what sacrifices, what bitterness and what sorrow we all had to face to rid India of that centuries-old malady that had eaten into the very vitals of its nationhood A great change has come about, indeed a great revolution has been brought into being. The greater the change, the more comprehensive the revolution, the more are the travails through which the country has to pass. We have already had more than our due share of troubles and turmoils. We are lucky to have survived so many of them, but many are still to be overcome. If we falter or fail, we shall consign ourselves to eternal shame and disgrace.

I want you to realize the full gravity of the situation and to consider the position in the light of the legacy which we have inherited. Did anyone dream a year or two ago that one-third of India would be integrated in this fashion? This is the first time in history after centuries that India can call itself an integrated whole in the real sense of the term. But we must all resolve that whatever mistakes we might commit, we should do nothing which would be calculated to send India back into the slavery of the past. It is, therefore, the duty of India's valiant sons to see that the clocks of progress are not put back, but advance forward. We must also realize that if we have to take our due place in the comity of nations it will not come to us for the asking, but we shall have to strain every nerve for it.

If you read the history of democratic countries, you will find that where there is stability, the task of administration goes on steadily, but where a country is foundationally unsteady, it becomes a prey to all

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sorts of influences, feelings, sentiments and ideas. Our primary aim should, therefore, be to achieve that stability which is the surest foundation of progress. That stability can come only when there is unity in our ranks. It is true that for the foundation of a democratic Government we must have a Government and an opposition, but to-day while we have yet to stand on our legs we have got to strengthen ourselves and that strength cannot come by dissensions in our ranks but by unity of purpose, unity of aims and unity of endeavour.

The charge is sometimes hurled against the States Ministry that it has moved too quickly. But the world today is different from the world of yesterday. Things could move slowly and steadily in the old world where there was more leisure and less speed. Today one day is equal to a century. See how overnight States have fallen and empires have disappeared! Who can say then that time does not fly and that we can afford to wait? In integration and democratization, therefore, there must be quick progress if the country is to avoid disasters and threats to its existence and unity. In this connection I warn certain Princes who are still thinking of disturbing the security and integrity of the States. Some one of them pays heed to an astrologer that in August the Ministry would break and Government would fall, thereby giving him a chance to stage a march to Delhi. Some others listened to a so-called *sadhu* who predicted all sorts of things and advised them to take steps calculated seriously to jeopardise the interests of the country. Let all these persons remember that we have not taken the reins of office to destroy what we have achieved. We have done so not only to build a sound system of administration but to raise a noble edifice of which both we and the future can feel proud and happy. To that task we shall devote ourselves with full energy and vigour and resources. We are not going to give in because astrologers and *sadhus* say so or other evil designers desire it. We shall give in only when we have done our job. I feel that in that task we are entitled to receive the co-operation of every true son of India and if each one of us plays the part which we must, I have no doubt that we shall succeed.

Swaraj involves learning by experience. That is proverbially costly but we have to ensure that the cost is not disproportionately high and serious mistakes are prevented. It is not wise or practical politics to rush headlong into experiments and decisions of doubtful wisdom. The position is such that everyone must tread cautiously. Mistakes can be tolerated elsewhere where administration is set on an even key, but where the foundations have not been well and properly laid they cannot be tolerated.

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PROBLEMS OF INDIA

The Sardar's 75th Birthday was celebrated with great eclat throughout India. The Sardar was in Bombay, and in a speech there reminded his audience that Bombay held the key to India; it can lead the way and the rest of India can follow. He decried the controversy about the position of Bombay when the provinces were redistributed on linguistic lines and appealed to Bombayites to close up their ranks, because real Swaraj was yet to be achieved.

I have reached an age when it is my right to take rest, but the heart is yearning to utilise the time that is still left to me in the service of my country, in these critical days. It is my earnest wish to see India stable, strong, prosperous and free from danger, and I wish to dedicate the rest of my life to that sacred task.

You know what India had to put up with in the course of one year. We had to pass through many difficult and critical times. Sometimes, day and night, we were anxious and apprehensive, lest we should make a slip which might spell disaster to India. Many were there who did not expect or believe that we could survive. When I accepted partition, in a sense, I was unwilling and was full of sorrow. It went against the grain of all my innermost feelings, against all we had to live for and against all we had aspired, but in another sense we accepted partition willingly and after a full weighment of its consequences we felt that if we could not remain united we must part. We could not have secured India's freedom by any other means. If we had not partitioned India, the consequences of what would have followed would have been much worse than what actually took place as a result of partition. We were quarrelling and fighting bitterly amongst ourselves. The third party was reaping the full benefits out of the dilemma in which we were placed and out of the situation in which we had landed ourselves. We had to pay the price for our liberty. It was then that we decided that, if the foreign government undertook to leave as soon as possible, the price of partition was worth paying for. We suffered grievously as a result of partition. A limb was torn asunder and we bled profusely, but it was nothing as compared to the troubles that would have been in store for us and with which we would have had to put up.

At the time India was partitioned, it was part of the settlement that Paramountcy would lapse and that the Rulers would be free to enter

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into new relationship or to keep aloof. But nobody could have been so innocent or ignorant to presume that overnight small Rulers could be converted into "Their Majesties". That position would have been full of dangerous possibilities and potentialities that we would not have been a willing party to it. It was at this time that several Rulers, led by patriotic and good intentions, decided to cast their lot with us. Even those who had striven to remain outside were finally converted, some of them even at the last moment.

Some people consider that a Muslim majority area must necessarily belong to Pakistan. They wonder why we are in Kashmir. The answer is plain and simple. We are in Kashmir, because the people of Kashmir want us to be there. The moment we realise, that the people of Kashmir do not want us to be there, we shall not be there even for a minute.

Some people suggest that we should split up Hyderabad into three parts and give each to the linguistic area to which it belongs. Some suggest that the Nizam should be removed and some contend that responsible Government should be introduced. At present we can only hear everybody and consider it at the proper time. But one thing is clear. We shall do what the interests of the people of Hyderabad demand and what they themselves desire. It would be for them to take a decision and no outside interference can succeed in keeping the Nizam on the throne if the people wish otherwise. They say we should remain in the Commonwealth. We will decide that question in accordance with the best interests of India. Today, truth, love and justice alone can save the world. The world cannot bear a third war. It is only Gandhiji's way that can bring peace and tranquillity to a distracted world.

We have made India one but it has to be strong and united. We have to lay strong foundations of peace and tranquillity and good Government.

We have taken over Government from the Rulers but we have yet to think and arrange how we are to function. A great task lies before us. We have no time even to think or to breathe. We can satisfactorily conduct our affairs only if we work night and day. Look at what is happening on our borders. Burma, Malaya, Indonesia and China are without peace. Cast aside provincial separatism and even if you indulge in it, for Heaven's sake, control your tongues. It would be like Lakshmi coming to put the mark on the forehead and ourselves going to wash it. We loved each other in slavery, we were united in bondage; why, then, should we fight now that we are free? Look at your past history. We lost our kingdom in the past through division and fratricide. Future generations will curse us if having got freedom we frittered it away. We

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cannot rest on our oars or indulge in self-congratulations. We have to husband our resources. Otherwise bankruptcy stares us in the face.

What is the biggest problem facing us today? It is undoubtedly peace and tranquillity in IIndia. We have secured a foothold, we have now to strengthen our foundations. Mutual love and affection alone would make India united and strong.

The next biggest question is inflation. We do not produce enough and therefore we have to import it at heavy cost. We spend crores in freight alone, which we could have saved if we had been wise enough to build more ships, or even to buy them. We do not produce sufficient cloth. If we had enough bread to eat and cloth to wear, we could remain in peace and contentment. We could bear with our other difficulties. Even whatever we can produce we do not distribute properly. If we introduce control, opposition is sprung on our face. If we lift control, prices shoot up and profiteers make money out of it. You can realise what a year-old Government has to do to maintain peace and to bring about prosperity. The steel-frame on which India relied so far is now broken. The machinery functioned well as long as it served its purpose. When we took over the reigns of Government, the frame was split up. 55 per cent of it which was foreign went across the seas. Partition further weakened it. Of the rest, many had to leave us for foreign countries to serve as our representatives. We have only a small number of civil servants left. Many say they are working in their old way, but those who have experience of administration know under what circumstances and how much they are working. Outsiders cannot appreciate their work. Many of them loyal workers and patriots, are working with us night and day. All we have been able to achieve, whether it be in the sphere of States or in Kashmir or in other theatres has been possible only because of their loyalty and whole-hearted support. These are all our difficulties, of which we have to take note and which gives us no end of anxiety. We are trying to fill in the gaps, but that will take time.

We lifted control and have seen the consequences. Profiteers reaped their full reward; some of them have not paid income-tax. They cannot bring out their hoarded wealth for fear of having to pay income-tax. In the meantime, prices are going up and labourers are asking for more wages. Government servants naturally follow suit. Think of these things and put them side by side with what is happening in China, Malaya, in Burma and Indonesia. If we are to go the same way as these countries are going, Swaraj has been in vain.

We have yet to find a way out. We have all to pool our resources, and think out how best we can pull the country out of these difficulties. Labourers, workers, employers, the rich and the poor, men of the

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profession should all realise that if we go the way we are going, India would have inevitably to face ruin.

People say we should have an opposition. I say in all humility that this is not time for opposition, but for co-operation. Let India be strong and be able to assume the leadership of Asia, which is its right, and then you can indulge in mutual quarrels and differences. If you do not heed my advice, I can see nothing but ruin facing us.

Our economic organisation is in chaos. If we cannot put it in order, even our army would disintegrate. We require money. We require materials, and in the interests of the country, we must all make sacrifices. This is not the time to make money. Let that be clear to every labourer, millowner or businessman. This is the time for the selfless effort and ceaseless enterprise. Wealth can be usefully destroyed only if wealth is produced elsewhere. Otherwise a country must face ruin rapidly. Government is not your enemy. I shall be the first to ask them to end capitalism if I were convinced that way lay the interests of the country. I am convinced however that that is not the country's interests. Nationalisation is worthwhile only if you can manage to run the industries. We have not the men or the resources even to run our administration. We have had to make our civil servants available to the States, and still they are not being run as efficiently as they should be. Let us, therefore, remove disharmony and immorality from our midst. Let us recreate Gandhiji's spirit of neighbourliness, love, truth and justice. If we can do this, we shall put the country on the road to peace and prosperity. If the prices fall, labourer himself would realise that it would not be just and proper to make any further demands. They will also recognise that leadership can be attained by strikes only for a temporary period and ultimately that leadership must fail. We ourselves are carrying on the burden of Government not to heap disabilities on labourers or enrich the employers, but only because the interests of our country demand it. Think over the efforts which England and America are making to bring prosperity back to Europe. Only the other day, we heard that England was raising a loan of three or four million pounds. Today if we raise a loan, none will come forward to subscribe to it because they are afraid of being called upon to account for failure to pay income-tax. They have issued a questionaire. All that will take two years; till then they will hoard their wealth and keep it intact. This will benefit no one. Let them, therefore, give to the country what they owe to it and not keep it back. Let those who have the knowledge and experience come forward and help us in finding a way out. The employers have both these in abundant measure. Let them place their talents and resources at the disposal of the country. Otherwise if the country goes to ruin, their wealth will not avail them for a minute.

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Shed your provincialism. Do not spread the poison of hatred. We must make India strong and preserve its strength. Few countries are as big and full of resources as India is. We must produce for India's prosperity. We must create wealth for India's benefit. We must consult each other and settle each one our respective roles. We shall only then have done our best for India and be worthy of the great leader whose spirit, I am sure, will continue to guide us if we behave ourselves.

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REPUBLIC DAY

India became a Sovereign Independent Republic on January 26, 1950, while remaining a member of the British Commonwealth through special provision. The Sardar's dream of an India enjoying the same independence as Britain and having relations with the latter on the basis of mutual benefit was realised. The following is the text of the message of the Sardar to the nation on the occasion.

Exactly 20 years ago from today, the people of India took a solemn pledge of complete independence. Behind that pledge was the determination of a whole people and the strength which comes of faith in one's destiny. Although we obtained independence on the 15th of August, 1947, it was not complete in the sense of the pledge we took. Today, by the grace of God, that pledge has been completely fulfilled.

On this auspicious occasion, it is quite natural that our thoughts should turn to the Father of the Nation under whose inspiration and guidance we took that pledge and due to whose leadership we achieved success in our mission. Unhappily, he is not amongst us, but he is watching us from above and I have no doubt his blessings and good wishes are with us on this supreme occasion in our national history.

The day on which India attains Republican status will be written in the letters of gold in her history. With the disappearance of all traces of foreign rule, we become in law and in fact our own masters and it will be now for us to recover from the centuries of exploitation and bondage; considerable sacrifices will yet be necessary before sufficient quantity of fresh blood can flow in India's veins.

We worked hard to achieve our freedom. We shall have to strive harder to justify it. Let us not, therefore, celebrate this occasion with any light heart. On the other hand, let us resolve to play our true and active role of responsible citizens of a free country which has yet to stand on its feet and to attain its full stature. May divine guidance and bounty be with us all!

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

"History of a Nation is the biography of her great men"

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almost daily when he was in Bombay, watching with admiring awe the working of his mind.

Few know the difficulties which the Sardar had to face in setting up a homogeneous party. He selected Shri Kher, and commissioned some of us to get the latter's consent. He piloted the activities which ended in Shri Kher's choice as a leader. This choice was Sardar's stroke of Generalship. But for it, the Bombay Congress Ministry would have been a ghastly failure.

Congress was a seething mass of ambitions all throughout the country. Sardar's genius alone brought order and discipline. Often, at night, I saw and heard him answering long distance calls from all over India with short, decisive suggestions, which were devastating in their effectiveness.

For 27 months when I was a Home Minister in the Congress Ministry, I was in the closest contact with him. There is an erroneous impression that he meddled in ministerial affairs. But he watched their work incessantly and only stepped in when the Ministers weakened in their effort to become effective centres of power against the Governors. His was a vast campaign at creating power. We were often weak; many a time we knew not how to act up to the task of reducing the Governors to mere constitutional heads. Then only the Sardar stepped in.

I was associated with some informal negotiations between the Viceroy and Gandhiji through Vallabhbhai. I was in touch with the negotiations with Rajkot which Sardar carried on; with the last stages of ministerial existence in November 1939; with the unfructuous negotiations with the Viceroy in 1940. And in them all, I saw Sardar's penetrating insight, his profound knowledge of human strength and weakness, his unerring grasp of the essentials in the game. And behind it all I saw the Grand Rebel who under the leadership of Gandhiji, the Master, was fighting British rule, not merely by words, but by mobilisation of human efforts and ambitions on the field of open battle and unseen diplomacy.

IN YERVADA JAIL

In 1940 we were together in Yervada Jail. I had then the occasion to see his human side. He laughed, he cracked jokes, he told droll stories. He became our house-keeper, prepared tea for us, looked after our food and other arrangements. For hours we walked by ourselves. He told me stories of his young days, of his early association with Gandhiji, of the missing links in many affairs to which I was only a partial witness. He came to acquire a strong attachment for me. And when in March 1941, I was laid up with serious illness, while Dr. Gilder nursed me with unfailing care, I saw the Sardar watching me

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with a mother's tender solicitude. And when, on being released, I was being taken out on a stretcher in a semi-conscious condition, I remember having seen this indomitable man's eyes following me with humid tenderness.

Ordinarily Sardar is a man of very few words. He can keep silence for hours in the midst of most exciting conversation..... never speaks for the sake of speaking. He only becomes eloquent when action is in the air. But when he does speak, he speaks with an eloquence unrivalled. He can attack, he can appeal, he can heap ridicule; he can make an audience cry. Above all, he is a master of winged words which like shafts pierce the heart. At the time of Bardoli Satyagraha the buffaloes of the agriculturists had grown whitish by being kept inside the house. The agriculturists were anxious about their beloved cattle which were developing some skin disease. Sardar said: "Mr. Smith, the Commissioner, did not like the buffaloes' colour. He does not like dark skin. He has turned them into 'madamdies.' (a contemptuous Gujerati form for madam, referring to European women)." The joke went from mouth to mouth and the whole Bardoli laughed at the cost of the Commissioner.

I remember another occasion. An Indian Ruler, about the time of the Rajkot affair, was telling Sardar how if their dynastic rule was in danger they would ally themselves with anybody to preserve it. Out came the Sardar: "Yes nothing very wonderful. During the Moghul times you gave your daughters to the Muslims and preserved your thrones." It was possibly said in a low tone which was all the more fearful because it was not loaded by vicious assent. His last speech before the Quit India Movement was a torrent of verbal lava. He made a pun on the word 'hath' which will long be remembered. In the language 'hath' means obstinacy and also to retreat. He stated that in the world, as the proverb goes, there were three kinds of 'haths;' the 'hath' of a woman, the 'hath' of a ruler and the 'hath' of a child. But the British had discovered a fourth 'hath', ('piche-hath': fleeing away). One member of the A.I.C.C. stated that the Congress of the Muslim was not in the A.I.C.C. but in the Muslim League. Prompt came the retort. "If that was so, the member's place was in the Muslim League and not in the A.I.C.C."

His language varies with the occasion and the audience. He can speak in the idiom of the villager. The next minute he can turn out sentences in choice literary Gujerati. His words are weapons; They never miss the mark.

Men have different estimates of his views and methods. But they are of no account in the final appreciation of what he is and what he stands for.

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Beyond his views and his ways is the Grand Rebel; the essential Sardar, the defiant hero of the undaunted will, unbending in his fierce determination to assert Indian independence. In India where alien rule has brought inferiority complex, he creates, wherever he moves, an atmosphere of self-dependent strength. To a nation's mind which is sicklied over with the pale cast of thought, he brings the elemental strength of limitless courage: "Be bold, again be bold, every where be bold." To an age of sweet words and hypocritical action, he brings a rugged strength which shatters the veneer which cloaks the most ambitious imperialism of all time. His fierce but dynamic will strives to represent, create a free and united India in an India afflicted with bondage and threatened with disruption.

Men of lesser strength —and I am one— often shudder at his audacity, his pugnacious refusal to compromise. The man of thought finds little that is attractive in him. The crowd bent on admiration misses the romantic look, the personal tradition, the flaming idealism which the collective mind worships. The imaginative mind turns away from him; for his mastery of the details and organisation shuts out the creed of the spirit within. But the student of history will immediately recognise him. He has stepped out of Plutarch's gallery of indomitable men. He is made of the stuff of which were made Prithviraj and Pratap of immortal glory.

PRECIOUS PATEL

Sardar Patel was dauntless, defiant, determined. He was a fine and fearless fighter for freedom. He was said to be a man of iron nerves. He has been rightly called a man of few words and many triumphs by a noted author. He was at once an answerable leader and an unquestioning follower. Not only was he a man of iron determination but also a man of determined irony. His ready repartee has lightened many a gloomy heart. He was par excellence one of the greatest humourists in the Congress ranks, perhaps in India.

"When Vallabhbhai was moving in advance as Gandhi's forerunner," writes Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, "Government saw in him John the Baptist who was the forerunner of Jesus, nineteen hundred years ago, and forthwith they laid their hands on him."

Sardar Patel is the hero of the people. And this has vested him with an astonishing hold on the minds of simple folk. He led the peasants, because he himself was their kith and kin. The peasants have an unflinching faith in his leadership. That in itself speaks volumes for his rare ability.

The peasant patriot was an indefatigable fighter. He had no love for the wordy feuds of shallow politicians. He refused to be drawn into controversies, and kept his finger on the heart of action.

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"I do not know," he said to the journalists, "if the Wavell plan gives real power or not. I do not also know if it is an advance on the Cripps' offer."

But this rock-like actionist is not without humour. He rocks his very adversaries with qualms of laughter. Once Gandhiji was discussing the appointment of a Principal in a certain college.

"Myself!" said Sardar Patel.

"What will you teach the students?"

"What Indian students require" said Patel, "is not learning but unlearning much of what they have learnt."

Sardar Patel always reserves the bitterest of his irony for the British. Referring to the August Revolution, he said:

"A former Secretary of State for India patted his back by saying on the eve of Gandhiji's arrest that the caravan was going on, while not even a dog barked. But this time the dogs did not stop at barking but did a pretty bit of biting too. And the next struggle would witness the biting of rabid dogs."

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SARDAR VALLABHBHAI J. PATEL

By G. V. Mavlankar.

MEMORIES from 1914 and onwards crowd the mind, and it is difficult, nay impossible, to select. Each incident, during the long period of 31 years' close association—in private life as well as public work—is expressive of one or the other trait of the Sardar's great personality, as aslo a record of the history of our national life and struggle for freedom. The reader will therefore take this only as my respectful and loving homage to the Sardar and in no sense an adequate pen-picture even in broad outlines.

My memory goes back to 1913. The Sardar landed at Bombay on 13th February 1913 and came to Ahmedabad the next morning. He knew very well the then Chief Justice Sir Basil Scott and therefore naturally called on him at Bombay. Sir Basil received him well and offered to give him all support, including a professorship at the Govt. Law School (the College was then known as "school"), if Vallabhbhai would stay at Bombay. But Vallabhbhai having no attractions and ambitions for the first place in the Bombay Legal World, preferred to come over to Ahmedabad. He had his own plans of serving his people and preferred Ahmedabad as the centre for his future public activities. What a coincidence that two years later Gandhiji also selected the same place! Friends all over the country will appreciate the just pride and excuse the local patriotism of the people of Ahmedabad when their hearts are full of exuberance and joy at the idea that they—their city—have contributed such a unique share in the moulding and leading of Indian Nationalism, during the last 30 years. While Ahmedabad cannot be permitted the exclusive claim of having given Gandhiji to India and the world, it can legitimately claim so as regards the Sardar. He practically started his public life in Ahmedabad and rose to his present position by dint of qualities, work and sacrifice. To trace and follow the course of his unique career as patriot, and the process of the growing spiritualization of his politics on his association with Gandhiji will be an absorbing and fascinating story and history of Indian Nationalism and fight for freedom.

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A smart, young man, dressed in a well-cut suit, with a felt hat worn slightly at an angle, piercing and bright eyes, not given to many words, receiving visitors with just a smile but not entering into any conversation, maintaining firm and pensive looks appearing almost to look upon the world with a sort of superiority complex, talking with an air of confidence and superiority whenever he opened his lips, carrying an impression of sternness and reserve. Such was the new barrister who had come to Ahmedabad for practice. There were in Ahmedabad at that time about six barristers only a couple of whom had busy practice. The new barrister was naturally a centre of attraction for the junior bar. His personality, demeanour etc., had their own attractions—Mixed feelings of attraction, respect, awe and perhaps a feeling of subdued resentment at the way in which he seemed to look at others.

I had started practice formally in February 1913, but had not decided to settle at Ahmedabad. There was an idea of migrating to Bombay which was then a centre of attraction for service of the country under persons like the late Sir Pherozshah Mehta, Sir Dinshaw Waccha, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale and other stalwarts of the Liberal Party. Due to domestic happenings, I had to give up the idea of migrating to Bombay for practice and settled at Ahmedabad (the native place of my family for nearly six generations) from October 1913. This was the luckiest choice in my life as it brought me into personal and close touch with the greatest living person of our age and with another great personality and patriot the Sardar.

He had, as a lawyer, mostly criminal practice. His cross-examination of witnesses was brief but pointed and he showed such a masterly judgment of men that he could make out by a searching glance at the witness as to the type the witness was and would lead his attack by way or cross-examination accordingly. His conduct of his cases always exhibited thorough mastery of facts, a proper and correct estimate of the opponents and case and line of attack and his carefully planned defence and attack. But the one great quality which struck everybody and made him the object of admiration was his fearlessness and the bluntness with which he would deal with the court in which he was appearing. He would never allow the judge to outstep, even in the least, the limits of courtesy nor would he allow or tolerate any unfair, unjust or improper leaning on the part of the court in favour of the police or the prosecution. He had always to appear for the defence and his presence as a defence counsel not only inspired confidence in the client but held the judge and the prosecution within their legitimate bounds. He would neither spare the judge, nor the prosecutor, nor the police and would call a spade, a spade. It is difficult, at this day, for people to realise what this meant in 1913-14, when people and the bar carried notions different from now about respect and courtesy for authority. These notions of courtesy and respect almost savoured of flattery and servility.

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Vallabhbhai was far above these and never minced matters, for fear of losing practice before a particular judge, if he happened to criticise or expose the idiosyncrasies of a judge. He was thus a great protector of the self-respect as well as the conveniences of the bar and the public.

The Kaira district was considered by Government Officials to be a criminal district. It, therefore, appeared to them to require different standards in the matter of legal justice. Though heavy criminal cases for Kaira used to be tried by the Sessions Court at Ahmedabad and though members of the jury would be persons from Ahmedabad, the Kaira district was not given the right of trial by jury. The Kaira cases used to be trials by judges with the aid of assessors. This was a great handicap to the Kaira people and the judge's opinion being final, the accused were prejudiced by the biassed official views of the criminality in the Kaira district. In one murder case, two brothers on trial against whom there was practically no **prima facie** evidence, were not only committed for trial but bail was refused to them. Vallabhbhai, during the course of sessions trial, had a straight thrust against the judge, "Why were the accused not granted bail?" The police had the usual plea that the accused would tamper with the prosecution evidence and this was a Kaira case, therefore the accused should be taken as dangerous people. Vallabhbhai applied for bail at the beginning of the trial. His argument was, "I extremely regret that no accused from Kaira gets a fair trial in this court. If there is evidence against him, convict him on the evidence and if there is no evidence against him, convict him on insufficient evidence, because the accused being a Kaira man must have managed to tamper it. Evidence or no evidence the people being considered criminal, the accused must be convicted. That seems to be the reasoning of this court. If this were not so, I do not see why bail should not have been granted in a case like this, where there is not even **prima facie** evidence of the guilt of the accused.

Mr. Vallabhbhai said this in open court in the presence of a large number of lawyers. The judge was stunned at the frontal attack. He had also some consciousness of the truth of the defence counsel's statement. The court said, "Mr. Patel, you are obviously in an excited mood when you make such a serious allegation against the court. We will adjourn and meet after half an hour."

The judge went to his chamber and immediately passed orders for bail which he had refused a short time back. Needless to add that the trial resulted in the acquittal of the accused. I need not multiply instances of Vallabhbhai's courage and fearlessness in the course of his legal practice. It is this quality and the training he had in the legal profession is, to my mind, the basis of his success in later political life.

Practice of law for the purpose of earning a fortune and living a comfortable life of ease and personal enjoyment were never his ideals.

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Born of poor parents and brought up literally as an agriculturist knowing the conditions of the village folk and their hardships, he had always the idea of the service of the community. He had to strive hard for his education and all through he was self-reliant. This made him what he is. Blessed by intelligence, he combined therewith habits of self-reliance, determination and industry.

Gandhiji had come to India in 1915 and had started his Satyagrah-ashram in Ahmedabad. Gujarat Club, was then the central meeting place in Ahmedabad for evening recreation of the prominent public workers of the day including men like the late Mr. Govindrao Patil, (Secretary, Gujarat Sabha and General Secretary 18th National Congress at Ahmedabad), the late Mr. Shivabhai Patel (Secretary, Gujarat Sabha), the late Mr. Chimanlal N. Thakore (Bar-at-Law), the late Mr. Maganbhai Chaturbhai Patel (Bar-at-Law) and, many other lawyers. I had joined the Club in 1909 (immediately after passing my B.A. Exam) and it was a pleasure and a treat to sit by the side or better to say "**at the feet**" of these elders every evening and hear their talks about the various topics affecting the country's political, social, economical life and their plans of work for the country's uplift. Vallabhbhai had also joined the club on his arrival in Ahmedabad, but his chief interest therein was relaxation by game of Bridge with his friend Mr. Chimanlal Thakore. Mr. Thakore used always to warn Mr. Vallabhbhai against launching himself into public life relying on any strength or support from friends.

Mr. Thakore had very bitter experience in 1902 when he was let down and left alone in the fight he had taken up against a European who had started something like a slaughter house in Ahmedabad. The whole population disliked it and wanted it to be removed. Mr. Thakore and others were deputed by the public to see the gentleman and to request him to establish himself elsewhere. When the party went to see him, such was the arrogance and racial pride of the man, that, he not only insulted but assaulted the gentlemen and such was the courage of the public that not one of the gentlemen could dare even think of prosecuting the European; but they declined even to appear as witnesses for Mr. Thakore! This was too much for Mr. Thakore. But for the gentlemen who were with him, he would have settled accounts with the European there and then, but he restrained himself and instead decided to launch a prosecution. This also had to be given up and Mr. Thakore left public life in sheer disgust. It was but natural that he should sound a note of warning to his friend Mr. Vallabhbhai.

The experience of Mr. Thakore was a small incident but it shows the thraldom under which the Indian gentry then lived in their relations with Europeans in this country. The European was not even an official; but the principal officers were all Europeans and the public had neither confidence that they would get justice in a struggle beetween an Indian

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and a European nor had they the courage to resist and assert their own and vindicate their honour. It is difficult for the present generation to appreciate the general atmosphere of suppression, fear and cowardice which had deprived them their sense of self-respect and equality of status with the European as man to man. We have to view the part played by Gandhiji and Vallabhbhai with this background to enable us to appraise the real value of their work, their services to the country and the deep sense of obligation which the Indian Nation will, for ever, carry when they think of Gandhiji and Vallabhbhai. They and others of their type and mettle changed the whole, as if by a magic wand, in a wonderfully short space of time and brought us to a realisation of our manhood, our sense of self-respect and our right of equality with all races in the world. The white race is no longer conceded any inherently higher status—But to resume our story:

Mr. Vallabhbhai had not therefore immediately entered public life though that was his chief aim of life. He was watching, studying and establishing contacts. Public life was then almost exclusively restricted to the lawyer class. Gandhiji was also desirous of having contacts with leaders of public life in Ahmedabad and with that end in view, he visited the Gujarat Club once or twice just to meet people there and explain to them his ideas about his Satyagraha Ashram. Vallabhbhai kept aloof and was very sceptical and critical about Gandhiji's plans. He was also brutally frank in expressing his views. He was at his game of Bridge with his friend Mr. Thakore, and I was sitting by his side watching it. When I got up to go to the group of elders where Gandhiji came, Vallabhbhai passed very sarcastic remarks discouraging me from going to hear the talks. Could any one had then even dreamt that this man would be a devoted follower and a firm believer in Gandhian philosophy and technique? But this has not been the transformation overnight. It is the result of growing and closer and closer association and comradeship in selfless service of the country, which means the poor and down-trodden, and not the vested interests.

Thus, though Gandhiji was in Ahmedabad for nearly two years, Vallabhbhai was aloof from him and started his public life independently by entry in the Ahmedabad Municipality in about 1916. He took no time to make his mark by the thoroughness of his work. He spared neither time nor industry to go into the details of administration and did yeoman's service to the city as Chairman, Sanitary Committee. His colleagues on the Municipality were the late Sir Ramanbhai Nilkanth, and the late Dewan Bahadur Harilal Desai. Both these were indefatigable workers and Ahmedabad was really lucky in having this devoted trio to guide and control the affairs of the city. Though ideologically and temperamentally the three differed, the administration of the Municipality was carried on with one mind, but of all the three, Vallabhbhai, though

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a junior in the Municipality, was undoubtedly the coming man, essentially because of his courage to fight the officials.

Ahmedabad was singularly free from visitations of plague from 1896 onwards notwithstanding the ravages of the epidemic in other parts of the country. But the situation got a bit serious in about October 1917. For the first time people went outside to live in huts and even courts were as good as closed. The responsibility of the Chairman, Sanitary Committee, was heavy. Mr. Vallabhbhai stood at his post. He continued to live in the city and was seen moving round with the Municipal staff for effective sanitation under his personal guidance. This was, to the public mind, a new departure in the outlook and method of service by city fathers.

In 1916, a session of the Bombay Provincial Conference (very probably 16th session) was held at Ahmedabad under the Presidency of Mr. Mahomed Ali Jinnah. Vallabhbhai took no prominent part in this, though he attended it. He had restricted himself to his Municipal work. An important question (appointment of the Municipal Engineer) agitated the Municipality. Of the three candidates, one was a European who was supported by the authorities, the then Commissioner Mr. Pratt taking a personal interest in the matter. The Englishman won his seat by a majority of one vote as against the rival Indian. One of the persons who voted for the Englishman was the Secretary of the Gujarat Sabha which was then working as a District Congress Committee as also for the whole of Gujarat. Of course, the work of the Sabha was then limited to representations and protest meetings only. There was abundant resentment in the body of the members, that one of its secretaries should have voted for an Englishman notwithstanding the Congress and therefore the Sabha's insistence on Indianisation. The Indian candidate was also superior to his English rival and the resentment was therefore not merely sentimental but legitimately justified. At the annual general meeting of the Sabha, though everybody resented the action of one of its secretaries, nobody had the courage of proposing names for the secretaryship deleting the delinquent's name. Mr. Vallabhbhai belled the cat and put up a proposal substituting my name in place of the other secretary. I was selected, though quite a junior, because of the work I did in respect of the Provincial Conference. Here again, but for Vallabhbhai, the Sabha would have continued, out of a sense of false courtesy or unwillingness of members to get unpleasant, to exist in an incongruous position of preaching one thing and practising the reverse.

In July 1917, Messrs. Vallabhbhai and Harilal Desai were elected Secretaries of the Gujarat Club and I was elected Joint-Secretary. It was at the Club that we received one afternoon the news about the heroic stand of Gandhiji in the court of the Motihari (Bihar) Magistrate who banned Gandhiji's inquiry into the conditions of labour employed

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by the European planters in Bihar. This was the first act in India of Gandhiji's technique of non-violent resistance. Gandhiji refused to obey the order and preferred imprisonment to abandonment of the inquiry. This act of Gandhiji electrified all of us at the Club. The late Dewan Bahadur Harilal jumped up and waving his hands exclaimed, "Mavlankar, here is a brave man and we must have him as our President." It was this occasion which attracted Vallabhbhai more to Gujarat Sabha and his attention, hitherto restricted to the Municipality, began to be diverted more and more into the affairs of the Gujarat Sabha. Gandhiji accepted our invitation to be the President of the Sabha and that was also the beginning of Vallabhbhai being drawn nearer to and in Gandhiji's activities and methods. Brave as he was, the bravery in Gandhiji found in him a ready response. This was a small beginning of the close and great association in comradeship in the service of the motherland.

Till the reorganisation of the National Congress in December 1920 at Nagpur, it was the Gujarat Sabha which was functioning as the political organisation for Gujarat and District Congress Committee for Ahmedabad. Since its rejuvenation from the time of the Provincial Conference in 1916, the Sabha had become active and with the inclusion therein of Gandhiji, its activities not only increased in many directions, but the members of the Sabha began to whirl round to Gandhiji's technique of direct action. It was however the point of Gandhiji not to involve the Sabha in any active programme of direct action, but to take its activities upto that limit and then form a separate body for the purposes of direct action taking such members of the Sabha and others with him as were agreeable and willing to take up the responsibilities and risks involved in any programme of direct action. Vallabhbhai was of course the first and foremost to throw himself whole-heartedly into such programme.

The Sabha was carrying on many activities with all of which he was associated as member of the Committee and some time as office-bearer. I had, thus, the good luck of closer association with him as our work increased. The Gujarat Sabha sent us as delegates to the Lucknow Congress in 1916. It arranged to present a monster petition to Mr. Montague in connection with the Reforms. It undertook influenza relief in 1918, famine relief in 1919. But the most important of the Sabha's work was the question of redress to the Kaira agriculturists, on failure of crops, till the monsoon of 1917. The Sabha made all possible representations to the Govt. officials—from the Collector of Kaira to the Govt.—with the active help and support of all big guns such as the late Sir Goculdas Kahandas Parekh, Vitthalbhai J. Patel, Diwan Bahadur Harilal Desai, Sir Ramanbhai Nilkanth and others. This was all being done under Gandhiji's guidance and direction. But the bureaucracy was adamant and it became necessary to contemplate direct action. All the

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the taxes not only from those in Ahmedabad but also from those who were transferred to various places during the time. The history of the Ahmedabad Municipality from 1919 to 1929 is the history principally of Vallabhbhai's fight for Swaraj. It is impossible even to mention the various and crowded activities and to do them any justice.

His other activities outside the Municipality from 1921 onwards are wellknown to the public and I need not detail them. The Nagpur Flag Satyagraha of 1922, his presidentship of the Congress, the Bardoli struggle of 1928, Flood Relief operations of 1927, the C. D. O. struggles of 1930-31, 1932-34, 1940-41, and 1942-45, work as member of the Congress Working Committee and Parliamentary Board etc. are fresh in the public mind. He is a great administrator, a great organiser, a great fighter.

But this picture of Vallabhbhai would be incomplete and one-sided if I were not just to touch the domestic and personal aspects. He is a loving friend and possesses the rare quality of loyalty to colleagues and friends in all circumstances and situations. He has a very soft and tender heart, which being perhaps concealed under stern and self-contained looks, few or no words or very pungent and incisive words, is not seen by those who have not the privilege of close association. Notwithstanding his exceptional shrewdness and sound judgment about men and matters, he is simple and trusting, almost like a child, in the case of those whom he considers worthy of his confidence. To stand by a friend is always a point of honour with him. Having a strong mind combined with sentiment his likes and dislikes are also strong—some time strong to a fault; but the greatest merit is that he never has any personal motive or axe to grind—not even obliging a friend or hurting a foe. He measures everything and moulds his attitude and conduct to achieve what he considers to be in the best interests of the country. His wit and humour are absolutely his own—so much so, that in his company, you feel happy even under the most adverse situations.

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NEHRU AND PATEL

By **Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.**

We had heard of Damon and Pythias, as well as of David and Jonathan. They are always mentioned together but in Bharat we witness today much the same spectacle when we constantly see the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister of India sailing on the breezy ocean of popular applause together or alternately. They command the devotion of the people and occasionally even their dread. Indeed the two make but one personality, and composite character of compensating qualities which together make up the ideal leadership of a popular ministry. Each without the other would leave the picture unfinished.

One often wonders what should have been the position of the Central Government in Delhi — if the combination of the apposites (one had almost said, the opposites) had not been so happy, so appropriate, and so well dove-tailed as it actually is. Two friends do not make an ideal combination if each is the rubber stamp of the other. Two fellow workers can make no progress, can indeed reach no decision, if they are punching each other. With our two public characters it is otherwise and here we must pause to understand what these respective qualities are which are dovetailed into one another to produce effective co-operation.

DYNAMIC

The Sardar is a dynamic personality, quick to receive an idea, prompt in thought and relentless in action. He believes in collective working through friends and fellow workers bound together by ties of loyalty to the leader. He is always alert, ever receptive and restless, eager to grasp information and storing it like the bee in a particular cell of the honeycomb of his capacious brain—to be drawn upon when allied matters mature and await utilization. Whether he is ill or well, whether in Bombay or Delhi, whether awake or asleep, whether thinking or dreaming, he has his mind upon the burning problems of the day, the issues of the hour and the solutions of the minute and operates his telephones inside his mind and outside in his office, perhaps four at a time, like the stock-

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brokers of the share market in the Dalal Street of Bombay, or the Clive Street of Calcutta.

To the spectator, it is all buzz and boom, the sound of drum and cymbal with no articulate noises, yet crores-worth-business is done in the one; and empires are demolished in the other. The fate of five hundred and sixty-two states is decided in a minute, the destiny of nine provinces is determined in a second. Is it the lot of the Zamindars and the compensation due to them?—the provincial Governments are pulled up in a jiffy; is it the relations between Congress Committees and State Ministers? each is put in its place in a moment.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY

In all these matters it would be somewhat of an exaggeration to say that Sardar and Nehru see eye to eye with each other. But they furnish a remarkable example of unity in diversity. No two fingers on the same hand are alike. No two brothers of the same parents think, feel or act together. The best of friends differ from each other. To differ and diverge is natural, but to reconcile is difficult and is achieved through effort. It is here that our two public characters furnish an example to the world of how collaborators bent upon a common purpose must distinguish essentials from non-essentials, the remote from the immediate and principle from expedient. Indeed it is not merely by temperament that the two may happen to differ, but by their very portfolios, they are bound to develop types of outlook which cannot but differ in the two cases.

SELF-EFFACEMENT

The Minister for Home Affairs is dominated by the supreme and irresistible need for internal safety and peace, while the Minister for Foreign Affairs is swayed by the external reactions of any particular measure or policy adopted. Where a certain foreigner in the country may be considered an undesirable by the Home Minister, the attitude and approach of the Foreign Minister may be less pronounced and more conciliatory in respect of the same problem and the same person.

The art of co-operation whether it be in a married couple or a ministerial couple depends upon a measure of self-effacement and a good deal of mutual subordination. This art is found to be cultivated to its highest pitch by our revered Sardar and our beloved Nehru.

VARIATION AND VISION

It is not in respect of matters of pure politics alone that such variation of view and vision is apt to arise. The Sardar is essentially an Easterner, he is more consciously a Hindu, yet he is able to imbibe the

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ideals of the West and maintain the best of relations with other communities. Where convictions are particularly strong and even uncompromising, in respect of subjects other than one's own, it is just possible that harmony and fellowship are only maintained by a wise hesitation in thinking; a wise taciturnity of speech and a wise tardiness in action. It is thus that the Kashmir problem is treated as one on which initiative and development of policy are wholly left to the Prime Minister for the latter's interest and concern for Kashmir cannot be easily excelled or at all called in question.

COUNTRY ABOVE SELF

The difficulty, however, arises where one is concerned with one's own department and need not observe any checks and balances, for then it is just possible that we may lay the emphasis too strongly on our own view points. If ever report has it that the Sardar does it, one can only say that between nature and artifice, which are always at war with each other, victory may come to the one or to the other.

The Sardar, however, let it be noted, is working against time, against doctors and at times against the dictates of the guardian angel at home—his daughter. But to him country is higher than self and need we say that success cannot be withheld from the labours of a statesman who works with the tenacity of the bull-dog, the shrewdness of the bloodhound and the dignity of the Dane.

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THE LEADER OF MEN

By **Shri R. R. Diwakar**

As days pass by, the great figure of Sardar which filled the national life of India and occupied the political arena so prominently for close on three decades, recedes gradually from our eyes. But his solid achievements, the impress of his personality, the special contribution he made to the making of the nation, before as well as after freedom, stand out now far more dominantly than ever on the canvas of Indian history.

From the role of a humble soldier in the Kheda Satyagraha under Gandhiji, he rose to be his most trusted lieutenant. He continued to be so till Bapu's passing away. 'Sardar is incorruptible,' wrote Bapu once in his journal. Departure or deviation from the line laid down by the Guru even by a hair's breadth was inconceivable in his case.

His qualities as a great social worker and as an able administrator came to the fore when for some time he was at the head of Municipal affairs in Ahmedabad. But what made him a 'Sardar' was Bardoli and the campaign that he led so ably. Even Bapu said that he would not go or talk there unless Sardar ordered him to do so! He held undivided sway in that peasant world. His power of organisation was so great that even government servants in those areas could not get rations unless he permitted. *'The Times of India'* wrote in those days that the writ of the Government had ceased to run in Bardoli. He emerged triumphant from the peasants' struggle, as the Sardar, as the man of the masses, as the leader of men.

If he was a great soldier and a strategist while fighting the battle for independence, he was no less great as the builder of a new State, as a shrewd and masterly administrator, as the wielder of a wizard's wand that consolidated and integrated some six hundred States into a single Union. This handling of the States probelm will go down in history as the greatest single achievement of this rare statesman. There did exist empires of a sort in India, and elsewhere too, possibly bigger ones. But it was his astute statecraft which moulded a big museum of political institutions, which sheltered all varieties of medieval and modern

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administrations, into a single sovereign, democratic Republic, consisting of a vast continental area and a population of 360 millions.

Many are often heard saying, Oh, how nice it would have been if he were spared for the country. These people forget that that can be said of almost every great man; because never was humanity surplus in good or great men and never has there been a dearth of arrears of good work to be done!

It is heartening however, to recall the camaraderie that became closer and closer between Panditji, who has amply justified his choice as the political heir of Gandhiji, and the Sardar. It may almost be said that it was historic and brought great results to the country which was faced with tasks of vast magnitude. It is now for the youth of the country and the newer generation to carry the burdens and see that they help build the nation further and take it along the path of greater achievement and glory.

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THE ADMIRABLE MAN

By G. S. Bajpai

I first met the Sardar 25 years ago. I was at the time President of the Indian Merchants' Chamber which was trying to bring about a settlement in the matter of the Bardoli Satyagraha. Under his leadership, the movement had assumed formidable proportions and the Bombay Government had ultimately to acknowledge its strength and come to terms with him.

The impressions I formed at my first meeting were those of a man of strong purpose and iron will. Later on, I was to see something of the human side of him; and in the last few years of his life, while great distances still divided us, I was privileged to enjoy his friendship. The more I saw of him, the more I came to admire the qualities which had earned him the unique position he occupied in the leadership of the country.

Sardar Vallabhbhai's stature seemed to grow even bigger after the long-drawn struggle was over and Independence was attained. The political fighter ripened into a statesman. It is in the closing years of his life that, in spite of ill-health and advancing age, his genius for leadership was seen at its best. It is not necessary to dwell on the services he rendered in consolidating the newly-won freedom and in shaping the diverse units in the political life of India into an integral whole. The part he played in bringing this about has been universally acclaimed and has secured for him an abiding place in the history of the country.

Among those who led the struggle for India's independence to a successful conclusion, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel will rank, not only in the judgment of contemporaries but of posterity, as one of the foremost. Indeed, with the exception of Mahatma Gandhi and our Prime Minister, he had no superior.

Of the days when it waxed and waned in fortune—it never waned in courage and resolution—only those can speak with the authority of experience who took part in the fray. My only contact, and that too

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indirect, with this rich and gallant period of the Sardar's life was limited to that unique effort in organised non-violent resistance, the Bardoli satyagraha. I was, then, Secretary to the Government of India in the Department which dealt, among other matters, with Land Revenue. Since this was still a "reserved" subject, the Centre had powers of direction, superintendence and control over the Provinces. Moreover, the no-tax campaign in Bardoli raised issues relating to "law and order" far more important than those connected with Land Revenue. Indeed, unless memory betrays me, it was the law and order aspect that caused greater concern to the Government of India than that of Revenue. Nevertheless, at a late stage, Lord Halifax (then Lord Irwin) asked my Department for an appraisal of the claim on behalf of the *satyagrahis* that the increase in assessment was excessive. Our conclusion that the complaint was justified—a view supported by the independent findings of Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru and the late Shri Thakkar — was accepted by the Viceroy. The experts of the then Government of Bombay cut an unenviable figure in the Conference of Revenue Members of Council which the Viceroy convened to consider whether a radical change in Land Revenue policy was necessary. In view of the constitutional changes then contemplated, nothing much resulted from this Conference. Its significance lies in the impact that Bardoli made upon something so esoteric and so sacrosanct as a policy which Lord Curzon had formulated in the first few years of the present century and which British Administrators had come to regard as a model, not only of efficiency but of generosity to the tenant.

This was in 1929. 18 years later, when I joined the Ministry of External Affairs, India stood on the eve of freedom. In the critical days that followed its advent, the national government had to face, first, a grave threat to the very stability of the new State and, when the tragic situation created by the uprooting of vast masses of people caused by the partition had been brought under control, problems of equal gravity and of equal significance for India's future, such as the dispute with Pakistan over Kashmir; the menace of violent resistance to accession in Hyderabad; the fitting of the autocratic princely States into the political pattern of the Indian Union; the harnessing, in complete loyalty of mind and spirit, of the Services to a Popular Administration completely different in outlook, approach and method, to the tasks of government from the British Raj.

As Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home and State Affairs Sardar Patel had to meet a large share of all and the brunt of several elements in this formidable challenge. The resolution, the courage, the patience and the sagacity with which he met the challenge have become part of contemporary tradition. If the integration or merger of former Indian States into the Indian Union were his only achievement, Sardar Patel would be sure of a luminous niche in our long and chequered history.

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But he left his mark on the entire field of government. Cabinet responsibility is apt to blur the contribution of individual members to the shaping and implementation of policy. Public service, however, should not be judged only by the measure of publicity or praise that it receives.

What I learnt to admire most in Sardar Patel was his sense of realism. To some he might appear, even in the short retrospect of less than a decade, a revolutionary turned conservative. But if revolutionary ardour is the wind that the ship of State needs for progression, realism is equally essential as ballast. He addressed himself primarily to the tasks of consolidation. He was convinced that free India needed firm and stable foundations for social and economic progress. If dynamism seemed to cause him some concern at times, this was due not to lack of courage but to a sense of anxiety lest excessive speed should defeat its own purpose. He believed in progress but progress with order.

In politics, the criteria of value are not immutable. Each succeeding age has its own standards. But no change can ever efface or even diminish the respect and admiration evoked by fortitude in adversity; by courage in the face of danger; by single-mindedness and steadfast, unwavering endeavour in the pursuit of ideals honestly held. These are eternal virtues, an unvarying and invariable measure of human worth and human greatness. Sardar Patel had his shortcomings; which human being has not? But his constructive achievement will outlive the memory of his failings and determine his place in history. It is that achievement which entitles him to the nation's homage and affection.

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THE SARDAR AS I KNEW HIM

By Mr. V. P. Menon

On August 15, 1947, India emerged from slavery to Swaraj. We had to pay a heavy price for this freedom which brought with it both sorrow and anxiety. The country which had been regarded as a geographical unit was cut in twain. The communal Frankenstein had demanded a heavy toll of life and money. Fanaticism was pitted against fanaticism and reason disappeared. The permanent services which had constituted the steel-frame of the British administration had developed cracks as a result of the war and were further weakened by the disappearance of the British element and also of the Muslims who had opted for Pakistan. The lapse of paramountcy had made this situation more perilous with the spectre of 562 Ulsters being created in the country. Prophets of gloom predicted that the newly-launched ship of the Indian Union would not survive the rocks ahead.

No one in the country realised the grimness of the menacing situation so clearly as Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He had been the Home Member ever since the Congress entered the Executive Council of the Governor-General in September 1946. He knew that behind the deceptive facade of popular excitement and enthusiasm, the condition of the country was far from satisfactory. He realised that our hard-won freedom would not survive for long if prompt and adequate measures were not taken. He was apprehensive that fissiparous and subversive tendencies might get the upper hand in a country always noted for its centrifugalism. He was clear in his mind that the paramount task before the nascent Republic was to establish security. He had the example of Burma before him; and he was determined that India should not go down the Gadarene slope to chaos. He was convinced that to create stability in the country and confidence in the Government was the imperative need of the hour; and he set about achieving it.

He first turned his attention to the services and was determined that they should be induced to play their part. He understood that without a reliable and efficient steel-frame, the new Government could achieve nothing. Rightly therefore did he give top priority to the task of winning over the services and strengthening their morale. He sent

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for a few of the senior officers who had his confidence and assured them that the interests of the services would be safe in his hands. He said that whatever might have been the attitude of the services in the past, he had confidence that they would play the game. He trusted the Indian officials to strengthen their own Government and to adjust themselves to the requirements of a Welfare State. He constituted himself as the champion of the services. It is remarkable how the services reacted to his touch. It became a question of honour with them to live up to Sardar's expectations. Very few know the prodigious task the services did perform during the critical period following the partition.

During the communal disorders that followed partition, Sardar was ruthless. He gave unqualified support to his officers in suppressing this threat to law and order. At the same time, he followed a policy of sympathetic understanding towards the refugees in general and the Sikhs in particular. He won them over with conciliation and kind words. If the Sikh situation did not get out of control at that critical time, it was mainly due to Sardar's healing touch. His speech at Amritsar at the height of the two-way migration will ever remain in my memory. It was a masterpiece of tact and sympathy. It was this twin policy of putting down disorders and of conciliating those who had legitimate grievances that saved the situation in the country immediately after the Transfer of Power.

Leadership is of two kinds. A leader like Napoleon who was master of both policy as well as detail wanted only instruments to carry out his orders. Such supermen are not born every day. Sardar's leadership was of the second category. He selected his officers with care and left them to implement his policy without interference. He never pretended that he knew everything in the world. He never adopted a policy without full and frank consultation with his officers. These discussions benefited him as also the officers.

Sardar never looked for scapegoats whenever any of his policies miscarried. He was prepared to take the full blame on his broad shoulders. Because of this protection that he gave to his officers, rarely did any of his schemes or policies ever go wrong. He would never allow the services to be cavilled at. No wonder therefore that the services looked up to him as their champion and protector. I remember that during the financial stringency of 1949, he expressed a wish to me that if the services would voluntarily accept a cut in salary, it would be a good political gesture. It was only his wish and he left it to us to consider. I was at the time Chairman of the Selection Board; and I called a meeting of the Secretaries and Joint Secretaries of the Government of India and told them of Sardar's wish. It was certainly a great sacrifice which they were asked to make. But everyone voluntarily agreed to forego a portion of his salary and the meeting

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Sardar Patel with Shri S. K. Patil, President of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee.

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SARDAR—THE MAN WHO LED

By S. K. Patil

The Fifteenth of December 1950 was the darkest day for India because on that day the nation lost Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, one of her foremost architects. This heavy blow coming so close on the heels of the great tragedy of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi has laid the nation prostrate. The feeling of confidence and security which this Iron Man of Action inspired in the country had become almost a habit of our national mind for many years. The magnitude of the national loss will continue to unfold itself at every step when things get stuck up for want of his clear-cut directive and decisive action.

Born of farmer parents of sturdy stock on 31st October 1875 Vallabhbhai had inherited in his temparament and action the qualities typical of rural life. It was against the background of these qualities that his early youth was built up. Even in the days of his greatest triumphs, he never ceased taking pride in the circumstance that he was a farmer and would always remain one. No single man has served their cause as much as he has done. Sarojini Naidu in her usual irrepressible, humorous vein once said that the great Sardar understood agriculture better than any other culture. Sardar was essentially a born leader of peasants whatever else he might have been in later life. He had his education in an unorthodox fashion. He passed the Pleader's Examination and started practice early in life. His unfailing tact and uncanny judgment of men—the qualities that made him so great and dependable in later life—were assets for his legal practice too. At a comparatively late age when he was 35 he went to England and qualified himself for the Bar. He had a farmer's single-minded devotion to the job in hand and this never failed to produce the expected results. Returning to India then as a Barrister-at-Law, he easily established a sizable legal practice in Ahmedabad where he did not take long to assume the social leadership. By his rustic humour, outspokenness and biting sarcasm he soon became a figure to be reckoned with in the City's

The year 1917 brought about a revolutionary change in Vallabhbhai's life—a change that pushed him into public life and made him the most

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popular national leader that he was. This was the year when the Guru and the Disciple met. The Guru was Mahatma Gandhi and the Disciple was Vallabhbhai Patel. The relation between the two had something of a divine touch in it. On more than one occasion Gandhiji himself in his characteristic humour described what a pompous man Sardar was before he met him and what a simple man he became after they had met. The relationship between these two great leaders was the greatest single factor for the success of our political struggle. Never did Sardar do anything thereafter which had not the complete approval and blessing of the Guru. On many an occasion he brushed aside his personal convictions to fall in line with the advice of his Guru. He had a soldier's discipline where obedience was concerned.

Gandhiji's assassination was the severest blow to Sardar. He never recovered from this blow. Very often he used to say "What is the fun in life when the saint of Sabarmati is no more". Although completely paralysed by this blow Sardar made a superhuman effort during the last two years to suppress his personal emotions and deliver himself to the task which the nation had entrusted to his care. The effort was so much of a strain on his frail body with its numerous handicaps.

Those of this country and outside who had the good fortune of watching the glorious achievements of Sardar during recent years, and particularly after the attainment of freedom, used to be reminded of some of his earlier achievements which, though comparatively smaller and definitely less spectacular, nonetheless laid the foundation of his unassailable position in our public and political life. His sense of public service rivalled with his indomitable spirit in the fight for his country's freedom. To him both were complementary propositions.

The City of Ahmedabad was afflicted by the epidemic of plague in the year 1917. Many had fled the City for self protection. Vallabhbhai refused to leave the City. He organised an anti-plague campaign and gave succour to those who stood in need of it. The high spirit of social service which he exhibited on that occasion won for him the blessings of the poor of Ahmedabad. In subsequent tragedies to which his native province, Gujerat, was a prey, people looked to him with confidence to organise the relief measures. No single man in our big country organised and with unfailing success as many and as extensive relief measures in natural calamities as he had done. He fought for the abolition of forced labour which was then in vogue and got it removed. He organised large-scale relief measures in the influenza epidemic of 1918. Organisation of famine relief was his special subject. No matter what part of the country was ravaged by famine, Sardar's great organising ability was promptly in operation and with spectacular results. He organised famine relief in 1918 and added laurels to his crown. His resistance to evil had all the mark of his brave and fearless spirit.

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He successfully fought against the iniquitous tax in Borsad and chronic thefts in railway wagons. His relief campaign in Borsad plague won universal praise from all parts of the country. His unmatched organisation of relief measures in Quetta and Bihar Earthquakes brought relief to millions in distress. His ability to collect large funds for worthy causes had become almost a by word in our country. Donors of funds had complete confidence in his judgment and integrity alike. That cannot be said of many men in public life. Even the woes of his countrymen in far-off places like East Africa did not fail to move his kind heart. The Clove Boycott in 1937 is a case in point.

Carlyle's definition of a hero was exemplified in Sardar Patel to an amazing degree. He was, indeed, a hero at all points. Whether it was serving the cause of agriculturists or organising relief measures in disasters or fighting the wrongs of British Imperialism or running the institutions of local self government or carrying on the responsibilities of the country's administration, he evinced the same earnestness and masterly grasp of details. In 1924 he was elected President of the Ahmedabad Municipality and remained so for a continuous period of five years until 1928. With his usual thoroughness and sense of service he lifted the tone of the local self government administration. His regime as the President brought him encomiums both from friends and critics alike. The City of Ahmedabad had not in those days any reputation for sanitation and good administration. The City had to be cleaned up and for that many revolutionary measures had immediately to be taken in hand. The views of orthodoxy were a stumbling block in the way of progress. As was his nature Vallabhbhai reckoned no obstacle or handicap too big for his efforts. He immediately set himself to the task and accomplished it to a large extent before he laid down the reigns of office.

Ever since, his interest in the institution of local self government continued unabated. His last public act before he breathed his last was the inspiring message to the Local Self Government Conference in Delhi which he signed on 13th December 1950. He could sign no more papers after that. This fact will remain a great tribute to the local self government itself.

Vallabhbhai had many triumphs to his credit but, in my view, the greatest and the most significant was the heroic struggle of Bardoli in 1928. The no-tax movement of Bardoli known as the Bardoli Satyagraha is now an epic in the struggle of our political freedom. It was here that the foundation of the later successes of our Satyagraha Movements was well and truly laid. It is a singular phenomenon of our political struggle that unlike in other countries the peasants in India were in the forefront of all campaigns of our movement. They discovered themselves as it were in the great Bardoli Movement. The 'Bardoli

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spirit' as it came to be recognised sustained us in all our later trials. It was as the General of the Bardoli Campaign that Vallabhbhai came to be known as 'Sardar'. Gandhiji in a public meeting once described him as the Sardar of Bardoli and the people of India took up the cue. Ever since he was the beloved Sardar not only of the peasants of Bardoli but the whole of India. The spirit of non-violent resistance which was the dream of Gandhiji was fulfilled by Sardar in the Bardoli Satyagraha. The uneducated and unsophisticated peasantry of Bardoli Taluka reacted to Sardar's lead in a manner and in a measure which were, indeed, a marvel. The struggle ended in complete triumph for Sardar and the peasants of Bardoli. The Bombay Government of those days, however, would not easily swallow the defeat they had sustained in Bardoli for many years thereafter. The Sardar became their enemy No. 1. The confiscated and auctioned lands were not restored to the original owners until the Congress Government came into power ten years thereafter. Sardar neither forgave Government nor forgot the cause of the peasants which was so dear to his heart. It was mainly due to his sheer persistance that the Bardoli chapter was finally closed in 1938 with laurels going to the peasants.

After Bardoli it was a foregone conclusion that Sardar would become the President of the Indian National Congress, the highest honour in the gift of the nation. So did he become in 1931 when the Congress Session was held in Karachi. It was in this Session that Sardar, for the first time, spoke to the nation. It was a brief message but very dynamic in its contents and more so in the action that followed. Sardar had a reputation of being more eloquent in action than in words. This reputation he continued to enjoy throughout his life. In the years that followed the country had to go through many trials and tribulations. As the executive head of the Second Civil Disobedience Movement of 1932 Sardar had to bear the brunt of that struggle. Repeated incarcerations and the rigours of jail life broke his health but not his spirit. It was a wonder to those who knew him well how bravely and tenaciously he battled against his physical handicaps. It was verily a triumph of spirit over body. Many close friends of Sardar who knew him in his private life had numerous occasions to notice that his body would wonderfully react to the state of his mind. His physical ailments would remain under control if he could be in a happy state of mind. The moment the peace of mind was disturbed the physical disabilities would show themselves up. This phenomenon, perhaps explainable in medical theory, was known to his doctors. Normally he was a man of strong will but the situations were not wanting when his peace of mind and his usual happy mood would be seriously affected.

It was more as an obligation to the nation than by choice that Sardar was persuaded to join the Central Cabinet and became its first Home Member and Deputy Prime Minister after the freedom of the

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country was achieved. He had joined the Congress-League Cabinet a few months earlier perhaps due to the same considerations. What part the mature statesmanship and practical wisdom of Sardar played in shaping the destinies of this great land and advancing its freedom, very few people know. Some of these facts may become records of history and yet there will be some more which, due to their delicate nature, may never see the light of the day. As a minister in charge of Home and States Ministries, he gave abundant proof of his wonderful grasp of administration. Sardar of Bardoli peasants now became the Sardar of India's administrators. His handling of the intricate administrative problems was masterly and showed that he was a born administrator. Many an enemy and doubtful friends thought and even hoped that India would not be able to maintain law and order and her national discipline would collapse in the very first trial. Indeed, we were on the brink of a precipice. Undaunted by the dangers inherent in the situation, Sardar acted with ruthless precision and accurate foresight. The saner elements in the country rallied round him and eventually he was able to produce results which must have staggered the imagination both of his friends and critics. He showed that he richly deserved the epithet—India's Iron Man of Action.

The problem of five hundred and odd States with a variety of administrations and traditions not very helpful to the unification of the country, would have baffled anybody with a less stout heart. It was, however, customary with Sardar that deeper the dangers the greater was the despatch with which he worked and more often than not he would emerge triumphant. So was the case of this problem of States. He liquidated the problem in as many months as years that the administration would have given him for the job. Bismarck of Germany grappled with a lesser problem and that too with the threat of invincible Prussian armies in the background. Sardar accomplished a decidedly greater feat and yet did it without rancour and bad blood. The Princely Order of India, even after its total eclipse, remained loyal to him and to the Republic and on his part, he remained a loyal and sincere friend of the Princes. This one single achievement of his would entitle him to the highest place of honour in the history of our nation. His swift action in Hyderabad and his loyal support to the Prime Minister on the Kashmir issue are eloquent testimony to his far-sighted statesmanship.

What was really the secret of Sardar's phenomenal success in administrative efficiency? This question must have occurred to many. The answers are bound to vary. In my view, this success is largely attributable to his capacity to choose the right man for the job and then to implicitly trust him. This has yielded very rich dividends. Sardar had an uncanny instinct in placing people in their proper niches. He loved his lieutenants with the tenderness of a father and would stand by them in all circumstances. His lieutenants in their turn served him with steadfast loyalty and deep devotion.

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If Sardar was great in his mighty achievements for the nation, he was greater still in his human qualities. His rough and stern exterior covered a very tender and sensitive heart. He had an exhaustless fund of wit and humour and would enjoy a joke as he would like to crack one. He was kind to his lieutenants and followers almost to a fault. He would look after them, he would enquire of their well-being and did everything which a kind father does to his son. I have come across very few political leaders who have shown as much consideration to their humble followers as this great man has done. Once he trusted a man, he never doubted him. Trust begets trust and this was the secret of the relationship between Sardar and those who followed him. The void that he has left in our public life is impossible to be filled. The nation has to get itself accustomed to that void. It is, perhaps, once in several generations that such a man is born. It was India's greatest good fortune that people like Gandhiji, Sardar and Jawaharlal belonged to the same generation which was responsible for liberating this country. Many people have come and gone but we shall never see the like of Sardar again.

It is impossible to ignore the part played by Maniben, the faithful daughter of the Sardar. She followed Sardar as shadow follows substance. She had no existence of her own apart from her father's. She has inherited many good qualities of her father. It is no exaggeration if I say that by her careful nursing and tender love she must have added at least ten years to his life. This is her contribution to the nation. Her selfless devotion and complete self-effacement in the service of her father make a poem of human virtues.

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A CIVIL SERVANT'S TRIBUTE

By N. M. Buch

I had heard but had never met Sardar Patel before I joined the Ministry of States a week before partition in August 1947. From that date till almost the day of his death in December 1950, I had opportunities of continuous contact with him and the privilege of serving under his direction.

Distance generally lends enchantment. How many times after we meet a person or visit a place about which we have heard so much, we feel disillusioned or disappointed? We attribute almost superhuman qualities to our heroes and when we come in close contact with great men and see that after all they are also human with all the frailties that flesh is heir to, the picture we have drawn of them comes crashing down. This is common experience. The greatness of Sardar Patel lay in the fact that far from being disillusioned, one discovered new attributes and sources of strength, so that his stature in one's mind grew from day to day, the growth being limitless.

The Sardar's life and work had many facets. As a Civil Servant, I could observe some more than others. He was not entirely a Chief from whom one had only to take orders. He treated the Civil Servants also in the context of human relationships, letting them have an insight into the man, behind the politician and the Minister and expecting and getting in return not merely a production return in terms of man-hours of work in lieu of payments made, but their loyalty, their enthusiasm and the very best that they were capable of giving. There was a challenge to their ingenuity and sense of patriotism and a regard for their experience and sense of self-respect.

One of the great qualities of this great man was that he never thought that he knew everything. He did not consider that anything could be taken away from his greatness if he got the views and advice of all those who had something to contribute to a problem. He therefore listened and listened patiently. He drew one out. Equally promptly, having carefully weighed the advice he obtained, he gave a decision. The decision was not always to the liking of the advisers but they learnt from

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experience that the decision was in almost every instance the correct one. Here then was a leader who had an unerring instinct, who knew the virtues and weaknesses of men, who could appreciate the play and interplay of many influences— political, social, economic — and who, having a fixed goal before him, came to conclusions which would bring that goal quickly and smoothly within reach.

However great a person may be, he can only work through his instruments. If the instruments are bad, they have to be refashioned or replaced but nothing could be achieved if one were always quarrelling with one's tools. The Sardar chose his instruments such as were available, discarded them when he found that they were not serving the purpose—when discarding a person, he however never humiliated him—but as long as he used those instruments, he elevated them and invested them with a character and importance which enhanced their stature and usefulness. He knew that when big tasks were to be achieved and there was no time to waste, mistakes would be made. So long as they were **bona fide,** men who worked for him knew that they would not be let down; they therefore displayed initiative, took responsibility and achieved results. Some of them even came momentarily to believe, as they discovered later, quite mistakenly, that they were achieving the results and not the Sardar. In due course, they realised that they were merely reflecting the strength, the power and the judgment of the silent leader, who knew that solid achievement need not necessarily be accompanied by froth and fury and creation of tensions.

The Sardar had many sources of information and woe betide the official who tried to mislead him or who did not keep himself well-posted; and yet these various sources of information, comments and views, did not confuse his thinking or cloud his judgment. The officers knew that just because someone, however highly placed he may be, either maliciously or through inadequate appreciation or information wrote to Sardar either against their competence or their integrity, that would not necessarily be believed without enquiry. The Sardar could sift truth from untruth expeditiously. There was therefore no question of any witch-hunting and there was no unwarranted terror of either signed, pseudonymous or anonymous communications.

While firm in his determination, he was ruthless—in the good sense of the term—in his methods leading to the achievement of his objective—all born out of the intensity of his patriotism and the burning love for his country. The Sardar was just to all interests in the highest degree. He did not lose sight of his objective— the preservation and consolidation of the newly-won freedom—but there was no question with him of any unfair deal to anyone on the score of his communal, political or any other label. This is a side of his character which has often insufficiently been appreciated. The prince and the commoner therefore

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hearing every whisper; and a hundred hands, each busy making moves and counter moves. All India is his province.

After over one and a half centuries of political slavery, the fact that such a man of action with unerring insight into men and quick grasp of detail could be produced is in itself enough to take one's breath away. His matching his administrative ability with the Government of India often seemed foolhardy audacity. But he proved his efficiency against these odds every time he was given any job of work.

Gandhiji picked him up from the Ahmedabad law library where about thirty years ago he had sat apart sneering at the new spiritual force in Indian politics. He was slow to accept the Gandhian creed. But the first triumph of Gandhiji, the Bardoli Campaign, was due to the erstwhile sceptic lawyer who had become perhaps the most devout follower of Mahatma, the perfect instrument, the vehicle supreme of the Master. Before the Government knew what was happening a *taluk* of 80,000 people had been organised into one compact unit which the Raj tried with desperate tricks to break up. But all in vain. They had bargained without the host. From that day to this the Sardar stands first for efficiency of organization, thoroughness in handling a situation, and mastery in management of big things.

Sardar Patel has what may be called an index-card mind. Everything seems to be indexed and labelled and filed. And when the occasion arrives the impressions, secretly pigeon-holed and kept for years, play their part in his quick decisions and swift moves. He misses nothing.

Of all the Congress leaders he is the man who has escaped death by inches or seconds. Mr. K. M. Munshi relates how hostile elements lay in wait to bump him off at Bhavnagar and sheer luck prevented his death. Communists have attempted to murder him in broad daylight. He revels in risks. He is never so composed as immediately after one of these numerous incidents. These give him the spice of life.

Though he knows how to wield power and keep inveterate rebels in discipline he never craves for power for its own sake. It has to be thrust into his hands. Until his moment arrives he keeps himself in the background. But his is the last word before the battle of which he is made the General. At a meeting of the Congress Working Committee at Allahabad, in May 1942, in considering the draft of the "Quit India" Resolution, he said: "I have placed myself in the hands of Gandhiji. I feel he is instinctively right—the lead he gives in all critical situations. It is time the door is finally closed after the repeated insults heaped upon us." On the release of the Congress leaders in 1945 when some people had hoped Congress would show a changed attitude the Sardar's voice rang loud and bold: "Not a word of the 'Quit India' resolution

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could be obliterated or altered. Indeed if anything is to come next it will be 'Quit Asia'. There was the man of action for you, the moving finger, having writ, passing on.

As a General in the field he knows both strategy and tactics. He knows how to manoeuvre as well as how to give crushing blows. His index-card mind does not scruple to make use of personal jealousies or rivalries, weaknesses of individuals or parties which are carefully recorded in his memory, to out-manoeuvre his opponents. And when he shoots, he shoots to kill.

To millions of Indians brought up on a helpless feeling of inferiority along with their mother's milk he became the symbol of self-confident strength, the champion who could pick up a gauntlet with an astounding audacity and fling it in the face of the challenger. His very exterior suggests a rugged strength that stands no nonsense. The man of thought finds in him no hero battling with ideas. The drowsy are not roused by his eloquent silences. But the nation as a whole worships him. For, he is the General at the critical moment, when the Rubicon has been crossed, the boats burnt. His forearm has the might to bang any door in anybody's face. He alone has the capacity and courage to give back in *ahimsá* what they get in attack. Indians might not mob him at railway stations, fall over each other to touch his feet. But no Indian is not proud of him. They all have the same feeling for him as a miser has for his money. He might not be their show-piece, to be mounted on a pedestal. If anything, they are just a tiny bit ashamed of him, his rough exterior and uncouth manners in an age of Indian politicians educated at Oxford and well versed in the polite pleasantries of drawing rooms. But when the time for battle arrives all India watches with child-like confidence the moves of this political ugly duckling from Bardoli. His power is irresistible. You pay tribute to him because you cannot help it, not because you want to. Your admiration is perfectly under control. He is not the man on whose forehead a girl would put a *tilak* with her own blood or to see whom a man would risk being crushed to death.

But, if the admiration is given rather grudgingly, it is also taken grudgingly. He is rather impatient of all this flapdoodle of garlands and songs, frenzied crowds wishing just an eyeful of a hero. He cares for the praise or blame of only one man. That man is Gandhiji. It is the Mahatma's smile that has made him a dynamic figure stepping out of the pages of Plutarch.

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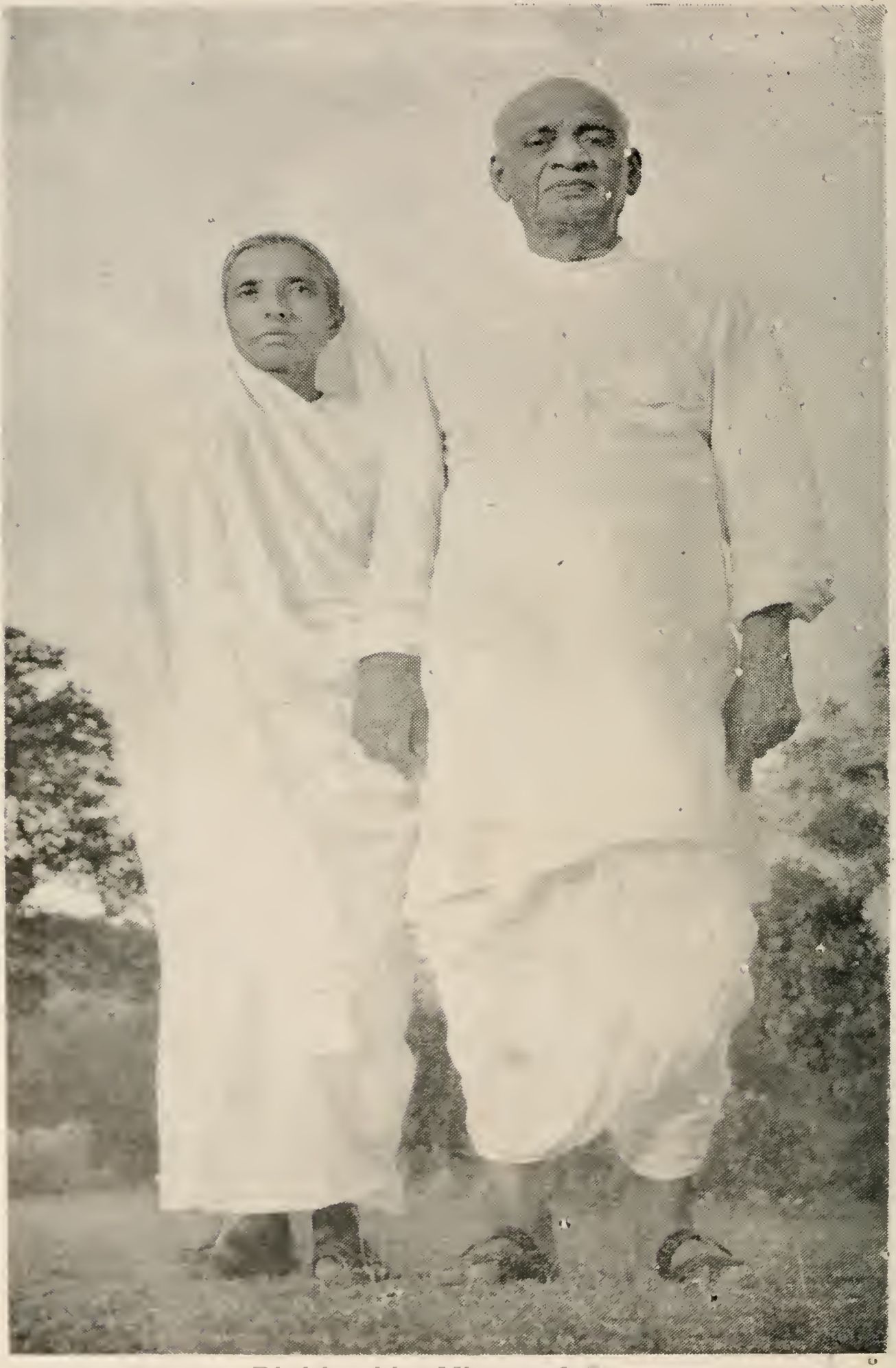

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Maniben and her father Sardar Patel.

THE GENTLE HINDU

By **Alan Campbell-Johnson.**

It is commonplace to draw the political contrast between Nehru and Patel; who after the transfer of power are likely to provide India with a virtual duumvirate; but the variations in personality and appearance are hardly less striking. Dressed in his **dhoti,** Patel conjures up the vision of a Roman Emperor in his toga. There are, in fact, Roman qualities about this man—administrative talent, the capacity to take and sustain strong decisions, and a certain serenity which invariably accompanies real strength of character.

He lacks Nehru's world reputation and world outlook, and he has deliberately confined himself to the tasks that involve surveillance of domestic politics. Here his powers and responsibilities are as wide as they well can be; they include control over all Government Information, Internal Security, the Police and, last but not least, the vital problem of relations with the Indian States. The completion of his Accession policy should bring into the Indian Dominion more citizens than will be lost to it through the creation of Pakistan, for (excluding the twenty millions in Hyderabad and Kashmir) there are some ninety million States' subjects involved which is considerably more than the population of Pakistan: he also holds in his hands nearly all Congress patronage. This is a formidable concentration of personal power under any regime. In spite of all these pre-occupations, Patel has a shrewd grasp of India's strategic position in the world at large.

Off duty, as he was to-day, he is indeed the embodiment of the gentle Hindu, full of benevolence and smiles. He was interested to hear my first-hand account of the passing of the Independence Bill in London, and in the course of conversation the general subject of speech-making cropped up. He and Maniben laughed when I asked whether he enjoyed making speeches, Maniben reminding me that her father was a great orator in Gujerati.

Throughout most of the meal Maniben, who is on the inside of all the Sardar's official and top-secret activities, remained the silent acolyte. Dressed in the austere simplicity of her Khadi sari, and wearing at her

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waist a giant bunch of keys, she gave the impression of an efficient and wholly absorbed comptroller of the domestic household.

Nearly all the Indian leaders are surrounded by women members of family, whether as wives, sisters or daughters, who exercise an extremely powerful influence on their careers. I had come out to India under the naive impression that Indian women were completely submerged and had no say or interest in matters of State. This is certainly not the case at the summit of affairs. Miss Fatima Jinnah, Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Begum Liaquat Ali Khan and Mrs. Kripalani are formidable personalities whose ambitions and interests measure up to those of their respective menfolk. Not all of them would be content to remain so quietly in the background as Maniben, but it is doubtful whether the influence of any of them in their respective households exceeds hers with her father.

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THE APOSTLE OF REALITY

By **Pranlal Devkaran Nanjee**

On the pedestal bearing the bust of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, which was recently unveiled at the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, by Sir S. Radhakrishnan, the following words are inscribed:

> Apostle of Reality."
> " Patriot—Statesman

These words aptly describe in brief the character of the Sardar. The born leader of men that he was, he set an example by his own actions for all to follow. The simple way in which he lived, the boldness with which he expressed his principles and the firmness with which he followed them, the ever-readiness to suffer and sacrifice in the cause of the country, strict obedience to the dictates of his chief Mahatma Gandhi, the practical and constructive attitude towards men and things, and the genius for organisation and the ability to get things done and attract a host of willing workers and faithful followers, were some of the outstanding qualities that characterised his life.

Shri Sardar was also kindly and courteous. A very dear friend of mine, the late Sjt. Mathooradas Tricamjee, a former Mayor of Bombay and a grand-nephew of Mahatma Gandhi, was one of Sardarji's close associates and devoted followers. When I had occasions of meeting Sardarji, knowing that Sjt. Mathooradas and I were great friends, I do not ever remember an occasion when he did not enquire of me about Mathooradas, and similarly of Mathooradas about me.

Sardar Vallabhbhai was a considerate friend and was generously appreciative of those who were striving and undergoing sacrifice for the advantage of the country. In 1940, I gave a big dinner in honour of Shri Walchand Hirachand and as the intention was to appreciate Shri Walchand's unique services to Indian Shipping, I particularly wanted Vallabhbhai to preside and speak on the occasion. He was at Bardoli then, but he was happy that Shri Walchand who had done so much for the country's shipping was being honoured, and without the slightest hesitation he consented and he took all the trouble to come

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over to Bombay for it, although travelling to Bombay and back to Bardoli meant two nights in the train. The following extracts from the speech he made on that occasion denote his intense love for the country and some of them have proved prophetic!

"My innermost feelings with regard to National Shipping have already been referred to by Mr. Pranlal in his speech. In the modern world no country can carry on its existence, or its trade, as an independent country, if it is without any independent port belonging to itself. Our country is surrounded on three sides by the waters of the ocean; its fourth boundary is made up of mountains. How then can we tolerate the humiliating condition of not being able to claim even a little corner, a little strip of land on the coast, which we can call our own, despite the fact that ours is a country surrounded on all but one side by the seas?

"They call this, our waters, the Indian ocean. It is not however Indian, because it does not belong to India. The fact is that, like our land, our seas also have been mortgaged to the foreigners. Nothing out of these vast lands and these mighty waters belongs to us. If you want to be acquainted with the great history of the struggle to gain back these seas for ourselves, you have only to glance over the history of the Scindia Company. If India were a free nation the Chairman of the Scindia Company would have put Lord Inchcape in his small pocket long before this! That is our strength; we have sufficient courage for this, but we have lost our independence.

"In fact the moment India desires to have a little freedom the Britishers are out to demand mighty safeguards. If the tiger wants safeguards against the lamb, or if the giant wants safeguards against the dwarf, it would not be more absurd.

"Britain is proud because Britain is the mistress of the sea. Britannia rules the waves. The very waters of the oceans are controlled by Britain. Our history however has been proclaiming since the days of the King Ravana of Lanka that pride always goeth before the fall. India today is challenging the pride of England. God has always shown the proud their proper place.

"The world to-day is reeling on the waves of trouble. No one can say when it will be driven to the fathomless bottom. The world is to-day hanging over the precipice of the mountain; who can say when it will topple over and be shattered to pieces at the rocky bottoms of the valley? No one can predict with certainty the result of this war.

"India has no weapons of war and India has no intentions of fighting anyone. We only want our own back. Every individual in India believes in Universal brotherhood. The Indian does not want to

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aggrandise, but he must defend his own home. If we Indians cannot even defend our own trade and commerce and our own national shipping we are not fit to live in this land.

"We do not speak, but certainly we cannot forget. If we were to forget, our proper place will be the bottom of the sea. We would be fit for nothing else but suicide. We cannot any more keep looking on in silence to what is happening around us in the world. How can India forget those vital wounds, which have been draining her to death? India is determined to find its legitimate place in the oceans of the world and India is prepared to fight for that place.

"You that are all here, the citizens and the merchant princes of Bombay, you are the cream of this city, and you are all here to congratulate Mr. Walchand. What does this occasion mean? It means that you have all realised the urgent necessity of a truly independent National Shipping in this country. It is needless to say that those who would read the signs of the times cannot have a better time than this to make themselves scarce from the coasts of India. It is really to their advantage to do so now. It is for their good that they should make our way clear in this regard and at this time. Otherwise we have no doubt whatsoever, that we will have the ways and means to take back from them what is our own." (Loud Applause).

Owing to their practical and realistic outlook and kindly and human approach, Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai attracted the mercantile community and important commercial associations and industrial bodies towards the Congress, and these were made to work for the national cause. In 1944, when I was the President of the Indian Merchants' Chamber for the first time, our Congress leaders were in jail, and the trend of my speeches at its quarterly and other meetings was highly nationalistic and I had occasions vehemently to criticise and protest against actions and policies of the foreign Government. A few of my friends jocularly told me that by having been so outspoken against the then rulers, any chances that I had of receiving a knighthood were completely shattered! I had never aspired nor worked for a knighthood and I was therefore amused at their observation; but I was more than satisfied when I came to know that Mahatma Gandhi, who was in the Yeravda Jail, and Sardar Vallabhbhai, who was in the Ahmedabad Jail with the other leaders, were both mightily pleased with my speeches. Sardar Vallabhbhai was an esteemed well-wisher of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, which Mahatma Gandhi had honoured by accepting its Honorary Membership, and it was at the Sardar's auspicious hands that in 1939 the lovely building of the Chamber, opposite Churchgate Station, was opened. He refused, however, to interfere in its election and its affairs, but the nationalist body that the Indian Merchants' Chamber has always been, it received his affection and blessings.

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It is well-known that the Sardar was very much senior in politics to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, but since Mahatma Gandhi wished and decided that Pandit Jawaharlal was to be his political heir, the Sardar agreed without demur and worked upto his last days with Pandit Nehru as his No. 2 with the utmost sincerity and the staunchest loyalty. It was a great and noble example of steadfastness, loyalty and devotion to the cause of the country.

Shri Sardar, who was known to be a fighter with indomitable will and courage and doggedness of purpose against the foreign yoke, possessed in abundance the qualities of statesmanship, judgment, fairplay, foresight and patience that go to make an able and successful administrator. His high integrity not only in money matters but also in dispensing office and patronage commanded the respect and admiration of all. His acknowledgment and unforgetfulness of the right thing practised even by opponents and those who were at one time enemies made him a prince among men. Behind a bold blunt and rocklike exterior, Sardar Vallabhbhai had a heart of gold.

Hard as steel in the enforcement of duty, obligations and principles, he manifested a heart as soft as rose-petals in human relations. He was a generous leader, a disciplined follower, a kind friend, and a fearless but honourable enemy. He was a man of few words and believed in action. He was a builder and, with feet firmly planted on the ground, endeavoured to build up the nation. He worked to make India free and, when it had achieved freedom, strove hard to make it united and strong enough to retain it. Although doctors had warned him that his end was near, he continued to work unceasingly as he passionately wished to consolidate our freedom. When the history of the emancipation of our country is written, the name of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel will shine in letters of gold in the roll of honour alongside the names of Mahatma Gandhi, Lokmanya Tilak, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Deshabandhu Chitta Ranjan Das.

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THE REALIST

By **Shri Ambalal Kilachand**

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was a great patriot and a statesman of rare abilities.

He was an outstanding figure in political life of the country and by the manifold services rendered by him, he has left an imperishable name in the history of this country. He was an intrepid fighter and as a trusted and devoted lieutenant of Mahatma Gandhi, he was always in the vanguard of our political struggle for independence. It is hardly necessary to recount the important part played by him from the beginning of his political career with Kaira Satyagraha in 1918 to the historic Bardoli campaign during which he displayed his genius for organisation and his sense of discipline to the greatest advantage. It was in acknowledgment of the efficiency with which he had conducted the movement that Gandhiji acclaimed him as "Sardar", the beloved name by which he came to be known to the nation during all the subsequent phases of our struggle.

However, it was with the proclamation of Indian Independence in August 1947 that a new phase in Sardar's epoch-making services to the country began. His outstanding contribution to India's unity lies in the integration of 500 and odd Princely States within the Indian Union. With far-seeing statesmanship tempered by a sense of realism, he worked out a bloodless revolution and re-drew the map of India, which may be regarded as his lasting claim to greatness and to the gratitude of his countrymen. He befriended the farmers and the workers and in times of distress and natural calamities, he carried succour and relief to the stricken humanity.

With the commercial community, I am happy to say, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel maintained the closest relations both before and after achieving freedom, and had always proved a great source of inspiration to them from time to time. He evinced great interest in the economic development of the country and appreciated the patriotic role played by private enterprise in promoting the national well-being of the country. He was keenly aware of the heavy odds against which the nationalist

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private enterprise of the country had to struggle to build up the economy of the country. His optimism was irrepressible and in times of stress and strain he was a tower of strength to all those who approached him for assistance and guidance.

As one who played an important part in the making of policies, he displayed all along his supreme sense of realism and never allowed himself to be swayed by ideological considerations. In view of the magnitude of the economic problems awaiting solution, in order to make India strong and great and in order to enable the country to produce most of the things she needed, it was, according to him, imperative to set aside all such controversies and harness national energies in constructive directions. The greatest tribute that we can pay to his memory is to steadfastly follow the path laid down by this great patriot, statesman and apostle of reality and thus prove worthy of the legacy he has left behind for us.

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handicrafts, which act as a counter part to large-scale industries. It was only during the war, that owing to lack of supply of raw materials to large-scale units, and again owing to lack of capacity to meet the demand and often the inability to produce the requisite quality, small units sprang up with very little of capital and without much aid from the Government.

It is now recognised that these small units have a vital role to play in the economic structure of the country, in so far as they could provide wide employment to the educated section of the community. But if these small units could successfully function, they should all be organised co-operatively, so that their financing, sale, and marketing may be facilitated.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Also the Congress Ministry, following the advice of Gandhiji, have been intent on re-organising the land ownership and developing rural re-construction. The Community Project idea now tried at 55 centres will soon extend to 200 blocks throughout the country, each block to consist of 100 villages with a population of about a lakh. In each of these blocks, agriculture, cottage industries, and social services will be paid special attention for bringing the people to a level of a civilised and urban life each earning decent income.

Thus after Independence, during these seven years, the Government has been evolving sound policies in all sectors of economic structure aiming at an integrated development. It is our ambition to see our beloved country for whose independence our giants like Mahatmaji, Vallabhbhai, Nehru and Rajendra Prasad fought incessantly—to grow economically strong with starving and unemployed millions raised to the level of full employment and to the stature of full-blown and self-respecting Indian Citizenship.

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SAURASHTRA'S CLAIM

By M. V. Rupani

Sardar Patel of course belonged to the whole of India. All the same, as a son of Gujerat, he was naturally closely connected with Saurashtra. It is difficult to write on Sardar Patel's work within the space of a short article. But if he has to be compared with any leader, I will like to speak of him as the Stalin of India. I know that comparisons are sometimes odious. But human nature cannot help likening someone to someone else and even the great Poet Kalidas therefore had to resort to the figure of speech called "Upama". Hence I sincerely believe that Sardar Patel approximated in many respects to the great Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin. Being a Saurashtrian myself I will only mention some of the activities of Sardar Patel so far as they had a bearing on his work for Saurashtra. When Gandhiji arrived in India from South Africa and landed on the shores of Bombay on the 9th of January 1915, practically every public man in India had a soft corner for Gandhiji because of his selfless work for the Indians in South Africa. Similarly, Sardar Patel also had some spiritual liking for Gandhiji who immediately after his arrival announced that he wanted to settle in the capital of Gujerat, Ahmedabad, because it was a connecting link between Gujerat and Saurashtra. Sardar Patel was naturally delighted at the decision of Gandhiji to become a citizen of Ahmedabad of which Sardar Patel was the supreme leader even at that early time. But when Gandhiji started his Ashram in Ahmedabad near the suburb of Kochrab, Sardar Patel was a little disappointed with the ways of Gandhiji which were rather unique. Sardar Patel at the outset could not understand the significance of Gandhiji's idea of asking his colleagues in the Ashram to grind their own *bajri* or wheat flour. After some time the Ashram was shifted from Kochrab to Sabarmati just opposite the Sabarmati Jail. Sardar Patel used to pay occasional visits to Gandhiji and when he encountered the Father of the Nation himself grinding the flour at the "*Ghanti*" for the requirements of the Ashram, the great Sardar could not but question the usefulness of these curious ways of Gandhiji. But Gandhiji made the Sardar altogether speechless when he said that he had introduced this laborious duty of grinding the flour because the late Lokmanya Tilak while in the Mandalay jail in Burma as a prisoner sentenced to hard labour was regularly forced to grind some 20 lbs. or

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more of the flour. Gandhiji added that in course of time he would have to go to jail and it was therefore essential that he should be conversant with this arduous task. Gandhiji further explained to the Sardar that the Sabarmati site was specially chosen by him because the rigours which the prisoners have to undergo compulsorily in the Sabarmati jail must be cheerfully gone through by the Ashram's inmates absolutely voluntarily, since every member of the Ashram will be called upon to go to jail. The Satyagraha Ashram was a self-chosen "**jail**" so that the discipline practised there may be useful to every patriot when he was sent to the jail for his belief in the cult of Satyagraha.

Gradually the Sardar became the Arjun of our modern Krishna. The friendship was permanent. When the Sardar was elected the President of the Saurashtra Political Conference at Morvi he told the political workers that although he was the President, nobody should ask him any questions because so long as the leader, Gandhiji, was there he was not supposed to be the leader but was only a Soldier. This soldierly statesmanship of the Sardar made him the undisputed and uncrowned King of Maha Gujerat of which Saurashtra is morally a part. There was something like a sacred contract between Gandhiji and Sardar Patel. Our great Sardar used to say to Gandhiji that had Gandhiji not made Gujerat his permanent home the Sardar would have been never a great worker for the cause of Swarajya. As Gandhiji worked primarily for Gujerat during his early years in India, Gandhiji had elicited a spiritual promise from the Sardar that he should work for the poor Home Province of the Mahatma. The Sardar carried on the Rajkot Struggle with the late Virawala, since he wanted to defray the "debt" which the people of Gujerat owed to Gandhiji for having worked for Gujerat during his early years in our country. And it is a matter of history that the Sardar fought so heroically for the freedom of Saurashtra that every Saurashtrian was as proud of the Sardar as of Gandhiji himself. The late Prabhashankar Pattani who attended the Political Conference of Saurashtra at Morvi received the last *sloka* of the Bhagwat Gita at the time of the return of Sardar and Gandhiji from Morvi.

At the time of Sardar's passing away and afterwards many tributes were paid to him. But the Times of London observed that the late Sardar Patel was equal to ten Bismarcks of Germany, inasmuch as the German Bismarck evolved a united Germany the Indian Bismarck evolved a united India which is about ten times the size of Germany. How can India forget such a leader? His memory will survive as long as the memory of the Father of the Nation is green in India. One cannot remember Rama and forget Hanuman. Similarly, we Saurashtrians cannot forget Sardar Patel for the simple fact that we cannot forget the Father of the Nation himself. Both had one soul and only separate bodies. The Sardar's devotion to the leader made him what he was. His connection with Saurashtra will be fondly remembered.

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REMINISCENCES

By Shri Byramjee Cawasjee

Shri Byramjee Cawasjee is a childhood friend of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. They met for the first time when the Sardar joined the Nadiad High School in 1893.

A nationalist by conviction, Shri Cawasjee has been associated with the freedom struggle from the very beginning. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, in a letter addressed to Sir Pherozeshah Mehta in 1904, says: "We were very much struck by the enthusiasm and keen interest displayed by this young Parsi gentleman with regard to the Congress programme. He possessed all the Congress literature....has offered to do any work that he may be entrusted with in connection with the Congress."

My acquaintance with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel dates back from 1895 when he, still in his 'teens, came to join the high school at Nadiad. Soon I was not only a class-mate, but one of his intimate and closest friends.

Within a short time after joining the school, apart from his studies, Vallabhbhai plunged himself in various activities and gained popularity, not only amongst the students but also among the public. He organised and presided over the Debating Society functions held on holidays in the School hall. He got the system then prevailing in the school's boarding house much improved in diet, etc., at the same time reducing the cost for the boarders.

In those days the Nadiad Municipality was dominated by influential nominated members. The handful members who were elected, slavishly co-operated and sided with the nominated members. Even in the school most of the teachers sided with the 'big' party.

After studying civic affairs the Sardar took the opportunity of the Municipal elections which were soon due and selected candidates to offer strong opposition to the proteges of the majority party, of course with the consent and private backing of a couple of teachers of the higher standards. One of them was Mr. Chaturbhai Patel, who later became the Principal of the Elphinstone High School, Bombay. The Science

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teacher, Shri Mahanand Bhatt, who was shy by nature, but honest and deserving was put up as an opposition candidate. Though the school was open on election day, the students stayed away to canvass and demonstrate for the popular candidate.

But the situation took an ugly turn on the second day of the elections when there were demonstrations in front of the big building owned by the old autocrats, who succeeded in inducing the Director General of Education to appoint a high English officer for investigations. Most of the allegations against us could not be substantiated. The writer was accused of being the leading mischief-maker but fortunately, though there were hardly a dozen Parsi families in Nadiad, there happened to be another Parsi schoolboy of my age and size. When presented at the enquiry he announced his own name and was released. The enquiry was eventually abandoned.

After passing Matriculation he went for higher studies and passing as a pleader, established a reputation for some years in various courts in the Kaira and surrounding districts. But, being naturally anxious to enter in big appeal and higher courts he decided to become a Bar-at-Law. He, therefore, wrote to a friend, then in London, to secure all the necessary information. But a strange, though rather funny, incident intervened. The Sardar's elder brother Mr. Vithalbhai had started legal practice a few years before him. Their common headquarters was in their family house in Karamsad, from where they used to attend the different courts. When the reply came from London, the Sardar was away on work. The letter was addressed to V. J. Patel and Vithalbhai presumed the same to be for him, as he also had some friends in London. Thus the contents of the letter created a pleasant surprise. However, both the affectionate brothers soon agreed that the elder brother should proceed to London first and the younger after his return.

While referring to their amicability, it is extremely rare or even exceptional to find similar examples. The spade work of the elder brother was continuously developed by the younger brother.

After the Sardar left the Nadiad High School close contact between us could not be maintained, as circumstances did not permit my higher education and forced me to come to Bombay in search of employment. But within a short period, due to the light and deep inspiration created in me by the Sardar, I started to take interest in Civics and Politics. I have always remained grateful to the Sardar for his inspiration and words of encouragement. Incidentally, the Sardar joined politics twenty years after me.

Sardar Vallabhbhai first proved his mettle by greatly improving the affairs of the Ahmedabad Municipality. A few years after Mahatmaji's

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return from South Africa, the Sardar plunged heart and soul into the national movement and proved himself a great and able leader in the Bardoli and Kaira Satyagraha.

As is well-known among the present generation, he, along with other top leaders, was several times the 'guest of the British Government'. During his spells of detention, I carried on some correspondence with him. As there was stringent censorship, we had to confine ourselves to recollections of our school life. During his detention in Yerwada Central Jail in 1932, he wrote:

"I have received your affectionate letter. It strongly reminded me of our childhood days in the Nadiad High School".

On the day of his death, I was one of the very few who were allowed to enter the room where his body lay in state. As I looked at the lifeless body wrapped in *khadi*, and its serene face, I remembered our childhood days, his words of encouragement when I was struggling to make a living in the vast city of Bombay, his comments which continued to inspire me. Truly, one of the greatest sons of Bharat and one of the noblest statesmen of our generation had passed away.

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HISTORY REPEATS.....

By **Chapalakanta Bhattacharya**, M.A., L.L.B.

It can be asserted without any hesitation that amongst those who have recreated history in the present age, the place of Sardar Patel is one of the foremost. He is not to be judged as a mere politician or a political leader but should be regarded as one of the greatest historical personalities who appear in periods of great crisis. That is the feeling uppermost in my mind and it is this feature of his life on which I want to put a special stress. We have seen many persons rising to great heights in their individual achievements. But persons, who can give a new mould to history, who can create and control historical events, are not born in large numbers. There are few such personalities in contemporary history, who can be compared to Sardar Patel in his endeavour and in his achievements. And even the assessment that we are now making fall short because we are too near to him to make a full and correct appreciation. Long after our age, history will continue to remember his greatness and perhaps recognise it to a greater degree.

To make an assessment of Sardarji's achievements, however short, we must place him against the proper historical background. As I look back upon the pages of the Indian History, another great character rises before my mind's eye with whom alone I find a comparison possible. I mean Chanakya, the Prime Minister of Chandragupta, who was really the founder and builder of the Maurya Empire. In fact, in the entire history, he is, perhaps, the only character whose achievements were similar to those of Sardar Patel. This highly intellectual statesman of the past with the help of his penetrating and almost all-pervasive foresight created out of nothing an Empire for Chandragupta. In an India disrupted by foreign invasion he stood as a unifying and dominating force for building up a national state. Almost in the same way, we saw Sardarji creating a new Indian State out of an India left in fragments by the retiring British authority. When Destiny put them in the control of the authority to rule over India, their entire attempt throughout a century and half was directed towards integration and unification of the country. But when after that period they found the authority slipping out of their hands they deliberately encouraged and fostered

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the forces of disintegration, the last step of which was the transferring of paramountcy from the Central Government to the Princely States, in spite of earnest requests from Sardar Patel for not doing so. Any person less tactful and less dominating than Sardar Patel would have completely failed to control the disruptive tendency created thereby and to bring together the different fragments each trying to have its own way. How he achieved this wonder will perhaps remain unknown; but that he achieved it will always remain and be remembered as an outstanding fact in the history of the world. Amongst the manifold achievements of his life, this was the crowning one and has deservedly received the greatest prominence and recognition.

As I compare the character and achievements of this new Chanakya 'Mudra-Rakshasa" which very faithfully portrays the character of in Indian Politics with the one who appeared many centuries ago, I am struck with awe by the wonderful similarity between them. Both appeared in history as pilots of storm. Both were inspired by the same ideas, the same motive-spring worked under the actions of both. Both adopted the same outlook and policy, viz., a stern realism. To do without hesitation, what is required by the needs of the circumstances, not to be moved from an objective after it is deliberated and decided upon and to put that objective into action with a single-minded devotion—these were the remarkable features of both these great Indians. They would not swing or swerve from their purpose in the least, even though their critics would characterise their conduct as verging on heartlessness and even though it made them face the greatest crisis in their career. Both had unlimited confidence in themselves and in the capacity of their intellect to comprehend and achieve the impossible.

A reference may be made to the well-known Sanskrit drama, Chanakya. His secret agents brought to him the news that persons from the rank of his faithful followers were deserting him to join the camp of his enemy. The dramatist portrays him as completely unperturbed at the prospect. Rather, in a characteristically challenging mood, he burst out loudly so that the vacillating elements still with him could have a bit of his own mind:—

"Ye yatah kimapi pradharya hridaye purbam gata eba te.
Ye tisthanti bhabantu tepi gamane kamam prakamodyamah.
Eka kebalamatra sadhanabidhou sena-satebhyodhika
Nandonmulana dirstabiryamahima buddistu maganmama."

"I do not care for those who have left me with a purpose,
because they had gone even before they had actually left.
Those that are still with me may leave me if they like;
even that I do not care. My only prayer is that my intellect

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which has demonstrated its effectiveness by uprooting the Nanda Dynasty may remain unaffected; because that alone will stand me in better stead than even an army."

This was what Chanakya said. We can quite imagine Sardar Patel uttering the very same words in similar circumstances and, in fact, we know, he did when necessity arose. Those who came in contact with him in different spheres of his work must have had many opportunities of knowing and realising this characteristic bent of his mind. India had seen the rise of such a character only twice in her history. I fondly wish that She would have more of them. That would save her and help her to find her way in this world of diplomacy-ridden politics. We had one Sardar Patel for achieving the unification of the India that the Britishers left to us. We must pray for the appearance of another to complete the work that he had commenced.

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CHANAKYA OF TODAY

By **Lalit Sethi**

Sixteen days before the 20th century could be sliced into two, India was swept by a wave of helplessness—Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who must go down in history as one of the greatest builders and consolidators that the globe has ever seen since the dawn of democracy, had gone for ever.

That fateful day, I happened to be in Lucknow. This splendid city of gardens, of architectural beauty and of a delectable culture, was rocking as if it was being rocked by high-speed earthquake tremors. A deep shadow of gloom had overcast the sky as well as the earth and the people seemed to feel as if they, like the whole of India, were a spent force. Life came to a stand-still for a whole day.

Not long before his death, Sardar Patel said about himself: "It has been my good fortune to have borne a temperament which adapts itself equally well to the most taxing and light moments."

Small wonder that Sardar Patel emerged victorious during India's most trying years and was able to maintain peace at home when the most significant developments—the tackling of India's numerous princely states—were taking place.

Sardar Patel has been rightly described as India's modern Chanakya: what he might have lacked in Chanakya's economic strategy was more than compensated in his accomplished diplomacy. This steel-hearted leader of men always found an answer to even the most insoluble problems. And the answer was always straight-forward: it was not round-about because he was essentially a man of few words but firm determination. Whether in speech or writing, his resort was always to brevity. The welcome address delivered by him as the Chairman of the Ahmedabad Congress to the A.I.C.C. session in the early 'twenties was the shortest in Congress history. His administrative notes consisted of words countable on finger tips and yet they are said to show such a firm garsp over the situation as none, save him, could have and contained perfect solution of the problem. Though a pucca London-trained Sahib

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in youth, the lines of his forehead in old age singled him out as a great gift from the hoary commendable past of India with its root embedded deep in the Mauryan age.

Sardar Patel scored flawless 75 solid runs in the cricket of life. Each run symbolic of one year bespake of epic struggle and superhuman workmanship.

Describing Sardar Patel as a rock "full of wisdom and determination, a rock of patient strength to whom instinctively all of us went for guidance," Pandit Nehru said, "For him it is well, for his life's duty was well performed and is done. But for us it is not well, for we miss his strength and wisdom and we can no longer go to him for counsel and advice."

Sardar Patel was a nationalist first and last. He believed in the sane adage: "Charity begins at home". Before helping others, let us set our own home right, was his plea.

Though he fully supported the Khilafat movement, he was not in its favour from the core of his heart. He said privately: "Imagine, our fighting for the inlependence of the Arabs of Arabia, and Palestine, Syria and Mesopotamia, when we ourselves are held as slaves under the British bayonets in our own land. Isn't it funny beyond words?"

There are countless leaders everywhere who raise the cries of war and instigate people to indulge in disorder. But there are very few who counsel peace and calmness. There are fewer still—none almost—who who are really capable of checking people's temper effectively. Sardar Patel was the man who could do this. Soon after the division of India, train-loads of humanity were being slaughtered each day on either side —in India as well as in Pakistan—because the innocent people professed a faith which was not the attackers' own. Sardar Patel had come to Amritsar, the important border town of the Punjab on a routine visit. A public meeting was called at very short notice. A record gathering of nearly two hundred thousand people listened to Sardar Patel with rapt attention. He told them that it was no use murdering human beings. He assured hem that if Pakistanis did not stop slaughtering Hindu and Sikh refugees coming to India, he would himself lead the people to retaliate in whatever manner they considered fit. This was only a clever device but it had a tremendous effect. Since that day, not a single Muslim refugee going to Pakistan from Punjab (I) lost his life and India received migrant Hindus and Sikhs safe and sound. The clarion call paid superb dividends not only in India but in Pakistan whose leaders had received a challenge of existence.

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IN CONTRAST WITH NEHRU

By **Haribhau Upadhyaya**

When talking of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, I am reminded of the political developments in our country from 1921 to our day. I saw the Sardar for the first time at the Bombay session of the All-India Congress Committee in 1921, when the boycott of the celebrations in connection with the visit of the Prince of Wales was on the tapis. The Sardar had not yet emerged as the undisputed leader of Gujarat. The Bardoli agitation put the Sardar on the political firmment of India and from then onwards, Gandhiji began to address him as "the Sardar". As the President of the Karachi Session in 1931, the Sardar became one of the foremost leaders of the Congress. He generally used to take part in the Satyagrahas and constructive activities under the leadership of Gandhiji. Although the Nagpur Flag Satyagraha fired the imagination of the country, its leader, the Sardar, was not regarded as an all-India leader. He spoke little, but worked more. He was regarded as the "ditto" of Gandhiji. But after the Karachi Session and especially after the formation of Congress in the Provinces, the Sardar became the man behind the scenes. He never minced matters. An inveterate foe of injustice and hypocrisy, those people who perpetrated these always avoided him. He did not hesitate to tell the bitter truth and was objective even at the risk of being disliked. Thus he spared Gandhiji many embarrassing situations. He had a genuis for organisation and did his work with the least amount of talk and travel. He carried on his work smoothly with the help of the telephone in his room.

Although the Sardar seemed to be unsociable and cold on the surface, those who had the privilege of coming into close contact with him have testified that he had the affectionate heart of a mother. Gandhiji, while writing about his days in the Yerawada Jail, remarked that the Sardar looked after his comforts like a mother. The Sardar was known for his steel-like determination and people felt re-assured on getting the least hint of a promise from him.

There was a great difference between the temperament of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the Sardar. Even their methods of work were

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THE VERSATILE GENIUS

By **Vijaysinh Govindji**

India in bondage was fortunate enough to produce a galaxy of brilliant men — Gandhiji, Lokmanya Tilak, Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Each made his own contribution to the national, economic and social uplift of the motherland. Gandhiji uplifted the soul of a down-trodden nation in shame and gave the message of freedom and dignity of the human personality, which permeated every nook and corner of the Country. In fact the moral force of non-violence spread to the whole world—and he became an international figure. After freedom was won—in the noble cause and altar of communal unity—he sacrificed his precious life to become an inspiration for generations to come. He in fact became immortal in his death. So also did this selfless band of patriots play their own part. But when the historian writes the epic of India's freedom struggle in the pages of history the name of Sardar Patel will shine in letters of gold as the victor and consolidator of hard won Independence.

His life is a study of unflinching determination, courage and devotion and dedication to a cause. He can rightly be called the Bismarck of India—the two iron men in two Continents are the makers of modern Germany and modern India. One wonders what would have happened to this country, if in the great crisis in which we were placed after partition, the clear mind and strong hand of Sardar Patel were not there.

This sturdy man hails from Gujarat. His life is well-worth a study—as in a way he was an institution in himself. He was a budding lawyer with the bustling energy of youth and a zest for life. When Gandhiji returned from Africa after the historical resistance movement he one day visited the Ahmedabad Club, where the young, the old and the rich indulged in a life of ease and pleasure. Sardar Patel was rather indifferent to the presence of the great man. But very soon he fell under the hypnotic spell of the Mahatma. He discarded riches and pleasures and immediately followed in the footsteps of the Master. From this day onwards, he embarked on a life of sacrifice, suffering and

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service to his motherland. He took an active part in the resistance struggle and courted imprisonment on several occasions. The very success of the Civil Disobedience Movement was in a great measure the result of his genius for organisation and his dauntless courage. The Congress with years was growing into a mighty organisation and abuses crept in and some undesirable elements also crept in. Fortunately the Sardar ruthlessly suppressed all the evil forces within the Congress and he was responsible for moulding the Congress into a disciplined mighty fighting force. It is no exaggeration to say—the Congress as a well knit organisation was his creation.

Sardar Patel showed the greatness of his mind, when India attained Independence by readily accepting Pandit Nehru as the Prime Minister. In the upheaval that followed in the wake of partition and when the security of the infant state was in peril, Sardar Patel rose to great heights. As the Home Member of the Government of India with rare judgment and courage he curbed all subversive activities with a firm hand. The greatest and most delicate problem of the Princes and States brought out his great qualities of firmness and tact. Within two years he liquidated the Princely order without causing even so much as a ripple. This achievement will live and resound throughout the centuries.

Unfortunately the people at large knew very little of his good qualities. He was known only as a hard task-master. To those who worked and served sincerely—he was a most loyal friend. He not only acknowledged and appreciated their merit but he stood by them against all odds. He had a genius for picking the right type of men and once they worked with him he placed his full trust in them.

After Independence instead of swinging the rod against the Services, he won them over by his kindness and converted their apathy to the new order of things into zealous duty and loyalty to the Government. This rare gift of Sardar Patel shows the loftiness of his mind. Although he could be severe on dishonest persons, petty mindedness had no place in his heart.

The India of today owes an undying gratitude to this great soul who was the architect of India's freedom and the man who laid the foundations of a new India on a firm rock. In all humility let us pay our homage to this great patriot and let his life be an inspiration for generations to come to serve their country and stand and die by the Country's Flag and keep its banner always aloft.

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THE DIPLOMAT

It was during the time of the R. I. N. Strike in the last week of February 1946. It had come to a climax when the strikers were just ready to use their armed might. The guns of their sloops and minesweepers were turned on the city. The strikers thought they would teach the British a lesson for not redressing their unquestionably righteous grievances. But they were not thinking the practical way. Nor were many others who were egging them on to the hazardous step of opening fire. Its only result would have been the blowing up of over half of Bombay.

Fortunately the Sardar, the only level-headed adviser, was in Bombay at the time. And though the strikers had not consulted him before embarking on their strike he was acquainted with the details after the firing in Castle Barracks had taken place. The agitated ratings wanted the Sardar to declare a hartal in the city in sympathy with the sufferings and indignities borne by them.

The practical-minded Sardar, knowing that it would lead to panic and disturbances, would not agree, but promised to take up the matter immediately with the Government at Delhi. It may be remembered that at the time we had no Government of our own; otherwise our ministers could have gone to the spot and settled the trouble there and then.

SWIFT ACTION

The Sardar, as is wont with him, acted with alacrity. He sternly addressed the Delhi Government and the firing ceased that very afternoon. But that did not ease the growing tension in the city. The infuriated ratings, holding some twenty fully armed ships in the harbour, were burning for an indiscriminate revenge.

That was the city's most anxious night. There was no saying what the inflamed boys of eighteen and nineteen, their passions fully roused, would do any minute, without realizing the consequences. They had enough magazine on their ships to blow up the whole of Bombay.

The city survived the night. But in the morning the situation took an entirely different turn. The Sardar's decision not to declare

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hartal was given no publicity and the hartal took place just the same. The inevitable consequences followed. Disturbances broke out. Interested political propaganda sought in this way to undermine the Congress' prestige and power.

As the nerve-wrecking day wore on, the ugly monster of violence grew more hideous. The ratings were still in a state of indecision. Vice-Admiral Godfrey's indiscreet broadcast threatening the use of the full armed might against the ratings, had been like a red rag to a bull. The stage for a devastating tragedy was all set. Only the word "fire" apparently remained to be given.

SOUND ADVICE

Towards the afternoon, however, the Strikers' Committee called on Sardar and sought his advice. He explained to them that it was a mistake on their part to contemplate the use of arms and of violence. The consequences, he pointed out, would be disastrous. So long as they continued their strike peacefully for justifiable grievances, for which they had no remedy, there was no harm—but their cause would be lost the moment they took to firing.

The Sardar advised them to surrender without loss of life. In any case, they would have to surrender sooner or later—only, that if it were later, it would mean, with a senseless loss of life and much unnecessary bloodshed. The Sardar warned them that the British would not hesitate to employ ruthlessly all means to break the ratings' offensive. And with the ample means at their disposal—cruisers, airforce, army—the ratings would stand no chance. They would be smashed and with them the entire city of Bombay. He concluded by saying that it was not gallantry or patriotism to fight senselessly against overwhelming odds. It was madness.

One would think that the drama ended here. But the last chapter was still to be written. Just when one thought all's well that ends well, news came at midnight that one group of ratings had refused to accept the Sardar's advice and so the entire Committee had reversed its decision. The news was sought to be withheld from Vallabhbhai who was announced to leave for Lahore the next morning, in the hope that once he was out of the way, they would be able to do as they pleased. But they did not know that in view of the uncertain conditions, the leader had already cancelled his departure.

However, when it came to be known at last that the Sardar was still in the city, the hands of the much-impressed Strikers Committee were strengthened, the instigators knew their game was up and word was sent officially that the strikers would surrender their ships by eight that morning as required by the British High Command.

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The End.

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