THE LEADERSHIP OF

THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT,

1914 - 20

by

Hugh F. Owen

A Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Australian National University.
This thesis is based on my original research and has not been submitted to any other university.

Hugh F. Owen

Canberra, 25th January 1965.
SUMMARY OF ARGUMENT

In 1914 two tendencies existed in the Indian national movement - on the one hand, the Moderate tendency, inclined to caution, seeking a rational solution to Indian political problems, desirous of building a secular, democratic state on the British model, and of preparing thoroughly for this by the spread of education, by social reform and by the gradual introduction of the institutions of self-government; on the other, the Extremist tendency, based on the rise in Hindu self-confidence associated with the Hindu revival, asserting India's fitness for self-government, and moved by emotional appeals to patriotism and to rejection of Western innovations in favour of a return to indigenous institutions and traditions. Few members of the national movement can be identified as belonging entirely to one of these types: in most, elements of both were combined.

During the first decade of the twentieth century the balance in the movement swung toward Extremism. Leaders emerged in Bengal and Maharashtra, who played upon the vague desire for national freedom. They were helped in rousing bitterness and defiance towards the British by the example of the Japanese defeat of the Russians, and by British provocation culminating in the
Partition of Bengal, which was seen as an attempt to divide and weaken the bhadralok from whom came the nationalist elite in that province. In the ensuing agitation the Extremist leaders advocated passive resistance in the form of the boycott of Government institutions and the non-payment of taxes.

Those who were students during this decade were particularly affected by the agitation, which was largely directed at them, and their bitterness toward the British and their admiration for the Extremist leaders were increased by the repression of these leaders by the British.

In 1906-7 the Extremist leaders challenged the older leaders for control of Congress, the national organisation built up by them in the last quarter of the nineteenth century to debate political reform, and to represent their conclusions to the Government. By their command of the constituent associations of Congress, the Moderates excluded the Extremists. Members of Congress were thus forced to identify themselves as either Moderates or Extremists. The unreality of this choice was demonstrated, however, by the yearning for reunification from the time of the split among all, except a handful of Moderate leaders, mainly concentrated in Bombay.
The rest of the Moderates were inclined to readmit the Extremists to Congress: they were disappointed by the meagreness of the advance to self-government granted by the British in the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909; they were reassured of the "moderation" of the Extremists by the quiescence of the latter, following the removal of their leaders by British repression; they felt that the Extremists might help to revive the Congress, which declined after the split; and they vaguely felt that in unity was strength.

In 1906 the Indian Muslims' sense of separateness and insecurity (which had been aggravated by Extremism associated with the Hindu revival movement) was reflected in the establishment of the Muslim League to further the political interests of the Muslim community. But from 1909 they were encouraged to seek an entente with Congress as the result, partly of an increased sense of security due to the safeguards granted to the Muslims by the Morley-Minto Reforms; partly of the Muslim feeling that the Repartition of Bengal demonstrated that the Hindus had been right in agitating; and as the result partly of Muslim anger toward Britain - particularly among Pan-Islamists - due to British acts or omissions in relation to Muslims inside or outside India.
Thus in 1914 there was readiness for rapprochement between the Moderates and Extremists and between Congress and the Muslim League, and leaders, or would-be leaders were presented with the opportunity of uniting these three groups. To accomplish this the leaders would have to provide a programme which was acceptable to the widest range of outlooks. Such a programme must satisfy the feeling of the Moderates and Extremists (shared by the young men especially) that the movement should be more active. It must give expression to the defiance of the young men and the Pan-Islamists toward the British, but it must avoid alienating the more cautious members of the movement. It must promise to satisfy the general desire for more rapid devolution of power by the British. Finally, it would have to guarantee the Muslims' desire for security. To put this programme into effect and to ensure control of the movement, the existing organisation must be developed or a new organisation established.

A leader did emerge in 1914 who, temporarily at least, solved these problems. Mrs Besant put forward a programme which balanced the Moderate and Extremist positions: it postulated rapid progress to self-government to be attained by a vigorous press and platform agitation (which pleased the Extremists and the young men), while
eschewing all resort to passive resistance or other sanctions (which were anathema to the Moderates, particularly the Bombay leaders).

Finding that the Moderate leaders were reluctant to share leadership of Congress with her, or to allow Congress to be used for rousing such agitation, Mrs Besant founded her Home Rule League to rouse the agitation. In this she was joined by Tilak who established a League in Maharashtra. Their aim, however, was to capture control of Congress, first in order to benefit from the prestige that Congress enjoyed among both Indians and British, secondly to claim to speak for united India and thirdly (in Mrs Besant's case) in the hope that the Moderates would help to restrain the more ardent spirits while the latter stimulated the former.

The death of Pherozeshah Mehta in 1915 removed the leading Bombay opponent of Tilak's readmission to Congress and of the Home Rule agitation. The 1915 Congress Session agreed to readmit him and the Extremists. The continued refusal of the British to make any political concessions led Moderates to despair of gradual advance to self-government and many of them to support the Home Rule agitation.

In conjunction with Jinnah and his fellow
"nationalist" Muslims, Mrs Besant and Tilak won the support of the Muslim League for the agitation for self-government by agreeing to give the Muslims a definite share of any power which was obtained from the British.

Thus at the end of 1916 the three groups had been united behind the demand for Home Rule.

This unity was, however, a fragile thing.

First, new socio-economic groups were emerging, which until this time had been greatly under-represented in the national movement. These groups, rich peasant-proprietors in western and southern India and rich traders, now began to claim a share of any power which was devolved by the British. Fearing that any power which was devolved in the near future would be concentrated in the hands of the intellectually- and socially-dominant, upper-caste groups which dominated the national movement, these groups opposed the Home Rule agitation. A strong sense of identity was given to them in the south and west of India for there they were all non-Brahmins and found themselves confronted by a Home Rule movement manned almost entirely by Brahmins. Mrs Besant and Tilak had based their strength largely on the Brahmins of these areas and were forced to grapple with this new threat to the unity and programme of the national movement.
Secondly, many Muslims opposed the rapprochement of the Muslim League and the Congress. Conservative Muslims were suspicious of any attempt to make common cause with the Hindus against the British. They remembered the outbreaks of communal violence and feared that, if Home Rule were won, the Hindu majority would oppress the Muslim minority. Their fears seemed to be borne out by the Hindu-Muslim riots in Bihar and the UP in September-October 1917. Many Muslims in the Muslim-majority provinces of Bengal and the Punjab were dissatisfied with the share of power allocated to them by the Muslim League leaders. Together these two groups of Muslims set up organisations to oppose the demand for self-government. In an effort to divert them from their opposition to the national movement, Mrs Besant, Tilak and Jinnah took up the complaints of Pan-Islamists at the wartime internment of their leaders, the Ali Brothers. The "nationalist" Muslims were averse to continuing the Pan-Islamist opposition to Britain, because this would have made them liable to internment likewise, but also because a Pan-Islamic agitation might provoke violence among the Muslim masses. The "nationalist" Muslims thus also came under attack from the more impetuous young Muslims, for being inadequately aggressive toward the British.
Thirdly, the basis of the unity between the Moderates and the Extremists was unstable. Recruiting delegates through their Home Rule Leagues, Mrs Besant and Tilak brought a majority to the 1916 Congress. The Moderates nevertheless retained important positions in the Congress executive bodies and frustrated the attempts of Besant and Tilak to amalgamate the Home Rule Leagues with Congress and to attain undisputed control of it. The Moderates could be yoked with the young men and the Extremists only so long as the Home Rule leaders could prevent any reversion to Extremist methods and so long as the British refused to grant any political reform. Tilak and Besant, however, responded to continued British obduracy and mounting British repression (which culminated in the internment of Mrs Besant in June 1917) by rousing an increasingly bitter agitation, until in mid-1917 the young men raised the demand for a campaign of passive resistance which, in the heat of the moment, the two leaders endorsed. Almost immediately Montagu, the Secretary of State, announced that limited reforms would be introduced, and this revived the Moderates' faith in the possibility of gradual progress to self-government. Thus began the alienation of the Moderates from Mrs Besant, Tilak and the young men, which was
completed a year later when the latter rejected the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. Finding themselves in a minority in the Congress, the Moderates withdrew from it and formed their own organisations.

The Home Rule agitation frightened the Moderates but was inadequate nevertheless to satisfy the young lieutenants and followers of Besant and Tilak. The leaders aroused a deep sense of bitterness against the British among them but without providing them with a means of expressing these feelings in action: hence the demand for passive resistance. Again, while the branches of the Home Rule Leagues were adequate for the rousing of agitation, they were too loosely organised and articulated to enable the leaders to use them to control and restrain their followers. During her internment, Mrs Besant realised that she was in danger of losing control of those she had helped to rouse. After her release from internment she was inclined to agree with the Moderates that the Reforms put forward by Montagu and Chelmsford could best be improved by consultation with Montagu: she called off the passive resistance campaign and would have liked to suspend further agitation. But, having provided no outlet for the bitterness of the young men and lacking any adequate organisation to control them,
she found herself rejected by them at the end of 1918. Tilak believed that continued agitation would result in an extension of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and he encouraged the Congress (which now consisted largely of the young men) to reject the Reforms as an agitational device. Toward the end of 1918 he left for England, where he hoped to be able to influence the shaping of the Reforms more directly. His ability to do so was limited, however, by the suspicion with which he was regarded by the British, and his departure from India betokened virtual abdication of the leadership at a time when the young men were most vociferously demanding a programme of action for the expression of their bitterness toward the British. At the 1918 Congress, C. R. Das emerged as the young men's spokesman, but he had no programme which would give more than vocal expression to their feelings.

In the Muslim League Jinnah and the "nationalists" acceded most unwillingly to the demand of the young Muslims and Pan-Islamists that they voice Muslim anger at the contemplated dismemberment of Turkey by Britain and her wartime allies.

The stage was thus set for Gandhi's emergence to leadership at the beginning of 1919.
Mrs Besant's Home Rule League and agitation mobilised members of the educated classes, especially those who as students had been affected by the rise in Extremism in the first decade of the century. She had drawn into the national movement new areas, notably Gujarat, the UP, Sind and the Madras mofussil, of which the first two were to become increasingly important. She gave training to young men who were to become leaders and lieutenants, and her agitation created channels of communication which were available for future use and development.

Gandhi had prepared himself for leadership. He had espoused the anti-British Khilafat grievances of the Pan-Islamists and thus had a sizable following among the Muslims. His conduct of the passive resistance campaigns in South Africa between 1906 and 1913 and of similar campaigns among the peasantry in Bihar and Gujarat and the workers of Ahmedabad in 1917-18 made him a hero in the eyes of many young men. During these campaigns he had built up throughout India a cadre of devoted lieutenants with varying degrees of experience in his methods. Gandhi had begun his practice of making whirlwind tours throughout India, in the course of which he established face-to-face contact with audiences of all castes,
appealing to their religious beliefs, instilling into them a sense of pride and self-confidence and calling for sacrifice. At the same time, by emphasising the need for non-violence he assuaged the fears of many more cautious Indians.

In finding a cause on which to unite these groups, he was assisted (as Besant and Tilak had been before him) by the British, for early in 1919 the Government of India introduced the repressive Rowlatt Acts, which were criticised by Indians of all shades of political temperament. Thus when Gandhi launched the Rowlatt satyagraha (a form of political action in the tradition of passive resistance) the participants included the young men; the Pan-Islamists, and other Muslims who feared for the fate of the Khilafat; the emerging peasant and trading groups in Gujarat, and the townsfolk who had been reached by Gandhi himself and his lieutenants. The resort to satyagraha was opposed only by those Moderates who objected to his appeal to religious sentiment as running counter to their goal of a secular state and who feared that his appeal to mass groups and his call to break laws would lead to outbreaks of violence; by Mrs Besant, who added to her fear of violence the personal antipathy of a defeated rival; and by the non-Brahmins of south and west India.
Gandhi's satyagraha did result in violence and in May 1919 he called it off. There ensued a period of uncertainty as to the programme to be followed by the movement. Gandhi himself feared that violence would break out if he revived satyagraha, and reiterated the need for restraint; but at the same time he was anxious to prevent the excitement turning to depression as the result of his suspension of the movement. Until early 1920 he was at a loss to suggest any programme other than acceptance of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, such as had been advocated by Mrs Besant, and such as Tilak likewise advocated once the passing of the Government of India Act embodying the Reforms made it clear that no further concessions were to be gained by continued agitation.

The Rowlatt Act satyagraha had provided a partial catharsis for the bitterness of the young men. Nevertheless, the severity with which the Government had put down the violence which accompanied it (especially in the Punjab) exacerbated the feelings of bitterness which remained. At the same time Muslim anger and anguish rose with the increasing evidence after the War that the British contemplated the dismemberment of the Khilafat. Early in 1920 Gandhi resolved to use these feelings to launch a programme of Non-Co-operation with the British,
through which he hoped to inculcate satyagraha, to buttress Hindu-Muslim unity and to instil a sense of self-confidence among the Indians by making them independent of the institutions proffered in the Reforms. He proposed in the first instance the boycott of government employment, schools and law courts, and of the reformed Legislative Councils, the establishment of parallel, "national" institutions and constructive work among the masses. This programme was opposed by those who had been in the front rank of the Congress and the Muslim League. Many older Extremists recognised the impossibility of rejecting India's British heritage in toto. They did not relish sacrificing their legal practices or the promised power (however limited) in the Councils; still less did they wish to leave the Councils to the Moderates and the anti-national Muslims and non-Brahmins; Muslims opposed the boycott of schools, for their community was already proportionately less well-educated than the Hindus; communally-minded Hindus objected to making sacrifices for the Khilafat cause; and many (the Bengalis especially) were fearful of any attempt to involve the masses in the movement, for this threatened violence and the downfall of their domination of the national movement.

In September 1920 Gandhi's Non-Co-operation was
adopted by the Congress. The opposition of the old leaders was overborne by the young men and the Pan-Islamists, and by Gandhi's tactic of threatening to work through the formal and informal organisations which he had created outside the Congress in his cadre of lieutenants and the Khilafat Committees.

This marks a major turning-point in the Indian national movement: Gandhi's programme and leadership had now been accepted by the Congress, and in the Congress Gandhi had acquired an India-wide organisation which he was to refashion as a weapon for use during the next 27 years. During those years there were to be periods when the movement would work through the institutions provided by the British and when Gandhi would retire into the background. But at times of crisis the national movement turned back to Gandhi and his programme of Non-Co-operation.
In 1914 the Indian national movement was dominated by the Moderates, many of them the men who had founded the first nationalist associations and brought them together in the Congress in the previous century; the main activity of the Congress for the year consisted of sending a deputation to England and the annual Session at the end of the year. At the end of 1920 the dominant figure in the national movement was Mahatma Gandhi, who through Congress had just launched it on the first of the campaigns of Non-Co-operation with the Government that he was to lead. The seven turbulent years between marked the prelude to the modern Indian national movement. In order to understand the changes which occurred in that period the thesis focusses attention on the leaders who initiated them.

In concentrating on the leaders, the thesis devotes proportionately little space to the detailed analysis of those who constituted their following and, in dealing with the leaders at the all-India level and in attempting to see the movement as a whole, it gives less emphasis to the local peculiarities and the differences in response to those leaders than to the broad similarities. The sorts of groups, from which the members of the movement came, have been touched upon, as have those groups, from
which opposition to the national movement arose. But much further investigation of these questions is required. Some academic and journalistic analysis of current Indian politics is being done in terms of social and regional group loyalties, but much detailed historical research is required to extend similar insights into the politics of pre-Independence India. Work has been begun in this field, particularly for Maharashtra and Bengal. The overriding unity of the Indian national movement cannot be denied, particularly in view of the centralised leadership which emerged out of the period 1914-20, but more detailed studies of the regions will facilitate advance at the national level.

Plainly, too, much work is waiting to be done on the economic factors in Indian nationalism, both in the period under review and in those before and after it. I shall only hint, for example, at the significance of the large profits made at the beginning of the First World War by firms importing material for the cotton industry,


which enabled those who were connected with them to contribute largely to the funds of the Home Rule movement; or again at that of the high price of foodstuffs during and after the War, which increased the wealth of the rising peasant-proprietor and trading groups and probably contributed to their assertiveness, while increasing the discontent of landless, rural and urban workers.

I wish to thank the Australian National University for the Scholarship and for financing the year's fieldwork in India, which made this study possible. It is impossible for me adequately to thank my supervisors, Dr D. A. Low and Dr B. D. Graham, for their inspiration and guidance of my work; and Dr H. A. Lamb, who was in the unenviable position of taking over supervision during the last few months of the writing of the thesis. I remember with gratitude the stimulus of discussion and disputation with colleagues of the University.

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1. see Jamnadas Dwarkadas, "A Memoire of Gandhiji" (unpublished memoirs held by the author); Joint Select Committee on the Government of India Bill, Report. Vol II, Minutes of Evidence", House of Commons Papers, 1919, IV, 80, Q 1419[Mrs Besant's evidence].
Patna; the Secretariat Record Office, Bombay; Punjab State Record Office, Patiala; from the Librarian and staff of the Australian National University Library; the S. Sinha Library, Patna; the National Library of India, Calcutta; Madras University Library; AICC Library, New Delhi; the Bombay Presidency Association, Indian Association and the Madras Mahajana Sabha; Professor N. R. Phatak and the staff of the History of the Freedom Movement Office in Bombay; Dr Dighe of the History of the Freedom Movement Office, New Delhi; Mr Sri Ram, the President of the Theosophical Society, the staff of the Adyar Archives and Library, and the officers of the Society at Adyar, Banaras and Poona; the members of the Servants of India Society in Poona and Madras; the Trustees of the Kesari/Mahratta Trust in Poona; the Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya. For their help received while in India I shall always be indebted to Messrs B. Shiva Rao of New Delhi; R. T. Parthasarathy, Salem, Madras; D. V. Trivedi, Ahmedabad; A. R. Mukherjea, Calcutta; Dr C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Annamalai University; and Dr S. Raj, New Delhi.

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS USED IN TEXT

AICC       All-India Congress Committee
AIHRL      All-India Home Rule League
AIML       All-India Muslim League
CP         Central Provinces
DCC        District Congress Committee
HRL        Home Rule League
ICS        Indian Civil Service
IHRL       Indian Home Rule League
NCO        Non-Co-operation
PCC        Provincial Congress Committee
UP         United Provinces

Note on Spelling:

In spelling the names of individuals, the form preferred by the individual himself has been used wherever this is known; where this is not known the most frequently-used form in printed works is employed. While introducing an element of complexity, this, it is hoped, will assist the reader in differentiating between individuals with similar names. Hence one meets Surendranath Banerjea and Jitendralal Bannerjee, S. Subramania Aiyer and C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Mazharul Haque and Fazlul Huq. For the names of towns and regions the modern Indian
spelling has been used: if this differs markedly from spelling used during the early twentieth century the latter form has been shown in brackets wherever this seems helpful. Other words from Indian languages have been explained briefly in the Glossary.

**KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS USED IN FOOTNOTES.**

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<td>Young India, [date of entry], Tagore, p.</td>
<td>Young India 1919-1922 (Madras, Tagore, 1922).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Standard Forms of Reference

Government of India, Home Department files.

Files of the Home Department, Political branch are referred to as follows:

Home Poll, followed by category [A, B, Deposit], date and number, e.g.

Home Poll A, Jan 1914, no. 1
Home Poll Dep. Feb 1915, nos 2-3

Files of the Home Department, Public Branch are referred to as follows:

Home Public, followed likewise by category, date and number, e.g.
Home Public B, Mar 1916, no. 4

Indian National Congress Reports of the Proceedings of Sessions

Annual Sessions are referred to as:

Congress [year], Report, p.

Special Sessions are referred to as:

Special Congress [year], Report, p.

Note on Footnote Conventions (I)

As far as has been practicable the style laid down for use in the Journal of Asian Studies has been adhered to. Volume numbers are shown in upper-case roman numerals without the word "vol." Where the volume numbers are given the letters "p." or "pp." for page(s) have been omitted: thus

Jayakar, I, 263
Note on Footnote Conventions (II)

In the interests of clarity shortened titles have been used in preference to "op. cit." except where the work has been referred to in the preceding two or three pages or has been referred to frequently.

The Reports on Native Newspapers are not consistently paginated. In references to Reports which are bound in fully-paginated annual volumes, the page number follows the year (e.g. Bengal NP, 1918, p. 1); where Reports are bound in half-yearly volumes, the volume number I or II, as appropriate, is interpolated between the year and the page number. Where volumes are incompletely paginated, the page reference is to individual weekly Newspaper Reports (e.g. Bombay NP, w.e. 20 June 1919, p. 2).

Weekly CID Reports in Government of India files are referred to by page numbers (where consistent and complete) or by date of the report (w[ee]k e[nding] date). Fortnightly reports from Provincial Governments to the Government of India are also referred to by page numbers where possible, and otherwise by the province of origin.
## GLOSSARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adi-Dravidian</td>
<td>&quot;Original Dravidian&quot;, title taken by untouchables of Madras.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agarwal</td>
<td>Trading caste of northern India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ahimsa</td>
<td>&quot;Not killing&quot;, i.e. non-violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahir</td>
<td>A caste, traditionally shepherds, but comprising landless labourers in general, mainly in the UP, also in other parts of north and west India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiyar</td>
<td>A title added to the names of Shaivite Brahmins of south India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiyengar</td>
<td>&quot;Father&quot;, a title added to the names of Srivaishnava (or Ramanujiya) Brahmins of south India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alim</td>
<td>See &quot;ulema&quot; below.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amil</td>
<td>The outstanding caste of the Hindu minority of Sind; originally administrators in the service of the Muslim rulers of Sind, they have traditions of scholarship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anavla (Anavil Brahmin)</td>
<td>The dominant agricultural caste of the Surat, Broach and Panch Mahal districts of southern Gujarat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anjuman</td>
<td>A communal assembly or association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>archana</td>
<td>Hindu religious ceremony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arya Samaj</td>
<td>Hindu sect founded by Dayanand in Punjab, whence it spread into the UP in particular; opposes caste restrictions aggressively proselytising especially vis-à-vis Muslims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ashram</td>
<td>&quot;A hermitage&quot;, the abode of persons leading a religious or contemplative life; also a school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Balija (or Balajiga)  Caste of traders (occasionally agricul­
turists) of the Telugu-or Kannada-­speaking areas, usually Lingayats.

Bania (Vani, Vania)  Caste numerous in Gujarat; divided into 2 main groups, Vaishnavas and Jains, both of which are engaged chiefly in trade and banking. Also used of any trader.

Baqr Id  Festival observed by Muslims on the 10th of the month Zilhaja - the feast of the ox, in commemoration of the offering of Ismail by Abraham (accord­
ing to Muslim tradition).

Bapu  Father (Gujarati); a term of affection­ate respect, applied to Gandhi in particular.

bhadralok  "The respectable people": the upper castes of Bengal, Brahmins, Kayasthas, Vaidyas.

bhakti  Faith, devotion, service. The reform­ing bhakti cults in Hinduism stress devotion and love, as opposed to knowledge and duty, as the means of realising God.

Bharata Varsha  Classical term for "India".

Bhatia  Trading caste of Gujarat and Bombay, accorded Kshatriya status.

bigha  A measure of land, varying in extent in different parts of India.

Bohra  Banker, money lender or merchant of a tribe originally in Gujarat, converted to Islam.

brahma  The ultimate source of the universe, the inmost reality.

brahmacharya  Celibacy and self-denial; the condition of a student leading such a life.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Member of the highest, or priestly, caste among the Hindus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmo</td>
<td>A member of the Brahmo Samaj.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmo Samaj</td>
<td>A monotheistic sect founded in Bengal by Raja Rammohan Roy. It found its support among the Westernised intelligentsia of Bengal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charkha</td>
<td>(Spinning)-wheel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaturh</td>
<td>Agricultural caste of Jains in southern Maharashtra and Karnataka.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chawl</td>
<td>Tenement; also used of the open spaces formed between blocks of such buildings in Bombay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chetti</td>
<td>Non-Brahmin caste of south India, traditionally weavers or tradesmen; particularly applied to rich trader-moneylender-bankers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chitpavan [Brahmin]</td>
<td>Sub-caste of Maharashtrian Brahmins, traditionally dominant in Maharashtra since the rise of the Peshwa from among them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crore</td>
<td>10 million [printed 1,00,00,000].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deshbandu</td>
<td>&quot;Friend of the country&quot;, title bestowed on C. R. Das.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dewan</td>
<td>Prime Minister of a Native or Princely State.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dharma</td>
<td>Hindu religious duty or duty imposed by one's caste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhed</td>
<td>Untouchable caste of Gujarat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dharma-yuddha</td>
<td>&quot;War of duty&quot;, righteous struggle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhurna</td>
<td>Tapasya [q.v.] undergone with the intention of bringing about a change of heart in another, but often involving non-violent coercion; notably takes the form of sitting at the door of the one to be influenced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fatwa</td>
<td>Written opinion of ulema on a matter of Islamic law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganpati</td>
<td>A name of Ganesh, the propitious god for all undertakings, round whom Tilak built a nationalistic festival.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghadr</td>
<td>Mutiny.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goonda</td>
<td>Rowdy, ruffian, gangster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guru</td>
<td>Hindu spiritual teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hakim</td>
<td>A physician.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hortal</td>
<td>Closure of the shops of a market as passive resistance to exaction, hence suspension of work and business as a mark of indignation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hat</td>
<td>&quot;Bazaar&quot; or &quot;market&quot;, hence a village, especially in Bengal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hijrat</td>
<td>Flight from one's country: course imposed on Muslims if they are not free to practise their faith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>istifta</td>
<td>Interrogatory epistle exchanged by ulema to ascertain opinions on questions of Islamic doctrine (preparatory to the issuing of a fatwa [q.v.])</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jainism</td>
<td>Non-Brahminical sect, which has its own priesthood (see &quot;Chaturth&quot;, &quot;Bania&quot;).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jihad</td>
<td>A religious war of Muslims against unbelievers, inculcated as a duty by the Quran and &quot;Traditions&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamma (Kammarar)</td>
<td>Dominant agricultural caste in parts of Andhra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanyakubja</td>
<td>Sub-division of Brahmins, originating in Kanauj (UP), from whom the Brahmins of Bengal are reputed to spring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapu (Reddi)</td>
<td>Leading caste of cultivators in Andhra; especially village-headman in that region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>karma</td>
<td>Fate or destiny, following as effect from one's action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnatak</td>
<td>Kannada-speaking area, particularly that part north of Mysore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathi (Kattha)</td>
<td>A measure of land; in Bengal and Bihar the twentieth part of a bigha [q.v.].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayastha</td>
<td>A caste group whose occupation is writer or accountant; associated with administration under Muslim rulers in northern India and with scholastic traditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khadi</td>
<td>Hand-woven cloth from hand-spun thread.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khalif</td>
<td>&quot;Successor&quot;, the religious head of Islam (as acknowledged by Sunni Muslims).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khilafat</td>
<td>Sovereignty, the office of Khalif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khoja</td>
<td>Tribe and sect of Shia Muslims in Gujarat, largely settled in Sind and Bombay City.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;...ki jai&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Victory to...&quot; or &quot;Hail...&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kirtan</td>
<td>Hindu religious song.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kirtankar</td>
<td>Singer of kirtans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Komati</td>
<td>Caste in south India who consider themselves Vaisyas; shopkeepers and merchants, they assume the denomination of Shet or Chetti [q.v.].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kshatriya</td>
<td>Generalised term for castes of the second (warrior and kingly) status, or varna.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kunbee</td>
<td>&quot;Agriculturist&quot;; also the name of cultivating castes in Maharashtra and Gujarat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lakh</td>
<td>100,000 [printed 1,00,000].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lathi</td>
<td>A club, bludgeon, stick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lingayat</td>
<td>Member of the Vira-Saiva sect, which rejected Brahmin priestdom and worships Shiva as the linga; concentrated in the Kannada-speaking region where they form 20 per cent of the population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lokamanya</td>
<td>&quot;Beloved of the people&quot;, title given to Tilak.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mahalwari</td>
<td>Land-revenue settlement by which a whole village (&quot;estate&quot;) is responsible for payment of the revenue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahar</td>
<td>Untouchable caste of rural Maharashtra. Village-watchmen, they are often employed in the village as scavengers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahatma</td>
<td>A title (given to Gandhi but also to others, e.g. Shraddhananda) meaning &quot;Great Soul&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>Gardener caste of Maharashtra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manu</td>
<td>Traditional author of the famous Hindu law-code bearing his name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maratha</td>
<td>Dominant agricultural caste of Maharashtra, of which 96 clans claim Kshatriya status by virtue of their relationship to former rulers of the Deccan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marwari</td>
<td>A native of Marwar settled in other parts of India, usually banker, broker, merchant; mostly of Jain religion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maya</td>
<td>Illusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mofussil</td>
<td>The rural localities of a district (or region) as distinguished from the chief station (or capital).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohurrum</td>
<td>Annual celebration in the first month of the Muslim year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moplah</td>
<td>Muslim of Malabar, descendant of Arabs who settled there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mudaliar</td>
<td>A title of trading, agricultural and other respectable, non-Brahmin castes in Tamilnad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muhajrin</td>
<td>Participant in <em>hijrat</em> [q.v.].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mullah</td>
<td>Muslim learned in theology and sacred law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naidu</td>
<td>A title of respectable persons among the non-Brahmin castes of Andhra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nair</td>
<td>The dominant, ruling and warrior caste in Malabar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namasudra</td>
<td>Low-caste or outcaste agriculturist in Bengal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pallan (pl. Pallar)</td>
<td>Outcaste agricultural labourer, commonly the slave of the Vellalar agricultural caste in Tamilnad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pan supari</td>
<td>Areka nut and spices rolled up in leaf of <em>Piper betel</em> offered as courtesy to guests. <em>Pan supari</em> parties are held to celebrate a favourable event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>panchayat</td>
<td>A council of 5 (or more) persons assembled as a committee to decide on matters affecting a village, community or body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pandal</td>
<td>Marquee, tent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pariah</td>
<td>Outcaste in southern India, commonly slave of agricultural caste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parishad</td>
<td>Conference, or Congress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsee</td>
<td>Race settled chiefly in Gujarat and Bombay City who observe Zoroastrian religion: distinguished as merchants, traders, industrialists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathare Prabhu</td>
<td>Writer caste of western India, claiming Kshatriya status which was denied by the Brahmins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patidar</td>
<td>Dominant cultivator caste of districts around Ahmedabad.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pillai  "Child", a respectable adjunct to Tamil names in some agricultural castes, especially Vellalar.

pir  Among Muslims a saint, a spiritual guide.

Prarthana Samaj  The western Indian equivalent to the Brahmo Samaj [q.v.], which undertook social reform.

qurbani  Muslim sacrifice of cows.

raj  Sovereignty, rule, kingdom.

Rayalaseema  The Ceded Districts of Andhra.

Reddi  See "Kapu".

rishi  An inspired sage, the author or teacher of those works which are considered sacred.

ryot  A peasant.

ryotwari  See "Ryot". A land-revenue settlement in which the peasant enters into a direct contractual relationship with the State.

sabha  An assembly, association.

Sakta  From "sakti", power, especially of a goddess: sects, especially in Bengal, which worship the goddess Durga or Kali either publicly or privately. Such worship was associated with the activities of certain Bengali anti-British, terrorist associations after 1905.

Saktic  Relating to Sakta [q.v.].

sarkar  The government, applied particularly to the British Government of India and its representatives.

Sarvajanik Sabha  "People's association", representative associations founded in a number of towns in Maharashtra in 19th-century; the most outstanding was at Poona.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satya Shodhak Samaj</td>
<td>&quot;Society for the Propagation of Truth&quot;, a non-Brahmin educational and political organisation founded in Maharashtra by Jyotiba Fule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>satyagraha</td>
<td>Truth-force or soul-force, term coined by Gandhi to cover forms of non-violent coercion, e.g. civil disobedience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>satyagrahi</td>
<td>One who practises satyagraha [q.v.].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaivite (Shaiva)</td>
<td>Worshipper or votary of Shiva.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shastri</td>
<td>An expounder of Hindu law and texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shet (Seth, Chetti)</td>
<td>Merchant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shia</td>
<td>The second of the two great divisions of Muslims, following Ali, son-in-law of Mahomed and his lawful successors. Shias do not recognise the &quot;Traditions&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shroff</td>
<td>A banker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smarta Aiyar</td>
<td>Shaivite Brahmin, the larger of the two principal sects of Brahmins of south India [see &quot;Aiyar&quot;].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sowcar</td>
<td>A substantial urban financier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Vaishnavism</td>
<td>The branch of the votaries of Vishnu who follow the teachings of Ramanuja.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufi</td>
<td>One of a sect of Muslim ascetic mystics who in later times embraced pantheistic vows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunni</td>
<td>The orthodox Muslims who accept the Sunna (&quot;Traditions&quot; of Mahomed) as of almost equal authority with the Quran.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swadeshi</td>
<td>Belonging to, or made in, one's own country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swami</td>
<td>Title of the head of a religious order or establishment (especially in northern India); in southern India, a title given to idols and thence incorporated in the names of devotees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swaraj</td>
<td>&quot;Self-rule&quot;, self-government; had been used of Hindu states of the Deccan, which wrested their independence from Muslim rulers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taluq</td>
<td>Area of administration next in size and rank below district.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taluqdar</td>
<td>Contractor for revenue (in Oudh chiefly) granted proprietary rights by the British; cf. zamindar [q.v.].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamasha</td>
<td>An entertainment, show, display, public function.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tapasya</td>
<td>Self-suffering for self-purification or as form of supplication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tinkathia</td>
<td>Illegal land-tax in indigo-growing areas of Bihar, by which three kathies [q.v.] in each bigha had to be sown with indigo for the landlord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ulema (sing,</td>
<td>Those specially trained in Islamic religion and law, who are regarded by Muslims as the authorities on these matters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alim)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaishnavite</td>
<td>Worshipper of Vishnu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Vaishnava)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaishya</td>
<td>Generalised term for the castes of the third (trading) status, or varna (in which Manu also included agriculturists). Bania [q.v.] is used similarly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vakil</td>
<td>A pleader or lawyer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vani</td>
<td>Moneylender (see &quot;Bania&quot;).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>varna</td>
<td>A caste; especially each of the four-fold generalised classifications, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Sudra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vedantic</td>
<td>Deriving from Vedanta, one of the leading systems of Hindu philosophy, founded by Sankaracharya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vedas</td>
<td>The general name of the chief scriptural authorities of the Hindus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vellalar</td>
<td>Member of the great cultivating caste of Tamilnad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virashaiva</td>
<td>See &quot;Lingayat&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vyapari</td>
<td>A trader, a dealer, a man of business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wahabi</td>
<td>A follower of the doctrine of Shaikh-ul-Wahab, an Arabian reformer of Islam who tried to reform many abuses in the religion, especially practices of the Shias.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zamindar</td>
<td>&quot;Zamin&quot;, land; &quot;dar&quot; he who has: formerly a revenue farmer; in Bengal, Bihar, eastern UP and Madras they were accorded proprietary rights by the British (see &quot;zamindari&quot;); in Punjab, any cultivator, but especially those who held village lands in common (see &quot;mahalwari&quot;).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zamindari</td>
<td>The office and rights of a zamindar; a land-revenue settlement, in which the zamindar was granted proprietary rights and became responsible for the collection and payment of revenue, usually permanently fixed, from all tillers of the soil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zillah</td>
<td>A division, a district, a tract of country.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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### Chapter II - RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION


### Chapter III - THE CONGRESS/MUSLIM LEAGUE RAPPROCHEMENT


### Chapter IV - AGITATION AND ORGANISATION: THE HOME RULE LEAGUES


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INTRODUCTORY: THE SITUATION IN 1914.

The seven years between 1914 and 1920 constituted a most formative period in the history of the Indian national movement. New leaders emerged, with new strategies for the deployment of the movement's forces and for the attainment of its objective, self-government, and with new organisational ideas for putting these strategies into operation.

This was also a time of experimentation. The first of the new leaders was Mrs Annie Besant, who worked in co-operation with Tilak and Jinnah. By the end of 1918, however, their leadership was proving inadequate. C. R. Das rose to prominence and it seemed as if he might take their place. But by the end of 1920 Gandhi emerged as the leader, with the programme of Non-Co-operation which was to be applied repeatedly over the next twenty-seven years, and with the reconstructed Congress which was to be the vehicle of the national movement for the rest of its existence.

Gandhi's success was qualified by the decline in his leadership between 1922 and 1927 and again in the mid-thirties, and this has to be borne in mind in
considering his leadership as a whole. Nevertheless
in 1920 he had clearly succeeded where Mrs Besant and
others had failed.

The thesis seeks to understand his success and
the others' failure. To do so it examines the problems
confronting the leaders in this period and their response
to these problems.

The activity of this period and the developments
within the leadership contrasted strikingly with the
disruption and stagnation that had characterised the
previous six years since 1908. Nevertheless the devel­
opment of the national movement since the 1870s and
British reactions to the movement, and even the inactivity
of the years 1908-14 gave rise to the problems with which
the leaders were faced in 1914.

The National Movement and the British Response.

The first nationalist political movements in India
arose among the Western-educated professional men, the
lawyers, journalists and professors. Their education
had taught them of the movements for liberty among the
representatives of the people in Britain, her colonies
and in Europe. They had come to regard themselves as the
representatives of the Indian people and during the last quarter of the nineteenth century organised to acquire power, and the institutions through which to exercise it. At the same time they became increasingly conscious of the restrictions on the avenues of employment (important for prestige as much as for remuneration) open to them: although many of them were as highly educated as the English members of the higher Civil, administrative and military services, they found entry to these services barred to them. These and other grievances they sought to present to the Government for reform through their new organisations.

The largest concentration of these professional men was in the Presidency towns - Calcutta, Bombay and Madras - each one a great capital where law courts, newspapers, universities and other institutions had grown up round the commercial offices and the Government House, and in Poona which was both a traditional and modern political and educational centre. In these cities the first national political organisations were set up, the Indian Association in Calcutta in 1876 and, during the following decade, the Sarvajanik Sabha in Poona, the Mahajana Sabha in Madras and the Bombay Presidency Association in Bombay. The most active members comprised
the executive Council of the Association which met monthly or more frequently to discuss political matters of the moment: on more important matters they might call together the general body of the Association or hold a public meeting which would be attended by respectable citizens and authorise a representation to the Government.

The elite nature of these Associations was reflected in their size. A year after its foundation the Indian Association claimed 200 members, while in 1914 the Mahajana Sabha, for example, had 440. Generally no more than 20 attended Council meetings. Public meetings might attract up to 3000, or on specially contentious matters, 10,000 or more.

Attempts to co-ordinate the demands of these organisations culminated in 1885 in the first Session of the Indian National Congress. Congress sessions were held annually thereafter in the Christmas week, and provided a brief forum for leading speakers from the several provincial Associations. Resolutions were passed urging the Government to reform the system of administration,

1. J. C. Bagal, History of Indian Association, p. 21; Mahajana Sabha, Annual Report 1914, p. 5.
2. e.g. J. C. Bagal, op. cit., pp. 34, 41, 60.
above all in two ways, by introducing representative government and by admitting Indians in larger numbers to the public service.¹ "Representation is...the gospel of our political redemption", said one speaker,² and others pointed to Canada and Australia as the models for India.³

Congress appointed Standing Committees in each province, which were practically identical with the Councils of the provincial Associations, but no central Committee was set up until 1899 when a Constitution was finally adopted.⁴ Even after this the co-ordination of the activities of the provincial Associations and Congress Committees was carried out informally by private correspondence between their leading members and the Congress General Secretaries.

Conventions developed for the running of Congress: at each session the venue of the following session was agreed upon; the host Congressmen then appointed a

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3. e.g. Malaviya, Congress 1885. Report, pp. 31-4.
Reception Committee to raise funds, prepare for the Congress and to chart the resolutions to be adopted in correspondence with leading Congressmen elsewhere; and the resolutions and speakers upon them were finally decided at the time of the session by a Subjects Committee appointed by the leading delegates from among themselves. Delegates were "elected" by the provincial Committees and Associations or by public meetings: anyone willing to attend could count on being elected, at least during the first 20 years of the Congress. Annual attendance between 1892 and 1904 varied between 471 and 1584, of whom on the average about half were professional men.

In addition the provincial Standing Committee took over the running of annual Provincial Conferences (inaugurated by the Indian Association) which were miniature Congress sessions at the provincial level.

Foremost among those responsible for the formation of Congress was a British ex-Indian-Civil-Servant, A. O. Hume (1829-1912), who urged the members of the provincial

1. 1892-1904: Total delegates, 10,550; Lawyers, 37%; other Professional Men, 10%; Landed Men, 19%; Commercial Men, 16%; Others or not known, 19%. One assumes that those, whose occupation was not known, also included professional men. Source, P. C. Ghosh, The Development of the Indian National Congress, 1892-1909, p. 24.
Associations to combine their forces.\textsuperscript{1} When, after the third Congress Session, it became clear that the Government would make no practical response to the resolutions passed, Hume launched a propaganda campaign modelled on Cobden's Anti-Corn Law campaign of 1839-45, distributing pamphlets and arranging over 1000 lectures and meetings throughout India. As this produced no apparent favourable response, Hume and others turned to win the sympathy of the British Government and its electorate.\textsuperscript{2} Between 1889 and 1893 a British Committee of Congress and a newspaper, \textit{India}, were established and Members of Parliament interested in Indian affairs formed into a Committee. The leading figure in these activities was another ex-Indian-Civil-Servant, Sir William Wedderburn (1838-1918) who after his retirement in 1887 pressed the case for representative government for India as President of two Congress sessions, as a Liberal MP from 1887 to 1900 and as the confidant of Liberal statesmen.\textsuperscript{3} From his vantage point in Westminster Wedderburn provided leading

\textsuperscript{1} see W. Wedderburn, \textit{Allan Octavian Hume}, pp. 50-9; cf. Bagal, \textit{Indian Association}, pp. 80-8.


Congressmen with information and advice on programme and strategy between 1887 and 1917. A propaganda campaign like that initiated in 1888 by Hume was not repeated (and the propaganda in England was hampered by the difficulty of raising funds in India): Congress confined itself to passing resolutions at its annual sessions and to sending deputations and representatives to England to press its case on the Secretary of State, most notably in 1906-08 on the subject of Morley's Reform Bill.

In the 1890s and early 1900s a new spirit entered the national movement, more defiant of the British. This spirit rose out of the Hindu religious revival of the second half of the nineteenth century, which was in part a reaction against the zeal of reformers who had sought to "purify" Hinduism and reconcile it with Western thought, and in part the result of recognition of the greatness of Hinduism by Western scholars like Max Müller. The Arya Samaj, for example, proclaimed the greatness of the Vedas and sought to base a national religion on their teachings,¹ while Swami Vivekananda strove to give Indians a sense of strength through exposition of the Vedanta. Bipin Chandra Pal, who was deeply affected by

¹. see Census of India, 1911, XIV, 'Punjab', part i, 133-9; XV, 'UP', part i, 132-40.
the new spirit, affirmed that the Theosophical Society, founded in the USA by Madame Blavatsky and "Colonel" Olcott and brought by them to India in 1879, was perhaps the most powerful of the forces that brought in this movement of Hindu religious revival....This Society told our people that instead of having any reason to be ashamed of their past or of the legacies left to them by it, they have every reason to feel justly proud of it all, because their seers and saints had been the spokesmen of the highest truths....This new message, coming from the representatives of the most advanced peoples of the modern world, the inheritors of the most advanced culture and civilisation the world has as yet known, at once raised us in our estimation and created a self-confidence in us....

This spirit was first manifested in national politics in Maharashtra. Here in the 1890s festivals were inaugurated, one for the worship of the Hindu god Ganesh, an other to celebrate the Maharashtrian national hero, Shivaji who, by defeating a Muslim general, had launched the Marathas on the road to power. These festivals were celebrated with displays of gymnastics and lathi-play. They gave the Hindus of Maharashtra a sense of solidarity and strength but at the expense of ill-feeling between the Hindus and Muslims which culminated in riots.

2. the lathi is a weighted stick used in self-defence.
this movement, notably Tilak, set out to alienate mass groups from the Government: in 1896 they urged peasants, who were suffering from famine to withhold the payment of land-taxes, and in the following year championed plague-victims in Poona in their allegations of harshness in the application of the Government's sanitary measures.¹

This defiant spirit toward the British was next seen in Bengal following the Partition of that province by the Government in 1905. Regarding this as an attempt to divide and weaken the professional groups and hence the national movement, the older Bengali politicians called for a day of mourning (foreshadowing the later hartals of Gandhi), began a boycott of British goods and defied the authorities' ban on shouting the slogan "Bande Mataram" - "Hail the Motherland". The older politicians found that they could not control the agitation they had begun and representatives of the new spirit, like Bipin Chandra Pal, took it over, advocating the boycott of colleges by students and the severing of links between rulers and ruled.² In 1907 Pal visited


Madras where he lectured to large audiences, including many students, arguing the case for complete independence from Britain.¹ In the Punjab at the same time, "agitators", mainly members of the Arya Samaj, urged policemen and soldiers to quit the service of the Government and farmers to resist the implementation of the unpopular Canal Colonies Act.²

Indian self-confidence and defiance toward Britain received encouragement from the first defeat of a European by an Asiatic power in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 and by the boycott of American goods by the Chinese in 1906.³

The Congressmen who had been affected by this new spirit referred to themselves as the "New Party" or "Extremists" to distinguish themselves from those who adhered to the aim of gradual reform, whom they called "Moderates".⁴ The Extremists challenged the existing leaders of Congress for control of that body. They proposed a campaign of passive resistance against the

¹ see A. Gupta (ed), Studies in the Bengal Renaissance, p. 565.
⁴ see B. G. Tilak, "Tenets of the New Party", speech, 2 Jan 1907, in All About Lok. Tilak, p. 492.
Government, which included the boycott of Government schools and courts and the refusal to pay land-revenue and taxes. In Britain Morley, the recently-appointed Liberal Secretary of State, had reforms on the anvil which the Moderates hoped would largely fulfill their demands for representative government; Morley told them that "If your speakers or your newspapers set to work to belittle what we do, to clamour for the impossible, then all will go wrong". The Moderates therefore resisted the threats to their authority and to the expected success of their methods of demanding reform, and excluded the Extremists from Congress at the 1907 Session at Surat.

The Moderates were able to expel the Extremists because they formed a majority of Congress delegates and still had control of the Provincial Congress Committees [hereafter "PCCs"].

1. ibid., p. 503; Sri Aurobindo, The Doctrine of Passive Resistance, passim.
2. Mary, Countess of Minto, India, Minto and Morley, 1905-10, pp. 99-100.
At Surat about 900 of the 1600 delegates attended a Convention called by the Moderates immediately after the "split", while only 300 attended an Extremist meeting.¹

The Moderates ensured their control of Congress by drawing up a new Constitution in 1908. Under this the PCCs became crucially-important bodies. Delegates to the annual session could only be elected by the PCCs or bodies recognised by them.² As before, the PCC of the host province was to form the Reception Committee of the annual session. In addition, the All-India Congress Committee [hereafter "AICC"] was set up as the executive body of the Congress: apart from ex-officio members, its members were to be elected by the PCCs or by the delegates to the annual session.³ The PCCs themselves were comprised entirely of those who were known to be Moderates and who signed a declaration that they desired the attainment...of a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing Members of the British Empire...by strictly constitutional means, by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration...

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3. ibid., Arts XXII, XIV.
and future applicants for membership were to be scrutinised by the council of the appropriate PCC.¹

Under this Constitution the Moderates proposed to set up a hierarchy of district organisations to bring the Moderate leaders into touch with the new areas that were being tapped by the Extremists with their exciting, defiant speeches. After a good beginning in Madras and the United Provinces [hereafter "UP"], this attempt to set up district organisations collapsed² and even existing Congress institutions, like the Provincial Conferences, were allowed to lapse. Attendance at the annual sessions fell away; that of 1912 was the most poorly attended of all.

Before the Surat split the Extremists had possessed no formal organisation outside Congress and it was only after their expulsion that they set about creating any such organisation. In 1908 they held Conferences in Poona and Bombay and planned a "Congress" for the end of the year.³ The Government now stepped in to crush the

1. ibid., Arts VI(6), VII; Bombay PCC Rules (1908), Rule 5; Indian Association, Rule 3; Bombay Presidency Association, Rule 5; Deccan Sabha, Rule 5. For the working of these rules see e.g. N. K. Ramasami, letter to Mahratta, 20 Dec 1914, p. 395.

2. see letters of V. S. S. Sastri to V. Krishnaswami Iyer 28 and 29 Sept, 3 and 17 Oct 1908, VKI Papers; Gokhale to Mrs Besant, 21 Nov 1914, Adyar Archives.

3. V. G. Bhat, Lokamanya Tilak (His Life, Mind, Politics and Philosophy), pp. 80-1; Gokhale to Bhupendranath Basu, 14 Dec 1914, Adyar Archives.
defiance of the Extremists. It deported the Punjab leader, Lajpat Rai, without trial, and procured sentences of six months' to six years' imprisonment upon the leading Extremists of Bengal, the Deccan and Madras for their newspaper writings and speeches, which the courts held to contain incitements to disaffection and violence. Those who escaped or received short sentences were cowed; bereft of their leaders, the Extremist rank-and-file sank into inactivity.

The British reaction to the Indian national movement between 1885 and 1914 was a combination of reluctance to accede to the demands for reform and (after 1907) of repression of the Extremists.

In 1893 the friends of Congress in the House of Commons passed a resolution in favour of the admission of Indians to the Indian Civil Service on terms of equality with Europeans. This was rejected by the Government of the day after consultation with the Viceroy who opined that "material reduction of the European staff...was incompatible with the safety of British rule".¹ So much for Parliament's responsibility for India!

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¹ Cambridge History of India, VI, 368-71.
As for representative government, the Legislative Councils constituted in 1861, while following quasi-parliamentary procedure, were empowered only to consider legislation laid before them by the executive. Furthermore they were not representative of the indigenous population: they consisted of nominees of the Governor-General, of whom a few were Indians.¹ In 1892, in response to the demands of Congress and its advocates among Members of Parliament the British Government passed the Indian Councils Act to reform these legislatures. Since 1886 Congress had reiterated its opinion that at least one-half of the members of the legislatures should be elected by Indians, and the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, had urged the Home Government to introduce an elected element into the Councils.² The 1892 Act failed to introduce the right of election, although under the guise of "selection" it allowed local-government and other bodies to choose a few Councillors. This dealt a blow to Congress optimism about the rate of advance toward representative government.³

² ibid., pp. 43-4.
³ see 1892, 1893 resolutions in Chakrabarty and Bhattacharyya, Congress in Evolution, pp. 6-7; Besant, Wrought, p. 154.
Councils' powers were frustratingly limited for while they could discuss the Budget they could not vote upon it. Nevertheless Congress set out to use these Reforms as a platform for winning further advance.

Curzon, in defending the Government's refusal to grant the right of election had referred to the Congress, in a famous phrase, as representing "a minute and almost microscopic minority of the total population of India". As Viceroy from 1898 to 1905, Curzon further antagonised the educated classes from which the Congress was drawn by his unconcealed aversion to them, which found expression in the Partition of Bengal in 1905, by which he hoped to "split up and thereby weaken a solid body of opponents to our rule".

A further expansion of the Councils was made by the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909, largely in response to criticism of the existing Councils. But once again Congress was disappointed. Gokhale, one of the leading

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2. see J. H. Broomfield, op. cit., pp. 38-42.
Moderates, who had discussed the Bill at length with Morley, the Secretary of State, felt "certain" in 1908 that elected majorities would at last be granted in the provincial legislatures, but this was not done except in Bengal.¹ Thus Congress had failed to obtain what it had asked for as early as 1886. The provision in Morley's original Bill to establish Executive Councils in the UP, the Punjab and Assam was deleted on the Bill's passage through the House of Lords.² Morley gave Indian Moderates no solace by saying that he did not envisage Parliamentary Government in India for the foreseeable future.³ The Moderates were further disillusioned by their experience of working the reformed Councils. Morley's Bill had promised the elected Council-members a greater role in financial policies in particular. But, as the leading Moderate member of the Bombay Legislative Council, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, pointed out in 1912, while the official members had months to consider the Budget,

1. Gokhale to Vamanrao, 30 Oct 1908, Gokhale Papers.


the non-official members of the Budget Committee had only a weekend to do so; and the Budget debate was narrowly restricted to a discussion of the matters contained in the Budget. The "arrangements", he said, are "more or less of a farce".¹

In 1911 it seemed that the Government of Minto's successor, Lord Hardinge, had gone far toward accepting the Congress' ultimate goal of self-government, for in its famous "Delhi" Despatch of that year it wrote:

in the course of time the just demands of Indians for a share in the government of the country will have to be satisfied, and the question will be how this devolution of power can be conceded without impairing the supreme authority of the Governor-General in Council. The only possible solution of the difficulty would appear to be gradually to give the provinces a larger measure of self-government, until at last India would consist of a number of administrations, autonomous in all provincial affairs, with the Government of India above them all, and possessing power to interfere in case of misgovernment, but ordinarily restricting their functions to matters of Imperial concern.²

Indian Moderates welcomed this as a portent of advance

¹. ibid., p. 316; cf. Motilal to Jawaharlal Nehru, 29 April 1910, in Nanda, The Nehrus, p. 110.

to self-government along the lines of Canada and Australia.¹ Hardinge and the members of his Executive Council recorded, however, that they regarded "the permanency of British rule in India" as "essential", and "colonial self-government on the lines of the British Dominions" as "out of the question",² while the Secretary of State, Lord Crewe, made similar disclaimers in Parliament.³

The slowness of political advance permitted by the British, and the constant disappointment of Indian hopes, culminating in these categorical denials that India would ever progress to Parliamentary self-government, served to embitter those who had been affected by the defiant spirit of the Extremists and to disillusion the Moderates who had expelled the Extremists from Congress, in the hope of thereby assuring the gradual and peaceful acquisition of political power.⁴

The disappointment and disillusionment of the Moderates with the British response to their demands for

2. Note by Hardinge, 30 June 1912, in Home Poll Dep. Sept 1912, no. 7; Minute by R. H. Craddock, 26 June 1912, in ibid.  
4. see e.g. Home Poll B, Aug 1912, nos 26-30, pp. 7, 20.
reform prepared many of them for rapprochement with the Extremists. To understand this change of attitude it is necessary to examine the Moderate-Extremist tension more closely.

II

The Nature of Moderate-Extremist Tension.

The doctrine of the Moderates was based on the conclusion that British rule was both necessary and beneficial to India. It was necessary, in that without it India would be plunged into disorder. "With the Hindus not united among themselves, with the Mahomedans occupying an attitude of almost open antagonism to them, is it possible for the country to get on except under the guidance and control of a strong power like the British?" asked one Moderate,¹ and in 1908 Gokhale wrote: "It is not difficult at any time to create disorder in our country - it was our portion for centuries - but it is not so easy to substitute another form of order for that which has been evolved by Englishmen in the course of a century."²

2. Gokhale to Vamanrao, 15 May 1908, Gokhale Papers.
British rule was beneficial, according to the Moderate view, since it opened to India the storehouse of Western knowledge, and acquainted India with Western concepts of individual worth, of justice, rationality and political organisation. This view was most rigorously elaborated in western India, by M. G. Ranade (1842-1901), founder of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha and one of the founders of the Congress. He expressed the Moderate viewpoint thus:

Indian learning, even in its most flourishing period, has to be pronounced immature, whereas today European knowledge has advanced to a mature stage....India is in a fortunate position as compared with the Chinese and Japanese, since she is so favourably situated for acquiring [European knowledge].

In 1904 Gokhale, who had taken Ranade as his guru, his intellectual and political preceptor, longed for "the liberation of the Indian mind from the thraldom of old-world ideas and the assimilation of all that is best in the life and thought and character of the West".

The liberation of the Indian mind and its self-realisation, for which Ranade and Gokhale longed, were to

1. translation of Marathi speech, 1878, quoted in J. Kellock, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Patriot and Social Servant, pp. 12-3.

be effected by the spread of education, by the reform of social abuses hallowed by religious usage and by the development of secular democracy. Education would release Indians from the limitations imposed by their own cultures and would also break down the social barriers of religion, caste and language, which imposed such a threat to order. Hinduism must be purified through reforming societies like the Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj, of which Ranade was a leading member. Education and socio-religious reform would prepare the way for secular democracy, but meanwhile Indians should be given "practical training [in Gokhale's words]...for the proper exercise of the political institutions of the West" by the introduction of representative, parliamentary institutions.¹

The strategies employed by the Moderates for the achievement of these ends were generally confined to the submission of the resolutions of annual Congresses and public meetings to the Government, to deputations of Congressmen and to consultations such as Gokhale held with Morley in 1907-08: Hume's agitation of 1888 and the anti-Partition agitation launched by the Bengal Moderates were exceptional.

The Extremists on the other hand professed to regard the British presence as neither necessary nor beneficial, but dated India's decline from the commencement of British rule.\(^1\) They denounced the Government system of education as irreligious,\(^2\) and regarded social reform as undesirable, since by making Indians aware of their "shortcomings" it sapped their self-confidence.\(^3\) India, the Extremists claimed, had as much right to self-government as any other country: it was unpatriotic and self-degrading to argue, as did the Moderates, that India had to be taught by the British how to rule herself. India should demand not representative government, but independence.

The Hindu revivalist movements, with which Extremism was closely related, inculcated self-confidence in the Hindus and denied that the institutions and

1. Kesari, 18 Feb 1902 in S. A. Wolpert, Tilak and Gokhale: Revolution and Reform in the Making of Modern India, p. 150.
4. see quotation from Bande Mataram, 1906, in Pal's second Madras speech, 1907, in ibid., p. 154; cf. ibid., pp. 9, 11; Bombay Police 1908, par. 13(b) in HFM Bombay, II, 221.
systems of thought of the West should be models for India.¹ Aurobindo, one of the leading Extremists, insisted that "Swaraj [self-government] as the fulfilment of the ancient life of India under modern conditions [and]...the final fulfilment of the Vedantic ideal in politics" was "the true Swaraj for India".²

The Extremists' rejection of the West was to a great extent unreal. Aurobindo, for instance, never defined the "Vedantic ideal" that he wished to fulfill under conditions of Indian self-rule. The turning back of Indians to their past was in the tradition of European romanticism which, since 1830, had been turning Frenchmen and Germans back to their respective pasts. Furthermore Western education, which had provided Indian Moderates with the models of British liberalism and reform, presented the Extremists with examples of European revolutions, violent as in the case of Italy against Austria, or non-violent as in the cases of Ireland against Britain and Hungary against Austria. Lajpat Rai, for instance, while at Law College, determined to "make Mazzini my guru" and later wrote


biographies of Mazzini and Garibaldi.¹

From studying Western models the Extremists concluded that Britain would never give up India of her own free will or in response to the appeals of the Moderates to her sense of justice. Some form of sanction, they decided, must be employed to drive the British out.

Looking at Russia, some of them - notably in Bengal - advocated terrorism. Aurobindo encouraged the establishment of secret terrorist societies in Bengal and taught young men to make bombs,² but other Extremists found bomb-throwing distasteful or felt it could have little effect on the British. Armed uprising, the Extremists saw, was extremely unlikely of success. Under the Arms Act the civilian population was disarmed; the possibilities for seducing the armed forces were severely limited by the care with which the British deployed troops from one region to another, and by the British refusal to commission Indians, which inhibited those classes from which the national politicians were drawn from enlisting. Also, armed resistance was rendered unattractive by the availability of a weapon which seemed easier to

wield,¹ passive resistance on the Hungarian² or Irish model.

Tilak quoted the example of Ireland in advising the peasants of the Deccan to refuse to pay taxes in 1896, as did Aurobindo in 1907 in proposing no-tax campaigns and obstruction in the councils of Government.³ The agitation against the Partition of Bengal prompted the Extremist leaders to elaborate plans of passive resistance in 1906-07. Aurobindo, for instance, wrote:

By an organised and relentless boycott of British goods, we propose to render the further exploitation of the country impossible....We refuse to send our boys to Government schools or to schools aided and controlled by the Government;...the control of its [India's] youthful minds [will] pass out of the hands of the foreigners....We refuse...to have any resort to the alien courts of justice....We refuse...to go to the executive for help or advice or protection....If Indians no longer consented to teach in Government schools or work in the Government offices, or to serve the alien [sic] as police, the administration could not continue for a day.⁴


2. see Case, Non-Violent Coercion, pp. 326-8.

3. see Wolpert, p. 122; Sri Aurobindo, Passive Resistance, p. 27.

Tilak declared:

We shall not assist them [the Government] in fighting beyond the frontiers....We shall have our own courts, and when the time comes we shall not pay taxes.

The Extremist leaders spoke of involving the masses, India's "sweating, swarthy populations", her peasants and "proletariate" in their passive resistance campaigns. Here again they were influenced more perhaps by European revolutionary examples than by the facts of Indian political life. Tilak, to be sure, strove to identify himself with the dissatisfactions of the Maratha peasantry and Lajpat Rai espoused the grievances of the Hindu farmers of the south western Punjab over the Canal Colonies Act in order to "win the sympathy and affection of the people". But these were spasmodic attempts, and in Bengal no serious attempt was made by the Extremist leaders to rouse the peasantry.

The Extremist leaders were advocating programmes which involved much larger groups than the elite which comprised the Associations affiliated to Congress. Their

2. see Mukherjee, Aurobindo's Thought, pp. 107-9; Pal, 8 Apr 1905 in Swadeshi and Swaraj, p. 20.
speeches advocating passive resistance excited their audiences, composed of smaller townspeople and students, and they proposed to involve peasant, and town, mass groups. There was little indication however that they had considered the need for more elaborate organisation either inside or outside Congress to direct and control such groups. Their proposals constituted an emotional response to their situation rather than a rational campaign of action.

Extremist doctrine was indeed highly emotional and expressed the discontents of groups in Indian society. Two kinds of such groups may be distinguished. First were those, like the Chitpavan Brahmins of Maharashtra, who had been dispossessed of power by the intrusion of the British. Secondly were those groups which had received Western education but which by the beginning of the twentieth century found that due to the increase in educational facilities unmatched by any comparable increase in professional and administrative positions, the possibilities for employment were decreasing. Typical of these groups were the younger members of the Hindu castes of Bengal with traditions of learning, the bhadralok, who found the competition for suitable jobs
increasingly intense.¹ Moderate doctrine by contrast appealed rather to more successful professional men, men of "wealth, influence and prestige",² who did not share the discontents of those to whom the Extremists appealed (at least not in the same degree) and who were wary of the Extremists' threats to involve mass groups with the possible consequence of violence.

It would be misleading however to equate Moderates with one class or group, Extremists with others. Such equations would ignore the fact that the Chitpavan Brahmin community produced both Moderates, like Ranade and Gokhale, and Extremists, like Tilak, or that both Extremists and Moderates came from various income levels within the bhadralok.

The distinction between Moderate and Extremist was rather one of temperament. The Moderate temperament was cautious, concerned to maintain order and to make the most of the opportunities for acquiring Western civilisation: the Extremist temperament was more ebullient and reacted sharply and bitterly against the disabilities and what it felt to be the ignominy of foreign rule. This

¹. J. H. Broomfield, op. cit., p. 45.
². V. S. S. Sastri to V. Krishnaswami Iyer, 28 Sept 1908, VKI Papers.
distinction was seen by leaders on either side. Tilak, for instance, wrote that

The difference, if any [between Extremist and Moderate] is in their temperaments; one will work with greater energy and vigour and is prepared to use the liberty allowed by the law to the utmost extent, not much caring for the official opinion; while the other will keep within a respectable distance even from the limits of liberty allowed to them and will not push their constitutional agitation, if it be calculated to offend in any way the powers that be.¹

It has been argued that the doctrines and strategies, which had been evolved by Moderate and Extremist leaders respectively, were "ideal types" and that the actions of "any one individual or group show, when analysed, a mixture of both types".² Moderate and Extremist leaders had elaborated their respective doctrines and strategies, but few of the rank-and-file of Congress had thought out their position as rigorously as their leaders. On the Moderate side, Gokhale saw that

The number of men who can form a sound political judgment in the country is not large. But you can find any number of unthinking men, filled with an honest but vague longing for the emancipation of the


country, ready to follow any plausible leaders, whom, in their heart of hearts, they believe to be wholly "against the foreigner". 1

In fact most members of the national movement shared this "honest but vague" patriotism in greater or lesser degree, and it was to these feelings that the Extremists appealed.

Several observers have pointed out that the two temperaments which we have distinguished as Moderate and Extremist were often seen to exist, side by side or in conflict, within the same Indian nationalist personality: 2 in the same breast caution fought with impatience, and recognition of the desirability of moving steadily toward a synthesis of Western and Indian culture and political forms battled with angry or "patriotic" rejection of the West.

In 1907, by challenging the Moderate leadership and by demanding that their programme of passive resistance be endorsed by Congress, the Extremists forced the rank-and-file to choose between their doctrine and that of the Moderates. But the Moderate-Extremist tension within

1. Gokhale to Mrs Besant, 5 Jan 1915, quoted in Wolpert, p. 268.

the personality of many nationalists made this an unreal choice.

That the majority of the rank-and-file chose to support the Moderate leaders can be traced partly to the recent emergence of the Extremists. As a result the Moderate leaders were still in charge of Congress and its affiliated Associations and could shift the venue of the session and enlist support in the name of preserving the Congress. More important, the Extremists' speeches roused fears of violence among the Congress rank-and-file and, temporarily at least, resolved the Moderate-Extremist tension in their minds in the direction of caution. Furthermore, Morley's promise to give reforms, on condition that Indians did not "clamour for the impossible", inclined many to leave control of Congress with the Moderates, since this appeared to ensure steady progress toward self-government for India.

The Extremist leaders had won a considerable following in Bengal, the Deccan and, (as a result of Pal's speeches) in Madras.¹ As Gokhale wrote, "the bulk of the so-called extremists are men who are adopting an anti-British attitude, because they have despaired of

¹ see Gokhale to V. Krishnaswami Iyer, 29 Sept 1906, quoted p. 12 above.
getting any real reforms".¹ Clearly therefore the Reforms would have to be substantial if the drift of support to the Extremists was to be halted.

The Morley-Minto Reforms however were disappointing and were capped in 1912 by Crewe's denial that Britain regarded self-government as India's goal. This disillusioned members of the Congress rank-and-file with Moderate methods of consultation with the British and helped to prepare them for rapprochement with the Extremists.

This increasing readiness for rapprochement between 1908 and 1914 arose partly out of the desire of the Moderate leaders to preserve their dominant position; partly out of the growing dissatisfaction of the rank-and-file with the Moderate Congress; and partly out of a growing feeling among both Moderate rank-and-file and leaders that the differences between the two wings into which the national movement had split were not so very great.

The first of these factors was particularly relevant to Bengal. Even before the split, the Bengali Moderate leaders, Surendranath Banerjea and Bhupendranath Basu, were at pains to minimise the cleavage between themselves

¹ Gokhale to Sir Lawrence Jenkins, 29 Jan 1909, Gokhale Papers.
and their Extremist opponents. It was they who inaugurated the boycott campaigns over the Bengal Partition in 1905, while Moderate leaders of other parts of India looked on in horror: Gokhale deplored "Surendranath's inexcusable excesses." But with Pal's advocacy of the boycott of colleges, Banerjea's caution and moderation reasserted themselves and he opposed Pal's boycott as a threat to order and an incitement to the Government to repress the whole movement. The Extremists retaliated by trying to capture the Indian Association which Banerjea dominated.

Thus when the split came at Surat, Banerjea and the Bengal Moderates welcomed the drawing up of a Constitution which gave control of Congress to the Moderates. But they did not welcome the exclusion of the Extremist leaders and their followers. They would have preferred to keep them in the Congress organisations, while trying to ensure by means of the Constitution that they did not gain control. Gokhale estimated that the Extremists were stronger in Bengal than elsewhere: to exclude them was to invite the setting up of a rival


organisation to the Congress and its affiliated Associations, which would attract to it the young nationalists. In fact, the Extremists were excluded from neither the Indian Association nor the Bengal PCC, though the Rules of both ensured the continuity of Moderate control.

In addition to the deep dissatisfaction with the Reforms and their working among the Moderate leaders and rank-and-file, many of them were also disturbed by the decline in activity of Congress and its institutions.

The Moderates' plan of 1908 to establish a network of local Congress organisations to spread a "living interest" in the Congress fell through. The suppression of the Extremists removed the Moderates' rivals and, with them, the immediate need for a Moderate propagandist organisation. The Moderates relied upon consultation with the Government rather than upon rousing agitation, for winning reforms and therefore had little use for such

1. see Mody, Mehta, II, 542.
2. see L. A. Govindaraghava Iyer in New India, 31 Oct 1914, p. 6b, and T. B. Sapru in ibid., 9 Dec 1914, p. 5b.
3. see note by A. C. Mazumdar, President, Indian Association, 13 May 1913 enclosed in Indian Association, Executive Council Minutes.
organisation. Had the reformed legislatures under the Morley-Minto Reforms been popularly-elected bodies, the Moderates might have been encouraged to execute their plan for local bodies. On the contrary the representatives of "the people at large" in the central and provincial legislatures were elected indirectly by local government bodies.¹ The Moderates permitted Bombay, Punjab and other Provincial Conferences to lapse after 1907. Activity continued only in Bengal in the form of the anti-Partition agitation, and with the revision of the Partition in 1911, this came to an end also.

By 1914 dissatisfaction with this inactivity was prompting even some of the more cautious Moderates to suggest that some modus operandi might be sought with the Extremists "for unitedly carrying on the work of the Congress which already suffers from lack of earnest workers".² Like the Congress President for 1911 they argued that "in every active and reforming body there is always an extreme wing...moderation sometimes means indifference, and caution timidity....Our agitation, in


2. N. Subba Rao Pantulu, Joint Secretary, Congress, in New India, 7 Nov 1914, p. 6b-d; cf. letter from A. K. Iyer, ibid., 9 Nov 1914, p. 13(a); G. Subramania Aiyer, ibid., 28 Nov 1914, p. 5.
order to be effective must be National not sectarian, persistent not spasmodic.¹

Many of the Moderate rank-and-file saw little difference between the Moderate and Extremist doctrines. In 1914 a number of them wrote that they could find "no irreconcilable differences between the Extremists and the Moderates", since both had accepted self-government within the Empire as their goal; that Indian nationalists "ought in no way to divide" themselves; and that the "Congress authorities" should "bring about unification, ...sacrificing all trifling technicalities".² Among the Moderate leaders Gokhale advocated the readmission of the Extremists as early as 1910.³ The quiescence of the Extremists following the blows of British repression led him to believe that they had abandoned their programme of boycott and obstruction,⁴ and he urged that they be readmitted, in the Subjects Committee of the 1911 Congress. There the desire for rapprochement was so


3. see Wacha to Wedderburn, 12 Aug 1910, Mehta Papers.

strong that his proposal was carried by some 92 or 93 votes to eight. His eight opponents included the leading Bombay Moderates who, from caution and determination not to lose their leadership to the Extremists, had set their faces against readmission. They threatened to leave Congress if Gokhale's resolution were adopted and, rather than face "another unfortunate split", Gokhale withdrew it.¹

The readiness among the Moderate leaders and rank-and-file for rapprochement with the Extremists was matched by a similar readiness for rapprochement on the part of the Extremist leaders. The determination of the Moderates to exclude them from the Congress at Surat came as a complete surprise to them. They assumed that sooner or later they would be readmitted to Congress: when they met after the Surat split, the Extremist leaders constituted themselves into a "Congress Continuation Committee" and, though they held conferences of their own, these were held as substitutes for Congress conferences and all nationalists were invited to them.²

¹ Gokhale to Mrs Besant, 21 Nov 1914, Adyar Archives.
² see [Proceedings of so-called] 16th Bombay Provincial Conference held [by Extremists] at Satara, 26, 27, 28 April 1914, p. 4; Bhat, Tilak, pp. 80-1.
Several Extremists, notably Lajpat Rai and one of Tilak's lieutenants, R. P. Karandikar, renounced their adherence to Extremist doctrine and joined the Moderates in Congress in the hope of arranging a compromise.\(^1\) Up to the time of the split, the Extremists do not seem to have doubted that sooner or later they would win the support of the majority of Congressmen by appealing to their patriotism.

Had the Extremists not lapsed into inactivity under British repression between 1908 and 1914, they might have developed an organisation parallel to Congress. In 1908 they proposed to hold their own "Congress" at Nagpur but the British refused to allow this,\(^2\) making them more anxious than ever to rejoin Congress since for them to organise separately was to invite further British repression.

Among those who were anxious to see the breach healed were the men of the younger generation whose national spirit had been stirred since the rise of Extremism in 1904.\(^3\) This generation was to be swept up

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1. R. P. Karandikar "Diary" (Poona), 28 Dec 1907.
2. Gokhale to Bhupendranath Basu, 14 Dec 1914, Adyar Archives.
3. see e.g. M. R. Jayakar, *The Story of My Life*, I. 89-91.
by the nationalist agitation of the second decade of this century, and its more outstanding members were to provide the Congress leaders with many of their principal helpers during that, and subsequent, decades. The men of this generation were in their late teens, their 20s or 30s in 1914. Like the older members of the national movement, most of them joined the professions, notably the law, though (in Bombay in particular) some of them went into business. They had received Western education, most having a degree from an Indian or, in some cases, an English or European university. While students in the last years of the nineteenth, or in the early twentieth, century, they had come very much under the influence of Extremism. Their youthful idealism had responded to the Extremists' call for self-sacrifice for India's sake, to their challenging defiance of the British and to their demand for independence.¹

The Japanese defeat of the Russians in 1905-05 provided unprecedented proof of the ability of Asiatics to match and beat Europeans and increased the self-confidence of this generation in challenging the British. "After the Japanese victory we felt an immense elation",

¹. Gokhale to Wedderburn, 29 April 1910, Gokhale Papers.
wrote one of them.\(^1\) Revolutions against despotic Governments in Persia and China seemed to portend the rise of liberal democratic regimes in Asia.\(^2\)

Not only was the emotionalism of Extremism attractive to the young, but the Extremist leaders specifically aimed their appeal at the students. B. C. Pal called for the boycott of colleges by students. To young Bengalis the anti-Partition agitation transformed the Government from a protector into "an agency of oppression and usurpation":\(^3\) students participated in the picketing of shops selling British goods, a National Council of Education was established to replace Government schools with "National" institutions and young Bengalis who had recently graduated participated in the organisation of the boycott and the speech-making associated with it.\(^4\)

The influence of the anti-Partition agitation was not confined to the young men of Bengal, for it stirred

\(^3\) see N. C. Chaudhuri, op. cit., p. 48.
\(^4\) e.g. Jitendralal Bannerjee, see Home Poll Dep...Oct 1919, no. 19, pp. 1-4; for others, Home Poll A, July 1913, no. 85; N. C. Banerji, *At the Cross-roads (1885-1946)*, pp. 68-78.
Indian students in other provinces and even in England. Of the Extremist leaders Tilak and Lajpat Rai lectured in the UP while Aurobindo, who had been a teacher at Baroda, had influenced many Gujarati students, and lectured on National Education in Bombay. And one young Madrasi nationalist testified that

The first event that altered my life definitely was Bepin Chandra Pal's lecturing in Madras in the early summer of 1907....I felt drawn towards the ideal he was preaching - of service to my country....How I was going to serve I could not quite determine; but it was in the direction of making India independent of England.

The trials and conviction of the Extremist leaders in 1906-09 made them martyrs in the eyes of the student population. This was particularly so in the case of Tilak who had already been imprisoned in 1897 and whose sentence of six years' imprisonment in 1908 was greeted by strikes on the part of students. Some of the young men were themselves caught in the net of repression. In

1. see letters Jawaharlal to Motilal Nehru, B. R. Nanda, The Nehrus, pp. 81, 86.
Bengal some who were active in the Partition agitation and who had places of employment which could be influenced by the Government lost their jobs. In Madras, for example, the Government accused two young men of complicity in the murder of a Government official. They had helped to foment anti-British feeling through their speeches, but the prosecution could not prove any direct implication in the matter. Nevertheless they were convicted of sedition and given the very heavy sentences of transportation with hard labour. One of them succumbed to tuberculosis as the result of his ordeal but the other, V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, was to become one of the bitterest assailants of the British after his release.

Although the Extremists were silenced after 1908, the strategy of passive resistance was put into practice among the Indian population of South Africa by Gandhi, to the admiration of the young men in India.

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1. e.g. Jitendralal Bannerjee, see Home Poll Dep. Oct 1919, no. 19.


In the circumstances of the decline in both Moderate and Extremist political activity in India between 1908 and 1914, some of the young men whose patriotism had been stirred by the agitation turned to terrorism and bomb-throwing. This was particularly so among the young bhadralok of Bengal, amongst whom there was a tradition of personal vendetta by murder.\(^1\) Others studied the Sinn Fein movement and discussed the making of bombs,\(^2\) but most either shrank from clandestine violence or rejected it as unlikely to have any appreciable effect on the British. Furthermore, the Extremists' advocacy of passive resistance and Gandhi's practice of it in South Africa prepared them rather for this form of sanctions against the British.

Needless to say this younger, more impetuous generation found the inactivity of both Congress and the Extremists particularly galling. Jawaharlal Nehru, who returned to India from Cambridge and the Inns of Court at the age of 23 in 1912, found the Congress Session of that year very dull. Like other men of his generation

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2. interview with K. Dwarkadas, 1 June 1963; Munshi, I Follow the Mahatma, p. 1.
he was not attracted by terrorism

but [he wrote] the idea that we must not tamely submit to existing conditions and that something must be done began to obsess me more and more. Successful action, from the national point of view, did not seem to be at all easy, but I felt that both individual and national honor demanded a more aggressive and fighting attitude to foreign rule.

III

The Problems of Leadership.

In 1914 therefore, the national movement was divided and its two wings were languishing. There was however a general desire to change this. Among Moderates and Extremists there was a readiness for rapprochement, which was being prevented by a handful of determined Moderate leaders. The sense of community was sharpened by the disappointment which both groups shared at the meagreness of the reforms granted by the British.

There was a strong, if vague, feeling among the rank-and-file of Congress that it ought to be a more active and "aggressive" body, a feeling particularly marked among the younger generation. Extremist

propaganda and the Partition agitation had stirred groups outside Congress, the smaller bhadralok in Bengal, the townspeople of Madras and Maharashtra. Their inactivity in 1914 reflected that of the two wings of the national movement, but they were a dormant audience waiting to be roused again.

Despite their dissatisfaction with the inactivity of Congress, many nationalists, both Moderate and Extremist, were still cautious. Many Moderates were fearful of any course of action which threatened to provoke violence. In advocating the readmission of the Extremists to Congress many members of the Moderate rank-and-file assumed that Extremists would no longer urge boycott and passive resistance for the gaining of India's ends, and a few made this assumption explicit. Clearly any rapprochement to be lasting and stable would have to take into account Moderate caution.

Among the Extremists, the more reckless had found their newspapers required to pay crushing securities and themselves threatened with imprisonment, and had learnt to express their criticisms of the British with

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1. articles in *New India*, 7 Nov 1914, p. 6b-d; 19 Dec 1914, p. 5.
restraint. Repression had strengthened the position of the more cautious among them,¹ who were inclined to seek rapprochement.

Opportunities and problems faced those who would lead the national movement in 1914.

The outlook for reunification was good. But the leaders would have to evolve a programme which would provide a satisfactory basis for reconciliation. On the one hand the programme would have to satisfy the desire for greater activity. It would have to satisfy the young men's feeling that "something must be done", to capture their enthusiasm and to express their defiance toward the British. To do this it would almost certainly have had to include some form of continuous agitation, possibly in the shape of press and platform criticism of the Government.

On the other hand it must not lead the more cautious to fear violence or renewed British repression. Such a programme would be extremely difficult to evolve. Particularly as it became necessary to draw up more

¹. see "Contribution to Freedom Struggle in India by Shri N. C. Kelkar of Poona" (unpubl., HFM Bombay), pp. 3-4; "Contribution to Freedom Struggle by the late Shri Shivaram Mahadeo Paranjpye of Poona" (unpubl., HFM Bombay), pp. 4-5; "Contribution to Freedom Struggle by Shri Krishnaji Prabhakar Khadilkar of Poona" (unpubl., HFM Bombay), pp. 1-3.
detailed plans for action, either the more cautious would be frightened or the more impetuous dissatisfied. At this point it would be necessary to try to carry a majority of the movement, hoping that the minority would accept the majority sentiment but being prepared in the last resort to see the minority secede.

Those who sought to lead would have to evolve strategies which promised to accelerate India's advance to self-government, since nationalists of all temperaments had been disappointed by Britain's dilatoriness and obduracy. There was the danger, however, that those of more moderate temperament would be satisfied by more gradual advance than those who had been attracted by Extremist leaders' demands for independence. If the British could be prevailed upon to modify their obduracy in only a small degree, therefore, some Moderates might be wooed from their desire for rapprochement with the Extremists.

In order to lessen the likelihood of further splits, the leaders would have to build up a more elaborate and better-articulated organisation than existed in the part-moribund Congress with its decentralised, affiliated Associations in the provinces. They would have to create local, district organisations like those
on which a beginning had been made by the Moderates in 1908 and establish well-articulated channels of communication between themselves and these local organisations in order to gauge the mood and the needs of their following and, at the same time, to exert adequate discipline.

Such organisation was needed to direct and control the large potential audience which now existed outside Congress thanks to the Partition agitation and to agitation aroused by the Extremists.

IV

Contenders for Leadership

The most venerable of nationalist leaders was Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917), a Parsee of Bombay. His career was symbolic of the whole Indian national movement for, while he was identified with the Moderates, he had become increasingly critical of British obduracy regarding political reform and the employment of Indians in the ICS, and had even welcomed the rise of Extremism:¹

¹. see R. P. Masani, Dadabhai Naoroji (Delhi ed.), pp. 148-55.
as President of the 1906 Congress he had striven to
effect a compromise between Extremists and Moderates.
After 1907 however he was precluded by increasing ill-
ness from playing an active part in the leadership.

Among Moderate leaders, Pherozeshah Mehta (1845–
1915) was the dominant personality from the 1890s until
his death. By 1901 his fellow-founders of Congress in
Bombay were dead; his skill in argument had brought
him pre-eminence at the Bombay Bar, in professional
society and thus, in the elite which comprised the
Bombay Presidency Association. While Moderates, by and
large, were timid men, Mehta was quite fearless: it
was he, above all, who kept his head at Surat and
insisted that the Extremists be expelled. Despite
(or, rather, because of) his pre-eminence among the
Moderates, Mehta was clearly unsuited for carrying out
the tasks which confronted the leadership of the move­
ment in 1914. He had no sympathy for rapprochement
between the two wings, the desire for which he dismissed
as "mawkish sentimentalität". He conceived of nationalist

1. see e.g. Gokhale to V. Krishnaswami Iyer, 7 Oct
1907, VKI Papers.
2. see Morley to Minto, 31 Oct 1907 in Minto, Countess,
political organisation as a society, in which the professional elite considered the political questions of the day and which conveyed the opinions of the elite, where appropriate, to the Government. He had no notion of organising to rouse agitation or to involve groups outside the professional elite.

While he was critical of the paucity of British response to the Indian national demands, Mehta continued to rely on remonstrance and on consultation with the British to remedy this situation. He was totally averse to mounting a programme of agitation aimed at intimidating the British into granting larger reforms, and thus held out no promise of satisfaction to those Moderates and to the younger generation who were hoping for a revival in Congress activity. Signs of rebellion against his authority were appearing among both these groups but, without an alternative leader to Mehta, they were too timid to challenge him openly.¹

Mehta's attitudes were shared by a number of outstanding Moderates who accepted the role of lieutenant to him. Of these the most important were V. Krishnaswami Iyer and Dinshaw Wacha.

¹. see e.g. Bombay Police 1915, par. 705(a).
Krishnaswami Iyer, a lawyer of Madras, resembled Mehta closely in personality. Like him he was fearless but utterly devoted to Moderate principles: from the time of Pal's visit to Madras in May 1907 he called for the expulsion of the Extremists from Congress.\(^1\) By force of personality and forensic ability similar to Mehta's, he dominated the Moderates of Madras until his death in 1911. His place was never really filled, and the Madras Moderates remained virtually leaderless.

Mehta's most devoted associate was his fellow Parsee, Dinshaw Wacha (1844-1936). He was Joint Secretary of the Congress from 1895 to 1913, and in his mountainous correspondence with Dadabhai in London and with provincial secretaries and leaders, he is seen guiding the politically-inexperienced with the arrangements for the sessions, suggesting members for the various committees, gathering funds, assessing friends and foes and urging his associates - including Mehta - to action.

\(^1\) see his letters to Gokhale, 11 May, 12 Dec 1907, VKI Papers.
There is little doubt that the final decisions were Mehta's, but a great deal of the hard work was Wacha's.\(^1\) When Mehta died, his mantle passed to Wacha but, although Wacha had learnt much from his chief, he lacked the qualities of a great leader. He lacked the voice and temper of a debater. To his undoubted courage he added a certain petulance which, together with his proprietorial attitude to the Congress, won him enemies rather than followers.\(^2\)

A key figure among Moderates was G. K. Gokhale (1866-1915), a leading Moderate thinker and parliamentary debater. Unlike many Moderates who were successful professional men and who attended to national politics in their spare time, he had given up his teaching career to devote himself wholly to politics and social work and had founded the Servants of India Society in 1905 for others who would do likewise.

Like Mehta, Gokhale relied on consultation with, and representations to, the Government to win reforms,

\(^1\) see letters from Wacha to Mehta, 29 Oct 1895, 7 Nov 1896, 26 Oct 1896, 4 Dec 1897, 31 Dec 1899: Gokhale to Wacha, 1 Feb 1904, etc., Mehta Papers.

\(^2\) see Who's Who in India (Newul Kishore), part vii, pp. 137-8; V. S. S. Sastri, Sir Dinshaw Wacha Memorial, passim.
and travelled to England seven times to argue India's case at Whitehall.

Unlike Mehta, however, Gokhale recognised the need to build local organisations to counter the challenge thrown out by Extremist appeals to young men and groups outside the professional elite. By 1910 he was also seeking some basis for the readmission of the Extremists to Congress. He was particularly anxious that "the rising generation of the country should not have to grow up under the baleful tradition of that breach,"\(^1\) lest the split become permanent and the Extremists set up a separate organisation which would attract this rising generation. Gokhale had not evolved a programme of agitation which would satisfy the young men's desire for "more aggressive" activity. As President of the 1905 Congress he had criticised the Government bitterly,\(^2\) but he lacked the taste for demagoguy and probably also the style of oratory to sway crowds that would be required to lead an agitational movement.\(^3\) Furthermore he

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deferred to Mehta's age and domineering personality and did not press for the compromise for which he, like so many other Moderates, was prepared.

The eminence of Mehta and Gokhale among Moderate leaders was only equalled in 1914 by Surendranath Banerjea (1848-1925) of Bengal. Professor of English and history and editor of the Bengalee, he had been dismissed from the ICS because (he believed) of racial prejudice.¹ He was a co-founder of Congress and of the Indian Association, a majority of members of which were his personal adherents.

At first sight he was more fitted to be a leader of the national movement as it was in 1914 than was either of his Moderate rivals. His oratorical gifts had brought him great renown. He had wanted to avoid the split at Surat while keeping Congress and its component institutions under Moderate control. His leadership of the anti-Partition agitation, which he continued after the Extremists were scattered in 1907-08,² showed him as a Moderate who was prepared to seek a

¹ S. Banerjea, A Nation in Making: Being the Reminiscences of Fifty Years of Public Life, pp. 32-3; for biographical details see J. H. Broomfield, op. cit., pp. 92-6; Home Poll A, Feb 1913, nos 9-35.
² see his speech, Congress 1908, Report, p. 48; Home Poll Dep. Oct 1919, no. 19, p. 4.
programme to satisfy the more ardent spirits. But his popularity suffered as the result of his opposition to the Extremists' proposals to extend the Partition agitation, and it was further reduced by his discontinuance of agitation after Repartition in 1911 and by his failure to achieve anything worthwhile in the Legislative Council (to which he was elected in 1912) due to the Indians' lack of power. His leadership of the national movement in Bengal was weakened by the continued attacks on him by the Extremists, in which his moderation was emphasised and presented as lack of patriotism. This continuing feud took up much of his energy.

Furthermore, like other Moderates he lacked appreciation of the kind and complexity of organisation necessary for the rousing and control of agitation, particularly in the presence of rivals who were only too anxious to deprive him of leadership.

The most outstanding Extremist leaders in 1908 had been Aurobindo Ghose, Lajpat Rai, B. C. Pal and Tilak. Of these Aurobindo fled to Pondicherry in 1909 under the threat of prosecution by the British and never rejoined

1. J. H. Broomfield, op. cit., pp. 95, 121.
the national movement.

Lajpat Rai (1865-1928), as a lawyer from one of the Hindu moneylending castes, was a typical member of the nationalist elite in the Punjab. He sought support specifically from the Hindus, having joined the Arya Samaj, not so much because of his concern with Hinduism as a religion, as because the Samaj promised to give Hindus self-confidence and the will to assert themselves.¹ In 1906-07 he aroused groups outside the elite, notably the Hindu peasantry, and young Hindu Punjabis with his speeches calling for passive resistance.

Government repression was even more severe in the Punjab than in other provinces. Rai was transported in 1907 without trial and, though soon released, was much chastened; so much so that at Surat he renounced Extremism and joined the Moderate Convention. National politics remained quiescent in the Punjab until 1917, and in 1914 Rai went into voluntary exile in the USA, returning only in 1920.

Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932) also moved toward compromise with the Moderate position. Before 1908 he had won popularity by his oratory and writings

advocating passive resistance and asserting India's right to independence. Imprisoned in 1907 and released in 1908, he went to England until 1911 where he became convinced that the greatest threats to India were posed, not by Britain but by the Pan-Islamic movement and Japan. On his return to India he proposed that India should seek "equality" with Britain, but now on the basis of federation with Britain and not of independence from her. He concentrated on publicising these ideas, but his new style, more reasonable and less denunciatory, was less exciting than his former oratory. Furthermore he lacked any plan of action or organisation and dropped back in the ranks of the main contenders for leadership.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920), known as "Lokamanya", was the leading Extremist of western India. A Chitpavan Brahmin of Poona, he had left teaching to take up the management and editing of two papers, Kesari (in Marathi) and the Mahratta (in English) to expound his views and to finance his other political activities. His leadership was based on his popularity with his Chitpavan community, which he had won, first, by

2. "Revered by the People".
expressing the community's resentment against British overlordship and, secondly, by espousing its opposition to social reform movements. Not only were the majority of the Chitpavan community traditional Hindus, but they also saw that reform threatened their social and religious dominance. With these allies he won control of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha in 1895 and strove to capture Congress, thus conflicting with Ranade and Gokhale and earning the lasting dislike of the Moderates of Bombay. He was mainly responsible for launching the Ganpati and Shivaji festivals which mobilised groups outside the Congress elite: the poorer Chitpavans (many of them Government servants), peasants and traders. He also roused peasant and labouring groups by exploiting their economic grievances.¹

When Tilak was released after six years' imprisonment in 1914, his popularity was unequalled. He was identified however with his native region of Maharashtra, and continued to restrict his activities to this area. Extremists and young men looked to him to revive his advocacy of passive resistance and his demand for

¹. HFM Bombay, II, 207-8.
independence,\textsuperscript{1} but being understandably anxious to avoid further imprisonment, he hesitated to do so. The collapse of the Extremist movement during his imprisonment made Tilak pessimistic about the likelihood of an adequate response to a programme of passive resistance. He always held that "to be a political leader, you must never get too far ahead of the people you wish to lead",\textsuperscript{2} a principle which made him unwilling to draw up a clear, consistent plan of campaign.

Tilak had built up a network of lieutenants throughout Maharashtra consisting of his most devoted followers - Brahmins, with one or two exceptions. They had echoed his speeches and helped to arrange the festivals. This was a useful beginning, but more elaborate organisation was required, embracing townspeople and peasants, should Tilak plan to direct and control a passive resistance campaign or a widespread agitation. He had tried to capture Congress but there is no indication that he recognised the need to expand it if he wished to turn it to agitational purposes. By capturing it, he hoped rather to legitimise his claim to

\textsuperscript{1} for his demand for independence in 1907, see HFM Bombay, II, 22.
\textsuperscript{2} interview with Mr Kher, April 1963; cf. R. G. Pradhan in Mahratta, 23 Aug 1914, p. 271.
make demands of the British on behalf of India. After his release from prison he tried to re-enter Congress with his followers, again with the hope of capturing control of it, since for him to act outside Congress was to invite suppression by the British.

In 1914 Tilak thus toned down his programme and moved toward a compromise with the Moderates. This would be a difficult manoeuvre to accomplish, however, since many of his Maharashtrian Extremist followers and the newer generation were expecting to find him as "aggressive" as before; and, on the other hand Tilak probably underestimated the antipathy with which the leading Moderates regarded him.

V

The Muslim Problem.

Would-be leaders of the national movement in 1914 were also confronted with the problem of winning the support of the Muslim community. Hindu revival movements, with which political Extremism had been linked, had sought to give Hindus confidence and a sense of identity by recalling Hindu victories over the Muslims
or deprecating Islam. It was necessary therefore to dissociate Extremism (or a reunited national movement) from the Hindu revival or to play down the anti-Muslim features of that revival if the Muslims were not to become permanent enemies of the national movement.

Muslim aloofness preceded the rise of Extremism. Having ruled most of India when the British arrived, the Muslims disdained to mix with the Hindus. They had clung to their traditional ways and hung back from Western education. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century they became increasingly conscious of their backwardness in comparison with the Hindu majority community. Under Syed Ahmed Khan's guidance they set about developing a Western-educated Muslim elite, through the establishment of the Mahomedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, and had relied on conspicuous loyalty to the British to ensure the protection and advancement of their interests. They stood aloof from the Congress fearing, on the one hand, that participation in agitation would call down the displeasure of the British and on the other, that their interests would be overlooked by the majority community in any system of representative

1. e.g. the Shivaji Festival and the work of the Arya Samaj; HFM Bombay, II, 210-1; Home Poll A, Dec 1913, nos. 1-4.
government such as was desired by the Congress.

In 1906 the leading Muslims founded the Muslim League, to promote Muslim loyalty to the British Government, and to "protect and advance the political rights" of Muslims.¹

The immediate occasions for the establishment of the Muslim League were the Partition of Bengal and the Liberal victory at the British elections in 1905. The Partition brought into being East Bengal and Assam, a province in which the Muslims were in a large majority, with a Government which could be expected to favour their interests, and with a capital city, Dacca, which would create jobs and draw wealth to it.² The leading Muslim landowner in East Bengal, the Nawab of Dacca, to whom the British had lent considerable sums, was active in convincing his co-religionists that the new province was advantageous to them and that they should organise for the "consolidation and conservation of the strength of the Mohammedans of the new Province".³ At the same

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1. M. Noman, Muslim India, Rise and Growth of the All-India Muslim League, p. 78.
time the resentment of the Muslims was roused by the agitation against the Partition among the Hindu bhadralok.¹

After the Liberal victory in England the Muslims suspected that Morley, the new Secretary of State, was inclined to revise the Partition in the face of this agitation. For though he told Parliament that the Partition was a "settled fact", he admitted in the same speech that he thought that "nothing was ever worse done".² More important, the Liberal victory foreshadowed the attainment by Congress of its long-desired reforms.³

The Muslims presented an address to the Viceroy on October 1, 1906, urging that in any scheme which expanded representation in the legislatures, the Muslims should receive separate electorates; they formed the Muslim League at the end of the year to continue to urge these claims, which had been cordially received by

Lord Minto. 1

The Muslim League was smaller than Congress, reflecting the relatively small proportion of Muslims who were professional or moneyed men and hence politically articulate. The League was first organised as an all-India body, which established provincial branches. Its Constitution, which was redrafted in 1912, enabled a small group to control the League's activities. Its executive was the Council of 300 members; of these only 60 retired each year, 30 new Councillors being elected by the provincial Leagues and 30 by the Council itself. Every candidate for membership of the League had to be approved by both the central Council of the League and the League of the province in which he lived. The President, Secretary and other office bearers were elected at three-yearly intervals by the annual session at which as few as 75 members constituted a quorum. For Council meetings the quorum was a mere 10 members; moreover the Council could delegate its powers to the Secretary, and "in an emergency" the Secretary might call a meeting of the "members of the Council present at the

Headquarters" to act for the League.\(^1\) It will be realised how important under this Constitution was the position of the Secretary and his associates in Lucknow, where the Headquarters were situated from 1910.

Between the end of 1909 and 1914 the Muslim League became less guarded in its dealings with Congress and moved towards a rapprochement with that body. This shift in emphasis was due to several factors: the gaining of safeguards for the Muslim community in the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909; overtures for rapprochement from Congress; a series of actions on the part of the British which alienated Muslims, in conjunction with the rise of Pan-Islamism; and the increasing influence of "nationalist" Muslims in the League.

Morley was initially disinclined to grant separate representation to the Muslims,\(^2\) but he was continually pressed to do so by Muslim leaders like the Aga Khan, the permanent President of the League, who resided principally in London. This pressure was supported by the Government of India: Minto argued that "the only

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representation for which India is at present fitted
is the representation of Communities, as I said in my
reply to the Mahomedan deputation [of October 1906].

Against his will, Morley gave way and granted separate
Muslim representation in the Indian Councils. This
resulted in an immediate increase in Muslim confidence.
At the January 1910 Session of the League the Aga Khan
was reported to have said: "Now that we have separate
electorate[s], I hope that this...[will] lead to a
permanent political goodwill and a real unity between
the two neighbouring communities".

The Congress Moderates were working for the develop­
ment of a secular democracy, in which men should be
treated as individuals not as members of separate
communities. They therefore regretted the decision of
the Muslims to hold aloof from Congress, and opposed the
separate representation granted to the Muslims in the
Morley-Minto Reforms not only as "monstrously unjust"

1. Minto, Countess, p. 102; Morley's first response was
to suggest joint electorates with reservation of seats for
Muslims, see his Despatch of 27 Nov 1908, in Lal Bahadur,
The Muslim League, p. 79.

2. see J. Morley, Recollections, p. 278.

3. translated from M. Ansari, Tarikh Muslim League in
Lal Bahadur, The Muslim League, p. 82.
(since the Muslims' representation was proportionately larger than their share of the total population) but also as tending to perpetuate the division between the Muslim and Hindu communities.\footnote{Gokhale to Wedderburn, 3 Dec 1909, Gokhale Papers; Bombay Presidency Association, Council Minutes, 1 July 1909.} Hindu Congressmen in the Punjab and a few in UP founded Hindu Leagues to protect Hindu interests.\footnote{Gokhale to Wedderburn 24 Sept 1909 in Wolpert, p. 235; Gokhale to Wedderburn 30 June 1910, Gokhale Papers.} Among the Moderates, however, Gokhale came to realise how insecure the Muslims felt in the face of the Hindu majority, and he publicly accepted the Muslim separate electorates.\footnote{Speech to Deccan Sabha, 11 July 1909, in Wolpert, p. 234; cf. Speech in Indian Legislative Council, March 1909, in A. C. Banerjee, Indian Constitutional Documents, p. 303.}

A Hindu-Muslim Conference at Allahabad in 1910, organised by Wedderburn and Gokhale, foundered on the resentment of Hindus from the Punjab and the UP at Muslim separate representation, but its discussions helped to prepare the ground for rapprochement.\footnote{Noman, pp. lll-3.}

Thereafter Congress made a series of conciliatory gestures towards the League. In 1912 Congress met in
Bihar, where nearly half the Congressmen were Muslims, and the President "recognised the expediency of adopting ... communal representation [for Muslims]." The following Congress session was held in the conspicuously Muslim city of Karachi, with a Muslim as President.

The Muslims' reliance on loyalty to the Government for the advancement of their interests received a blow from the Repartition of Bengal in 1911. "...the old feeling among Mahomedans of keeping aloof from the Congress has altered", observed Craddock, Home Minister in the Government of India, "on the ground that the Hindus were right in agitating". The Repartition seemed to invalidate a premise of the Muslim League, that agitation would only bring down Government repression.

The Muslims were further alienated by the British

1. Mudholkar's Address, Congress Presidential Addresses, II, 71; S. Sinha to Gokhale, 8 Aug 1912, Gokhale Papers.
2. see H. Vishindas to Gokhale 18, 20 Mar and 7 Aug 1913, Gokhale Papers.
3. 1864-1937; Home Member of Viceroy's Executive Council 1912-17; Chief Commissioner, CP, 1907-12; Lt-Governor of Burma 1917-22.
Government's failure to help Turkey, when the latter was attacked by Italy and the Balkan States in 1911 and 1912 respectively, and by the speeches of British Cabinet members making it clear that they approved of the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire by Christian States.¹ The Ottoman Empire had special significance for the Sunni majority of Indian Muslims, since the Sultan of the Empire was also their Khalif or spiritual head.² The other major group among Indian Muslims, the Shias, did not regard the Sultan as Khalif: their sympathies lay rather with Persia, where some of their principal shrines were situated. At this time their ire was also roused against Britain when the latter's ally, Russia, attacked Persia and bombarded the Shia Shrine at Meshed.³

The Muslims who reacted most bitterly to Britain's failure to assist Turkey were the Pan-Islamists. Pan-Islamism was a movement for the rehabilitation of Islamic Brotherhood on an international scale as a means

1. see Home Poll A, Oct 1913, nos 100-18, pp. 51, 181.
2. see e.g. W. Cantwell Smith, Islam in Modern History, p. 209.
3. see Home Poll A, Mar 1913, nos 45-55, pp. 24-5.
of arresting the decline of Islam due to autocracy and Western imperialism. It had been introduced to India about 1880.1 This spirit had been revived in the early years of this century, largely by graduates of the Aligarh College who had been made aware of Islam's decline through the Western learning they imbibed, and some of whom had gone on to study overseas, where they had met revolutionaries from other parts of the Islamic world.

Among the more outstanding Aligarh graduates were C. Khaliquzzaman (1889-1962) of Lucknow, Dr S. Kitchlu (1888- ) of Amritsar and the Ali Brothers, Shaukat (1872-19??) and, above all, Mohamed (1878-1931). After graduating from Aligarh in 1896, Mohamed Ali read History at Oxford and on his return to India in 1900 worked in the service of two Indian states, Rampur and Baroda. He was an enthusiastic founder member of the Muslim League. In 1911 the troubles of Turkey prompted him to leave Baroda and launch a paper, the Comrade, which he edited at first in Calcutta and, when the capital was shifted, in Delhi. He has testified that he had little interest in Islamic theology until

1. see Pak. HFM, pp. 88-106.
detention by the Government gave him the opportunity of reading the Quran: it was rather the temporal troubles of Islam that called him to action.¹

Among Pan-Islamists who were not "old boys" of Aligarh, the most outstanding was Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958) of Calcutta, who had received both traditional and Western education. In 1908 he travelled to the Middle East and Europe where he was the enthusiastic recipient of the ideas of Egyptian and Turkish revolutionaries. He returned to India in time to take a leading part in kindling the Muslim agitation against the British through the newspaper Al Hilal, which he founded in June 1912.²

From 1912 papers like the Comrade and Al Hilal³ denounced the British Government, and Christians in general, in increasingly violent tones. Even the most "moderate" Muslim leaders were dismayed by Britain's lack of sympathy, and the Pan-Islamists found it easy to rouse bitter resentment against the British. In 1912 Dr Ansari, a Pan-Islamist of Delhi, led a Medical Mission of


enthusiastic young Muslims (including Khaliquzzaman) to the battlefields in the Balkans, while Shaukat Ali founded a Society\(^1\) whose members pledged themselves to "sacrifice their lives and property" for the protection of Muslim sacred places. In 1913 the Pan-Islamic papers roused bitter and widespread resentment at the destruction by the UP Government of a washplace attached to a Kanpur mosque: in this heavily-charged atmosphere, the same newspapers proposed a rapprochement between the Muslim League and Congress.\(^2\)

A number of "nationalist" Muslims joined hands with the Pan-Islamists in urging the League to substitute an entente with Congress for the policy of loyalty to the British.

The "nationalists" looked forward to the creation of a secular state in India, in which religious differences should be unreflected in political institutions, and to this end they sought to make common cause with the Hindus in Congress. They had joined Congress and formed a valuable bridge between their community and that organisation. The Pan-Islamists on the other hand were

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1. the Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Ka'aba (Society of the Servants of the Ka'aba).

concerned, as had been the founders of the Muslim League, with the interests of the Muslims as such, and sought rather an alliance of the Muslims as a community with the Congress against a common foe, the British. From 1912 the Pan-Islamists were beginning to reach out to involve the Muslim masses in political agitation by appealing, through the Muslim divines, the ulema, to Muslim religious sentiment. The "nationalists" were averse to rousing mass groups before they had been educated in preparation for the operation of Western political institutions and were particularly opposed to rousing religious feelings which might encourage violence. To make such a distinction between "nationalist" and Pan-Islamist Muslims is instructive but it must be borne in mind that in the reality, from which it is abstracted, there were many shades of outlook ranging between these extremes.

The most outstanding Muslim "nationalist" was Mohamed Ali Jinnah (1876-1948). The son of a Karachi merchant, he was a member of the Khoja sect, which was, strictly-speaking, heretical from the viewpoint of the Sunni majority of Indian Muslims:¹ he was rational, a

man of the world, rather than religious. He studied law from 1892 to 1896 in England and there came much under the influence of Dadabhai Naoroji. Returning to India, he built a brilliant reputation as a lawyer in Bombay and, through his legal contacts, joined Mehta and the circle of the Bombay Presidency Association. In 1914 Congress recognised his talents by sending him on a deputation to England and, though not the leader of the deputation, Jinnah acted as its spokesman. "It is my ambition to become the Muslim Gokhale", he was reported to have said, and indeed Gokhale found him free from "all sectarian prejudice". His antipathy to the communal goals of the Muslim League made him shun membership of it until he believed he might help to link it with Congress.

Other leading "nationalists" were the Raja of Mahmudabad, Wazir Hasan, and Mazharul Haque. Mahmudabad (1878-1931) as one of the largest landowners of the UP, dominated Muslim society in Lucknow and exercised great influence in the Headquarters of the Muslim League.

1. see S. Naidu, "Pen Portrait" in Mohomed [sic] Ali Jinnah An Ambassador of Unity: His Speeches and Writings, 1912-17, pp. 1-18. At the 1906 Congress he opposed any special treatment of Muslims: Congress 1906, Report, p.120.

2. also Sarfaraz Husein Khan in Bihar and Nawab Syed Mahomed of Madras.
He contributed substantially to the League's finances and became its President in 1916. From 1907 he was a member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council, where he became closely acquainted with Jinnah.

Wazir Hasan, like Mahmudabad a Shia, was the son of a Government official and became a lawyer on his graduation in 1896. Moving to Lucknow in 1903 he undertook cases on behalf of the Mahmudabad estate and joined the Raja's circle. In 1911 he was appointed to the crucial position of Secretary of the League, and as such joined Mohamed Ali in a deputation to England to protest at the Kanpur Mosque affair.¹

Mazharul Haque (1866-1930), a lawyer of Bihar, had studied in England. As a member of the central Legislative Council from 1910 he came in contact with other "nationalist" Muslims. He was largely responsible for establishing a Congress Committee in Bihar and devoted himself to Hindu-Muslim reconciliation.²

These men belonged to the Muslim elite of the UP and Bihar, which shared its Persian culture with

¹. interviews with Hon. S. A. Zaheer, 4 Aug 1963, Maharajkumar M. A. Hyder Khan, 4 and 5 Aug 1963.

². see e.g. his letter to Gokhale 18 Apr 1911, Gokhale Papers; New India, 4 Jan 1916, p. 13b.
important Hindu groups, the Kayasthas in Bihar and the Kashmiri Brahmins in the UP, which had provided the Mughal rulers with their administrative cadre and now produced many professional men from whom came the leading Congressmen of the region.¹ These groups had frequent social contact and helped to link Congress and the League.

As a step toward reconciliation with Congress, the "nationalists" and Pan-Islamists urged the Council of the League to amend the Constitution. Wazir Hasan visited Councillors throughout India, arguing for amendment. Jinnah (though still not a member) participated in the Council meeting at Mahmudabad House in December 1912, which added to the aims of the League,

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the attainment of a system of self-government suitable to India by bringing about, through constitutional means, a steady reform of the existing system of administration...²
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This echoed the goal laid down in the Congress Constitution of 1908, but was less precise than the Congress goal of "a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing Members of the British Empire", and represented a compromise between conflicting

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². quoted in Lal Bahadur, The Muslim League, p. 92.
views. For, while Muslims were generally critical of Britain, many of the League Councillors still feared Hindu domination and clung to loyalty to the British. These "conservatives" included the Presidents of the Punjab and Bombay branches of the League, Mian Mohammad Shafi\(^1\) and Rafi-ud-din Ahmad respectively. At the League Session in December 1913 they defeated a resolution designed as a conciliatory gesture to Congress by 89 votes to 40. The "nationalists" saw this as a sign of progress, however: "Last year", said Mazharul Haque, there had been "nobody even to second" such a resolution but now it was supported by nearly one-third of the members of the Session.\(^2\)

By 1914 the Muslim League and the Congress under the Moderates had come far toward an understanding. Those who were working toward this consummation had yet to overcome the opposition of Muslim "conservatives" and to solve the problems posed by Hindu communalism both among Congressmen (particularly from the Punjab and the UP) and among Extremists outside Congress. There was danger too in the rousing of religious sentiment by Pan-Islamists.

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1. born 1869, entered Middle Temple 1889, called to English Bar 1892; prominent Lahore lawyer; Education Member Viceroy's Executive Council, 1919-22, Law Member 1923-24.

During 1913 however, Wazir Hasan and Mohamed Ali had strengthened the forces favouring entente with Congress by persuading Jinnah to join the League.

During 1914 there were also developments at the leadership level on the side of Congress, which held out hope that the problems posed by the division of Congress into Moderates and Extremists would be taken up. For in January Mrs Besant became a member of Congress and in June Tilak was released from Mandalay Jail.
Renaissance and Reformation

The years 1914 and 1915 saw the revival of the national movement.

During this period, the Muslim League and Congress moved toward a rapprochement, which was consummated in their adoption of a Joint Scheme of Reforms at the end of 1916. This was largely the work of Jinnah and the "nationalist" Muslims, and will be considered in the following chapter.

On the side of Congress, activity increased both among Moderates and Extremists during 1914 and 1915, due to Tilak's return to India and to Mrs Besant's launching of agitation. This agitation marked an attempt to evolve a new programme which would induce the British to hasten the devolution of power to India: Indians themselves were encouraged to contemplate more rapid progress to self-government as their goal.

Mrs Besant's agitation also marked an attempt to evolve a programme which would be acceptable to both the more cautious and the more impetuous members of the movement, and thus provide a basis for reconciliation.
between the two wings. Continued British refusal to grant reforms during this period deepened the disillusionment of the Moderates with the methods they had employed hitherto and made them more prepared for reconciliation with the Extremists.

New organisational ideas were introduced, again mainly thanks to Mrs Besant. Finding that her attempts to re-invigorate Congress and to use it for her agitation were frustrated by a hard core of older leaders, she turned to set up her own organisation with branches throughout India. Congress nevertheless was to remain the vehicle of Indian nationalism, since Mrs Besant wanted to capture its leadership, and regarded her organisation as supplementing, and not replacing, Congress.

During 1914-15, therefore, the movement took tentative steps toward the adoption of new strategies, toward the reformulation of its goals and toward the reformation of its organisation.

I

Annie Besant.

The creative role in this transformation was played
by Annie Besant, although, even had she not joined the movement, it is unlikely that the quiescence of 1908-14 would have continued: in Maharashtra, for example, national political activity revived in anticipation of Tilak's release, quite independently of her activity.

At first sight she was a most unlikely leader: a woman, elderly - she was 66 in 1914 - and, above all, European. Eventually indeed these were to be among the factors contributing to the downfall of her leadership.

But she had a number of qualities which fitted her for leadership. Even in being white there lay advantages. Indians still deferred to Europeans and her white skin shielded her from Government repression for a considerable time. The Government generally permitted greater freedom of expression to Europeans than to Indians; and, furthermore, it discounted the likelihood of Indian politicians allowing a white woman to assume leadership and so refrained from moving to limit her freedom.¹

As for her personal qualities Annie Besant had tremendous drive and energy, and she had developed great powers of oratory and journalistic expression as a propagandist of Free-Thought, Radicalism, Fabianism and Theosophy in England.

1. see Home Poll A, Nov 1915, nos 166-8.
Since her arrival in India in 1893 she had identified herself with India as closely as a Westerner can. Already a vegetarian on her arrival, she adopted the sari, made India her home and referred to Indians as "we".¹ The identification was most closely made through her activities in the Theosophical Society, as Head of its Indian Section until 1907 and thereafter International President up to her death in 1933.

The Theosophical Society expounded the thesis that all religions are paths to truth, and investigated occult and psychic phenomena. It drew much of its inspiration from Buddhism and Hinduism, and notably the notion that all human beings contain a reincarnated element of the divine. "Adepts", according to the Society, might so develop their occult power as to escape from the process of reincarnation and join the Masters (or Mahatmas or Rishis) who guide the destinies of the world. Mrs Besant believed that, as an "adept", she was directed by two Masters, and Theosophists respected her wishes as inspired by these superhuman agencies. Under the guidance of its co-founder, "Colonel" Olcott,

¹ New India, 9 Jan 1915, p. 7d.
the Society in India had emphasised its debt to Buddhism, but Annie Besant gave it a more pronounced Hindu orientation.¹

Through the Theosophical Society she contributed substantially to the revival of Hinduism. By 1914 the Society had nearly 6000 members,² and Mrs Besant gave them, as well as many non-members, renewed faith in Hinduism and confidence in its greatness, by means of her lectures and writings and English translations of the Gita and other texts, and through schools and colleges where Hindu principles were taught. Mrs Besant spoke no Indian language and her work was mainly confined to the professional and business classes, déraciné as the result of their Western education.

Initially Mrs Besant contributed to the retrograde features of the Hindu revival and to its rejection of the West, condoning the caste system, for example.³ But as she found herself increasingly accepted as a Hindu, so she advocated social and caste reform, which attracted


3. see also A. Besant, Hindu Reform on National Lines, p. 4.
more liberal-minded Indians to her.¹

Because of its close identification with Hinduism, the Theosophical Society did not attract Muslims. However, by emphasising the Society's tenet that all religions were paths to God and by stressing the affinity of the Society's mystical aspect with the Sufi strain in Islam, Mrs Besant won a number of Muslim adherents, particularly among the elite of the community in the UP and Bihar.²

One of Annie Besant's advantages in seeking leadership in the national movement was that she had not been connected with the movement hitherto, and was not identified therefore with a particular group or party in the movement. She could act her chosen part of mediator between groups and draw support from different parts of the movement. Nor was she identified (as a native-born Indian would have been) with a particular region. As President of the Theosophical Society her Headquarters were in Madras, as Head of the Indian Section they had been in the UP and it was in these two provinces that her work was best known. Having been less active in national


² CHC Magazine, IX (1910), 137; Theosophist, XXIX, Nov 1907, 98 and Jan 1908, 386.
politics than Bombay or Bengal, these provinces lacked strongly-entrenched Moderate leaders, and Mrs Besant was able to seek leadership there without arousing strong opposition. In addition, the Theosophical Society provided her with devoted followers among Western-educated Indians not only in Madras and the UP but in much of the rest of India, notably in Bombay City, Sind and Gujarat.¹ Mrs Besant was thus well-situated to bring regions, hitherto relatively inactive, into the movement, to base her power on these regions, and to reach out for leadership on a nation-wide basis, which had hitherto eluded leaders who were identified with their native region.

Mrs Besant was perspicacious in assessing the national movement in 1914. In the course of her educational work, she realised how young men's imaginations had been stirred by Extremism² and how they hankered after some form of expression for their patriotism, and she recognised that the widespread longing for unity among Extremists and Moderates provided her

¹. in 1914 the Bombay City lodges of the TS had 457 members: TS, Indian Section Annual Report, loc. cit.

². see CHC Magazine, VII (1907), 313-4; VIII (1908) 113, 275; IX (1909), 109.
with an opportunity for leadership if she could evolve a programme of activity on which all elements could agree. The only important weakness in her diagnosis at this stage was in underestimating the antipathy of the Bombay Moderates to reunification and to the Extremists personally, and the jealousy with which they clung to the leadership.

Moderate and Extremist elements were combined in Mrs Besant's personality and outlook and fitted her for the task of reconciling the two wings. Highly emotional, she was easily angered by injustice and her enthusiasm aroused by causes in which she believed. This identified her with the younger and more impetuous members of the national movement. Like the Extremists, she believed that India was ready for self-government and rejected the need for preparation and gradual advance under British tutelage advocated in Moderate doctrine. While she believed that India had much to teach England in matters of religion, and that India had much to learn in matters of organisation, and the application of principles to practice, she did not believe that self-government for

India would halt this process. On the other hand she shared the Moderate abhorrence of violence. In 1908 she had deplored Tilak's writings which she regarded as incitements to terrorism, denouncing his advocacy of the boycott of colleges (which she termed an incitement to "aimless disaffection"), and his desire to "use the student population as a continual menace to public order".¹

In joining the national movement her primary aim was to prepare the way for a stable, lasting Imperial-Federal alliance between India and Britain. "One thing that lies very near to our heart is to draw Great Britain and India nearer to each other", she wrote.² She believed that to achieve this alliance Britain must win Indian good-will and that Britain could do so only by granting self-government to India.³ At the same time she wanted to woo young Indians from violence and to forestall the possible revival of Extremist advocacy of passive resistance, which she saw as leading to disorder.

1. CHC Magazine, VIII (1908), 113-4, 141, 247.

2. "Our Policy", in the first issue of her paper Commonweal, 2 Jan 1914, p. 4; see JSC on G of I Bill, p. 78, Q 1382.

She hoped to attain both these ends by rousing agitation which would absorb the energies of impetuous nationalists and move the conscience of the British Government and electorate.

The sort of agitation she had in mind was shaped very largely by her experience as orator and journalist in England¹ and by the example of Hume's Congress agitation of 1888, which in turn had been modelled on Cobden's Anti-Corn-Law agitation.² She indicated the prototype of the agitation she had in mind when in April 1914 she wrote:

The strength of the English feeling [on the question of Imperial Federation] is shown...by the enormous Hyde Park Demonstration - the favourite Radical weapon - with its fourteen platforms, its twenty-two processions, its banners representing seventy-six constituencies of Greater London, and with Mr Balfour speaking in Hyde Park for the first time in his life...the purpose is obvious - to create a situation in which the problem of Federalism must come to the front, and...enter...the sphere of practical politics.³

2. Hume was a Theosophist, and Mrs Besant was well acquainted with his work: see e.g. Commonweal, 2 Jan 1914, p. 4; Wrought, pp. 51, 71.
3. "Federation", in Commonweal, 10 and 17 April 1914, reprinted in A. Besant, The Birth of New India, pp. 70-1.
Monster meetings, outstanding speakers - together with newspaper articles and pamphlets - this was the stuff of political agitation, which would, she believed, make the demand for reform "irresistible" and absorb potentially dangerous enthusiasm.

It was in the hope of turning Congress into a vehicle for this agitation that she joined it in 1914. She was not tempted to set up a new organisation, since Congress already had Committees throughout India and she hoped to revive the 1908 plan for a network of District Congress Committees [hereafter "DCCs"] and to link them with district Theosophical and Social Conferences for continuous work.\(^1\) The Moderates, it was clear, would not leave Congress in order to join a new organisation and Mrs Besant was anxious that they should act as a brake upon the young men, while the latter per contra provoked them to greater activity. As a European and a newcomer to national politics she wished to acquire the cachet of membership in the only organisation which had achieved recognition as the mouthpiece of educated India among Indians and the British.\(^2\)

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1. see ibid., pp. 74-7; A. Besant, United India [Oct. 1913], reprinted in For India's Uplift (1921), pp. 211-29.

2. see New India, 9 Nov 1914, p. 12a.
January - August 1914.

To supplement her work in Congress and to help her capture it Annie Besant founded two newspapers, the weekly, Commonweal in January 1914 and the daily, New India in July.¹ During a lecture tour of England from April to June she placed India's case for self-government before newspaper editors² and before large meetings. There was much talk of reorganising the British Empire on a federal basis but, while Britain and the Colonies with white populations were mentioned, "India", she wrote, "is always left out. If she is shut out of the Empire, as a self-governing country, will she be to blame if she refuses to remain in it as a dependency?"³

By her efforts in England on India's behalf Mrs Besant identified herself with Moderate methods (with the difference that she appealed more directly to the

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1. together with C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar she bought the Madras Standard, published it first on 14 July, renamed it New India on 1 Aug. See Mrs Besant to Gokhale, 16 and 24 July 1914, Gokhale Papers; Madras Standard, 14 July 1914, p. 4b; 20 July 1914, p. 6e.

2. see Mrs Besant to Gokhale, 28 May 1914, Gokhale Papers; Besant, India and Empire, pp 100-53.

3. letter, 28 May 1914, to The Times, in Besant, India and Empire, p. 38; cf. ibid., p. 62.
electorate) and co-operated with Gokhale and the deputation of Moderates in England at the time. But this was the last occasion on which she left India until 1919. On her return from England she decided to concentrate on national political work in India for ten months: before that time was up overseas travel had been rendered difficult by the outbreak of the World War, and Mrs Besant had become so embroiled in politics that she was unable to leave India.

She made the readmission to Congress of the Extremists her first task. In this she was joined by an outstanding Madrasi lawyer, C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, then aged 34. They had met as opponents in a law-suit (in which Mrs Besant had conducted her own case), after which he agreed to join her in politics, becoming her staunchest, non-Theosophist follower. Like her, he wished to see the Congress become more active but opposed any course which he believed might lead to violence. He was an admirer of

1. see New India, 9 Nov 1914, p. 12; Gokhale to Mrs Besant, 26 June 1914, Adyar Archives.
2. see Madras Standard, 24 July 1914, p. 6b-d; Mahratta, 26 July 1916, p. 237.
3. she had foreshadowed this in the first issue of Commonweal, 2 Jan 1914, p. 4.
4. see C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Annie Besant, p. 68.
Gokhale and, with Mrs Besant, urged Gokhale to seek some basis on which his fellow-Moderates would accept the readmission of the Extremists.¹ Gokhale in return hoped that "we may succeed in devising some scheme which will bring together the more earnest spirits in the country in active co-operation".²

This was an opportune moment to press for the reconciliation of Moderates and Extremists, for the Moderates had just received another rebuff from the British. The Congress deputation in England had been pressing for the abolition of the Secretary of State's Council or for the reduction of returned ICS-men, and the increase of Indians, among its members. The Secretary of State laid a Bill before Parliament which went far toward satisfying the alternative request, but Curzon led the House of Lords in throwing the Bill out.³

During Mrs Besant's absence in England, Tilak was released from prison on 17 June. Her newspapers welcomed him cautiously, recognising his "greatness" but

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¹ Mrs Besant to Gokhale, 6 Feb 1914, Gokhale Papers; interview with C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, 31 Mar 1963.
² Gokhale to Mrs Besant, 26 June 1914, Adyar Archives.
reiterating Mrs Besant's opinion that his judgment had been "mistaken". She hoped to prevent him from returning to his advocacy of passive resistance and his supposed support of terrorism by drawing him into Congress, and urged him to seek a compromise which would "bridge the gulf...between the two parties of the National Congress". "Co-operation with varied temperaments is the secret of success of great souls", wrote the Commonweal.¹

The approach of Tilak's release had provoked a revival of activity among his lieutenants in Maharashtra: they held the first "Bombay Provincial Conference" for six years in April at Satara. This Conference augured well for rapprochement since it was attended not only by Extremists but also by a number of Moderates from the mofussil. The attendance of the mofussil Moderates indicated growing rebelliousness among the Congress rank-and-file against the Bombay Moderate leaders, since the PCC controlled by the latter refused to authorise the Conference.² By its principal resolution, the Conference set up a Committee

   to try to bring about a reconciliation between the two Congress parties on the

¹ quoted in Mahratta, 21 June 1914, p. 194.
² Satara "Provincial" Conference, 1st day, pp. 5, 9.
following basis: 'The Congress shall be open to every person elected as a delegate to it at any public meeting or any public association in the British Empire, provided the delegate accepts in writing Article I of the present constitution of the Indian National Congress organisation'.

This resolution was so worded in an attempt to satisfy both parties. The Moderates insisted that delegates should affirm their adherence to "constitutional means" of activity mentioned in Article I, by which they understood that methods leading to violence would be avoided. The Extremists wished to enter Congress from public meetings, since this would avoid the necessity of joining a Congress Committee controlled by the Moderates who could exclude applicants of whom they disapproved. Others followed the lead provided by the Satara people: at Salem in Madras, for instance, those who had followed Tilak into the wilderness met with Congressmen and arranged to hold a District Conference, to which delegates would be elected by public meetings.

III

August – December 1914.

After an initial period of silence following his

1. ibid., 3rd day, p. 8.
release\(^1\) Tilak indicated his support for these movements for readmission to Congress. He saw the strength of the feeling in favour of rapprochement among the Moderates and the opening this gave him to re-enter Congress and again seek leadership of it. Moreover, he hoped to shield himself from renewed Government repression by joining Congress. He was doubtless urged to do so by several of his more cautious lieutenants, notably Kelkar and Karandikar. N. C. Kelkar (1872-1947) was Tilak's closest co-worker: he had taken over the editorship of Tilak's English-language paper, the *Mahratta* in 1897, and in a letter from prison in 1909 Tilak entrusted the *Kesari* to him also, recognising that Kelkar was more circumspect than his other lieutenants. Kelkar had kept in touch with the Moderates, particularly Gokhale, during Tilak's incarceration, and in 1914 he supported rapprochement along the lines of the Satara "Provincial Conference" resolution in his editorial columns.\(^2\) Karandikar (1857-1935) was one of Tilak's chief legal advisers and his leading lieutenant in the Satara District. With

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Kelkar, Karandikar had taken the lead in organising the Satara Conference: having joined the Moderate Convention at Surat in 1907, he was, in his own words, a "connecting link" between the Moderates and Extremists.¹

Several of Tilak's more fiery co-workers, on the other hand, opposed re-entry to Congress on the basis of any compromise involving the forfeiture of the Extremist pose of "aggressive" nationalism. S. M. Paranjpe, K. P. Khadilkar and Gangadharrao Deshpande were the most outstanding of these. Shivram Mahadeo Paranjpe (1864-1929) had been a college professor in Poona until the British forced him to resign in 1897 for his part in organising Tilak's Shivaji and Ganpati Festivals. As editor of the Marathi newspaper Kal (The "Times") and as public speaker he was noted for oblique, but pointedly satirical, criticisms of the British. He was silenced by 15 months' imprisonment in 1908, followed by the imposition of Rs 10,000 security on Kal. Khadilkar (1872-1948) was editor of the Kesari until Tilak, fearing his temerity, authorised Kelkar to take it over in 1909, after which Khadilkar concentrated on criticising the

¹. see R. P. Karandikar "Diary" (Poona), 28 Dec 1907, 16 Mar to 28 April 1914.
Government through Marathi historical dramas.  
Gangadharrao Deshpande (1870-1962), a lawyer, was Tilak's principal lieutenant in the predominantly Kanarese-speaking area of the Karnatak in the south of Bombay Presidency, though he (like Tilak's other lieutenants) was a Brahmin of Maharashtrian stock. These men felt that, now Tilak was back among them, they should recommence agitation. In this they represented Extremism at its purest and most irrational. They saw national politics largely in terms of rousing audiences and had little clear idea of relating the emotions they kindled to the aim of attaining self-government. In this situation a leader like Tilak who sought to devise a policy which involved a compromise with the Moderates ran the danger of being branded a "moderate" himself: and if men like S. M. Paranjpe did not so brand him, others would rise who would.

In 1914 however Tilak had a breathing space, since his more fiery co-workers' audiences had been subdued by repression, and the inactivity of Paranjpe and others placed them in an awkward position for criticising moderation on the part of Tilak.

Tilak set out to reassure the Moderates that he was not a firebrand and to demonstrate that they shared common ground. In the *Mahratta* of 23 August one of his associates wrote, no doubt with Tilak's concurrence, that Tilak was "no enemy of the British Raj and does not seek severance from the British Crown".¹ This was calculated both to reassure the Moderates and to persuade the Government to relax the strict surveillance which it had maintained over Tilak since his release. A few days later Tilak took the opportunity provided by the outbreak of War to declare that it was the duty of every Indian to assist the Government, and continued in a strain of sweet reasonableness:

The reforms introduced during Lord Morley's and Lord Minto's administration will show that Government is fully alive to the necessity of progressive change and desire to associate the people more and more in the work of Government. It can also be claimed, and fairly conceded, that this indicates a marked increase of confidence between the Rulers and the Ruled, and a sustained endeavour to remove popular grievances. Considered from the public point of view, I think this is a distinct gain;... it is absurd...to speak of my actions or my attitude as in any way hostile to His Majesty's Government....we are trying in India, as the Irish Home-rulers have been doing in Ireland, for a reform of the system of administration and not for the over-throw of Government.²

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Tilak knew that the "Mehta party" would oppose his readmission to Congress but he hoped, by emphasising the areas of agreement between Moderates and Extremists, so to strengthen the movement in favour of rapprochement in Congress that Mehta would bow before it.¹

Tilak's conciliatoriness and his support for the Government convinced Mrs Besant that he was trustworthy and she redoubled her efforts for reunification. In a series of articles in New India, Mrs Besant and a number of other Congressmen urged the desirability of readmitting the Extremists.² The 1914 Congress Session was to be held in Madras and, on joining Congress, Mrs Besant had been invited to join the Reception Committee. Its meetings brought her in contact with the leading Madras Congressmen and she succeeded in persuading most of them to this point of view.³ Mrs Besant again urged Gokhale to take up the matter, and he replied that he agreed "every effort must now be made to close the unfortunate divisions of 1907".⁴ He proposed that the Extremists

1. see Tilak to Khaparde, 22 Nov 1914, Khaparde Papers.
2. see New India, 17 Oct 1914, p. 6; 7 Nov 1914, p. 6; 9 Nov 1914, p. 13a; 12 Nov 1914, p. 6d; 18 Nov 1914, p. 5.
3. see V. S. S. Sastri to Gokhale, 20 Dec 1914, Gokhale Papers; Mahratta, 26 Sept 1915, p. 317.
4. Gokhale to Mrs Besant, 18 Nov 1914, Adyar Archives.
should be allowed to come in as members of associations, which accepted the goal and methods laid down in the Congress Constitution of 1908, but which would not be required to seek affiliation to the Moderate-dominated PCCs. Early in December Mrs Besant went to Poona and with Gokhale thrashed the whole matter out with Tilak.

When Mehta was approached however, he opposed readmission point blank. Tilak was under pressure from S. M. Paranjpe and his more aggressive followers to demand unfettered entry to Congress and, partly in a "bid for quieting his more violent followers who were growing restive", partly out of pique at Mehta's obduracy, Tilak exclaimed that

The present programme of the Congress was of no value. They were asking for small reforms....Mr Tilak would ask his countrymen to have nothing to do with these. He would make only one demand, namely that for self-government within the Empire....The Irish, by resorting to methods, of obstruction had, in the course or [i.e. of] 30 years, got Home Rule. They must also similarly adopt methods of obstruction within the limits of the law

1. Gokhale to Mrs Besant, 21 Nov 1914, Adyar Archives.
2. Gokhale to Mrs Besant, 10 Jan 1915, ibid.; cf. Tilak to G. S. Khaparde, 22 Nov 1914, Khaparde Papers.
and then only would they be able to compel the Government to concede their demand.†

Tilak did not elaborate his "methods of obstruction within the limits of the law" and indeed he had no clear programme of action marked out. Rather he was expressing his own highly emotional reaction to the situation, and appealing to his more excitable followers, who looked to him for an aggressive stance. Tilak went on to say that he regarded Gokhale's proposed amendment "as an instalment only" and that he and his followers aimed at capturing control of Congress.²

This outburst united the Moderate leaders in opposition to Tilak's re-entry: Gokhale withdrew his support and Bhupendranath Basu, the President of the 1914 Congress Session, did likewise.³

Mrs Besant, on the other hand, was convinced that not Tilak but Mehta was responsible for the failure to achieve a compromise,⁴ and felt in any case that it would

1. report of conversation on 8 (?) Dec 1914 between N. Subba Rao Pantulu, General Secretary of Congress, and Tilak, [accepted by Tilak, see Tilak "Diary" (handwritten, kept in Kesari-Mahratta Trust Library), 9 Dec 1914], Mahratta, 14 Feb 1915, pp. 55-6 (comma after "methods" in original).
2. ibid.
3. see Gokhale to Bhupendranath Basu 14 Dec 1914, Adyar Archives; V. S. Sastri to Gokhale, 30 Dec 1914, Gokhale Papers.
4. see Tilak to Khaparde 7 Dec 1914, Khaparde Papers.
be easier to restrain Tilak and his followers if they were inside Congress. She strove to have him elected as a delegate to the Madras Congress by the Bengal PCC and the Madras Mahajana Sabha, though without success, and at the Subjects Committee she brought forward Gokhale's amendment for the readmission of the Extremists, even though Gokhale himself had withdrawn it.¹ For the Moderates to have accepted either of these proposals would have been to fly in the face of Mehta and Gokhale, and this they were not prepared to do.

Mrs Besant therefore tried another tactic and urged the Subjects Committee to set up a Committee to consider amending the Constitution so that Tilak might be admitted. This time she was successful. Despite the unwillingness of most Moderates to flout Mehta's wishes many of them were anxious to heal the breach: in this they were encouraged by Tilak, for, after his outburst of early December but before the Congress met he returned to his more reasonable tone, minimising the differences between Moderates and Extremists. It was admitted, he claimed in the Mahratta,² "that the political aims and objects

¹. Gokhale to Mrs Besant, 9 Jan 1915, Adyar Archives.
of both the parties are the same, both are willing to work for their realisation in a constitutional way”. The Bombay Moderates in the Subjects Committee were thus pressed to give way in this matter by the other members and, in the absence of both Mehta and Gokhale due to illness, they did so, probably expecting that they could prevent the Constitutional Committee from meeting or otherwise browbeat it into shelving the question.¹

During the later part of 1914 Mrs Besant had also taken up a question closely related to the readmission of the Extremists, that of increasing the activity of Congress. In October she wrote in New India:

The younger generation is growing impatient while the Congress marks time. All are ready to honour...those who...created and sustained Congress....If they would lead, the younger men would gladly follow. But a leader must not stand still....there are definite functions for the Congress to discharge: (1) To educate public opinion, in order that it may support legislative action in the Councils. (2) To prepare materials for proposed legislation....(3) To formulate and proclaim the opinion of educated India on all urgent public matters....²

¹. see Mahratta, 3 Jan 1915, p. 1; Home Poll B, Dec 1914, nos 227-9, p. 21; Jan 1915, nos 278-82, pp. 32-3; New India, 15 Jan 1915, p. 3a.

². New India, 17 Oct 1914, p. 5b-d.
These functions, she concluded, should be carried out by the AICC and by a network of reconstructed Provincial, District and Taluq Committees and by town and village meetings organised by them. The sort of activity she had in mind was to "educate" Indian opinion and to "proclaim" that opinion to the rulers; in other words, to rouse Indian feeling upon political matters and to bring this feeling forcibly to the notice of the British. Such activity would give expression to the impatience of the younger generation, and also divert that impatience from more violent channels. The existing Congress organisation was inadequate to undertake these tasks, and her solution, in October 1914, was to expand and revive the Congress organisation itself.

She invited Congressmen to comment on her suggestions and in their replies, which she printed as a series of articles and letters in *New India*, received considerable support for her suggestions.

The question of reviving and expanding Congress organisation was brought up at the Madras Congress by

1. *ibid.*

Sir Subramania Aiyer in his Welcoming Address as Chairman of the Reception Committee:¹ as a Theosophist, Subramania Aiyer was a devoted follower of Mrs Besant² and, being also a veteran member of Congress and distinguished ex-judge, was highly respected by his fellow-Congressmen. The readmission of the Extremists, however, overshadowed all other questions at the Madras Session and the reorganisation of Congress was not taken up.³

By the end of 1914 therefore, Mrs Besant had obtained neither the readmission of the Extremists nor the reorganisation and revival of Congress. In the appointment of the Constitutional Committee, however, a step had been taken toward attaining the first of these goals, and Moderates who favoured reunification and a more active national movement had a leader around whom to rally. Mrs Besant moreover now had experience of the obstinacy of the Bombay Moderates and a clearer idea of the opposition they might offer to her plans for the reorganisation of Congress.

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2. see ibid., p. 3.
3. Home Poll B, Jan 1915, nos 278-82, pp. 32-3; see Commonweal, 1 Jan 1915, pp. 5-6; 15 Jan 1915, p. 41b.
January - April 1915.

Lest it be thought that in pressing for Tilak's readmission she was condoning the resort to passive resistance or to "Irish obstruction" which Tilak had recommended in his outburst of early December, Mrs Besant published several articles opposing these methods. She wrote: "while respecting the handful of patriots who adopt this policy, and hoping that they will join the Congress, we say quite definitely that passive resistance cannot be...employed in working for Self-Government", ¹ and that boycott was "an impossibility" and "mischievous silliness". ² Gandhi was on his way back from South Africa, and many young Congressmen echoed a young Gujarati, Indulal Yajnik, who wrote in a Bombay newspaper late in 1914 that he hoped Gandhi would lead a passive resistance movement in support of self-government. ³ With this in mind, Mrs Besant warned that in India,

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1. New India, 4 Jan 1915, p. 6b.
2. ibid., 5 Jan 1915, p. 6a.
3. I. K. Yajnik, Gandhi As I Know Him (Bombay, [1931]), pp. 1, 7, 14; see Madras Standard, 21 July 1914, p. 2a.
any concerted action like that of Mr Gandhi and his fellow resisters would be forcibly broken up and the leaders deported, if there were not evidence enough to convict and imprison.... The conditions of successful passive resistance are: a clearly defined grievance, deeply felt by the great majority of the people; a public, whose sympathy can be obtained; a small area, in which practically all the people concerned exercise such resistance. Vague discontent, general dissatisfaction - these are not suitable for passive resistance.... In India, none of the conditions are present.1

Recalling her hopes for an Indo-British alliance she concluded: "India does not want any Revolution; it wants Freedom, won by constitutional means by co-operation with Great Britain, and not by antagonism to her".2 As a step toward diverting young Madrasis from these "revolutionary" paths and providing them with training in constitutional procedures, she established a mock "Madras Parliament" which held debates on bills for social and political reform.

In February Gokhale died. Despite the breakdown of negotiations with Tilak and Tilak's reiteration that if "we [the Extremists] join the Congress we shall do so

1. *New India*, 4 Jan 1915, p. 6b.
2. ibid., 5 Jan 1915, p. 6b.
for working out our programme by persuading the majority...to our side",¹ Gokhale had still hoped to resume these negotiations when Mehta's and Tilak's tempers cooled.² Gokhale's death removed a link between the two groups, but it also reduced the Bombay Moderates' power to resist Tilak's re-entry, since by his intellectual stature coupled with deference to Mehta, Gokhale had been a key figure, if an unwilling one, in stiffening the Moderates against Tilak's readmission.

In March Mrs Besant published a scheme for Indian self-government and urged Congress Committees to formulate schemes for discussion,³ her first attempt to apply her own suggestion that Congress should "formulate and proclaim the opinion of educated India on all urgent public matters". This was indeed an urgent matter. As Mrs Besant had pointed out in 1914, plans for the re-definition of the relationship of the self-governing Dominions to Britain were under discussion. The execution of these

¹. Tilak to Mrs Besant, 21 Jan 1915, forwarded to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers. Mrs Besant visited Tilak and Gokhale again in January, New India, 21 Jan 1915, p. 7a.

². Gokhale to Mrs Besant, 3 Feb 1915, Adyar Archives.

plans would be accelerated by the War, and unless India formulated and pressed her own plans she would be left behind. Mrs Besant called for "a full debate" so that "the wishes of the people of India might be finally laid down before the War came to a close".\footnote{New India, 13 Mar 1915, p. 14.}

Her 1915 scheme was similar to those which she had put forward before\footnote{e.g. "The Ideals of Theosophy", 1912, in Builder, pp. 292-5; Besant, United India, p. 31.} based on revived panchayats, local, village councils as the base of a pyramid of power. The panchayats were to be elected by universal franchise and would deal with local affairs. The panchayats, together with older villagers of a certain educational standard, would elect the taluq board, and so on to the provincial councils, which would elect the national Parliament. She saw that when Indian politicians "talk of 'democracy' they mean the rule of the educated class": she found this "a far more rational system of Government" than "counting heads, however empty".\footnote{Builder, p. 294.} Mrs Besant sought to give self-government an Indian form and not merely to imitate
British institutions, but in avoiding a national Parliament based on direct, universal franchise she was influenced by her British experience. As a Fabian she had taken over from Shaw a contempt for "one man, one vote", preferring some form of benevolent despotism. In her early Indian schemes the apex of her pyramid had been occupied by a "monarch" - a prince of the British Royal Family or, perhaps, even herself\(^1\) - but in her 1915 scheme the monarch was replaced by the indirectly-elected oligarchy of "educated men" comprising the national Parliament.

Among the Moderates Surendranath Banerjea agreed with Mrs Besant on the "necessity to formulate Indian ideas on self-government so as to have a scheme ready when the War was over",\(^2\) and the PCCs of Bengal, Madras and the UP authorised sub-committees to produce a scheme. The two major considerations weighing with the Moderates were Mrs Besant's insistence upon the need to agree on a scheme, and the effects of the War on British attitudes.

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1. see ibid.; Hindu, 2 July 1910, p. 4; editor of Justice [T. M. Nair], The Evolution of Mrs Besant, Being the Life and Public Activities of Mrs Annie Besant, p. 313; A. Besant and G. W. Leadbeater, Man: Whence, How and Whither, passim.

In November 1914, the Under Secretary of State for India, Charles Roberts, had told the House of Commons that the "partnership in spirit with us on the battle field could not but alter the angle from which henceforth we could regard problems of the government in India".  

Even the unsympathetic *Times* agreed that in future India should receive a "more ample place in the Councils of the Empire".  

In April 1915 Wedderburn advised the Moderates in charge of Congress that these assurances rightly express the feelings of the British people, who..., at the conclusion of the war, will be prepared to give effect to India's legitimate aspirations....What is now wanted is to come to an agreement on a scheme of reforms...[W]ithout delay, the Congress authorities should take counsel among themselves and...draw up a careful note of suggestions.

In order, however, that the suggestions might be "within the scope of practical politics, as understood in" Britain, he urged that they should be approved in principle by the British and Indian Governments before being urged upon the British Government in private by "an accredited representative" of Congress, following the

2. quoted in *ibid.*, 11 Oct 1914, p. 323.
example of Gokhale at the time of the Morley-Minto Reforms.¹

The notion that the Indian national movement should agree upon a scheme of reform was being generally accepted and Mrs Besant was on common ground with the Moderates. While urging the Moderates forward she was careful not to emphasise the differences between her attitude to the reforms and theirs. For example, in May she urged the Madras Provincial Conference to accept the principle of self-government and to "leave details aside for the moment".² At the same time it was evident that she envisaged far more rapid progress toward self-government than did Wedderburn and the Bombay Moderates. As President of the UP Provincial Conference in April she put forward her pyramidal scheme of self-government but now proposed that provincial autonomy should be introduced at the end of the War.³ This she said was only "a step" toward self-government,⁴ but it was a very substantial one. From

1. ibid.

2. see New India, 6 May 1915, p. 12.

3. Presidential Address, UP Provincial Conference, 2 April 1915, reprinted as The Political Outlook ("New India" Political Pamphlet No. 2), p. 34; see Mahratta, 4 Apr 1915, p. 114.

this time she placed less emphasis on her pyramidal system of election, and more on the powers to be granted to the national Parliament.

V

April - September 1915.

Mrs Besant did not desire merely the formulation of a scheme; nor did she believe that its presentation to the Government by Moderate methods of consultation alone would ensure success. She wanted to popularise the scheme which was agreed upon and to bring it "to the front" by demonstrating to the British that all India was behind it. This she felt would make its implementation by the British certain. "British politicians", she wrote in July, "...judge the value of claims by the energy of those who put them forward, and if they see that India is indifferent as to the solution of these problems they will leave her out of account".¹ Surendranath Banerjea had agreed, she claimed, that "the demand [for self-government] must come not only from the 'insignificant minority' but from the masses" and that to this end

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¹ New India, 19 July 1915, p. 10b.
Congress Committees should undertake propaganda "so that the people should understand that their education, their economic position and their prosperity depend on the establishment of Self-Government".\(^1\)

The British provided Mrs Besant at this time with an excellent opportunity to persuade Moderates and Extremists of the desirability of agitation. Congressmen of the UP, as well as other provinces, had repeatedly demanded an Executive Council, containing at least one Indian member, to advise the Lieutenant-Governor of that province.\(^2\) Lord Hardinge's Government endorsed this demand, and to satisfy it the British Government produced a proclamation, only to have it rejected in March 1915 by the House of Lords, Curzon again at its head.\(^3\) In her Presidential Address to the UP Provincial Conference Mrs Besant kindled Indian resentment against the Lords for "flouting their special object of hatred, the educated Indian",\(^4\) and deduced the moral: Indians

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1. New India, 8 Apr 1915, p. 9b.
2. see e.g. resolutions of 1908, 1909, 1911 Congresses in Chakrabarty and Bhattacharyya, Congress in Evolution, pp. 12, 14; Home Public A, Apr 1915, nos 206-220.
4. Besant, Political Outlook, p. 10.
must agitate until the Council was granted. The British, she pointed out, had denied to India the first concession suggested since the start of the War. Statements about the "changed angle of vision" would be reduced to so many empty words unless India kept Britain up to the mark.¹

The national politicians of the UP were united in condemning the decision of the Lords, and they formed a League, with the Raja of Mahmudabad as Chairman, to organise meetings and otherwise raise a demand for its revision.² India "is organising herself to win her Freedom", exclaimed Mrs Besant. "A Nation is fit for Freedom when she is determined to have it", and the UP Governor-in-Council League was the sign of India's fitness for freedom.³ The UP agitation was echoed in other provinces: the Madras Provincial Conference in May, for example, urged the Viceroy to declare that the "small body of peers in London...are not fit to reject the prayer" for an Executive Council.⁴ Mrs Besant wrote:

2. *see Home Public A*, July 1915, nos 75-9, especially pp. 9-12.
"If only some other questions would arise in the other Provinces which would scourge them into action fresh life would pour through the Nation".¹

From this time Mrs Besant's utterances became increasingly sharp, as she brought forward a number of issues to "scourge" India to action. In July and August, she returned to her major theme of India's place in the Empire at the end of the War. The Government had asked for the suspension of discussion during the War of controversial matters, which were held to include the re-examination of India's place in the Empire. Was it reasonable, asked Mrs Besant, to expect Indians to stop discussing this question when the Colonial Secretary was promising that the "white" Dominions would share in governing the Empire after the War, while the Secretary of State for India remained conspicuously silent?² Through her newspapers and by organising public meetings she sided with the students of Madras and their parents, who were aghast at the failure rate of 74 per cent in the University examinations.³ Learning that the Report of

¹. ibid., 1 June 1915, p. 8a; cf. ibid., 26 Apr 1915, p.8.
the Royal Commission enquiring into the Indian Public Services was about to be signed in London and that it was likely to be "unsatisfactory", Mrs Besant warned the Government not to publish it and urged Indians, in case it did, to criticise it "frankly, boldly and sharply". Similarly she took the lead in denouncing the use of the Press Act by the Governments of the Punjab and the UP; and she castigated Austen Chamberlain, the newly-appointed Secretary of State, whom she called "fatuous", for his "ignorance of India's needs" and for rushing through Parliament a contentious Bill relating to the Indian Civil Service.

At this time Tilak was trying to infuse life into Maharashtrian national politics. The Satara Conference of 1914 had broken the drought in political activity, but Tilak was under pressure to provide his more excitable followers with further outlets for their zeal. At the end of 1914 he wrote to G. S. Khaparde (1854-1938), his great friend and leading co-worker in Berar, suggesting

2. ibid., 14 Aug 1915, p. 10c.
they hold

a small Nationalist [i.e. Extremist] Conference at Poona...and establish a Central Nationalist Association of our own, to strengthen our party and facilitate work in the future. The holding of such a Conference...may satisfy the desire for display of the miner [sic] members, who seem to be anxious for such a thing.¹

The idea of a Nationalist Association was put to one side, but in May 1915, the Extremists held a "Bombay Provincial Conference" at Poona (like that at Satara in 1914, unauthorised by the Bombay PCC) and a "District Conference" in Bombay City a few days later.²

Hoping to convince most Moderates (if not the handful of leaders in Bombay) of his reasonableness and his suitability for readmission to Congress, Tilak went out of his way to ensure that these Conferences were conciliatory in tone. He diverted his more sharp-tongued supporters, Khadilkar and S. M. Paranjpe, from the Subjects Committee of the "Provincial Conference" by deputing the administrative arrangements for the Conference to them and, with Kelkar, he persuaded the Subjects

¹. Tilak to G. S. Khaparde, 7 Dec 1914, Khaparde Papers.
². [Report of so-called] 17th Provincial Conference, Poona, 8 to 10 May 1915; Bombay Police 1915, pars 434, 568(a) (b).
Committee to withdraw a resolution asserting India's right to Home Rule, lest it be used by the Bombay leaders to frighten the more cautious Moderates. As President of the "District Conference", Kelkar stated that "the statesmanlike and conciliatory policy of the Government as symbolised by the abrogation of the Partition [of Bengal] has cast the doctrine of Boycott into the limbo of oblivion".

Nevertheless the more perceptive Moderates of Bombay Presidency saw that the Extremists' activities threatened to undermine the authority held by the Bombay PCC. In preparing for their Conferences, the Extremists had held meetings throughout the Marathi- and Kanarese-speaking areas and in parts of Gujarat and by their restraint had won support from many who were counted as Moderates.

The "Provincial Conference" sanctioned a "paid agency... to enlighten the villagers regarding the objects and the work of the Congress": this "agency" might prove to be a

1. Bombay Police 1915, pars 568(a) (b); Amrita Bazar Patrika, 14 May 1915, in Bengal NP, p. 1095; Mahratta, 23 May 1915, p. 168.
4. ibid., par. 568(b).
parallel organisation replacing Congress. The members of the Servants of India Society, who had hitherto carried out the organisational functions of Congress, were particularly impressed with the danger, and persuaded Pherozeshah Mehta to allow the PCC to authorise a Provincial Conference. He did so reluctantly on condition that, in view of the War,

all political controversies will be hushed and the Conference will deem its greatest function to proclaim solemnly and emphatically the loyalty...of our Province to the British Crown.1

Members of the Servants of India Society and other Moderates set up DCCs and Taluq Committees and revived those that were defunct in preparation for the Conference, which was held at Poona in July.2 The DCCs, however, remained merely formal organisations through which the Moderates might control the election of delegates. By contrast with the Extremist "Provincial Conference" which had preceded it by two months, the authorised Conference seemed a "milk and water business" to many of the mofussil Moderates and younger men from Bombay who

1. P. M. Mehta to H. N. Apte, Chairman of Reception Committee, 15th Provincial Conference, 8 July 1915, Mehta Papers.

2. Bombay Police 1915, pars 504, 570(a) (b), 621(a), 647, 677, 704.
attended it.¹ "This", they said, echoing Mrs Besant, was the time "to make some definite political demands, when there was a good chance of their being listened to with greater respect than later on". Mehta was too sick to attend but through his lieutenants vetoed resolutions for the readmission of the Extremists. Some of the delegates threatened to defy this,² but there was a feeling "that among the younger generation there is none capable of tackling [such] an experienced dialectician as Sir P. Mehta", though "Mrs Besant may be able to do it".³

On the day the Conference opened Mrs Besant called the Congress officials to "bestir themselves": they should convene the Constitutional Committee set up by the Madras Congress to consider the readmission of the Extremists; and they should set to work on formulating reform schemes. If they did not,

then [she wrote] it will be well for some of the younger people to take action....It has always been the custom in England to supplement the older bodies with new organisations for particular purposes. The

1. ibid., par. 705(a).
2. ibid., par. 677.
3. ibid., par. 705(a).
Reform Club becoming somewhat too ponderous and inactive, the National Liberal Club was founded by the younger and more vigorous workers...; then Leagues have been formed for special items of the general programme, and thus, without any cleavage or lack of cordial co-operation with the elders, the energies of the younger generation have been utilised for the more rapid progress of the country.¹

The Bombay Moderate Conference convinced her that the Bombay leaders did not mean to move² and she set about forming her own organisation, the Home Rule League. Through the League she planned to utilise the energies of the young men, who were dissatisfied with the Congress, in publicising her reform scheme and in rousing agitation in India to bring the demand for reform before the British. She would be able to direct the movement more effectively through a League founded by herself. Furthermore the League would serve as an instrument to spur and coerce the Bombay leaders: if they would not allow her to rouse agitation through the Congress, she would do so outside.

As her ultimate goal was to gain control of Congress, it was necessary to avoid breaking with Moderate leaders and to win the approval of as many Moderates as possible

¹. *New India*, 10 July 1915, p. 10a-b.
². see e.g. ibid., 28 July 1915, p. 9a.
for the League. She had already won the Madras Moderates to her side on the question of readmitting Tilak and the desirability of reviving the Congress, a task which had been facilitated by the fact that several leading Madras Moderates, in addition to Sir Subramania Aiyer, were Theosophists, notably L. A. Govindaraghava Aiyar, Vice-President of the Mahajana Sabha and President of the Madras PCC. In July the Madras Moderates co-opted her onto the Madras PCC, while in private conversations Subramania Aiyer accepted the position of President for India of the proposed Home Rule League. Her meeting in March with Surendranath Banerjea led her to believe that she could rely on his support for the League and in September she sought the approval of the Bombay Moderates. Mehta refused to see her on the grounds of his ill-health, and his lieutenants Wacha and Samarth were unenthusiastic, though she skilfully avoided giving them the opportunity to oppose her point blank. Of the other members of Mehta's circle, some recognised that the scheme

1. born in 1867, lawyer, was elected member of Madras Legislative Council.

2. the remainder of this paragraph is based on Jamnadas, "Memoire", pp. 120-6; New India, 17 Sept 1915, p. 8d; 25 Sept 1915, p. 10a-b; 28 Sept 1915, p. 9a; 29 Sept 1915, p. 9a; Mahratta, 26 Sept 1915, p. 317; Bombay Police 1915, par. 1082.
would be attractive to the younger men and hesitated to oppose it outright, while Jinnah was enthusiastic, though he kept this private for fear of angering Mehta. Mrs Besant's major coup consisted however in obtaining Dadabhai Naoroji's support for the League: he approved of the way Mrs Besant proposed to claim self-government as a right. "England", he said, "understands plain speaking, and does not resent it....Take it for granted that England will do justice, when she understands".

On 25 September Mrs Besant announced the decision to establish the Home Rule League, which would comprise two Divisions, one in India, the other in England. The Indian Division was to "educate the people", to "popularise" the reform scheme which Mrs Besant hoped would be agreed upon at the 1915 Congress Session and to "give to the demand ...for Self-Government...the strength of a Nation which has realised itself". The English Division would "educate the English Democracy", both Parliament and the "masses, in whose hands power lies", bringing to their notice

1. e.g. Chimanlal Setalvad.


3. ibid., p. 11; see "The HRL", in "Formation of HRL" file, Adyar Archives.
India's demand for self-government.

This announcement marked a turning point in the history of the national movement. First, with regard to the goal of the movement, the announcement implied the adoption of much more rapid progress to self-government than had been envisaged hitherto: "Home Rule for India" would be the League's "only object".¹ The goal of Home Rule had the virtue of simplicity, which would make it a good rallying cry. But in its forthrightness and simplicity lay the danger that it would arouse large expectations among the younger and more impetuous men, who would object should Mrs Besant find it desirable to accept less than full Home Rule. Secondly, in rousing agitation to support the demand for reforms Mrs Besant proposed to appeal to Indian "alarm" at "the growing poverty of the masses, the decay of industries, and the increasing burden of debt", which she traced to the unequal relationship between India and Britain. During her visit to Bombay in September she accused Britain of responsibility for India's increasing poverty.² Thus

1. she had put forward a similar demand in August and September, see New India, 17 Aug 1915, p. 8b; Mahratta, 12 Sept 1915, p. 310.

she was passing from the mere "popularisation" of a reform scheme, to the rousing of Indian animosity toward Britain.

Mrs Besant strove nevertheless to reassure more cautious Congressmen and to deflect the Bombay Moderates' opposition to the League: it would supplement Congress, she assured them, not supplant it; also she would devise its organisation in consultation with Congressmen. By these means she won a broad consensus of support; on the other hand, by trying to please everyone she was restricting her own freedom to organise and to plan her strategies.

Tilak had also been considering the setting up of a separate organisation, which he had probably discussed with Mrs Besant when she came to Poona at the end of 1914. After the "Mehta party" frustrated his re-entry into Congress, he threatened to set up a "separate League", \(^1\) and in May the President of the Extremist "Bombay Provincial Conference" suggested the institution of a Home Rule League to "formulate a reasoned Home Rule Scheme suitable for India". \(^2\) In August and September

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1. *Mahratta*, 14 Feb 1915, p. 56; cf. his letter to Khaparde, 7 Dec 1914, quoted on p.120 above.

followers of Tilak in Bombay City and mofussil towns established Nationalist Associations to work for colonial self-government (echoing the 1908 Congress Constitution) by means of public meetings, lectures and pamphlets.¹ The Associations actually carried out few of these activities: they were significant rather in demonstrating the strength of the desire for rapprochement with the Congress among those of Tilak's followers who joined them, and as portents of his later Home Rule League. Almost the only function performed by these Associations was to gather and publish suggestions for rapprochement between Extremists and Moderates, by which means the Extremists hoped to convince Moderates of their reasonableness.²

Tilak was impressed by Mrs Besant's outspoken criticism of the Government, by her call for more rapid progress to self-government³ and her efforts to "scourge" Indian nationalists to action. In his papers and his few public speeches he echoed her arguments⁴ and foreshadowed the demand for Home Rule: "Make a single demand which will

2. see ibid., par. 1083; Mahratta, 10 Oct 1915, p. 336.
3. see e.g. comments on her UP Provincial Conference speech, Mahratta, 4 Apr 1915, p. 114.
4. see e.g. ibid., 22 Aug 1915, p. 277.
include all things", he urged an audience at the time of the Extremist "Provincial Conference". "We must demand from the Government that the key of the administration should be placed in our hands at least partly,..."\(^1\)

He met Mrs Besant on her visit to Bombay in September and they decided to set up separate Home Rule Leagues, Tilak's in Maharashtra, Mrs Besant's to cover the rest of India.\(^2\)

They both wished to avoid provoking the outright opposition of the Bombay Moderate leaders, however, and to deprive them of any opportunity to stir up the opposition of other Moderates by arguing that Mrs Besant and Tilak were trying to wreck Congress by setting up a rival to it. They therefore called a Conference to consider the formation of the Home Rule League [hereafter "HRL"] at the time of the 1915 Congress Session in Bombay and invited the leading members of the Congress and Muslim League to take part.

VI

October - December 1915.

Between October and December Mrs Besant visited

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2. ibid., par. 963; Jamnadas, "Memoire", p. 133; New India, 15 Sept 1915, p. 7d; JSC on G of I Bill, p. 82, Q 1439.
Calcutta, Bihar, the UP, CP, Bombay and Madras, soliciting the support of the leading Congressmen for her proposed League, and discussing its organisation with them.\(^1\) She addressed large public meetings, urging the need for a reform scheme and agitation in favour of it, but her main work was done at private meetings, where she met both leading national politicians and members of the rank-and-file, outlining her plans and collecting signatures on an Invitation to the Bombay Conference "to decide on the establishment" of the League.\(^2\) She also won the support of Muslim politicians both in the UP and Bihar, notably Mazharul Haque.\(^3\) Her conciliatoriness toward the Moderate leaders was rewarded by promises of support from several of them. Banerjea for example agreed that

The Congress is a deliberative rather than an executive body. It formulates [the] National demand, but it has hardly an organisation to inaugurate the measures. To carry on them, a separate organisation, devoted to one object...would be far more effective...\(^4\)

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4. Bengalee, quoted in New India, 9 Oct 1915, p. 10d; see Bangali in Bengal NP, 1915, pp. 806, 989.
And in the UP she was supported by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.\(^1\) Born in 1861, educationist, editor, orthodox Hindu and champion of the rights of the UP Hindu community, Malaviya had been an active member of Congress since its second year.\(^2\) Inclined to caution, he had joined the Moderate Convention in 1908, but was to join both Mrs Besant's and Gandhi's movements — rather out of a desire to restrain them than out of sympathy with their more aggressive aspects.

The foundation of the League was opposed only by the Bombay Moderate leaders and the Servants of India Society. Mehta still refused to see Mrs Besant, and his lieutenant N. M. Samarth\(^3\) criticised her bitterly, while Wacha tried to persuade Dadabhai Naoroji to withdraw his support for the League.\(^4\) Srinivasa Sastri, who had taken Gokhale's place as First Member of the Servants of India Society, approved heartily of the idea of a propaganda organisation but was averse to it being in any way separate from Congress

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1. see C. Y. Chintamani to Mrs Besant, 13 Dec 1915 [telegram], Adyar Archives.

2. see The Indian Nation Builders, I, 143-58.

3. a Hindu lawyer, Secretary of the Bombay Presidency Association since 1908.

which he feared would thus be overshadowed: the Congress
leaders, he urged, should themselves establish the League.¹

The younger men, needless to say, were attracted
by Mrs Besant's promise of activity. Outstanding among
them was Jamnadas Dwarkadas of Bombay, a Theosophist,
who was 25 in 1915. After graduating from Bombay Univer-
sity in 1912, he had lectured to the undergraduates of
Elphinstone College on French literature before turning
to business, the traditional occupation of his Bhatia
family. His nationalism had been stirred by Tilak's
trial and Gandhi's exploits in South Africa and now by
Mrs Besant's writings and speeches; by July 1915 he had
made sufficient money from trade in dyes to offer his
services to Mrs Besant.² Her speeches in Bombay in
September excited the admiration of other young men of
Bombay, who joined with Jamnadas in preparing for the
Conference to discuss the formation of the HRL. Several
of the more enthusiastic joined him in launching a weekly,
English-language paper, Young India, which they put at
Mrs Besant's service.³ Of Jamnadas' co-workers the most

1. see New India, 24 Dec 1915, p. 6a-b; Sastri "Diary",
2, 18 and 24 Dec 1915.

2. these details and those following are from his

3. ibid., pp. 123-32; K. M. Munshi, Autobiography [in
Gujarati, translated for the writer by the author]; Home
Poll Dep. Dec 1915, no. 26, 'Bombay'.

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outstanding were the Gujaratis, Indulal Yajnik, K. M. Munshi and Shankarlal Banker. They typified, if in heightened degree, the enthusiastic response to Mrs Besant of educated young Indians whose patriotism had been aroused. Yajnik was an admirer of Gandhi's passive resistance and had dedicated himself to national and social service by joining the Servants of India Society. Munshi's patriotism had been stirred by Aurobindo at the Baroda College: he was now a rising lawyer in Bombay and the centre of a coterie of Gujarati writers. Unlike the others, Shankarlal Banker was not a writer but, being the son of a wealthy man, contributed financially to *Young India*.

He was anxious to serve his poorer fellow-countrymen and had joined the Depressed Classes Mission where he had begun to demonstrate the flair for organisation which he later applied to the national movement under Mrs Besant and Gandhi.

Whilst Mrs Besant sought the support of older, better-known politicians, it was throughout India the younger men, who had not yet played a prominent role in the national movement and now saw the chance to do so,

who turned to her most enthusiastically and threw themselves into winning support for the Home Rule Conference. In many areas the key figure was a Theosophist, like Jamnadas Dwarkadas in Bombay, Purnendu Narayan Sinha in Patna, Gokaran Nath Misra in Lucknow, Hirendranath Datta in Calcutta and Durgdas Adwani in Karachi;¹ but they drew around them many others who were not Theosophists, like Yajnik, Munshi and Banker in Bombay and Jawaharlal Nehru in Allahabad.² Whatever the older politicians might say to her plans at the Home Rule Conference, the support of the younger generation was assured.

Mrs Besant's proposals for agitation startled the Governments, particularly that of Madras which was worried by her increasingly sharp criticisms and by her argument that India's decline was due to British rule. The Madras Government therefore proposed to deport her.³ Opinion in the Viceroy's Executive Council was divided, several

¹. see e.g. letters and telegrams to Mrs Besant from Jamnadas Dwarkadas, 24 and 29 Nov 1915; Gokaran Nath Misra 15 Dec 1915; A. Rangaswami Ayar (Madura), 18 Dec 1915; P. N. Sinha, 19 Dec 1915; Durgdas Adwani, 17 Dec 1915; Jethmal Parsram (Hyderabad, Sind), 6 Dec 1915, Adyar Archives.

². see e.g. letters and telegrams to Mrs Besant from N. P. Nigam (Kanpur), 20 Dec 1915; C. Y. Chintamani (Allahabad), 13 Dec 1915, ibid.

members warning that if she were deported to England, she would rouse agitation there which would come echoing back.¹

The argument that carried the day was Craddock's: he could not believe that "Indian politicians will much relish being tied to the apron strings of an elderly European lady", and the Government of India vetoed deportation on the ground that Congress and the Muslim League were unlikely to authorise her HRL.² They knew that Wedderburn had fortified the Bombay Moderates' opposition to Mrs Besant by rejecting her invitation to preside over the English Division of her League and by arguing in a published Note that "public action", agitation and even public debate were "inexpedient" during the War.³ "The Congress was invited to Bombay to checkmate her [Mrs Besant]", an Indian member of the Viceroy's Council told his colleagues, "and, if Sir Pherozeshah is able to guide the Congress it will


dissociate itself finally from her. Sir S. P. Sinha who is elected President, is likely to do the same".  

The Bombay Moderates received a stunning blow in November, however, from the death of Mehta. Not only were they deprived of his guidance and heartbroken (particularly in Wacha's case) by his loss, but any threat to walk out as a means of dissuading Congress from reaching unwelcome decisions would carry less weight without him.

Nevertheless they succeeded in thwarting Mrs Besant's plan to found the League at the time of the Congress. Mrs Besant and Tilak had originally planned that Extremists, as well as Moderates and members of the Muslim League, should attend the Home Rule Conference on December 25 and 27; but, as a further concession to the Moderate leaders and assurance to the Moderate rank-and-file, they agreed — despite Extremist protests — that

1. born 1863, joined Lincoln's Inn 1881, called to the Bar 1886; Advocate-General of Bengal 1906; Law Member, Viceroy's Executive Council 1909; 1917, Under-Secretary of State for India, raised to the peerage; was relatively inactive member of Congress.

2. Minute by Sir C. Sankaran Nair, 4 Nov 1915; for Mehta's choice of Sinha, see Mody, Mehta, II, 657.

3. see Khaparde "Diary" (Poona), 13 Oct 1915.
only members of Congress and the Muslim League should attend it. Mrs Besant promised that she would not launch the League unless "great majorities" of the Congress and Muslim League approved of it, though she hinted that she was prepared to ignore "a reactionary minority within the Congress", meaning no doubt the "Mehta party". As a further gesture to Moderates from outside Bombay, she invited Banerjea to chair the Conference. Imagine then her chagrin on finding that the Bombay Moderates and Sastri had persuaded Banerjea and Malaviya to urge that the question of founding the League be handed over to Congress. Wacha and Sastri doubtless appealed to the concern of Banerjea and Malaviya to preserve Congress from the threat of its proposed rival, and to their jealousy of Mrs Besant and her rising influence. Mrs Besant insisted that the Conference meet again to reach


3. ibid., 27 Dec 1915, pp. 8c, 11a-b.
a final decision on December 29, after the Congress Session but before the delegates dispersed.¹ On December 28, however, the Congress Subjects Committee authorised the AICC to "frame...a programme of continuous work, educative and propagandist" in support of a scheme of reform,² thereby acknowledging - however vaguely - the desirability of agitation. The AICC in turn authorised the PCCs to "carry out educative and propagandist work".³ Mrs Besant accepted this limited victory with grace: "exactly the proposal made by me for the Home Rule League, taken up by the AICC", she claimed, and at the meeting on the 29th, despite the presence of a majority in favour of founding the League, she avoided a clash with her Moderate opponents by suspending its formation.⁴ She recognised however that the Bombay Moderates had accepted the Congress Resolution for "continuous work" in the hope of shelving it, and warned that if the AICC did not

1. ibid., 29 Dec 1915, p. 11a-b.
2. Resolution XIX, Congress 1915, Report, pp. f and g.
3. Resolution 6, AICC Minutes, 30 Dec 1915. N. M. Samarth opposed even this much.
undertake such work when a scheme of reforms had been agreed upon she would launch the League. ¹

The acceptance of the principle of agitation by the Subjects Committee was due in part to the "Mehta party's" wish to remove the raison d'être of Mrs Besant's proposed League. But equally important was the increasing belief, except among the Bombay leaders, in the desirability of such agitation and the general feeling that a more active policy was required. Banerjea and Sastri had been convinced by Mrs Besant of the need for agitation; the Madras Moderates demonstrated their approval of her by electing her to the AICC in December 1915; and she was supported by many of the members of the Subjects Committee from the UP, Bihar, CP and Berar, and Bengal. Finally, the young men and the mofussil Moderates of Bombay Presidency who had chafed under the dominance of the Bombay leaders during Mehta's lifetime now revolted. Some of Mehta's less obscurantist followers - notably Jinnah² - had invited Jamnadas Dwarkadas and the other young men to join the Bombay Presidency Association, partly out of sympathy with their youthful enthusiasm,

¹ New India, 1 Jan 1916, p. 11a-b; 3 Jan 1916, p. 11b-d; 6 Jan 1916, p. 10c-d.

partly, no doubt, to keep them in check, and the Presidency Association elected these young men as delegates to the 1915 Congress.¹ Many mofussil Moderates were angered by the high-handed way in which the Bombay PCC had debarred delegates (some of them Extremists) elected at public meetings held by DCCs,² In addition from Sind (which was part of Bombay Presidency) came a strong contingent of delegates who favoured a more active programme than that envisaged by the Bombay Moderates.³ Thus, when Samarth on behalf of the "Mehta party" tried to impose a list of names on the meeting held by the Bombay delegates to elect their 25 members for the Subjects Committee, these groups shouted him down and replaced 10 of his nominees with men of their own choosing. Had they been better organised, their revolt might have been even more successful.⁴ The Subjects Committee,

2. under Art. XX of the Constitution as amended at the 1912 Session; see Bombay Police 1916, par. 39(i).
wrote Mrs Besant, was "far more representative of forward opinion than might have been expected".\(^1\)

As a further result of this representation of "forward opinion" in the Subjects Committee, Mrs Besant won a limited victory on the question of a reform scheme and the speed at which India might progress to self-government. Banerjea in Bengal and Mrs Besant in Madras had produced schemes demanding provincial autonomy and the power of the purse for fully- or partly-elected legislatures.\(^2\) Banerjea's scheme was not presented in the Subjects Committee. Mrs Besant's scheme was presented but was ruled out of order by the President, S. P. Sinha, on the ground that in proposing rapid advance to self-government it contravened the 1908 Congress Constitution, which prescribed "a steady reform of the existing system of administration".\(^3\) Sinha himself put forward a scheme with the warning that the path to self-government "is long and devious....The end will not come by impatience"


2. for Banerjea's scheme, see J. H. Broomfield, op. cit., p. 125.

and that "no true friend of India" - he did not mention Mrs Besant by name - "will place the ideal of Self-Government before us without this necessary qualification". In response to Mrs Besant's opposition to Sinha's scheme, the Subjects Committee decided to refer the matter to the AICC for consideration, in consultation with the Muslim League, before September 1. With the help of the more "forward" members of the Committee, Mrs Besant fought the wording of the Committee's instructions to the AICC phrase by phrase and in their final form they directed the AICC to demand popular control over the executive, which had been the distinctive feature of Mrs Besant's scheme. "...the time has arrived", said the instructions,

to introduce further and substantial measures of reform...amongst others,...
(a) The introduction of Provincial Autonomy including financial independence;
(b) Expansion and reform of the Legislative Councils so as to make them truly...representative of all sections of the people and to give them an effective control over the acts of the Executive Government;...3


Finally, Mrs Besant now succeeded in having Tilak readmitted to Congress. She had refused to allow the Constitutional Committee appointed at the 1914 Congress to be forgotten;\(^1\) thanks largely to her it met when its members were gathered for the 1915 Congress. By avoiding controversy with the Moderates, Tilak had reassured many of them, as had been demonstrated in November in CP and Berar where, for the first time since Surat, the Moderates and Extremists joined to hold the Provincial Conference.\(^2\) Before Mehta's death it was clear that a majority of the members of the Constitutional Committee was in favour of readmission, but hesitated to press for it in the face of opposition from Bombay.\(^3\) Mehta's death in November weakened this opposition, and Mrs Besant and the Deccan Extremists pressed their advantage: during her tour gathering support for the HRL, she urged readmission, while in December Kelkar toured central and northern India assuring Moderates that the Extremists did

1. see e.g. *New India*, 10 July 1915, p. 10a.


3. Home Poll B, Aug 1915, nos 552-6, w.e. 31 Aug 1915.
not contemplate advocating boycott or passive resistance.\textsuperscript{1} When the Constitutional Committee met, the Bombay Moderates, finding themselves hard pressed, retreated. They surrendered their ground stubbornly, however, and the Committee recommended only that the AICC allow the right of electing Congress delegates to public meetings convened by associations of two years' standing, which applied to Congress for recognition, each association to elect no more than 15 delegates.\textsuperscript{2} This fell far short of Tilak's demand that the right of electing delegates in unlimited numbers be granted to any public meeting or at least to any association. No doubt the Bombay Moderates hoped by this grudging concession to force him to reject it.

Tilak's first reaction was, indeed, to declare that Congress had not opened the door to the Extremists.\textsuperscript{3} He said this, at least partly, with an eye to his more fiery lieutenants: at a meeting of his co-workers on 16 January 1916, S. M. Paranjpe, Khadilkar and others opposed

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} Bombay Police 1915, par. 1257; New India 15 Dec 1915, p. 18b; Khaparde "Diary" (Bombay), 12 and 13 Oct 1915.
\item \textsuperscript{2} Bombay Police 1916, par. 39(j); New India, 28 Dec 1915, p. 10c-d; AICC Minutes, 26 Dec 1915.
\item \textsuperscript{3} Home Poll B, Jan 1916, nos 541-4, p. 24.
\end{itemize}
re-entering Congress while each Extremist association was limited to 15 delegates, and the meeting resolved that the Congress offer was "highly unsatisfactory".\(^1\) Tilak however was anxious to re-enter Congress, in anticipation of thereby shielding himself from the attentions of the British and of being able to win a majority in Congress by appealing to the "vague but honest patriotism" of the majority of Congressmen.\(^2\) Mrs Besant would be his ally in achieving this goal: she clearly preferred his friendship and co-operation to his enmity and was pressing him to accept the Congress offer. "In India", she urged, "we should all present a united front".\(^3\) But he hesitated to give a firm lead on this question since, by their denunciations of the Moderates' offer, Paranjpe and Khadilkar might well rouse the indignation of his other lieutenants and the Extremist rank-and-file against him if he should accept it.

The final decision was to be reached at the

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1. *Bombay Police 1916*, pars 103(a), 123(b).
2. see ibid., pars 66(a), 103(a), 530(c); Deshpande, *Autobiography*, p. 256.
Extremists' 1916 "Bombay Provincial Conference" at Belgaum in April; meanwhile Tilak strove (with Kelkar) to convince a majority of his followers that they should accept the Congress offer. Kelkar resuscitated the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha to provide a convenient electoral association, and, to ensure the support of the Extremists from CP and Berar, Tilak invited Khaparde to preside. After a tussle between Tilak's more fiery lieutenants and those who approved of re-entry, the Conference Subjects Committee sent to the plenary session a resolution that "under the present circumstances" the Congress offer should be accepted. Paranjpe threatened to oppose this in the open session but Tilak, judging correctly that Paranjpe would not oppose him directly, threw his weight behind the resolution, which was passed. Tilak and his followers would thus attend the Congress at Lucknow at the end of 1916.

The Bombay Congress Session at the end of 1915


foreshadowed significant developments in the programme, organisation and leadership of the national movement. The victories which Mrs Besant won were not clear-cut but they signalled a shift in the balance of forces in her favour. Her plans for a separate organisation under her own control to rouse agitation had been thwarted — for the time being — but the desirability of agitation had been accepted by Congress itself. When the time came for her to set up such an agitational organisation she could claim Congress authority for it. The older Congressmen were plainly jealous of her, but she had avoided an open break with them and could continue to seek the leadership of Congress. Her scheme for self-government had not been accepted but the principle underlying it — the demand for the control of the internal government of India — had. Finally, while the doors of Congress had not been thrown open to the Extremists, they had been opened sufficiently wide for the Extremists to come in and link hands with the impetuous young men, who were already members, under the joint leadership of Mrs Besant and Tilak. From its ensuing Lucknow Session, Congress would "present a united front",¹ to which

¹. New India, 28 Dec 1915, p. 10c-d.
(so Mrs Besant hoped) the Extremists and young men would impart greater vigour but in which they would be restrained by the Moderates.

While these developments were taking place within Congress, equally important ones were occurring in the relationship between it and the Muslim League.
Mrs Besant obtains Dadabhai Naoroji's support for the Home Rule League, 12 September 1915.

The adults are, from left to right:

Ratansi Morarji (later Bombay Provincial Secretary of HRL),
Dr V. S. Trilokekar (First President, Bombay Branch, HRL),
Jamnadas Dwarkadas (Mrs Besant's principal lieutenant in Bombay),
Mrs Annie Besant,
Dadabhai Naoroji,
Narotam Morarji (Secretary, Reception Committee, Inaugural Meeting, HRL, 25 December 1915),
A relative of Dadabhai Naoroji.

(Photograph by courtesy of Jamnadas Dwarkadas)
Chapter III

THE CONGRESS/MUSLIM LEAGUE RAPPROCHEMENT

I

January 1914 - December 1915.

Up to 1914 moves for rapprochement between Congress and the Muslim League had come from Gokhale on the one side and from the "nationalists" and Pan-Islamists on the other. During 1914 there was a lull since Gokhale was in England, as were Jinnah and other leading "nationalist" Muslims: Jinnah and Mazharul Haque were members of the Congress deputation on the Secretary of State's Council. In the Muslim League the "conservatives" prevailed and, as a token of loyalty to the Government following the outbreak of War, they prevented the League from meeting in 1914.

The Pan-Islamists continued to stir up anti-British feeling, chiefly over the approach of war between Britain and Turkey and its outbreak in November.1 In their

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1. also e.g. over the demolition of semi-derelict mosques for extensions to the Kidderpore Docks near Calcutta, see Home Poll B, May 1914, nos 137-40, pp. 4, 12; Bengal NP, 1915, p. 603.
newspapers Mohamed Ali and Azad wrote as openly as they dared in favour of the Turks. "At last God is going to avenge her [Turkey] on the Christian powers", wrote Mohamed Ali,¹ and his Urdu paper, Hamdard, published correspondence between his spiritual preceptor, Abdul Bari, and another alim,² suggesting that Turkey was fighting a jihad or holy war.³ Early in 1915 the Ali Brothers and Azad joined local Pan-Islamic leaders in the Punjab where they urged students to cross into tribal areas and incite Muslims to attack the British.⁴ The Punjab Government was the first to act: it interned the leading Punjabi Pan-Islamists in October 1914 and pressed the Government of India to pass the Defence of India Act under which persons hampering the War effort could be interned without trial. In 1915 the Ali Brothers and


2. one specially trained in Islamic religion and law, regarded by Muslims as an authority on these matters.


4. Home Poll B, April 1915, nos 416-19, w.e. 6 Apr 1915; cf. C. Khaliquzzaman, Pathway to Pakistan, pp. 30-31. For their attacks on the Government at the Muhammadan Educational Conference, Rawalpindi, Dec 1914, see Home Poll B, Jan 1915, nos 278-82.
Azad were interned under this Act.¹

This display of determination by the Government cowed the remaining Pan-Islamists, and emphasis in Muslim politics shifted back from the rousing of widespread agitation over the international affairs of the Khilafat to the ordering of the Muslims' relations with their co-inhabitants of India.

In April 1915 Jinnah persuaded a number of Bombay Muslims, mainly fellow-Khojas, to invite the Muslim League to hold a 1915 Session in Bombay at the same time as the Congress.² In doing so, Jinnah had the support of the President of the League, the Aga Khan who, while inclined to favour the suspension of both Congress and the League during the War, wrote that "if the Congress meets in Bombay, I think the League should come to Bombay also".³ Jinnah was also supported by the Headquarters of

1. ibid., Dec 1914, nos 218-22, w.e. 20 Oct 1914; Bengal NP. 1915, pp. 1127-8, 1144-66.

2. Jinnah and 28 others to W. Hasán, Hon. Sec., All-India Muslim League, 12 Apr 1915, in Home Poll A, Feb 1916, nos 425-8, Enclosure A.

the League, the Secretary, Wazir Hasan, working indefatigably for the success of the Session.

Jinnah and Wazir Hasan planned that, in meeting concurrently, the League and Congress should arrange to co-ordinate their activities and, in particular, to draw up a mutually-acceptable scheme of reform. A start had been made in this direction by the Aga Khan who had been drafting a reform scheme with Gokhale at the time of the latter's death,¹ and Mrs Besant hastened the process when, as President of the UP Provincial Conference, she met Muslim League officials and urged the need for agreement on a scheme.

In working for the Congress/League rapprochement, Jinnah was probably aiming at leadership of the united national movement, if not immediately, at least after sharing it initially with Mrs Besant and Tilak. His contacts were as much with Congress as with the Muslim League; while he was associated with the Bombay Moderates, he saw much of Jamnadas Dwarkadas and the rising young men of Bombay who were being attracted to Mrs Besant, and he brought them into the Congress organisation in 1915. Furthermore, as a member of the "Mehta party"

¹. see Aga Khan, Memoirs, pp. 147-8; Home Poll Dep. Mar 1915, no. 56, 'UP'.
he sought to find some basis of readmitting the Extremists to Congress, first at the Moderate Provincial Conference in July, then later in that month and in September when Tilak came to Bombay, and again at the time of the Congress and Muslim League Sessions in December.¹

The "nationalists" plan to hold a League Session in Bombay met determined opposition from "conservative" Muslims, from the Sunnis and some Khojas of Bombay and from the Government. Among "conservatives" the most resolute opponent was Maulvi Rafi-ud-din Ahmed of Poona, a staunch ally of the Government and President of the Bombay branch of the Muslim League:² this branch was practically defunct,³ but he continued to act in its name. The Sunnis had to concede educational, economic and social eminence in the Bombay Muslim community to the Khojas and other minority sects but, being the largest group in that community, did so with a bad grace.⁴

1. Sastri "Diary", 11 July 1915; Home Poll B, Aug 1915, nos 552-6, w.e. 10 Aug 1915; Bombay Police 1915, par. 963; AICC Minutes, 26 Dec 1915.
2. see Home Poll Dep. Dec 1914, no. 31, p. 2
3. see New India, 4 Dec 1914, p. 8c; 8 Dec 1915, p. 7c.
4. see Bombay Police 1915, par. 601.
Prominent Bombay Sunnis therefore resented the attempt by Jinnah and his fellow-Khojas to lead the Muslim community into alliance with Congress. Even within the Khoja community Jinnah's pretensions to leadership were challenged. The Government was anxious not only to concentrate its energies on the War but to prevent the union of the League and Congress in opposition to itself, and the Bombay Commissioner of Police encouraged Jinnah's opponents to frustrate the holding of the League Session in Bombay.

Wazir Hasan visited Bombay twice in August and November to win support for the Session, but failed to make much headway against the combined opposition. This Gordian knot was cut in November when the League Council met in Lucknow and decided to accept Jinnah's invitation.

The voting at this meeting demonstrated how the Muslims of the UP and (to a lesser extent) of Bihar dominated the affairs of the League. Of 64 votes cast (including postal votes), 22 were from the UP and 8 from Bihar. Bengal and the Punjab, with by far the greatest

1. Sir Ibrahim Rahimtulla, Fazulbhoy Chinoy and Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy were contenders, see Wacha to Mehta 18 Dec 1897, Mehta Papers; Bombay Police 1915, pars 505, 601, 1340(b).

concentration of Muslims, registered only 5 votes each. Of the votes cast for the UP, 17 were in favour of holding the Session, 5 against; for Bihar 6 in favour, 2 against; Bombay and the Punjab each registered 2 in favour and 3 against; while the 24 from Bengal, Madras and other provinces were all in favour.\footnote{New India, 11 Nov 1915, p. 8a.} Among the UP and Bihar members of the Council, "nationalists" favouring cooperation with Congress, clearly predominated. The Punjab vote against holding the Session, although small, indicated the strength of "conservatism" among Muslims there and their doubt about the possibility of reconciliation with the Hindus, born in part of Hindu aggressiveness inculcated by the Arya Samaj. The unanimous vote in favour of the Session from Bengal reflected the disillusionment of Bengali Muslims with the British as the result of the Repartition of the province.\footnote{see F. Huq, Presidential Speech, Bengal Provincial Muslim League Conference, 13 Apr 1914, in Home Poll B, May 1914, nos 137-40.} In addition, "conservative" Muslims in Bengal had been weakened by the death earlier in 1915 of the Nawab of Dacca.\footnote{Bengal NP, 1915, pp. 59, 70, 132-3.} A new type of Muslim politician was rising in
Bengal, typified by Fazlul Huq (1873-1962), the Secretary of the provincial branch of the Muslim League, who voted for the Bombay Session. He has been characterised as a "nationalist communal Muslim"; his aim was to further the interests of the Muslim community, and at this time he believed this was possible by alliance with the Hindu national politicians, many of whose values, as a Western-educated lawyer, he shared. The League Council's decision to accept the Bombay invitation marked the triumph of Jinnah and the "nationalists" in the affairs of the League.

In view of the League's decision, the Governor of Bombay brought Jinnah and Wazir Hasan and their opponents together in order to reach an agreed agenda, and so avoid disturbances. They agreed that the Session would appoint a committee to frame a scheme of reforms in consultation with Congress. The Session met in an atmosphere of mutual suspicion for, in distributing the agenda, Wazir Hasan had tried to enlarge its terms so as to commit the

2. ibid., pp. 89-91; see New India, 11 Nov 1915, p. 8a.
League to a more sweeping reform scheme closer to the one Mrs Besant was urging upon Congress, prescribing, in particular, that the Legislative Councils "should have the power to exercise effective control over the executive" and that "'Provincial Autonomy' should be granted to all the provinces".¹

The Muslim opponents of rapprochement now appealed to the sense of communal solidarity among Muslims both outside and inside the Session. They held a meeting, at which the religious leaders of the Sunni and other communities were present and attracted an audience of 10,000, to denounce the holding of the Session.² At the Session itself they raised the shout that the President, Mazharul Haque, was no true Muslim since he was clean shaven, wore Western clothes and spoke English instead of Urdu.³ When this resulted in pandemonium, Mazharul Haque adjourned the proceedings to a small meeting at the Taj Hotel, from which all but members of the League were excluded, and here the League authorised


3. see HFM Bombay, II, 870, 881.
a Committee to draw up a scheme of reforms with Congress.\footnote{Home Poll B, Jan 1916, nos 541-4, p. 17.}

Jinnah and the "nationalists" thus got their way. But their success was qualified by the smallness of the numbers who had assented to it. The tactics of their opponents had demonstrated that it was a relatively easy matter to inflame Muslims' tempers by appealing to their sense of community and to turn these feelings against Hindu-Muslim unity, though in this case they were not turned against Hindus personally.

There had been some danger that Tilak and Mrs Besant might seek support by appealing to Hindu communal feeling and thus set back the movement for rapprochement between the Muslim League and Congress. During Tilak's imprisonment the Shivaji and Ganpati Festivals had declined with a consequent relaxation in tension between the two communities in western India, and on his release Tilak had recognised that unity between the two communities would strengthen the voice with which the national movement could speak. The Mahratta, for example, assumed a conciliatory tone in 1914: "A considerable section of the educated Mahomedans have begun to perceive...the necessity of political agitation on the Congress lines and it would
be a fault of the Congress if it does not meet them half-way....suitable concessions [must be] made".¹

Mrs Besant had encouraged the 1914 Congress to condemn separate representation for the Muslims in the legislatures,² but in 1915 she realised that such statements frightened most articulate Muslims who relied on safeguards for their community. She continued to deplore "favouritism" on the grounds of religion but, in her Presidential Address to the UP Provincial Conference in April, agreed that "it would probably cause too much friction to withdraw them ['separate electorates for Musalmans'] at present".³ She put forward her HRL as a body in which Hindus and Muslims could combine for national work,⁴ and in her tour of northern and western India preparing for its formation she sought and received enthusiastic support from the "nationalist" Muslims.⁵ Jinnah, Mazharul Haque and others supported the formation

². see Commonweal, 8 Jan 1915, pp. 19-20.
³. Besant, Political Outlook, p. 17.
⁵. see ibid., 18 Oct 1915, p. 9b-d; 8 Dec 1915, p. 7c; 14 Dec 1915, p. 17b.
of the HRL vigorously though unsuccessfully at the Conference at the end of 1915,\(^1\) while she in turn was largely responsible for the Congress decision to prepare a Joint Scheme of Reforms with the Muslim League.

II

January - December 1916.

In July 1916, Wazir Hasan circulated for discussion to the Muslim League branches a draft reform scheme, in the preparation of which he had been influenced by the deliberations of the Congress Reforms Committee, which had met in April to discuss Mrs Besant's scheme among others.\(^2\) The general principles of his scheme were similar to those of Mrs Besant's scheme and of the final Scheme agreed on by Congress and the Muslim League: all three envisaged large elected majorities in both central and provincial legislatures, which would control all legislation except foreign and military affairs, subject

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2. Home Poll Dep. May 1917, no. 17: the Congress Committee comprised 36 members of the AICC. Cf. *New India*, 10 Apr 1916, p. 8. Much of this and following paragraphs is based on *B & O Police 1917*, pars 142-3. Mazharul Haque and a UP "nationalist" Muslim, Samiulla Beg, were members of the Congress Committee; Sapru was said to have sent the schemes discussed at the AICC Committee meeting to Wazir Hasan, *UP Police 1916*, par. 1849.
only to the veto of the Viceroy or provincial Governor.¹ Hasan's scheme differed only in its incorporation of the principle of separate representation. Of the 65 elected members of the central Council of 100, 15 (about 23 per cent), and of the 75 elected members of the provincial legislatures 20 (about 24 per cent), should be elected by Muslims alone. Muslims would also vote in general electorates.² At meetings of the League Reforms Committee in August and October Bengal and the Punjab, the provinces with larger Muslim populations, demanded separate representation more closely proportional to their share of the population, in return for which they would forego participation in the general electorates.³

It was clear that for the bulk of Muslims who were concerned with the reforms, separate representation was an essential safeguard for the community against the possibility of being swamped electorally by the Hindu

1. W. Hasan to provincial Muslim Leagues, 26 July 1916, and attached draft scheme, Sections III, par. 7; V, 3-5, in Home Poll Dep. May 1917, no. 17; see Congress and Muslim League's Scheme of Reforms, in India's Claim for Home Rule (Ganesh), pp. 478-85.

2. though not stated specifically this may be inferred, since otherwise Muslims of the Punjab and Bengal would have been severely under-represented: see Home Poll Dep. May 1917, no. 17.

majority. Jinnah had formerly opposed separate representation, but as President of the Bombay Provincial Conference at Ahmedabad in October 1916 he said:

rightly or wrongly the Muslim community is absolutely determined for the present to insist upon separate electorates.... I would, therefore, appeal to my Hindu brethren that in the present state of [the]position they should try to win... the trust of the Muslims....If they are determined to have separate electorates, no resistance should be shown to their demands.2

At the end of 1916 Jinnah assured the Congress Subjects Committee that if it accepted separate representation, Muslim trust in Congress would so increase that he would in time be able to persuade the League to accept joint electorates.3

The Congress Reforms Committee tacitly accepted separate Muslim representation. Once this had been done, the main points at issue between the two Committees concerned the proportion of seats to be reserved for Muslims in each province. The bargaining over these proportions was quite bitter and, while recalcitrant

1. see e.g. Congress 1906, Report, p. 120.
provincial representatives on either side were brought into line by the majority of the Congress or the League Committee as appropriate, bitterness and tensions remained which weakened the ensuing Entente.

Joint meetings of these Committees were held at Calcutta in November, and at Lucknow in December. The November meeting agreed to give the Muslims over-representation in the central legislature, where they were to have 33 1/3 per cent of the seats (their proportion of the population being about 20 per cent), and in the provincial legislatures of Bihar, Bombay, Madras and CP.¹

In return for these concessions to Muslim minorities by the Congress, the League agreed to reduce Muslim representation in the Punjab (where Muslims constituted 55 per cent of the population) to 50 per cent. Hindu Congressmen from the Punjab resented the Congress Committee's acceptance of these terms, which they regarded as an altogether ungracious concession by the Muslims, while many Punjabi Muslims were equally resentful that the League had surrendered their majority.²

1. Home Poll B, Nov 1916, nos 452-3, w.e. 25 Nov 1916; Khaliquzzaman, p. 37. Muslim percentage of seats (and, in parentheses, of the provincial population) was: Bihar, 30 (13); Bombay, 33 [originally 20] (20); Madras, 15 (7) and CP 10 (4).

The UP Muslims demanded 40 per cent of the UP seats, which was out of all proportion to their 14 per cent of the population: the UP Hindus responded by offering them 20 per cent. Being anxious for agreement and bearing in mind that the UP Muslims dominated the League, Mrs Besant urged generosity upon the UP Hindus and, supported by the votes of the Bengal Congressmen (who, as the meeting was in Calcutta, were somewhat over-represented) gave the UP Muslims 33 per cent of the seats.\(^1\) One can then imagine the indignation of the UP Congressmen when the Bengal Hindus refused point-blank to accede to the Bengal Muslims' demand for 50 per cent of the seats, which was slightly less than their proportion (52.6 per cent) of the population.\(^2\) "Almost a split over Bengal and UP", recorded Sastri in his diary: "In my judgment Bengal leaders were unwilling to give much, while they asked UP to give too much".\(^3\)

The decision on Bengal representation was deferred


2. the Bengal Hindus offered the Bengal Muslims only 33 per cent: B & O Police 1917, par. 142.

to the December meeting at Lucknow. There it was the
turn of Fazlul Huq and the Bengal Muslims to sacrifice
their interests for the sake of overall unity. Under
pressure from the UP members of the Muslim Reforms
Committee, they agreed to accept only 40 per cent of the
Bengal representation, a concession which was to be
unpopular with many of their fellow Bengali Muslims.¹
At this meeting some of the UP Hindus led by Malaviya
reopened the question of representation in their province.
They tried to reduce the representation of the UP Muslims
from the 33 per cent given to them at Calcutta to 25 per
cent. To Malaviya, as an orthodox Brahmin, the idea of
making concessions to the Muslims was repugnant. He
typified the strain in UP Hinduism which resented the
traditional dominance in that area of the Muslim elite,
as opposed to the strain in UP Hinduism which shared the
Persian culture of that elite. Mrs Besant, the Bengali
Congressmen and Tilak (who joined the deliberations for
the first time) urged magnanimity upon the UP Hindus. At
last after four meetings, Jinnah and Wazir Hasan per-
suaded the UP Muslims to accept 30 per cent and the

¹ Fazlul Huq probably recognised this before the pour-
parlers were over, see B & O Police 1917, par. 142; also
J. H. Broomfield, op. cit., pp. 165-93; see Ch. VI below.
Congress Committee outvoted Malaviya to accept this.¹

On the Congress side therefore there were hints of communal feeling, particularly among the Hindus of the UP and the Punjab, which threatened the attempts to ally the two major communities. For the time being these threats were checked by the votes of the Congressmen of other provinces, but should the Hindus in the Punjab and the UP continue to feel that they had been unfairly dealt with these threats would re-emerge.

Both Mrs Besant and Tilak had adopted conciliatory attitudes to the Muslims, but in arguing for an united front between Hindus and Muslims until self-government might be won, they hinted that the terms of the Lucknow Pact were not the final answer. "Once the [sic] Home Rule was gained", said Mrs Besant, "the minor internal differences could be easily adjusted", and Tilak echoed these words at the Lucknow Congress.²

On the Muslim side there were also reservations about the Pact in the Punjab and Bengal where Muslims had surrendered the majority representation they might

². New India, 28 Dec 1916, p. 9a; Congress 1916, Report, p. 84.
have claimed, in the interests of an overall agreement. Furthermore the "nationalist" Muslims who had reached this agreement were a minute fragment of the Muslim community, and their opponents had shown how easy it was to rouse the fears of Muslims and their sense of solidarity against Hindu-Muslim unity.

The "nationalist" Muslims, however, buoyed up by the prospect of sharing in the leadership of the national movement, ignored or discounted these difficulties and Jinnah, as President of the 1916 League Session, set the seal on the Entente. Muslims and Hindus joined hands, and British opponents of Indian advance to self-government could no longer point to the Muslim League's opposition to the demands of Congress to justify their case.

Speaking for both organisations, at the 1916 Congress, Mazharul Haque said:

The time for action has come (Applause). Remember, you are demanding Self-Government and Home Rule for India. Do you for a moment believe that you will get it by asking? (Cries of 'no, no') ....Machinery [is wanted] which you could work up for the attainment of Self-Government. We must have a propaganda throughout the Country and let our

1. see his speech in Saiyid, Jinnah, pp. 872-80.
rulers see for themselves that every man...of India is determined to have Self-Government.1

But while they had formulated a reform scheme, neither Congress nor the Muslim League had created "machinery" for rousing agitation. For this, an auxiliary organisation to both was required and Mrs Besant had set up such an auxiliary during their pourparlers for rapprochement in 1916.

Chapter IV

AGITATION AND ORGANISATION: THE HOME RULE LEAGUES.

The Course of Agitation, January 1916 – June 1917.

While Mrs Besant suspended the formation of her HRL at the end of 1915, she did not drop her plans for agitation. Pointing to the AICC Resolution authorising the PCCs to "carry out educative and propagandist work", she persuaded the Madras PCC to arrange a series of lectures, which would be printed as pamphlets.¹ She addressed meetings and Conferences and in her Presidential address to a District Conference in March, said that "on the ground of her white skin she was allowed to say things which might be dangerous for Indians to say" but "she was not going to modify her language until she was silenced by force".² Her young admirers, who were dissatisfied with the inactivity of Congress, were disappointed with the suspension of the HRL and, encouraged by them, Mrs Besant established an All-India Propaganda Fund to publish pamphlets in English and Indian regional languages.³

¹ New India. 6 Jan 1916, p. 10d; 10 Jan 1916, p. 10a-b; 1 Feb 1916, p. 8d.
² Home Poll Dep. April 1916, no. 19, "Madras".
first pamphlet, Why Not Home Rule? in Gujarati by Yajnik, was produced by her young Bombay supporters and other pamphlets followed from the UP, Sind and Madras.¹

Tilak was not bound by Mrs Besant's decision to suspend formation of her League and, in consultation with his lieutenants, he established his Indian Home Rule League on 28 April 1916.² They followed this up with speeches demanding swaraj in a number of Maharashtrian towns.³ At Tilak's invitation, Mrs Besant visited Poona, where she discussed arrangements for the two Leagues and addressed audiences of over 5000.⁴

The launching of Tilak's League and agitation provoked Mrs Besant to renewed activity: just before going to Poona she had attended the Madras Provincial Conference, where she identified herself with the impetuous young men of the province by demanding fully-elected Legislative

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1. Bombay Police 1916, pars 519, 779(a), Accompaniment C; New India, 4 Sept 1916, pp. 8c, 11.

2. this will be referred to simply as "HRL" except where it is necessary to distinguish it from Mrs Besant's League, when it will be referred to as "IHRL".

3. Mahratta, 7 May 1916, p. 223; see ibid., 26 Dec 1915, p. 413; Bombay Police 1916, pars 122, 609.

4. see Bal Gangadhar Tilak: His Writings and Speeches, pp. 104-200.

5. Bombay Police 1916, pars 779(a) and Accompaniment A; New India, 23 May 1916, p. 6; Khaparde "Diary" (Bombay), 22 May 1916.
Councillors as part of the provincial reform scheme, in opposition to those who proposed that one-fifth of the Councillors should be nominated by the Governor. As President of a District Conference—also in May—she urged the delegates to start propaganda organisations throughout the district, and on her return to Madras from Poona she authorised her supporters to form Home Rule "Groups", which were in effect branches of her "suspended" HRL, thinly disguised. The tone of New India became increasingly shrill, culminating in the justification of the 1916 Irish rebellion, and in May the Madras Government demanded a security of Rs 2000 from Mrs Besant under the Press Act, while the Bombay Government took the opportunity to extern her from the Bombay Presidency.

Moderates joined Extremists throughout India in public meetings protesting against this Government repression and newspapers deplored the imposition of the


3. ibid., 24 May 1916, p. 11a.

4. section 7(a) in Region VIII, file 12/2, pp. 41-3 at the office of the History of the Freedom Movement, Delhi [hereafter HFM Delhi]; New India, 18 Jan 1916, p. 8a-b; 27 May 1916, p. 9b; Home Poll Dep. June 1916, no. 25, 'Bombay'; ibid., July 1916, no. 25, 'Bombay'.
security. From the Press Association, which Mrs Besant had helped to form, a deputation of her fellow-editors waited on the Viceroy: the deputation included Moderates like Banerjea and Malaviya and Extremists like Horniman of the Bombay Chronicle and Kasturiranga Iyengar of the Hindu. Now, she claimed, her identity with her fellow-Indians had been sealed: "my Indian colleagues", she wrote, "will never again be able to tell me good-humouredly that I am protected by my white skin, for the Colour Bar for me is broken and I am treated as Indians are treated for which I thank God". She did not moderate her tone. In New India she warned: "I fear we are in for an era of repression....under bureaucratic Government...there is no security for liberty or property". Editorials accused the Government of favouring the British community and Christian missionaries; denounced the reservation of railway compartments for Europeans (whereupon riots occurred on Madras stations); and championed Indian students, who were "in the grip of foreigners, who impose

1. Home Poll Dep. July 1916, no. 25, 'Bombay'; ibid., no. 26, 'Bombay'; HFM Delhi, section 7(b), Region VIII, file 12/2; New India, e.g. 29 May 1916, p. 5; 30 May 1916, p. 4.
2. New India, 5 May 1916, p. 9a-b.
3. ibid., 27 May 1916, p. 9.
upon them a crushing curriculum". In August the Government forfeited the Rs 2000 security and demanded Rs 10,000. Mrs Besant now appealed to the courts, thereby parrying further Government action temporarily and, more important, gaining much favourable publicity. Public meetings flourished in protest against the forfeiture, as they did again in November against her externment from the CP and Berar.

The failure of the Congress (save in Madras) to implement its resolution to launch educative propaganda gave Mrs Besant the opportunity to found her Home Rule for India League (usually known by its later name of All-India Home Rule League). In mid-1916 her Theosophical and Socialist associates in Britain formed an Auxiliary HRL, and in India at the same time she appointed her

1. all these editorials reprinted in ibid., 29 Aug 1916, p. 4.

2. Home Poll Dep. Sept 1916, no. 18, 'Madras'; HFM Delhi, section 7(b), Region VIII, file 12/2, pp. 83ff; New India, 29 Aug 1916, p. 4.

3. HFM Delhi, section 7(d), Region VIII, file 12/2, p. 10a; Home Poll B, Sept 1916, nos 652-6, w.e. 16 Sept 1916; ibid. Dep. Jan 1917, no. 42, 'CP'; A. Besant, India Bond or Free? A World Problem, pp. 170-3.

4. this will also be referred to simply as "HRL", except when necessary to distinguish it from Tilak's League, when it will be referred to as "AIHRL".

5. New India, 2 Aug 1916, p. 5d; Home Poll B, July 1916, nos 441-5, w.e. 1, 8 and 29 July 1916.
staunch Theosophical follower, George Arundale,¹ as Organising Secretary pro tem for the establishment of her HRL. The League was formally inaugurated on 3 September with ten branches and 500 members.²

In Maharashtra, the Government brought pressure to bear upon Tilak to desist from Home Rule agitation: in July, bonds of Rs 40,000 were demanded from him on the grounds that his speeches were seditious, and local officials warned people against supporting his HRL.³ Tilak cautiously stopped delivering speeches and appealed. In November the Bombay High Court ruled that the demand for swaraj was not seditious.⁴ Tilak's HRL now embarked on a successful recruiting drive: from 1000 in November, its membership rose to 3000 in January 1917 and 14,000 in April.⁵

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1. B.A. (Moral Science) 1898 and LL.B. 1899 (Cantab.), he arrived in India in 1903 to teach English at the TS Central Hindu College, Banaras; became headmaster. Mrs Besant recalled him from England 1916 to help her run the HRL and edit New India; Later became President of TS.

2. New India, 24 May 1916, p. 11a; 21 June 1916, p. 3d; Home Poll B, July 1916, nos 441-5, w.e. 1, 8 and 29 July, 1916, p. 3.

3. HFM Bombay, II, 243; Mahratta, 5 Nov 1916, p. 540.


5. ibid., 5 Nov 1916, p. 540; 4 Feb 1917, p. 58; 20 May 1917, p. 250; Bombay Police 1916, par. 1480(d); 1917, e.g. pars 55(a), 156(d), 182(b) (c), 203(d).
Some Moderates, fearful lest they be overshadowed by the Home Rule agitation, set out to match the activities of the HRLs. Sastri, the President of the Servants of India Society, told the members of the Society that they could not ignore the "new political spirit" and that "if they let slip the opportunity now they would only be dragged into the current eventually".\(^1\) While refusing to allow its members to join the HRLs, the Society decided to support the demand for Home Rule in the name of Congress and its members embarked on speech-making tours and the publication of pamphlets in the UP, Bombay City and Maharashtra.\(^2\)

The Moderates were drawn into increasingly close alliance with the Home Rulers (as the members of the HRLs were known) by the Government's failure to make any favourable, public response to the demand for reforms at the end of the War. In a despatch to the Secretary of State in November 1916, the Government of India did propose the enunciation of the goal of British policy for India, which they expressed as "the endowment of British

\(^1\) Yajnik, 1st ed., p. 14.

\(^2\) Yajnik, 1943, pp. 16-19; UP Police 1916, e.g. pars 1424, 2050, 2445, 2613; H. N. Kunzru to Vaze, 12 Apr 1917, SIS Papers, Poona; Bombay Police 1916, pars 194, 779(c); interview with H. N. Kunzru, 27 July 1963.
India as an integral part of the Empire, with self-government". In pursuit of this goal, they recommended the expansion of the elected Indian membership of the Legislative Councils into a majority, and the broadening of the franchise, but they felt unable to publish these proposals until the British Government had pronounced upon them. Even if they had, few Indians would have been satisfied, for the despatch explicitly excluded "any immediate expansion of...the constitutional powers of the Councils". As early as September the unofficial, Indian members of the central legislature got word that the Viceroy was sending home a "reactionary despatch", and in October, 19 of them (including Wacha and Bhupendranath from among the Moderates) produced as a "counter blast" a Memorandum proposing that at the end of the War the Councils should have a "substantial majority of elected representatives" with power to legislate on all domestic matters and from whom half of the Executive


2. ibid., par. 43.

Councils should be elected. These sweeping demands showed the influence of Mrs Besant's scheme which was currently under consideration by the Congress and Muslim League Reforms Committees. The demands were spelt out in greater detail in the Reforms Scheme accepted by the Moderates and Extremists of Congress and by the Muslim League at Lucknow in December.

The Lucknow Congress called on the HRLs to continue their agitation but the Moderates opposed the Home Rule leaders' suggestion that Congress should itself undertake agitation. The Moderates also resisted Mrs Besant's attempt to commit Congress to the goal of Home Rule (pointing out that this was inconsistent with the Congress-League Scheme, which demanded less than complete internal self-government) and, rather than clash openly with the Moderates, Tilak and Mrs Besant acceded to their wishes.

After the Lucknow Congress, the Home Rule agitation was carried on with renewed vigour, with both Tilak and Mrs Besant making triumphal tours, addressing meetings

through northern, east and central India. They seized upon issues which appealed to all shades of Indian political opinion, such as the indenturing of Indian labour for overseas. In February the Governments of the Punjab and Delhi forbade Tilak and B. C. Pal to enter their provinces, and this set off another series of protest meetings. The demand for self-government was stimulated by events outside India, notably the March Revolution in Russia, and President Wilson's message to Congress justifying the entry of the USA into the World War on the grounds of defending the liberties of small nations.

Seeing that the agitation was discrediting them and raising hopes which were bound to be disappointed, the provincial Governments asked the Government of India to

1. see e.g. Home Poll A, Mar 1918, no. 247, p. 34; New India, 6 Jan 1917, p. 6b; 8 Jan 1917, p. 6c; 10 Jan 1917, p. 5a; Khaparde "Diary" (Poona), 1 Jan to 9 Feb 1917; Bombay Police 1917, pars 109(f) (h), 133(d), 156(d) (e) (f).


3. Home Poll B, Feb 1917, nos 552-5, w.e. 17 Feb 1917; Dep. Mar 1917, no. 33 'Bombay'; Bengal NP, pp. 64, 302,339.

4. see Chamberlain to Chelmsford, 19 Mar 1917, and Sir J. Meston to Chelmsford, 7 July 1917, in Home Poll A, July 1917, nos 299-313; The Indian Demands, p. 31; Home Poll Dep. Apr 1917, no. 61, passim; ibid. May 1917, no. 70, 'Bombay'.

provide

some guidance as to what their attitude should be towards a movement which they know is exciting sedition among the young, undermining the influence of moderate men, and steadily creating an atmosphere of hatred.¹

In its reply of 20 March, the central Government urged the provincial Governments to "point out to all Indians who are likely to listen to reason that any thought of early Home Rule should be put entirely out of mind", and authorised them to prohibit students from attending HRL meetings and to curb the leaders by use of the Defence of India Act.² Bombay, Madras and OP banned undergraduates from meetings forthwith,³ and in April and May the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and the Governors of Bombay and Madras publicly deplored the Home Rule agitation in terms which suggested that they might prohibit it.⁴ Mrs Besant's lieutenants responded with talk of


². Government of India to all Local Governments and Administrations 20 Mar 1917, in ibid.

³. Home Poll A, Mar 1918, no. 247, p. 35; B, May 1917, nos 445-48, w.e. 19 May 1917; Dep. June 1917, no. 68, 'Madras'.

⁴. ibid. B, April 1917, nos 700-2, w.e. 7 Apr 1917; Dep. May 1917, no. 70, 'Punjab'; quoted by M. Nehru, Presidential Address to the Special Provincial Congress, Lucknow, 10 August 1917, p. 17.
passively resisting any attempts to proscribe the
agitation, which Mrs Besant echoed in New India,\textsuperscript{1} where-
upon the Government of Madras interned her and Arundale
at a Madras hill-station.

This was the signal for a nation-wide outcry:
prominent men, including Moderates, who had held aloof
from Mrs Besant's HRL now joined it, and its membership
more than doubled.\textsuperscript{2} Of those Moderates who did not
become members of the League, Banerjea, Sastri and Wacha
joined with the more impetuous in denouncing the intern-
ments.\textsuperscript{3}

The internments did not crush the agitation, as the
Governments hoped - quite the reverse. Mrs Besant's
young lieutenants in Bombay set out to rouse the Gujarat
towns and mofussil, while in Madras Arundale's place as
Organising Secretary of the HRL was taken by a member of

\textsuperscript{1} see New India, 4 June 1917, p. 8a-c; J. Dwarkadas to
A. Besant, 27 Feb 1919, Advar Archives.

\textsuperscript{2} HRL (Bombay Branch): Report for the Year ended 30
June 1917, p. 1; Hindu, 20 June 1917, p. 4; 26 June 1917,
p. 5; Mahratta, 12 Aug 1917, p. 382; 26 Aug 1917, p. 403;
Jamnadas, "Memoire", pp. 281-3. Those who joined the HRL
included Jinnah, H. A. Wadia (a leading Bombay Moderate),
Motilal Nehru, T. B. Sapru, C. Y. Chintamani, M. R.
Jayakar, B. G. Horniman.

\textsuperscript{3} Home Poll Dep. Aug 1917, no. 3, 'Bihar and Orissa';
Hindu, 20 June 1917, p. 5; Bombay Presidency Association,
Council Minutes, 23 June 1917.
the Viceroy's Legislative Council and the empty editorial chairs at the New India office were filled by Kelkar, Horniman and others.²

II

Home Rule Leagues: Organisation

Tilak confined the operations of his HRL to the Maharashtrian and Karnatak areas of the Bombay Presidency, CP and Berar, where he had an assured following. His League pre-empted these areas as his field of operations, leaving the rest of India to Annie Besant, as had been agreed between them in the previous year.³

At the inaugural meeting of the IHRL, Tilak and his ten lieutenants who decided to establish it appointed themselves and six others as its executive Central Committee.⁴

1. K. V. Rangaswami Ayyangar.
2. A. Besant, "Internment Diary", p. 14, Adyar Archives.
3. Jamnadas, "Memoire", p. 133; see Ch. II, p.130 above.
4. Maharatta, 30 Apr 1916, p. 216; 7 May 1916, p. 223. Those comprising the Committee which set up the IHRL were Khaparde, Tilak and Baptist (from Bombay), Dr B. S. Moonje (Nagpur), M. S. Aney (Yeotmal), R. P. Karandikar (Satara), G. B. Phansalkar (Satara), S. K. Altekar (Karad), C. M. Desai (Bombay), D. V. Belvi (Belgaum), and Kelkar; those added to form the Central Committee were Dr D. D. Sathaye (Bombay), Dr R. G. Vaze, C. V. Vaidya (Kalyan), V. R. Patwardhan (Poona), N. R. Alekar (Nagpur), and V. R. Lele (Sholapur).
At the first annual Conference of its members in April 1917 a more "democratic" Constitution was adopted providing for plebiscitory approval of office bearers by the Conference: needless to say, the "slate" put forward by Tilak's lieutenants was approved.¹ Thereafter these office bearers formed the League's Executive Committee by co-opting a representative from each of the League's six branches. Tilak carefully ensured that each major town and area covered by the League had representatives on these committees, thus avoiding jealousies.² The day-to-day working of the IHRL was supervised from the office of Tilak's newspaper, Kesari, in Poona, by Tilak and Kelkar with the help of the League's Executive Assistant, a young Chitpavan Brahmin, D. V. Gokhale. Early in 1917 the area of the League's operations was divided into six branches - Central Maharashtra, Berar (two branches), CP, the Karnatak and Bombay City - and branch offices were set up in the principal city in each, to organise the work throughout the branch.³ This was done as part of the drive to

1. Mahratta, 20 May 1917, p. 239; 27 May 1917, p. 255; S. M. Paranjpe was included in the "slate" as a Treasurer.
2. Mahratta, 4 Feb 1917, p. 58; 11 Feb 1917, p. 69; see n. 4, p.182 above.
increase membership following the successful outcome of Tilak's appeal to the High Court in November 1916. From 1000 in that month, membership rose to 14,000 in April 1917, and to 32,000 early in 1918.\(^1\) This result was achieved by dropping the entry fee of Rs 2 which each member had paid hitherto (though the annual subscription of Re 1 was retained), by setting up recruiting centres in the offices of professional men among Tilak's supporters and by recruiting tours on the part of Tilak's followers.\(^2\)

As in his earlier activities, Tilak's most active co-workers were Maharashtrian Brahmins, mainly professional men in the cities and towns, where they were well-situated for influencing their fellow-Brahmins and members of other communities by personal contact or public meetings. They made determined efforts, with some success, to enlist the support of the moneylending and trading communities—flattering Marwaris, for instance, by appointing them to

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1. Mahratta, 5 Nov 1916, p. 540; 20 May 1917, pp. 238, 240; 10 Mar 1918, p. 111. In August 1917, 20,635 members were claimed, see Kesari, 4 Sept 1917 in Bombay Police 1917, par. 949(m).

2. Mahratta, 3 Dec 1916, p. 588; 20 May 1917, p. 240; Bombay Police 1916, pars 954(b), 1903(d), 1480(d); 1917, pars 55(a), 109(1), 182(b) (c), 203(d), 225(c), 251(a) (d), 227(b), 300(f) (g), 320(b).
official positions at Conferences. But, despite their claims that a quarter of members of the IHRL were agriculturists, they had little success in winning support from landed groups.

The Council of Mrs Besant's HRL consisted initially of seven office bearers of the League elected in September 1916 for three years by the 34 "founding branches". As in the case of the Maharashtraion League, the names put forward by Mrs Besant were returned unopposed, Mrs Besant being confirmed as President, Arundale as Organising Secretary and C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar as one of the General Secretaries. The Council held few official meetings, the League's business being conducted informally from Mrs Besant's Adyar headquarters by Arundale, B. P. Wadia, Ramaswami Aiyar and Mrs Besant herself. Any three persons might form a branch, so that each branch of Mrs Besant's HRL was formed for a town or a village rather than a region.

1. *Bombay Police* 1916, par. 758; 1917, pars 55, 81(b), 109(j), 225(c), 351(g), 731(g); *Mahratta*, 4 June 1916, p. 273.


3. B. P. Wadia was confirmed as Treasurer; P. K. Telang and A. Rasul as General Secretaries for Bombay and Bengal respectively; Gokaran Nath Misra was added later as General Secretary for the UP; Wadia and Ratansi Morarji were elected as Provincial Secretaries. All except 'C.P.' and Rasul were stalwart Theosophists. *New India*, 29 Aug 1916, p. 3d; 4 Sept 1916, p. 11; HRL Council Minutes, 8 Oct 1916.

4. Member of wealthy Bombay Parsee family; managed the Theosophical Publishing House and *New India*, which he helped to edit.
The branches were arranged into provinces by linguistic areas, each with a Provincial Secretary.

No uniform pattern of organisation was laid down for the branches; indeed, in view of the variation in their size - between three and 2600 members - it would have been difficult to do so. Mrs Besant merely suggested that each branch should elect a secretary, who would devote himself to arranging the propaganda activities of the branch, and that each other member should undertake to assist in at least one of these activities.¹

The constitutional links between the headquarters of the League and its branches were most tenuous: the Organising Secretary simply sanctioned the formation of branches, which remitted an entry fee of one Rupee from each member to the HRL Council. Mrs Besant's links with the branches were maintained by informal contact with individuals who were active in each branch or who, as in the case of the Provincial Secretaries and the leading members of the Bombay branch, were in touch with a number of branches. Instructions were transmitted through these informal channels, or through New India, in which Arundale edited a page of Home Rule news and advice from the

¹ see New India, 5 July 1916, p. 8c-d; 25 Sept 1916, p. 3c-d.
beginning of 1916.

The membership of Mrs Besant's HRL grew more slowly than Tilak's until her internment: from 7000 in March 1917, it rose to 27,000 in December.¹ Unlike the IHRL which opened its membership to those over 21, Mrs Besant's League was open to anyone over 18, except undergraduates. Undergraduates might attend meetings as "Associates" but could not vote² - an insignificant limitation on their participation.

In the formation of the AIHRL and its branches Mrs Besant drew on the personal loyalty of Theosophists towards herself. Some Theosophists objected to her mixing of politics with Theosophy but the more ardent believed that in launching the HRL she was carrying out the behests of those who control the affairs of the world.³ Of course, the HRL was supported by many who were not Theosophists: by December 1917 the League's membership was five times that of the Indian Section of the

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¹ New India, 31 Mar 1917, p. 5c; "Addresses Presented in India to his Excellency the Viceroy and the Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State for India", Commons Papers, 1918, XVIII, Cd. 9178, p. 17.

² Mahratta, 27 May 1917, p. 255; New India, 4 Sept 1916, p. 12b.

Theosophical Society. But Theosophists often provided the initial impetus for the formation of HRL branches and the strength of the League, area by area, generally reflected the local strength of the Theosophical Society. The Society, for example, had more members and a more elaborate network of "lodges" in the Madras Presidency than elsewhere in India (largely, one suspects, because the south had not experienced a revival of Hinduism when the Theosophical Society began its work there, unlike, say, Bengal) and this was reflected in the AIHRL. After Mrs Besant's internment, the League had 132 branches in the Madras Presidency, which was more than all those in the rest of India. And in this area the Theosophical officers


2. which embraced the Tamil-speaking area, Telugu-speaking Andhra, Malayalam-speaking Malabar and parts of the Kannada-speaking area.

3. New India, 11 Sept 1917, p. 3; the figures for Madras were: 63 in Tamil-, 48 in Telugu-, 12 in Kannada-speaking areas, 9 in Malabar; I estimate the numbers of other branches of Mrs Besant's HRL as 6 in Sind, 25 in Gujarat, 20 in the rest of Bombay and CP, 8 in the UP, 8 in Bihar, 3 in Punjab, 1 in Delhi, 1 in Bengal; total 204. Over 40% of Indian TS members were residents of Madras Presidency, 20% of Bombay Presidency and 7% each of the UP and Bengal; over 56% of the TS lodges were in the Madras Presidency and there was hardly a township without its handful of Theosophists: TS, Indian Section, Annual Report, 1913, in Proceedings; cf. Annual Report, 1914.
of the HRL were legion: Manjeri Ramier, for example, was an office bearer in the Calicut Theosophical Lodge and President of the Malabar HRL and there were similar duplications of function at Vijayawada (Bezwada) in Andhra and at Madura and Tiruchchirappalli (Trichy) in Tamilnad.¹

The number of branches was not an entirely adequate indication of the strength of the HRL, however. While some of the Madras branches were quite small or relatively inactive, the Bombay City branch had over 2600 members by September 1917. Here again the League reflected the strength of the Theosophical Society for, in addition to Jamnadas Dwarkadas, its officers included Theosophists like P. K. Telang (who edited Young India from November 1916) and the young businessman, Ratansi Morarji. Although there were only eight branches in the UP, the four in the main cities were very active in the mofussil as well as in the cities themselves, and in these leading roles were played by Theosophists of Lucknow and the staffs of the Theosophical Colleges at Banaras, Kanpur and Allahabad. Similarly in Delhi the initial impetus for the foundation of a branch of the HRL came from the headmistress of the

Theosophical Girls' College.¹

There were considerable regional variations in the strength of the Home Rule movement. In Punjab, for instances, branches of the HRL and Home Rule agitation were almost entirely lacking. This was due largely to the continuation of Government repression from the 1908-1914 period, reinforced by application of the Defence of India Act to threaten politicians with internment. In addition, the strength of the Arya Samaj had inhibited the spread of Theosophy in the province, and there were thus few followers on whom Mrs Besant might call to build a political organisation.

The relative meagreness of the response in Bengal may again be traced in part to the weakness of the Theosophical Society in that province. Besides, Congress politics in Bengal were still dominated by Surendranath and the Moderates (who had withdrawn their early support for the HRL) and the Extremists were still disorganised as the result of their period in the wilderness since 1907; it was only with the emergence of C. R. Das later in 1917 that the Extremists and young Congressmen organised to challenge the Moderates. Furthermore many of the young

members of the Bengali bhadralok, whose patriotism had been aroused, had been drawn into the terrorist movement between 1908 and 1915, and the Government had employed the Defence of India Act to intern 2000 terrorists suspects thus depriving the Home Rule movement of many of those who might have joined it.¹ Such Home Rule activity as there was in Bengal may, however, be traced to Theosophists. The Bengal Extremists, following Tilak's lead, first proposed to set up their own HRL organisation, but Hirendranath Datta, a Theosophist who had been prominent in the Partition agitation, gathered a number of young Calcutta men around him and formed a branch of Mrs Besant's League. This was joined by the leading Extremists after Mrs Besant's internment.²

The greatest strength of Mrs Besant's HRL lay in the south, in Bombay and Gujarat, in Sind and in the UP. In Madras, Theosophy had renewed the Hindu faith of Western-educated men, mainly Brahmans, and it was these men who predominated in the HRL. In Andhra the Telugu Brahmins also saw in the HRL a vehicle for their agitation

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1. see Home Poll B, Jan 1918, nos 487-90, p. 10.
2. see Bombay Police 1916, par. 122; New India, 21 Dec 1916, p. 3b; Home Poll Dep. Sept 1917, no. 6, p. 8.
in favour of a separate province, in which they hoped to replace the Tamil Brahmins who had received a head-start in education under the British and had acquired a dominant place in administration and the professions throughout the Presidency.¹

Mrs Besant's supporters in Bombay City were drawn from the business community, as well as the professional groups, and particularly from those who had uprooted themselves from their native Gujarat to seek their fortune in the capital of the Presidency. Most prominent among the Bombay Theosophists (and, in turn, in the HRL there) were the members of the Bhatia and other Gujarati trading castes, who were engaged in the cotton, and ancillary, industries. Young Bhatias formed the nucleus of the Bombay HRL and through their business and social contacts drew other industrial and professional men in the city into it, as well as enlisting workers from the cloth mills and markets for their meetings and demonstrations. They were active not only in the city but also in Gujarat, which they visited repeatedly from the time of Mrs Besant's internment, encouraging the formation of branches and addressing meetings in towns and villages. Here they

¹ see HRL Council Minutes, 8 Oct 1916.
won support for the League from their fellow-members of the trading castes and from professional and administrative men drawn from both Brahmin and from rising, wealthy peasant groups.¹

In Sind the Theosophical Society, and with it the HRL, attracted the support of the Western-educated Hindu group which dominated the professions and administration, in this case the Amils. The Amils were a minority among the Hindu community, which was in turn outnumbered five times by the Muslim population. A handful of "nationalist" Muslims joined the Home Rule movement but most of the Muslims of Sind were peasants who, under the guidance of their landlords and their pirs (religious leaders), refused to have anything to do with the movement.²

In the UP and Bihar members of the HRL came from the same groups that already dominated Congress and the Muslim League in this area, the Western-educated professional elite. At first, it was mainly the "nationalist" Muslims and the younger and more impetuous Congressmen

¹ see Bombay Police 1916, pars 1093(e), 1491(b), 1480(b) 1516(a); 1917, pars 841(f) (g) (h) (j) (o), 859(e) (k), 899(r) (s) (u) (v) (y), 970(f) (j); Census of India, 1911, VII Part I, 240, 280, 307.

² see Home Poll B, May 1917, nos 445-8, p. 5; Bombay Police 1917, e.g. pars 513(a), 815(d), 841(e), 859(a); cf. par. 841(b).
who joined the HRL.\textsuperscript{1} Under the influence of Malaviya, the older Congressmen, like Motilal Nehru, supported the Home Rule agitation but held aloof from the League itself, and joined it only after Mrs Besant's internment.

\section*{III}

\textbf{The Aims and Methods of Agitation.}

Mrs Besant's inspiration in launching her Home Rule agitation came from the Whig and Radical tradition of agitation in British politics, and from her own English political experience in the 1870s and '80s in the company of Charles Bradlaugh and the Fabians. In the manner of the organisers of the anti-Slavery agitation of the 1820s and the anti-Corn Law agitation of the 1830s and '40s, she relied on public meetings, newspapers and pamphlets to awaken the public conscience. First, she believed, it was necessary to educate Indians, both those who were Western-educated and the "masses" who only spoke the vernaculars: to shake their dependence on the Government, by convincing them that India's poverty was due to the Government's economic policy; and to rouse their

\textsuperscript{1} see \textit{UP Police 1916}, pars 1653, 1933, 2195, 2516.
"pride in the Motherland" and increase their self-confidence, by.convincing them of India's greatness prior to the arrival of the British. This, she wrote, would "lay a solid foundation for our propagandists", who would then go on to raise a wave of criticism against the Government. She probably did not set out deliberately to provoke Government repression, but criticism of the Government had its own momentum and her tone became increasingly defiant. When the Government tried to silence her by applying its repressive legislation she again turned to her English experience and appealed to the courts. She later acknowledged her debt to Bradlaugh in this regard. His advice had been: "In fighting a bad law never give way, but utilise every opportunity of delay which the law gives you. For time is on the side of a just agitation and stirs up the people".

Such agitation would, she believed, bring the question of Home Rule "to the front", that is to the attention of the British, so that it would "enter the

1. A. Besant, article in Young India, reprinted in New India, 10 Jan 1916, p. 3; cf. A. Besant, India: A Nation [first published Nov 1915], pp. 13-19.
2. ibid.
3. Besant, Bond or Free?, p. 171.
sphere of practical politics". The sound and fury of the agitation would move liberal-minded men in the administration, like Lord Hardinge the Viceroy, to recommend the Home Government to grant reform; and it would echo to England, where it would stir the conscience of the electorate and persuade the Government to grant India's demands. "British politicians", she wrote, "...judge the value of claims by the energy of those who put them forward".

In joining Mrs Besant, Tilak was probably less optimistic than she about the possibility of moving the British to grant self-government by a press and platform agitation: certainly he was less optimistic about the time it might take to do so. Soon after the foundation of his HRL he said: "The petition [for Home Rule] is to be made to the English Parliament....If you carry on such an effort for 5 or 25 years, you will never fail to obtain its fruit". In his outburst at the end of 1914 he had

1. see her article on "Federation", in Birth, pp. 70-1, quoted in Ch. II, p. 90 above.

2. for her view of Hardinge, see New India, 9 Oct 1915, p. 10a; for her view of Lord Carmichael, then Governor of Bengal, see ibid., 18 Oct 1915, p. 9b-d.

3. see G. P. Ramaswami Aiyar "Foreword" in A. Besant, India: A Nation, p. iii.

4. New India, 10 July 1915, p. 10b.

spoken of using "methods of obstruction" similar to those employed by the Irish but he had no alternative programme to the agitation marked out by Mrs Besant. His contribution to the national movement in this period was thus subsidiary to Mrs Besant's.

Tilak grasped at agitation as providing a programme which would satisfy the temper of his more fiery lieutenants and, as he said, the "desire for display" of the minor members. Here he resembled Mrs Besant who believed that through agitation she could satisfy the younger generation, whom she feared might otherwise turn to terrorism or to passive resistance.

The function of the HRLs was to contribute to the rousing of this agitation in India, and to provide it with a sounding-board in Britain. Mrs Besant and Tilak did not rely entirely on the Leagues, for they had their newspapers and Mrs Besant had helped to form a Press Association to encourage other newspapers to co-ordinate their editorial policy with hers. Also, through their court actions they won attention in the press and contributed to the rousing of agitation. The HRLs were only a part, therefore, of Mrs Besant's and Tilak's arsenal,

1. for her attempt to co-ordinate *New India*, *Hindu*, *Swadeshamitran*, *Andhra Patrika*, see e.g. *New India*, 22 Jan 1916, p. 11a.
though an extremely important part.

The closest precedent for the organisation and methods of the HRLs is probably in the British Anti-Slavery Society of 1823. This Society roused public opinion through public meetings held by its branches, through the personal contacts of its members and through the newspapers and pamphlets which it published.\(^1\) The HRLs' namesake in Ireland, on the other hand, provided a sorry example of disorganisation and failure while, of other models, the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain and the Anti-Corn Law League were well-organised electoral machines as well as agitational bodies.\(^2\)

Mrs Besant and Tilak never seriously tried to make their HRLs machines for the election of members to the House of Commons or to the Indian legislatures. True, they had little opportunity to influence elections during this period. In Britain elections were not held until after the War, while in India elections to the Legislative Councils were so indirect as to be difficult to influence from outside the electoral bodies themselves. But again,

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Mrs Besant was influenced by her British experience. Although she had helped Bradlaugh in his electioneering, her experience was that of a public orator and propagandist rather than a member of a party organised as an electoral machine.

Only in one regard did Tilak and Mrs Besant attempt to use the HRLs as other than agitational bodies. At the time of the annual Congress sessions, they used them to bring a majority of delegates to the session committed to support the demand for Home Rule, in an effort to gain control of Congress and to link its functions with those of the HRLs.

In rousing agitation, Arundale, as Organising Secretary of the AIHRL, first concentrated on what Mrs Besant had called its "educative" aspect. After her decision to found the League in the middle of 1916, he advised the branches through his Home Rule page in New India on the sort of activities they should undertake. Their members, he said, should argue the case for Home Rule with their friends, and urge them to join the League; they should collect political facts and opinions and discuss them regularly; set up classes to lecture to students on political matters; establish a library, containing printed speeches of Indian nationalists, newspapers and
works by J. S. Mill, Seeley — and, of course, Mrs Besant. Also they should circulate Home Rule pamphlets; undertake constructive work in their local area; participate in local councils; collect funds; and give public lectures and hold meetings.¹

Of the 200-odd branches of the AIHRL, some doubtless existed in little more than name, while others were active but fitfully.² But most did carry out a number of the functions suggested by Arundale. Some held regular discussion groups for their members and for students, notably in larger cities like Karachi, Bombay and Madras, but also in smaller places. These groups discussed such problems as those of Indian Finance or Local Self-Government — or even discussed Tagore's poetry — but the desirability of Home Rule formed the basis of each discussion.³ Libraries were established by branches in larger towns, and even those in quite small places (in the Madras mofussil, for instance) subscribed to the

1. New India, 7 July 1916, p. 3b–d; 5 Sept 1916, p. 8; 25 Sept 1916, p. 3

2. see e.g. New India, 15 Jan 1917, p. 12b; 26 Feb 1917, p. 3.

current nationalist newspapers (and, for contrast, one or two of those produced for the British community in India, which deplored the Home Rule movement), and provided a place, perhaps in a member's home, for members to read and discuss them. ¹ As for Home Rule literature, when her HRL was founded Mrs Besant's Propaganda Fund had already sold over 300,000 copies of 26 pamphlets in English, which discussed the machinery of government in India and the arguments for self-government. Some of these reproduced the speeches of prominent Congressmen, but more often they comprised speeches or essays by Mrs Besant or her young followers. ² Branches now republished these, and published new pamphlets in the Indian languages ³ and (in the larger towns) opened bookshops for their sale. ⁴

¹ e.g. there were libraries at Bombay, Hyderabad (Sind), Karachi, Allahabad, Sitapur (UP), Madras, Tiruchchirappalli, see New India, 3 Nov 1916, p. 3b-d; 9 Nov 1916, p. 8d; 18 Nov 1916, p. 4; 29 Nov 1916, p. 3d; Home Poll Dep. Mar 1917, no. 32 and KW; reading rooms at Negapatam, Kumbakonam, Banaras, New India, 10 Oct 1916, p. 12c; 23 Oct 1916, p. 3.

² see e.g. the "New India" Political Pamphlet Series; Bombay Police 1916, par. 779, Accompaniment C.


⁴ e.g. Karachi, Madras and mofussil towns: New India, 28 Aug 1916, p. 9a; 17 Jan 1917, p. 12a; Bombay Police 1917 par. 603(e).
Few of the branches took up constructive work or local political matters. Several did set up schools for children of the depressed classes, while in industrial centres two night-schools were established for coolies. And at Kancheepuram, for example, the League took up the grievances of the local potters and urged the removal of an unpopular official. But few branches were active on such local questions and none (as far as can be told) sought to influence candidates for election to local bodies until January 1919 when the Bombay branches contested the municipal elections.

The League's activities were almost entirely directed at Indians who were Western-educated or literate in Indian languages, and many of the speeches delivered by members of the League reached the same audience. Although the meetings at which these speeches were given were described as "public", they were often held in a Theosophical Hall or a large private home, where the uneducated members of society would not penetrate. In the UP, for

2. *ibid.*, 14 Nov 1916, p. 3b; 24 Nov 1916, p. 3b.
4. e.g. *Bombay Police 1917*, pars 251(c), 701(p) (r); *New India*, 16 Sept 1916, p. 11b.
example, Home Rule speakers from the branches in the cities undertook speech-making tours into the surrounding districts. They went by train, stopping off at each town of any size along the way; on arrival they addressed the members of the bar library, who would have arranged a public meeting. Such meetings were attended by professional people, students, and by a few business people. The speakers' arguments (which were usually put in Hindi) appealed to an educated audience, and followed those which had been put forward by Mrs Besant and incorporated in pamphlets like Yajnik's *Why Not Home Rule?*. They outlined European movements for national independence, extolled the glories of India in pre-British times and contrasted these with her current poverty and degradation.

If [they said] peace and tranquillity have been established, economical prosperity and the glory of manhood have departed....[the Government] has taken away our arms....such severe restraints are placed upon the tongue and pen of the people,...that the entire Government assumes the shape of an obstacle to the development of the life of the Indians....prosperity and happiness will again spread in the country only by our getting Swarajya similar to that of the colonies of the British Empire.2

1. this is based on interviews with Harkaran Nath Misra, 5 Aug 1963; R. Shukla, 8 Aug 1963; UP Police 1916, pars 2046, 2047, 2130, 2194, 2273.

Many of the speeches were on sober subjects, such as education or finance, which lent themselves to less emotional treatment than this. The audiences numbered 20 to 60 in smaller places and two to five hundred in the cities.

While the HRL branches were envisaged by Mrs Besant as loudspeakers carrying the agitation out into the towns and countryside, they were also to act as sounding boards to send the agitation echoing back to Britain. In November 1916, for example, Arundale urged the branches to hold public meetings in protest at Mrs Besant's externment from CP and to send resolutions to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. Most branches appear to have complied, and to have held similar meetings on Tilak's externment from the Punjab in February 1917 and, a fortiori, on Mrs Besant's internment in June. These protest meetings, like those protesting at the indenturing of Indian labourers for overseas, were held in large meeting
places and attracted larger audiences than had attended the rather more "educative" lectures. In Bombay, for instance, the Home Rulers commandeered a large open space known as Shantaram's Chawl, near the area inhabited by millworkers and Maharashtrian government-employees, for meetings attended by ten to twelve thousand.\(^1\) On their tours into Gujarat after Mrs Besant's internment, Jamnadas Dwarkadas and his fellow Home Rulers from Bombay addressed audiences composed of peasant-proprietors, as well as merchants and professional men,\(^2\) and in the UP the Home Rule movement encouraged the members of the Servants of India Society to go into the villages where they told audiences including cultivators, that under Home Rule the Government would tackle the questions of high land rents and rural indebtedness.\(^3\)

Tilak's HRL used much the same techniques although, lacking offices in the smaller towns it relied more heavily on public speeches and on word-of-mouth propaganda by its members than upon the provision of reading rooms.

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2. e.g. *Bombay Police 1917*, pars 841(g) (h) (j) (o), 899(m) (s) (v) (y), 930(k) (x), 949(g).

and other facilities. During its first year, the IHRL published six Marathi and two English pamphlets, of which 47,000 copies were sold, together with one in Gujarati and one in Kannada.\(^1\) Tilak himself undertook a number of speech-tours, as did his leading lieutenants from the six branch headquarters, addressing meetings in towns but also in quite small places: usually their audiences comprised "mostly Brahmins and shopkeepers", but as the agitation became more intense and especially if Tilak himself spoke, large audiences embracing "members of all castes" were attracted.\(^2\) Tilak and his fellow speakers echoed the arguments put forward by Mrs Besant, while assuring their audiences that they might safely join the League as courts had pronounced the demand for swaraj not to be seditious.\(^3\) A device used by Tilak and his fellow speakers to shield themselves against charges of sedition, was the reiteration of loyalty while criticising the Government and its policies. Adapting to Indian conditions an argument used by Carson in defending Ulster's threat to


2. e.g. *Bombay Police 1917*, pars 351(g), 731(g) (k), 785(a), 930(u) (x), 949(g).

3. see ibid., pars 109(f) (h), 156(d) (f).
rebel against the imposition of Irish Home Rule,\textsuperscript{1} Tilak likened the King-Emperor to \textit{brahma}, "without attributes and without form", and the administration to \textit{maya}, or illusion, and argued that to demand a change in the latter from bureaucratic to Indian rule involved no disloyalty to the King.\textsuperscript{2} And in the Karnatak, for instance, Gangadharrao Deshpande, while ostensibly supporting the Government's call for Army volunteers, argued that volunteering would be of no use to India unless she got \textit{swaraj}.\textsuperscript{3}

In an effort to reach a wider audience both Leagues appealed to religious sentiments, although, wishing to avoid alienating Muslims or Hindus by identifying themselves with the other community, they did so cautiously. In Bombay City, for instance, the branches of the two HRLs joined to celebrate the Hindu festival, Dassehra Day, as a national day.\textsuperscript{4} Throughout Maharashtra and the Karnatak meetings of Tilak's HRL were held in temples or before

\begin{itemize}
  \item[1.] see \textit{Mahratta}, 25 Jan 1914, p. 31.
  \item[2.] Tilak, \textit{Writings \& Speeches}, pp. 104–137.
  \item[3.] \textit{Bombay Police 1917}, pars 351(g), 513(c).
  \item[4.] ibid., \textit{1916}, par. 1352.
\end{itemize}
shrines\(^1\) while, after Mrs Besant's internment in particular, meetings of her League were held in temples and, in regions such as Bihar, processions were taken both to mosques and temples.\(^2\)

IV

The Results of the Movement.

Mrs Besant clearly had considerable success in "educating" Indians, in the sense of convincing them of India's readiness for self-government. The Western-educated classes had been persuaded that they should demand self-government and not only demand it but expect it after the War. The "masses" had barely been touched, but a beginning had been made: labouring groups in Bombay, Ahmedabad and other cities and agriculturists in some districts of Gujarat and UP had heard the British Government criticised and blamed for their troubles. Admittedly the two Leagues never claimed to have more than 60,000

1. ibid., 1917, pars 583(a) (b), 637(c), 930(f), 1039(u).

2. B & O Police 1917, pars 965, 1128, 1129; Bombay Police 1917, pars 513(c), 583(a) (b), 701(c); Home Poll Dep. July 1917, no. 35, p. 6; ibid., Aug 1917, no. 2, p. 20; Besant, "Internment Diary", 17 July 1917; New India, 31 July 1917, pp. 6b, 8b-c.
members between them and so were small, compared to what was to follow under Gandhi. These numbers, however, were not an adequate indication of the Leagues' effectiveness, since their propaganda and that of the Servants of India Society, which they provoked into similar activity, reached many who were not HRL members. Even in Bengal, for example, where the HRL was relatively inactive, the press took up Mrs Besant's arguments and encouraged criticism of the Government by publicising the restrictions placed on Mrs Besant and Tilak and their court actions. ¹

Mrs Besant had asserted that a loud and reiterated demand would move the British Government to remedy injustices, and Dadabhai Naoroji had endorsed this assertion. Their faith was justified by the results of many agitational campaigns, from that for the abolition of slavery through Bradlaugh's on behalf of the rights of atheists to that for Irish Home Rule. But each of these campaigns had been carried out in England and had protagonists in Parliament. The British Auxiliary of

¹. see e.g. Bengal NP, 1916, pp. 1527, 1559, 1575, 1563; 1917, pp. 23, 134, 173, 192, 211, 231, 783.
Mrs Besant's HRL was inactive and Mrs Besant was too busy in India to go to England to infuse life into it. Furthermore Britain was distracted by the War and, while Tilak's HRL paid Rs 25,000 for a representative to put the Home Rule case in England after Mrs Besant's internment, he received scant attention.¹

Nevertheless Mrs Besant and Tilak were partly successful in moving British statesmen to grant self-government. The desire to reward India for her great contribution to the War and the hope of lessening the impact of the Home Rule agitation in India prompted Chelmsford (who succeeded Hardinge as Viceroy in 1916) and his Council to send home the despatch of November 1916, suggesting the enlargement of the Indian legislatures and the enunciation of self-government as the goal of British policy in India.² The intensity of the Home Rule agitation however convinced the Secretary of State, Austen Chamberlain, that this was an inadequate response. "It is obvious from the papers you send me", he wrote to Chelmsford,

that the opinion of the vocal classes in

1. Mahratta, 10 Mar 1918, p. 111.
India is moving very fast.... The politicians of India have found out how to agitate.... I doubt whether a mere pronouncement ex cathedra by either you or me would be accepted by any of these gentlemen in India, or would prevent even the wildest of their proposals from receiving a large measure of support at home.  

Chamberlain was anxious not only to expand the Councils, but also to increase their "authority and responsibility." He moved slowly however, and in response to the pleas of the Governors, the Viceroy urged on him the need for speed in making an announcement of forthcoming reforms, in order to "stay the agitation" and to draw Moderates away from it.

Mrs Besant and Dadabhai and Tilak were clearly on the right path. But in demanding "Home Rule not by instalments, but Home Rule complete and immediately after the War" they had set their sights, and those of the national movement too high. While Chamberlain was moving toward reforms, he intended that "rash and dangerous


2. Chamberlain to Chelmsford, 2 May 1917, par. 11 in ibid.


changes" should be avoided. India would only get an instalment of Home Rule. That it would, however, was largely due to the agitation.

Up to the time of Mrs Besant's internment there was no hint that India would obtain even so much. On the contrary, the Governors deprecated the demands for self-government contained in the Congress-League Scheme and seem to have decided on repression instead of reform. This made the Moderates draw toward the Home Rulers in criticism of the Government. In protesting at Mrs Besant's internment, the Bombay Moderates said that this policy of repression is being construed as an attempt on the part of the authorities in India to force the Indian public to accept without demur such post-war reforms of a minor character as the Government of India are believed to have formulated, without giving effect to the essential features of the scheme of reforms which the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League have conjointly framed.

Mrs Besant had hoped that her programme of agitating while avoiding passive resistance would be accepted by the Moderates and, with the help of British repression and British obduracy, she had succeeded. If, however, the

Government could convince the Moderates that it intended to grant reforms increasing the power of Indian legislators, it was clear that it could detach many Moderates from alliance with Mrs Besant.

While the Moderates might join her in elaborating the Congress-League Scheme of Reforms and defending it, they were not willing to allow her and Tilak to obtain control of Congress. This Mrs Besant and Tilak had hoped to do at the 1916 Congress Session with the help of their HRLs. At the inauguration of the AIHRL in September 1916, Arundale laid down that every member of the League "should find out what DCC he can belong to and should immediately join it....get himself elected as a delegate to Lucknow" and ensure that this Congress was "committed far more definitely to Home Rule than its immediate predecessor".¹ The officers of the Bombay City branch of Tilak's HRL organised the first "Congress Special" trains to take HRL delegates to Lucknow from western India;² in the elections to the Congress Subjects Committee, the Bombay Presidency delegates under Tilak's guidance elected the HRL slate in toto. Other provinces were less ruthless, but the Home

1. New India, 4 Sept 1916, p. 11; 16 Sept 1916, p. 3d; cf. Mrs Besant in ibid., 5 July 1916, p. 8c.

2. D. D. Sathaye, My Recollections about the Congress and Lokamanya Tilak.
Rulers were in a decided majority, both in the open session and in the Subjects Committee.¹

Nevertheless the Moderates still controlled the Bombay and Bengal PCCs; through them they held a large number of places on the AICC and had elected a Bengal Moderate, A. C. Mazumdar, President of the Session; and they held *ex-officio* positions on the Subjects Committee.² The Moderates used their positions, and played upon Mrs Besant's and Tilak's desire for unity, to prevent the Home Rule leaders getting their way in the Subjects Committee. The Committee passed by a large majority Mrs Besant's resolution claiming Home Rule at the end of the War but when the Moderates threatened to oppose this in the open session and reveal disunity in Congress, she withdrew it.³

More important, Tilak proposed that a compact Working Committee be set up to take over the day-to-day executive work from the AICC and to direct agitation. He no doubt calculated that the Home Rule majority would elect a majority of Home Rulers to the new Committee, which

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1. *Bombay Police 1917*, par. 21(b); *New India*, 29 Dec 1916, p. 5a-b.

2. see *Congress 1916*, Report, pp. 133-7; *AICC Minutes*, 30 Dec 1916; *New India*, 1 Dec 1916, p. 5d.

he and Mrs Besant would more easily dominate than the unwieldy AICC,¹ and that by carrying out agitation the Committee would assimilate the work of the HRL. "I cannot adequately tell you", wrote Kelkar to a Moderate, "how anxious Mr Tilak is that there should be a central agency to initiate, organise and carry out the agitation recommended and sanctioned by the National Congress."² But Moderates wished neither to give Tilak and Mrs Besant this chance to consolidate their leadership nor to become responsible through Congress for rousing agitation. "[T]he Congress was a mere deliberative body", said the President, and ruled Tilak's proposal out of order.³

With this evidence of Moderate obstructiveness before her, Mrs Besant decided that it was not yet time for the HRLs to be amalgamated with Congress. She opposed the suggestion of one Moderate that the HRL branches should affiliate themselves with Congress. She said she "had no objection to affiliation but this should not mean control by the Provincial [Congress] Committee. If every pamphlet

¹. the 1908 Constitution amended in 1915 provided for an AICC of 107 elected members plus ex-Presidents and General Secretaries.


and speech needed the approval of the Committee, work would be impossible". Mrs Besant and Tilak were anxious that Congress should adopt their programme, but only under their leadership.

Through the Home Rule agitation Tilak and Mrs Besant succeeded in providing an outlet for their more fiery supporters and for the energies of the young men who were dissatisfied with the inactivity of Congress. S. M. Paranjpe and Khadilkar, for instance, toured Maharashtra delivering speeches and assisting the branches to enlist members while Gangadharrao Deshpande directed the active Karnatak branch of the IHRL. Tilak's League provided the new generation of Maharashtrian Brahmins with active roles in rousing agitation. Among them, D. V. Gokhale, who was a lawyer in Bombay and then aged 30, eagerly responded to Tilak's call in 1915 to take editorial work in Poona, to prepare for the establishment of his League and to assume its administration. And in Bombay City

1. Bombay Police 1917, par. 21(b).

2. see e.g. ibid., pars 300(f), 351(g), 454(f), 637(c), 670(c) (e) (g) (i).

3. ibid. 1915, pars 1260, 1367; 1916, pars 497, 563(c). D. V. Gokhale was Editor, Sarvajanik Sabha Quarterly, from 1916; Chief Editor, Mahratta, 1918-30; imprisoned in Gandhi's NCO movement, 1921.
the activities of Tilak's League were organised and co-ordinated with those of Mrs Besant's League by a number of young Brahmin professional men, typical of whom was the doctor, D. D. Sathaye. He had attended the Extremists' meeting at Surat and heard Aurobindo speak in Bombay and in 1916-17 spoke at many public meetings, which he helped to organise, recruited delegates for conferences and organised the special trains for the Lucknow Congress.¹

At the Conference called to discuss the formation of Mrs Besant's League at the end of 1915, the young men had been most disappointed with her decision to suspend it and encouraged her to go ahead with the informal preparations for the League. While not all the Theosophists who formed the nuclei of the branches were themselves young, it was to the younger generation that the League first appealed. The Bombay branch was run almost entirely by men in their twenties, non-Theosophists like Shankarlal Banker and the Muslim millowner Umar Sobhani,² as well as the Theosophists. The same was true for the branches in Sind, where most of the leading figures were young professional men, Theosophist and non-Theosophist.³ In

¹. see e.g. Bombay Police 1916, pars 530(c), 1352; 1917 par. 182(c).
². 1890-1926, Director of Bombay Chronicle, which he helped to finance; helped Jinnah organise 1915 Muslim League Session; confidant of Ali Brothers; Sec. AIHRL, Bombay branch 1916-17; Gen. Sec. AIHRL 1918-20.
³. e.g. for Hyderabad branch see Bombay Police 1917, pars 182(h), 482(a), 731(b), 841(b); for Karachi branch see ibid., par. 603(e).
the UP it was the young men, like Jawaharlal Nehru and his contemporary at Cambridge, Harkaran Nath Misra, who first joined the League and who, even after Jawaharlal's father and the older men joined it in mid-1917, continued to be its most active workers.

While the Home Rule agitation satisfied the young men's demands for a more active and aggressive policy, there was the possibility that it would not continue to do so. As Mrs Besant denounced the British with increasing vehemence, her young followers became more excited, and at the time of her internment they began to talk of passive resistance. Mrs Besant had rejected passive resistance as a weapon in the Home Rule campaign; if she was still unwilling to embark on passive resistance she would have to find some means of restraining her young followers.

Her HRL was not designed for such a purpose. The formal links between her headquarters at Adyar and the branches were most tenuous; indeed later she was to say that "there is not available for my use even a register, giving the names of all branches and their Secretaries".¹ Like Tilak, of course, she had close informal contact with

¹. A. Besant to A-IHRL Council, 19 June 1918, Adyar Archives.
her lieutenants - even when she was externed from Bombay, for instance, Jamnadas Dwarkadas visited her at Adyar, and she in turn used messengers to inform her of the state of feeling among the members and to relay instructions to them.¹ She had thus substituted informal contact and personal loyalty for elaborate organisation. But the agitation attracted many young men who felt no personal loyalty to Mrs Besant. Among them were a number of Madrasis, including C. Rajagopalachariar ("Rajaji") and S. Satyamurti, who were both admirers of Tilak and Gandhi and hoped that the national movement would adopt passive resistance.² Mrs Besant was thus to be confronted with the problem of devising either a programme which would continue to satisfy those she had helped to rouse, or a means of restraining them from paths which she saw were potentially violent.

The League had begun to reach labouring groups in the cities and peasants in Gujarat and the UP. As yet, however, it had no trade unions, peasant associations or other organisations which would enable it to control mass action, such as the refusal to pay taxes. In teaching

¹ e.g. interview with B. Shiva Rao, 21 Feb 1963; J. Dwarkadas to A. Besant, 27 Feb 1919, Adyar Archives.
² see New India, 22 Feb 1916, p. 9b; 1 Feb 1917, p. 3c.
these groups to criticise the British there lay the danger of provoking violent outbursts which the League was quite inadequate to control. If the young members of the HRL themselves insisted on launching passive resistance this danger would be greatly increased.

Despite these shortcomings the HRLs marked an important stage in the development of the national movement.

The HRLs introduced a new form of organisation and new methods to the national movement. For the first time a network of local political committees covered much of India. Congress had failed to construct the network of DCCs and District Associations foreshadowed in its 1908 Constitution and, since Hume's agitation of 1888, those provincial and district Congress organisations which existed had not aimed to rouse a widespread or continuing agitation. The Extremist agitations in Maharashtra in the 1890s and the Bengal Partition agitation were closer precedents, but these were not roused through local branches nor were they more than provincial in scope.

The wave of protest meetings and demonstrations over Mrs Besant's internment in mid-1917 marked the first occasion on which a nation-wide agitation had been roused. The Home Rule movement awakened areas which had been practically inactive in national politics - Gujarat, Sind,
the UP, Bihar and the four language areas of the Madras mofussil.

The HRLs had also provided rising young nationalists with the opportunity of working together and of collaborating with workers in the districts they visited. Tilak's and Mrs Besant's lieutenants in Bombay City, for example, had co-operated in arranging meetings both in the city and in Maharashtra and Gujarat. Despite the modest articulation of the HRLs, they had created informal channels of communication which would be useful in future political work.

Many men who later became leading figures in the national movement had their first experience of addressing and moving audiences in the course of the Home Rule agitation. Jawaharlal Nehru in the UP and Satyamurti in Madras, for example, received training that the old Congress would never have provided.

But while Mrs Besant and Tilak had established the HRLs they had no desire to cut themselves off from Congress. Indeed, by their alliance with the Moderates in that body they hoped to claim Home Rule on behalf of all of India. At Lucknow they failed to capture control of Congress and gave up - at least temporarily - their idea of amalgamating the HRLs with Congress. Nevertheless they had brought into
Congress a majority of Extremists and young men, who were committed to the goal of Home Rule or, in Gokhale's phrase, "filled with an honest but vague longing for the emancipation of the country". Encouraged by the agitation of 1917, these Home Rulers became increasingly censorious of the British. From now on Congress took its tone and its temper more and more from them.
PART 2:  THE DECLINE OF MRS BESANT AND TILAK

Chapter V

THE NON-BRAHMIN CHALLENGE

I

The anti-Home Rule Movements.

In the previous chapters we have seen that Mrs Besant and Tilak had produced an India-wide agitation through their HRLs and, exploiting the British refusal to grant concessions, they had brought together the Congress Moderates and Extremists behind this agitation. Working with the Muslim League leaders, they had brought Congress and the League together on the programme of attaining self-government with an agreed sharing of power between the two major communities.

Even before this unity was proclaimed at the end of 1916 it was challenged, and the agitation for Home Rule opposed, by organisations representing new social groups from among non-Brahmin Hindu castes, who claimed power and privilege in the political system.

This threatened to disrupt the united front, which Besant and Tilak had tried to present to the British, and in the immediate sense to delay the advance to Home Rule
by persuading the British to make a smaller devolution of power to India. Furthermore it threatened to introduce permanent divisions between different sectors of the Hindu community and thus to divide and weaken the national movement. The challenge to the existing leadership was considerable: they had to neutralize the non-Brahmin movements' opposition to Home Rule in some way and, at the same time, to deal with the threat to the cohesion of the national movement. By and large as will be seen, they had only limited success in solving these problems.

From its inception, Congress had consisted primarily of men from groups in Indian society which had been traditionally associated with learning and administration under the pre-British rulers of the sub-continent, the Brahmins in western India and Madras, the bhadralok (comprised of Brahmins, Vaidyas and Kayasthas) in Bengal and the Brahmins, Kayasthas and Muslims traditionally associated with administration in the United Provinces and Bihar. In addition, the Parsee minority had been prominent in western Indian nationalist politics while in the Punjab, where an influential cadre of Brahmins associated with learning and administration was lacking,
the Hindu moneylending castes had achieved a similar position.¹

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the non-Brahmin castes, which were not traditionally associated with administration but with agriculture, business and soldiery, produced a relatively small number of educated and professional men who identified themselves with the nationalist elite and joined Congress.² An increasing proportion of men associated with business was participating in Congress by the second decade of the twentieth century.³

But during this decade some of the educated members of these non-Brahmin castes realised that they might acquire increased power and status for themselves and for the castes from which they came by drawing back from Congress and forming their own organisations. These organisations opposed the granting of Home Rule and demanded that in any Reforms introduced in the Indian legislatures seats should be reserved in separate

¹. see Charts in P. C. Ghosh, Indian National Congress, 1892-1909, pp. 23-6.

². e.g. P. Kesava Pillai, C. Sankaran Nair, P. Theagaraya Chetti in the south; V. R. Shinde in Maharashtra.

³. see Appendices B and C.
electorates for the non-Brahmin community in approximately the same ratio as their proportion of the population. Since the Brahmins were in a minority everywhere—they were about 4 per cent of the Madras population, for example—this programme would deprive the Brahmins of power and reserve it for the non-Brahmins.

This rapid increase in the self-assertiveness of the non-Brahmin elite in the second decade of the twentieth century may be traced in part to the increase in the wealth of the agricultural and trading castes among the non-Brahmins due to high prices during World War I, which enabled them to undertake the costs of organisation. Of much greater importance, however, as an incentive to organise was the Home Rule agitation of 1915-17.

The demand for Home Rule at the end of the War was tantamount to demanding power for the existing nationalist elite, which still consisted largely of Brahmins, Kayasthas and other non-agricultural and non-trading castes. By implication the national leadership


2. some indications of the numerical dominance of Congress by these castes is provided by Appendices B and C: clearly it was not as overwhelming as the non-Brahmins claimed; furthermore it was declining.
thus ignored the aspirations of the rising non-Brahmin groups. The non-Brahmins must organise themselves if they would not be swamped by the Brahmins.

They were also encouraged to organise by the adherence of the Moderates to the Congress-League Scheme. Hitherto the Moderates, who had controlled Congress, had been committed to gradual progress to self-government accompanied by social reform and the extension of education to all levels of Indian society. Such a gradualist doctrine was not incompatible with the acquisition of power by the emerging non-Brahmins. But with the Moderates' adherence to the demand for rapid progress to self-government in 1916, the non-Brahmins could no longer rely on the Moderates to state the case for them and were thus further encouraged to organise to speak for themselves.¹ When the Moderates left Congress in 1918, the non-Brahmins re-established contact with them and joined them in opposing the demands of Congress for larger Reforms.²

There had been indications since the outbreak of

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1. see A. B. Latthe, Memoirs of His Highness Shri Shahu Chhatrapati, Maharaja of Kolhapur, II, 565.
2. see e.g. Bombay Police 1920, pars 522, 590, 591, 641(a).
the War that the Government was moving toward a favourable response to the demands for reform at the end of the War. At the end of 1916 the rumour spread that the Government was sending home a despatch, inadequate from the Home Rulers' point of view to be sure, but embodying suggestions for reforms nevertheless. Then in August 1917 the Secretary of State, Edwin Montagu, announced that Britain would allow India to take "substantial steps" in the direction of responsible government, and that he would visit India to receive representations on how substantial these steps should be and to whom the responsible government should be devolved. ¹ Clearly, if the non-Brahmins wished to protect and advance their interests as a group they had to organise quickly. Montagu's Announcement and visit proved to be the principal catalysts in the precipitation of organisations representing groups wishing to promote their own interests and the non-Brahmins were no exception. ² Not only did organisations and deputations from among the richer peasant and trading groups submit representations to Montagu but


2. see e.g. the organisations formed in the months between the Announcement and the visit to present addresses: Montagu Addresses.
organisations of poorer peasant and agricultural-labourer castes, of tenant groups and the depressed and outcastes\textsuperscript{1} did likewise, urging that the granting of Home Rule be delayed and that in any reforms that were made, their interests should be safeguarded through the reservation of seats for their community in the legislatures.

In this regard the Muslim demand for separate electorates, to which Minto and Morley had acceded in the 1909 Reforms, had shown the way. A non-Brahmin paper in the south had noted in 1914 that

\textit{...the Muhammadans have lost nothing through their separatist activities. On the other hand it is becoming clearer every day that, because the Muslim League got all that it wanted, its spokesmen are now ready to fraternise with their Hindu fellow subjects and pursue common objects in concert.}\textsuperscript{2}

The lesson was driven home when the Congress agreed to accept separate representation for the Muslims in its 1916 pact with the Muslim League.

In their opposition to the demand for Home Rule the non-Brahmins were encouraged directly and indirectly by

\textsuperscript{1} see e.g. addresses of Ahirs; Tenantry of the UP; the Namasudras of Bengal; Adi-Dravidians; Dheds and other out-caste groups, Montagu Addresses, pp. 11, 87, 89, 92.

\textsuperscript{2} Malayali, 1 Aug 1914 in HFM Delhi, Region VIII, file 14/2.
Government officials and by the British community in India.\(^1\) A prominent official of the Madras Government,\(^2\) for instance, constituted himself spokesman for the non-Brahmins and provided them with much of their indictment of the Brahmins and their arguments against Home Rule. And in western India the Maharaja of Kolhapur encouraged the anti-Home Rule non-Brahmin movement and was under no delusion in believing that he would ingratiate himself with the British by doing so. The non-Brahmins indeed could reasonably expect to further their interests more by such a \textit{de facto} alliance with the Government in opposition to the Home Rule movement than by attempting to come to terms with the Home Rule movement itself. In the short term they might hope to receive the loaves and fishes that the Government had at its disposal and in the longer term they might delay Home Rule at least until they could speak from a position of greater equality with the Brahmins in the national movement.

Recent research has linked the rise of non-Brahmin

\(^1\) for the European community's encouragement of organisations opposed to Home Rule among the lowcaste Namasudras, see e.g. Bengal NP, 1917, pp. 299, 300, 1077, 1182.

\(^2\) Sir Alexander Cardew, Member of the Governor's Executive Council, Madras, 1914-29; see Swadesamitran, 10 Jan 1913 in HFM Delhi, Region VIII, file 14/2; JSC on G of I Bill, Evidence, pp. 333-41.
movements to the rise of affluent socio-economic groups among the non-Brahmin castes in the later part of the nineteenth and in the twentieth centuries. The two most important of these groups were the wealthy peasant-proprietors and the trader-moneylenders. As these groups acquired wealth so they began to educate their sons, some of whom sought admittance to professional and administrative positions outside the occupations traditionally prescribed for their caste. In this they followed far behind the Brahmins and Kayasthas and bhadralok, and in areas where the latter had entrenched themselves in the professions, administrative jobs and national politics, the rising economic groups found entry into these avenues difficult. For this they blamed the "Brahmin oligarchy" which they found already in charge of these posts and whom they suspected, rightly or wrongly, of a "conspiracy" against all who were not Brahmins. With their rise to affluence and their entry into the professions, these

1. R. Kumar, "State and Society in Maharashtra in the Nineteenth Century", pp. 484-94; 504-9 summarises his thesis that the ryotwari system and its modifications gave rise to wealthy moneylenders and to an affluent stratum of peasants in Maharashtra, and, further traces the rise of anti-Brahminism in this region to the growth of a non-Brahmin professional elite; to the "rise of a rich peasantry anxious to find for itself a place in the sun"; and to the spread of the idea that "progress and prosperity and social mobility were desirable and attainable."
non-Brahmin groups sought not only power and positions but also prestige and status, and this, in the areas where they were dominant, the Brahmins were loath to give.

The non-Brahmin movements would therefore be strongest in areas where there were specially vigorous, rising socio-economic groups among the non-Brahmins, who found their ambitions for place, power and prestige frustrated by a dominant, Brahmin group. Such a confrontation occurred in a particularly marked degree in the Deccan and in the south. In the Deccan Brahmin dominance stemmed not only from ritual superiority but also from the exercise of political power by the Peshwa, who as a Chitpavan Brahmin had placed his fellow-castemen in landowning and administrative positions from which they could dominate Deccan society.¹ In Madras the Brahmins had relegated all other castes to the status of Sudras—fourth in the fourfold varna scale—or below. The HRLs highlighted the virtual monopolisation of positions in the nationalist elite in these two areas by Brahmins, for Tilak's lieutenants were (with few exceptions) like him, members of the Chitpavan sub-caste, while in Madras Mrs Besant's closest associates were Aiyar Brahmins.

¹. R. Kumar, op. cit., p. 62.
The way was prepared for the emergence of a rich peasantry in south and western India by the conscious attempt on the part of the British during the nineteenth century to base their power in those areas on a stable and contented peasantry.¹ In much of Madras and in the Deccan and Gujarat the peasant was given ownership of the land under the *ryotwari* system. By improving their land and buying more and by lending money to their less thrifty or fortunate fellows, the more enterprising became wealthy. In the Punjab, although the *mahalwari* system theoretically made the village responsible collectively for the land revenue, the members of the village were in fact confirmed in possession of the land; there were, in addition, numbers of hereditary landholders.²

In east and north-eastern India, on the other hand, the British had made *zamindari* or *taluqdari* land-settlement with the large landowners, the *zamindars* or *taluqdars*, who were thus placed on possession of the land, with the mass of peasants as their tenants or as landless labourers. In this situation no class of peasant-proprietors, rich or otherwise, could emerge.

1. see R. Kumar, op. cit., passim.

British social engineering in the *ryotwari* and *mahalwari* areas also had results which were neither intended nor desired. Chief among these was the acquisition of land by moneylenders who had no intention of working or improving the soil but who grew wealthy on the income from their debtor-tenants. This was especially the case in large parts of the Punjab where Hindu moneylenders expropriated large numbers of peasants.¹ Furthermore the introduction of modern industry and the growth of commerce gave the moneylending and trading groups opportunity for the acquisition of wealth in the ports and cities.

In the Deccan, the wealthy peasant-proprietors of the Karnatak were either Lingayats or Chaturth Jains, those of Maharashtra Marathas.² The moneylenders and traders were predominantly Jains or Lingayats.³ From among these groups emerged the non-Brahmin professional, administrative and business elite which was to lead the non-Brahmin movement in the Deccan. The Jains and

2. Census of India, 1901, IX, part 1, 183; 1911, XII, part 1, 184.
3. Census, 1911, VIII, part 1, 251; part 2, 260-1.
Lingayats each formed a religious group with its own priesthood distinct from the Brahmins, and as such had a strong sense of identity and separateness. In addition the Lingayats, as Kannada-speakers were marked off by language from the Maharashtrian Brahmins who dominated the professions and administration in the Karnatak.¹

The Marathas were not divided from the Brahmins of Maharashtra by language or adherence to different religious beliefs, but the leading families among them traced their descent from the Maratha rulers who had predated the Peshwas, and they claimed a status above that of Sudra which had been ascribed to them as agriculturists by the Brahmins.²

In Madras, the most prominent among the rich peasants were the Vellalars (often known by their title of Pillai), the largest of the Tamil peasant-proprietor castes, which predominated in the Tamil-speaking area of the Presidency from Tanjore northward and had spread into the southern Telugu-speaking area and into Malabar


to the west.\(^1\) There was strong competition between the Vellalars and the Brahmins for the acquisition of land: by entering into the business of lending money to poorer peasants the richer members of the Vellalar community increased their hold on the land in the late nineteenth century.\(^2\) A similarly affluent stratum had emerged among the Nairs of Malabar, traditionally a warrior caste and formerly the rulers of that area, who had striven (in competition, again, with the Brahmins) for control of the land in Malabar under the British.\(^3\) The emergence of a rich peasant stratum was inhibited in the deltaic areas of the Telugu country (the modern Andhra) and in small portions of Tamilnad, notably the far south, by the existence of landlords with whom the British had made permanent settlements.\(^4\) However these landlords were again non-Brahmins and a number of them supported the non-Brahmin movement. Of the trading castes, the

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2. see "Note on Land Transfer and Agricultural Indebtedness" (by E. D. Maclagan, 18 Mar 1895), Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture, Land Revenue (Branch), Oct 1895, A Pros. nos. 72 and 73.


4. Baden-Powell, III, 24; in the Rayalaseema and deltas of Andhra the two great peasant-proprietor castes were the Kapus (or Reddis) and Kammas, but they emerged into politics somewhat later than did the Vellalars: Census, 1911, loc. cit., p. 184; Harrison, *Dangerous Decades*, p.110.
most advanced were the Chettis and the Mudaliars—some of them very wealthy—, the Komatis and the Naidu.\(^1\)

While, as we shall see, these non-Brahmins claimed to speak on behalf of all who were not Brahmins, including the outcastes, they were themselves a minority—they comprised no more than 16 per cent of the population of the Madras Presidency—and regarded themselves as a superior minority: the Vellalars, for instance, looked upon their inferior Sudra brethren and the outcastes with as much hauteur as did the Brahmins and were reliant upon a docile agricultural-labour force.

In Gujarat the *ryotwari* land-settlement had led to the emergence of wealthy peasant-proprietors, the Anavlas and Patidars, and the cotton industry had given rise to wealthy trading groups, the Vanis and Bhatias.\(^3\) The Brahmins of this area, however, did not possess the social dominance of those of the Deccan and Madras and did not bar the rising groups' way to place or prestige. This

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2. Baden-Powell, III, 121, n. 3; Desabhaktan, 13 Dec 1917, in HFM Delhi, file 16/2; Home Poll Dep. Dec 1918, no. 23; Census, 1911, loc. cit., p. 184; see JSC on G of I Bill, Evidence, QQ 3142-9, 6109, pp. 188, 339.

was reflected in the Home Rule movement, in which, as we have seen, some of Mrs Besant's most prominent lieutenants in Bombay were Bhatias and they, in turn, in their forays into Gujarat, called on the wealthy peasant and trading castes to form branches of the HRL.

In the Punjab, the situation was more complicated, and is still awaiting thorough investigation.\(^1\) It is clear however that the Hindu moneylending castes had appropriated much of the arable land and were entrenched in the professions and the national movement, and that their economic and political dominance was deeply resented by the peasants and hereditary land-holding castes and tribes. The Government had stifled nationalist politics in the Punjab between 1907 and 1917 and had thus inhibited the rise both of Home Rule agitation and of agitation among the peasantry opposing it, but in view of Montagu's visit to discuss Reforms in 1917, land-owning elements, other than the Hindu moneylenders, organised to protect and further their interests vis-à-vis the moneylenders. Two Associations claimed to speak on behalf of the agriculturists. One, speaking for the

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1. particularly for the period after 1900: P. van den Dungen, "Note on Punjab Rural Society before 1900".
Sikh and Hindu peasants, urged that "the rural population should have a preponderating share of the elected seats" in the reformed Councils. The other, speaking for the Muslim "zemindars" (probably hereditary landholders rather than peasants) claimed a similar share of seats and requested enfranchisement for those paying over Rs 50 land-revenue or income-tax, that is for the relatively well-to-do.\(^1\) The agriculturists of the Punjab were divided among the three religious communities, Hindu, Sikh and Muslim, but their defence of their interests in 1917 foreshadowed their co-ordination in the Unionist Party of the 1920s in opposition to the Hindu moneylenders and the national movement.

The UP, Bihar and Bengal on the other hand were areas of landlord-settlement. Here the peasantry were tenants or labourers who had less opportunity than the proprietors of the west and south for the acquisition of wealth and hence education that would fit them for professional or administrative jobs. By the second decade of the twentieth century, however, a few members of these groups had secured education and organised

\[1\] ibid.; Address of the Punjab Muslim Association, Montagu Addresses, pp. 4-5; Address of the Punjab Zamin-dar Central Association, ibid., pp. 12-13.
sabhas to represent their caste fellows. Montagu's visit in 1917 provoked representations from tenants and agricultural labourers in these areas opposing rapid advance to Home Rule and requesting separate representation for these groups.

In the UP and Bihar the resentment of the tenants and labourers toward their landlords was growing. The professional classes from which the nationalist elite was drawn in these provinces had links with the landlords, who had been their chief employers, and they were thus in danger of being identified with an economic elite whom the tenants were coming to regard as oppressors. The members of the nationalist elite were not themselves landlords, however, and from 1917 onward, increasing numbers of them, inspired by Gandhi's example, championed the grievances of the tenants against the landlords.

In Bengal the lines were drawn sharply between the agriculturists and the bhadralok, who were dominant in land-holding as well as in the professions and national

1. Addresses of Joint Deputation of Ahir Mahasabhas, and of Bengal Namasudra Association, Montagu Addresses, pp. 11, 92; Montagu, Diary, p. 48.

2. see Addresses of the Ahir Mahasabhas and UP Tenantry, Montagu Addresses, pp. 11, 92.

politics and whose traditions led them to regard agricultural work as defiling. ¹ The articulate Hindu agriculturists, especially the Namasudras, were resentful of bhadralok dominance and, as in the case of the Hindu peasantry in the Punjab, were in the 1920s to join with the Muslim peasantry under Muslim leadership in opposing the Hindu national politicians. ²

Thus the absence of anti-Home Rule, non-Brahmin movements in the north of India comparable to those in the south and west did not mean that the national leadership was not confronted there also by demands for a share of power from rising socio-economic groups or by opposition to the rapid granting of Home Rule from depressed groups. The stability of the national movement was least threatened in Gujarat, where the aspirations of the rising peasant and trading-caste groups were not thwarted by a dominant Brahmin-professional elite, and in the UP and Bihar, where rising socio-economic groups were lacking and the national elite identified itself with the dissatisfaction of the larger, depressed groups. In

¹. this is discussed at length in J. H. Broomfield, op. cit., pp. 237-42; see N. K. Bose, "Some Aspects of Caste in Bengal", in Man in India, XXXVIII, no. 2 (June 1958), 88.

². see e.g. J. N. Mandal, "Pledges & Assurances", Times of India, 9 Oct 1950, pp. 10-11.
the Punjab and Bengal there were indications that the
dominance of the Hindu, moneylending castes and the
bhadralok in the national movement would be threatened,
and with it the stability of the national movement itself
in those areas. The immediate and most vigorous challenge,
however, came from the non-Brahmin movements in the
Deccan and Madras.

The awakening resentment of the Maharashtrian agri-
culturists toward Brahmin dominance was first expressed
in the founding in 1873 of the Satya Shodhak Samaj
(Society for the Propagation of Truth) by an educated
member of the agricultural community.¹ This Samaj was
intended to enlighten non-Brahmin agriculturists of
their exploitation by Brahmin lawyers, officials and
village accountants and to dissuade them from employing
Brahmin priests. During the first decade of the twen-
tieth century, the Brahmins angered the leading Maratha
families by refusing to recognise the Kshatriya status
(second in the varna hierarchy) claimed by them. A
native ruler, the Maharaja of Kolhapur, who stood first

¹ Jotirao Fule, 1827-73, Mali (gardening) caste, edu-
cated by Christian missionaries, published Gulamgeri
("Slavery") in 1873, charging Brahmins with oppressing
agriculturists; extracts in English from Gulamgeri held
at HFM Bombay, II; cf. Latthe, I, 322-4; II, 373-6.
among these families, retaliated by installing non-Brahmin advisers and, with them, reviving the Satya Shodhak Samaj in his domains and in the surrounding areas of Maharashtra and the Karnataka in British India. The launching of the Home Rule agitation provoked the Maharaja and his advisers to launch a counter-agitation through the Samaj. The Maharaja helped to finance several newspapers, and a number of Maratha, Jain and Lingayat lecturers, of whom the most outstanding was A. B. Latthe. The lecturers toured Maharashtra and the Karnataka, denouncing the Home Rule agitation as part of a Brahmin conspiracy to continue their dominance of the agriculturists; they matched Home Rule and Congress Conferences with rival Shodhak Samaj Conferences, and established branches of the Samaj. Montagu's Announcement foreshadowing progress toward self-government caused a redoubling of these efforts. The Samajists held meetings in the name of the outcastes; and they established


2. Deccan Ryot, English weekly, publ. in Poona, ed. by A. B. Latthe; Vibhakar, Anglo-Kanarese weekly, publ. in Belgaum, ed. by P. R. Chikodi; Jagaruk, Anglo-Marathi weekly, publ. in Poona, ed. by V. R. Kothari: Latthe, II 575; Bombay NP, 1917, Index.

3. born 1887, Jain, a lawyer; adviser to the Maharaja since 1912; other lecturers included Marathas, B. Yadav, B. Jadhav, G. D. Naik; a Jain, B. Patil; Lingayats, R. B. Artal, F. G. Holkathi; see e.g. Bombay Police 1918, pars 578, 664(a), (b), (c).
Associations to make representations to Montagu on behalf of the Marathas, the Lingayats and other agricultural castes, as well as the outcastes, each of which requested that, if advance were made toward responsible government, they should receive separate communal representation.¹

The first open expression of resentment at the Brahmin monopolisation of administrative positions in Madras was made by members of the non-Brahmin professional and business elite in their evidence before the Public Services Commission in 1912.² This elite received its main impetus to organise in furtherance of its interests in response to the Home Rule agitation under Mrs Besant. In her Theosophical preaching and in her call for the rebuilding of a "new India" she continually invoked the greatness of Brahmanical Hinduism and philosophical systems, notably Advaita.³ But, as has been pointed

1. Bombay Police 1915, par. 569; 1916, pars 610(d); cf. 530(e), 563(f), 610(c); 1917, pars 760(f), 930(f), 1058, 1081, 1224(u), 1245(j), (k), 1288; cf. for 1918 developments, 1918, par. 578; Home Poll Dep. Mar 1918, no. 41, p. 6; May 1918, no. 22, 'Bombay'; May 1918, no. 64, p. 4; Mahratta, 7 May 1916, p. 219; Matthew, Patil, p. 119; Addresses of Deccan Ryots' Association, Marathas, Lingayats, Backward Classes in Montagu Addresses, pp. 68-70, 89-90; Montagu, Diary, p. 148; R. Kumar, op. cit., p. 508.

2. Swadesamitran, 10 Jan 1913; Madras Standard, 17 Jan 1913; cf. Kistna Patrika, 22 Feb 1913, in HPM Delhi, Region VIII, file 14/2.

3. see Chapter II above.
out recently, most caste non-Brahmins in the south were adherents of Saiva Siddhantism, which was distinct from the systems of thought adhered to by Tamil Brahmins, and were angered by Mrs Besant's equation of Hindu with Brahmanical values. Her association with Brahmins and her eulogies of their intellectual eminence led the non-Brahmins to regard her as "the Irish Brahmani" working for the benefit of the Brahmins. This impression appeared to be confirmed at the 1916 Madras Provincial Conference when, in an effort to identify herself with the impetuous young men of Madras politics, she vigorously opposed the provision in the Conference reforms resolution that one-fifth of the seats in the Madras legislature should be reserved for nomination by the Governor, even though the non-Brahmins present pointed out to her it was intended that the Governor should ensure the representation of the politically-backward

1. E. Irschick, "A Preliminary Note on the Intellectual Background to Tamil Separatism, 1900-29" (unpublished paper, University of Chicago), pp. 8-9, n. 25.


3. Non-Brahman, 28 Jan 1917 in HFM Delhi, Region VIII, file 16/2.
non-Brahmins. Furthermore there was deep personal enmity between Mrs Besant and T. M. Nair, a doctor and medical journalist who was to become one of the non-Brahmin leaders, and she had exacerbated this by helping to defeat him in the election to the Imperial Legislative Council in 1916. In December 1916, three months after the inauguration of Mrs Besant's HRL and at the time the Government was rumoured to have sent home its Reforms despatch, the non-Brahmin South Indian Liberal Federation (or "Association") was founded, which issued a Manifesto opposing the attempt to "undermine the influence and authority of the British Rulers who alone in the present circumstances of India are able to hold the scales even between creed and class".

The South Indian Liberal Federation comprised a portion of the non-Brahmin professional and business elite of Madras City and a number of large landowners, Zamindars as well as peasant proprietors, under the

2. see I. Irschick, "Politics and Social Conflict in South India: The Non-Brahmin Movement and Tamil Separatism 1916 to 1929", Ch. II, pp. 30-1; the Editor of Justice, Madras [i.e. T. M. Nair], Evolution of Mrs Besant, being the Life and Public Activities of Mrs Annie Besant, pp.321-333; 336; A. Besant, "Dr Nair and Annie Besant", pp.ii-iv.
leadership of P. Theagaraya Chetti, a leading Madras merchant, and Dr T. M. Nair. The elitist nature of the Federation was demonstrated by the fact that it had only 300 members in October 1917. While the Federation’s promise to found branches in the mofussil was fulfilled in but a perfunctory manner, it published newspapers in English, Tamil and Telugu, and matched Home Rule meetings and conferences with anti-Home Rule meetings and angry demonstrations. Following Montagu’s Announcement these activities increased, and the Federation also held meetings claiming to represent outcastes. In their Address to Montagu, the Federation deprecated any rapid advance to self-government and demanded separate representation which would have placed Brahmins in a

1. Home Poll Dep. Jan 1917, no. 45; P. T. Chetti was President of the South India Chamber of Commerce.


3. Non-Brahman, English weekly; Justice, English daily; Dravidan, Tamil daily; Andraprakasika, Telugu daily; Home Poll Dep. Mar 1917, no. 33; June 1917, no. 69.

4. New India, 24 May 1917, p. 9c-d; Home Poll Dep. Apr 1917, no. 60; June 1917, no. 69; Sept 1917, no. 6; Mar 1918, no. 40.

5. ibid., Nov 1917, no. 30; Jan 1918, no. 59.

6. see Address of the Non-Brahman Communities of Madras Presidency, Montagu Addresses, p. 59.
permanent minority in the Madras Councils.  

These non-Brahmin and low-caste movements threatened to delay the advance to Home Rule. The addresses presented to Montagu, demanding safeguards for politically-backward and economically-depressed groups and opposing the rapid devolution of power to the "articulate classes", provided welcome propaganda for the British opponents of reform and gave a hollow ring to the claim of Congress and the Muslim League to speak for "all creeds, classes and communities". They threatened to divide and weaken the national movement, more immediately in Madras and the Deccan and prospectively in the Punjab and Bengal.

II

The Home-Rule Leaders' Response.

Mrs Besant and Tilak recognised that they must counter these threats. They had to demonstrate their own representative character and the unrepresentative character of the non-Brahmin movements and they had to resolve in some way the conflict between the old national elite and the rising non-Brahmin elite. They might try to weaken their opponents by counter-propaganda; try

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1. see Montagu Addresses, pp. 58-9; JSC on G of I Bill, Evidence, K. V. Reddi on behalf of South Indian Liberal Federation, pp. 175-8 and QQ 3202-4, p. 190.

2. see Addresses of the AICC and the Council of the AIML, Montagu Addresses, p. 15.
to distract them from their special interests, by invoking shared religious interests or the wider interest of patriotism; or attempt to undermine the new elite, by setting up rival organisations; or try to come to terms with them, by accepting some of their demands and obliging the old elite groups to give up some of their special claims.

It seems certain that sooner or later the leaders of the national movement would have to come to terms with the non-Brahmin groups, and prevail upon the old elite to share power with them. Tilak, however, had identified himself with the conservative majority of his Chitpavan Brahmin community and wished without doubt to preserve its social and political dominance in Maharashtra. Mrs Besant was not committed in the same way to the preservation of the Brahmin position. She had warned the Madras Brahmins that they must prepare to share their position with others or face an equivalent of the French Revolution,¹ and in Bombay and northern India she had worked with non-Brahmins and Muslims. Nevertheless in Madras she had identified herself closely with the Brahmins and was neither willing nor, if she wished to

retain her leadership of the Congress there, able to dissociate herself from that community. She and Tilak therefore made little straightforward attempt to come to terms with the new elites, but they used every other weapon in their armoury to avert the threats to the national movement.

They began by trying to ignore the non-Brahmin movements. In their newspapers they gave them as little publicity as possible: after deploring the lack of patriotism revealed in the non-Brahmin Manifesto, New India announced that its columns were closed to correspondence on the matter.¹ Like the Hindu and Tilak's papers it rarely mentioned non-Brahmin meetings or demonstrations, except to dismiss them as "packed-up".²

But silence in the press was matched by more vigorous counter-attacks from the platform. At meetings and conferences in Maharashtra and the Karnatak, Tilak and his lieutenants argued that the Home Rule movement did not aim at Brahmin oligarchy.³ In Madras Mrs Besant very

2. see e.g. Mahratta, 7 May 1916, p. 219.
3. see Bombay Police 1917, pars 1080 (m), (n).
wisely left the task of denying that the Home Rule movement was aiming at a Brahmin oligarchy to an honoured non-Brahmin Congressman, P. Kesava Pillai.\(^1\) Although Mrs Besant's most prominent co-workers in Madras were Brahmins she had contacts and supporters among the wealthy landowning and Chetti commercial families, and while the non-Brahmin movement was in its initial stages she was able to call on them to preside at conferences to give an appearance of reality to such denials. Positions of honour at nationalist conferences remained as a bait to be offered to important non-Brahmins who were wavering between the Home Rule and non-Brahmin movements.\(^2\) Tilak also used this device; early in 1918, for example, he asked the young M. R. Jayakar, a Pathare Prabhu, to preside at the Poona District Conference.\(^3\) Tilak's staunchest non-Brahmin supporter was V. R. Shinde, a Maratha, who had joined Ranade's Prarthana Samaj and had devoted himself to the betterment of the outcastes

1. see. e.g. Home Poll Dep. Jan 1917, no. 45; Mar 1917, nos 27, 32 and 33; Apr 1917, no. 61, 'Madras'; New India, 1 Jan 1917, p. 7(b).

2. among these was C. Karunakara Menon, the editor of Indian Patriot, see Home Poll B, May 1917, nos 445-8.

through the Depressed Classes Mission. In both these institutions he was associated with Brahmins who were working for social reform and for social harmony. Tilak's lieutenants also had friends and political co-workers among educated non-Brahmins who took a similar attitude and who supported the Home Rule movement on grounds of patriotism.

Mrs Besant and Tilak appealed to Hindu religious sentiment as a means of uniting lower-caste Hindus with Brahmins in support of Home Rule. After Mrs Besant's internment in 1917 particularly, her lieutenants organised meetings and worship in temples in Madras and throughout India. It was necessary of course to avoid giving the impression that the Home Rule movement was purely Hindu in Muslim areas: in Bihar, for example, Home Rule processions were taken to both temples and mosques. Mrs Besant was unaware, apparently, of the

1. interview with Prof. Phatak, 22 June 1963; Bombay Police 1917, par. 59; Matthew, Patil, pp. 120ff.
2. e.g. Malji and Karguppi, Lingayat supporters of G. Deshpande at Belgaum: see Bombay Police 1917, pars 899(l), 1080(i); cf. pars 1014(i), 1039(o).
3. New India, 2 June 1917, p. 5b; 16 July 1917, p. 7c; 24 July 1917, p. 6a; 27 July 1917, p. 6a; 31 July 1917, p. 6b; Hindu, 19 June 1917, p. 5; A. Besant, "Internment Diary", 17 July 1917, p. 45: "I am very glad that archanas in temples are being performed for us; that will move the people as nothing else will".
danger that in the south appeals to Hindu religious sentiments could have divisive rather than unifying effects, since, as we have seen, non-Brahmins and Brahmins were adherents of different doctrines. Such dangers were less in Maharashtra, with its traditions of religious, intellectual consensus based on the sharing of bhakti values by all castes. At a Home Rule lecture given in the Maruti temple at Poona in June 1917, Kelkar said:

There are about 250 temples in this city and if speeches on Swaraj are made in them I am sure our propaganda will spread with the utmost rapidity and reap a rich harvest.  

Home Rule meetings were held in temples and before shrines in towns throughout Maharashtra and the Karnataka; speakers used religious imagery and parables; and kirtankars gave recitals in which swaraj was extolled.

1. see R. Kumar, op. cit., e.g. p. 536.
2. Bombay Police 1917, par. 701(c).
3. Bombay Police 1917, pars 156(d), 513(d), 670(e), 1014(h), (i), (l),1057(II), 1058, 1080(i); Home Poll Dep. July 1917, no. 35, p. 6; Aug 1917, no. 2, p. 20.
4. e.g. Khaparde, see Bombay Police 1917, pars 637(c), (d).
5. singers of kirtans, religious songs.
Remembering the Hindu-Muslim riots following his Ganpati and Shivaji Festivals in the 1890s, Tilak was careful in 1917-19 to avoid giving offence to the Muslims. Some of his lieutenants however were less cautious and in later years were to encourage anti-Muslim feeling as a means of diverting the non-Brahmin castes from their antipathy toward the Brahmins. The Arya Samaj was to play a similar game in northern India as a means of wooing the Hindu peasantry from its alliance with the Muslims in the Punjab.

The impetus given to the non-Brahmin movements by Montagu's Announcement of August 1917 and his promised visit prompted the nationalist leadership to step up its attempts to woo support from the non-Brahmin groups. A number of non-Brahmins remained supporters of Congress and in September 1917 Mrs Besant's lieutenants encouraged the pro-Home Rule non-Brahmins of Madras to form the Madras Presidency Association, with P. Kesava Pillai as President. The Association held meetings endorsing the

1. During the 1917 Baqr Id riots in Bihar he joined Jinnah in a pacificatory mission to the CP and joined a Moharram procession in Poona; Home Poll Dep. Nov 1917, no. 29, p. 24; Jan 1918, no. 1, p. 7.

Congress-League Scheme in Madras and the *mofussil*,¹ and under its auspices V. O. Chidambaram Pillai and other non-Brahmins toured the Presidency lecturing in Tamil and Telugu in support of Home Rule.² The Association published a Tamil-, and an English-language newspaper, at a loss made good by Mrs Besant's Chetti supporters.³ In Maharashtra Tilak encouraged V. R. Shinde to establish Maratha Leagues in Bombay, Poona and other towns. These Leagues held meetings and Provincial Conferences which were attended by Maratha agriculturists and workmen and addressed by Tilak's Brahmin lieutenants in addition to Shinde himself, and "passed" appropriate resolutions supporting the Congress-League Scheme.⁴

The Home Rulers in Madras sought to undermine potential low-caste support for the anti-Home Rule movement. They were not, however, tempted to follow the —

1. see e.g. Madras Presidency Association: *Presidential Address delivered at the Madura/Ramnad/Tinnevelly Group Conference, 10 Dec 1917, by George Joseph, Bar-at-Law.*

2. Home Poll Dep. Mar 1918, no. 41, 'Madras', par. 9; May 1918, no. 21, p. 3; no. 22, p. 3; no. 65, p. 2; Aug 1918, no. 31, p. 4; other lecturers included P. Vara-darajalu Naidu, Andinarayana Chetti.

3. Home Poll Dep. Jan 1918, no. 60, p. 2; B, Dec 1917, nos 225-28, pp. 13-14; Dep. Mar 1918, no. 41; the Tamil paper was the *Desabhaktan*, the English paper, the *Indian Patriot*.

4. Bombay Police 1917, pars 1224(s), (t), 1245(1), 1288; Home Poll Dep. Jan 1918, no. 60, pp. 4-5.
example of the younger politicians in the UP in espousing the discontents of the low-caste agricultural labourers against the non-Brahmin landowners, since many Brahmins themselves owned land and were unwilling to rouse a socio-economic revolution which would affect their own labourers. In Maharashtra the non-Brahmin movement had permeated the mass of peasants far more thoroughly than in Madras, thanks to the continued efforts of the Satya Shodhak Samaj,¹ and such tactics would have been commensurately more difficult. Here also the Brahmins feared to precipitate social revolution.

The Home Rulers of Madras and Bombay City therefore sought to undermine the potential support for the non-Brahmin movement in the urban proletariat which was small and more easily-controllable than the rural masses. The rise in food prices during the War brought great hardship to Indian workers and from the middle of 1917 strikes occurred in the railways and post-offices which the Home Rulers and Madras Presidency Association assisted with funds and organisational advice.² This

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1. see Matthew, Patil, pp. 115-8, 129ff.

gave them the idea of organising trade unions among the workers in the railway workshops of Madras and Negapatam and the mills of Madras and Madura.¹ They forestalled the South Indian Liberal Federation in acquiring support among the urban proletariat: indeed it was not until April 1918 that the Federation started a trade-union organisation opposed to Home Rule.² In Bombay City the Home Rulers helped the railwaymen and post-office workers to organise, and Shinde's Maratha League held meetings in areas inhabited by working men who were attracted by the tamasha (or "show").³

In founding pro-Home-Rule non-Brahmin organisations and in working among the urban proletariat, the Home Rulers were not only trying to weaken the non-Brahmin movement. They were also hoping to convince Montagu and the British Government of their right to speak on behalf of all "classes and communities", and to convince the British Labour Party, on whom they were to rely

¹ see Home Poll Dep. Mar 1918, no. 40, p. 2; May 1918, no. 64, p. 3; no. 65, p. 2; Aug 1918, no. 29, 'Madras', par. 9; Sept 1918, no. 41, p. 3.
² Home Poll Dep. May 1918, no. 64.
³ see Home Poll B, Jan 1918, nos 487-90, p. 5; Dep. Sept 1917, no. 5, p. 6; B, Sept 1917, nos 139-43; Bombay Police 1917, par. 1245(1).
increasingly for support, of their concern for the masses. They succeeded in the second of these tasks; as to the first, Montagu was not sympathetic to the non-Brahmins' claims for separate representation and did not water down his Reforms in response to the anti-Home Rule agitation.¹

The encouragement given by Tilak and Mrs Besant to the formation of pro-Home-Rule, non-Brahmin organisations marked a step towards coming to terms with the rising groups. If these organisations wished to compete for non-Brahmin support with the organisations opposing Home Rule, they had to further and protect non-Brahmin interests, and, therefore, also demanded safeguards and opportunities for the acquisition of power by the non-Brahmins. In their Addresses to Montagu and Chelmsford, the Madras Presidency Association, the All-India Maratha Conference and the Bombay Depressed Classes Mission all demanded separate electorates or reserved places in the reformed Councils for non-Brahmins.² The reform scheme submitted by the Madras Presidency Association, for example, would

¹. see JSC on G of I Bill, Evidence, passim.
². Montagu Addresses, pp. 48-9, 74, 90.
have made it impossible for Brahmins to stand for more than 35 out of a total of 100 seats open for election to the Madras legislature and, although 45 members (15 Brahmin and 30 non-Brahmin) would have been elected by general constituencies, at least another seven would have been elected by separate non-Brahmin electorates.\(^1\)

While condemning Brahmins to a minority in the legislature this scheme would have still allowed Brahmins to influence voting results through their membership of the general constituencies and was therefore less detrimental to Brahmin influence than the scheme of the South Indian Liberal Federation which demanded a majority of separate non-Brahmin electorates in which Brahmins would be excluded from voting.\(^2\)

Indeed in response to the upsurge of anti-Home Rule propaganda following Montagu's Announcement, Tilak's Mahratta "heartily supported" the demand for special electorates for Lingayats, Marathas and Jains and suggested a round-table conference of caste leaders to work out the details.\(^3\) Mrs Besant remained non-committal on

1. Montagu Addresses, p. 49.
this point\textsuperscript{1} and the Mahratta did not repeat its offer.

Why did Tilak and Mrs Besant not make a more determined effort to come to terms with the non-Brahmins on the basis of separate electorates? Several reasons may be adduced. In the short run, at least, it must have seemed that the movements led by Latthe, Theagaraya Chetti and Dr Nair were unlikely to support Home Rule at any price: their attitude to the national leadership was too embittered; furthermore they believed that the non-Brahmins had more to gain from alliance with the British than with the Home Rule movement. Secondly the national leadership believed that communal representation would have a permanently divisive effect on Hindu society. While the Congress had agreed to separate representation for the Muslims, it had done so on the understanding that this arrangement would be temporary only. Moreover the non-Brahmins demanded too much; the arrangement with the Muslims left the Hindus with a majority (or, at the least, parity) in every legislature whereas the non-Brahmins of the Deccan and Madras envisaged a permanent swamping of the Brahmins by non-Brahmins. The Brahmins of Maharashtra and Madras were quite unwilling to acquiesce

\textsuperscript{1} see e.g. Home Poll Dep. Nov 1917, no. 30, p. 7.
in such a position and it is hardly surprising that the Mahratta dropped its "hearty support" for separate electorates. Finally, even assuming that Tilak and Besant could have got the Brahmins of these two areas to accept communal representation for the non-Brahmins, it was most unlikely that they could have persuaded the dominant Hindu elements in Bengal and the rest of India to agree to such a move, for it would have encouraged similar demands which were as yet weak or inchoate in areas outside western and southern India.

Thus while Besant and Tilak did succeed in winning the support of a considerable number of non-Brahmins for the Home Rule movement and the Congress-League Scheme, they failed either to crush the anti-Home Rule movement or to come to terms with it. The South Indian Liberal Federation remained to become the basis of the Justice Party which achieved the dominant position in the reformed Madras legislature in the 1920s, while in the Deccan the anti-Congress movement among the non-Brahmins gathered in strength and achieved a similar position in the Bombay legislature in alliance with the Moderate Brahmins, who broke away from the Congress in 1918. In both of these areas therefore the national movement was distracted and weakened at a time when new areas, notably the UP and Gujarat, were being drawn into it.
Chapter VI

MRS BESANT'S AND TILAK'S LOSS OF LEADERSHIP:

JUNE 1917 - DECEMBER 1918

Mrs Besant, in conjunction with Tillak and Jinnah had succeeded in re-uniting the Extremists with the Congress Moderates, and in uniting the Congress and the Muslim League in support of the Congress-League Scheme of Reforms at the end of 1916.¹

The Congress-League entente was arrived at by the Hindu and Muslim elites which were active in those two bodies but, as we shall see in this chapter, this reconciliation did not reach to the masses of the two communities. Even among the elite a considerable proportion was dissatisfied with the terms of the Scheme. This was particularly true of the Muslims, a number of whom established organisations to further the objects of Muslims alone, which opposed the Congress-League Scheme – a dangerous portent for the development of communal loyalties which in a later period were to wreck efforts to reconcile the two communities. Furthermore, the younger members of the

¹ see Chapters II, III and IV above.
Muslim League, who had been attracted by the Pan-Islamic propaganda of the Ali Brothers, Ansari and others before 1914, became increasingly assertive and critical of the moderation of Jinnah and the other leaders of the Muslim League in 1917-18, thus introducing instability into the League.

Severe strains also appeared within the Congress between the Moderates on the one hand and the Extremists and young men (who, together, referred to themselves as "Nationalists") on the other. In yoking these two groups together in Congress, Mrs Besant had two aims. First, this "united front" would speak with one voice and would, she hoped, convince the British that it spoke for the whole of India and that its demand for self-government was irresistible. She hoped secondly that the Extremists, once inside Congress, would impart fresh vigour to its demands for self-government, which might satisfy the impetuosity of the young men; and that association with the Moderates would restrain both Extremists and young men. The balance attained between the Moderates and Nationalists in this united front was most precarious and, indeed, it is difficult to see how it could have been maintained for long. On the one hand, the Moderates
(especially those of Bombay) resented Mrs Besant's ascendency in the national movement and Tilak's readmission to it, and were fearful lest Mrs Besant's and Tilak's criticism of the Government bring down the Government's wrath on the movement as a whole.

Dissatisfaction with the Government's obduracy in the face of Indian demands for advance to self-government prompted the Moderates of other provinces to override their Bombay colleagues in agreeing to the formation of Mrs Besant's united front, but it was clear that if the British obduracy softened the Moderates might be wooed away from the united front. On the other hand the Extremists had advocated the resort to passive resistance as a means of coercing the Government into granting concessions and many of the young men had been attracted by this political method. To the Moderates resort to such sanctions was anathema.

The united front could only have been maintained if Mrs Besant could have mollified her Moderate critics (by reserving places in the Congress leadership for them, for instance); if the British maintained their obduracy; and if Mrs Besant had been able to devise a programme which satisfied both Moderates and Nationalists. We shall see that none of these
conditions was fulfilled.

It seemed at first as if she had been able to devise a programme satisfactory to both groups in her Home Rule agitation, which was taken up by Tilak. In this they renounced recourse to sanctions, such as passive resistance, but at the same time provided the young men with a more aggressive programme than had been provided by the Moderates and one which, Mrs Besant assured them, promised rapid progress to self-government. This programme of agitation without sanctions only served, however, to increase the instability of the united front. Not only did it frighten the more timid Moderates but it increased the impetuosity of the young men, so that they demanded some more active outlet for their feelings, and turned to passive resistance.

The proposals to launch passive resistance convinced the Moderates that they could not trust Mrs Besant or her moderation, and made the young men unwilling to return to the straightjacket of agitation without sanctions. The balance inside the united front had thus been upset and, while the form of the united front might continue, the balance would have been very difficult to re-establish. The best
course for Mrs Besant and Tilak to take in order to retain their leadership, would probably have been to accept the alienation of the Moderates as a fact and to identify themselves with the young men's demand for passive resistance, or at least to hold it up as a threat to encourage the British to grant a larger devolution of power. Left to himself, Tilak might have done this. Mrs Besant, however, had no programme of passive resistance and feared that, in any case, her organisation of HRLs and lieutenants was inadequate for the conduct of a passive-resistance campaign. She therefore returned to her aim of restraining, rather than of giving expression to, the young men and called upon the Moderates in the yet united AICC to help in this task.

Mrs Besant and Tilak were both anxious to devise a strategy to extract the maximum of concessions from the British. But both found that their attempts to do so were crippled by the legacy of their earlier activities. Mrs Besant, believing that her Home Rule agitation had done its job of making the British responsive to India's demands, proposed to call off the agitation and parley with Montagu, in the fashion of Gokhale with Morley: but the temper and the
expectations she had aroused by agitation made it impossible for her to simply give up agitation altogether and concentrate on parleying. Tilak on the other hand would have liked to bring pressure upon the British to grant more generous Reforms by getting Congress to reject the British Government's initial proposals as inadequate, but he found that this could not be done if the united front with the Moderates was to be retained. Tilak expressed this dilemma in a letter to his Madras supporter, Vijiaramghavachariar:

"...Our main difficulty at present is to get as many Moderates with us as possible without giving up our principles. These principles are - (1) we must not accept the scheme as it is; and (2) the modifications we insist upon should be such as would bring Montagu's scheme as near as possible to the Congress-League scheme. I for myself would have preferred if Montagu's scheme is rejected altogether. But you can get a majority for it in the Congress and it is not advisable, especially at this time, to cause a split in the Congress. A few Moderates will keep out do what you can. But, excepting these few, we must try to get all the others in our fold. That is what we have decided to do after many a long discussion. Still it is desirable that the total rejection view should be put before the Subjects Committee. I would have done it myself, if I had not been an organiser of the Special Congress session and had not during the course of that organisation explained both privately and publicly the minimum that we should insist upon. I therefore request you to do that work for me in the Subjects Committee. Some friends from Bombay will support you. Eventually however we may accept a compromise on
the lines stated above.

The Congressmen don't care as to what happens after the Session is over. But the home rulers mean to work in England; and for that purpose we must resolve clearly that the Montagu scheme is unsatisfactory and not acceptable to us unless and until certain vital modifications are made therein. The deputation will then work on these lines in England. I know that this [is] equivalent to practically rejecting the Montagu scheme. But if this form will please many - if not all - Moderates I think we should accept this formal compromise after putting our view before the Subjects Committee.

I have fully explained my position to Mr Rajagopalacharya and Mr Chidambaram Pillay and they will be able to give you further explanations if necessary...

As this letter also illustrates, in order to maintain organisational unity Mrs Besant and Tilak posed as the champions of compromise between the views of the Moderates and those of the Extremists and young men. They thus surrendered their identification with their followers among the latter. Tilak was more cautious than Mrs Besant in trying to impose restraint upon the more impetuous and therefore severed his identity with them less thoroughly. But as another South Indian supporter of Tilak, Rajaji, wrote:

Besant and Tilak have become mediators between Nationalists and seceding Moderates. Their

1. B. G. Tilak to Vijiargahavachhariar, 8 Aug 1918, Vij. Papers.
position [is thus] incompatible [with] leadership of full Nationalists' claim. Tilak definitely says [he] cannot now consequently lead [the] party representing by [sic] his own principles. Therefore other strenuous leaders must take charge of full Nationalist demands.¹

As this suggests, the young men were starting to look for other "strenuous leaders" who would express their temper more accurately than either Mrs Besant or Tilak. At the end of this period we shall see that they thought they had found such a spokesman in C. R. Das.

I

June - September 1917.

The Bombay Moderates had been accustomed to ordering the affairs of Congress and resented Mrs Besant's rise to popularity and her threat with Tilak, to usurp their control; at the same time, while mollified by the avoidance of passive resistance by Mrs Besant and Tilak,

¹. telegram, Rajaji to Vijiaraghavachariar, 19 Aug 1918, Vij. Papers.
they feared that the Home Rule agitation would rouse
the young politicians and mass groups to uncontrollable
violence and provoke the British to fierce repression.
Their attitude to Mrs Besant and to Tilak's readmission
to Congress was revealed in a letter written by Wacha
just before Mrs Besant's internment in mid-1917:

Touching Mrs Besant I may frankly tell you
that she has never impressed me....I have
not disguised my opinion...that the Madras
Provincial Congress Committee committed a
grave error when they admitted her....I
stood alone, with only 3 or 4 other Bombay
men for 4 years [against the readmission
of the Tilakites]....At Bombay we firmly
resisted her from [sic]establishting the
Home Rule League....our progress in Self
Government would have been accelerated if
she had never joined the Congress. It is
her propaganda that has frightened our
rulers who have therefore held us up and
kept us at arm's length.¹

In Bengal too the old Moderate leaders were jealous
of Mrs Besant's rise to leadership: unlike some Moder-
ates in other parts of India Banerjea and Bhupendranath
Basu did not join the HRL at the time of her internment.²

Temporarily at least, most Moderates put aside
their criticisms of Besant and Tilak in the face of

¹. cf. Ch. IV above. D. E. Wacha to Vijiaraghavachariar,
11 June 1917, Vij. Papers.

². Navak, 15 June 1917, in Bengal NP, 1917, pp. 772-3;
the Governors' censure of the demand for self-government and the internment of Mrs Besant in April-June 1917. At the Bombay Provincial Conference, over which he presided in May 1917, Srinivasa Sastri stood shoulder-to-shoulder with his Extremist fellow-delegates in chiding the Governors for the "undiscriminating dislike of all political agitation" and in asserting: "We want political power; let there be no mistake about it. We want the right to rule ourselves".¹ After the internment, the Moderates of the Deccan Sabha² in Poona joined the Moderates and Nationalists of the Indian Association in Calcutta and the Bombay Presidency Association in protesting at the Governors' condemnation of the demand for Home Rule and at the internments.³ With Malaviya many a Moderate might have said

As for Mrs Besant, I have had some very sharp differences with her in the past. But I cannot but admire her and feel grateful to her for the splendid manner in which she has been sacrificing herself at her age in the cause of Indian progress and reform...If she is exposed to suffering in that cause, thousands of Indians who have not been able to see eye

². The Poona Moderate Association, founded in 1896 by Ranade (to replace the Sarvajanik Sabha, captured by Tilak) and revived in 1909 by Gokhale.
³. Representation from the Deccan Sabha to the Viceroy [1917], undated copy held among Deccan Sabha Papers, SIS, Poona; Indian Association Minutes 7 July 1917; Bombay Presidency Association Minutes, 12, 15, 18 and 23 June 1917; cf. Bengalee, 31 May 1917, in Bengal NP, 1917, pp. 173, 728.
to eye with her in all things, will think it their duty to stand by her and to follow her.\(^1\)

But, no sooner had this unity been proclaimed than the adherence of the Moderates to the united front was subjected to strains both from inside and outside the Congress. The strains from inside arose from two proposals put forward by the young men and assented to by Tilak and Besant: first that the movement undertake a campaign of passive resistance; and secondly that Mrs Besant should preside over the ensuing annual Session of the Congress. Those from outside resulted from the appointment of Montagu as Secretary of State for India and his Announcement of 20 August 1917 on the question of self-government for India.

With the first rumours that the Home Rule leaders were to be interned, the young men's minds turned to passive resistance: the agitation which Mrs Besant and Tilak had carried on in the press and from the platform in support of the demand for Home Rule had induced a sense of defiance of the British among their young followers and had roused great enthusiasm among them. They turned to passive resistance more out of anger at

\(^1\) Hindu, 20 June 1917, p. 4; cf. ibid., 28 June 1917, p. 3.
the British than as part of any plan of political action.1 Passive resistance had been given a new lease of life in 1917 by Gandhi's refusal to comply with Government orders in Champaran, Bihar,2 and it was to Gandhi that the young men now turned for a programme of passive resistance and for leadership in putting it into action.3 The lead in approaching Gandhi was taken by Mrs Besant's Bombay lieutenants, Jamnadas Dwarkadas and Shankarlal Banker; and Sir Subramania Aiyer and Mrs Besant's other staunch followers took up the idea.4 Gandhi visited Bombay and Madras briefly from Champaran and, while he was too busy at Champaran to lead the campaign, he suggested that the young men should march from Bombay to Mrs Besant's place of internment — about 500 miles! — and that she should

1. Rangaswamiaiyer [A. Rangaswami Iyengar?] to Vijiaraaghavachariar, 10 June 1917, Vij. Papers.

2. Gandhi, Experiments, pp. 497-507; for his passive resistance campaign in South Africa, 1906-14, see next chapter.


4. B & O Police 1917, pars 803, 825-6, 862, 968; Maharatta, 15 May 1917, p. 333; Bombay Police 1917, par. 783(n); Besant, "Internment Diary", 7 July 1917; Home Poll Dep. Sept 1917, no. 5, pp. 11-12; ibid., no. 6, p. 11; ibid., B, Aug 1917, nos 195-8, p. 21; interview with S. G. Banker, 27 June 1963; Gandhi to A. Besant, 10 May 1919, no. S 6605, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.
then defy her internment orders, presumably by marching out of Ootacamund at their head. Jamnadas and his young associates accepted Gandhi's advice eagerly and collected the signatures of over 1000 young Bombay men who were prepared to offer passive resistance.1

Mrs Besant and Tilak both endorsed the young men's demand for passive resistance. Besant seems to have been thoroughly aroused by her own propaganda and by the enthusiasm of her young followers. She had foreshadowed the possibility of resisting Government orders before her internment,2 and now set to work, in her own words, "to think out methods, so as to adapt P. R. to Indian conditions....Meetings at which people cheer, go home to their suppers and then to bed, and to business next morning as usual, will never convince the Government that they are in earnest", she wrote.

1. Home Poll B. July 1917, nos 426-30, p. 21; 250 of these were TS members, interview with Mr Hazare, 18 May 1963; for Gandhi's visit to Madras, see Gandhi to A. Besant, 10 May 1919, loc. cit.; interview with Rajaji, 20 March 1963.

2. editorial, 'The Coming Storm', New India, 4 June 1917, p. 8a-c; Jamnadas Dwarkadas to A. Besant, 27 Feb 1919, Adyar Archives: "That '[P. R.] pledge' included even the non payment of taxes after a certain date if you were not released. You yourself instructed me to include that when we were talking on the verandah outside your Adyar room".
"I hope that they [the Congress and the Muslim League] will decide to lead the P. R. movement".1

Tilak was more cautious: he was too wily to be caught up in the young men's enthusiasm for long walks, and was more sceptical than formerly of the preparedness of the people for a programme of thorough-going non-co-operation with the Government.2 Nevertheless he did not wish to stand in the way of the young men whom he had helped to rouse: even if a passive-resistance campaign could not be successfully implemented, approval of the principle might serve to frighten the British. Through his newspapers therefore, after some initial hesitation, he launched a vigorous campaign urging its adoption on the Congress and the Muslim League.3

1. A. Besant, "Internment Diary", 7, 8, 18 July, 3 Aug 1917; emphasis in the original. Apologists for, and critics of, Mrs Besant have generally agreed that she consistently opposed passive resistance: the evidence in her own hand plainly shows this is not true. Her latest biographer, A. H. Nethercot, has ignored this question, see his vol. II, 259-66.


The endorsement of the young men's demand for passive resistance by Mrs Besant and Tilak confirmed the Bombay Moderates' suspicion of the two leaders. Tilak and Mrs Besant themselves had upset the balance in their programme between the Moderate and Extremist elements. Wacha wrote sarcastically:

"Passive resistance" is an excellent phrase but many who cry out the shibboleth will never be able to give you a correct conception of it....the [Home Rule] Leaguers have become absurdly impatient. Who can counsel such a clientele whose leaders understand little about it [p.r.] and have no original thinking. The few standard bearers raise the cry and the mobocracy of the new fangled Leaguers lustily echo it. With passive resistance campaign and action, my fear is that there would be a political earthquake which will engulf the campaigners besides doing irreparable injury to the true progress of the country....

Of the Bengal Moderates, Surendranath and his circle, at least, were less fearful of the passive resistance proposals than were Wacha and the Bombay Moderates, or certainly less willing than were the latter to break with the young men over this matter. And at a Joint Meeting of the AICC and the Council of


the AIML held at Bombay on 28-29 July to consider the adoption of passive resistance, Surendranath both presided and moved the consideration of passive resistance, whereupon Wacha walked out in indignation, followed by Samarth after the latter had expressed his "strong disapproval of the actions of Mrs Besant and the Home Rule League".1 "There must", wrote Wacha, "be a parting of the ways. This is the result of a 'United' Congress. So much of disintegration and disruption owing to the machinations of a marplot alien".2 In fact the voice of caution prevailed: the AICC-AIML Meeting referred the question of adopting passive resistance to the PCCs and the Muslim League Council for their recommendation, to be made within six weeks.

Surendranath, however, soon found himself in agreement with Wacha - over the proposal that Mrs Besant should preside over the forthcoming annual Session of the Congress at Calcutta. This was first mooted in Mrs Besant's own New India during her internment, and

1. Bombay Police, 1917, pars 841(w), (I); Wacha to Vijiaramghavachariar 3, 7 and 8 Aug 1917, Vij. Papers; Khaparde "Diary" (Poona), 26, 27, 28, 29 July 1917.

was enthusiastically taken up by the Nationalists. The Moderates had proposed the Raja of Mahmudabad for the position as the outstanding representative of Hindu-Muslim amity, but in the PCC nomination-meetings Mrs Besant's supporters triumphed, even in Bombay:¹ not in Bengal however, at least not at first. Banerjea and the Moderates resented Mrs Besant's rise to national pre-eminence, which threatened to eclipse the years of hard work they had devoted to the Congress.² To make matters worse, the young men in Bengal politics (like Datta, B. K. Lahiri, I. B. Sen, Jitendaralal Bannerjee and Fazlul Huq) and the older Extremists (e.g. B. Chakravarti, Moti Lall Ghose and Pal), led by the rising star, C. R. Das, used this issue to challenge the Moderates' leadership of national politics in Bengal.³ Surendranath foiled a bid for the Chairmanship of the Reception Committee of the forthcoming Congress by Chakravarti, the President of the Calcutta

¹. Home Poll B, July 1917, nos 426-30, w.e. 14 July 1917; ibid. Dep. Sept 1917, no. 5, p. 6; ibid., no. 6, 'Madras', par. 11; for Bombay Moderates' attempts to thwart Mrs Besant's election see Bengal NP, 1917, p. 1033.

². see P. C. Ray's letter to the Leader, 4 Oct 1917, p. 8a-c.

branch of Mrs Besant's HRL, and also his proposal to replace Mahmudabad's name with Besant's in the presidential nomination at a meeting of the Bengal PCC on 29 August. But, with the aid of liberal expenditure from Chakravarti's pocket, the Extremists and young Bengalis were able to pack the Reception Committee which met the following day: amidst uproar, Surendranath and 100 Moderates walked out, whereupon the Extremist "rump" reversed the decision of the PCC.

The proposals for passive resistance and Mrs Besant's election had plainly shaken the Moderates' faith in the united front. They were also alienated by the appeal to religious sentiment by Mrs Besant's and Tilak's lieutenants during and after her internment. They were repelled by the confused invocations of "Besant Mata" and "Bharat Mata" ("Mother India") in temple ceremonies, and also by the discipular adoration lavished on Mrs Besant by her Theosophical followers.

2. ibid., Bengal NP. 1917, pp. 247, 991.
The Moderates were further enticed away from the united front by Montagu's appointment to the India Office in July 1917. This gave Wacha, Surendranath and other Moderates hope that "better days" were in store for India.\(^1\) As Under Secretary of State for India, Montagu had visited India in 1911-12, and was known to be sympathetic to Indian aspirations for reform.\(^2\)

On August 20, Montagu made his famous Announcement: the British intended to take "substantial steps" in introducing "responsible government in India"; and he would visit India to discuss these steps with the Government and representative Indian bodies.\(^3\) This revived the Moderates' faith in the possibility of gradual advance to self-government in co-operation with the British. They urged that agitation should cease and threats of passive resistance be withdrawn, so

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2. Just prior to his appointment he had castigated the Government of India in the Mesopotamia Debate and demanded it be thoroughly reformed: House of Commons Debates, 12 July 1917, XCV, cols 2202-2212; The Rt Hon. E. S. Montagu on Indian Affairs, Ganesh, pp. 397-417; Sir S. Subramania Aiyar's foreword to the latter volume, especially pp. vii-xi.

that a "calm atmosphere" could be created for the discussion of reforms during Montagu's visit.¹

While the Moderates pinned their faith on Montagu and feared that agitation would strengthen the hands of British opponents of reform, Tilak and Jamnadas Dwarkadas took the opposite view. They claimed that any good in Montagu's Announcement was "more the result of our agitation culminating in the P. R. resolution of the Joint Conference, than of anything else".² Montagu, they argued, was coming to discover just how determined they were: a "fictitious 'calm'" would only mislead him.³ Furthermore, Montagu would be able to extract a greater measure of reform from his Cabinet colleagues if he could point to unrest in India: turning to Ireland, Tilak and Jamnadas asserted that Britain was agreeing to reforms for that unhappy country, not because Irishmen were giving "over-enthusiastic co-operation but because they were giving

1. see Sastri et al., 'Manifesto against P. R.', New India, 24 Aug 1917, p. 6a-b.
trouble".¹

Montagu's Announcement thus had the effect of wooing the Moderates from the united front.² The Viceroy and members of his Council such as Sir Reginald Craddock, had certainly intended to achieve this effect when, during the rising Home Rule agitation of 1917, they pressed the Secretary of State, with increasing urgency, to declare that reforms were under consideration.³

There was at this time no open split between the Moderates and the other members of the united Congress. As for passive resistance, the AICC-AIML meeting on 28 July had referred it to the PCCs; these discussed

¹. Mahratta, 26 Aug 1917, p. 403.

². Dainik Bharat Mitra, 6 Sept 1917, Bengal NP, 1917, p. 1013: "...now with Montagu's announcement, they [public leaders] have divided into parties....".

³. e.g. R. H. Craddock, Note, 17 Jan 1917, in Home Poll A, July 1917, nos 299-313 and KW; telegram P, Viceroy to Secretary of State, 18 May 1917, pars 4 and 5, in ibid.: "...in order to arrest the further defection of moderate opinion, we think it very desirable to make the position of the Government clear as far as this is possible"; emphasis in original; cf. Minutes of members of Council on Memo by Sir J. Meston, in Home Poll Dep. May 1917, no. 3; S. R. Mehrotra, "The Politics Behind the Montagu Declaration of 1917" in Politics & Society in India, pp. 71-96, especially pp. 91-4.
it and called Special Provincial Conferences to do likewise. Protagonists of passive resistance were generally vague as to how they meant to implement it, but three sorts of schemes were put forward envisaging, first, resignation by elected members of the legislatures; secondly, the taking of the vow to use only Indian-made goods, or "swadeshi"; and thirdly, the continuation of Home Rule agitation in the face of possible Government prohibition. Before Montagu's announcement, the PCCs of Madras and Bihar had adopted the last of these, and the CP PCC had approved passive resistance in principle. At the UP Special Provincial Conference, the older men, like Jagat Narayan, and Sapru resisted so staunchly those, like Ansari (who came down from Delhi), Gokaran Nath Misra and Ranga Iyer, who favoured passive resistance that the Subjects Committee ruled that it should not be discussed in the open session; instead, individuals would be urged to make "all sacrifices" in promoting agitation for self-government.

1. see Wacha to Vijiargvhavachariar, 7 Aug 1917, Vij. Papers.
3. ibid.; Mahratta, 2 Sept 1917, p. 913.
strength occurred in Bombay. Wacha, Samarth and Setalvad had walked out of the AICC there, but since other Moderates had stayed to "fight out the issue" and had prevailed on the AICC-AIML meeting to desist from committing itself to passive resistance, Wacha and the others attended the PCC meeting. They put up such determined opposition again that the Bombay PCC also avoided coming to a decision by referring the matter to a sub-committee! This sub-committee reflected the balance of numerical strength in the PCC, a majority of its members being followers of Tilak or young Home Rulers, who could be expected to favour passive resistance. Montagu's Announcement fortified the Moderates' opposition to passive resistance and threw the Nationalists into disarray. When the sub-committee met on 26 August the Moderates were able to convince the latter to recommend the suspension of consideration of passive resistance "in view of... Mr Montagu's forthcoming visit to India". Only Jamnadas objected that,

until Mrs Besant was released, passive resistance was still desirable. At the PCC meeting on 2 September he and Tilak took this stand but, when the Moderates threatened to secede altogether if it were adopted, they accepted a resolution similar to that recommended by the sub-committee. Conferences in CP and Bihar avoided any mention of passive resistance and in Bengal no Special Conference was held. Only in Madras was the commitment to passive resistance confirmed (at a Special Conference) after Montagu's Announcement. Thus, except in Madras, the Bombay Moderates' attitude to passive resistance prevailed.

The incipient split over Mrs Besant's election as President of the 1917 Congress was also healed, but less to the Moderates' advantage. Samarth, on behalf of the Bombay Moderates, tried to have the Congress venue changed to Madras, Mrs Besant's home province, where by convention she could not preside. But in

2. Bombay Police 1917, par. 949(1); HFM Bombay, II, p. ix.
3. Home Poll Dep. Sept 1917, no. 6, pp. 11, 18, 19; Mahratta, 2 Sept 1917, p. 413; B & O Police 1917, par. 1004.
Bengal young Congressmen canvassed for her among Congress Committees in the mofussil, pressing (with unwonted sagacity) for a compromise whereby Mrs Besant would become President and a nominee of Surendranath Chairman of the Reception Committee. Plainly Mrs Besant was the popular candidate, and her young champions were more vigorous and more numerous in the Reception Committee and the AICC (the final arbiter) than their opponents.1 "Samarth is a strong, brave fighter", wrote Sastri,

but the forces against him are too strong. Mrs Besant must be accepted as President. We [the Moderates] shall vote and counsel against it and so save our consciences.... Surendra Nath and Vaikunta Nath Sen2 and their party must bend their heads to the storm.3

Like Sastri most Moderates probably feared that a split was inevitable but believed that they should try to avoid provoking it. After much acrimonious debate the Moderates accepted the compromise offered by their opponents:4 Surendranath would even propose Annie

2. Surendranath's nominee for Chairman of the Reception Committee.
3. V. S. Sastri to (?), 17 Sept 1917, Deccan Sabha Papers
Besant for her high office and move the self-government resolution as usual! The Moderates were further convinced of Montagu’s intention to heed India’s demands when in September he had Mrs Besant released. But how many of them shared the perceptiveness of Sastri, who prophesied that “when Mrs Besant comes out and presides she will herself be a sobering force”?¹

Mrs Besant was to be an increasingly sobering force in Indian national politics. This endeared her to Sastri and the Madras Moderates but not to her younger, more impetuous followers.

II

September – December 1917.

For Annie Besant, the time of her release was one of disorientation. Her internment had provided her with an opportunity to reappraise the political situation and to reconsider her programme. Had she not, she must have wondered, been carried away by her feelings for India, and indeed by her own Home Rule propaganda? Might not a “raging, tearing” agitation, such as she

¹. V. S. S. Sastri to (?), 17 Sept 1917, Deccan Sabha Papers.
had led, embitter feelings between India and Britain? On her release therefore she gave the Viceroy an undertaking that she would co-operate with the Government in obtaining calmness during Montagu's visit. Some of her followers denied that she had accepted any conditions for her release, but there is no doubt that the Government considered that she had.\textsuperscript{2} As for passive resistance, internment had given her time to recall that in 1915 she had inveighed against resort to this form of political activity,\textsuperscript{3} and that the Masters had warned her against being "provocative". She had no campaign of passive resistance worked out: it was rather pathetic that in her internment she set to "to think out methods". But then, supposing she devised a campaign, how could she direct it through her loosely-organised HRL? She recalled her fear lest passive resistance pass over into mass violence\textsuperscript{4} - a nightmare which was to haunt her increasingly. Furthermore, her young followers, in thinking of passive

\begin{enumerate}
\item see speech 23 Sept 1917 in S. Subramaniam Aiyer, \textit{Speeches and Writings}, Murthy, p. 182.
\item see Home Poll Dep. Nov 1917, no. 2; \textit{Bengal NP, 1917} p. 276.
\item \underline{New India}, 4 Jan 1915, p. 6a-b; 5 Jan 1915, p. 6a; see Chapter II above.
\item She had seen something similar happen in England, see Nethercot, op. cit., I, 255-9.
\end{enumerate}
resistance, had turned to Gandhi for guidance: how could she agree, without pangs of jealousy and mortification, to share leadership with one who, she had said, was "not a politician"? Some of her co-workers had opposed passive resistance, notably C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar and (among Madras Moderates) L. A. Govindaraghava Iyer, a Theosophist and the President of the PCC, who no doubt pointed out to her the strain that her advocacy of it had placed on the adherence of the Moderates to the united front. In any case, Montagu's Announcement and her release seemed to have removed the reasons for passive resistance. Soon after her release, therefore, at a Joint Meeting of the AICC and the AIML Council, on 6 October, she joined the Moderates in rejecting passive resistance "for the present". This removed the likelihood of a Moderate exodus from the united front, at least for the immediate future.

But, while Mrs Besant might agree with the Moderates that this was a wise and logical course to

1. New India, 19 Mar 1915, p. 9a.
2. re C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, see ibid., 10 Aug 1917, p. 4a-b; re Govindaraghava Iyer, ibid., 25 Aug 1917, pp. 7, 10a.
3. Bombay Police 1917, par. 1109(C).
take, there is no evidence that she considered the mood of her young followers; or how she would be frustrating them by asking them, in effect, to turn off those feelings which she had helped to arouse among them; or that she was aware that if she wished her followers to alter course, it was necessary to tell them so and prepare them for it. The young men's enthusiasm had been aroused by the Home Rule agitation and by the campaign in support of passive resistance.¹ Home Rulers all over India were collecting signatures for a Monster Petition in support of the Congress-League Scheme which had been suggested by Gandhi;² those of Bombay were still setting up branches of her HRL in Gujarat and addressing public meetings in support of Home Rule; and the young men of Madras had continued to press for passive resistance at the Special Conference.³ Soon after Besant's vote against passive resistance at the Joint Conference, V. O.

¹ see, e.g., Bombay Police 1917, pars 880(d), (i); 899(1); 930(f), (j); Home Poll Dep. Nov 1917, no. 6, 'Madras', par. 7; Rahimtoola to Vijnaraghavachariar, 6 Oct 1917, Vij. Papers.
² Bengal Police 1917, pars 4726-7, 4731, 4846, 4850-1; B & O Police 1917, par. 1272; Bombay Police 1917, pars 987(p), 1014(f), 1039(o), (s), (x) [in which the text of the Petition is quoted].
³ see p. 285 above.
Chidambaram Pillai wrote: "she is a fraud", and like others condemned her as unfit to preside over the Congress.\(^1\) Having confirmed the Moderates' suspicion that she was an Extremist, Mrs Besant was now beginning to alienate the young men by her moderation.

Liaison between her and Tilak broke down on this issue, for he continued to suggest passive resistance for some time after the Joint Conference.\(^2\)

But they agreed at least in public on the response to be given to Montagu's promise of reforms. Tilak was suspicious of the British (not least when they came bearing gifts) and, like Jamnadas Dwarkadas, he noted that the Announcement hedged its promises about with warnings that Indian advance to self-government could only be gradual and at a pace set by the British.\(^3\) Believing that the British might be hustled into enlarging the reforms by a united demand from India and hoping to bolster the united front, all the elements of which had supported the Congress-League Scheme,

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3. J. Dwarkadas, Minute, 28 Aug 1917, to resolution of Sub-Committee on P. R. of Bombay PGC, loc. cit.: "...the declaration...is of a very vague...character".
Tilak and Mrs Besant announced that this Scheme constituted the "irreducible minimum of political reforms which must be immediately granted to India".\(^1\) Many Moderates at first agreed with the position - Banerjea, for instance, took his stand on it at his first interview with Montagu.\(^2\) But others, like Sapru, who were perhaps more perceptive, were "furious" at this attempt to force a posture on the national movement from which bargaining would be difficult.\(^3\) On this question the split between the Moderates and the Nationalists was to be re-opened.

The later part of 1917 was a period of great stress in relations between Muslims and Hindus and within the Muslim community and the Muslim League. These stresses resulted from outbreaks of rioting between mass groups of the Hindu and Muslim communities; from opposition to the Congress-League Scheme among members of the Muslim elite; and from the increasing assertiveness and rising Pan-Islamic feeling among the

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1. Bombay Police 1917, par. 1080(m); Sastri "Diary", 9 Sept 1917; both HRLs were stated to have agreed to this formula: N. C. Kelkar, The Case for Indian Home Rule, p. i.


younger members of the Muslim League.

The worst riots occurred in western Bihar at the time of the Baqr Id in September, in the course of which over a hundred Muslim villages were looted and burned and many Muslims killed.¹ Until 1914 the Hindus of this area had participated amicably in Muslim festivals but from that year the Arya Samaj had striven only too effectively to give them a sense of their separate identity, encouraging them to hold processions of their own and promoting Hindu opposition to the slaughter of cows.² As qurbani, or cow-sacrifice, was part of the Id observance this had become a time of tension between the two communities. The Baqr Id riots set many Muslims who had been tolerant of, or neutral toward, the Muslim-Congress entente against it.³ Among Pan-Islamists, even Abdul Bari was so carried away that he forgot his advocacy of Hindu-Muslim alliance against the arch-foe, the British, and proclaimed

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jihad, or holy war, against the Hindus (for which he subsequently apologised!). Even some "nationalist" Muslims who supported the entente with the Congress, like Fazlul Huq, almost despaired of the possibility of real alliance between the two communities.\(^3\)

Opposition to the Congress-League Scheme had come from two groups of Muslims: the "conservatives", \(^4\) and those in Muslim-majority provinces who were dissatisfied with the terms granted to them under the Scheme. Leading "conservatives" in the Muslim League had opposed the rise to dominance in the League's affairs of "nationalist" Muslims like Jinnah and the Raja of Mahmudabad, and the replacement by the latter of the League's old policy of reliance on the British with that of alliance with the Congress.

A number of Muslims in the two Muslim-majority provinces, the Punjab and Bengal, were dissatisfied with

2. see Chapter I above: "nationalist" as opposed to "communalist"; to be differentiated from Nationalist, as applied to the Extremists and young men of Congress, meaning "aggressively nationalistic", as opposed to "Moderate".
3. Bengal Police 1917, pars 4605, 4735, 4852(a), 4959; Bengal NP, 1917, pp. 1090, 1105, 1106, 1124-8, 1167; B & O Police 1917, pars 15, 1350; Home Poll B, Dec 1917, nos 225-8, p. 4.
4. see Chapter I above.
the terms granted to them under the Congress-League Scheme. In the Punjab, where the Muslims comprised 55 per cent of the population, they were to have 50 per cent of the elected seats in the proposed provincial legislature and in Bengal, where they were 52.6 per cent of the population, they were to have only 40 per cent of the seats.¹ The Punjab Muslim League under Sir Muhammad Shafi refused to accept anything less than representation "commensurate not only with their numerical strength but also with their political importance".² Jinnah was already a ruthless foe and at the meeting of the Council of the League at the time of the 1916 annual Session he insisted that the Punjab League be disaffiliated and a new "Punjab Provincial Muslim League", consisting of Fazl-i-Husain, alone from among the older Muslims of the province, and a few Pan-Islamists and young editors (financed by Mahmudabad), recognised in its stead.³ Similarly in Bengal one of the leaders of the attack on the terms granted to the Muslims of the province in the Scheme

1. see Chapter III above.

2. see addresses of Punjab Provincial Muslim League and Punjab Muslim League, in Montagu Addresses, pp. 1, 3-4.

was the President of the provincial Muslim League, Nawab Syed Ali Choudhuri. At the end of 1916 he had refused to sign the Reforms Memorandum of the 19 members of the Imperial Legislative Council as being insufficiently explicit in safeguarding Muslim interests, and in May 1917 he resigned from the Muslim League. In October a number of Bengali Muslims, "mostly big Nakhoda Muhammadan merchants", who believed that the "policy of the joint committees of the AIML and Congress were suicidal to Muhammadan interests", formed the Indian Moslem Association, of which Choudhuri became a Vice-President. Montagu's Announcement, foreshadowing the devolution of some power, had encouraged Muslims who were apathetic to the entente with Congress to join those who were actively opposed to it in organisations aimed at safeguarding Muslim interests.

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2. the great mosque of Calcutta near which many leading Muslim merchants had their premises.


4. Home Poll Dep. Nov 1917, no. 6, 'CP', par. 2; no. 7, pp. 11-2; Jan 1918, no. 1; cf. ibid., Aug 1917, no. 3, p. 10; Nov 1917, no. 30, p. 13; Bengal Police 1917, par. 4465; Montagu, Diary, p. 45; Montagu Addresses, p. 10.
members of the Muslim League resigned and formed the South India Islamia League, which in turn joined with the Bengal Moslem Association and Shafi's Punjab League to form the All-India Muslim Association. This Association was not large, but it marked both a drain of older, more cautious members from the Muslim League and the re-emergence of the Muslim community's tradition of seeking salvation in opposition to, as opposed to alliance with, the Hindus.

The "nationalist" leaders of the Muslim League also came under attack from young Muslims and Pan-Islamists, who felt that the Congress-League entente was being inadequately exploited for Muslim ends; that the League leaders were too closely associated with the Congress Moderates and should be taking a more aggressive line against the British. At an AIML-Council meeting in November they criticised the inactivity of the leaders and denounced the failure of the British to observe the sanctity of Muslim Holy Places


2. Home Poll B, May 1917, nos 445-8, p. 16; June 1917, nos. 438-41, w/e 9 June 1917, pars 9, 10.
in military operations. ¹ In order to counter these charges, the League leaders took up the cause of the interned Pan-Islamic leaders, the Ali Brothers, demanding that the British make the charges against them specific or else release them. ² The League leaders were joined in this agitation by Mrs Besant (following her release) and Tilak, who hoped thereby to bolster the Congress-League entente. ³

While agitating on behalf of the Brothers, the "nationalist" Muslims were critical and somewhat fearful of them: ⁴ they recognised the great source of power that might be tapped by appealing to Muslim religious feeling but were also aware that such feeling once aroused could easily pass over into fanaticism, which might sweep away the Hindu-Muslim entente and with it all ordered progress to self-government for India. A

2. see Montagu, Diary, pp. 4, 140, 142-3; Home Poll Dep. Jan 1918, no. 59, p. 13; cf. resolution 2, Muslim League proceedings, 1916 in B & O Police 1917, par. 143.
3. Home Poll Dep. Nov 1917, no. 29, pp. 3, 4; B, Nov 1917, nos 43-5, pp. 23-4; no. 29, pp. 6, 10; B & O Police 1917, pars 1201, 1240; Bengal Police 1917, par. 4598; Mahratta, 14 Oct 1917, p. 489; cf. A. Besant, "Internment Diary", 30 July 1917.
4. see, e.g., Montagu, Diary, loc. cit.; Sastri to 'Ramaswany', 26 Sept 1917, Madras SIS Papers; Bombay Police 1917, par. 1109(B); Home Poll Dep. Nov 1917, no. 29, p. 13.
reminder of these dangers was given at the annual Session of the Muslim League at the end of 1917, where the Ali Brothers' mother was present. Each mention of the Brothers in the Raja of Mahmudabad's Presidential address and in their mother's message aroused wild excitement. Speakers on the resolution condemning their internment exhorted the audience to "sacrifice" and even to bloodshed, and "turned the scene of confusion into pandemonium". In addition the resolution on the Bihar riots roused great illwill towards the Hindus: so much so that the Muslim leaders thought it discreet to stay away from the Congress.  

But, while allowing a lot of explosive feeling to escape, Mahmudabad and Jinnah restrained the session in other directions. In conformity with a pledge given to the Government, Mahmudabad expunged or forbade all mention of the Khilafat and of Indian Muslims' loyalty to Muslim institutions outside India. In the AIML

2. ibid, pp. 9, 24.
Council, which produced the resolutions for the Session and where the "nationalists" had a majority, Mahmudabad prevented any modification of the previous year's Congress-League Scheme in the direction of a demand for more rapid progress to Home Rule.\(^1\)

Although Mahmudabad thus had a strong inclination toward moderation and was aware of the danger that an agitation based on Muslim religious feelings might get out of hand, he and his fellow "nationalists" dared not discontinue the Ali Brothers' agitation once begun, for fear of alienating the Pan-Islamists in the Muslim League.\(^2\) During 1918 they were to find the young Muslims increasingly difficult to restrain.

The 1917 annual Congress Session was held at Calcutta concurrently with that of the League. Here Mrs Besant played a role comparable to that of Mahmudabad at the League, in which indeed she was assisted by him. In the preparation of the resolutions for the open session in the Subjects Committee, the young men pressed for a resolution demanding immediate internal

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2. ibid. Dep. Jan 1918, no. 60, 'UP', par. 2; B, Feb 1918, nos 214-7, p. 17; Bengal NP, 1917, pp. 1234, 1281.
self-government. This was demanded by the young men of Bengal in particular, led by C. R. Das and Pal: they had successfully challenged the Bengal Moderates over Mrs Besant's Presidentship; furthermore they were incensed against the British by the internment of some 2000 young bhadralok under the Defence of India Act.

Mrs Besant, however, was now seeking to restrain the young men. Backed up by the Moderates, who opposed any demand for immediate Home Rule, she convinced Tilak that they should not go beyond the Congress-League Scheme, since it formed the basis of their representations to Montagu who was now in India, and that he should urge the young Bengalis to reduce their demand to "self-government in ten years". Here Mahmudabad and the Muslim League acted as a further brake on the young Congressmen: they refused to set any time-limit for the attainment of self-government and the latter agreed to substitute "at an early date" for "ten years".

2. Bengal NP, 1917, pp. 1066-7, 1089, 1114, 1138; letters to Mrs Besant from Calcutta, "Congress" Files, Adyar Archives.
4. ibid.; Leader, 6 Jan 1918, p. 3a; cf. HFM Bombay, II, p. 693.
Mrs Besant seemed to expect that her election to the Presidentship of Congress would enable her, almost in a mystical way, to carry the national movement with her. "Up till now...I have claimed no authority of leadership", she said. "Now by your election, I take the place you have given..."¹ She appointed C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar as principal Congress General Secretary, and, with Tilak, replaced Moderates on the AICC by members of the HRL, but otherwise took no steps to ensure her control of Congress or to improve it as a medium of communication. She did re-organise her HRL.²

But while, on paper, she set up a more elaborate organisation of Provincial Councils to act as intermediaries between the headquarters and the branches, in fact she allowed the League to be partly dismantled: the position of Organising Secretary was abolished as no longer necessary and "C. P." vacated the position of General Secretary. She regarded the agitational function of the HRLs as largely concluded; but as a means of controlling and of rousing support, she was

². New India, 19 Jan 1918, p. 3a-b; Congress 1917, Report, p. 133.
to regret its decline.¹

Mrs Besant was preparing to change her strategy. As we have seen, she had not only drawn back from threatening the British with passive resistance but had promised to work for calmness during Montagu's visit, which marked a retreat even from agitation without sanctions. Just before the 1917 Congress she wrote to Montagu offering "to modify her policy within limits".² He saw her and seems to have given her hope that she could accelerate India's advance more effectively through parleying with him in the manner of a Gokhale than by agitation. In her Congress address she foreshadowed increasing moderation: "I cannot promise to please you always", she said.³ But while this strategy might promise success in the direction of improved reforms (a promise which, in the event, was hardly fulfilled), it took little account of the spirit Mrs Besant had roused among the young men by

1. see A. Besant to members of the AIHRL Council, 19 June 1918, Advar Archives.
2. Montagu, Diary, p. 117.
her Home Rule agitation.

III

January - September 1918.

Although the different temperaments within the national movement were reconciled at the 1917 Congress and Muslim League Sessions, the alienation of the Moderates from other Congressmen became more pronounced from this time on.

This was partly due to the provocative grasping for places of power by the young men, which Tilak and Mrs Besant were unwilling or unable to prevent. Though they retained their ex-officio places on the AICC and PCCs, the Moderates were swept out of the elective positions. 1 Moderate newspapers interpreted the Congress Presidential speech as a declaration of dictatorship by Mrs Besant. 2 In Bengal Das and his

1. Mahratta, 20 Jan 1918, pp. 31-2; Leader, 6 Jan 1918, p. 3a; 12 Jan 1918, p. 7b; 16 Jan 1918, p. 5b; 26 Aug 1918, p. 3; Bombay Police 1918, pars 382, 414; Home Poll B, Dec 1917, nos 225-8, w.e. 15 Dec 1917, par. 7.

2. e.g. Leader, 28 Dec 1917, p. 3; cf. Home Poll Dep. Mar 1918, no. 41, pp. 12-13.
young colleagues pressed their attacks on the Moderate dominance of political institutions - successfully in the case of the PCC, unsuccessfully in that of the Indian Association.¹

Montagu's visit from November 1917 until April 1918 played a major role in the defection of the Moderates. While Banerjea was supporting the demand for the Congress-League Scheme at the 1917 Congress, Wacha and the Bombay and Poona Moderates were telling Montagu that India was not ready for responsible government.² Montagu convinced the Moderates of Bengal and the UP that to try to run the country along the lines of the Congress-League Scheme, with an elected legislature having the power of the purse but no power to dismiss the executive, would lead to hopeless deadlocks.³ The Moderates were flattered by

¹. Indian Association, Council Minutes, 4 and 10 Jan 1918, General Meeting Minutes, 31 Jan 1918; Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18 Jan 1918, p. 6; 1 Feb 1918, p. 6; 5 Feb 1918, p. 6.

². Montagu, Diary, p. 147; Congress 1917, Report, pp. iv, 90-5.

³. Montagu, Diary, p. 91, passim; Kunzru to Vaze, 8 July 1918, SIS Poona Papers; cf. Pal's speech, Congress 1917, Report, p. 98.
Montagu's attentions.¹ Most of them avoided giving him a firm pledge to support any scheme he offered in place of the Congress-League Scheme,² but they led him to expect that he could rely on them to give general support.³ Montagu even went to the length of discussing the formation of a separate Moderate party, with the Moderates, notably Sastri.⁴

Montagu also encouraged Mrs Besant to adopt an increasingly moderate position: he saw both her and "the attractive Ramaswami Aiyar", and by the end of February he felt that "she means to support [the Montagu scheme] in principle, although she will suggest all sorts of amendments".⁵

Mrs Besant's decision to accept less than the Congress Scheme was painfully "surprising" to Tilak's supporters to whom she had said that she would not do

1. e.g. Sastri to Ramaswami, 1 Feb 1918, SIS Madras Papers.
2. C. Y. Chintamani to Vijiaraghavachariar, 1 Aug 1918, Vij. Papers; Montagu, Diary, p. 235.
3. e.g. ibid., pp. 336, 338.
4. mainly through Basu, Sinha, Willingdon: see Montagu, Diary, p. 217; Sastri to Venkatasubbiah, 26 Jan 1918, and to Ramaswami, 1 Feb 1918, SIS Madras Papers.
5. Montagu, Diary, pp. 117-9, 128, 274, 278; Sastri to Ramaswami, 24 Feb 1918, SIS Madras Papers: "Mrs Besant and C. P. Ramaswamy both...[said] they would accept the Secretary of State's proposals on nearly the same conditions as I....Perhaps Montagu's personal influence, perhaps Sir Sankaran Nair's [Education Member], perhaps both must have been the cause".
so "except in very minor matters". They were equally "disappointed" when at the AICC meeting on 23 February she changed her mind about sending a Congress-League deputation to England to agitate for large reforms, and voted with the Moderates in rejecting it. She gave various reasons for her action, such as shortage of funds, but it was widely believed that her volte face was in response to a request from Montagu, and she was much criticised by the Extremists and young men. She may have been hoping to ingratiate herself with the Moderates. Certainly she was hoping to increase her control over the national movement: simultaneously with vetoing the Congress deputation she was arranging a deputation to England, the members of which she selected from lists drawn up by the

1. Khaparde "Diary" (Bombay), 25 Feb 1918.

2. the AICC met this time at Delhi, from which Tilak was still externed; AICC Minutes, 23 Feb 1918, resolution no. 9; Khaparde "Diary" (Bombay), 23 Feb 1918; Dnyan Prakash, 2 Mar 1918 in Bombay NP, 1918, p. 145.

3. ibid.; Sastri to Ramaswamy, 24 Feb 1918, SIS Madras Papers; the Montagu Diary does not confirm this, see pp. 278-9; though cf. Sastri to Ramaswamy, 1 Feb 1918, SIS Madras Papers.

4. see Mahratta, 17 Mar 1918, p. 125.
AIHRL Council. To their criticism of her on the grounds of inconsistency and moderation, Mrs Besant's young critics therefore added the suspicion that she wished to work only through those who were subservient to her.

Mrs Besant was taking less care to work closely with Tilak at this time. She clearly had not consulted him about her tactics in the AICC on the question of the deputation. Lack of co-ordination was also evident in their reactions to the Government's urgent call for money and men at the time of the great German offensive of March 1918. Tilak's response was "grant us Home Rule and we shall help you. Otherwise your Empire is in danger." This firm stance proved popular and at first Mrs Besant joined Tilak and others, in signing a Manifesto that "a definite promise of Home Rule should precede any appeal for help or money". But again she


2. see Mahratta, 17 Mar 1918, p. 125.


4. New India, 22 Apr 1918; see Home Poll Dep. May 1918, no. 65, p. 3.
executed an about-turn. At the AICC meeting on 3 May, she and her lieutenants swung over to an attitude which was, again, more acceptable to the Moderates, and persuaded Tilak to agree to a resolution calling on "all patriotic organisations to aid in recruiting for Home and Imperial defence".¹ Tilak and Khaparde only gave in after much wrangling, and Mrs Besant's popularity suffered grievously. Among the young Home Rulers of Bombay, for instance, it was openly said that she had been "bought over" by the Government and only her Theosophical followers remained loyal, while in Sind for example seceders from her HRL set up branches of Tilak's League as an expression of their disapproval.²

The young men's defiance had already been roused against the Government. Tilak had repeatedly asserted that the Congress-League Scheme was a minimum and that a promise of Home Rule must precede help with recruitment. The young men also had before them the example of the

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¹. AICC Minutes 3 May 1918, resolution no. 8; Bombay Police 1918, par. 577; Home Poll Dep. Aug 1918, no. 28, p. 6.
². ibid., pp. 6-7; cf. ibid. B, May 1918, nos 581-4, p. 23.
passive resistance campaign which Gandhi had been leading in Kaira. Furthermore Subramania Aiyer, Jamnadas Dwarkadas and others had been advocating passive resistance in case Montagu's Reforms should prove inadequate and in an effort to retain a semblance of identification with the young rank-and-file even Mrs Besant had argued in favour of passive resistance again! The Government had provided fuel for the flame of agitation by turning back the Home Rule deputations, Mrs Besant's from Gibraltar, and Tilak's (comprising Tilak, some of his lieutenants and Pal) from Colombo, and by failing to invite Tilak or Mrs Besant to the War Conference at Delhi to discuss ways of raising men and money.

The temper of the young men exploded against Mrs Besant's increasing moderation at the Madras Provincial Conference, just a week after the AICC meeting which advocated recruitment. Here in the open session, Satyamurti, V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, Rajaji

1. see Subramania Aiyer, Speeches, p. 399; Bombay NP, 1918, pp. 307-10.

2. see Young India, 10 Apr 1918 in Bombay NP, 1918, p. 263; Home Poll Dep. May 1918, no. 65, p. 3; ibid. B, May 1918, nos 581-4, p. 2.

3. Home Poll Dep. May 1918, no. 64, 'UP', par. 1; ibid. no. 65, 'Bengal', par. 3; B, May 1918, nos 581-4, p. 10; Bombay Police 1918, par. 577; Bombay NP, 1918, p. 440.

4. see Khaparde "Diary" (Bombay), 22-28 April 1918.
and Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, led them in an attack on Mrs Besant's resolution which urged recruitment in terms identical with those passed by the AICC.¹ She managed to pass her resolution intact by 122 votes to 121, but only after a careful recount and by the casting vote of the sympathetic President, Sarojini Naidu. From this time Mrs Besant was subjected to caustic criticism in Kasturi's Hindu and to vitriolic attacks in Tamil from the platform by young men such as Varadarajalu Naidu.² She tried to re-establish her identification with the young men by rousing agitation on such issues as the turning back of the HRL deputations and Montagu's denunciation of Sir Subramania Aiyer for writing to President Wilson for help in gaining Home Rule,³ but with little success.

In July 1918 Montagu's proposals for reform were

1. New India, 13 May 1918, pp. 3-4; Home Poll B, May 1918, nos 581-4, pp. 20-1; Dep. Aug 1918, no. 28, pp. 3-4; ibid., no. 29, pp. 2-3; the Bombay Provincial Conference had passed a resolution in Mrs Besant's words: Mahratta, 12 May 1918, p. 227.


published as the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. The provincial legislatures and the lower house at the centre were to have elected majorities, but an element of responsibility was to be introduced only in the provincial governments: there a limited number of subjects were to be transferred to ministers responsible to the legislature; the legislature would have the power of the purse in regard to these subjects only; and this arrangement would be reviewed after four years.¹

The Moderates were alienated by the reception given to the Reforms by Mrs Besant and Tilak. Montagu had convinced the Moderates that if they did not support his scheme it would be thrown out by Cabinet or Parliament. During the second quarter of 1918, the Moderates had come to believe that Tilak and Annie Besant were bent on "wrecking" Montagu's scheme.²

This, they felt, was confirmed when Mrs Besant, in a further attempt to identify her feelings with those

1. Muslims were to receive disproportionately large representation at the centre and in provinces where they were in a minority, but no communal representation in provinces where they were in a majority.

of her young followers, greeted the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme as "unworthy of Britain to offer", and Tilak said that he had "nothing to do but to reject it" since it failed to come up to the ideal of political advance set forth in the Congress-League Scheme.¹

The Moderates were even more thoroughly alienated by the conduct of the young Congressmen. In February the AICC had decided to hold a Special Congress to discuss Montagu's proposals soon after their publication;² not only were the Moderates clearly in a minority in the Congress and likely to be outvoted at the Special Session³ but the younger members of the majority were becoming increasingly unruly. At the Madras Provincial Conference, for instance, when Sastri was announced as a member of the Subjects Committee, there were cries of "no, no" from the young men, who appeared "half naked to 'demonstrate national spirit', headed by Satyamurti in a shirt...".⁴ After the publication of the Montagu-


3. Kunzru to Vaze, 1 Apr 1917 [1918?], SIS Poona Papers.

Chelmsford Report, Special Provincial Conferences were held to "consider" it: at the Bengal Conference the majority shouted the Moderates down and passed a resolution moved by Pal that the Report "does not present any real steps towards responsible government"; much the same happened in Berar; Fazl-i-Husain and the Moderates left the Punjab Conference unobtrusively; and in the UP, Motilal Nehru as President of the PCC by-passed his fellow Committee-members and organised a Special "Congress" to denounce the Reforms. Satyamurti and Rajaji continued their vendetta against Mrs Besant and she was howled down at the Madras Special Conference in August.

Just before the publication of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, the Government of Bombay had called a War Conference to which the nationalist leaders were invited, but when the Governor refused to allow Tilak to mention

1. Home Poll Dep. Sept 1918, no. 19, pp. 11-12; no. 40, p. 11.
2. Dnyan Prakash, 21 Aug 1918, in Bombay NP, 1918, w.e. 24 Aug 1918, p. 5.
4. Leader, 14 Aug 1918, p. 5a-b; 24 Aug 1918, p. 5; Kunzru to Vaze, 15 and 19 Aug 1918, SIS Poona Papers.
5. New India, 3 Aug 1918, pp. 3-6, 10; 5 Aug 1918, p. 6; Mahratta, 11 Aug 1918, p. 382; Bombay NP, 1918, II, 151.
Home Rule he and his colleagues walked out. In a particularly inept piece of mis-timing, the Government of India published the Report of the Rowlatt Committee, which suggested new repressive legislation, immediately after the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. The publicity, which Tilak's walk-out and the Rowlatt Report received, turned the young men's defiance of the Government to anger.

Believing that she could only restrain them and fend off the young Madrasis' attacks by maintaining the united front, Mrs Besant fought to save it by finding a posture in relation to the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms which would be acceptable to both Moderates and Nationalists. She consulted with Mahmudabad and Sastri and together they persuaded Tilak to refrain from rejecting the Reforms outright but to urge modifications in them. The salient modifications envisaged Muslim representation


2. Reforms proposals accepted by Tilak "on the understanding that they are needed in the interest of unity of moderates and nationalists in the Special Congress", 17 July 1918, in "Reforms Congress" File, Adyar Archives; Tilak to Khaparde, 18 July, and A. Besant to Khaparde, 25 July 1918, Khaparde Papers; Bombay Police 1918, par. 1320(j).
along the lines of the Congress-League Scheme; in the provinces the transfer to elected ministers of all subjects, with the exception only of police, law and justice, which would be reserved to the British executive for five years; in the provinces complete responsible government after five years; in the central government, transfer to elected ministers of all powers other than those affecting peace, internal tranquility and safety; and the power of the purse for the elected legislatures over all powers not reserved to the executive. Through their newspapers Mrs Besant and Tilak argued that, although they had said that if the Reforms were "inadequate" they would not "accept" them, nevertheless they would "utilise every advantage or advance they contain"; they would work any Reforms, although those outlined were "unacceptable unless modified".¹ But the modifications agreed to by Tilak and Mrs Besant were too close to rejection of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms for most

Moderates; Mrs Besant, Tilak and their followers had spoken too often of the Congress-League Scheme as the "irreducible minimum" for the Bombay Moderates and those like the Bengal Moderate P. C. Ray (who had started to organise a Moderate Party in 1917), to believe that any genuine compromise could be found. The Moderates of Bombay, CP, Bengal, the UP and in the Servants of India Society seceded from Congress, and the Raja of Mahmudabad refused to preside over the Bombay Special Session.

Nevertheless, Mrs Besant persuaded the Special Congress to refrain from rejecting the Reforms and to accept the modifications agreed to by Tilak. She was able to do so because a number of Moderates did attend, including those from Madras and - since she prevailed on Hasan Imam of Bihar to preside - those of Bihar: she, Malaviya and Imam convinced Tilak and, with him, they convinced the more headstrong members of the Subjects Committee that they should adhere to the terms

1. see B & O Police 1918, par. 406; Dnyan Prakash, 16 Aug 1918, in Bombay NP, 1918, II, 170; Leader, 15 Aug 1918, p. 3; Circular Manifesto from P. C. Ray, 10 Nov 1917, Deccan Sabha Papers.

2. see Butler/Chelmsford correspondence, 31 July, 1 Aug 1918, in Home Public (Reforms) Dep. Sept 1919, no. 64 and KWs; cf. Home Poll B, Aug 1918, nos 208-13. They offered Wacha the Chairmanship of the Reception Committee: Bombay Police 1918, pars 983, 1096, 1230, 1132(m).
agreed to with Mahmudabad and Sastri.\textsuperscript{1} Despite Mahmudabad's refusal of the Presidentship, he did exert a restraining influence, since he presided over the Special Session of the Muslim League, the Council of which met jointly with the Congress Subjects Committee to consider the Reforms resolutions of the two organisations.\textsuperscript{2}

At the Muslim League Session, those like Mahmudabad and Jinnah who wished to welcome Montagu's Reforms (while demanding the proportional franchise laid down for the Muslims in the Congress-League Scheme), exerted an uneasy control over the younger Muslims, like Syed Husain, and Pan-Islamists, like Dr Ansari, who wished to reject them.\textsuperscript{3} The Muslim League "welcomed" the Montagu-Chelmsford Report and did not imitate the Congress in demanding a 15-year time limit for the grant of full responsible government, but its resolutions were otherwise very similar

\textsuperscript{3} ibid., no. 20, p. 13; Butler to Chelmsford 31 July 1918, loc. cit.; for Jinnah's reaction to the Reforms, see Saiyid, Jinnah, pp. 222-30, e.g. p. 224: "the... Proposals cannot be rejected summarily"; K. Dwarkadas, Gandhiji: Through My Diary Leaves, 1915-48, p. 14.
to those passed by the Congress.\textsuperscript{1} Conservative Muslims outside the League alleged that it was unrepresentative of the Muslims and dominated by Hindu Congressmen.\textsuperscript{2} The "younger Muhammadans in the League", on the other hand, "did not like the excessive spirit of accommodation shown by some of the elders to some of the... proposals in Mr Montagu's scheme",\textsuperscript{3} and once again they criticised the "nationalists'" conduct of the League's business.\textsuperscript{4}

India was about to make a major political advance under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. The leaders of her nationalist organisations were anxious to carry the fight for more generous Reforms to England, Annie Besant and Jinnah to parley with Montagu, Tilak to threaten Montagu with the rejection of "inadequate" Reforms. But at this critical moment their leadership in India was revealed as unstable at the Congress and Muslim League Special Sessions. In the League, the

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2. \textit{Bombay NP, 1918}, w/e 7 Sept 1918, p. 10.


"nationalist" Muslims would have to come to terms with the strengthening current of Pan-Islamist feeling if they would retain their leadership. In Congress, Mrs Besant had barely retained hers. In her efforts to preserve the united front she had alienated both the Moderates by her aggressive postures and many of the young men by her attempts to restrain their enthusiasm. She had restrained them, with Tilak's help, by arguing from the desirability of maintaining the united front, but now that the front had broken down this argument had been removed. The young men had no clear idea of the strategy that they or their leaders should employ to enlarge the Reforms: rather they demanded expression for their frustration and for their anger against the British. Unless Mrs Besant could re-establish the united front, she must either bow to the young Congressmen's demand that the Reforms be rejected - which meant that she must threaten Montagu, rather than parley - or prepare to have her leadership rejected altogether by the young men.
September – December 1918.

Immediately after the Special Sessions the Congress-League entente was again shaken by riots at the Baqr Id, this time in Calcutta, instigated by Muslims as a retaliation for the previous year’s attacks by Hindus on Muslims in Bihar.¹ Bengal Congressmen headed by C. R. Das set up an Investigation Committee to smooth relations between the communities,² but the Hindu-Muslim entente suffered another severe blow.

The Government finally permitted Tilak to go to England. He went to clear his name in the Courts of Sir Valentine Chirol’s charges that he had incited to murder and terrorism: by so doing he probably hoped to make himself a more acceptable spokesman for India to the British public and a more acceptable colleague to the Moderates. He also planned to launch a campaign in England demanding modifications in the Montagu scheme

². ibid. Dep. Dec 1918, no. 23, p. 8; Das to Vijiaraghavachariar, telegram 22 Oct 1918, Vij. Papers.
as soon as the Government lifted its ban on Indian deputations to England. Tilak, who had formerly denounced deputations to Britain as mendicancy, now believed that "The real work for some years lies...in England".¹

There was certainly work to do in urging wider reforms in England, but Tilak's leadership of the Extremists and his imprisonment for sedition reduced his standing with the British Government, and thus his ability to influence it.² Furthermore this was a most dangerous time for a leader to leave India: direction and restraint had never been more needed by the rank-and-file of the national movement. By going to England at this critical time Tilak virtually turned his back on the young men of Congress and abdicated his leadership of them.

Tilak sailed in September. In the three months between then and the Delhi Congress the young men's bitterness and defiance toward the British intensified.


². see Montagu, Diary, pp. 43, 59; cf. JSC on G of I Bill, Evidence, p. 131.
In Bombay Jinnah, Jamnadas Dwarkadas and others wrecked a meeting held by some of the city fathers to present a memorial of appreciation to the retiring Governor, Lord Willingdon.\footnote{1} Even in the Punjab, where nationalist politics had been virtually non-existent from 1907 to 1917, the Government's ban on political discussion had been lifted at Montagu's insistence and young agitators, both Muslim and Hindu, like Kitchlu and Dunichand, made "wild speeches" advocating Home Rule.\footnote{2}

Among tenants and landless labourers in many parts of the country there was great economic distress owing to famine and the high price of food and other necessities, which expressed itself in rioting.\footnote{3} Politicians with ideas of organising labour movements began to channel the distress existing in densely-populated industrial areas.\footnote{4}


\footnote{2}{Home Poll Dep. Oct 1918, no. 31, p. 14.}

\footnote{3}{Rushbrooke Williams, \textit{India},[1917-18] pp. 86-90, [1919], pp. 63-9.}

\footnote{4}{Home Poll Dep. Oct 1918, no. 31, p. 32; Nov. 1918, no. 23, passim.}
In November the Moderates held a separate Conference in Bombay which set the seal on their secession from Congress. This released the young men from the restraint imposed on them at the Special Congress in the name of finding a "compromise" with the Moderates.¹

The end of the Great War gave a sense of urgency to the demand for responsible government. President Wilson and Lloyd George spoke of "self-determination" for subject peoples. The War - so it had been said - had been India's opportunity: if India allowed the War to pass without winning responsible government, when might the chance come again?²

A leader was needed, therefore, who would give forcible expression to the feelings of those who remained in the Congress. But Mrs Besant now only thought of finding some way to restrain the young men from passing more outspoken resolutions at the Delhi Congress than those passed at the Special Session. She provoked more antipathy by seeking a President for the

1. Home Poll B, Dec 1918, nos 158-9, pp. 4-6; Indian Annual Register 1919, part v, pp. 47-65; C. Y. Chintamani to Vijiaraghavachariar, 12 Oct 1918, Vij. Papers; Khaparde "Diary" (Bombay), 1 Jan 1919.

2. see Malaviya to Vijiaraghavachariar, 14 Nov 1918, T. V. Venkatarama Aiyar to Vijiaraghavachariar, 5 Nov 1918, Vij. Papers; Congress 1918, Report, p. 4; S. R. Bomanji to N. C. Kelkar, 15 Oct 1918, Kelkar Papers.
forthcoming Congress who would help her to hold it in check. In supporting Malaviya for the position she angered both the young Madrasis and Tilak's followers, for they had nominated Vijiaraghavachariar. Malaviya was elected. "There was certainly some danger of his giving in to the Moderates if the latter had agreed to come" but, without a Moderate contingent to stand firm against the young men in the Subjects Committee, Malaviya was not in a position to play the role of conciliator, for which he was noted, and he gave Mrs Besant little help in restraining them.

At the time of Malaviya's election it seemed to the young Congressmen that he and Mrs Besant might succeed in re-uniting a large number of Moderates with the Congress and, with a majority in the Subjects Committee, go back on the Special Congress resolution demanding provincial self-government in five years.

4. ibid.; A. Rangaswami Iyengar, 10 Nov 1918, ibid.
5. Motilal Nehru to Vijiaraghavachariar, 18 Dec 1918, ibid.
The young men and their mentors in the several provinces therefore co-ordinated their plans to ensure that they should have a majority at the Delhi Session. Had Tilak still been in India he would doubtless have made arrangements for the Session with Mrs Besant as before; but now the initiative passed to the second rank of leadership. Rajaji, A. Rangaswami Iyengar, Vijiarraghavachariar and others in the south arranged with D. V. Gokhale, Khaparde and Tilak’s other lieutenants in the west, Das and his Bengal friends and the Nehrus in the UP to bring numbers of delegates pledged to vote against any retreat from the Special Congress Reforms resolution.¹ "I have just returned from Delhi", wrote Jawaharlal Nehru. "There is no question of going back on the resolution passed by the Special Congress. Any attempt to do so would be strongly opposed by the Delhi people. In fact most of them are of opinion that we ought to take up a stronger attitude now that the war is ended".² This manoeuvring, combined with Mrs Besant’s inability to bring any but the Madras and

1. A. Rangaswami Iyengar to Vijiarraghavachariar, 10 and 29 Nov 1918; Motilal Nehru, telegram, to Vijiarraghavachariar, 17 Dec 1918, Viji. Papers.
Bihar Moderates to the Session, resulted in the young men having a considerable majority over Mrs Besant's forces in the Subjects Committee.

The parting of the ways came over the self-government resolution. Mrs Besant urged Congress to reaffirm the resolution passed at the Bombay Special Congress, which reserved police, law and justice to the official executive in the provinces for five years with complete provincial autonomy thereafter, on the ground that this resolution was reached by compromise with the Moderates and thus provided a basis for the re-entry of the Moderates to Congress.¹ It was now clear, however, that she could not bring the Moderates back into Congress, and in any case the young men were unwilling to be yoked to them once again. Under the leadership of C. R. Das the young Congressmen - who "showered abuse" on those who opposed them - used their majority in the Subjects Committee to produce a resolution demanding immediate provincial autonomy. Only Mrs Besant and her most devoted Theosophical lieutenants, and Jinnah and the Madras Moderates opposed them.²

2. Home Poll B, Jan 1919, nos 160-3, pp. 11-12; Bombay Police 1919, par. 216(b).
Needless to say, the difference over whether to demand provincial autonomy immediately or in five years was a symbol of the issue at stake, rather than the issue itself. Fundamentally the difference was a matter of temperament: those for whom Das spoke wished vaguely to go forward, to find some means of expressing their impatience and petulance against the British, whereas Mrs Besant wanted to hold them back.

Why, one may ask, did she not bow to the storm and accept Das' resolution? First, she still clung to the hope that organisational unity with the Moderates could be re-established. Secondly, she had changed her strategy: in the changed situation after the Montagu Announcement she believed that agitation was no longer adequate to win rapid progress to self-government and must be supplemented by parleying with the British Government. She explained that since she planned to go to England, she wanted to be free to accept as much as could be won by bargaining and not to be committed to rejecting anything less than full provincial autonomy.¹ Thirdly, her leadership had been clearly rejected in the

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1. A. Besant to N. C. Kelkar, 24 Jan 1919, Kelkar Papers.
Delhi Subjects Committee: Das had become the young men's spokesman; he had moved their resolutions successfully and had replaced her nominees for the General Secretari­ships. Her identification with the young men was shattered and she was mortified at her inability to in­fluence them. She complained bitterly at their ingratit­ude for her work on their behalf and accused "all Tilakites" and Malaviya of being "against" her. Indeed some of Tilak's followers probably did resent her: Khaparde didn't disguise his glee at her discomfiture, while D. V. Gokhale, as Secretary of Tilak's HRL, arranged for Chidambaram Pillai, Viji­araghavachariar and others to set up branches of Tilak's League in competition to hers. Mrs Besant took the enmity of the followers for the enmity of the leader himself and sealed her unpopularity by denouncing Tilak. In this she was misled by her followers: "...one of the greatest

1. Bombay Police 1919, par. 216(b).
2. see Home Poll D, Feb 1919, no. 41, p. 2.
3. ibid. B, Jan 1919, nos 93-5, p. 7; Khaparde "Diary" (Bombay), 30 and 31 Dec 1918.
5. Khaparde "Diary" (Bombay), 29 Dec 1918.
disservices that C. P. [Ramaswami Aiyar] has done to A. B[esant]", wrote one of her followers wistfully, "...is that he has created in his [i.e. her] mind a very strong prejudice against Tilak personally by telling her what I look upon as positive lies about his revolutionary tendencies and attempts to join hands with Sinn Fein".¹

Tilak was most anxious to retain Mrs Besant's association with the Congress and himself, for the sake both of unity in India and of Mrs Besant's contacts in England. "It is idle to talk of fundamental differences between us", he wrote to Khaparde. "Five years more or less for complete provincial autonomy is no fundamental difference".² Had Tilak been in India he might well have prevented the rupture between her and the Nationalists.

The Muslim League Session in Delhi at the end of 1918 was likewise rowdy and also marked a great turning point. As with the young Congressmen, young Muslims' feelings had been aroused. Pan-Islamists were


2. Tilak, London, to Khaparde, 28 Feb 1919; also 6 Feb, 5 Mar 1919; Tilak to D. V. Gokhale, 23 Jan and 6 Feb 1919, Khaparde Papers.
greatly agitated by the end of the War which signalled Turkey's defeat: not only was it a great blow to their pride as Muslims, but it raised the whole question of the integrity of the Khilafat and its hegemony over the Holy Places.¹ With the end of the War, most of the Pan-Islamists who had been interned (though not the Ali Brothers or Azad) were released, especially in the Punjab. Pan-Islamic feeling was thus running high and nowhere higher than in Delhi, a Pan-Islamic centre.

Pan-Islamist feeling affected both the Congress and the League Sessions, for the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the former was Hakim Ajmal Khan and, of the latter, Dr Ansari, both Pan-Islamists. The Reception Committee of the League had invited the Muslim ulema to its sessions, despite warnings, even from Pan-Islamists like Khaliquzzaman that they "were playing with fire" and "would either be swept off their

¹. Home Poll Dep. Jan 1919, no. 41, 'Delhi', par. 2; ibid., no. 42, 'Madras', par. 5.

². Home Poll Dep. Dec 1918, no. 23, p. 14. The Government of the Punjab said somewhat prematurely: "the collapse of Turkey involves the collapse of the whole Pan-Islamic propaganda rendering those connected with it comparatively harmless". Ibid., p. 27, Viceroy to Secretary of State, Telegram, 16 Dec 1918.
feet or carry the whole of Muslim India with them. As doctors of Islamic law the *ulema* were highly respected by Muslims, religious and lay, and formed the top rank of a hierarchy of authority among Muslims. If, however, their religious zeal were fired by the cry of "Islam in danger" they might direct Muslims into dangerous, even violent paths. The speech of the President of the Muslim League Session, Fazlul-Huq, was in English, and evoked little enthusiasm, but Ansari's Urdu speech roused the anger of his hearers at the threats to the Khalif's authority from British support for the rebellious Sharif of Mecca and the rumoured British intention of dismembering the Ottoman Empire: this set the tone of the Session. Mahmudabad, Wazir Hasan and Jinnah opposed the raising of the Khilafat question, querying the League's constitutional competence to discuss other than domestic matters, but they were outvoted. Mahmudabad and Wazir Hasan resigned the offices of President and Secretary in response to renewed attacks from young Muslims, but were pressed to withdraw these resignations. A new spirit, however, had clearly entered Muslim politics.

Conclusion:

At the end of 1918 Annie Besant and Tilak had lost the leadership both of the Moderates and of the Extremists and young men of Congress, while the "nationalist" Muslims who had controlled the Muslim League, were being compelled to follow new and unwelcome paths by the Pan-Islamists and young Muslims in the League. Mrs Besant's and Tilak's strategy of the united front had broken down and with the departure of the Moderates from Congress they found themselves without a programme to satisfy the Nationalists who remained.

The breakdown of the united front can be traced to the earlier conduct of the programme of agitation without sanctions. The Home Rule agitation which Mrs Besant and Tilak roused in 1916 and the first half of 1917 had the effect of encouraging their younger and more impetuous followers' bitterness and defiance toward the British and of confirming the suspicions of the Moderates, particularly those of Bombay, that the two Home Rule leaders were not genuine in relinquishing passive resistance. Mrs Besant and Tilak thus exacerbated the distinctions within the united front instead of reconciling them.
Up to August 1917, the Moderates were held in harness with the Extremists and the young men as the result of British repression of those who demanded self-government and British failure to make any response to this demand. But as soon as the British started to modify this policy by promising reforms, the Moderates' faith in the possibility of gradual advance to self-government in co-operation with the British was revived, and they began to turn away from the united front. Mrs Besant returned to her opposition to passive resistance and persuaded Tilak to join her in conciliating the Moderates.

But once the latter had begun to separate from the Congress it proved impossible to halt the process except temporarily. With their faith in the possibility of advance in co-operation with the British restored, they agreed with Montagu that they should give up the position, which they shared with the rest of the national movement, that the Congress-League Scheme of Reforms was the minimum India would accept. Being rational men they agreed that it was necessary to consider the situation in terms of what was possible - the Congress-League Scheme had clearly been rejected by the British. Montagu, moreover, convinced them that if they did not support his
scheme, it might be rejected by Cabinet or Parliament. Tilak and Mrs Besant focussed attention on the Congress-League Scheme as the "irreducible minimum", hoping to re-cement the united front, and (in Tilak's case especially) to use this large demand as a tactical basis for gaining more from the British. In fact, however, it was round this question that differences between the member groups of the united front crystallised after Mrs Besant and Tilak had abandoned passive resistance. The Moderates convinced themselves that Tilak and the young men wanted to wreck the Reforms. Tilak summed up the differences between them thus:

There are men of different temperaments all over the world. There are men who think that they should make easy terms with the rulers. There are others who think that the people are entitled to have something from their rulers...\footnote{speech "The Present Situation", 21 Apr 1918, at Madras, Tilak, \textit{Writings and Speeches}, p. 363; cf. \textit{Mahratta}, 27 Dec 1914, p. 401.}

Earlier his paper had written: "The Britishers cannot be moved by anything but strength....Not a 'calm', but a 'storm', is the proper atmosphere for the British intellect and emotion to grasp the realities fully."\footnote{\textit{Mahratta}, 2 Sept 1917, p. 415.}

Tilak thus identified himself with the emotionalism...
of the young men, which prompted them to approach Gandhi for a programme of passive resistance. The emotional and irrational frame of mind in which they turned to this form of political expression was conveyed by the Mahratta:

P.R. [i.e. passive resistance] has on its side the brilliant recommendation of being a highly spiritual, manly measure, which the other [i.e. the Moderate or "anti-P.R. programme"] has not....When we realise that Passive Resistance is not a matter of option with us, but clearly a matter of moral "compulsion", we shall refuse to be over-calculating in the matter of "results" and leave to God the shaping of our efforts to the end He may deem proper.

What Mrs Besant said in 1915 January [sic] as regards "the conditions of successful passive resistance" we shall understand as applying only very partially to the National case of the Day, seeing that not material success but the safeguarding of National Honour is our first and foremost requirement in the present circumstances.

This emotionalism among her followers, which Mrs Besant had helped to rouse, limited her room for manoeuvre vis-a-vis the British. The Reforms offered by Montagu constituted a partial response to her demands. She recognised that the situation had changed and believed that by parleying with him she had a strategy which was more likely to bring further concessions than continued agitation. Such a strategy however was patently incapable

of satisfying the young men. From the time of her release Mrs Besant's policy became increasingly ambivalent: on the one hand she strove to maintain her identity with the more impetuous Congressmen by denunciatory and inflammatory speeches, but on the other she joined with the Moderates in the yet united AICC to keep them in check.

Like Besant, Tilak was also committed to the maintenance of the united front, and she was thus able to persuade him to help her in restraining the young men. On a succession of issues from September 1917 until the end of 1918 Mrs Besant and Tilak adopted an aggressive attitude toward the British, but on each occasion Mrs Besant drew back from these positions and, willingly or unwillingly, Tilak followed suit. These constant reversals of policy imposed strains on the loyalty of their young followers. This in turn deepened the strategic dilemma of the leaders who were anxious not only to retain this loyalty but also to maintain the united front and to gain the greatest reform from the British. Tilak revealed the strain that this imposed on him when he wrote just before the Special Congress: "...Our main difficulty at present is to get as many
Moderates with us as possible without giving up our principles...." but that "Still it is desirable that [the] total rejection view should be put before the Subjects Committee". But as Rajaji who had followed him hitherto put it, Mrs Besant's and Tilak's positions as "mediators between nationalists and seceding moderates" were "incompatible" with leadership of the Nationalists.

Why did Mrs Besant and Tilak impose this crippling restriction on their leadership? Why did they try to maintain the united front, when plainly it inhibited the fashioning of a programme which would satisfy the Nationalists, who formed the bulk of their supporters?

First, as Tilak's letter suggests, they did not recognise how deeply the Moderates disliked and distrusted them. Secondly, in order to legitimise the demands they made of their British audience they wanted to claim to speak on behalf of all India: for this reason, one can say that they were more concerned about the effect of their actions on the British than on those who followed them.

1. Tilak to Viji a r a gh a v a c h a r i a r, 8 Aug 1918, quoted on p. 268 above.

2. see telegram, Rajaji to Viji a r a gh a v a c h a r i a r, 19 Aug 1918, quoted on p. 269 above.

3. for a discussion of the "audience" to whom politicians address their action, see H. Tinker, Ballot Box and Bayonet: People and Government in Emergent Asian Countries, pp. 102ff.
Thirdly, Mrs Besant was anxious to restrain the young men of Indian politics, and for a year from September 1917 she was able to use the necessity for compromise, in order to keep the Moderates in the united front, as a restraint upon them. In this she differed fundamentally from Tilak for, although he had become doubtful of the possibility of rousing and controlling an effective mass, passive-resistance campaign and therefore agreed that the young hotheads should be restrained, he did not regard restraint as one of the ends of his policy. Mrs Besant had entered the national movement in order to provide the young men with an alternative to passive resistance and terrorism, to which, she feared, Tilak if left to himself would lead them.1 She refused to recognise that by her programme of agitation she was helping to defeat this purpose, and that by encouraging agitation and then calling it off she was adding to the degree of frustration among the young men that demanded an outlet.

Having failed to provide a programme which both satisfied and enabled her to control her followers, Mrs Besant might have retained control through organisation.

But while the HRL provided an excellent hortatory mechanism for the rousing of agitation, it was deficient as a means of control. The activity of the branches depended on the quality of the local leaders, who were left free to draw up their own rules; machinery was almost non-existent to enforce obedience to any decisions taken by the plenary sessions or office bearers of the League; and the articulation between the headquarters and the branches was minimal. At the end of 1917 Mrs Besant allowed this organisation to decline even further: the office of Organising Secretary (who, if anybody, was in a position to exact obedience from the branches) was abolished and the vigorous Ramaswami Aiyar left the position of General Secretary for the equivalent position in Congress. Mrs Besant's aim was in part to mollify the Moderates, who had objected to the HRL as a rival to the Congress; but her primary reason in allowing the League to decline was probably her belief that, as President of Congress, she would be able to demand obedience from members of the national movement as Congressmen. As she put it in her Presidential Address:

I cannot promise to agree with and to follow you always; the duty of a leader is to lead....A general should see further than his officers and his army, and cannot explain, while battles are
going on, every move in a campaign...Up
till now...I have claimed no authority
of leadership...Now, by your election,
I take the place which you have given...

Congress was inadequately developed or articulated to
act as an effective means of communication between the
leadership and the rank-and-file and Mrs Besant and
Tilak failed to reorganise it at the 1917 or 1918
Sessions. Mrs Besant did place her lieutenants and Home
Rulers in important positions and might have made some
use of Congress, but by alienating all but the most
devoted Theosophists among them she rendered her leader­
ship of Congress nugatory. By the middle of 1918 when
she was trying to hold the united front together, she
regretted that she had allowed the HRL organisation,
already inadequate for purposes of controlling her foll­
owers, to decline. She wrote:

Bombay Presidency alone is sufficiently
well organised to make an appeal to
all the Branch Leagues effective,
when a sudden need arises. There is
not available for my use even a register,
giving the names of all branches and
their Secretaries.¹

¹. The Besant Spirit, IV, 147.
². A. Besant to members of the All-India HRL Council
19 June 1918, A-IHRL File no. 3, Adyar Archives.
She urged that the organisation be revived and Arundale re-appointed Organising Secretary. But it was too late to build an organisation: the young men of Madras were already in revolt. Her failure to provide them with a consistent, satisfactory programme and her attempts to mollify their enthusiasm had alienated them. A few of them, notably Satyamurti and Rajaji, had never accepted her leadership unreservedly: they resented her attacks on Tilak and Gandhi, and believed these showed that one day she would "compromise with the Government". They seduced others, like Varadarajalu Naidu, who at first had not doubted her nationalism. Her desire to dominate made enemies of men like Vijiaraghavachariar; her position at the head of the Theosophical Society made her overbearing; and even the superior airs of her Theosophical Society followers and their resentment of any criticism of her won her enemies. Indeed what is surprising is that, with all her obvious disadvantages, she had succeeded in identifying herself so well with the young men of Indian nationalism.


Tilak, of course, started with none of these disadvantages. His championing of an aggressive line toward the British and his suffering for the national cause had made him the hero of the young Nationalists. In his association with Mrs Besant in 1917-18 he was clearly less anxious to restrain them than she was. But he too failed to give the young men leadership. By committing himself to the united front and allying himself with Mrs Besant, he was unable to give them a firm lead in putting into effect a programme which would express their feelings. His increasing caution made him unwilling to give more than verbal support to passive resistance. And, at the end of 1918, with his eyes on the audience in Britain, he left India.

The way was thus prepared for one who would give expression to the feelings of the young Congressmen.

The articulate members of the Muslim community were, like their Congress counterparts, men of disparate tendencies: as we have seen, there were "conservative" Muslims, who objected to rapprochement with Congress; Muslims in Muslim-majority provinces who were dissatisfied with the terms given to them under the Congress-League Scheme; the "nationalist" Muslims, at this time in
charge of the Muslim League, who looked forward to the evolution of a secular state in India; and the young Muslims and Pan-Islamists who were dissatisfied with the inactivity of the Muslim League, and wished to make more use of the control they might expect to gain over the Muslim masses by appealing to Islamic religious sentiment.

It was plainly impossible to find a programme which would satisfy all these shades of opinion. The Muslim League organisation was much more tightly controlled by its executive than was Congress: those who objected to the entente with Congress were ejected, or retired, from the League. But this made Jinnah, Mahmudabad and the small group of "nationalist" Muslims who controlled the League more vulnerable to attack from the side of the young Muslims and Pan-Islamists, who wanted them to take up a more aggressive policy vis-a-vis the British in demanding self-government for India and in defence of the integrity of the Khilafat. With the visit of Montagu and his promise of reforms, Jinnah and Mahmudabad were inclined to take up a more moderate position toward the British in whose bona fides their confidence had been somewhat restored. And Jinnah and Mahmudabad were wisely averse to rousing Muslim feeling over the Khilafat since, though this might temporarily unite the Muslims more closely
with the Hindus of Congress in opposition to the British, to do so threatened to rouse Muslim fanaticism which might prove uncontrollable. This would inhibit the advance to secularism; and might well be turned against the Hindus and wreck the Muslim League-Congress entente.

The Muslim League, as it had existed heretofore, obviously could not control the Muslim masses, as had been demonstrated by the anti-Hindu Muslim riots in Calcutta. Here, clearly, was a threat to the continuance of the Hindu-Muslim entente. The best chance of controlling the masses was through the hierarchy of the ulema and Muslim divines; but they, in turn, were not readily controllable, since their religious zeal was easily aroused.

In order to assuage the Pan-Islamists the "nationalist" Muslim leaders did take up the agitation over the internment of the Ali Brothers; but even this served to rouse the Pan-Islamic tempers. At the end of the year the Pan-Islamists swept aside the warnings of Mahmudabad, Jinnah and the other "nationalist" leaders and used the League Session as the amplifier of Pan-Islamic feelings.

The field had been left clear in India for a leader who would utilise, and give expression to, the
feelings of the young Congressmen and the Pan-Islamists, and who would also try to overcome threats to the Muslim-Hindu entente from communal violence. It was Gandhi who emerged to fill this role.
PART 3: GANDHI'S RISE TO LEADERSHIP

Chapter VII

THE EMERGENCE OF GANDHI, JANUARY - APRIL, 1919.

Introduction:

After the excitement of the 1918 Sessions of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League at Delhi, the leading men in these organisations turned their attention to the selection of suitable deputations to press India's claims at Westminster and before the British public for as wide a devolution of power as possible under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. But these preparations were soon to be overshadowed by more spectacular political events. The Report of the Sedition, or "Rowlatt", Committee, which the Government of India had published contemporaneously with the Montagu-Chelmsford

Report, had recommended that legislation should be passed to enable the Government to retain the powers of arbitrary arrest and detention, which it had held during the War under the Defence of India Act (due to lapse six months after Peace was declared) and which it had used to detain some thousands of anarchist and terrorist suspects.\(^1\) It suggested that trials for sedition might be by special "courts", without juries, and \textit{in camera} if the "court" so decided; that confessions be admitted as evidence; and that the right of appeal be abolished. Early in 1919 the Government of India introduced two Bills to implement the suggestions of this Report, the Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill and the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, known as the Rowlatt Bills or, more commonly among Indians, as the "Black Bills".\(^2\)

\(^1\) Rowlatt Report, especially pp. 197-212.

\(^2\) the Bills were gazetted on 18 Jan 1919, see \textit{Indian Leg. Co.}, LVII (Apr 1918 – Mar 1919), 470; and introduced in the central legislature on 6 and 19 Feb respectively, ibid., pp. 450-551, 553-76.
Gandhi announced in March that if the Bills were passed he would lead a satyagraha campaign, inaugurated by a 24-hour hartal or cessation of business, in the course of which Indians would be urged to disobey the new legislation and other laws. The Government dropped one Bill but forced the other through the legislature against the opposition of all the non-official Indian members. The hartal was widely observed throughout India: trading and transport came to a halt in the large cities and towns, and even in villages; crowds joined processions to rivers or to the sea, and took purificatory baths; Muslims joined Hindus in prayer at temples, Hindus addressed crowds in mosques; and laws were broken by the sale of unregistered or prohibited literature. Political demonstrations had never been so widespread in India before and, it is safe to say, had never before involved so many Indians drawn from such wide social backgrounds; no Indian leader had demonstrated his ability to sway and direct large numbers as did Gandhi on this occasion. And yet he had hardly taken part in Indian national politics during the six months since the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms proposals had appeared. How, then, was he able to assume the leadership of the Indian national movement?
The answer to this question is to be found partly in the policy of the British, partly in the state of mind of the young men of the Congress and the Muslim League who became his most devoted followers and executives, and partly in Gandhi's preparation for leadership.

By their hasty enactment of the Rowlatt legislation the British provided the immediate occasion for Gandhi's rise to leadership. The Bills provoked unanimous opposition from every shade of Indian political opinion, for it was seen that they could be used to muzzle or detain politicians of whatever hue and "to deal with ordinary political offences". ¹ The British also contributed to Gandhi's rise by permitting him to publicise and organise his satyagraha campaign. As the result of their experience of his methods in South Africa and in India since 1914 and of Mrs Besant's internment, the British - notably Sir George Lloyd, who had recently arrived as Governor of Bombay - trusted Gandhi to keep his movement non-violent, and believed that the best way to deal with the movement was to allow it to run its course, rather than to restrain

¹. *Indian Leg. Co.*, LVII, 457, 1188; cf. pp. 464, etc.
its leaders and thus to give them martyrdom and popularity. It is unlikely, for instance, that they would have allowed Tilak to go so far.

The key to Gandhi's success at this time, however, lies in the young Congressmen and Muslims, whose temper was high at the end of 1918 and who became his most devoted lieutenants and followers. The young men of Congress were looking for a programme of action which would enable them to strike at the British: some of them were prepared to employ terrorism and acts of violence but most regarded armed rebellion as unpractical, for the immediate future at least, if only because the country was disarmed by the Arms Act. In any case, there was a weapon nearer to hand which had not been used, passive resistance. This had been urged as a means of bringing pressure to bear upon the British since 1906 but on the only occasion when it had appeared likely to be put into effect on a national scale - over Mrs Besant's internment - the leaders had dropped it, thus adding to the young men's sense of frustration. Many of the young men saw passive resistance, in which they included refusal to pay land taxes, as a means of involving mass groups, notably the

1. see K. M. Munshi, I Follow the Mahatma, pp. 1-3.
2. see Chapter I above.
peasants. Some of them expected the British to reply with coercion, thus alienating these mass groups and leading to mob violence: to a number of Gandhi's lieutenants, when they joined him, such a result would not have been altogether unwelcome.¹

The young Muslims and Pan-Islamists had been similarly aroused by Turkey's defeat at the end of 1918 and the threats by Britain and the other Allies to dismember the Ottoman Empire and thus to divest the Khalif of suzerainty over the Holy Places of Islam.

Gandhi had been preparing a method of political action which appealed to these young men as a means of expression for their pent-up feelings; he promised too to mobilise mass groups in support of action taken by them, and from both the young politicians and mass groups he had been securing admirers and followers who would do his bidding and act as a chain of command to others.

¹ Deshpande, Autobiography, pp. 280-1, 295; Yajnik, 1943, pp. 89-90; Munshi, I Follow the Mahatma, p. 9, and Gujarati autobiography, translated for the writer by the author; interview with Dr S. Kitchlu, 19 Feb 1953.
Gandhi Evolves His Doctrine in Action.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born in 1869 in one of the Native States of Gujarat. Although his family was of the Bania caste, third in the fourfold varna hierarchy and traditionally traders, his grandfather, uncle and father had all risen to the position of dewan, or prime minister, of a Native State. Gandhi trained as a lawyer in London, and it was in order to take part in a court case that he first went to South Africa in 1893 (the year, it will be remembered, that Annie Besant arrived in India). Within a few days of his arrival he had performed several acts of personal passive resistance: he refused to vacate voluntarily his seat, first in a first-class railway compartment (from which by convention non-whites were excluded in South Africa), and then on a stage-coach. In the first

instance he failed, for the guard ejected him bodily, but in the second the white attendant beat him so brutally that his white fellow-passengers interposed. During the thirteen years from 1893 to 1906 he led the Indians of South Africa in presenting their hardships to the governments and pressing for their rights. This convinced him of the need to increase Indians' self-respect, at home and abroad, as well as giving him experience of organisation and leadership and teaching him the value of communications and publicity.  

It was only during his last eight years in South Africa, from 1906 to 1914, that he put passive resistance, which he had shown to the stage-coach attendant at a personal level, into practice at the political level in a series of satyagraha campaigns. He led the South African Indian community in offering civil disobedience 2 and in protesting against a Transvaal law that all Indians must be registered and carry passes, the aim of which was to make life so unpleasant for


2. "Civil" in contradistinction to "criminal" law-breaking, which would involve violence.
Indians in the Transvaal that they would leave, and against other laws which restricted Indian immigration, imposed poll taxes on Indians and invalidated Indian marriages. They refused to register; marched across state boundaries as "illegal immigrants"; struck against the poll taxes; and suffered imprisonment, deportation and forced labour for these offences. Labourers and merchants, Muslims, Hindus and Parsees, men and women strove and suffered together. Their staunchness in the face of suffering won the approval of the Viceroy of India for their struggle and the admiration and support of their compatriots at home. Furthermore it wrought a change of heart in Smuts: the Union Government capitulated - at least for the time being - on most of the issues over which satyagraha had been launched and, though Gandhi confessed himself not completely satisfied, he returned to India in 1915 a hero.

Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and his Moderate associates of Bombay had applauded Gandhi's work while making it clear that they had little hope of his success; but as Gandhi demonstrated his determination and his ability to carry the Indians in South Africa with him, so their
support, financial as well as moral, grew. Among the Moderates Gandhi won a staunch advocate in Gokhale: doubtless they were drawn to each other by their mutual belief in non-violence and in the necessity for self-sacrifice in the service of their country. Gandhi seems to have felt a complete lack of rapport with Tilak, who was known for the enmity which he had stirred up between Muslims and Hindus in western India and had been convicted of encouraging young nationalists to crimes of violence. On Gandhi's return to India, at the beginning of 1915, therefore, he put himself in the hands of Gokhale, who advised him to abstain from active participation in politics for a year, during which he should observe Indian political life.

Gandhi embarked on several extended tours of India, observing, and speaking on South Africa, but he had made up his mind to apply the political method he had evolved in South Africa to his homeland. In May 1915,


2. Gandhi to Gokhale, 27 Feb 1914, no. 1224, Gandhi Papers Nidhi.

three months after the death of Gokhale, he set up an
ashram in Ahmedabad. "I wanted to acquaint India with
the method I had tried in South Africa", he wrote later,
"and I desired to test in India the extent to which its
application might be possible. So my companions and I
selected [for it] the name 'Satyagraha Ashram'...". 2
Although Gandhi set up his headquarters in his native
province of Gujarat, he strove to establish contact
with as many of the groups in Indian society as
possible: the inmates of the ashram included Tamils
and soon, to the perturbation of some of Gandhi's more
orthodox caste followers, untouchables. In addition
he "searched out" the Muslim leaders and met Dr Ansari
and also the Ali Brothers, and their spiritual adviser
Abdul Bari. 3

Gandhi had hoped to join Gokhale's Servants of
India Society (SIS), but after Gokhale's death the
members of the Society decided against his admission:

1. an "abode", the home of a religious teacher and his
disciples.
2. Gandhi, Experiments, pp. 482-3; C. F. Andrews,
Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas, p. 200.
3. Young India, 14 May 1919, p. 6; Bombay Police
1915, par. 408; Hailey to Government of India, 1 May
1915 in Home Poll Dep. May 1915, no. 36, p. 3; Gandhi,
his South African reputation would place him in a domin­
ant position in the Society and, while its members agreed with him in foregoing the pursuit of wealth in order to serve India socially and politically, they did not insist on some of the other conditions he laid down for service, notably celibacy, nor did they like his dietetic and other fads; moreover, as Moderates, the older members were unwilling to be dragged into cam­paings of passive resistance. Nevertheless Gandhi continued to associate himself with the Moderates rather than the Extremists. In July 1915 he attended the Bombay Provincial Conference in Poona, organised by the Moderate-dominated PCC, where he urged Tilak to accept unconditionally the Moderates' terms for readmission to the Congress, and told Tilak that India would not be "prepared for the latter's propaganda" - presumably the demand for complete self-government and nation-wide agitation in support of that demand - "for at least 20 years to come". At the Extremists' Bombay "Provincial


2. Bombay Police 1915, par. 700; Karandikar "Diary" (Poona), 11 July 1915; Yajnik, 1943, p. 8; for the ineff­ectiveness of Gandhi's intervention, see Chapter II above.
Conference" at Belgaum in April of the following year, where Tilak and his followers decided to re-enter the Congress (under terms more favourable than those offered the year before), Gandhi urged Tilak to rejoin the Congress only if he was genuinely prepared for a compromise with the Moderates.

Gandhi was out of sympathy with the Home Rule agitation roused by Mrs Besant and Tilak, although he did not actively oppose it. He wrote:

I myself do not much like Mrs Besant's methods. I have not liked the idea of the political propaganda being carried on during the war. In my opinion our restraint will have been the best propaganda. But the whole country was against me.

Gandhi considered that it was unchivalrous to take advantage of Britain's difficulties during the War to put forward India's demand for self-government: logically, indeed was not India thereby using German violence in an attempt to gain her ends? Above all, he feared

that the Home Rule agitation would be superficial, that it would affect only the upper, Western-educated stratum of society and win power, if at all, for that stratum: he, on the contrary, wanted to involve mass groups in satyagraha and to ameliorate their lot through it.\(^1\) And, of course, as the "expert" in satyagraha, he intended to direct its introduction himself. He was as unwilling to share leadership with Mrs Besant as she to share it with him: "one scabbard cannot hold two swords", he told her Bombay lieutenants who urged him to join the HRL.\(^2\)

While Gandhi would not utilise Britain's difficulties to press the general demand for a devolution of power, he was still anxious to test satyagraha in Indian conditions and to use it to right particular wrongs. He launched several satyagraha campaigns, which he rationalised as attempts to reconcile the Indian people to the Government by making the latter amenable to public opinion: these campaigns, he said, were his "direct and special contribution to the War".\(^3\) But

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2. Yajnik, 1943, p. 33; see Mrs Besant's letter to him, 7 June 1917, no. S 6361, *Gandhi Papers Sabarmati*.
3. Gandhi to Viceroy, 29 Apr 1918, loc. cit.
they provided testing grounds for the application of satyagraha on a much wider scale after the War.

Gandhi's first use of satyagraha in India - or threat to use it - was over the system of indentured labour, which reduced Indians to near-slavery in Natal, in Fiji and elsewhere. In 1915 C. F. Andrews, an Anglican priest with unorthodox, pro-Hindu notions who had worked with Gandhi in South Africa, came back from an inspection of Fiji with harrowing tales of the conditions of the indentured labourers. Andrews persuaded Mrs Besant and Tilak to launch an agitation on this question, which distressed Indians of all shades of political opinion: when it became clear in early 1917 that the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, was prepared to make soothing and vague promises of "eventual abolition" but not to allow legislation for an immediate ban, Gandhi joined the agitation. He set 31st July as the deadline for abolition and hinted that if it were not abolished by then he would call on

1. see letters from C. F. Andrews to Tagore, 23 Jan 1914, 7 May, (?) Oct and 28 Oct 1915, C. F. Andrews Papers. This paragraph is also based on Yajnik, 1943, pp. 18-23; Gandhi, Experiments, pp. 489-93; Gandhi, Speeches & Writings, pp. 113-6; New India, 24 Oct 1916, p. 5b-d; 29 Jan 1917, p. 6b; 2 Feb 1917, p. 9c; 3 Feb 1917, p. 3c; Home Poll B, Feb 1917, nos 552-5, w/e 10 Feb 1917, par. 5; w/e 17 Feb 1917, par. 7; Dep. Mar 1917, no. 32, 'Madras', par. 11, 'Bombay!', par. 2.
Indians to "be prepared to suffer, to go to prison or even to die". Rather than face a growing agitation, Chelmsford capitulated.

Immediately after this Gandhi took up the case of the peasants of the Champaran area in northern Bihar. Here the tenant-peasants suffered virtual serfdom: forced labour, a multitude of customary but illegal dues exacted by the ingenious landlords and, above all, the tinkathia system under which three-twentieths of the tenants' land was put under indigo for the landlords. Furthermore, most of the landlords were British. Gandhi came to investigate and refused to leave when ordered to do so by the local government officials who were friends of the planters. This was Gandhi's first act of civil disobedience in India. Word of this soon spread: Gandhi had been invited to Champaran by one of the leading Bihari politicians, Braj Kishore Prasad, and on his way through Patna had sought out the others; in addition, Gandhi made sure that his actions were well publicised by telegrams to friends and the press.

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1. this paragraph is based on Gandhi, Experiments, pp. 494-519; R. Prasad, Autobiography, pp. 82-100; R. Prasad, Mahatma Gandhi & Bihar, pp. 1-37; B. B. Misra (ed), Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, passim; B & O Police 1917, notably pars 440, 479, 531, 592, 641.

Lieutenant-Governor of the province, fearing a cause célèbre, withdrew the orders against Gandhi, who advised his followers that "no public agitation [would be] necessary" and proceeded with his enquiry.\(^1\) Realising no doubt that Gandhi would not be satisfied merely to enquire and leave things as they were, the Lieutenant-Governor set up an official enquiry, in which Gandhi was included, and on its recommendation allowed the passing of the Champaran Agrarian Act, which ended the planters' extortions.\(^2\)

Gandhi carefully avoided relating the Champaran satyagraha to the Home Rule agitation then in progress in the country, but on Mrs Besant's internment he slipped away to Bombay and, in response to requests for guidance from her young, HRL followers there he suggested that they should demonstrate their disapproval of the internment by offering passive resistance against it, marching the 500-odd miles to her place of internment and asking her to march out at their head.\(^3\) Her

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1. see telegram from Government of Bihar to Commissioner, Muzaffarpur, 19 Apr 1917, in Champaran Documents, p. 73; B & O Police 1917, par. 529.
2. much of this was due to the advice of Sir William Vincent (1866-1941), Home Member, Government of India, 1917-20; had been member of the Lt.-Governor's Executive Council, Bihar and Orissa, 1915-17; see Champaran Documents, especially pp. 164, 190-1.
3. see Chapter VI above.
followers were so excited that they set to work to put this somewhat bizarre proposal into effect, collecting signatures on a pledge drawn up by Gandhi from those who were prepared to participate. They also acted upon his suggestions that they should take the Home Rule demand to the villages, instead of concentrating solely on addressing audiences in the Chawls and Markets of Bombay, and that they should draw up a Petition to the Secretary of State in support of the Congress-League Scheme, to be signed by thousands of peasants after the Scheme had been explained to them. The young men of Bombay, in company with those of the rest of India, pressed the Congress Committees to adopt passive resistance in protest at Mrs Besant's internment: this not only provoked the determined opposition of the Moderates in the Congress but also gave rise to a debate on the meaning of passive resistance and how it was to be put into effect. Gandhi (although not a member of the PCC) was called in to advise the Bombay PCC on this question: he was reported to have said - somewhat surprisingly in view of his South African campaigns and his later leadership of the Congress - that passive resistance was purely a matter of individual conscience and that
being so, the Congress as a body should not adopt [it]". 1
Presumably he meant that his sort of passive resistance
(which will be examined in more detail below) could not
be carried out without proper preparation nor, indeed,
without his guidance which, due to the Champaran cam-
paign and the fact that he did not control the Congress,
he could not give.

From the end of 1917 Gandhi transferred most of
his activity to his native region of Gujarat. His
advice to the young men of Bombay - many of them Gujar-
atis - to take politics to the countryside had borne
fruit in a crop of HRLs in the towns and villages of
Gujarat. The awakening in this hitherto politically-
backward region expressed itself in the First Gujarat
Provincial Conference at Godhra in November, the
organisers of which asked Gandhi to preside. He
expounded his notion of satyagraha, and mentioned that
he had applied it again with success: he had told the
Government that, if a customs barrier, recently
imposed between the Gujarat Native States and British
India at Viramgam was not removed, he and the people of

1. Minutes of the Sub-Committee of the Bombay PCC
appointed to consider Passive Resistance, 26 Aug 1917,
in Bombay PCC Papers, kept in Deccan Sabha Papers.
the area might ignore the barrier and court imprison-
ment; the Government had again acquiesced.\(^1\) His next
two satyagraha campaigns were carried out in Gujarat, one
among the millworkers of Ahmedabad, the other among the
peasants of the Kaira District.\(^2\) Gandhi undertook to
lead a strike of the Ahmedabad weavers if they would
reduce their demand and accept a number of harsh con-
ditions, e.g. to accept no alms and not to picket. The
workers had no savings and suffered grievously during
the strike, which was eventually settled on their
(reduced) terms but only after Gandhi had stiffened their
will (and frightened the mill-owners) by fasting — the
first occasion on which he employed the fast. In Kaira,
the Government had allowed a number of suspensions in
the payment of land revenue, due to heavy damage to
crops by rain and pests. The peasants claimed that as
the crop was less than a third of the normal the whole
of the revenue should be suspended; Gandhi persuaded

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1. Yajnik, 1943, pp. 33-5; Gandhi Presidential Speech, First Gujarat Provincial Conference, 3 Nov 1917, in
Speeches & Writings, pp. 400-22; Bombay Police 1917,
par. 1247; Gandhi presents the story somewhat differ-
etly, Experiments, pp. 460-3; though cf. Speeches &
Writings, pp. 201-2.

2. re former, see M. H. Desai, A Righteous Struggle (A
Chronicle of the Ahmedabad Textile Labourers' Fight for
Justice), passim; N. D. Parikh, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel,
I, 90-7; HFM Bombay, II, 729-36; Gandhi, Experiments, pp.
520-2, 526-30; re latter, see ibid., pp. 531-8; Parikh,
Vallabhbhai Patel, I, 48-89; G. K. Devadhar et al, Report
of an Inquiry into the Agricultural Situation in...Kaira,
them to demand the suspension of half the revenue and to pledge themselves to refuse to pay any revenue, and to suffer seizure of property and imprisonment, until the Government agreed. But forfeiture of their property worked such hardship on the peasantry that Gandhi went back on the pledge and agreed that the richer peasants would pay up if remissions were granted to the poor—whose identity was to be decided by the Government. Gandhi was dejected at this partial surrender but the result was celebrated as another triumph for satyagraha.

This brings us to April 1918 when, as we have seen, the Government's urgent plea for men and money to meet the German offensive on the Western Front resulted in a division of opinion between Mrs Besant, who wished India to support Britain in this emergency, and Tilak and the young men of the national movement, who saw this as an opportunity to press their demands for a definite promise of Home Rule at the end of the War. Gandhi found himself in an awkward position. His aversion to taking advantage of Britain's difficulties made him decide to assist the Government in its recruiting

1. Chapter VI above.
campaign. He had intended to support the Government at its War Conferences, but seeing how unpopular this stand would be and in view of the Government's snub to the national movement by refusing to invite Mrs Besant, Tilak and the Ali Brothers, he merely offered general support at the Delhi Conference, and wrote to the Viceroy, deploiring the absence of the leaders, saying that he could not forswear the use of satyagraha even during the War, and asking for assurances that the Government would respect the Indians' desire for Home Rule.¹ At the Bombay War Conference he refused to support a resolution and, after the Conference, presided at a meeting to protest at the Governor's refusal to allow Tilak to demand Home Rule at the Conference.² During the rest of 1918, while the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were eagerly debated, Gandhi was withdrawn from the general stream of politics by his recruiting campaign in Gujarat. Sastri visited him and convinced Gandhi that the Reforms would be of benefit to India and that he

¹ Gandhi, Experiments, pp. 546–50; Gandhi to Viceroy, (draft), 29 Apr 1918, no. 5237, Gandhi Papers Nidhi.

² Jayakar, I, 192; Indian Annual Register, 1919, part 4, pp. 97–100.
should welcome them, but Gandhi was too busy recruiting to attend the 1918 Special Congress, and too sick to attend the annual Congress at the end of the year, having worn himself out in recruiting and by his dietetic fads.

Having brought the narrative to the eve of Gandhi's emergence as the leader of the Indian national movement, let us consider in greater detail the political technique he had evolved, his doctrinal outlook and the following he had acquired in India.

II

Gandhian Technique, Doctrine and Organisation.

What, first of all, did Gandhi mean by satyagraha? The word literally translated means "truth-force", though Gandhi referred to it more frequently as "soul-force". Gandhi expressed what he meant by the term in countless articles, through parables and in his actions, and developed the idea over a long life: to follow him would be to enter a vast metaphysical territory. It

may suffice to indicate the religious nature of Gandhi's concept of "truth-force" to recall his oft-repeated assertion that, for him, "Truth is God".\(^1\) Gandhi used the term satyagraha to mean the practice of truth in general,\(^2\) but usually applied it in a more limited sense in conflict situations to signify "passive resistance" or "civil disobedience". In some of his writings he differentiated strictly between passive resistance and satyagraha: the former he defined as non-violent resistance to unwelcome or unrighteous laws or authority out of a sense of weakness - if the passive resister got the chance he would resort to violence to achieve his ends; satyagraha was non-violent resistance undertaken on the principle that violence was wrong and that evil should be met by non-violence, or ahimsa.\(^3\) Gandhi believed that if India could be persuaded to adopt non-violent resistance out of a sense of conviction in her struggle against the British, this technique could then be used for the conflict situations

2. "When is Satyagraha Going to be Resumed?", in \textit{Young India}, 7 [should be 10] May, 1919, p. 6b.
which were bound to arise between Hindus and Muslims, between Brahmins and non-Brahmins and between economic groups within Indian society. To some it seemed that Gandhi became obsessed with satyagraha in itself. Indeed, Rabindranath Tagore felt it necessary to warn him:

Passive resistance [i.e. satyagraha] is a force which is not necessarily moral in itself; it can be used against truth as well as for it....I know your teaching is to fight against evil by the help of the good. But such a fight is for heroes and not for men led by the impulses of the moment.1

Nevertheless Gandhi was able to enlist large numbers of Indians from mass groups in his satyagraha campaigns. That he was able to do so was largely due to their acquaintance with and reverence for the religious concepts which he used,2 and for him as a man of God.

The sources from which Gandhi drew these ideas were partly Western (or Western-mediated): Christianity above all, and Tolstoy, later fortified by Thoreau.3

1. R. Tagore to Gandhi, 12 Apr 1919, no. 4583, Gandhi Papers Nidhi.
2. see Gandhi, Speeches & Writings, p. 315.
But much of his inspiration came from Indian traditions. He had been brought up in a Vaishnava family, and ahimsa, "non-injury" or "non-violence", was strongly entrenched in Vaishnava, or bhakti (devotional), Hinduism.¹ From Hindu sources too came his conviction that, in order to serve his fellow-men and to offer satyagraha, he must purify himself by committing himself to celibacy and restraint of the senses (brahmacharya) and poverty:² this was the first step on the way to asceticism. Here Gandhi was tapping sources of "soul-force" in a somewhat different sense, for the ascetic in Indian tradition has been regarded as the possessor of extraordinary, super-physical power.³ Satyagraha itself was an application by Gandhi at the political level of the tradition of inflicting or inviting suffering upon oneself (tapasya) as a means of purifying oneself and of changing the heart of an oppressor or opponent. One such form of tapasya was known as

3. see A. L. Basham, The Wonder that Was India, pp. 244-6.
"sitting dharna": in order to move the heart of an oppressor or creditor, the sufferer would sit at his door and fast.\(^1\) While in theory satyagraha and dharna were supposed to work a change of heart in the oppressor entirely through the sight of the self-suffering of the performer, both did involve an element of coercion upon the oppressor: dharna might pass over into social boycott, and in the Kaira satyagraha, for instance, the refusal to pay land revenue did "hurt" the Government. Later during the Rowlatt satyagraha Gandhi was to speak of "bending" the Government to the national will:\(^2\) he seems to have recognised that the Government was more likely to change its mind through fear of losing its authority than because of the sufferings of the satyagrahis.

Gandhi laid more stress on the desirability of his technique of satyagraha and its adoption, than on the political goals which he envisaged for India. Nevertheless, while in South Africa, he had outlined the sort

1. see N. K. Bose, "Conflict and Its Resolution in Hindu Civilization", in his Studies in Gandhism, pp. 80-8; Gandhi actually opposed "sitting dharna", see Young India, 2 Feb 1922, Ganesan, pp. 298-9.

2. Young India, 30 Mar 1919, Ganesan, p. 1190.
of society toward which he wanted India to work. This was the traditional, if somewhat idealised, peasant society of the past, centred on the village, where men might work with pre-industrial implements and strive to fulfill their duty, or dharma, without the temptations of modern civilisation.

His view of the British and their role in India was an ambivalent one. He rejected the Western civilisation which British rule had brought to India, and denounced its devices and institutions: hospitals, parliamentary institutions of the Westminster type, law courts, means of communication and Western education. At the same time he admired what he regarded as the British ethos: honesty, uprightness, respect for the worth of the individual, even godliness. Furthermore he recognised that government under the British gave the largest possible scope for the exercise of the individual conscience, and thus for the practice of satyagraha: he was "governed least under the British Empire."

1. M. K. Gandhi, Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule, pp. 44-5.

2. ibid., pp. 22-7, 32-4, 39-43, 64-70; speech, 27 Apr 1915, in Gandhi, Speeches & Writings, pp. 312-3; Gandhi, Ruskin: Unto This Last, A Paraphrase, pp. 66-7.
Hence [he said] my loyalty to the British Empire".  

Gandhi's ambivalent view of the British connection was reflected in a fluctuation in attitude to the necessity of getting rid of it. He probably expressed his continuing conviction when, in about 1904, he wrote:

> It is not right that one people should rule another. British rule in India is an evil....

But there were times when he seemed almost to have forgotten the urge to get rid of the British, as for instance during the recruitment campaign of 1918. At least until 1920 it seemed that Gandhi was only concerned to make the British responsive to the wishes of the Indian people, as in the Champaran and Kaira satyagrahas, though taken to its logical conclusion responsiveness would have been indistinguishable from self-governement. There was no doubt that in all circumstances, whether engaged in making the British more responsive or in winning swaraj, Gandhi's method was to use satyagraha

1. speech, Apr 1915, in *Speeches & Writings*, p. 310.  
2. for a somewhat different view, see P. van den Dungen, "Gandhi as a Political Leader", (unpublished).  
but with his loose definition of the word, this might not always involve civil disobedience but (as with the case of recruiting) whole-hearted co-operation — even in doing something with which he did not altogether agree.

On his return from South Africa Gandhi identified himself with the Moderates, mainly because of his admiration for Gokhale. He agreed with the latter's commitment to non-violence, to the uplift of the depressed lower orders of Indian society, and to self-sacrifice and painstaking work in service of India. The Moderates, however, saw how unlike themselves he was: they were opposed to satyagraha, which in its aspect of civil disobedience to authority they recognised as an application of coercive sanctions; and they were offended by Gandhi's tendency to reject modern civilisation. One of them summed up the Moderate position to Gandhi:

Western civilisation, taken as a whole, tends more strongly to justice for all than any older civilisation....condemn by all means as strongly as you like every feature of Western civilisation which merits condemnation....Where we find... that we cannot follow you, is in your generalisation against modern civilisation as such.\(^{1}\)

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Gandhi was suspicious of Tilak and the Extremists of Bengal and Maharashtra: Aurobindo had plainly condoned violence, and Tilak was tarred with the same brush.¹ After his return from South Africa Gandhi denounced anarchical crimes committed by the young Bengalis and Maharashtrians.² He disapproved too of the Home Rule agitation.

All of this carries the air of paradox, for Gandhi's satyagraha was far closer as a political method to the Extremists' passive resistance than to the protest and consultation with Government of the Moderates, whilst in drawing on Hindu religious traditions for his method he was continuing in the pattern of Hindu revivalism followed by Aurobindo, by Tilak with his Ganpati festivals and by Annie Besant's work with the Theosophical Society. Probably this very similarity made Gandhi feel the need to emphasise the difference between himself and them. The core of this difference lay in the emphasis which the parties placed on ends and means: for Tilak and Besant passive resistance and agitation were means

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¹ see Sri Aurobindo, Passive Resistance, and Chapter I above.

² e.g., Speeches & Writings, p. 307.
of hustling or coercing the British into granting political concessions; for Gandhi, as we have seen, the adoption of satyagraha was in itself the prime object—means and ends were as one. To Mrs Besant and Tilak the gaining of concessions from the British was the prime consideration, while for Gandhi the important thing was to change the mentality of the Indian people: to make them self-reliant and to prepare them for self-sacrifice, so that they might offer resistance to the Government (and in due course to other social groups) and bear the suffering involved without resiling from non-violence.

A task for saints and heroes? And yet his programme was taken up and his leadership accepted by the men of the national movement in 1919. This was partly because Gandhi himself was prepared to compromise (except in the matter of physical violence itself) with the world as he found it. In the face of the national movement's desire for parliamentary institutions, for example, Gandhi modified his rejection of them. In a similar way, although he opposed the agitation for Home Rule during the War, he recognised that it had roused large numbers of Indians and won their support. At the end of 1917 he expressed
his admiration for Mrs Besant since, he said, it was due to her that "swaraj" was "on the lips of hundreds of thousands of men and women". The enthusiasm which he harnessed in the Rowlatt satyagraha of 1919 had largely been roused by this agitation.

Gandhi's application of Hindu concepts and his working out of Hindu dharma in political life won him strong (if not always lasting) support among many fervent Hindus. Outstanding among these were Swami Shraddhananda, the great Arya Samaj leader and educationist, whose headquarters were now in Delhi but who had followers in both the Punjab and the UP, and other leading members of the Arya Samaj in both those provinces.

On the other hand Gandhi set out to win Muslim support by appealing to Islamic religious sentiment. He wrote: "my South African experiences had convinced me

2. see letter to Viceroy, 29 Apr 1918, Gandhi, Experiments, pp. 547-8; Speeches and Writings, pp. 437-8.
4. notably Dr Satyapal and Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhuri in Punjab, see Young India, 17 May 1919, p. 6; and Purshotamdas Tandon in UP, see National Herald, 4 Aug 1963 (Magazine Section) (published in Lucknow), pp. 1, 4.
that it would be on the question of Hindu-Muslim unity that my ahimsa would be put to its severest test, and he sought ways of cementing at lower levels the entente that had been established between the educated members of the two communities. He led the way for the Hindus in espousing causes to which the Muslims were committed by their faith. At the 1917 Session of the Muslim League he supported the plea for the release of the Ali Brothers, who had been interned by the British for their sympathies with Britain's Muslim enemies during the War: to him they had been interned for their religion and he contemplated threatening satyagraha for their release.

In his letter to the Viceroy in mid-1918 he urged the latter to assure the Muslims that at the end of the War the rights of the states of the Ottoman Empire and control over the Islamic Holy Places would be regulated according to Indian Muslim sentiment. The Pan-Islamist Dr Ansari, in his Address as Chairman of the Reception

2. Montagu, Diary, pp. 339, 373; Gandhi, Experiments, pp. 540-1; see M. Ali to Gandhi, 20 Feb 1918, Home Poll Dep. Apr 1918, no. 4. Gandhi corresponded on religious and political questions with the Brothers and made contact with their spiritual adviser, Abdul Bari of Lucknow.
Committee of the Muslim League at the end of 1918, thanked Gandhi as the "intrepid leader of India".\(^1\)

It is not surprising then to find a Bombay paper soon after this saying that "the future belongs to Religious Nationalism".\(^2\)

As for organisation, it is clear from Gandhi's satyagraha campaigns between 1906 and 1918 that he would work only through organisations which he had set up or which were thoroughly subservient to him; he did not work in the name of the Congress or of the HRL in Champaran, for example, but with a band of helpers whom he had called or who had offered themselves.\(^3\) In 1919 this pattern was repeated; the nation-wide satyagraha over the Rowlatt Act was organised quite outside the Congress and Muslim League. One is struck by the contrast with the approach to organisation of Mrs Besant and Tilak, who compromised with the Moderates in order to win control of the Congress.


2. New Times, 12 Apr 1919, in Bombay NP, 1919, w/e 19 Apr 1919, p. 15.

In South Africa and in his earlier Indian satyagrahas Gandhi had been confronted with "face-to-face" situations\(^1\) and therefore able to lead his campaigns personally. As we shall see, he continued to try to work in this way in the India-wide campaign of 1919 by a gruelling series of tours. He knew that his demand for complete non-violence was difficult to comply with and he wanted to explain it himself. To this extent personal leadership was a substitute for more elaborate organisation.

Gandhi set up no formal organisation of his own until the very eve of the Rowlatt satyagraha, when he established the Satyagraha Sabhas in various towns. These comprised participants in his earlier satyagraha campaigns who were prepared to follow him through thick and thin, and were formed round the persons of his lieutenants.

Indeed, his greatest asset in 1919, from the organisational point of view, was the lieutenants he had acquired in many parts of India, as the result of his South African reputation and his satyagraha campaigns of 1917-18, and who played a crucial role as his local

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\(^1\) see P. Laslett, "The Face to Face Society", in P. Laslett (ed), *Philosophy, Politics and Society*, pp. 157-84; the sole exception was the suggested, but abortive, passive resistance over Mrs Besant's internment.
executives in the conduct of the Rowlatt campaign. These lieutenants stood in the relation of devoted disciples to him: several of them have described the process of joining Gandhi as akin to that of conversion.

Among Gandhi's leading lieutenants was Rajendra Prasad who had worked under him in Champaran.¹ Born in 1884 Prasad had a brilliant career at Calcutta University; he had considered a call from Gokhale to a life of poverty and service in the SIS, but family pressure had forced him to enter the legal profession, which he had done with considerable success in Patna. He had heard but vaguely of Gandhi when the latter came to Champaran and was not impressed by his first contact. But Gandhi's fearlessness, his plans for organisation and his quiet determination to win better conditions for the poor tenants worked a transformation: "a change seemed to have come over our lives", wrote Prasad. "While this work enabled the villagers to shed their fear complex, we too became fearless!".² Prasad had hitherto been the leading organiser in Bihar politics but now found one

¹ this paragraph is based primarily on R. Prasad, *Autobiography*, pp. 28-100; he became President of independent India.

² ibid., pp. 86, 93.
whose organisational ability he could admire. Not all who worked with Gandhi in Champaran were from Bihar: some were seconded from the SIS in Poona; others were young Maharashtrians who had been itching to throw bombs at the British. Another was J. B. Kripalani from Sind, who was also to become one of Gandhi's leading lieutenants. Then aged 30, Kripalani had already dedicated himself to a life of poverty and service at the Brahma-charya Ashram in Sind. As a Professor in a Government College near Champaran he had taken considerable interest in the hardships of the Bihari peasants.

Gandhi's suggestions for passive resistance at the time of Mrs Besant's internment and the satyagrahas in Gujarat won staunch followers for Gandhi among the young leaders of the HRL in Bombay, and while the Theosophists among them, notably Jamnadas Dwarkadas, were later to be torn between their loyalty to Mrs Besant and their desire to follow Gandhi, others, notably Shankarlal Banker, were to remain devoted to him. Although Gandhi had no

2. Gandhi, *Experiments*, pp. 497-8; B & O Police 1917, pars 672, 827; Champaran Documents, p. 567; re Ashram, see Bombay Police 1917, par. 182(h).
formal connection with the HRLs at this time, those of
his lieutenants, who had been Mrs Besant's lieutenants
in her HRL organisation, particularly in Bombay, used
their contacts in the HRL branches to assist Gandhi in
preparing for the Rowlatt satyagraha. The most dis-
tinguished of Gandhi's adjutants in Gujarat was Vallabhbhai Patel.¹ A member of the rising, rich-peasant,
Patidar class of Gujarat, he had set himself up in law
in Kaira and Ahmedabad; he had been active in municipal,
as well as in Congress politics. He virtually threw up
a flourishing practice to join Gandhi, Being 43 when
he joined Gandhi, he was the oldest of Gandhi's
lieutenants.

These lieutenants were won to Gandhi by personal
contact and were trained in his method by going through
a satyagraha with him. Others were attracted by what
they heard and read of Gandhi's campaigns: like Jawaharlal Nehru they had grown critical of "the politics of
talk" and felt that "something must be done", though
"what action it should be was not clear".² Jawaharlal,

¹ Bombay Police 1917, pars 899(w), 1080(d); Gandhi, Experiments, pp. 522, 532; Parikh, Vallabhbhai Patel, I, 3-47.
² J. Nehru, Toward Freedom, p. 43.
who was 27 at the time of Champaran, had taken the
Natural Science Tripos at Cambridge, where he had joined
in much bitter criticism of the British in the Indian
student society, the Majlis. Life as a lawyer in Allah-
abad after his return in 1912 seemed very dull. Home
and education had given him a high regard for modern
civilisation, which he never lost, but England had also
given him a taste of Fabianism, which predisposed him to
look for some way to better the lot of the Indian
masses: this and his desire to "do something", which had
been encouraged by the Home Rule agitation, led him to
Gandhi.

In south India, Gandhi's principal lieutenant was
Rajaji (1879- ). He had been drawn into Congress by
Tilak's call for passive resistance in 1906 and his
admiration had been excited by Gandhi's South African
work: he recognised in satyagraha a means of involving
the masses in the national movement and thus bringing
pressure to bear on the British,¹ and saw Gandhi as the
leader whose programme would take up the one which Tilak
had failed to carry out.

¹. New India, 1 Feb 1917, p. 3c; interviews with Rajaji,
20 and 21 Mar, 1963; for Rajaji's earlier career, see
Chapters IV, VI above, and M. Felton, I Meet Rajaji,
pp. 16-17, 21-4, 32, 86, 116, 128, 136-7, 169.
Young Muslims were drawn to Gandhi too, as we have seen, because of his defence of Muslim interests. Some of them, like Umar Sobhani in Bombay or Khaliquzzaman in Lucknow, were members of the HRL who felt frustrated by Mrs Besant's increasing moderation in 1918 and saw satyagraha as a means of "doing something". Others, again like Kitchlu in the Punjab, at first saw satyagraha as a means of rousing a revolution, in which mob violence might shake British authority: during his studies at Cambridge and in Paris and Münster he had met Egyptian and Irish revolutionaries and had returned to Amritsar in 1912 with revolution in mind. He eventually agreed with Gandhi to commit himself wholeheartedly to non-violence as an expedient.

Gandhi's lieutenants were the most outstanding of the young men who were Gandhi's staunchest supporters, and were representative of them. These lieutenants were men in their twenties or thirties in 1919; they were already participants in the national movement, having joined Congress (and, if Muslims, the Muslim League) in the first or second decades of this century. Their

1. interview with Dr S. Kitchlu, 19 Feb 1963; Hunter Committee Report, p. 156; for biographical details of Umar Sobhani, see Chapter IV.
political ability had, in most cases, been proved before they joined Gandhi by their contributions to the organisation of the Home Rule agitation or by participation in local Congress politics. The confidence with which they challenged the British had been greatly boosted by the Russo-Japanese War and by the success of the Bengal Partition agitation in 1911. They were professional men or (increasingly in this period) engaged in business:¹ they were either the sons of the old elite, largely Brahmin, which had dominated Congress or (in a few cases) sons of the rising elite of rich peasant and trading castes. As such they had received a Western education and this had opened to them the history of British liberalism, the French Revolution, the Risorgimento and of Hungarian national self-assertion; these provided a romantic model for the Indian national movement and, together with the example of European socialism, had given them a belief that that movement would best succeed if it could mobilise the masses in some way. Tilak and the Extremists had pointed to such a way in 1906–7 when they urged passive resistance and non-payment of taxes. These young men had entered the national movement as

¹. see Appendix B.
admirers of Tilak: by 1915 many of them had become equally ardent admirers of Gandhi as the result of his South African campaigns. As Rajaji had written in mid-1916, comparing Gandhi and Tilak:

Here are two men who each one of them may well be literally worshipped as a real embodiment of the Spirit of Bharata Varsha, whose words and acts have passed through the Sacrificial Fire, in whom love of country and political thought burn with the fire and the light of true religion.

The young men's enthusiasm had been roused by the Home Rule agitation only to be frustrated by Mrs Besant's and Tilak's curbing of it after mid-1917. They had been disappointed by Gandhi's self-effacement after returning to India, his association with the Moderates and refusal to join the Home Rule agitation, but they hoped that he might eventually be persuaded to take up passive resistance, and felt that these hopes were justified by his campaigns in Champaran and Kaira.


3. see Yajnik, 1943, pp. 4-22.
The Rowlatt-Act Satyagraha, March – April 1919.

It was his young admirers in Bombay, Shankarlal Banker and Umar Sobhani who approached Gandhi with a request for "prompt action" when the Rowlatt Bills were foreshadowed in January 1919. Two major difficulties immediately presented themselves: first, Gandhi was on his sick-bed; secondly, how were the new laws to be disobeyed unless their provisions were brought into force? When his health had somewhat improved at the end of February, Gandhi discussed the second of these problems with his followers from Bombay City and Gujarat in Ahmedabad. They resolved the difficulty by deciding that those who wished to join the agitation should sign a Pledge to break the new laws "and such other laws as a Committee to be hereafter appointed may think fit".

Gandhi now called on his lieutenants to form

3. Young India, 2 Mar 1919, Ganesan, pp. 1187-8; Gandhi, Speeches & Writings, pp. 450-2.
Satyagraha Sabhas of those who were prepared to sign this Pledge; these Sabhas would direct the satyagraha locally.¹ At first, activity was confined to Bombay City and Gujarat, but due largely to the efforts of Shankarlal Banker and to the Bombay papers under the editorship of B. G. Horniman and Jamnadas Dwarkadas,² the proposal to conduct satyagraha spread throughout India. Banker had posters printed in the vernacular languages exhorting people to satyagraha. For the distribution of these the channels established by the HRLs were utilised, the Secretaries of mofussil HRL branches receiving parcels of posters and other literature for their areas.³ As the word of the forthcoming trial of strength with the Government spread, so the young men of the Congress, the HRLs and the Muslim League threw off the restraints of the previous months and joined the movement. In Sind, Durgdas Adwani and other young officers of the HRL branches addressed meetings urging

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2. i.e. the Bombay Chronicle and Young India, respectively.
3. e.g. Bombay Police 1919, pars 378(h), 430(a), 476(a), 500(c), 528(j), (k), 542(d), 555(1).
people to take the Pledge; Rajaji, Chidambaram Pillai and other young men in Madras, Shraddhananda and Ansari in Delhi and the Home Rulers of the UP and Bihar did the same.\(^1\) At the local level the name of the HRL was invoked and the contacts established through the League branches were used for the organisation of public meetings and tours by Gandhi's most active supporters. In the UP, Motilal Nehru, Tandon, Jawaharlal and the other members of the Allahabad HRL used the League's office in that city for their meetings and the collection of signatures; in Kanpur, the most active members of the HRL branch did likewise, as did Gokaran and Harkaran Nath Misra and Khaliquzzaman at Lucknow and the Home Rulers of Gorakhpur; while other Home Rulers toured mofussil centres.\(^2\) Similar use was made of their HRL contacts in Gujarat by Gandhi's lieutenants from Bombay and Gujarat itself, and of Tilak's HRL officers in Maharashtra and the Karnatak by those of Tilak's lieutenants who supported the Rowlatt satyagraha.\(^3\) In Bengal, on the other hand,

\(^1\) Bombay Police 1919, pars 476(f), 500(j), 528(m), 543(a), 555(q); Home Poll Dep. Mar 1919, no. 17, 'Madras', passim; April 1919, no. 48, 'Madras', passim; interviews with Durgdas Adwani, 21 and 25 Apr 1963, and with G. Shivdasani, 24 Apr 1963; on Dr Choithram Gidwani, see Bombay Police 1917, par. 182(h).


\(^3\) Bombay Police 1919, pars 378(i), 473(d), 474, 476(b), (e), 528(e), (h), 543(b), (e), etc.
where the HRL organisation had been minuscule, there was little preparation for satyagraha until the last minute, despite calls to passive resistance by young men like Jitendralal Bannerjee.\(^1\) In the Punjab, where politics had but recently been released from strict Government restriction, Gandhi's lieutenants, Pan-Islamists (like Kitchlu) and Arya Samajists (like Satyapal and Rambhuj Dutt Choudhuri) had to build an organisation almost from scratch and were confined mainly to their headquarters of Amritsar and Lahore.\(^2\)

As soon as his health permitted, Gandhi began a whirlwind tour,\(^3\) such as was to become a feature of his

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1. see Home Poll Dep. Mar 1919, no. 16, 'Bengal', par. 3; Apr 1919, no. 48, 'Bengal', pars 3, 6; no. 49, 'Bengal' par. 3; Oct 1919, no. 19, Appendix H.

2. ibid, Mar 1919, no. 16, p. 12; no. 17, p. 10; Apr 1919, no. 48, p. 10; see Hunter Committee Report, p. 156.

3. this paragraph is based on: Bombay Police 1919, pars 378(g), 476(a), 555(a); UP Police 1919, pars 518, 520; Home Poll Dep. Mar 1919, no. 17, 'Madras', passim; Apr 1919, no. 48, 'Madras', passim, 'Delhi', pars 1, 2; July 1919, no. 46, 'Madras', par. 6;

Letters from Gandhi to Viceroy, undated [Mar 1915]
future political campaigns. In the first days of March he came to Bombay from Ahmedabad, discussed his plans with his lieutenants there, formed the Satyagraha Sabha and issued the Satyagraha Pledge: ¹ he was too weak to address public meetings but Jamnadas Dwarkadas and B. G. Horniman remedied this deficiency. On 3 March he left for Delhi, where he had an interview with the Viceroy and urged him to withdraw the Bills and to release the Ali Brothers. On 6 March Gandhi saw one Bill passed and the following night he attended a meeting of 6000 people, where his speech was read for him and fifteen took the Pledge. A Satyagraha Sabha was formed, of which Ansari and Shraddhananda (and later, Hakim Ajmal Khan) were the leading members. From 9 to 11 March he was in Allahabad and Lucknow, where he had talks with Abdul Bari and the Pan-Islamists and with the Nehrus and the Home Rulers, and addressed public meetings. He returned to Bombay on 13th, conferred with his followers and presided at a public meeting, and left for south India on the 16th at the invitation of Rajaji, Vijayaraghavachariar and Kasturi Ranga Iyengar. Here he

¹ see p. 390 above.
joined the young men in addressing meetings of 10,000 people on the famous Madras Beach, formed a Satyagraha Sabha, and addressed meetings at cities in the Madras mofussil and at Vijayawada (Bezwada) in Andhra, before returning to Bombay at the beginning of April!

Gandhi also exhibited in this campaign a characteristic which is rather less desirable in a political leader, a hasty improvisation of tactics: in later campaigns he was to extend this penchant for ad hoc innovations and changes to the very goals of his campaigns. It was not until he received word in Madras on 18 March that the Viceroy had signed the Rowlatt Act into law that he hit on the idea of launching the satyagraha with an India-wide hartal.\(^1\) Hartal was in the tradition of dharna and in keeping with Gandhi's own views on the need for self-purification in preparation for national service, since the cessation of business has been looked on as a self-purificatory act in India - and Gandhi proposed that it should be accompanied by bathing, prayer and fasting for 24 hours (the maximum period for which a Muslim may fast). In addition Gandhi wanted to find a more striking demonstration of

\(^1\) Gandhi, *Experiments*, p. 562.
the nation's disapproval of the Rowlatt Act and a more effective means of giving expression to the reservoir of feeling, that had been built up by the previous frustration and the criticism of the Act, than was provided by the taking of the Pledge. After all, those who took the Pledge exposed themselves to the possibility of imprisonment and on 17 March it was reported that only 982 people had taken it. Gandhi felt that the "work had to be started at once" and so fixed the hartal for 30 March. Realising later that 10 days was insufficient to complete arrangements, he changed the date to 6 April. This, however, created confusion and in Delhi, Sind and the Punjab hartals were held on 30 March.

Opposition to the hartal and to the Pledge came from the Moderates and, after some hesitation, from Mrs Besant. They feared that mass demonstrations and the breaking of laws would lead to violence; Mrs Besant was also mortified by the young men's rejection of her at the 1918 Delhi Congress, and now saw that her brightest

1. Bombay Police 1919, par. 476(a): Bombay City, 397; Kaira 400; Sind 101; elsewhere in India 84; total 982.
lieutenants were turning to the new leader.\(^1\) She was prepared, she said,\(^2\) to disobey the Rowlatt Act itself but she could not agree to submit her conscience to the dictates of a Committee on the question of disobeying other laws, an argument which at first appealed to some other older Congressmen.\(^3\) However Besant's obvious persecution complex and her demand that her young lieutenants choose between her and Gandhi alienated all but a handful of her most devoted Theosophical followers: even C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar quarrelled with her on a personal matter and Jamnadas Dwarkadas wrote to her:

> Your attitude is quite correct as far as you yourself are concerned. You cannot take part in a movement like this, because you do not know the language of the people you are speaking to. But we have no [such] justification....One cannot imagine a graver crisis than the present. The people [,] fired in the right way because of my speeches, in Bombay and Gujarat especially, are prepared to lay down their lives as they were at the time of your internment. Gandhi said to me that I should be doing the

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1. see her article in the Theosophist, early 1919, in Bombay Police 1919, par. 471; S. Subramania Aiyer to Gandhi, 23 Mar 1919, no. S 6465; Gandhi to Subramania Aiyer, 23 Mar 1919, no. S 6466; A. Besant to Gandhi, 10 May, 11 May 1919; Gandhi to Besant, 10 May 1919, no. S 6605, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.


3. e.g. Motilal Nehru, see UP Police 1919, par. 445; possibly also Hasan Imam in Bihar, see B & O Police 1919, par. 596. Cf. Modern Review, XXV, no. 4 (Apr 1919) p. 424.
greatest disservice to you if I did not join the movement, and assist him in leading it. All those whom I reckon among my following have joined it. If I don't, against my conviction, it will be fatal to our influence here.¹

Jamnadas continued to work with his colleagues as a lieutenant of Gandhi's throughout the Rowlatt campaign. The Moderates had discredited themselves in the eyes of the youthful majority in the national movement by seceding from Congress, and had weakened their opposition to satyagraha by their denunciation of the Rowlatt legislation. Mrs Besant, too, was discredited at the Delhi Congress: she dared not appeal to the HRL she had founded, for clearly the great majority of its young members would reject her leadership. Instead she formed a new, National Home Rule League, composed mainly of Theosophists, to legitimise her claim to speak for India before the Joint Select Committee on the Indian Reforms Bill now under consideration at Westminster.²

Some eminent members of the national movement, while not openly opposing Gandhi's satyagraha, were more

1. J. Dwarkadas to A. Besant, 27 Feb 1919, Adyar Archives.
2. Interview of the writer with R. Shukla, 8 Aug 1963; A. Besant to K. Dwarkadas, 3 May 1919, K. Dwarkadas Papers; NHRL 1st Annual Report (Apr 1919-Dec 1920); JSC on G of I Bill, Evidence, Q 1439, p. 82.
concerned with the course of the Government of India Bill (as the Reforms Bill was called). The older Extremists were jealous of Gandhi's rise and were mainly concerned that any agitation in India should be conducted with the object of encouraging the British to grant wider Reforms: Pal opposed the extension of passive resistance to laws other than the Rowlatt Act, and Vithalbhai Patel wrote:

I am still not convinced about the wisdom of the Satyagraha movement in reference to the [Rowlatt] Bill. One could understand such a movement in reference to the bigger question of Home Rule. No doubt the movement will educate public opinion but if it had been taken up in connection with the Reforms, the sacrifices involved would have been satisfied [justified?].

Jinnah, while not participating in the satyagraha, identified himself with the anger over the Bills by resigning from the Imperial legislature. Tilak's lieutenants were divided: the younger ones, like Sathaye, and the more impetuous, like Gangadharrao Deshpande and S. M. Paranjpe, took up Gandhi's satyagraha eagerly as the heir to Tilak's passive resistance. His older followers and those who had shared leadership with him most

closely, like Kelkar and Khaparde, were piqued at Gandhi's virtual assumption of the leadership without consulting them: they dared not court unpopularity by opposing a campaign aimed against the British, and gave the Rowlatt satyagraha their grudging support.\footnote{Tilak, who was in England, was primarily concerned with the Reforms; he seems to have been torn by conflicting advice from his followers, but was not disposed to court unpopularity and gave guarded support to Gandhi's movement. Of other leading Congressmen, Malaviya stood in the background, while Motilal Nehru, Hasan Imam and C. R. Das joined and helped to direct the satyagraha campaign. A number of older Congressmen thus held aloof but did not oppose satyagraha. Opposition to it was weak or came from discredited sources. Enthusiasm, organisation and the programme of action were all with Gandhi and his young followers.}

The response to the call for hartal varied

\footnote{1. see e.g. Bombay Police 1919, pars 500(a), (e), (h), 542(b), 543(f), (h), 551(l), 555(a), (l); Maharashtra, 9 Mar 1919, p. 113; 30 Mar 1919, p. 156; Home Poll Dep. July 1919, no. 46, 'CP', pars 4, 5; Deshpande, Autobiography, pp. 258, 270, 280, 287, 295.

2. Tilak to D. D. Sathaye, 13 Mar, 8 May, 15 May 1919; Tilak to Baptista, 24 Apr 1919, D. D. Sathaye Papers; D. D. Sathaye, "Autobiographical Note"; Tilak to Khaparde, 28 Feb, 5 Mar 1919, Khaparde Papers; for biographical details of Sathaye, see Chapter IV above.}
considerably from place to place, but was no doubt heightened throughout India by the events associated with its premature observance on 30 March in Delhi. Shraddhananda and the Pan-Islamists had done their work well there: all shops and businesses closed, public transport ceased running and the leaders addressed a meeting of some 40,000 in Old Delhi.¹ But, in a disturbance at the Railway Station in the absence of the principal leaders, troops opened fire and killed several people, both Hindu and Muslim. This served to cement the Hindu-Muslim cordiality resulting from Gandhi's espousal of the Pan-Islamic cause, and led to the Swami being invited to speak from the pulpit of the Juma Masjid, the Great Mosque.² The hartal on the 6 April in the rest of India therefore became also a protest day for the Delhi Martyrs. In Hyderabad (Sind) the 30th had been observed as in Delhi (some shops being shut under threat of violence), but processions were held on the 6th;³ in Karachi,

2. ibid., pp. 61-70.
3. Bombay Police 1919, pars 555(b), (r); cf. Sukkur observance on 30 March, ibid., par. 542(n).
where the HRL branch had constituted itself into a Satyagraha Sabha, the 6th was thoroughly observed by Muslims and Hindus.1 In Bengal outside Calcutta, the hartal was most successful in the Muslim city of Dacca: in Calcutta itself, Das hastily assumed the leadership of the movement in correspondence with Gandhi. Gandhi was conscious of the inadequate preparation in Calcutta and when he heard reports of stone-throwing and threats to the police he telegraphed to Das: "till we can [restrain crowds] we are bound [to] refrain [from] processions [and] large gatherings", and promised to come himself as soon as possible.2 In Bihar, the hartals in Patna and in mofussil towns were organised through local HRL officers by Hasan Imam, Mazharul Haque, Rajendra Prasad and the other Patna politicians: they were well aware of the dangers of mob-enthusiasm flowing over into violence and at all the Bihar meetings the need for restraint was emphasised.3 In Maharashtra Tilak's older lieutenants pointedly ignored the hartal: in Poona it was only


partially observed and in the CP and Berar hardly at all; but in a number of the other towns and market centres, where the younger men had been active, shops were closed, baths taken and meetings held, mainly on the 30th.\footnote{1} The hartal was most thoroughly observed in Madras, Bombay City, Amritsar and in the cities and towns of the UP and Gujarat. In Gujarat both days were observed quietly in towns, small regional headquarters and even in villages.\footnote{2} The same was true of the UP, though here shopkeepers in the west of the province were given an added incentive to close as the result of pressure from Delhi wholesalers.\footnote{3} In Amritsar crowds of 30,000 attended meetings addressed by Kitchlu and Satyapal, while in Madras 100,000 were reported at meetings on the Beach.\footnote{4} Gandhi himself directed operations in Bombay, where 80 per cent of shops were shut and 20,000 bathed at Chowpatti; Gandhi addressed Muslims at a mosque and at a large meeting in the evening, and sold copies of his prohibited books, \textit{Hind Swaraj} and \textit{Sarvodaya}. This act

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Bombay Police 1919}, pars 543(f) (h) (i) (j), 555(j) (1) (m) (n); Home Poll Dep. July 1919, no. 46, pp. 22-5.
\item \textit{Bombay Police 1919}, pars 555(g) (h) (i); Parikh, Vallabhbhai Patel, pp. 99-100.
\item Home Poll Dep. July 1919, no. 47, 'Punjab', par. 1; July 1919, no. 46, pp. 1-5.
\end{enumerate}
of disobedience the Government however declined to notice.\footnote{1}

The response to Gandhi's call for hartal was apparently greatest in the cities and towns, where newspapers and the means of communication were most developed or — as in the case of Calcutta — where, despite the lack of painstaking organisation by Gandhi in advance, there was long experience of political activity and a body of "angry young men". A beginning had now been made in drawing smaller centres and villages into nationalist politics in Gujarat, Maharashtra and the UP: here the channels dug by the HRLs had been used by Gandhi's lieutenants in preparing the ground. The HRL branches in the Madras mofussil had apparently been less effectively used,\footnote{2} probably because they were officered to a great extent by Theosophists who loyally followed Mrs Besant in opposing satyagraha. The regional variation in response in the cities and towns may be related closely to Gandhi's personal tours and to the number and activity of his lieutenants: the hartal was most thoroughly observed where Gandhi was known by the crowds face-to-face (as in

\footnote{1. \textit{Bombay Police 1919}, par. 555(a); Gandhi, \textit{Experiments}, pp. 564-7.}

\footnote{2. see Home Poll Dep. July 1919, no. 46, 'Madras', par.5.}
Bombay City, Madras City, Gujarat and Delhi\(^1\) and where his lieutenants had been most active (in the same places and in Sind, the Punjab and the UP mofussil).

After conducting the Bombay satyagraha Gandhi left to investigate the trouble spot, Delhi, and the Punjab for himself; the Governments however externed him from these areas and, when on 10 April he insisted on proceeding, arrested him and sent him back to Bombay. Gandhi was jubilant and issued the press release: "It is a matter of the highest satisfaction to me,...that I have received an order from the Punjab Government not to enter that province....I have received what I was seeking, either withdrawal of the Rowlatt Legislation or imprisonment".\(^2\)

A week later, however, he lamented: "Had Government in an unwise manner not prevented me from entering Delhi and so compelled me to disobey their orders, I feel certain that Ahmedabad and Viramgam would have remained free from the horrors of the last week".\(^3\) He was

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1. the exception seems to be Bihar: this requires further investigation.
2. \textit{Young India}, 10 Apr 1919, Ganesan, p. 1195.
3. ibid., 18 Apr 1919, pp. 1199-1200.
referring to the outbreaks of arson, pillage and murder which had followed the issue of his press release and which led him to suspend satyagraha. At the time of his arrest he had warned that "...violence committed against anybody, whether Englishman or Indian, will surely damn the great cause the Satyagrahis are handling", but he clearly had not expected the violence which ensued. The news of his arrest had angered the crowds which had heard him speak, and it seems certain enabled rowdy elements or goondas to whip up these crowds in cities across India:¹ in Delhi for example there was a spontaneous hartal from 10 April, when the train came in without Gandhi, until 17th, when at last with great difficulty, Shraddhananda and Hakim Ajmal Khan got the shops to open.² In the Punjab, not only were the people deprived of Gandhi but also on the same day of their own leaders, for the Government arrested Kitchlu and Satyapal. This led to mob violence, arson and murder in Amritsar, the countryside and, to a lesser extent, in Lahore, but, instead of allowing the Indian leaders to calm the crowds as was done at Delhi and at Bombay,

1. see B. G. Horniman to Gandhi, 17 Apr 1919, no. S 6545, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.
Ahmedabad and Viramgam in the Bombay Presidency, the Punjab Government sent in the military, who set out to humiliate as well as to cow the Punjabis: they imposed degrading regulations, bombed and machine-gunned inoffensive villages from the air and, as an example to the rest of the Punjab, General Dyer shot dead 379 participants in a public meeting in the Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, on 13 April. These details were not known outside the locality where they occurred for some time: Gandhi merely knew that there had been violence on the part of Indians. Admitting to "a Himalayan miscalculation", in that he had not recognised that mass groups were not convinced of the need for non-violence, he suspended satyagraha on 18 April.¹

Gandhi had replied to a Moderate critic earlier in 1919 that "nothing but an energising activity which Satyagraha certainly is could have prevented the ambitious and high-spirited youths of the country from seeking questionable activities for want of a better" and as late as 15 April he claimed that satyagraha had been a check on the fury that existed as the result of the

¹ Gandhi, Experiments, pp. 575-7; Young India, 18 Apr 1919, Ganesan, pp. 1199-1201.
Rowlatt proposals. The violence which forced Gandhi to suspend satyagraha might be seen as refuting these claims; certainly Gandhi had received a shock and was to be more wary in launching satyagraha in the future. From this time he concentrated on solving the problem of control. On the other hand, the violence was in fact of remarkably small extent, when one considers the large numbers of people involved and the inexperience of Gandhi's followers in guiding and controlling such crowds. Also, it is hard to resist the conclusion that, in another sense, Gandhi was right. For the temper of the young men of the Congress and the Muslim League was such at the beginning of 1919, that some form of expression, some catharsis was required. Gandhi's 1919 Rowlatt satyagraha and the role that he gave to his young lieutenants and followers had provided such a catharsis.

1. Gandhi to V. S. Sastri, 8 Mar 1919, no. S 6446; and to Sir Stanley Reed, ed. of Times of India, 15 Apr 1919, no. S 6534, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.
After Satyagraha.

April to December 1919 was a time of indecision at the helm of Indian nationalism: after the storm of satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act Gandhi tried various tacks. Perhaps for this reason the period has been passed over lightly by writers who have been obsessed by the onward impetus of the movement and who have hurried to the later part of the following year when Gandhi finally set his course and that of the national movement, and was confirmed in its command.

After calling off the Rowlatt Act satyagraha Gandhi retained the same aims as before. At the back of his mind was the vision of India that he had sketched in Hind Swaraj: a land of self-sufficient, self-governing villages,
shunning most Western innovations\(^1\) where the members of the intellectual and professional elite would re-identify themselves with this village-centred life. Reason made him recognise that the elite had adopted many Western norms — for example Parliamentary Government — as its own and that if he would win their adherence he could not ask them to reject these norms immediately and \textit{in toto}, but he hankered after this dream nevertheless. In the more immediate sense, he was anxious to involve the masses, the peasants, in the national movement, to waken them from their traditional subservience to the Government, and to instil into them (and indeed into the Indian elite also) a sense of self-respect and fearlessness. But while Gandhi was primarily concerned with the effect that the activities of the national movement under his guidance were having on the Indians themselves, this did not mean that Indians should ignore the British. On the contrary, Indians could not, without loss of self-respect, acquiesce in British refusals to heed Indian public opinion. As he had written during the Rowlatt Act satyagraha: "I have been told that I am diverting the attention of the country from the one and only thing that

\(^1\) see Chapter VII above, p. 374, notes 1, 2.
matters viz., the forthcoming Reforms....To my mind, the first thing needful is to secure a full and frank recognition of the principle that public opinion properly expressed shall be respected by the Government".\(^1\) A more particular task that Gandhi set himself was the reconciliation of Hindus and Muslims at all levels of Indian society.

These goals could, he believed, be attained if he could prevail upon Indians to adopt satyagraha, particularly in the form of civil disobedience, and — needless to say — under his leadership. He had no clear-cut plan, however, for achieving these aims. He was to write in 1924:

> That is the beauty of Satyagraha. It comes up to oneself, one has not to go out in search of it....A dharma-yuddha [righteous struggle]...comes unsought; and a man of religion is ever ready for it. A struggle which has to be previously planned is not a righteous struggle. In a righteous struggle God Himself plans campaigns and conducts battles.\(^2\)

This aphorism reveals what was probably Gandhi's greatest weakness, his reliance on improvisation in formulating

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his programme, which led (in 1921 for example) to the dissipation of his own energies and those of the national movement in too many concurrent activities and (in 1919) to a sense of drift and aimlessness.

In mid-1919 Gandhi was confronted with a somewhat paradoxical problem. The national movement was profoundly emotional and in times of excitement — as during the Rowlatt Act satyagraha — this emotionalism flared up, presenting leaders with grave problems of control. As the collapse of Extremism after 1908 had shown, however, this excitement might easily subside into inactivity or depression. Gandhi recognised that in launching satyagraha he had underestimated the problem of control\(^1\) and, while in May he was anxious to provide expression for the bitterness that remained and to recommence satyagraha as soon as possible, he wrestled with the problem of controlling it in the future. At the same time the national movement, having been provided with catharsis in the Rowlatt agitation, was in danger of losing way, and Gandhi was at pains to maintain its momentum. He concentrated on these problems and took little interest in the reforms which were being hammered out in England.

\(^1\) see Gandhi to [A.] Rangaswami [Iyengar], 30 Mar 1919, loc. cit.
at this time and which were all-important to many outstanding members of the Indian national movement, such as Tilak, Jinnah, Mrs Besant and Das.

With regard to the first of his problems, that of control, Gandhi personally was able to control the crowds wherever he went during the Rowlatt agitation. This was largely due to his appeal through asceticism and through religious notions and symbols to the Hindus, and as a champion of the embattled Khilafat to the Muslims; it was due also to his identification with mass groups through his campaigns in South Africa and, in India since his return, his fearlessness in pressing the case of the peasants and workers. Satyagraha, furthermore, offered a new method of pressing the cases that Gandhi took up, an esoteric method of which he alone possessed the secret lore, or cabala.

In addition the authority of Gandhi's lieutenants in various parts of India was adequate to ensure the smooth running of the hartal and its associated processions and civil disobedience (often known as CDO), against which the Government declined to take action. Indeed the authority of Gandhi's lieutenants over shop-
keepers and crowds was most irksome to British officials.¹

Some of those who acted as his lieutenants already had a local reputation and a local following (for example, Das in Bengal, S. M. Paranjpe and Gangadharrao Deshpande in Maharashtra and the Karnatak, Jamnadas and the Home Rulers in Bombay and Sind). But all of them had augmented their power through association, in fact and in the public mind, with Gandhi. The personal loyalty of most of Gandhi's lieutenants to him, the teacher-disciple relationship which bound them to him, ensured his control over them and provided them with their major credentials for leadership.

Gandhi's sole access to the cabala of satyagraha and the discipular relationship between him and his lieutenants explain why Gandhi's call for the suspension of satyagraha was so implicitly obeyed. Control had been assisted by the conscientious inculcation of non-violence both by Gandhi and his lieutenants. Gandhi claimed:

...whenever I addressed the people the audience addressed by me became sobered, and there was an appreciable change in

¹. see e.g. explanation why Drs Kitchlu and Satyapal were deported, Hunter Committee Report, pp. 28-9; regarding Gokul Chand Narang's control over the Lahore mob, see ibid., p. 54.
their attitude towards the English.... My chief work, however, is done through private conversation with people, who visit me, wherever I go.... I can recall many conversions of people who came in to express their curses and went away ... with no unfriendliness towards the British.¹

But while Gandhi was able to control crowds in person, this was clearly inadequate: India was too vast for effective face-to-face leadership on a countrywide scale by Gandhi himself, even discounting the possibility that the Government might restrict his movements. Indeed the reverence in which Gandhi was held constituted a weakness, for when the Government arrested him the crowds, through fear for his safety and anger at the Government whom they regarded as his assailant, struck blindly and violently at the latter. Clearly, also, too heavy a burden was placed on the shoulders of too few lieutenants: while they were controlling crowds in one part of the region for which they were responsible, rabble-rousers would be at work elsewhere.² A hierarchy of deputies and assistants was necessary to enable

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¹. Gandhi to Sir Stanley Reed, 15 Apr 1919, no. S 6534, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati; for instructions to intending satyagrahis, e.g. by Kitchlu, see Hunter Committee Report, p. 156.

². see e.g. the braggart who stirred the Lahore-mosque crowd, ibid., p. 58; Shraddhananda's account of Delhi, Inside Congress, pp. 56-92.
Gandhi's lieutenants to exert effective control. Gandhi had started to form Satyagraha Sabhas, consisting of those who took the Satyagraha Pledge and made themselves responsible for conducting civil disobedience in their locality, but these were small and articulated only through the personal contact of their most prominent members with Gandhi. The lieutenants were in many places incapable of exercising control when Gandhi was arrested. In Ahmedabad, for instance, they "were thoroughly dumbfounded on seeing the burning lava of popular fury that began, as it were, to suddenly spout forth with demonic energy from some mysterious subterranean vaults, and that kindled hell-fires all over the city for three mad days". ¹ Gandhi had not elaborated his programme sufficiently: he had not clearly thought out the consequences of his arrest, nor of the arrest of his lieutenants, and consequently had not instructed the people on what action they should take under those circumstances.

¹. Yajnik 1943, pp. 97-9; cf. N. D. Parikh, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, p. 100; for Delhi, see Shraddhanand, loc. cit.; for Lahore, see Hunter Committee Report, pp. 57-8; for other Punjab areas, see ibid., e.g., pp. 62-71; for Bombay, see Gandhi, Experiments, p. 569.
Gandhi recognised - if inadequately - that a more developed organisation and a more thorough inculcation of his ideas were required to ensure control of the movement when it was resumed.\(^1\) Immediately on suspending it he therefore set about recruiting, through the agency of the Bombay Satyagraha Sabha and his lieutenants, a band of volunteers, "well-tried, pure-hearted...who thoroughly understood the strict conditions of Satyagraha", whose task would be to instruct participants in future campaigns and keep them "on the right path".\(^2\) In this he may have taken as his model the volunteers who helped control the annual Congress sessions. He turned to Congress in another sense too. He attended the AICC on 20 and 21 April and prevailed on it to condemn the "acts of violence" on the part of Indians and to appeal to the people to "maintain law and order".\(^3\) He does not, however, seem to have yet recognised the organisational requirements of running a campaign over an area and population as large as India's. He made no attempt, for instance,

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1. see Gandhi to Maffey [Private Secretary to Viceroy], 14 Apr 1919, no. S 6534, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.
3. AICC Minutes, 20-21 April 1919.
to refurbish the Satyagraha Sabhas either internally or as regards their co-ordination.

As for propaganda, he set out to inculcate the need for non-violence through "leaflets of an educative character"; through posters ordering satyagrahis to offer no resistance to their arrest; through messages delivered personally or by his volunteers at public meetings; and through the columns of the newspapers Young India and Navajivan (published in English from Bombay and in Gujarati from Ahmedabad respectively), which the owners, Banker, Sobhani and Yajnik, placed at his disposal.\(^1\) Gandhi had learnt the value of a newspaper in South Africa and (while he had had access during the Rowlatt satyagraha to the columns of Young India under Jamnadas and Banker and of the Bombay Chronicle under B. G. Horniman) it is surprising that he had not felt the need to supplement face-to-face leadership regularly through such a communications medium before this.

Gandhi found that, with his suspension of the movement and his emphasis on control and restraint,

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1. Gandhi, Experiments, pp. 576-81; Shraddhanand, Inside Congress, p. 93; Yajnik 1943, p. 98; Young India, 11 June 1919, p. 3.
combined with Government repression in the Punjab, Calcutta and Gujarat, the enthusiasm of the masses and even of some of his lieutenants evaporated: enrolment of volunteers declined, and (in the words of Indulal Yajnik, one of those who under Gandhi's instructions lectured the people of Ahmedabad on the need for restraint), "people...were too terror-stricken by the memory of the martial law regime...to be affected by our words".¹ After travelling across northern India, C. F. Andrews wrote that he saw "the tide of the merely popular and clamorous India turning against Bapu [as Gandhi was referred to]".²

Gandhi's position in trying to remedy this was complicated by his concern lest the Government arrest him. This would remove his influence at a time when he wanted to repair the damage done to the cause of satyagraha, and it might lead to renewed violence and Government repression which would further discredit non-violence.³

His position was made more awkward by disagreement

3. see Gandhi to Rahimtoola, n.d. [14 Apr 1919?], no. S. 6534, Gandhi to Mr Cowie [Private Secretary to Governor of Bombay], 29 Apr 1919, no. S 6574, in ibid.
among his lieutenants and followers. Some had been frightened by the violence that had erupted, and urged Gandhi to suspend civil disobedience: among these were Horniman, Dr Ansari and Hakim Ajmal Khan of Delhi.¹ Some - particularly Theosophist Home Rulers, who had followed Gandhi, such as Jamnadas and, in Bihar, Purnendu Narayan Sinha - now felt that Mrs Besant's warning against violence had been vindicated, and that civil disobedience should be renounced.² Hasan Imam and Rajendra Prasad concurred in this view.³ Some, while approving of Gandhi's temporary suspension of the movement, were angered by his criticism of his lieutenants and those who had taken the Satyagraha Pledge. Swami Shraddhananda in particular felt that Gandhi "had laid the responsibility for the peaceful citizens being shot...on the shoulders of the Satyagrahis", and had endorsed Government accusations against satyagrahis without enquiring into


2. regarding Jamnadas Dwarkadas, see Bombay Police 1919, pars 754, 791(a); P. N. Sinha, see E. C. Ryland, Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Bihar and Orissa, Special Report on "Satyagraha Movement", 14 Apr 1919, in B & O Police 1919.

the facts.¹ Shraddhananda wrote asking Gandhi whether those who had committed themselves to the Pledge could be held responsible for violence on the part of those who had not. When Gandhi replied that "we [satyagrahis] are just as responsible for the action of non-Satyagrahis when they act with us as we are for our own", the Swami (while promising to continue to preach ahimsa) resigned from the Satyagraha Sabha and, with Ansari, prevailed upon the Delhi Sabha to disband and burn its membership records.² Similarly the loyalty of Gandhi's Gujarati co-workers was strained by his implication of the "educated workers" in the disturbances,³ and the Satyagraha Sabhas there declined in numbers or disbanded themselves. Others among his followers felt disgusted or "deeply humiliated at having a leader who...had not the courage to face the natural consequences of his own plans".⁴

⁴ Munshi, I Follow the Mahatma, p. 9; cf. Yajnik, 1943, p. 98.
Some of these remained loyal, but others fell away from the Satyagraha Sabhas\(^1\) and others again, notably Hazrat Mohani and Sunder Lal of the UP, urged Gandhi to recommence civil disobedience.\(^2\)

There was some danger that those who were urging Gandhi to recommence civil disobedience would decide that satyagraha was inadequately aggressive and reject it: Gandhi was anxious to convince them of its efficacy. He was also disturbed by the fragmentation and disaffection of his following. Thus, while wishing to tighten his control over the movement, to inculcate restraint and non-violence, he wanted to find some way to maintain the momentum of the movement, to prevent it from subsiding or fragmenting, and this ambivalence led him to vacillate during mid-1919. He managed, however, to give the impression of activity, or of being about to act, while allowing passions to cool.

At the beginning of May, two weeks after suspending civil disobedience he wrote optimistically that by the end of July "we shall have...spread our message throughout

1. see e.g. Yajnik, 1943, pp. 98-9; Home Poll Dep. Aug 1919, no. 51, p. 4.
the country" and that therefore "we shall be fitted for resuming civil disobedience in about two months".  
After a further two weeks he held a hartal in Bombay City in protest at the deportation of Horniman by the Bombay Government, but he stressed that there should be no public demonstrations of any kind and the hartal was only partially, and quietly, observed. This failed to satisfy many of those who had taken the Pledge in western and northern India, and at meetings in Bombay and Ahmedabad in mid-May they urged him to recommence civil disobedience or at least to call public meetings. His public pronouncements at this time were dispiriting to those who were looking for resumption of activity: he urged those who had participated in violence to confess their guilt; to those who came as volunteers, he said that he expected blind obedience and that they must reconsider before he would accept them as followers; and at public meetings he refused to elaborate how he proposed to

1. "When is Satyagraha Going to be Resumed", 2 May 1919 in Young India, 7 [10] May 1919, p. 6b.
2. Home Poll Dep. July 1919, no. 48, p. 4; Satyagraha leaflets 5 - 12 May 1919 in Young India, Ganesan, pp. 1227-35; Bombay NP, 1919, w.e. 10 May 1919, p. 10.
3. Home Poll B, June 1919, nos 701-4, p. 15.
recommence civil disobedience.¹

Gandhi realised that, after the first stunned silence, Indian anger would rise over Government repression in the Punjab, and that he must mount and ride this fury if he would restrain and direct it. During May news filtered out from the Punjab. Not only were vicious punishments meted out to the Punjabis;² the Punjab Government, instead of placating the population under its charge, extended the duration of martial law so that it could punish those, whom it regarded as responsible for the violence, without having to submit to the processes of the ordinary courts. In this way it obtained sentences of transportation for life (later quashed) for most of the leading politicians who had advocated satyagraha, Kitchlu, Satyapal, Rambhuj Dutt Choudhuri and others. At the end of April Rs 2000 security was demanded from Motilal Nehru’s Independent for its criticism of the Punjab Government, and C. F. Andrews found that "every Indian I meet is saying

¹. ibid., and p. 23.

². "There were too many sentences of flogging", admitted the Majority Report of the Hunter Report (which was not conspicuous for its severity toward the officers administering martial law): Hunter Committee Report, pp. 52, 140; Home Poll Dep. Aug 1919, no. 54, p. 15; see C. F. Andrews to Tagore, 21 Oct 1919, C. F. Andrews Papers.
'Take away your d----d Reforms: we don't want them and we won't have them. Answer us this, are we to be treated as serfs, with no human rights at all?"¹ At the end of May Rabindranath Tagore renounced his knighthood: to understand the impact on educated Indians of the "frightfulness"² committed and condoned by the Punjab Government, one has only to savour the quiet fury and anguish of Tagore's letter of renunciation.³

After the appointment by the AICC of a Committee to enquire into the Punjab early in June, Gandhi wrote:

With reference to the Punjab disturbances by my complete silence over them I have allowed myself to be misunderstood by many friends and...deprived of the co-operation...of...Shri Shraddhanandji.

and took up sentences which he held to be a "travesty of justice".⁴ The public comments which Gandhi had made on the Punjab up to this point had been quite neutral,⁵

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2. The term is Churchill's, see House of Commons Debates, 8 July 1920, CXXXI, col. 1728.


4. Young India, 11 June 1919, p. 3; 12 July 1919, p. 2a; see AICC Minutes, 8 June 1919.

5. see e.g. ibid., 17 May 1919, p. 6.
partly (as he said) because he had no conclusive evidence to go on: he had asked permission of the Viceroy to enter the Punjab, but in vain.\(^1\) Also, one suspects, he was anxious to avoid contributing to the rise in Indian temper, which would increase the difficulties of control, and was uncertain of the course he wished to follow.

At a hastily-called meeting on May 28 in Bombay with some of his followers from various provinces, however, Gandhi's desire for continued momentum came uppermost. At this meeting he decided to call on the Viceroy to appoint a Committee to examine the disturbances and to revise the martial law sentences, failing which "satyagraha should be taken up...after two weeks at the earliest".\(^2\) Gandhi's followers responded with varying

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2. Gandhi, "Note on the Informal Private Satyagraha Conference", no. S 6628; draft invitation to Conference on 28 May from Gandhi to Hasan Imam, Sunderlal, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar [for Madras: Rajaji's name is deleted], Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Vallabhbhai Patel and Shraddhananda [?] 21 May 1919, no. S 6618; H. Imam to Gandhi, 25 May 1919, no. S 6626, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati; Bombay Police 1919, par. 719(a); Home Poll B, June 1919, nos 701-4, w.e. 16 June 1919, par. 11; those who attended included Jamnadas, S. G. Banker and L. R. Tairsee, from Bombay; Vallabhbhai, Mrs Anasuyabai, Yajnik and others from Ahmedabad; Ganshyamdas Shivadasani from Sind; and the Muslims, Hazrat Mohani and Zulfikar Khan, and the Hindu, Sunder Lal, from UP.
degrees of enthusiasm to this decision. Hazrat Mohani and Sunder Lal had urged him to it; Rajaji was enthusiastic; others like Hasan Imam felt that resumption of satyagraha would lead to violence but promised their loyalty to Gandhi while Jamnadas resigned from the Satyagraha Sabha in protest.¹

Still fearful of violence, Gandhi formulated a more detailed programme, that would provide guidance in the case of his arrest and limit the opportunities for violence. His first solution was to suggest that only those who had taken the Satyagraha Pledge in Bombay and had therefore been indoctrinated by him should perform acts of civil disobedience and that "there should be no Hartal on any account whatsoever,...no demonstration of any kind."² He then modified this to limit satyagraha in the first instance to himself, unaccompanied by any demonstrations, after which "if full peace is observed for one month...and it has been ascertained that the people have understood the doctrine of Satyagraha.... Civil disobedience may then be offered by those who may

¹. letter from Rajaji, 2 June 1919, in Young India, 7 June 1919, p. 7d.

be selected by the leaders" in other towns in India, though he advised that "not more than two should offer civil disobedience from any one centre [i.e. town] nor should civil disobedience be commenced simultaneously at all centres". Indeed, so wary was he of violence, that he wrote "one real Satyagrahi is enough for victory" though he did not spell out how this could be: this one, of course, was to be himself, and he would court arrest by breaking the regulation exterminating him from the Punjab. It is hard to believe that he was in earnest about recommencing civil disobedience even alone, for he had had no opportunity to prepare the Punjabis for it, nor had he refashioned the Satyagraha Sabha into a well-developed or -articulated organisation, nor substituted another organisation for it. After further hesitation,


2. Gandhi to [Rajaji], 25 June 1919, loc. cit.
in fact, he announced on 21 July that the Governor of Bombay had warned him that "resumption of Civil Disobedience" was "likely to be attended with serious consequences to the public security" and that its "temporary suspension" was to continue.\textsuperscript{1}

Civil disobedience had now been suspended for over three months, and many who had taken the Satyagraha Pledge deplored this \textit{de facto} ending of it, reminding Gandhi that he had vowed to agitate until the Rowlatt Act was withdrawn.\textsuperscript{2} Under these circumstances he sought to divert attention from civil disobedience, the Rowlatt Act and the Punjab repression. There is no evidence that Gandhi deliberately set out to distract his followers, but that he instinctively felt the need to do so was shown by his actions. In \textit{Young India}, for example, he devoted a great deal of space to the affairs of Indians in South Africa from June onward.\textsuperscript{3}

More important, he enjoined his followers to take up hand-weaving and -spinning. The inmates of his Satyagraha Ashram had between 1915 and 1918 resuscitated these

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} \textit{Young India}, 23 July 1919, p. 1.
\item \textsuperscript{2} \textit{Bombay Police 1919}, pars 1032(a), 1063(b); Gandhi, \textit{Experiments}, p. 582.
\item \textsuperscript{3} see e.g. \textit{Young India}, 5 July 1919, p. 2a.
\end{itemize}
arts and the machines appropriate to them, notably the charkha or spinning-wheel, which had fallen into disuse. In May 1919 Gandhi promulgated two Swadeshi Vows pledging those who took them to use only Indian-manufactured cloth, and during the following months he prevailed upon his lieutenants and followers to take up hand-spinning and -weaving, quoting the Gita: "the multitude will copy the actions of the enlightened".1 His newspapers and others like the Bombay Chronicle publicised hand-spinning and -weaving, and letters arrived seeking instructions.2 While Gandhi's introduction of the charkha was a useful diversion in a time of inactivity, it bore a deeper significance for the fulfilment of his aims. Gandhi had long sought some means of reviving village handicrafts, which agriculturists and their families might take up in their spare time in order to supplement their incomes, and the introduction of the charkha was the first step toward the attainment of the self-sufficient village he had foreshadowed in Hind Swaraj: in time the principle of

1. Young India, Ganesan, p. 1274; this paragraph is based on his articles of 17 May to 20 Aug 1919, reproduced in ibid., pp. 1240-6, 1268-93; Yajnik 1943, p. 104; Gandhi, Experiments, pp. 599-607; see Gandhi to Dr. N. Nagarkatti (Assistant Director of Industry, Hyderabad [Deccan]), 14 July 1919, no. S 6748, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.

2. See e.g. B. Aida to Gandhi 17 Oct 1919, no. S 6945, loc cit.
swadeshi, of using indigenous products, would be extended to commodities other than cloth. By making the masses less dependent on the outside world, the charkha and handloom would raise them in their own eyes. Furthermore, by insisting that his lieutenants and educated followers take to the charkha, he was asking them to identify themselves — as he had done — with the meanest of their fellow-countrymen. In this way he would accelerate the involvement of the masses in the national movement.

It was clear, however, that Indian nationalist attention could not be effectively diverted from the happenings in the Punjab. In August, for instance, the Madras and Bihar Provincial Conferences, respectively, passed resolutions denouncing the military "frightfulness" in the Punjab and demanding the recall of the Viceroy for having condoned it. Early in the following month the Indian press censured the Hunter Committee appointed by the Government to enquire into the disturbances for the paucity of unofficial and liberal-minded men among its members.\(^1\) *Young India* had been criticising martial law

\(^1\) Home Poll Dep. Oct 1919, no. 44, 'Madras', par. 3; 'Bihar', par. 3; ibid., no. 59, 'Madras', par. 4; Shraddhananda to Gandhi, 7 Sept 1919, no. S 6847 [in Hindi, kindly translated for writer by Mrs Singh, National Archives of India], *Gandhi Papers Sabarmati*; the Government's Indemnity Bill to indemnify its martial law officers was severely criticised also.
judgments and now devoted more space to this and to publishing judgments in full.¹

On October 17 Gandhi's externment from the Punjab was lifted, and he immediately entered that province. Gandhi knew from C. F. Andrews, Hasan Imam and the members of the Inquiry Committee appointed by the AICC, who had already gone there, how cowed the Punjabis were as the result of the repression and the removal of their leaders.² At Malaviya's invitation he joined the Congress Inquiry Committee and set about infusing a spirit of firmness and self-reliance into its members and into the people who came to see him. The ordinary people were heartened merely by the presence of sympathetic, educated men who were determined to hear their story and represent their grievances to the Government. "Courage is coming back, at last, to these terror-stricken people", wrote Andrews to Tagore, "peasants have come from 50 or 60 miles to meet me in Lahore and tell me about their villages".³ And "....What a relief it has been now that

¹ see Young India, passim; Gandhi, Speeches and Writings, pp. 482-3.
² see e.g. H. Imam, telegram, to Gandhi, 11 July 1919, no. S 6740, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.
³ Andrews to Tagore, 1 Oct 1919, C. F. Andrews Papers.
Mr Gandhi has come and Pandit Malaviya is away....things were being badly done...and this, just at a time when faith and strength and courage were pre-eminently needed".1

Gandhi now received a striking tribute to his will and to his ability to lead from the members of the Congress Inquiry Committee. He convinced them that, in order to ensure a fair revision of the martial law sentences, they should demand that the Hunter Committee allow those who appeared before it to be cross-examined and to have the aid of counsel, and that it should have the principal Punjabis under sentence released under security. The Hunter Committee gave way on the first two points but not on the third, whereupon Gandhi prevailed upon the Congress Committee to refuse to give evidence to the Hunter Committee. He did so by threatening to resign from the Congress Committee if it did not stick to its guns: recognising that, in view of Gandhi's reputation for uprightness and truthfulness, their position would be considerably weakened if he parted from them, the

Committee acquiesced.\(^1\) Gandhi, wrote Andrews, had prevailed upon the Committee to "purge out the weakness of always acquiescing as beggars in whatever Government says or does".\(^2\)

As further training in self-reliance Gandhi persuaded the Congress Committee to hold "almost a parallel inquiry" to that of the Hunter Committee into the Punjab.\(^3\) In this way he identified himself with the Indian condemnation of the Punjab repression: Indian anger over the Punjab was provoked in November by General Dyer's admission before the Hunter Committee that he fired on an innocent crowd in order to intimidate the population of the province, and that if he could have got his machine-guns into Jallianwala Bagh he would have done "all men to death".\(^4\) On the Inquiry, Gandhi was associated with Das, who had been the spokesman for the young


2. C. F. Andrews to Tagore, 16 Nov 1919, loc. cit.


Congressmen at the 1918 Session, and with Motilal Nehru, one of the severest critics of the British but not yet committed entirely to Gandhi: Gandhi won their admiration by his sharp, judicial mind and industry, and dominated the Inquiry.¹ In the last weeks of 1919 the Congress Committee heard 1700 witnesses and sifted the evidence in preparation for the writing of its report. At Gandhi's urging, the Committee rejected evidence that could not be substantiated. Gandhi's voice, wrote one of the members, "was always for moderation and restraint".² Gandhi was here inculcating into his fellow-members a sense of responsibility, and attempting to curb the passions not only of the Committee but of Indians who would read its report. Gandhi's desire to impress the need for restraint and non-violence on his fellow Indians concerning the Punjab question was most strikingly seen at the Amritsar Congress at the end of the year, where he prevailed upon the Subjects Committee to put forward a resolution regretting and condemning the "excesses" committed by Indians in the Punjab and Gujarat in April.³

1. see J. Nehru, Toward Freedom, pp. 50-1.
Gandhi and the Khilafat.

Gandhi had for some time been aware of a fund of anti-British bitterness other than that roused by the Punjab repression, this time among the Pan-Islamists over the threatened dismemberment of the Khilafat. "The ferment among the Mahomedans", he wrote to Maffey, the Viceroy's Secretary, "is too great to be checked for ever. It may burst like a torrent at any moment".¹

He wanted both to restrain and to harness this ferment. The Pan-Islamists regarded the British as religious oppressors: Islam offers its adherents the choice of jihad (holy war) against, or hijrat (flight) from, such oppressors. Gandhi wanted to persuade Muslims to substitute for these courses his alternative of non-violent coercion, to reduce the likelihood of violence and to win them as adherents to his method of satyagraha. He hoped to attain these ends by espousing the Khilafat cause and by prevailing upon his fellow-Hindus to do likewise: he accepted the righteousness of the Pan-Islamists' desire to preserve the Khilafat and its temporal

¹. Gandhi to Maffey, 14 Apr 1919, no. S 6534, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.
embodiment, the Ottoman Empire, as prescribed by their religion (even though the metropolitan, Turanian nation was preparing to repudiate both). By associating himself and the Hindus with the Muslim religious feelings, he also hoped to reconcile Hindus and Muslims at all levels of society.

Gandhi had endorsed the Khilafat demands in his letter of April 1918 to the Viceroy, and after he met Abdul Bari in the course of his preparations for the Rowlatt Act satyagraha, the latter advised Muslims to join the Rowlatt agitation and "to organise some sort of passive resistance" if their wishes regarding the Holy Places were disregarded. During the Rowlatt agitation, it seemed that Gandhi's strategy was succeeding for, like Swami Shraddhananda, he and other Hindus were invited to preach in mosques. In May 1919 he told a Muslim audience: "there are two things to which I am devoting my life - permanent unity between Hindus and Muhammadans, and Satyagraha", and in October he wrote,

1. see Chapter VII, p.380 above.
3. see Chapter VII above.
4. Young India, 14 May 1919, p. 6b.
"it is the bounden duty of the Hindus and other religious denominations to associate themselves with their Muhammadan brethren [in the Khilafat agitation]. It is the surest and simplest method of bringing about the Hindu-Muhammadan unity".¹

On 19 March 1919, during the agitation leading up to the Rowlatt Act satyagraha, a Muslim mass meeting was held in Bombay, which resulted in the formation of a Khilafat Committee comprised mainly of wealthy, Muslim merchants and millowners under the presidency of a rich timber-merchant, Mian Mohamad Chotani.² There is no evidence that Gandhi was directly associated with this meeting but, of Gandhi's aides, Horniman was active at the meeting itself and Umar Sobhani moved in the cotton-industry circles of Bombay responsible for holding it. As businessmen, the members of this Committee were but dilatory politicians, and the disturbances accompanying the Rowlatt Act hartals made them fearful of encouraging agitation among the Muslim masses.

¹. Young India, 4 Oct 1919, quoted in Gandhi, Speeches and Writings, p. 483; cf. Young India, 5 May 1920, Tagore, p. 250; for Gandhi's fear of Muslim violence, see Gandhi to Shraddhananda, 17 Apr 1919, no. S 6546, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.

². Bombay Police 1919, pars 503, 529, 575, 603; the Committee was formed on 25 April; its leading members were Chotani, Devji Kanji, Sir F. Currimbhoy, Mirza Ali Mahomed Khan, S. Mitha, B. Koor, C. A. Peerbhoy, Maulvi Abdul Rauf of the Zia-ul-Islam.
Gandhi was confronted with a problem similar to that posed by the Punjab: how to maintain the momentum of the Khilafat movement while restraining the more ardent Pan-Islamic spirits, like Hazrat Mohani, who could whip themselves and their audiences into a frenzy of fanaticism over "Islam in danger". It would help considerably toward a solution of this problem, if those who had a stake in the country and who might thus be expected to exert a moderating influence - to wit, the Muslim businessmen of Bombay -, could be induced to adhere to the movement. The most likely solution to the problem lay in satyagraha, if Gandhi could get the moderating classes to regard it as a guarantee against social disorder and the more fanatical elements to regard it as the most practical method of bringing pressure to bear on the British. Gandhi argued that it was at a Muslim meeting in Bombay on 9 May.¹

Following Gandhi's suspension of the Rowlatt Act satyagraha, the Khilafat movement, like other forms of political agitation, declined. The demonstrations had allowed an outlet and a partial catharsis for emotional

¹. "The Khilafate: Mr Gandhi's Address before the Anjuman [Zia-ul-Islam]", Young India, 14 May 1919, p. 6b.
tensions, although without providing a satisfactory solution to the problems which had given rise to those tensions, thus ensuring that they would re-emerge. Afghanistan ill-advisedly chose this time to attack India. Not wishing to appear treasonable, all but the most fanatical Pan-Islamists desisted from agitation over the Khilafat. Needless to say, Gandhi did not wish to take advantage of the Amir's violence, and desisted likewise.¹

Nevertheless discontent over the Khilafat continued and in August the activity of the Bombay Khilafat Committee and of Pan-Islamists throughout India was revived by messages from Muslims in England. It seemed that Curzon might at last get his way and that Turkey would not only be deprived of the "rich and renowned" lands of Thrace and of her capital, Constantinople, which Lloyd George had soberly promised would remain with her, but would also be divided into spheres of influence under the Great Powers.² The Bombay Khilafat Committee and the

1. see Maffey to Gandhi, 7 May 1919, no. S 6593, reply 11 May 1919, no. S 6606, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.

2. see H. Nicolson, Curzon: The Last Phase, 1919-25, pp. 110-3; Home Poll Dep. Oct 1919, no. 44, 'Bombay', par. 2; 'UP', par. 1; 'Delhi', par. 3; ibid. no. 59, 'Madras', par. 3.
Lucknow Pan-Islamists arranged an All-India Khilafat Conference at Lucknow for 21 September.¹ This was the cue for Gandhi's re-entry, and at a preliminary public meeting at Bombay on 18 September he upbraided the organisers for failing to put forward a minimum demand on behalf of Turkey, and told the 25,000 Muslims present that "they had 21 crores [i.e. 210 million] of Hindus at their back and that with their moral support they could dictate whatever terms they liked"; they should "put their heart and soul into the agitation and they could not do that better than by adopting the satyagraha spirit".²

This exhortation to greater determination may have been prompted by a letter Gandhi had recently received from Abdul Bari regarding satyagraha: "I formed the opinion, chiefly from the events of the Punjab, that the Indian mass [does] not yet possess the aptitude for the movement. We consider that the swadeshi and a boycott movement more appropriate, being more useful and


harmless". The Muslims were thus threatening to discard satyagraha before they had really tried it. In fact articulate Muslim opinion was divided over the Khilafat. The "nationalists" like Jinnah (at this time in England in connection with the Reforms) and the Raja of Mahmudabad, the President of the Muslim League, still cherished the ideal of a secular India and feared the results of civil disobedience and the involvement of the masses in agitation. Secondly were those, like the Bombay merchants, who were genuinely distressed by the threatened dismemberment of the Khilafat, but who feared likewise to appeal to the masses. Some of the Pan-Islamists, like Abdul Bari, Ansari and Hakim Ajmal Khan, had got cold feet after seeing the violence in April, but were looking for an effective means of protest. Finally there were the Pan-Islamic irreconcilables, obscurantist Pan-Islamic divines and young Muslims for whom the Khilafat was of political rather than religious significance as a means of uniting Muslims (and possibly Hindus) against the British.  


2. concerning latter group, see Asaf Ali to Gandhi, 19 Jan 1920, no. S 7062, ibid; others in this category include Azad and M. H. Kidwai; for Fazlul Huq in this period, see Home Poll B, June 1919, nos 494-7, pp. 6-7.
Outstanding among the irreconcilables were the Ali Brothers, who from internment had written to the Viceroy at the time of the Afghan invasion threatening *hijrat* as a preparation for *jihad* against the Government of India: Gandhi clearly had not yet won them to satyagraha.¹

These divisions, which were complicated by personal feuds, appeared at the Lucknow Khilafat Conference on 21 September. Here the majority was in favour of some form of agitation and Mahmudabad and the Muslim League were by-passed. The Bombay Khilafat Committee (due to Chotani's wealth and liberality to the cause) was raised to the status of All-India Khilafat Committee, October 17 was proclaimed a day of fasting and mourning as Khilafat Day and local Khilafat Committees were to be formed to supervise arrangements.² Gandhi (who had not been invited to the Conference) responded by urging that Khilafat Day be observed with a hartal, in which Hindus should join.³ The Khilafat Committee welcomed his support and allowed


3. Young India, 4 Oct 1919, in Gandhi, Speeches and Writings, pp. 482-3; Bombay NP, 1919, pp. 449, 474-5.
him to take over much of the preparatory work for the observance in Bombay: wary of violence, he proscribed mass demonstrations. In Madras Rajaji helped the local Khilafat Committee by winning the co-operation of the Hindus, as did other followers of Gandhi in Calcutta, Delhi and the towns of Gujarat and the UP, and the hartal was quietly and widely observed, though not as thoroughly as that in April.

This peaceful hartal increased the reputation of satyagraha among Muslims, including the more cautious, and Gandhi was invited to an All-India Conference called by the Delhi Khilafat Committee for 23 and 24 November. Here he took up a suggestion, calculated to appeal to the more aggressive Pan-Islamists, to boycott the Peace Celebrations. Despite the qualms of the Khilafat Committee in Bombay the Celebrations were effectively boycotted throughout the country. Gandhi might indeed consider himself successful in wooing Hindus to co-operation with


the Muslims, and both to belief in satyagraha. He regarded the peaceful hartal of October 17 as "the greatest event" of the year, claiming that it marked "the acceptance of Satyagraha...both by the rulers and the ruled". At the November Khilafat Conference he had gone a step further in the application of satyagraha, by suggesting that if "justice" was not done to the Muslim claim the Khilafat Committee should "advise Mahomedans to withdraw co-operation from the Government". He had not, however, worked out a programme of Non-Co-operation, nor it is clear had he worked out its implication for the Reforms which were passed into law by the British Parliament in December 1919.

III

Co-operation or Non-Co-operation?

Gandhi was uninterested in the Reforms. This may be traced to his preoccupation with changing India; restoring self-respect; turning her elite back from the

1. Young India, 5 Nov 1919, Tagore, p. 44.
2. Young India, 3 Dec 1919, p. 8.
Western to the indigenous; and converting her to satyagraha. But mixed up in this was an irrational commitment to the efficacy of suffering. "...it is my firm belief", he said,¹ "that we shall obtain salvation only through suffering and not by reforms dropping on us from England, no matter how unstintingly they might be granted".

The Extremists, on the other hand (and in this they agreed with the Moderates and Mrs Besant), regarded the Reforms as of prime importance. Tilak gave guarded support to Gandhi's satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act, but was primarily concerned with the Reforms. "It is a mistake", he wrote from England,² "to lower our demands [for larger Reforms] just now in order to conciliate the Government of India. The Rowlatt Act and bombing of people from aeroplanes has [sic] created a very bad impression in England about the bureaucratic methods of governing India....we shall only be harming our own interest if we lower our demands". In February Congress had chosen a deputation to present its case before the Joint Select Committee on the Reforms Bill, including

1. Message on his arrest, Young India, 10 Apr 1919, Ganesan, p. 1196.

2. Tilak to D. V. Gokhale, 24 Apr 1919, Khaparde Papers; cf. ibid to ibid. 23 Jan 1919, Tilak to G. S. Khaparde, 5 Mar, 13 Mar 1919, in ibid; Tilak to Lajpat Rai [date not given], Home Poll B, June 1919, nos 701-4, p. 34; cf. Vithalbhai Patel to Vijiaraghavachariar, 3 Apr 1919, Vij. Papers.
Malaviya, Motilal Nehru, Hasan Imam, B. Chakravarti and Vithalbhai Patel. Most members of the deputation were drawn into the Rowlatt agitation and many were won to Gandhi's view that Indian nationalists' work lay in India. George Joseph of Madras spoke for these when, in resigning from the deputation, he wrote: "Mr Gandhi's work in India is more urgent....I should do 'my bit' by the side of Mr Gandhi". On the other hand Vithalbhai Patel, Kelkar and Jinnah (on behalf of the Muslim League) went to England to put India's case before the Joint Committee, and the opposite view to George Joseph's was put by Satyamurti, who wrote: "I agree...that our present position has been complicated by the satyagraha movement. But...we cannot give up our work in England".

Indeed for many nationalists it was not easy to choose between Gandhi's brand of nationalism and the Reforms. The dilemma confronting them was most poignantly illustrated in the case of C. R. Das. Das tried to commit the 1919 Bengal Provincial Conference, held just after

3. S. Satyamurti to Vijiaraghavachariar, 4 Apr 1919, ibid.
Gandhi had suspended civil disobedience, to unconditional support for satyagraha.\textsuperscript{1} He was opposed by leading Muslims and fellow-members of the Hindu bhadralok - Fazlul Huq, I. B. Sen and Pal. They were fearful of asking the masses to disobey the law: to do so would "work disaster among [the] masses who are illiterate and not in a position to do anything with regard to the consequences". Das threatened to leave the provincial Congress institutions, to "sign the [Satyagraha] Pledge...and go to the masses", but eventually he accepted the verdict of the Conference which represented the bhadralok political viewpoint.

The Bengali bhadralok, being a minority elite separated by tradition and education from the lower-caste and Muslim masses, feared that its social and political dominance would be swept away by an appeal to those masses.\textsuperscript{2} Das' heart inclined him to follow Gandhi and identify himself with the masses; but his head told him that his place was with his elitist fellows.

Mounting bitterness at British repression in the Punjab distracted Indian attention from the Reforms. In

\textsuperscript{1} Home Poll B, June 1919, nos 494-7, pp. 4-7.

\textsuperscript{2} see J. H. Broomfield, op. cit., passim.
England Tilak and his fellow Extremists on the Congress deputation considered boycotting the Joint Committee "in view of the doings in the Punjab".¹ The "frightfulness" was even more present to those in India: "the Punjab trouble is foremost in our hearts", wrote B. Chakravarti, "and has relegated the question of reform to a secondary place".² This bitterness was particularly strong among younger and less prominent members of the national organisations who were not distracted by the forthcoming Reforms, since they could not expect to play important roles in the reformed Councils.

The Congress deputation and Jinnah were able to claim that by their representations before the Joint Committee they had widened the Reforms granted under the Act passed at the end of the year.³ But it was clear when they returned to India at this time that the Act fell far short of the "irreducible minimum" claimed by Tilak. He had claimed this minimum as a tactic of winning more

¹ Khaparde "Diary" (Poona), 21 July 1919.
² B. Chakravarti to Vijiaraghavachariar, 5 July 1919, Vi.j. Papers.
³ see Kesari, 4 Nov 1919 and Mahratta, 30 Nov 1919 in Bombay NF, 1912, pp. 535, 620.
from the British. He had no intention of rejecting whatever the British might give: now that his bluff was called, he strove to find some way of accepting less than his minimum without appearing inconsistent to those who had taken him literally. His solution was "responsive co-operation": Indian national politicians would co-operate in working the Reforms wherever the British genuinely devolved power. "Responsive" was added rather as an expression of defiance than with any clear sense of the limits of Indian co-operation.

Das, however, who as a member of the Congress Inquiry Committee had confronted the sufferings of the Punjab, expressed the bitterness of the younger generation of Congressmen more faithfully when he refused to offer any co-operation whatever in working the Reforms and, at the Amritsar Congress in December, got Tilak to do likewise.¹ Their resolution merely reaffirmed India's fitness for responsible government and stigmatised the Reforms Act as "inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing".² This has led some people to believe that they proposed to


reject the Reforms. There is no evidence however that Das had any plan to substitute for Tilak's: he was simply determined to express India's bitterness over the Punjab and the paucity of the Reforms, while preparing to accept them and go on working for more.

Both in the Subjects Committee and in the open session, Gandhi opposed Das and Tilak strenuously: he called on the Session to add to Das' resolution a promise to co-operate with the Government in working the Reforms and an expression of thanks to Montagu. It has been suggested that Gandhi did so because he was basically a Moderate, that he wanted to work the Reforms meekly while Das, Tilak and the Extremists were all for refusing to co-operate with the Government. Not only was this untrue for Das and Tilak, but Gandhi was no Moderate in the sense of regarding the reformed Councils as the means to the Westernisation and political progress of India.

Gandhi still looked not to the Councils but to satyagraha for India's salvation. In October he had written, "for aught we know the reforms may not come. Even if they do, they will be worthless. The Congress

2. see Yajnik, 1943, p. 119.
League Scheme, then the Delhi Congress Scheme and subsequent schemes are now airy nothings.... The Punjab has been a scene of most revolting episodes.\(^1\) His advice to the November Khilafat Conference to "withdraw co-operation from the Government" committed him to working out a programme of Non-Co-operation and, while he had as yet no clear idea of how "obstruction" of the Reforms might be incorporated in such a programme, its operation would certainly distract attention from the Councils. In his speech on Das' resolution he foreshadowed obstruction if the British "resisted Indian advance to self-government", and in explaining his amendment soon after the Amritsar Session, he wrote, "we shall lose nothing by beginning with co-operation. We at once place the bureaucracy in the wrong by our readiness to co-operate".\(^2\)

Part of the aim of satyagraha was to make the Government responsive to public opinion. And it seems that Gandhi quite genuinely believed that the King's Proclamation and the amnesty to the Punjab and Pan-Islamist internees, which accompanied the Reforms, indicated deference on the part of the Government to public opinion.\(^3\)

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2. *Young India*, 7 Jan 1920, Tagore, p. 1129.
Gandhi's reaction to the Proclamation and the amnesty was emotional: he believed that India should show her gratitude. Here was evidence again of that admiration for the British which ran through Gandhi's ambivalence toward them.

But Gandhi's opposition to Das represented more than an emotional response to the British. It represented above all a further attempt to restrain the national movement and an attempt to strengthen the leadership which he had gained in early 1919.

In preparation for the renewal of satyagraha he wanted to enjoin restraint and non-violence upon the national movement. Writing just after the Congress Session, he gave "first place" to the resolution he had moved for the condemnation of excesses committed by Indians in April: "If we are to make orderly progress we must unequivocally disapprove of violence being committed by the people.... we shall find it impossible, when we have full control over our own national affairs, to carry on the government of the country without self-restraint". Tilak's and Das' 1 see Young India, 7 Jan 1920, Tagore, pp. 1128-9. 2 ibid., p. 1127.
resolution offered no programme, but might be taken as encouraging rejection of the Reforms. This Gandhi regarded as inflammatory, and his amendment marked in part an attempt to avoid raising the political temperature in this way.

Whether Gandhi recognised it or not, he was effectively challenging Tilak's and Das' bid for leadership. Gandhi believed that Congress should give a lead to the country on the Reforms — to avoid doing so would be impossible — and this Das' resolution failed to do. He himself had evolved no alternative programme to working the new Councils. By adopting a tough stance on the Reforms, Tilak and Das were identifying themselves with Indian anger and bitterness over the "frightfulness" in the Punjab, as well as encouraging similar feelings over the Reforms. But, as Gandhi saw, they had no alternative programme to working the Reforms and in the open session he pressed them to say so. In this way he demonstrated that their stance was a hollow one, and when Tilak and Das accepted a "compromise", which was virtually synonymous with his amendment, the pandal

1. see Young India, 14 Jan 1920, Ganesan, pp. 826-7.
erupted into cries of "Mahatma Gandhi ki jai".

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Gandhi's leadership had been strikingly demonstrated in March and April 1919. In the period between calling off satyagraha and calling for co-operation in working the Reforms he had been confronted with the difficult problem of restraining the movement and improving his control of it, while maintaining its momentum. He had inculcated restraint through written and spoken propaganda and by elaborating more detailed instructions for the conduct of civil disobedience and avoiding mass demonstrations. It was a question, however, of how long he could afford to eschew more demonstrative forms of satyagraha without losing adherents both among the elite and the masses.

Furthermore up to December 1919 he had only partly remedied his lack of organisation adequate to guarantee control through the recruitment of volunteers and the establishment of Khilafat Committees. But he had been turning increasingly to the Congress since calling off satyagraha: in June he had got the AICC to condemn the mob excesses of April; in October he joined the Congress
Punjab Inquiry; and in December he dominated his rivals at the Amritsar Congress. In 1920 he was to capture the Congress, combine it with his more informal organisation and refurbish it as his instrument of agitation and control.

The partial catharsis provided by satyagraha in March and April, Gandhi's suspension of it and his vacillation for fear of a recrudescence of violence deprived the national movement of momentum in mid-1919. But during the later part of the year, Gandhi rehabilitated the sources of momentum in the bitterness over the Khilafat, the Punjab and (among the elite) over the Reforms, encouraging here, restraining there. He had foreshadowed Non-Co-operation, but he had yet to elaborate his programme to harness the momentum effectively.
Chapter IX

NON-CO-OPERATION: ITS EVOLUTION AND ADOPTION, 1920

The uncertainty, which had surrounded the national movement and the direction it would follow since April 1919, continued into 1920. But we shall see that Gandhi gradually evolved his programme of Non-Co-operation [hereafter "NCO"] over the first six months of the year and that, despite the opposition and misgivings of many outstanding members of the Muslim community, he succeeded in having this programme adopted by the Khilafat Committee and the Muslim League and by large numbers of Muslims outside these formal organisations. Again, in spite of opposition from many leading Congressmen, he won the adoption of the NCO programme by Congress at its Special Session in September and, even more convincingly, at its annual Session at Nagpur at the end of the year. Gandhi's evolution of his programme and its adoption by the Muslims and Congress were, indeed, painstaking processes and were not the result of some inexorable, historical law, as has sometimes been suggested.  

1. Gandhi himself may have contributed to this impression by playing down the opposition to NCO in his autobiography, for instance, see Experiments, pp. 611-4.
The Evolution of NCO

Gandhi evolved his programme of NCO in the first half of 1920 in order to harness and control the feelings of bitterness over the Khilafat and, to a lesser extent, those over the Punjab repression that have been examined in Chapter VIII. The feelings aroused by the Khilafat question, which had been rising at the end of 1919, became rapidly more intense during 1920. As for the Punjab repression, during the first months of 1920 India watched and waited while the Hunter Committee prepared the Government's Report, but bitterness rose rapidly and decisively over this question after the publication of the Report in May.

In NCO Gandhi was evolving a programme which would balance the impetuosity of the more aggressive Pan-Islamists and the hesitancy of the more timid.
One can compare what he was attempting with Mrs Besant's attempt to balance the Extremists and young men and the Moderates in the Congress "united front" of 1915-18: the more timid would help to restrain the more impetuous and the impetuous would provide momentum. But whereas Mrs Besant had become increasingly concerned to restrain the impetuous from action without considering the frustrations and tensions thus produced, Gandhi produced a programme which would allow a release for such feelings, even at the risk of losing the adherence of some of the more timid.

Gandhi was anxious to maintain the momentum of the Khilafat movement during the later part of 1919¹ and to engage the support of his fellow Hindus for it. By doing so he hoped to win the Muslims to satyagraha and to provide a basis for Hindu-Muslim harmony. As he was to say in May, 1920,

I hope by my alliance with the Mahomedans...to obtain justice in the face of odds with the method of satyagraha and to show its efficacy over all other methods, [and] to secure Mahomedan friendship for the Hindus and thereby internal peace also.²

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1. see Chapter VII.

2. Young India, 5 May 1920, p. 4; see also speech 19 Mar 1920, quoted in Mahatma, I, 347.
He also encouraged the Khilafat movement because he saw that although some Pan-Islamists - and particularly those of the Central Khilafat Committee of Bombay - were inclined to rest on their oars there were others of sterner stuff, the "irreconcilables" like Hazrat Mohani who had urged Gandhi to recommence civil disobedience in May 1919: if the Khilafat movement were left entirely in their hands, it might well be more difficult to restrain. While the most prominent irreconcilables - the Ali Brothers, Azad and Kitchlu - were interned, they could not be kept thus indefinitely now that the War was over, and the Ali Brothers had made it clear to Gandhi that, once released, they would take up the agitation in earnest.¹

This, in fact, is what they did. The Brothers were liberated at the end of 1919, in time to attend the last two days of the Amritsar Session of the Muslim League, and a rise in Pan-Islamist temper was immediately evident at this Session. Before they arrived, the more cautious Pan-Islamist leaders, notably Ansari and Hakim Ajmal Khan, had rejected a resolution proposed by Hazrat Mohani that

¹ see A. Bari to Gandhi, 4 Aug 1919, no. S 6788, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.
the League should imitate the Khilafat Committee in adopting the principle of "non-co-operation" which had been suggested by Gandhi; but after the Ali Brothers' arrival Mohani succeeded in amending another resolution in the open session incorporating part of his earlier resolution to the effect that the army should be boycotted if it was to be used for "anti-Islamic purposes".\(^1\) Mohamed Ali argued that, in view of British treatment of the Khilafat, the only course left to Indian Muslims was to demand independence from the British Empire, and urged the Session to alter the League's Constitution accordingly, but even his most ardent colleagues seemed taken aback and insisted he must give notice of such radical alterations!\(^2\) In the first three months of 1920 Khilafat meetings were held throughout northern and western India which threatened to provoke Muslim violence. The Ali Brothers and Azad (who was released in January) addressed meetings in Sind, for instance, and the ulema from Lucknow in their entourage and the local mullahs, catching their enthusiasm, preached in favour of jihad.

\(^1\) UP Police 1920, par. 18.

\(^2\) ibid.; Bombay Police 1920, par. 242; Khaliquzzaman, Pathway to Pakistan, p. 51.
The Brothers were joined on these tours by their spiritual adviser, Abdul Bari of Lucknow, whose courage had been greatly raised by renewed association with them. In February they shifted their attention to Bengal, where by their defiant tone they "set an example to the rest of India" and where Abdul Bari was reported to have been so carried away that he spoke of soaking Christians in kerosine and burning them.¹

In response to this rise in feeling over the Khilafat in early 1920, Gandhi began to formulate a definite programme of NCO. At a Conference of the Khilafat leaders at Delhi in January he, Azad and Hakim Ajmal Khan were authorised to draw up a programme.² Gandhi, however, was still occupied with the preparation of the Congress Report on the Punjab and when, a month later in mid-February, 175 representatives of 33 Khilafat Committees throughout India met at Bombay he had no more than a vague manifesto to offer for their adoption: if British Ministers did not press the Muslim viewpoint at the Peace Conference, it said, the Government could not "expect peace in

India" or the continuance of "blind loyalty", but beyond that it was "impossible for the conference to foresee". This did not satisfy the irreconcilables and at a large conference a few days later in Calcutta, Shaukat Ali, Azad and Kitchlu called a nation-wide hartal on 19 March, which the Central Khilafat Committee meekly endorsed. Gandhi welcomed the adoption of this weapon which he had popularised but, with the violence of 1919 still in his mind's eye, urged that the city working-masses should be "left untouched". He now proposed that the first stage of NCO should involve the giving up of titles and of "offices of emolument" under the Government. "Those who belong to the menial services under the Government should do likewise". But "advice to the soldiers to refuse to serve is premature". The Khilafat, he said, "overshadows the Reforms and everything else". The hartal, as the Government admitted, was a great success, with Hindus and Muslims ceasing business throughout India:

2. ibid., Mar 1920, no. 89, p. 16; April 1920, no. 103, p. 13; July 1920, no. 90, pp. 5-6.
3. Young India, 10 Mar 1920, p. 4.
4. ibid.
"everywhere the agitators have addressed enormous meetings of thousands of men...".\(^1\) At an informal Khilafat Conference in Delhi following the hartal, attended by Hindu Congress leaders like Tilak as well as by Muslims, Gandhi proposed that NCO should be offered in four stages: first the giving up of titles and honorary posts, next the gradual withdrawal from service of Government employees, thirdly the withdrawal from service of the police and military and last, and most remote, the suspension of the payment of taxes. This programme was accepted by the Conference and promulgated by Gandhi and others in meetings in northern India.\(^2\)

Gandhi was not yet satisfied with his programme since it would primarily affect Government servants and he wished to involve other groups which were active in the nationalist organisations, particularly professional people such as lawyers. Government servants were reported to resent his programme since it allowed pleaders "to carry on work in the courts and rich contractors and others making money from the

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Government were not even referred to". At the same time it was clear that his programme must satisfy the more aggressive among the Pan-Islamists. Evidence of their rising temper was given in April, first by a Conference of ulema of the UP at Kanpur, which drew audiences of 7000 at its open sessions and resolved to prevent recruitment for the army and to liberate Khilafat workers who might be arrested, and secondly by a so-called Khilafat Workers' Conference at Delhi which established an office to encourage Muslims to perform hijrat to Afghanistan. Through the ulema the notion of hijrat spread, and thousands of muhajrin flooded into the North West Frontier Province on their way to Afghanistan. Gandhi was formally elected to the Central Khilafat Committee in May, and at a series of important meetings of the Committee at Allahabad on June 1st and 2nd he elaborated the first stage of NCO in greater detail. In addition to the giving up of titles, this should now include the boycott of

4. Home Poll Dep. June 1920, no. 112; the rest of this paragraph is based on Home Poll B, July 1920, no. 109, 'Accompaniment C', pp. 8-9; Dep. July 1920, no. 13, pp. 5-6.
Government schools and colleges and the boycott of Government Law Courts. At the instance of Hazrat Mohani and others, the buying of Swadeshi, to the exclusion of foreign goods was also included. Gandhi proposed that a committee should be set up with himself as a "sort of dictator" to execute the programme, and such a Committee was duly formed consisting of Gandhi, Shaukat and Mohamed Ali, Azad, Kitchlu and Mohani, with power to co-opt.

Gandhi's programme was rounded out early in July with the addition of the boycott of the Legislative Councils. The inspiration for this provision came from the bitterness over the Punjab. In early 1920 in company with other Indian papers, Gandhi's Young India continued to publicise the activities of the Punjab Government illustrating its racial arrogance.¹ In April 1920 the Government of India most unwisely added fresh fuel to these embers by refusing to exercise clemency in the case of two Punjabis convicted of murder during the 1919 riots; Gandhi wrote: "More than full reparation has been taken for

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¹ see e.g., Lady O'Dwyer's letter to Mrs Dutt Choudhroni, April 1919, in Young India, 11 Feb 1920, p. 11.
the murders and arson". On May 26 the Hunter Report on the Disorders was published together with despatches from the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, which Gandhi characterised as "whitewash". The AICC met at Banaras on May 30 and 31, roundly condemned the Report and the Government, and demanded the recall of the Viceroy. Lala Lajpat Rai, the Punjabi politician, fearing that his imprisonment of 1908 for advocating the non-payment of taxes might be repeated under the wartime Defence of India Act, had gone into voluntary exile in the United States during World War I. He returned to India in March 1920 and was staggered by what he saw and heard of Government repression in his native province. In June he wrote an article suggesting that Indians boycott the reformed Legislative Councils. Gandhi took up Lajpat Rai's suggestion: "Needless to say...I am in entire accord with Lala Lajpat Rai", he wrote. Gandhi had already expressed his doubts about the

1. Young India, 7 April 1920, p. 2.
2. Young India, 9 June 1920, Tagore, p. 79; cf. Bombay Chronicle, 29 May, Kesari, 1 June, etc. in Bombay NP, w/e 29 May 1920, pp. 4-8, w/e 12 June 1920, p. 9.
4. in his Urdu paper Bande Mataram, quoted [in English] in Young India, Ganesan, p. 341.
5. Young India, 7 July 1920, p. 8; in Tagore, pp. 400-2; Ganesan, pp. 341-2.
usefulness of the Councils. While, even as late at May 1920, he had been prepared to admit that "the most expeditious manner of reforming the Reforms Act would be to send to the Councils only those who wish to serve the nation", he felt that "many can serve the country better by remaining outside....They will find that they will be better occupied by educating the electorate and keeping the elected members to their promises at the polls". He now seemed glad to be able to wash his hands of the imperfect Councils: to him there was something intrinsically unhealthy about parliaments. In terms of his immediate strategy, the boycott of the Councils was a more clear-cut issue than the other items on his programme, and if he could get the Hindus to agree to this plank it would indeed involve a commitment on their part to join the Muslims in NCO. His colleagues on the Khilafat NCO Committee eagerly adopted his suggestion to incorporate this in the enlarged programme for the first stage of NCO, which was published on July 7. In toto, this now read:

1. ibid., 19 May 1920; in Tagore, pp. 395-7.
2. ibid., p. 396; cf. Hind Swaraj, p. 22.
1. Non-participation in Government loans.
2. Surrender of all titles and honorary offices.
3. Suspension by lawyers of practice and settlement of civil disputes by private arbitration.
5. Boycott of reformed Councils.
7. Refusal to accept any civil or military post in Mesopotamia.
8. Swadeshi must be pushed.¹

And this, with minor alterations, was the programme which Gandhi moved for acceptance by the National Congress at its Special Session in Calcutta in September 1920.²

II

Gandhi Wins The Muslims.

Although Gandhi had evolved NCO largely in relation to a Muslim grievance, this programme aroused considerable misgivings and opposition among Muslims. Among Muslim opponents of NCO four strands may be distinguished: first were those who felt it to be inadequately aggressive; secondly were those who, while accepting NCO in principle, opposed one or more of its detailed provisions; thirdly

¹. Youn,p; India, 30 June 1920, p. 5; 7 July 1920, Tagore, pp. 390-2, 400-2; Home Poll A, Nov 1920, nos 19-31, p. 50, 'Accompaniment A'.
². see Appendix A.
were those orthodox Muslims who supported the Khilafat agitation but dreaded NCO, in Gandhi's words, "as being too strong for India in her present stage",¹ or who objected to a non-Muslim leading the Muslims; and lastly the Muslim "nationalists" who opposed the whole appeal to Muslim religious sentiment.

The first group comprised the more reckless young Muslims and ulema who were calling for hijrat or for violence, in the form of jihad or an Afghan invasion. Gandhi did not at first oppose hijrat,² but with the closing of the frontier by the Amir, this alternative to NCO was removed. The only methods which Gandhi insisted the Pan-Islamists give up were those involving violence, and India's disarmed condition and the failure of the 1919 Afghan invasion made all but the most purblind Pan-Islamists recognise that violence was impracticable. "...my argument today against violence", wrote Gandhi in March 1920, "is based upon pure expedience, i.e. its utter futility".³ From time

1. Young India, 23 June 1920, Tagore, p. 252.
3. Young India, 10 Mar 1920, p. 4; in Tagore, p. 137
to time, nevertheless, Shaukat Ali stressed that jihad had not been permanently foresworn and suggested that for Muslims even the shedding of blood might be regarded as satyagraha.¹ Recognising that such statements enabled Shaukat Ali to save face by demonstrating that he was as aggressive as any Muslim, Gandhi turned a deaf ear, but continued to warn of the danger of impatience and to insist on non-violence while he was associated with the movement. The most impetuous Pan-Islamists were reconciled to NCO by the adherence to it of their most aggressive leaders, and like them recognised in it an additional weapon to jihad and hijrat. They were attracted too by Gandhi's promise of support by the "23 crores" of Hindus. Gandhi had to confess at the Allahabad Khilafat meeting in June that the AICC had refused to commit Congress (and by implication the Hindus) to NCO; and to assuage the storm of recrimination that this aroused he promised to launch NCO forthwith,² and clinched their support by incorporating Hazrat Mohani's demand for the boycott of foreign goods in the first stage of NCO.

¹ Home Poll A, Sept 1920, nos 100-3, pp. 49-50.
² Home Poll B, July 1920, no. 109, 'Accompaniment B'.
As to the second group, some like Hakim Ajmal Khan and Dr Ansari of Delhi, who supported NCO were nevertheless frankly pessimistic about its likely success: they were unhopeful of any large response from title-holders, Government employees, the police and the army. They were carried along, however, by Gandhi's determination. Others who were party to the adoption of NCO at the June Khilafat meeting were doubtful of certain parts of the programme. Representative of these was Fazlul Huq, President of the pro-Congress Bengal Muslim League. He denounced the boycott of schools as harmful to young people, and to Muslim youth in particular, and vehemently opposed the Council-boycott. We have seen that Huq's rival, Nawab Ali Choudhuri, had helped to form the Bengal Muslim Association, which opposed the Congress-League Pact. After some hesitation, this Association decided not to boycott the Council: Huq thus found that by adhering to Council-boycott he was denying himself political opportunities which his rivals were only too

1. Ansari to Gandhi [1 April 1920], no. S 7143, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.


3. Home Poll Dep. Dec 1920, no. 59, 'Bengal', par. 3; ibid., no. 66, 'Bengal', par. 3.
willing to exploit.

These Muslims might have combined with the more timid who were fearful of the whole NCO programme to form a majority at the June meetings in Allahabad, but they lacked such co-ordination and were inhibited by the intensity of the popular Muslim clamour over the Khilafat: it was thus relatively easy for Shaukat Ali to browbeat them into acquiescence to the whole NCO programme by taunting them with being "bad Muslims".¹

Timidity characterised most of the members of the Central Khilafat Committee of Bombay. With the rise in violent speaking after the release of the Ali Brothers and Azad a number of them resigned from the Committee. One letter of resignation explained the sorts of reasons that prompted them to do so. First, they quailed at the hardship that the NCO programme would entail as the result of refusing to pay taxes (for instance). Secondly, they feared and objected to acting unconstitutionally (by tampering with the loyalty of the troops, for example). Thirdly, they feared that the boycott of schools and Government employment would harm the already backward Muslim

community, that the Hindus would not support the Muslims wholeheartedly in NCO and that the Muslims would merely be put at a disadvantage by adopting it.\(^1\) He might have added, as did others, that he feared that NCO, far from assuaging Muslim tempers, would rouse Muslims—particularly the masses—to violence.\(^2\)

Others who were timid, like Chotani, the President of the Central Committee, stayed on in the hope of prevailing upon Gandhi to tone down his programme, by the deletion for example of the later stages relating to soldiers and the non-payment of taxes.\(^3\) Because of their substantial contributions to the Khilafat Committee's funds, they succeeded in restraining the movement at least until the Allahabad meetings in June, and Gandhi further reassured them by emphasising the first stage of the programme and allowing the later stages to recede into an indefinite future. The major factor in reconciling the more timid to NCO, however, was undoubtedly Gandhi's emphasis on non-violence, which was the best assurance that their more impetuous

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2. see Bhurgri, telegram, to Ameer Ali, 22 March 1920, in Home Poll Dep. Mar 1920, no. 89, p. 32.

brethren would be restrained.

The more orthodox Muslims, who reacted instinctively against the leadership of a Muslim movement by a non-Muslim, either held aloof from the Khilafat movement or acquiesced in it during 1920-1 because of their Pan-Islamist sympathies. But with the decline in the Khilafat movement from 1922 onward, their criticisms were heard more clearly.¹

The Muslim "nationalists", like Jinnah and the Raja of Mahmudabad, opposed the whole appeal to the Muslim community through religious sentiment.² They saw the rousing of religious passions and the involvement in the national movement of the fanatical ulama and of the masses as reversing the progress toward secularism by the Muslim community and thus toward democracy by India as a whole. These emotions, they believed, might well recoil on the heads of Gandhi and the others who used them. The tide of feeling was running too strongly for the handful of "nationalists" to oppose it on the public platform, and they held aloof from the Khilafat Committees. Their viewpoint was not brought forward until the Special Sessions of

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¹ see Aligarh Institute Gazette, 6 Jan 1922, p. 3, 16 Jan 1922, p. 2, in Lal Bahadur, The Muslim League, p. 141.

² see, e.g., Asaf Ali to Gandhi, 19 Jan 1920, no. S 7062, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.
the Muslim League and Congress in September, and it is to these bodies that we now turn.

III

Gandhi Wins Congress.

Despite Gandhi's promise to the Muslims that he would provide them with the support of the Hindus, he failed to persuade the AICC meeting held at Banaras on May 30 and 31, just before the Khilafat meetings at Allahabad, to commit Congress to support for NCO. The most that his opponents in the AICC would do - very unwisely for them, as it turned out - was to call a Special Congress in September to consider NCO.1 Gandhi's opponents at this meeting included the erstwhile leaders and older Congressmen: Tilak, Malaviya, Das, Motilal Nehru (not to mention Mrs Besant) and their associates and followers. Their opposition was compounded of a number of elements.

First was jealousy. It was not unnatural that Tilak and his lieutenants, like Khaparde and Kelkar, and Das and his Bengali followers should envy Gandhi's

rise to popularity and power.¹

Secondly, Tilak and his lieutenants considered Gandhi to be inconsistent and to lack determination in putting his programmes into effect. They cited his suspension of the Rowlatt satyagraha and the changes in the NCO programme during its evolution. Khaparde had written that Gandhi "would say something today and another thing tomorrow".²

Thirdly, as regards the NCO programme itself, the Congress leaders regarded it as impracticable. Malaviya never favoured the implementation of passive resistance or satyagraha. Tilak, as we have seen, had grown more cautious during his imprisonment and had concluded that India was incapable of the sacrifices and the organisation necessary for passive resistance or non-co-operation. A fortnight before his death in August 1920, Tilak told Gandhi that NCO "was an excellent method if the people could be persuaded to take to it. But he said he had his doubts".³ In addition, the Congress leaders were dubious of the

¹. cf. re Das, Chakravarti, J. H. Broomfield, op. cit., p. 221; Shraddhananda, Inside Congress, p. 113.
². Home Poll Dep. April 1919, no. 49.
Muslims' capacity for NCO. The Mahratta noted "a sharp division of Muhammadan opinion on Gandhi's plan" and an "absence of any striking response from the Moslem public", which made it "difficult for Hindus to follow the Moslem lead consistently".

Fourthly, the Hindus were averse to diverting the resources of the national movement to the support of a specifically Muslim issue founded on Muslim religious sentiment. One of Tilak's acquaintances has recorded that

To those Hindu nationalists who said that they did not believe a word of this Khilafat but still had agreed to agitate for it only to secure the friendship and active co-operation of the Muslims in our national fight for freedom, Tilak had only one reply that if the Hindus think that they will succeed in deceiving the Muslims, they will soon be disillusioned and will find that they will succeed in deceiving themselves only....Let us not therefore confound issues. Let us seek Muslim co-operation on the broad national question of Swaraj.

The Pan-Islamists' protestations of their loyalty to the Khalif implied that it took precedence over their loyalty to India and raised the spectre of Pan-Islamic anti-Hinduism, against which B. C. Pal had warned.

2. in S. V. Bapat, Reminiscences of Tilak, II, p. 127, quoted by M. R. Jayakar, I, 388, (Jayakar says "III").
At a series of joint Hindu-Muslim meetings held in Allahabad in early June concurrently with the Khilafat Conference, Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and other Hindus were very disturbed by the suggestions of Shaukat Ali and Hazrat Mohani that Indian Muslims would welcome and assist "any Moslem foreign power" which might invade India to "drive away the enemies of Islam".¹

Fifthly, those like Tilak, whose whole policy had been geared to extracting the maximum of reforms from the British, were averse to diverting the energies of the national movement from winning Swaraj to any subsidiary purpose, which they considered the Khilafat and the Punjab to be. Here, as we have seen, they differed fundamentally from Gandhi, who was more concerned to make Indians self-reliant and self-respecting than to move the British to grant political concessions.

Sixthly, as with the Muslims, there were considerable misgivings among Hindus over specific planks in Gandhi's programme, such as the boycott of courts and the withdrawal of children from Government schools and colleges. Lajpat Rai expressed the opinion of many Congressmen when, as President of the Special Congress

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¹ Home Poll B, July 1920, no. 109, 'Accompaniment E'; see Young India, 23 June 1920, Tagore, p. 255.
in September, he said that the boycott of schools would be harmful to the youth of the country and that no nation could solve the problem of education by private means.¹

The leading Congressmen also opposed the boycott of the Legislative Councils. Gandhi had not included this proposal in his programme at the time of the Banaras AICC meeting which decided to hold the Special Congress, but at the Congress itself this proved the main bone of contention.² Having striven for the devolution of the maximum amount of power to these Councils through the Home Rule agitation and their Deputations to England, and having gained as much as they could by these methods, Tilak, Das and the others were keen to make use of these gains. Tilak had organised his Congress Democratic Party in April 1920 to fight the elections;³ Kasturi Ranga Iyengar and his colleagues in the south, and Das, Chakravarti and their followers in Bengal had begun their election campaign: now Gandhi wanted them to give up all this.

1. Jayakar, I, 399; for others who opposed the boycott of schools, see G. Patel, Vithalbhai Patel, I, 449ff.
3. see Manifesto, Mahratta, 18 April 1920, p. 185.
They felt that to surrender the Councils was too passive a strategy; that more pressure could be put upon the Government by working for a large majority of elected members in the Councils who could then obstruct Government business or use the Council as a sounding board for denunciation of the Government.\footnote{1}

At the same time the leading men of the Congress were looking over their shoulders at their rivals for election: if they withdrew their candidatures, to whom would they be conceding places in the new Councils? Undoubtedly the Moderates and Mrs Besant's followers would stand for election, and while they were perhaps not greatly feared, the "Besantines" were bitterly resented as apostates and the Moderates as the Extremists' traditional rivals. More ominous were the non-Brahmin rivals of Congress.\footnote{2} In Maharashtra and Madras they were growing in strength\footnote{3} and threatening to undermine Congress' popular, low-caste support, both actual and potential. Congress was still dominated in these areas by Tilak, Kasturi Ranga

\footnote{1}{Kesari, in Home Poll Dep. Aug 1920, no. 111, p. 4; Mahratta, 4 July 1920, Bombay NP, w/e 3 July 1920, pp. 22-3.}

\footnote{2}{see Chapter IV.}

\footnote{3}{see, e.g., Mahratta, 16 Mar 1920, pp. 138-9, 173-5.
Iyengar and Satyamurti and their Brahmin caste-fellows. In Bengal the lower caste Namasudras had begun to organise, and they might be drawn into alliance with the anti-Congress/League Muslim Association of Nawab Ali Choudhuri. For Congressmen in these areas to withdraw their candidatures was to leave the way open to these rivals and to allow them free access to the prestige and patronage attaching to membership of the Councils and to Ministership under the Reforms.2

Finally, many of Gandhi's opponents were fearful of Gandhi's involvement of the masses in the movement. Through his satyagraha campaigns like those of Champaran and Kaira and the non-payment of taxes which formed the fourth stage of NCO and by urging the nationalist elite to turn away from the Councils, Gandhi was trying to embroil the masses in nationalist politics and to deflect the nationalist elite from obsession with the gaining of power from the British to work amongst and on behalf of the masses. He promoted the revival of the charkha as a symbol of identification of the nationalist elite with the

2. re Madras, see Searchlight, 29 Sept 1920, p. 6a.
masses, and was to symbolise his own identification with them by assuming the loincloth in September 1921. In much of India the groups which comprised the nationalist elite were predisposed by all the weight of tradition to regard with extreme distaste any suggestion that they identify themselves with the mass of the population, and this cleavage had been intensified by Western education and the status of the professions to which it opened the way. The degree of cleavage varied from group to group and region to region. A high degree of social consensus has been claimed, for example, for Maharashtra,\(^1\) and Tilak had earlier achieved considerable popularity among urban workers and among peasants in some areas.\(^2\)

In the Punjab the Arya Samaj provided a strong link between the Hindu elite, largely composed of urban businessmen, and the Hindu agricultural masses and gave the Hindu elite confidence in approaching the masses. In Madras and Bengal, on the other hand, the cleavage between the nationalist elite and the masses was deep. In Madras religious belief and social practice separated the Brahmins from both caste non-Brahmins and from the outcastes, though social

\(^1\) R. Kumar, op. cit., pp. 9-17, 510-36.

\(^2\) see *HFM Bombay*, II, 207, 256-77.
practice also sharply divided the two latter groups.¹ In Bengal the Hindu bhadralok were separated from the Muslim majority of the peasantry by religion and from the whole mass of peasantry by their caste traditions which forbade them to lay hand to the plough.²

Not only were the elite averse to identifying themselves with the lower orders of Indian society, but their economic interest and their fear that those orders once aroused would become uncontrollable combined to make them oppose embroiling mass groups in nationalist politics. This was particularly the case in Bengal and Madras, where many of the bhadralok and Brahmins owned landed property, and feared to rouse the tenantry to a sense of its rights.³ In the UP, the nationalist elite, while having no cultural bonds with the masses, nevertheless lacked personal ownership of land and felt at liberty to ally itself at will with the landowning aristocracy or the slowly awakening tenantry.

But, while the members of the nationalist elite

¹ see JSC on G of I Bill, QQ. 3147-9, p. 188.
² for a full discussion, see J. H. Broomfield, op. cit., pp. 220-34; cf. K. Nair, Blossoms in the Dust, pp. 146-50.
³ see Chakravarti's election manifesto, Amrita Bazar Patrika, 4 May 1920, p. 6; retort, ibid., 14 May, 1920, p. 6.
particularly in Bengal and Madras, were unwilling to arouse the peasantry, they were starting to rouse and organise urban mass groups, Government employees and workers in British enterprises. Not only were these groups relatively compact and therefore more amenable to control than the dispersed peasant masses, but they could be turned directly against the British and used as a political weapon. In Madras and Bombay city, B. P. Wadia, Satyamurti, Chidambaram Pillai and others established trade unions among millworkers, railway and post-office employees, and in Bengal, Pal and Das' lieutenants, I. B. Sen and B. K. Lahiri, did likewise among workers in Calcutta and Jamshedpur and in the British tea-gardens of Assam.¹ Gandhi, however as we have seen, was aiming at a far more all-embracing commitment to rouse the masses and engage them in the national movement.

Gandhi succeeded in overcoming his Congress opponents by outmanoeuvring and outflanking them, in other words by superior tactics: in addition his organisation

was superior to theirs: and, more fundamentally, his NCO programme promised to give expression to the discontents which he and other leaders had helped to rouse, while his opponents had failed to evolve any distinctive or equally-promising programme.

Gandhi's opponents were weakened by disunity. On the one hand were the Moderates, the followers of Mrs Besant and Jinnah, who wanted to use the Reforms as far as possible in a spirit of trust with the Government. Most of the Moderates were outside the Congress (with the notable exception of Malaviya) and therefore unable to influence its decisions, but Mrs Besant and her followers and Jinnah retained positions on the policy-making Committees of Congress, the AICC and the Subjects Committee. On the other hand were the leading Extremists and spokesmen for the young men, Tilak and Das, who also proposed to enter the Councils with the somewhat hazy aim of using them to wring further concessions from the Government.

Even before Gandhi incorporated Council boycott in his NCO programme the rank-and-file and many of the younger men of Congress felt that the Tilak-Das programme of Council-entry was inadequately aggressive for the mood of the time. Tilak and Das (together with Mrs Besant) were partly to blame for this feeling.
Their strategy in 1917-19 had been to arouse discontent with the British among the rank-and-file in Congress: Tilak had argued that the Reforms should be rejected if they were unsatisfactory, but he had failed to explain to the rank-and-file that this was meant to frighten the British into amplifying the Reforms rather than to be taken literally by Congress. His advocacy of "responsive co-operation" at the time of the Amritsar Congress had therefore been seen by them as apostasy rather than as policy,¹ and Das had urged that in order to retain his popularity Tilak drop all mention of co-operation and simply reiterate his condemnation of the Reforms. But as Gandhi forced Das and Tilak to admit at Amritsar they both intended to enter the Councils.

The first test between NCO and its opponents came at the AICC meeting in Banaras on May 30-31. Even though Gandhi had not included boycott of the Councils in NCO at this time, it was clear that if NCO were launched it would turn all attention from the Councils to work among the masses, and Gandhi had said that the main work, from his point of view, lay outside the

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¹ see Deshpande, Autobiography, p. 304.
Councils.\(^1\) Das and Tilak, like Kasturi Ranga Iyengar and Satyamurti in Madras, hesitated to oppose Gandhi point-blank because of his popularity among the rank-and-file. They found it difficult to maintain a posture of defiance toward the British while opposing NCO, and they shrank from giving up this posture since to do so was to take on the colour of the Moderates. Thus at the AICC meeting they dared not declare themselves against NCO and deferred taking a decision until a Special Session of Congress in early September.

Gandhi's lieutenant, Rajaji, wrote that

> This was a deliberate plan sent up by Mr S. Srinivasayyangar\(^2\) through his friends Satyamurti and A. R[angaswami] Iyengar. Mr. Satyamurti could not declare himself in favour of or against Non-Co-operation; so this plan....[These men speak] Moderate politics garbled in Nationalist phraseology.\(^3\)

By calling the Special Session, they were avoiding a head-on clash with Gandhi and playing for time. Bitterness over the Punjab repression was at its height following the publication of the Hunter Report at the time of the AICC meeting, and this would have

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1. *Young India*, 19 May 1920, quoted on p.468 above.
2. a Madras lawyer seeking the leadership of Congress in Madras at this time.
made outright rejection of NCO even more difficult. But the leaders hoped that this feeling would have subsided by the time of the Special Session.

Feelings over the Punjab, however, continued to rise, and were exploited by Gandhi to assist him in carrying his policy in the Congress. From the time of the AICC meeting he and Shaukat Ali linked the Government's failure to punish those responsible for the Martial Law excesses with the Khilafat in justification of NCO. This was a counter to those Hindus who objected to diverting the energies of the national movement into NCO on behalf of a purely Muslim issue. Once again the British played into Gandhi's hands, for in July the House of Lords exonerated and lauded General Dyer. The opponents of NCO were themselves infuriated at this gratuitous insult to Indian feeling, and through their newspaper articles and speeches contributed to the rise in Indian temper. The Government of India, too, failed to take steps which could have reduced tension over the Punjab.

1. NCO Resolution, Special Congress, see Appendix A; Home Poll Dep. July 1920, no. 97, p. 15.
3. see e.g., Amrita Bazar Patrika, 23 July 1920, p. 6; Bombay Chronicle, 22 and Kesari, 27 July 1920, in Bombay NP, w/e 24 July 1920, pp. 10, 14.
For example, as Gandhi was to point out, the few Europeans who suffered in the Punjab outbreaks continued to receive incomparably larger compensation than their Indian counterparts.¹

In these circumstances many of the young Congressmen welcomed Gandhi's Council-boycott proposal. To the "angry young men" like Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhi's programme seemed a much more natural continuation of Tilak's earlier calls for passive resistance and for the "rejection" of unsatisfactory Reforms, and of the Bengal Extremists' boycott of the Bengal Legislative Council, than did Tilak's new programme of "responsive co-operation". Some of Tilak's closest lieutenants shared this view: Gangadharrao Deshpande of Belgaum and S. M. Paranjpe of Poona, for example, had already worked for Gandhi in the Rowlatt Act satyagraha and though they remained loyal to Tilak and the majority of Tilak's lieutenants up to the time of the Special Congress, they joined Gandhi wholeheartedly in 1921.²


A number of younger, more impetuous bhadralok nationalists in Bengal also threw in their lot with Gandhi. Their decision to do so may have been encouraged by a belief that the future of Indian nationalism lay with Gandhi and NCO, but they could have by no means been sure of this in mid-1920, and their decision took courage for it involved a deliberate turning away from the interest of their group to a more national outlook and a commitment to work among the masses. One of the more outstanding of them was Jitendralal Bannerjee. Aged 37 in 1920, he was a lawyer and owned land near his family town of Rampur Hat. Until July 1920 he had been electioneering for B. Chakravarti but threw this up on Gandhi's call for Council-boycott.¹

Needless to say Gandhi's young lieutenants, who had committed themselves to follow him during his earlier satyagraha campaigns, threw themselves behind the campaign to boycott the Councils. In view of the forthcoming Special Congress Session, the PCCs met and held Provincial Conferences in August 1920 to decide the provinces' attitudes to NCO. At each of these

meetings Gandhi's local lieutenants strove successfully to have resolutions passed supporting NCO: Rajaji, for example, mustered the Pan-Islamists at the Madras Provincial Conference to counter the Hindus opposed to NCO; Vallabhbhai Patel and Gandhi's large following in Gujarat carried NCO at the Gujarat Conference; and in Bihar Rajendra Prasad, as President of the Provincial Conference, argued successfully for NCO.¹ Rather than make a determined stand against NCO at these provincial meetings, most of Gandhi's opponents in the Congress accepted resolutions which approved NCO "in principle" while deferring the decision as to its precise details until the Special Session.² That they did so highlighted their weakness, as compared with Gandhi, in regard to programme, organisation and tactics.

Gandhi's opponents recognised that his proposal for the rejection of the Councils provided a straightforward and, prima facie, therefore a more satisfactory expression for Indian feelings - which, indeed, they

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² see ibid.; Searchlight, 13 Aug 1920, p. 3b; 25 Aug 1920, p. 9a; 3 Sept 1920, p. 4c; Home Poll Dep. Aug 1920, no. 112, pp. 1-2, 4, 6, 16.
shared - than did their rather more devious policy of obstruction from within the Councils. Not only did they recognise that Gandhi's programme appealed to the rank-and-file, but they themselves felt drawn to it by that part of them which hankered after some means of striking at the British. They saw too that their policy was dangerously close to the Moderates' strategy of 1918-19 of accepting the Reforms while criticising them, which they had branded as co-operation with the British and traitorous to the national cause, and were therefore reticent about putting it forward. They failed even to present the case for Council-entry in their newspapers; the Bengal Extremist paper, Amrita Bazar Patrika, refused to "say or do anything in regard to the NCO movement till the September Session of the Congress...comes to a final decision", while Tilak's Kesari and Mahratta tried uneasily to get the best of both worlds by urging the Special Congress to "accept non-co-operation" but to "draw up a programme of obstruction in and outside the Councils".¹

In regard to organisation the Congress opponents of NCO consisted of disparate groups in each province, with little co-ordination between them. Even within the provinces a strong sense of party existed among the opponents of NCO only in Maharashtra, round the figure of Tilak, and in Bengal, round Das; in Madras they formed a constellation in which Kasturi Ranga Iyengar and Srinivas Iyengar were merely the most luminous, and in the UP, Motilal Nehru and Gokaran Nath Misra stood out as individuals rather than as leaders of an anti-NCO party. This disarray was heightened by the death of Tilak a month before the Special Session, leaving Kelkar as heir to his leadership in Maharashtra. Gandhi, on the other hand, had an informal network of lieutenants throughout the country, who were committed to following him and were members of the local Congress, and (if Muslims) the local Muslim League organisations. In addition Gandhi controlled the network of Khilafat Committees through the NCO Committee, established at the June Khilafat meeting in Allahabad, in which, as he had stipulated, he was "a sort of dictator". Even Gandhi's non-Muslim lieutenants were members of these Khilafat Committees or
worked closely with them, and the Pan-Islamic ulema supplemented the Khilafat Committees in rousing support for NCO. When Mrs Besant resigned from her All-India HRL in early 1919, the young men who remained in charge of it had used it in preparing for Gandhi's Rowlatt Act satyagraha: in April 1920 Gandhi formalised his control of the HRL by accepting its Presidentship.

Gandhi's superiority was demonstrated at the Calcutta Special Session itself. He had gathered support in a series of "face to face" tours to Gujarat, the Punjab, the South and the UP. His lieutenants and the Khilafat Committees ensured that a much larger proportion of Muslim delegates (committed to NCO, needless to say) attended this than any previous session. Rajaji brought a train-load of Pan-Islamists

1. e.g., for Rajaji's association with the Khilafat Committees, see Home Poll Dep. July 1920, no. 94, pp. 1, 5; for R. Prasad's, see ibid., p. 17.

2. Young India, 28 April 1920, p. 1; the young men in charge of the HRL included its General Secretaries, Jawaharlal Nehru and Umar Sobhani, see Circular Letter from Gen. Secs., A-IHRL, 10 April 1920, Adyar Archives; in July the HRL's Central Council committed the HRL to support adoption of the full NCO programme by the Congress Special Session, Report of the Commissioner of Police, Bombay, 3 Aug 1920, section II, in Home Poll Dep. Aug 1920, no. 31.

from Madras as, from Bombay, did Umar Sobhani and Shankarlal Banker. The success of these tactics was reflected in the election of a number of Pan-Islamists to the Subjects Committee. It was in the Subjects Committee that NCO was thrashed out, the main point at issue being the boycott of the Councils. The Committee, 300 strong, consisted of a few who opposed NCO outright (Mrs Besant's followers and Jinnah); some who had accepted NCO in principle but wished to delete its more important provisions; some who were committed to the full NCO programme — Pan-Islamists and young men, like Jitendralal Bannerjee and Gandhi's lieutenants —; and a number who wavered between the second and third of these courses. The outright opponents of NCO were too few to have any chance of passing a resolution rejecting it in toto or clearly proposing to make use of the Councils. There were thus only two practical alternatives: a resolution threatening to put NCO into operation if England did not grant India full autonomy but meanwhile suspending NCO, put forward by Pal, Das and Chakravarti, who controlled the Reception Committee of the Congress; and Gandhi's resolution

2. see Home Poll Dep. Sept 1920, no. 70. p. 6.
3. see Chakravarti's Welcoming Address in Amrita Bazar Patrika, 5 Sept 1920 (Supplement); see also ibid., 6 Sept 1920, p. 6; Jayakar, I, 395-96.
for the complete NCO programme.¹

In tactics, the Congress opponents of NCO were inferior to Gandhi. By accepting NCO in principle but deferring the decision as to the details of the programme they had no doubt hoped to be able to reduce Gandhi's programme to a nullity while avoiding the obloquy of making insufficiently aggressive gestures to express Indian bitterness over the Punjab and the Khilafat. Had their tactic succeeded they might have satisfied both their rational desire to make the most of the enlarged powers (however inadequate) granted by the British and the irrational urge of the rank-and-file to harm the British in some way for the wrongs they had done to India. But by accepting NCO "in principle" they had, of course, weakened their case.

Gandhi's tactics in the Subjects Committee were excellently designed to increase the disarray among his opponents and to swing the waverers in his favour. He threatened that if the Committee rejected his resolution he would launch NCO outside the Congress.²

¹ for text, see Appendix A.

² Home Poll Dep. Sept 1920, no. 70, p. 6; details of Subjects Committee debates are from this source or from Leader, 9 Sept 1920, in Home Poll A, Dec 1920, nos 210-6 and KW.
He had already begun NCO on 1 August without consulting Congress and, although the response had generally been slow,¹ it was clear that Gandhi could by-pass the Congress through his formal and informal organisations. He satisfied those, who objected to the idea of throwing all the resources of Congress behind the Khilafat and Punjab grievances, by incorporating the demand for Swaraj in his NCO resolution. This won a most important ally for Gandhi, Motilal Nehru² who as Congress President presided over all Congress meetings, including those of the AICC, for the year (excepting the Special Session, over which Lajpat Rai presided). To many of the waverers, his opponents' programme must have appeared as little more than a pale reflection of Gandhi's. Gandhi reconciled some to his programme by admitting to it the boycott of foreign goods, which many felt to be the most effective way of bringing pressure upon the British.³ Others who thought they could still accept NCO in principle while rendering it

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¹ Home Poll Dep. Aug 1920, no. 111, passim.
³ this was moved by Vijiaraghavachariar, Leader, 9 Sept 1920, loc. cit.
nugatory in practice were reconciled to Gandhi's programme by his acceptance of the word "gradual" before the boycott of schools and courts in his resolution: Vijiaraghavachariar believed that this turned the resolution into "nothing more than a pious wish" and Das said that NCO was "now only an ideal". \(^1\) Gandhi's resolution was thus carried by the narrow margin of 148 votes to 133 after three days' debate in the Subjects Committee.

On behalf of Gandhi's opponents, Pal moved his resolution as an amendment to Gandhi's in the open session, but here the **imprimatur** of the Subjects Committee upon Gandhi's resolution and Gandhi's popularity and his superior organisation told, and his resolution was passed by 1855 votes to 873. Over 2000 delegates abstained from voting however, - some authorities put the figure at over 3000\(^2\) - which suggests that at least one-third, if not half, of the delegates opposed all or part of Gandhi's programme but felt that Pal and his colleagues had no adequate alternative.

\(^1\) ibid.; *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 9 Sept 1920, p. 6.

Gandhi Consolidates His Control.

At the Special Session of the Muslim League, Jinnah, who presided, and the other "nationalist" Muslims opposed Gandhi's programme, but dared not do so point-blank. On the question of the Khilafat (which, as a Muslim, it would have been political suicide to ignore, however opposed he might be to bringing it into national politics) Jinnah advocated "resort to NCO as the final weapon to get redress, but not necessarily Gandhi's brand".¹ Most of the delegates to the Muslim League had been deeply stirred by the Khilafat agitation, and it was difficult to oppose NCO outright without appearing to be a "bad Muslim". At the instance of Fazlul Huq, who had been browbeaten into supporting the full NCO programme in the Congress Subjects Committee by Shaukat Ali, the Muslim League swept aside Jinnah's warnings and adopted the full NCO programme, deleting the word "gradual" from the boycott of schools and courts.²

These NCO resolutions would have remained, in Vijayaraghavachariar's phrase, "a pious wish" but for Gandhi's determination to put them into effect. The AICC appointed

2. ibid.
a sub-committee consisting of Gandhi, Motilal Nehru and Vithalbhai Patel to draw up the detailed programme of NCO. Assured of Motilal's support, Gandhi produced a programme for the surrender of titles; the boycott of educational institutions, law courts and the Council elections; propaganda against recruitment for Mesopotamia; the collection of a large fund; and "the formation of a volunteer corps to engender discipline and maintain order". The boycott of foreign goods was, he wrote, "an unfortunate interpolation", but hand-spinning and -weaving were to be encouraged.¹

The Khilafat Committees had been implementing a similar programme since August 1; Gandhi now called for the full implementation of this programme by the PCCs and the branches of the HRL, which he had renamed the Swarajya Sabha.² Gandhi supplemented the activities of these organisations and of his lieutenants during the last three months of 1920 by touring the


2. "Instructions to the Branches of the Swarajya Sabha, lately the AIHRL", Oct 1920, no. S 7327, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.
towners and countryside of northern, western and central India.¹

While his immediate purpose in these activities was to ensure the implementation of NCO, a subtler effect was quickly noticeable. Gandhi addressed peasant audiences in the countryside² – he could be understood across the densely-populated north, wherever Hindustani or Gujarati was spoken – and a sense of confidence and of an impending change for the better began to spread through the countryside. In the Punjab, for instance, the peasants began to talk of not paying their land revenue.³ Even where Gandhi could not go in this short time his reputation penetrated. C. F. Andrews reported of the peasantry in a part of Bihar that Gandhi had not visited, that they

do not understand in the least NCO; but they do understand that one little tiny man, frail in body and all alone, is challenging the great "Burra Lord Sahib" [personification of the Government] himself and bringing him to his knees time after time! They only understand one thing, viz. his absolutely fearless

¹. Home Poll Dep. Dec 1920, no. 66, 'UP', pars 2, 3; 'Punjab', par. 1; ibid., no. 74, 'Bombay', par. 2; Jan 1921, no. 33, 'UP', par. 2; Feb 1921, no. 35, 'Bihar', par. 3; 'Bengal', par. 3.

². e.g. in UP and Bihar he addressed the Kisan Sabhas "Peasant Associations" which had been founded by followers of his inspired by his call for work among the peasants and by his example at Kaira and Champaran: ibid, Dep. Jan 1921, no. 33, 'UP', par. 2.

and absolutely pure character and they worship that and make him their hero - both men and women and the young especially.¹

In the words of one commentator: "abhya[a, fearlessness] rather than ahimsa was Gandhi's legacy to his people".²

The Government of India had carefully avoided taking any action against Gandhi since April 1919 for fear of enabling him to pose as a martyr and of thus consolidating support behind him,³ but took fright at this increase of his influence in the countryside and asked the Governments of the UP and Bombay whether he should not be prosecuted in view of the fact that he was "apparently causing immense excitement and rousing the masses to danger point".⁴ These Governments retained their nerve, however, and advised against prosecution: the UP pointed out that Gandhi had been laying great stress on non-violence and that

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3. the responsibility for this policy of non-interference may be traced largely to Sir William Vincent, Home Member of the Government of India, 1917-23, see D. A. Low, "The Government of India and the First NCO Movement, 1920-2".
without him violence was much more likely.¹ The Governments' trust of Gandhi still held, therefore, and he remained free to pursue his policy of non-violent non-co-operation.

During the four months between the Special Session at Calcutta in September and the regular annual Session at Nagpur at the end of 1920, Gandhi had mixed success in putting NCO into effect. Relatively few titles and honours were surrendered. Very few lawyers gave up their practices, although Motilal Nehru provided a most conspicuous exception.² The boycott of educational institutions had its greatest success among Gujarati students, and, with financial assistance from Marwari and Muslim merchants, Gandhi was able to open "National" institutions in Bombay, Calcutta, and Ahmedabad and other towns of Gujarat; but Gandhi and the Ali Brothers failed signally to convert the Aligarh Muslim University or the Banaras Hindu

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University into National institutions. The recruitment and drilling of volunteers occurred in only a few centres. Gandhi himself played down the boycott of foreign goods, since for one thing it was unpopular with his Muslim and Marwari merchant supporters, but his followers found that this was one of the more popular parts of the programme as it involved less hardship than, say, boycott of schools.

As the elections were to be held in November, time was short for organising the boycott of the Legislative Councils, and Gandhi concentrated his efforts on this plank of the NCO programme. Voters were urged to stay away from the polls and in Bombay for example only 15 per cent of the electors voted. In conformity with their promise to abide by the Special Congress resolution on NCO, Das, Kelkar and their followers withdrew their candidatures; after some

1. Home Poll Dep. Dec 1920, no. 84, 'Bombay'; no. 59, 'Bombay'; no. 67, 'UP'; Feb 1921, no. 35, 'Bengal'.
2. e.g. ibid. Dep. Dec 1920, no. 59, 'Delhi'.
3. Ibid. Dep. Dec 1920, no. 84, 'Bombay'; no. 59, 'Bengal', 'Bihar'.
4. see Report of Congress Sub-Committee on NCO, loc. cit., art. (h); Instructions to Swarajya Sabha Sabha Oct 1920, no. S 7327, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.
hesitation (notably on the part of Kasturi Ranga
Iyengar and the Madrasis) most of the others, who had
opposed Gandhi while accepting NCO "in principle", did
likewise.¹ NCO had thus achieved a moderate, but quite
spectacular, success in its first few months of
application.

Das and his party, Kelkar and most of Tilak's
other followers, Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and others, who
had opposed Gandhi at the Special Congress, came to
the annual Session at Nagpur in December determined if
possible to reverse the decision on NCO. Their position,
however, was as weak as it had been on the previous
occasion, with the added disability that they had
committed themselves to the boycott of the Councils by
their abstention from the elections. Nagpur was in the
heart of the country which could be expected to support
the late Lokamanya's lieutenants, but several of the
latter (notably Gangadharr Rao Deshpande) had thrown in
their lot wholeheartedly with Gandhi since the Special
Congress and countered Das' attempt to rouse the local
delegates against Gandhi.² Furthermore Gandhi had the

¹ Home Poll Dep. Oct 1920, no. 51, p. 3.
² ibid. Dep Feb 1921, no. 35, p. 21; Khaparde "Diary"
(Bombay), 3 Dec 1920.
support of the merchant community of Maharashtra, symbolised in the election of the wealthy Marwari, Jamnalal Bajaj, to Chairmanship of the Reception Committee. To counter Das' party, the Bengal Khilafat Committee sanctioned Rs 10,000 for fares and Congress fees for Bengali Hindu and Muslim supporters of Gandhi,¹ and Gandhi's lieutenants brought 14,582 delegates, the largest number (which also included the largest percentage of Muslims), to attend any Congress.² They elected a Subjects Committee more markedly pro-Gandhi than the last.³

Gandhi's opponents still had no policy on which they agreed or which was clearly distinguishable from Gandhi's programme of NCO. The President of the Session, Vijiarchavarchabir, expressed their dilemma. While criticising Gandhi's programme sharply he confessed that "The one question everywhere asked is, what is the sanction...backing up our demand [for responsible self-government]?" The alternative he offered to Gandhi's programme was education and social

1. Home Poll Dep. Feb 1921, no. 35, 'Bengal'.
2. Congress 1920, Report, pp. 164ff.; see Appendix B.
3. It included such Pan-Islamists as Chotani, Azad, the Ali Brothers, ibid.; Khaparde "Diary" (Bombay), 27 Dec 1920.
reform; strikes and trade boycotts to reduce British profits; and alliance with the British Labour Party.¹

Facing inevitable defeat C. R. Das capitulated and moved the NCO resolution; Lajpat Rai, Pal and others followed suit. Only Khaparde, Tilak's lieutenant from Berar, and Jinnah and Malaviya (confined to a sick-bed) maintained their opposition.² The Ali Brothers, with a clear majority of Pan-Islamists, had a similar victory at the Muslim League presided over by Ansari.³

Gandhi identified himself with the bitterness of the rank-and-file of the Congress and the Pan-Islamist irreconcilables by moving that the object of the Congress should be the attainment of "Swarajya", by which he clearly opened the way to self-government outside the British Empire.⁴ This was passed and Shaukat Ali induced the Muslim League to pass a similar modification in its Constitution.⁵ This resolution was

3. Home Poll Dep. Feb 1921, no. 77, p. 3.
5. Home Poll Dep. Feb 1921, no. 77, p. 3.
opposed bitterly in both bodies by Jinnah, who had earlier opposed the adoption of a similar object by the Swarajya Sabha at Gandhi's urging. Jinnah's opposition arose partly from the termination of the leadership of the Muslims, which he had enjoyed since 1915, by the re-emergence of the Ali Brothers in the van of Pan-Islamism. But in addition, as one of Gandhi's Muslim friends told Gandhi, most Muslims were not ready to accept swaraj outside the Empire as their goal since they were "still afraid of the Hindus". Khilafat agitation obscured these fears; Muslims were so embittered against the British that they accepted the thinly-veiled call for "independence", but when the agitation subsided these fears re-emerged. Jinnah's opposition to Gandhi was thus a portent of failure for Gandhi's hopes of reconciling Hindus and Muslims.

Gandhi had barely recognised, let alone grappled with, the problem posed by the alienation of the non-Brahmin elite from Congress. During 1915-20 an

2. A. Tyabji to Gandhi, 8 Oct 1920, no. S 7296, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.
3. see Young India, 17 Nov 1920, Tagore, p. 608: "I little realised that the Non-Brahmin case was...a political matter"; ibid., 27 Oct 1920, Tagore, pp. 611-2; 27 Apr 1921, Ganesan, pp. 425-6.
increasing proportion of those taking part in Congress sessions were businessmen, mainly belonging doubtless to the non-Brahmin trading castes,¹ and Gandhi - himself belonging to such a caste - had won considerable support from traders. Congress was still dominated by the Brahmins, however, especially in the areas where the non-Brahmin movement was strong, and Gandhi had not ingratiated himself with the non-Brahmins by drawing his lieutenants from these dominant groups.² A lasting solution could only be obtained by drawing the non-Brahmin elite and the rich peasants into the upper echelons of the national movement and to that extent depleting the dominance of the Brahmins and bhadralok. Gandhi had already taken up so many great problems that he may be excused for handling another gingerly.³

Gandhi followed up his success in capturing the Congress by re-organising it to suit his programme. The amendment of the Congress Constitution and Rules had long been under consideration. A Sub-Committee to

1. see Appendices B and C.

2. e.g. Rajaji in Madras, Gangadharrao Deshpande in Maharashtra and members of the bhadralok in Bengal.

3. see C. F. Andrews to Gandhi, 8 Sept 1920, no. S 7245, Gandhi Papers Sabarmati.
recommend amendments appointed at the 1918 Session had been distracted by the Punjab troubles, and a new Sub-Committee had been appointed at the 1919 Session, consisting of Gandhi, Kelkar, I. B. Sen and three others.\footnote{Vithalbhai Patel, Gokaranath Misra, A. Rangaswami Iyengar, AICC Minutes, 31 Dec 1918; 25, 28 Dec 1919; 2 Jan 1920.} This Committee was also dilatory and after the Calcutta Session Gandhi drew up his own amendments, which were accepted by the Nagpur Subjects Committee with minor alterations:\footnote{Young India, 3 Nov 1920, Tagore, p. 1130; Gandhi, Experiments, p. 612.} Congress was to become a much more efficient instrument for the direction and control of day-to-day political work and agitation. This was ensured by the setting up of a compact, 15-man Working Committee to act as a permanent executive on behalf of the cumbrous AICC, and by the revitalisation of District and other local Congress Committees which were to elect the PCCs.\footnote{Constitution adopted at the Nagpur Congress, articles 6 and 24, in M. V. Ramana Rao, Development of the Congress Constitution, pp. 36, 40; "The Working Committee", in Young India, 29 June 1921, Tagore, p. 1142. The PCCs were now based on provinces corresponding to linguistic areas; delegates to annual Sessions were limited and (as with members of the AICC, and the Subjects Committee with which the AICC was non-synonymous) elected in proportion to population.} The compact executive
proposed by Tilak in 1916 was thus brought into being, and Mrs Besant's dream of the amalgamation of the branches of the HRL with Congress, in effect, finally realised: Gandhi, in fact, allowed the branches of the Swarajya Sabha to wither away.

Retrospect and Prospect.

Gandhi emerged as the leader of the national movement in 1920 and, although he was to lose this position in 1922 and again in the 1930s, the national movement turned back to him and to his programme of NCO in 1928-29 and in the 1940s. In 1920 the Congress, reorganised by Gandhi, had been established as the vehicle of Indian nationalism.

The leaders of the national movement in the second decade of this century were confronted with a complex problem. They had to provide an outlet for the large and increasing reservoir of Indian bitterness and defiance toward the British, while retaining control of the movement and alienating as few of the more cautious members as possible. The leaders had to solve this problem while trying to move the British to devolve power. The situation was complicated still further by the rise of new groups, which challenged those who dominated the
national movement, and for which, sooner or later, room must be found in the movement.

Mrs Besant succeeded partially in solving these problems. Her programme of agitation without sanctions in support of full self-government was at first highly successful in providing expression for the emotionalism of the young and the more impetuous. This programme also accelerated the devolution of power by Britain. Paradoxically, however, her success contributed to her failure: she had not won the whole-hearted support of the former Moderate leaders of the movement, and the devolution of power which she helped to bring about was sufficient to satisfy them and encouraged them to withdraw from association with her. She was thus deprived of their help in restraining her more impetuous followers. By initially demanding full Home Rule she limited her later ability to manoeuvre, since any attempt to change her strategy in relation to the British was regarded as apostasy by her followers. Furthermore, and this was of basic importance to the failure of her leadership, her agitation so contributed to the increase of excitement that a more active programme than she was prepared to provide became necessary.

The HRL organisation which Mrs Besant had created
was inadequately developed and articulated to provide her with means of control. She failed to use her election as President to strengthen the Congress organisation. Having set her sights on achieving command of Congress, she encouraged the members of her HRL to join this body and worked with Tilak for his readmission to it, and was thus largely responsible for the predominance of young men and Extremists in Congress after 1916. When the Moderates seceded in 1918, Congress was left in the hands of these groups, and when a majority of them offered their allegiance to Gandhi, Congress fell under his command.

Through her HRL Mrs Besant mobilised many, particularly the younger, educated men, who were to participate in the movements led by Gandhi, both in areas which had hitherto been active and others which had been inactive in the national movement. She gave training in rousing agitation to a number who were to become his lieutenants.

While she did not retain the leadership of the national movement she contributed substantially to the form the movement had assumed by 1920.

On the side of the Muslims, Jinnah and the "nationalists" prepared the way for the co-operation of Muslims with the Hindus in the expression of Pan-Islamist
bitterness against the British, but were themselves quite unwilling to lead such an expression of Muslim feeling.

Gandhi succeeded where Mrs Besant and the Muslim "nationalists" failed, in providing a programme which gave expression to the feelings of young and impetuous Congressmen and Muslims and Pan-Islamists, while reassuring more cautious Indians. NCO provided the first group with a means of venting their bitterness upon the British, while Gandhi's emphasis on nonviolence inspired faith among the second group that he would, and could, control the forces to which he was appealing. The success of Gandhi's appeal to those whose interest was opposed to violence was symbolised in the support he received from Jamnalal Bajaj, the merchant prince. As Chairman of the Nagpur Congress, Bajaj expressed also the emotionalism which NCO promised to satisfy: "at present," he said, "the real work before us is one of destruction and not of construction....It becomes incumbent upon us to discard all things whether good or evil if they come to us through our rulers". In its rejection of everything that came from the rulers, NCO

marked an attempt to provide the national movement with a simple, clear-cut solution to its infinitely-complicated problems, and was reminiscent of the Extremist programme of 1906-7.

Ironically enough, it was the old Extremists, Tilak and Pal who, together with Das, expressed doubt about the feasibility of such a doctrinaire rejection of India's British heritage. In 1919-20, while Tilak and Das were voicing the emotionalism of the national movement by denouncing the Reforms, they were preparing to work the new Councils which the British had given. Their associate, Vijiaraghavachariar, as President of the Nagpur Session, expressed their doubts about Gandhi's programme. While wishing, he said, to compel the British to grant self-government, he regarded NCO, with its boycotts of the institutions of education, justice and government introduced by the British, as a proposal "to rebarbarise the people of India", an inauspicious preparation for responsible government.¹

By turning the attention of the national movement from the Councils Gandhi was also hoping to encourage the nationalist elite to identify itself with the masses.

¹. Congress Presidential Addresses, II, 513.
The more impetuous members of the movement saw the peasant groups that Gandhi had mobilised at Champaran and Kaira as an added source of strength to the movement and were thus all the more predisposed to accept Gandhi's programme and leadership. But, conversely, the older and more cautious members of the nationalist elite in Bengal were opposed to involving the peasant masses, because they feared that they would prove uncontrollable. Furthermore the older Chitpavan and Tamil-Brahmin Extremists of Maharashtra and Madras opposed Gandhi's boycott of the Councils, since to vacate these repositories of power (however limited) was to leave them to the rising socio-economic groups which were challenging them for privilege and power. This challenge had absorbed much of the energy of Tilak and Mrs Besant whose bases of power were in these areas, and was to further weaken the national movement there. But Gandhi, whose main strength lay outside these areas, in Gujarat and the Hindi-speaking regions, had not as yet to grapple with this problem.

In 1920, nevertheless, NCO was adopted, thanks largely to the young and less eminent Congressmen on the Subjects Committee.

But in 1922 NCO collapsed. At the end of 1921 it
seemed that, in the face of the NCO campaign, the Viceroy, Lord Reading, was prepared to concede responsible government.¹ But Gandhi imposed such stringent conditions on his negotiations with Reading that the latter refused to accede to them. NCO thus failed to lead to any devolution of power by the British, a failure made all the more emphatic by Gandhi's promise at the Nagpur Congress Session to achieve "swaraj in one year".² Gandhi recognised in 1922 that his organisation was inadequate to prevent outbreaks of violence: the problem of control was threatening to become too great for him. Even before he called the movement off, however, there was evidence that the boycott of institutions and the hartals of the NCO campaign of 1921 had provided catharsis for the emotions that Gandhi had set out to express, and that these were now subsiding. So that, once again, the very success of a leader's programme carried in it the seeds of failure.

In Congress the more pragmatic attitude toward British institutions, which had been put forward by Das

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and Tilak in 1920 and had received very considerable support, now re-emerged, embodied in the Swaraj Party led by Das, Motilal Nehru and Tilak's lieutenant, Kelkar. Gandhi's nativism, it was thus acknowledged, would not provide an adequate solution to India's problems, and India's British heritage could not be summarily rejected. Even though the Swaraj Party set out to gain reforms by immobilising the Councils, its programme signified that the Councils were not simply to be dismissed by the national movement.

Nevertheless, continued British obduracy in the face of Indian demands for self-government gave rise once again to despair and bitterness, and British snubs to Indian pride provoked indignation, both in the later 1920s and again in the 1940s. To express these feelings in both these periods, the national movement turned back to Gandhi and NCO.
APPENDIX A

Non-Co-operation Resolution Moved by M. K. Gandhi and Passed at the 1920 Special Congress, Calcutta.

In view of the fact that on the Khilafat question both the Indian and Imperial Governments have signally failed in their duty towards the Mussalmans of India, and the Prime Minister has deliberately broken his pledged word given to them, and that it is the duty of every non-Moslem Indian in every legitimate manner to assist his Mussalman brother in his attempt to remove the religious calamity that has overtaken him;

And in view of the fact that in the matter of the events of the April of 1919 both the said Governments have grossly neglected or failed to protect the innocent people of the Punjab, and punish officers guilty of unsoldierly and barbarous behaviour towards them, and have exonerated Sir Michael O'Dwyer who proved himself, directly or indirectly, responsible for most of the official crimes, and callous to the sufferings of the people placed under his administration, and that the debate in the House of Commons and specially in the House of Lords betrayed
a woeful lack of sympathy with the people of India, and showed virtual support of the systematic terrorism and frightfulness adopted in the Punjab, and that the latest Viceregal pronouncement is proof of entire absence of repentance in the matters of the Khilafat and the Punjab;

This Congress is of opinion that there can be no contentment in India without redress of the two aforementioned wrongs and that the only effectual means to vindicate national honour and to prevent repetition of similar wrongs in future is the establishment of Swarajya. This Congress is further of opinion that there is no course left open for the people of India but to approve of and adopt the policy of progressive, non-violent Non-Co-operation inaugurated by Mr. Gandhi until the said wrongs are righted and Swarajya is established.

And in as much as a beginning should be made by the classes who have hitherto moulded and represented public opinion, and in as much as Government consolidates its power through titles and honours bestowed on the people, through Schools controlled by it, its law courts, and its legislative councils, and in as much as it is desirable in the prosecution of the movement to take the minimum risk and to call for the least sacrifice, compatible with the
attainment of the desired object, this Congress earnestly advises -

(a) surrender of titles and honorary offices and resignation from nominated seats in local bodies;

(b) refusal to attend Government Levees, Durbars, and other official and semi-official functions held by Government officials or in their honour;

(c) gradual withdrawal of children from schools and colleges owned, aided or controlled by Government, and in place of such schools and colleges, establishment of National schools and colleges in the various provinces;

(d) gradual boycott of British courts by lawyers and litigants, and establishment of private arbitration courts by their aid, for the settlement of private disputes;

(e) refusal on the part of the military, clerical and labouring classes to offer themselves as recruits for service in Mesopotamia;

(f) withdrawal by candidates of their candidature for election to the Reformed Councils, and refusal on the part of the voters to vote for any candidate who may, despite the Congress advice, offer himself for election;

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

[Source: D. Chakrabarty and C. Bhattacharyya, Congress in Evolution: Being a Collection of Congress Resolutions from 1885 to 1934, pp. 33-5.]
APPENDIX B - CASTE OF NATIONAL CONGRESS DELEGATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
<th>Brahmins</th>
<th>Trading Castes</th>
<th>Those showing selves &quot;Hindus&quot;</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>64.25</td>
<td>5.72</td>
<td>14.25</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>14.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>2190</td>
<td>30.27</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>21.27</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>43.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>2249</td>
<td>38.99</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>21.52</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>31.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>4782</td>
<td>34.29</td>
<td>16.70</td>
<td>20.28</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>25.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918 S.</td>
<td>Not shown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918 S.</td>
<td>Not shown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>5918</td>
<td>15.61</td>
<td>25.26</td>
<td>36.73</td>
<td>5.54</td>
<td>16.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920 S.</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920 (only two 14,582 categories shown)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>92.79</td>
<td>7.21</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

["S." after the date indicates the Special Session of the Indian National Congress held in that year.]

Source: Lists of Delegates in Reports of Congress Sessions.
### APPENDIX C - OCCUPATION OF NATIONAL CONGRESS DELEGATES (%AGE OF TOTAL)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Lawyers</th>
<th>Other Professions</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Landholders</th>
<th>Agriculturists</th>
<th>Not Known</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>61.16</td>
<td>9.29</td>
<td>12.62</td>
<td>14.28</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>34.65</td>
<td>9.91</td>
<td>37.03</td>
<td>7.53</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>44.17</td>
<td>11.24</td>
<td>18.37</td>
<td>12.45</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>8.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>28.99</td>
<td>9.70</td>
<td>26.64</td>
<td>15.15</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>13.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918 S.</td>
<td>16.61</td>
<td>5.98</td>
<td>27.82</td>
<td>7.65</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>32.00</td>
<td>7.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>11.23</td>
<td>6.83</td>
<td>31.92</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>16.82</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>22.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>12.66</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>57.85</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>11.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920 S.</td>
<td>Not available</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Not shown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

["S." after the date indicates the Special Session of the Indian National Congress held in that year.]

**Source:** Lists of Delegates in Reports of Congress Sessions.
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H. INTERVIEWS

The following were interviewed by the writer on the dates and at the places shown.

Adwani, Durgdas
21 and 25 April 1963, Bombay
Sindi lieutenant of Mrs Besant and Gandhi, 1914-20

Adwani, P.
12 April 1963, Adyar
Theosophist; associate of politicians in Sind

Ali Khan, Maharajkumar Md. Amir
4 Aug 1963, Lucknow
Son of Maharajah of Mahmudabad, UP Muslim political leader

Ambekar, D. V.
9, 10 May 1963, Poona
Secretary of the Servants of India Society

Banker, Shankarlal G.
27 June 1963, Ahmedabad
Bombay lieutenant of Mrs Besant, 1915-18, and Gandhi from 1918.

Bapat, S. V.
21 May 1963, Poona
Worker in Tilak's HRL, Poona, from 1916

Beg, Naseer Ullah
4 Aug 1963, Lucknow
Judge and son of Samiullah Beg, UP "nationalist" Muslim politician 1912-18.

Bhende, V. R.
18 June 1963, Bombay
Journalist and ex-Secretary of Bombay Presidency Association
Interviews

Bose, N. K.
30 Aug 1963, Calcutta
Anthropologist and Congress worker from 1921

Chaudhuri, N. C.
26 July 1963, Delhi
Bengali author and journalist

Dwarkadas, Jamnadas
27 May, 1 and 9 June 1963, Bombay
Leading Bombay lieutenant of Mrs Besant and Gandhi

Dwarkadas, Kanji
27 May, 1 and 9 June 1963, Bombay
HRL politician, Theosophist, labour organiser and MLC

Felton, Mrs M.
6 Sept 1963, Madras
Biographer of C. Rajagopalachariar

Ghose, Principal D. P.
2 Sept 1963, Calcutta
Follower of B. Chakravarti from 1917

Gurtu, Pt. Iqbal Narain
7 Aug 1963, Banaras
Prominent educationist, Theosophist, leading UP member of A-IHRL

Harkaran Nath Misra
5 Aug 1963, Lucknow
Active supporter of Mrs Besant, 1915-18, and of Gandhi from 1919

Mr Hazare
18 May 1963, Poona
Theosophist; worker in New India, HRL offices, Madras from 1914

Husain, Tajamul
18 Aug 1963, Patna
Son of Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Husain Khan, Patna
"nationalist" Muslim politician

Hyder Khan, Maharajkumar Md Amir
4 and 5 Aug 1963, Lucknow
Son of Maharajah of Mahmudabad

Imam, Mehdi
4 Aug 1963, Lucknow
Son of Hasan Imam, Patna "nationalist" Muslim politician
Interviews

Karandikar, Vithal
15 June 1963, Poona
Son of R. P. Karandikar, Tilak's Satara lieutenant

Katagade, N. Y. ("Pundalikji")
11 June 1963, Bombay
Ex-secretary to Gangadharrao Deshpande

Kelkar, K. N. and Kelkar, Y. N.
17 and 19 May 1963, Poona
Sons of N. C. Kelkar

Kher, Mr
April 1963, Poona
Sub-editor of Kesari

Kitchlu, Dr Saifuddin
19 Feb 1963, Delhi
Leading Muslim politician, Amritsar, from 1912

Kunzru, Dr H. N.
27 July 1963, Delhi
President, Servants of India Society, UP Liberal

Mukherjee, Prof. Satish
27 Aug 1963, Rampur Hat, W. Bengal
Acquaintance of Jitendralal Bannerjee

Munshi, K. M.
28 April 1963, Bombay
Author, editor, Bombay HRL and Congress politician

Natarajan, Mrs S
17 June 1963, Bombay
daughter of Umar Sobhani, lieutenant of Mrs Besant and Gandhi

Pal, Jnanajan
28 Aug 1963, Calcutta
Son of B. C. Pal

Parthasarathy, R. T.
29 Mar 1963, Salem, South India
Grandson of C. Vijiiraghavachariar

Mr Patmanabhan
1 Mar 1963, Madras
Research Officer, Hindu

Patwardhan, Prof. R. P.
13 May 1963, Poona
Educationist, editor of Naoroji Papers
Interviews

Phatak, Prof.
24 and 25 April 1963, Bombay
Administrative Secretary, History of the Freedom Movement Office, Bombay

Rajagopalachariar, C. ("Rajaji")
20 and 21 Mar 1963, Madras
Gandhi's leading Madras lieutenant, later Governor-General of independent India

Ramachandra Shukla
8 Aug 1963, Banaras
General Secretary, Indian Section, Theosophical Society; member of HRL, Allahabad and Kanpur

Ramaswami Aiyar, C. P.
31 Mar 1963, Annamalai University, Chidambaram
Educationist, statesman; General Secretary, HRL, 1916-17.

Sathaye, Dr V. D.
16 and 18 May 1963, Poona
Son of Dr D. D. Sathaye, Tilak's Bombay lieutenant

Shiva Rao, B.
20 Dec 1962, 14 Jan, 21 Feb and 1 Aug 1963, Delhi
Journalist, trade-union organiser, associate of Mrs Besant from 1914

Shivdasani, Prof. G.
24 April 1963, Bombay
HRL politician, Hyderabad (Sind)

Sipahimalani, Miss J.
23 April 1963, Bombay
Sindi follower of Gandhi

Sri Ram
February 1963, Adyar
President of the Theosophical Society

Sundararajan, P. G.
4 April 1963, Madras
Biographer of S. Satyamurti

Venkataraman, S. R.
5 April 1963, Madras
Member of Servants of India Society, Madras

Zaheer, Hon. Syed Ali
4 Aug 1963, Lucknow
Son of Wazir Hasan, Sec. AIML 1912-19.