Chapter IV

MOVEMENT IN WEST INDIA

In west India, the Civil Disobedience Movement was inaugurated with great enthusiasm. A mammoth public meeting was held at the Chaupati sands in Bombay on 6 April 1930 in connection with the celebration of the National Week. The prominent leaders urged the audience to remain non-violent and not to think that the absence of arrests meant that success had been achieved. Impressive scenes were witnessed at Hajiali Point, Mahalaxmi, on 7 April, when the first batch of the Bombay civil resisters consisting of Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, Mrs. Aventikadei Gokhale and seven others and led by K.F. Nariman wended their way to the sea coast in a large procession and broke salt law by manufacturing contraband salt in the presence of more than 10,000 spectators. A large force of mounted and foot police, armed with Leegis, stationed on the spot remained passive spectators throughout. Similarly, salt law was broken at Ville Parle, Santa Cruz, Khar, Bhandra, Borivli, Baugon, Mulund, Deva and Bhonduk on the same day in a most disciplined manner.

The rising tempo of the no-salt tax campaign alarmed the government. The suburban police raided the satyagraha camp at Ville Parle and destroyed the salt pans. They confiscated the contraband salt and arrested Nariman, Jamnalal Bajaj, Nashruwala and Kishorilal Bhat, Secretary of the Bombay Suburban District

1. AICC Papers. File 6-102, 1930.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
Congress Committee, under the Salt Act.

True to their resolve, batches of volunteers offered satyagraha on 9 April at different centres. After breaking the law they went about in streets with lotas full of sea water shouting slogans like "Mahatma Gandhiji Ki Jai" and "Bande-mataram". Unprecedented scenes were witnessed in three meetings, where each speaker exhorted the audience to break the salt law, give up liquor and adopt swadeshi. Students and lawyers were asked to leave colleges and law courts and join the struggle for swaraj. Dr. Abdul Salem Abidi appealed for volunteers. Packets of contraband salt ranging from one anna to one rupee were sold in every street and corner of the city to provide fund for the movement. Innumerable people came forward to purchase the salt prepared by defiance of law. One packet containing a seer of it was supplied to every family at two pice less than the market price of the government salt. Salt was also sold by volunteers in all trains.

Similarly, the sale of contraband salt was organised in every part of Ahmedabad city unchecked by the police in the initial stage. The volunteers sang in chorus, "We have broken the salt law which will wreck the Empire". In a few days, the police arrested Hariprasad, President, District Congress Committee, Ahmedabad, Rohit Mehta, Secretary, Youth League and Chandulal Bhogilal, the municipal auditor. When the magnitude of the

1. The Bombay Chronicle, 8 April 1930.
2. The Bombay Chronicle, 11 April 1930.
4. The Bombay Chronicle, 13 April 1930.
5. The Bombay Chronicle, 28 April 1930.
movement began to spread, Muslims, labourers and factory workers also joined it in large numbers. Muslims of eight different localities of the town resolved to organise boycott of all persons who took liquor. They even resolved not to deal with them as customers.

The shopkeepers of the Borsad taluka adopted a novel method of boycotting the government servants by refusing to sell anything to them. By the middle of April that taluka reported the enlistment of 1,740 volunteers and resignations of 226 village officials. The people were kept astir by meetings held every day. The Kheja Jangram Raschkar served as the most effective propaganda organ of the Civil Disobedience Movement. It had much educative value for the people in the villages. At Nadiad, there was a mass Civil Disobedience of salt law in which 50,000 persons participated.

The adoption of the cult of swadeshi was insisted upon as vehemently as the defiance of salt law. The following pledge was signed by a hundred lawyers of Bombay including the most prominent advocates and solicitors headed by Bhulabhai Desai:

'We hereby approve of the Indian swadeshi movement and pledge ourselves to support the same and not to use foreign cloth'.

The intensity of the Civil Disobedience Movement and its comprehensive programme baffled the government. Mahatma Gandhi's

1. Ibid.
2. The Bombay Chronicle, 16 April 1930.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
speeches and statements at various places in west India became a nightmare both for the Viceroy and the Governor of Bombay. His arrest was being postponed since 6 April 1930, for fear of anti-British reactions all over the country. He put Irwin's dilemma in a nutshell during his speech in Surat on 6 April 1930, "The Government's plight is that of the serpent which has swallowed a rat. It would find it hard to resort to either course of action—allowing me to remain out or putting me behind the bars."

Gandhiji laid utmost stress on the propagation of Khadi and asked everyone to spin and wear Khadi. He wished to make spinning a universal activity in the country in order to demolish the trade in foreign cloth. In a message to the Bombay Pradesh Congress Committee on 10 April, he explained: "We should carry on propaganda for Khadi and this will not be possible until everyone of us takes up the takli'."

When the Congress gave a call to the government servants to resign their official positions in order to participate in the movement, many persons in different walks of life tendered their resignations without caring for the consequences. Some showed hesitation and reluctance to do so as there was no alternate avenue for employment. Gandhiji, however, continued his efforts in this direction. His idea was to bring about a halt in the functioning of the administrative machinery and prepare ground for the establishment of swaraj government. Some headmen and talatis looked frightened at this call. They had a belief that

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1. The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. 43, p. 188.
2. Ibid., pp. 239, 254.
through the existing government, they could enjoy prestige and status and exploit people to their advantage in the name of the government. On 19 April 1930, Gandhiji in his speech at Bardoli asked the headmen and talati who had not resigned till then, to do so at once. His advice to the village heads at Surat was significant and meant for everyone. 'Your duty is to work wholeheartedly for the swaraj Government. If you have faith in yourselves and in swaraj, then alone I invite you to join this faith. Do not purchase Government salt. Do not wear foreign clothes and shun liquor. You are taking a step towards swaraj'.

On 4 May, Gandhiji addressed a letter to the Viceroy intimating to him his programme of setting out for Dharasana along with his companions and demanding possession of the salt works. The daily reports of brutal police assaults on satyagrahis in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, U.P., Bombay, Delhi, Madras, Peshawar and Karachi prompted him to state, 'I had hoped that the Government would fight the civil resisters in a civilised manner. Bones have been broken, private parts have been squeezed for the purpose of making volunteers give up, to the Government valueless, to the volunteers precious salt.' He stated that liquor dealers had assaulted pickets officially reported to have been peaceful and sold liquor in contravention of regulations. But the officials had taken no notice either of the assaults or the illegal sales. The Press Ordinance too came in for criticism. The way Bhagat Singh and others were persecuted was condemned.

1. Ibid., p. 296.
2. The Bombay Chronicle, 23 April 1930.
3. Young India, 8 May 1930.
4. Ibid.
The Viceroy was warned that, "... the greater the repression and lawlessness on the part of authority, the greater should be the suffering courted by the victims. Success is the certain result of suffering of the extremist character, voluntarily undergone."

Under these circumstances, Gandhi's arrest seemed imminent. The Viceroy knew that it might soon have to be done, but he was anxious to defer it as long as possible. He informed Secretary of State, "I am quite certain that we have been right so far not to arrest Gandhi and I am equally certain that he and his friends are greatly disappointed that we have not done so." He was, however, conscious that his action in not arresting Gandhi was 'very illogical' but he was sure that it had helped the government. He thought that Gandhi's plans at that time were uncertain but it was evident that he did not intend to remain immobilised on the sea-shore. He, therefore, wrote to the Governor of Madras on 14 April 1930, "... we must constantly be on guard against allowing the legend to establish itself that we are afraid of him or that he is unarrestable."

The Secretary of State expressed his concern at the political developments in India in his letter to Irwin on 22 April. He was sure that "... if Gandhi were arrested and disorder followed, it would become merged in the terrorist organization and thereby

1. Young India, 8 May 1930.
2. Halifax Papers. Viceroy to Secretary of State, 7 April 1930.
3. Halifax Papers. Viceroy to Secretary of State, 12 April 1930.
strengthen it. 1

Two days later, the Viceroy informed the Secretary of State: '... we are consulting Sykes and other Local Governments again as to what they think about it. On the whole, ... the situation is difficult but not critical. 2

Irwin's ambivalence on the issue of Gandhiji's arrest was finally resolved, it seems, by Sykes' increasing alarm and Malcolm Hailey's intervention. The latter was perhaps the most trusted adviser in the small group that Irwin liked to call his 'wise men'. At first, he himself had been ambivalent on the question, offering as he later recalled 'a compromise of differing views'. However, he supported Irwin's reluctance to arrest Gandhiji, and Irwin cited Hailey's support in his correspondence home. But on 25 April, with the unrest increasing rapidly, Hailey finally came down hard for Gandhiji's arrest, and, in a letter to Irwin, advised that they had already waited too long and should act speedily now.

This advice removed Irwin's ambivalence. He informed the Secretary of State on the same day, 'My own mind is moving, I think, towards arrest'. He also informed C.F. Andrews, '... I cannot bring myself to understand how he [Gandhi] can have been

1. Halifax Papers. Secretary of State to Viceroy, 22 April 1930.
right to throw away what seemed a golden opportunity for men of goodwill to work together in favour of this movement with all its inevitable consequences. It was at length decided that Gandhiji should be apprehended under Regulation XXV of 1827 which allowed persons engaged in unlawful activities to be placed under surveillance at the discretion of the authorities. By this means it was hoped that the excitement engendered by a public trial could be avoided.

On 5 May, the District Magistrate reached Gandhiji's camp at Kirdi along with the Superintendent of Police and a party of twenty armed constables at 12.45 A.M. when he was asleep. He woke him up and told him, 'I have a warrant for your arrest, Mr. Gandhi.' Gandhiji was found smiling when the warrant was being read out to him. The inmates of the ashram showed no resistance. Gandhiji was quietly taken to Yeravda Central Jail by the Bombay-Gujarat Mail. The arrest of Gandhiji was followed by a police raid on the Congress House at 414 Girgaum Back Road in Bombay resulting in the seizure of two cyclostyle machines and other material for issuing bulletins.

Popular protest against Gandhiji's arrest was demonstrated by a peaceful hestal on 6 May all over the country. All the

2. By 29 April 1930, Irwin had made up his mind to arrest Gandhiji. 'After full discussion we decided on his early arrest'. Halifax Papers. Viceroy to Secretary of State, 29 April 1930.
mills were to work as usual on 7 May. However, contrary to the instructions of the Congress, the workers of the Shoalpur Spinning and Weaving Mill left their mill on 7th morning in pursuance of instructions they had received from some outside sources that there would be a hartal on the second day also. They brought out the workers of all other mills of the city and organised a peaceful procession which went round the city. Joined by many others, it became an unmanageable mob. Some miscreants in the mob stoned a railway train, set fire to a municipal chowki and indulged in stone throwing. Therefore the mob, numbering about 10,000 persons, was dispersed by the police lathi charge after they had burnt a few liquor shops. In this clash, several persons received injuries including the Superintendent of Police and some other officials.

The police action led to serious disturbances in the city on 8 May and created a serious situation. The police chief was informed that about 900 men with ropes and axes had set out to destroy toddy trees. The police at once took action, arrested half a dozen of persons and dispersed the remainder. On their return, the Police found the road blocked by a large organised crowd, including a lorry full of men armed with lathis. The crowd at once began to stone the police heavily and blocked the road with stones and water pipes. The warnings of District

1. AICC Papers. File G-147, 1930.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
Magistrate produced no effect on them. They burnt a police station and the district court and killed two policemen.

To control the situation, Section 144 was promulgated and army was called from Poona on 12 May. A combined military and police patrol was sent through the city. The unmanageable mob melted away at the sight of the troops. On the arrival of reinforcement Martial Law was declared. Thirteen persons were reported to be dead and about forty injured during these disturbances.

The Secretary of State was not happy over the promulgation of the Martial Law in Sholapur and stated in a telegram to the Viceroy, 'I would trust a soldier absolutely in his own job ... and sometimes as a law-giver, he exhibits the most extraordinary stupidity'. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru publicly paid homage to the memory of martyrs and showed sense of concern and anxiety in his correspondence with the Viceroy.

As soon as the city fell into the hands of the military officers, they removed the national flags from the municipal buildings and began to harass persons wearing Gandhi caps. They also arrested some of the prominent Congressmen, lawyers, students, and labour leaders. Seventy-six persons were punished under the

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martial law ordinance. The sentences passed on them were severe and fines heavy. Some persons were mercilessly flogged.

Much concern was shown in London about the episode of Gandhi caps. The Secretary of State for India wrote to Viceroy on 16 May, "This implies that action was deliberate and by order of superior authority". After a week, he again reminded the Viceroy, "... I do realise the difficulties of your situation, but they will not be helped by giving free scope to plans of this kind". The High Commissioner of India, in his telegram to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy, wrote, "... Military in Sholapur should not be allowed to flick Gandhi caps off people's heads. It is a humiliation which will rankle long." In India, the removal of national flag from the municipal buildings was interpreted as an insult to the whole nation. The cause was taken up by V.V. Lethe who went from Poona to Sholapur with a batch of volunteers with national flags in their hands. They were beaten; flags were snatched from their hands; and they were arrested. Other batches followed and all were convicted. On 1st July the martial law regime was replaced by civil administration.

On 26 May 1930 a trivial incident led to a tragic happening at the Bhendi Bazaar in Bombay and caused much excite-

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3. Halifax Papers. Secretary of State to Viceroy, 22 May 1930.
ment and panic among the Muslims living in and near that locality. At about 9-30 p.m., a sergeant's dog barked at a passer-by Pethan and received a kick from him. Enraged at this, the sergeant fired his revolver. This news went round among the residents of the locality who were mostly Muslims. Seized with a frenzy they pelted brickbats at the sergeant. To save the sergeant police fired several shots, causing bullet injuries to seven persons, three of whom died in the J.J. Hospital. The Deputy Commissioner was hit by a stone and some policemen were injured by brick-bats. The Congress volunteers appeared on the scene, regulated the traffic and persuaded the crowd to disperse. This incident added to the existing commotion in the city. The Secretary of State who was in regular correspondence with the Viceroy, expressed anxiety in his telegram on 29 May: 'We are waiting anxiously to see the storm die down, and of course you are a far more anxious watcher than we are'.

To strengthen the hands of the administration, the Viceroy promulgated the Prevention of Intimidation Ordinance on 30 May 1930. It was to deal primarily with activities such as picketing of liquor and foreign cloth shops and molestation of persons intending to undermine the administration by the boycott of those engaged in public duties. It provided imprisonment up to six months with or without fine.

2. Ibid.
On 12 June 1930, a largely attended conference of the collegians of Gujarat met amidst scenes of great enthusiasm under the presidency of Professor J.C. Kamarappa of Gujarat Vidyapith. He asked the students to suspend their studies and use the period of suspension for constructive work and political education in the villages. Jivanlal Dewan, Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee, appealed to them to give up studies for one year and keep the colleges at Ahmedabad empty. Ultimately, the conference resolved that students should not join colleges till the end of the national fight.

The school boys did not lag behind in their enthusiasm for political work. More than five hundred boys, mostly under ten years of age, belonging to municipal primary schools, Bombay, went to the Congress House and offered their services for the freedom struggle. They formed a battalion of vadar sens, organised by the Bombay Presidency Youth League under the Vadar Raja, Satuk Desai. They held a parade, moved in a procession, shouting national slogans all over the city and generated enthusiasm for the constructive and political phase of freedom struggle.

On 26 June, Sardar Patel was released from the Sabarmati Jail on the completion of his sentence. At that time, hardly

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1. The Bombay Chronicle, 14 June 1930.
2. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. He was arrested at Res on 7 March 1930.
any leader of Gujarat was out of jail and the atmosphere was
saturated with emotion and anger. A regular stream of visitors
was seen pouring in to seek his guidance. A public reception
was accorded to the Sardar and it was attended by about a lakh
of people. During his speech, he congratulated the people of
Gujarat for their enthusiasm, courage and sacrifice and exhorted
them to work for national liberation and fill the British jails.
He told them, 'Your way was clearly shown by Mahatmaji to be the
way of truth and non-violence. If you miss the present opportu-
nity, if you shirk your duty, history will write your names in
black letters.'

About this time the government declared the
Working Committee of the Congress and many organizations allied
to it illegal, and took possession of their offices. Commenting
on this proclamation, the Sardar stated, 'Now the time has arrived
for every house in the country to be the office of the Congress
Committee, and every individual in the country to be the Congress
in himself.'

John Mac, the Home Member, visiting Bombay in June 1930,
had no illusion about the strength of Civil Disobedience Movement
in the city. He wrote, 'The Congress House openly directs the
movement of revolt against Government.... Gandhi caps fill the
streets, volunteers in uniform are posted for picketing with the
same regularity and orderliness as police constables.... Nothing,
perhaps, had done more to deepen the impression than the series
of processions organised by the Congress....'
The Viceroy showed much concern over the existing political situation during his inaugural speech in the Legislative Assembly on 9 July 1930: 'In my judgment and in that of my Government, it is a deliberate attempt to coerce established authority by mass action and ... it must be regarded as unconstitutional and dangerously subversive.... The present movement is exactly analogous to a general strike in an industrial country, which has for its purpose the coercion of Government by mass pressure as opposed to argument and which a British Government recently found it necessary to mobilise all its resources to resist.... So long as civil disobedience movement persists, 1 we must fight it with all our strength.'

The Governor of Bombay was also critical of the activities of the satyagrahis in his inaugural address to the Bombay Legislative Council on 17 July 1930. ... It was not long before passive resistance to law gave way to an active campaign of plundering and seeking property, both Government and private, which was initiated by the raids on salt depots.... Valuable plantations and timber have been cut down and forest produce has been stolen.... Throughout the campaign the weapon of intimidation has been ruthlessly employed to compel neutral persons to surrender their conscience and their liberties and even human life has not been safe from aggression'.

On 31 July 1930, it was arranged to take out a procession in Bombay on the occasion of the anniversary of Lokmanya Tilak's

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death. On that day, the Working Committee of the Congress was also in session in Bombay, and so its members, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Jaiminis Dalatram and T.A.K. Sherwani also participated in the procession. Among others who followed the procession were Hansabehn Mehta who was at that time the 'Dictator' of Bombay and Maniben Patel. The procession moved forward peacefully until it arrived at the Victoria Terminus railway station, where it was stopped and forbidden from moving forward towards the fort area. Instead of dispersing, the entire procession, consisting of thousands of men and women, including Sardar Patel and other local leaders sat down on the ground and refused to move even an inch despite all persuasive efforts of the police officers, heavy downpour of rain and growing darkness of night. At dawn on the following day, the leaders, including Hansabehn and Maniben, were arrested and thereafter a brutal lathi charge was made on the remaining crowd. Sardar Patel was again sentenced to three months' imprisonment and was sent to the Yeravda Jail.

In the first phase of the movement ending in March 1931 the following number of persons from various communities were put behind the bars in the Bombay Presidency:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hindus</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>3966</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4114</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4014</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>5014</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Juveniles under 17</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total: 99</td>
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The imprisonment of such numbers put an immense strain on provincial jail services. Bombay spent Rs.2,747,000 on jails in 1930-31 compared with Rs.2,437,000 in 1929-30.

By the autumn of 1930, the boycott of foreign cloth, liquor and all British goods was virtually complete. Women dressed in orange Khadi saris picketed shops dealing in foreign goods. The volunteers flung themselves even in front of cars until their owners submitted and returned the purchased forbidden goods to the dealers. Most of the Indian shops gave undertaking not to sell foreign cloth and it rarely happened that a purchaser tried to defy them. Only with a printed permit issued by the Bombay Congress Committee dare a driver take his bales past the Congress sentries who kept watch, day and night, in every lane and alley of the business quarters. Their inspectors entered every warehouse and shop and confiscated the forbidden goods which a merchant had tried to smuggle past their patrols.

Women were active participants throughout the movement. They played a significant role in this phase of national politics. Although they were not permitted to accompany Gandhiji in his arduous march to Dandi, they greeted him on the way and listened to his speeches. At the village of Ahram on 10 April 1930, in an audience of five thousand, no less than two thousand were women; at Natwad, on 11 April, a quarter of the audience were women and at Dandi, on 13 April, more than five hundred women received him.

3. Ibid.
Gandhiji explained to Kansa Mehta, 'India expects every woman to do her duty at this moment in the fight for freedom'. He felt sure that if the women of India arose, no one could stop the country's march to freedom. 'If non-violence is the law of our being, the future is with women.'

The women realized the urgency of the boycott of foreign cloth which was possible only through Khadi. A batch of women which assembled at Dandi on 15 April 1930, resolved that they would picket liquor and toddy shops of Gujarat and appealed to the shopkeepers and the shop-goers to desist from plying their trade or drinking intoxicating liquors. They also resolved to picket foreign cloth shops and appealed to the dealers and the buyers to desist from the practice of dealing in or buying foreign cloth. They took vow to use khadi and spin regularly. They carried the message of khadi to their neighbours, taught them the process of spinning and encouraged them to spin regularly.

In Bombay and its suburbs ladies worked shoulder to shoulder with men in producing and selling the contraband salt. The prominent ones among them were Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, Mirsala Devi, Mrs. Mushruwala and Ratanben Mehta. They went about crying, 'Holy Salt', 'Gandhi Salt', 'Civil Disobedience Salt', 'Salt that will release India'. Lady Mankurdas, Mrs. Lilavati Munshi and Kamaladevi visited the Bar Library of the

1. The Bombay Chronicle, 12 April 1930.
2. Young India, 10 April 1930.
3. Young India, 17 April 1930.
4. Ibid.
5. The Bombay Chronicle, 12 April 1930.
Bombay High Court and sold the salt worth Rs.150/-.

On 18 April, some other ladies sold the contraband salt in a police station.

At least ten women were required for picketing a liquor shop or foreign cloth shop and volunteers were required to carry banners or placards bearing warnings in bold letters against buying foreign cloth or indulging in intoxicants. They were instructed to desist from vulgarity, abuse, threat or unbecoming language.

Irwin expressed a sense of much concern over the participation of women in the Civil Disobedience Movement. In his communication to the Secretary of State, he wrote, 'Gandhi's appeal to women is a clever move and whatever may be its practical effect in the field of action, it is likely to have considerable effects in social life'.

Before launching movement against intoxicating drinks and drugs and the foreign cloth, the prominent women of the western region wrote a letter to the Viceroy expressing concern about these items. They explained that 'drink has desolated many a home, and foreign cloth has deprived millions of India's women of their employment during leisure hours which amount in the aggregate to no less than four months in the year.' They pointed out that it was the duty of the state to prohibit

1. The Bombay Chronicle, 19 April 1930.
2. The Bombay Chronicle, 21 April 1930.
3. Young India, 24 April 1930.
4. Halifax Papers, Viceroy to Secretary of State, 24 April 1930.
5. Young India, 1 May 1930.
traffic in intoxicating drinks and drugs because they ruined both mind and body of those who indulged in them, and to prohibit the entry of foreign cloth in the country as it had brought about the economic ruin of the villages of this 'unhappy land'. They expressed their resolve to dedicate themselves more to these questions than to the others which along with these were being dealt with in terms of the independence movement.

Most women joined the freedom struggle because like men they were inspired by patriotism and wanted to see the end of foreign rule from their motherland. Gandhiji nominated Sarojini Naidu to lead the raid on Amravati after he and Abbas Tyabji were arrested. In Bombay, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya and Avantikbai Gokhale were among the first batch of women to break the salt law. Kamaladevi recalls that on 6 April 1930, 'Thousands of women strode down to the sea like proud warriors. But instead of weapons, they bore pitchers of clay, brass and copper and instead of uniforms the simple cotton saris of village India... Undoubtedly the women turned this struggle into a beautiful epic.'

When the police raided the Bombay Congress House, where salt pans had been prepared, they found their way blocked by Mrs. Perin Captain, Mrs. Jawabehn Ratenshehn and five other women volunteers. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya stood by the Superintendent of Police who politely asked her to move away.

1. Ibid.
But she refused to oblige.

Kamaladevi, Sarojini Naidu, Hansa Mehta, Jai Chri Baiji, Maniben and others organised a procession on 1 August 1930, on the death anniversary of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Since the processions were banned in the fort area, the police did not let them proceed. They sat through the whole night in the open in pouring rain. Besides, Hansa Mehta and others formed the Dash Sevika Sangh which played an important role in organising picketing in Bombay. Their picketing was so effective that government declared it illegal. Through the summer of 1930, 'day by day, the streets of Bombay would be livened in the early morning with songs of freedom sung by troupes of patriots rousing the people to action.... Women could be found all over the city, sitting outside the liquor shops and foreign cloth shops, plying their little 'spinning wheels' called taklis, silently warning every Indian that he must not buy from that shop. Sometimes the stools on which these women sat through the heat of the day were provided by the shopkeepers whose trade they were destroying. Many of the women had never taken any part in public life before. Some came straight out of purdah; at the end of the day, they would have no idea how to go home, and must patiently wait till a husband or a son came to take them away'.

George Slocombe of the Daily Herald wrote in his despatch on the Wadala salt raid, '... One of the raiders carried out her mission with quiet dignity, very impressive to behold. It was a

2. Transcript of Interview with Sat. Hansa Mehta, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.
woman who emerged from the crowd, climbed through the barbed wire and approached the salt mound, as if it were an altar, and filled her sari with salt as part of some unknown ritual.

In Gujarat, where women's participation was perhaps the deepest, special classes were started in the Sabarmati Ashram to train women satyagrahis. Mridula Sarabhai led the way. She was arrested and sent to Belgum jail. The Rashtriya Stree Sabha carried on an intensive propaganda for use of swadeshi. Kasturba, Sarla Devi Sarabhai, Indumati Sheth, Mithubhan Petit, Mandubhijn Kanuga and Khurshedbehn Naroji were among the leaders in Ahmedabad. On analysing the composition of the leadership we find that most of them were either from the families of mill-owners -- SarabhaIs, Kasturbai Lalbhai, Ranchodlal Chhotelal, or from the Sabarmati Ashram. Thousands of women, teachers, students, and ordinary housewives joined prabhat pherias, processions and picketing. All these women were not highly educated or sophisticated; for instance, Gangedebhain Vaidya had become a widow at sixteen. She had read about Gandhiji's struggle in South Africa, met him in Bombay and was advised to learn spinning at Mani-bhavan. Later on, she became an inmate of Sabarmati Ashram.

Massive raids by satyagrahis on government salt works in several parts of west India were operated upon. The most important places raided were the Bhavasana Salt Works and the Wadala Salt Works. As a result of these operations, the volunteers suffered

immensely at the hands of the government machinery.

Ten days prior to his arrest, Gandhiji had planned to take possession of the salt beds of Dharasana. 1 ... he informed the government that he would personally conduct a raid on the Dharasana Salt Works. His arrest postponed the raids. 2 On 26 April 1930, he stated, 'You may call me a salt-thief but only when we take possession of the salt beds of Dharasana.... If you mean to play the real game, come out and loot the salt beds of Dharasana or Bhavnagar or Kharaghoda.'

The government felt that, 'To all intents and purposes, the whole resources of the district were concentrated on this one subject.' 3 The District Magistrate, Surat, informed the Home Secretary of Gandhiji's intentions of marching on government salt works within a few days. 4 The Home Secretary instructed the authorities on 29 April, 'Best precautions possible should be taken in the event of a raid on Dharasana by Gandhi to intercept telegrams in which information about the raid may be contained.'

On 7 May 1930, Abbas Tyabji, who had taken the place of Gandhiji as leader of the volunteers, addressed a meeting in which he stated, 'Let it not be thought that after Mahatmaji's arrest, the movement will be slackened and that the idea about raiding the Government salt works at Dharasana would be dropped.'

5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
He declared that he had decided to raid Dharasana with the aid of volunteers and thus complete Gandhiji's task which he himself could not finish. He preferred to face bullets, if it came to that. He confidently said, 'If we die, then rest assure that India will be free and attain her independence'.

An eye-witness remarked, 'It was a most solemn spectacle to see this Grand Old Man with his flowing snow-white beard marching at the head of the column and keeping pace in spite of his three score and sixteen years, with the youngest in the party, while Bapu like the incarnation of Mother India, walked by his side. He resisted all the requests of friends and companions to get into a motor car and insisted on doing the journey on foot.'

Abbas Tyabji and 53 satyagrahis were arrested on 12 May 1930 within a furlong of the commencement of their march from Karadi Satyagraha Ashram. The authorities also arrested Jugatram Dave, Secretary, Surat Congress Committee, who accompanied the party. Tyabji exhorted those who were not yet arrested, 'Carry it on, boys; carry it on'. Among those who were present at the time of arrest were Mrs. Gandhi, Mrs. Tyabji, Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya and Manilal Gandhi. All these persons offered themselves for arrest, but were not arrested. Tyabji called upon Mrs. Sarojini Naidu to take charge of satyagrahi volunteers after his arrest as arranged earlier by Gandhiji. Much resentment was expressed against these arrests in a mammoth public meeting in Bombay.

2. Young India, 16 May 1930.
4. Ibid.
The Congress Working Committee sent its congratulations to the batch of satyagrahis who had courted arrest and expected that batches of satyagrahis would take up the raid one after the other and that sufficient number of volunteers would be forthcoming from all parts of the country to carry on the good fight. It declared that Dharesana would be treated as the All-India centre for salt satyagraha 'until further instructions.' It took a serious notice of the blood-curdling account of the police barbarities on peaceful satyagrahis. While it conveyed to them its heart-felt sympathy for their sufferings and its high admiration for their cool courage and patient endurance, it condemned the police atrocities as inhuman and unworthy of any civilized government. It held the senior British and Indian officers directly responsible for the atrocities perpetrated in their presence or with their connivance and warned the government that it was only driving the iron deeper into the soul of the people whose determination could not be shaken by the cruelest form of torture.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, with a batch of fifty satyagrahis resumed the march. All the volunteers were pledged to perfect non-violence. The police force surrounded the satyagrahis and completely isolated them from each other; the people who were following were warned off and the pressmen also were told to leave the spot. Mrs. Naidu was nominally placed under arrest, sent outside Dharesana and released. She paid a tribute to the

wonderful discipline of her satyagrahis who remained fixed to the spot for 28 hours without a drop of water or food.

Referring to her removal off the cordon, Mrs. Naidu stated, 'The police were very much perturbed and wanted us to go back. The District Magistrate came to me and said, 'Don't you think, Madam, you will be much more comfortable at Madanapalle?' She replied, 'Of course, but I mean to stay here as long as I am not arrested or as long as I do not faint.'

The Nanasa Satyagraha took an unprecedented turn when about 150 'seminiks' offering satyagraha took the police unawares and rushed into salt pans, since many of the policemen had gone to take their meals. They had nearly reached the salt mounds which were protected by a fencing. The police raced after them and made a lathi charge as a result of which several satyagrahis received serious injuries. Volunteer after volunteer was falling on the ground after bravely withstanding lathi blows. The officials were giving orders, 'Beat them, beat them; mera mera'. No shriekings, no sighings were heard from the volunteers.

FRESH batches of volunteers arrived from Bulsar, Viraangam and Kaira to take their place. The wounded volunteers were removed to the Untadi camp.

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid. She replied emphatically, 'Let the police offer satyagraha. We shall also offer satyagraha. We shall sit here till the doomsday'.
4. AICC Papers, File C-94(11), 1930.
5. AICC Papers, File C-94(1), 1930.
Besides the mounted police which was frequently used to repulse satyagrahis at Narasana, the army personnel were posted at Dungari railway station to prevent the inflow of volunteers in that area.

After the satyagrahis were driven out of the bounds of salt works, mounted European guards rode at full gallop with lathis in their hands beating indiscriminately everybody they saw anywhere between the spot and the village. They also galloped at full speed through the streets of the village, scattering men, women and children and terrorising them. The villagers ran helter skelter into the lanes and closed themselves in the houses. The police also reported to inhuman tortures of its victims. Those who fell unconscious were thrown into the thorny bushes or dipped into the saline mud. The arrested ones were stripped naked and sticks were thrust into their anus.

On 20 May, Webb Miller, the United Press Correspondent, heard reports of the demonstration of the volunteers at Narasana and started for that place. The government took steps to prevent persons coming to, and news going out of the place. He, however, managed to reach Dungari by a goods train and then walked six miles to Narasana. He stated, 'In eighteen years of reporting I have never witnessed such harrowing scenes as Dungari. From where I stood, I heard the sickening sound of the clubs on

2. AICC Papers. File 0-94(ii), 1930.
4. Young India, 5 June 1930.
Webb Miller saw Sarojini Naidu leading the satyagrahis who commenced the half-mile march to salt-deposits slowly and in silence. Mahatma Gandhi, son of Gandhiji, also accompanied them. As the throng drew near the salt pans, they commenced chanting the revolutionary slogan, 'Inquilab Zindabad'. The salt-deposits were surrounded by ditches filled with water and guarded by four hundred policemen, commanded by half-a-dozen of British officials. The policemen carried lathis tipped with steel. Inside the stockade, twenty-five rifle-men were posted.

When the first column of satyagrahis advanced, they were warned to disperse. On their refusal to do so, the police rushed upon them and rained blows on their heads with their steel-shod lathis. Not one of the marchers raised an arm to fend off the blows. In two or three minutes, the ground was quilted with bodies. when everyone of the first column had been knocked down, stretcher-bearers rushed and carried off the injured to a thatched hut which had been arranged as a temporary hospital. Thus group after group walked forward, sat down and submitted to being beaten into insensibility without raising an arm to protect themselves.

The police became enraged by the non-resistance of the satyagrahis. They commenced savagely kicking the seated men in the abdomen and testicles. They also dragged the satyagrahis

3. Ibid.
by the arms or feet, sometime for a hundred yards and threw
them into the ditches. The stretcher-bearers carried back a
stream of inert, bleeding bodies.

Miss Madeleine Slade, a disciple of Gandhi, paid a
visit to Buler on 6 June to see how satyagrahi volunteers were
being treated by the police at the Bharasar Salt Depot. In her
report published in Young India, she found evidence of the
injuries perpetrated on satyagrahi volunteers, i.e. lathi blows
on head, chest, stomach and joints; stripping of men naked before
beating; tearing of loin cloth and thrusting of sticks into anus;
pressing and squeezing of testicles till a man became unconscious;
dragging of wounded men by legs and arms after beating them;
throwing of wounded men into hedges or into salt water; riding of
horses over men as they lay or sat on the ground; thrust of pins
and thorns into men's bodies and using of foul language and
blasphemy.

The Viceroy overlooked the police atrocities, and presented
that scene differently in a 'breezy' letter to the King, 'Your
Majesty can hardly fail to have read with amusement the accounts
of the several battles for the Salt Depot at Bharasar. The
police for a long time tried to refrain from action. After a time
this became impossible, and they eventually had to resort to
sterner methods. A good many people suffered minor injuries in
consequence...'.

1. Ibid.
2. For full account see Young India, 12 June 1930.
Pandit Motilal Nehru sent a letter of congratulations to the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee in which he stated, "I am very glad to learn how bravely our volunteers have stood the fierce and barbarous onslaught of the police without flinching. The doings at Dharasana will live in history to the everlasting glory of our men and equally everlasting in shame of the authorities." Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi visited the wounded volunteers in the hospital and was deeply shocked to see their condition. She consoled the victims by her cryptic comment that their suffering was for a right cause. As a protest against the atrocities, the wholesale merchants of Dungari and Untadi decided not to purchase salt from government depot at Dharasana for four months.

Similarly, on 17 May, about two thousand satyagrahi volunteers raided the Wadala Salt Works, situated about eight miles away from Bombay under the leadership of Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, Mrs. Lilavati Munshi and other local leaders. Men, women and boys of all ages, rank and position threw to the wind their lurking notions of respect for the government, rushed through the police cordon and snatched away the salt. Many of them used their khadi caps as bags for carrying salt.

On 19 May, one hundred satyagrahis arrived from Dadar and Matunga and continued the raid. They split themselves in ten

1. Young India, 5 June 1930.
2. AIIC Papers, File G-162, 1930.
4. Young India, 22 May 1930.
5. AIIC Papers, File G-102, 1930.
batches and raided the salt depot from different points.

About three hundred police men armed with lathis and rifles who were posted at the salt works after the incident of 19th May, resorted to lathi charge. Several volunteers were arrested and twelve were severely injured. One of the volunteers had his skull fractured and fell down unconscious. The police dealt him with seven dandia blows and later on threw him in the muddy soil. A crowd of people which attempted to go to the salt pans was chased away by the police sergeants, some of whom hurled iron bolts, nails and stones as missiles at the crowd.

V.J. Patel congratulated Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya and the salt satyagrahis in a mammoth meeting at the Esplanade Maidan and stated: 'There is no more British Raj in India. The Labour Government has abdicated in favour of Lord Irwin, and Lord Irwin in his turn has abdicated in favour of the military and the police and they have established a lathi Raj in the country ... if you do not show any signs of weakness and stick to your guns, you can establish swaraj in its place.'

Another raid on Vadala Salt works was successfully attempted on 1 June by about 1,500 volunteers as a challenge to the 'British anarchy', in accordance with the Bombay Congress Bulletin of 31 May. This raid was a logical apotheosis of the

1. Young India, 22 May 1930 and The Bombay Chronicle, 19 May 1930.
2. AICC Papers. File C-102, 1930.
defiance of the salt law. The government reacted promptly.
Eleven women including Mrs. Lilavati Munshi, seven Sikhs, one
Gujarati and two Becani women were placed under arrest and
detained at Wadala.

The Muslim volunteers were the first to break the police
cordon and in the police charge several Bohras received injuries.
Parsis, Sikhs and Christians also participated in the raid and
were lustily cheered by crowds of spectators, among whom were a
large number of women. Hundreds of mounds of salt was carried
away as a result of this raid. The police charged the crowd
with lathis and caused injuries to twenty-five volunteers. But
this did not discourage the volunteers. The appearance of
infantry, however, had some deterrent effect on them. They
completed the violation of salt law and departed from the scene.
The Wadala presented the appearance of a 'regular battle-field'
between the peaceful satyagrahis and the police. The raids
imposed considerable strain on the Bombay police during May and
the early part of June. The volunteers exhibited remarkable
strategy, courage and endurance. The Congress Ambulance Corps
did splendid work by promptly carrying the wounded to the
improvised sheds nearby where the necessary first aid was given
to them.

1. Home Pol. File 247/IV, 1930; and Young India, 5 June 1930.
2. The Bombay Chronicle, 2 June 1930.
3. Ibid.
4. The Bombay Chronicle, 3 June 1930.
5. Ibid.
7. The Bombay Chronicle, 2 June 1930.
The commercial, professional and religious communities accorded their moral and financial support to the Civil Disobedience Movement in the Bombay presidency. The main reason for business support was their hope to gain Indian control over financial policy. Some, however, expected that Gandhiji's presence and planning would be a safeguard against revolutionary violence. The reforms of 1919 had failed to slacken the whitehall control over the Indian fiscal policy. This was clear from the pressure of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, exercised subsequently on the government for rapid constitutional progress.

The position created by the arrest and imprisonment of Gandhiji could not be more clearly and forcibly pressed upon government than in the terms of the resolutions adopted by the representatives of fourteen prominent commercial bodies at a meeting held in Bombay on 6 May 1930 under the presidency of Walchand Hirachand. The institutions represented at the meeting included such influential bodies as the Native Share and Stock Brokers' Association; Bombay Shareholders Association; Bombay Commission Agents' Association; Bombay Cotton Brokers' Association; Marwari Chamber of Commerce; Bombay Piecegoods and Native Merchants' Association and Deccan Merchants' Association. It was indeed a remarkable feature of the times that these business bodies, many of which had studiously eschewed politics hitherto, should now take such a prominent part in the national movement. These institutions emphatically protested against the arrest

1. The Bombay Chronicle, 8 May 1930.
2. Ibid.
and internment, without any trial and without any term fixed, of Mahatma Gandhi in 'an arbitrary manner and under an absolute regulation'. Such a procedure they regarded as 'a negation of the rule of law by the very government who have been professing all the time to be acting in the name of law and order'.

Since April 1930, Purshotamdas Thakurdas was in correspondence with the Viceroy whom he apprised of the great loss to the commercial community as a result of the government's attitude to the Civil Disobedience Movement '... the country as a whole will suffer in this tussle... things will go from bad to worse and disaffection towards the British Government in India will increase... That with the boycott movement, picketing of shops, and the lathi charges and other rough handling by the police of the crowd, things are looking definitely ugly.' The Viceroy admitted that '... the economic condition of the country as a whole is steadily deteriorating and a good deal of discontent is attributable to this deterioration in the condition of the masses.' He decried the policy that '... the ultimate remedy for all these troubles can be found in arrests etc.'

On 23 May, the commercial community in Bombay organised a huge procession as a protest against the arrest of Gandhi. It terminated at the Esplanade Maidan where G.D. Birla addressed

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1. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 5 June 1930.
the gathering. Refuting the allegation that the merchant community did not approve of Gandhiji's methods and had no sympathy with the movement, started by him, he expressed the belief of the commercial community that there was no greater friend of the Indian merchants than Mahatma Gandhi. The meeting viewed with abhorrence the methods adopted by the police and the military against the unarmed and peaceful public of Sholapur, Nerasana and Madaga, and condemned proclamation of martial law at Sholapur.

The foundation of the Swadeshi Sabha by the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry under the presidency of Lala Shri Ram afforded much support of the commercial community to the movement. It was to encourage swadeshi and educate the public as to the availability and use of Indian goods which could 'effectively' replace foreign goods. It was also to carry on sustained propaganda for promotion of Indian industries and their products by means of pamphlets, lectures, swadeshi museum, swadeshi information bureau, organization of bazaars and fairs, and swadeshi workers' training classes.

The commercial associations and Mahajans of Ahmedabad held a similar meeting under the presidency of Mangaldas Girdhardas Parekh and adopted various resolutions strongly protesting against the incarceration of Mahatma Gandhi and demanding his immediate release. They condemned ruthless repression.

2. Other members were C.D. Birla, Purshottamdas Thakurdas, Chunilal V. Mehta, Ambalal Sarabhai, Kasturbhai Lalbhai, and Lelji Bhai. (Purshottamdas Thakurdas Papers. File 100, 1930); and *Young India*, 29 May 1930.
3. Ibid.
by the police and hard sentences passed on satyagrahis in the name of law and order and criticized the ordinances issued by the government for restricting the freedom of the press and curtailing civil liberties of the people.

The Ahmedabad Millowners' Association also sympathised with the nationalist cause. In its annual general meeting held on 26 July 1930, Chimanlal G. Parekh, its President stated: "There is no Government in the world which can rule against the will of the people, for any long time, however powerful that Government may be, as there is no pleasure for those who rule or those who are being ruled and that Government is sure to fall. The mill industry is faced with a grave economic peril... which may culminate into a great hardship if political atmosphere remains strained and conciliation of national demand is not effectively met with."

The Viceroy, however, reacted diffidently and wrote a somewhat strongly worded letter to Purnanand Thakurdas, "The remedy as I see it for the present situation is largely in the hands of merchants and persons like yourself. If such people were prepared to make it publicly plain that they were no longer willing to stand the enforcement of the policy dictated by Congress I have little doubt that this would do more than anything else to bring Congress and its leaders to a more reasonable frame of mind; and if traders and men of business were willing to assert themselves in this way, Government would take any steps open to

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them to protect them from harassing interference."  

The Great Depression had already hit them hard during this period. In 1929-30, their import-export and entrepot trade had fallen considerably and in the following year, there was further decline in their tonnage.

The Governor of Bombay wrote to the Viceroy about the critical situation in the presidency on 28 June 1930, "The complete lack of confidence and the constant harrasses and interference with freedom of trade have brought business to a standstill..... Things are worse at the present than at the time of non-co-operation movement..... Shares are dropping and with them the profits of the small investor..... Generally the public attitude is that things are already so bad that there is no use in supporting the present form of Government and any change would be welcome..... Government servants, and particularly the police, cannot be expected to stand firm indefinitely against a wave of feeling of this kind..... We are at present on very thin ice in Bombay".

The prominent advocates and solicitors of the presidency headed by Khubchand Desai pledged to support the cause of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The Parsi community also resolved to work for the success of the movement. On 28 May 1930, more

2. For details see the Bombay Administration Reports, 1929-30, pp. VI-VII and 1930-31, pp. VI-VIII.
then a thousand of them including a large number of ladies, many of whom were in khadi, attended a meeting held under the auspices of the Parsi Raj Juja Sabha on the Blavatsky Lodge Terrace in Bombay. Mrs. Goshiben Captain presided. Several short speeches were delivered on 'The Parsis and the present situation'. There was much enthusiasm throughout the meeting and slogans of 'Mahatma Gandhi Ki Ja' and 'Inquilab Zindabad' were raised. Mrs. Captain asked the audience to help Gandhiji's movement in all possible ways. Resolutions were passed condemning the British policy of repression and firing at Bhendi Bazaar.

The Muslim support was by no means large. They vacillated between co-operation and non-co-operation with the movement. While S.A. Brelvi, leader of the nationalist Muslims of Bombay and editor of The Bombay Chronicle reminded them of British atrocities in the local Bhendi Bazaar and Peshawar and called on them to join the movement, Mohamed Ali did the counter-propaganda and succeeded in his mission to a great extent. He argued that Civil Disobedience Movement was different from the Non-Co-operation Movement and was aimed at establishing Hindu Raj. Hence several sections of Muslims in the city population kept out of the Civil Disobedience Movement, but they did not provide any support to the government.

The Bombay mill workers in general were unresponsive to Congress overtures, despite the closure of many of the cotton mills as a result of the depression and their sympathy for the

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1. The Bombay Chronicle, 29 May 1930; also see The Bombay Congress Bulletin, 31 May 1930.

movement. By August 1930, over 44,000 were out of work and Congress tried to exploit the situation by holding meetings, organising a Labour Week from 18 August and establishing a Labour Camp in the mill area of Parel. Most of the labour force in Bombay being migrants from the Konkan and Deccan, they shared no regional solidarity with the Gujaratis. Moreover, their union, the Girni Kamgar Union, was divided, and although its President, C.L. Kanakar, favoured co-operation with the movement, S.V. Deshpande, its Secretary and a staunch Communist minority of the managing committee, regarded Congress as a capitalist body and were disinclined to make labour a Congress pawn. The failure of the 1929 mill strike was a further disincentive to mill-hands to participate in the Civil Disobedience. The prospects of a labour-Congress alliance faded when mills began to reopen in October 1930 and the number of unemployed fell to about 22,000.

The municipalities and local boards openly supported the movement. The primary school staff and pupils under their management participated in political demonstrations quite often and earned official displeasure. The government stopped educational grants to the Broach and Ahmedabad municipalities. In Surat, Broach and Ahmedabad, childrens' corps were formed. Their senior members picketed schools and colleges, when they reopened in June after the vacation. The cumulative effect of Civil Disobedience was that in June Sykes reported that in ‘most of Gujarat we have practically a mass movement, and we

cannot effectively apply coercion unless we are prepared for a clash on a very large scale, inevitably military action and its very far reaching political consequences. 1

In October 1930, the government declared the Congress illegal and arrested Morarji Desai within ten days of his taking over charge of the Provincial Congress Committee. He was tried for violating the law and sentenced to three months' rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs. 300/-, with one month extra imprisonment if he did not pay the fine. He was kept in the Sabarmati Jail in Ahmedabad, where food served to the prisoners was very bad and inadequate. The jowar rotas contained such an amount of grit, dirt, etc. that some of the prisoners fell ill.

The other main prong of the West India Civil Disobedience Movement was the peasants' refusal to pay land revenue in the Bardoli taluka of Gujarat, where the land assessment had been increased by 30 per cent in 1926. 4 Against this heavy assessment, Vallabhbhai Patel had launched a no-tax campaign in 1928 as a result of which the increased assessment was reduced only to 6 per cent. This, however, did not allay the agrarian dissatisfaction and resentment. The no-tax campaign was again taken up by the peasants of Rasa, a village in Borsad taluka, as a measure of protest.

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1. Indian Papers. Sykes to Irwin, 20 June 1930.
3. Ibid.
against the arrest of Vallabh bhai Patel on 7 March 1930. Thirteen more villages of that taluka declared their resolve in unequivocal terms not to pay the second instalment of land revenue which was due in April 1930 till the amicable solution of the deadlock.

On 10 May 1930, about one thousand farmers met at the Bardoli Ashram and reiterated their resolve. The no-tax campaign spread throughout rural Gujarat in May. The revenue officers, therefore, appropriated standing crops in lieu of revenue before farmers could sell them and evade payment of revenue.

The campaign was well organised in the districts of Ahmedabad, Kaira, Broach and Surat. In five talukas of Ahmedabad, arrears ranged from 35 to 52% of the demand, largely due to real difficulties of the cultivators to meet their liabilities. In the Kaira district, the difficulty in collecting land revenue in the talukas of Natar and Mahmedabad was so genuine that the government had to suspend its collection. Throughout the rest of the district, despite strong agitation, land revenue was successfully collected by various devices except in the twenty villages of the talukas of Borsad and Nadiad, where the total amount at stake was about one lakh of rupees. The figures indicating total recovery from seven prominent villages of Nadiad

2. Ibid.
taluka as against their approximate assessment, are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Total Assessment</th>
<th>Recovered upto 30 Nov. 1930</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Davda</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piplag</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitral</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narsenda</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerieni</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akhdol</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veena</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Broach district, the non-co-operative attitude on an extensive scale was confined to Jambusar, where 47 per cent of the land revenue remained uncollected. 2

In Surat district, the Bardoli taluka was the worst affected. The non-co-operative attitude of the inhabitants was such that, even in the cases of serious crimes like murders, assistance to the authorities was refused. Peaceful defiance was widespread in the Valod Petha and the Chorasi talukas. 3

By November 1930, hundreds of Patels, Talatis and other village servants resigned as a mark of protest against the revenue policy of the government and questionable methods of its collection. Their figures in November 1930 were as under: 4

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1. News of India (Ahmedabad), 31 December 1930.
3. Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total No. of officials</th>
<th>No. Resigned</th>
<th>No. Resignations withdrawn</th>
<th>Net Resignations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ahmedabad</td>
<td>823</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaira</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broach</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surat</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B) Talati</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmedabad</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaira</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broach</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surat</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C) Inferior Village Servants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmedabad</td>
<td>1197</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaira</td>
<td>1286</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broach</td>
<td>1830</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surat</td>
<td>1624</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total loss to the government treasury from these districts was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total Demand</th>
<th>Arrears</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ahmedabad</td>
<td>11,90,531</td>
<td>3,03,643</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaira</td>
<td>16,68,348</td>
<td>1,25,196</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broach</td>
<td>23,04,321</td>
<td>1,98,843</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surat</td>
<td>29,95,997</td>
<td>6,40,679</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The government of Bombay took a serious view of the no-tax campaign as it might spread elsewhere if it was allowed to succeed in the four districts of Gujarat. This alone might cause more harm and embarrassment to the government than any other single feature of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The Unlawful Instigation Ordinance was promulgated on 30 May 1930, empowering the local government to notify the area to which it should apply and to specify the liabilities in the notified area i.e. land revenue or any sums recoverable as arrears of land revenue. When the first Ordinance lapsed on 29 November 1930, the second Ordinance, with the same implications, was promulgated on 23 December. The government resolved to sell outright all the forfeited land. This was expected to reduce the resources of the peasantry and weaken their movement.

The outstanding land dues were collected by use of coercive powers in accordance with the Bombay Land Revenue Code, such as the attachment of movable property and arrest of defaulters.

Other methods used for the suppression of the no-tax campaign were dispossession of cattle, police terror and oppression of the satyagrahis. In Karanji, three men were tied with ropes and beaten.

Lathi charges, often without notice or provocation, became very common in Nadiad taluka. These occurred five times in one month. In all, 102 persons sustained injuries. In many

talukas cotton crops were attached. The revenue officials with a posse of police were always moving about the non-tax front. They tried to set up one community against the other. But this tactic met a dismal failure.

Pilfering and looting standing crops from the fields became the order of the day. Mysterious fires burnt houses and other properties of the peasantry participating in the movement. At Sikan, 6,000 bales of hay were burnt to ashes, when the village was in police possession. At Bardoli, a conflagration consumed thirteen houses belonging to satyagrahis. Over 16,000 peasants, mostly from the Patidar community, migrated to the neighbouring Bardoli territory. The District Magistrates reported Surat and Kaira desolate in November, with only a few labourers left behind.

Sardar Patel sent an open message to the farmers of Bardoli, Borsad, Jalalpur and a few other talukas who had suffered much and left their villages. "Let the Government remove from the map of India these three or four talukas which are fighting in this manner today. I shall be proud of them. We are here today to destroy the present map anyhow and in the new map which we shall draw, these talukas will obtain an honourable place.... Does the Government really think that if it takes away land from the farmers, it will be able to retain its power in this country?"

2. Ibid.
Jardar Patel's own village, K ernasad, in the Anand taluka, was raided by the police for the recovery of outstanding land revenue dues. His eighty years old mother was cooking food when the police picked up the cooking utensils, filled them up with stones and kerosene and created disorder in the house.

The campaign lasted till February 1931 and its tempo receded with the beginning of the Gandhi-Irwin talks.

Another prominent feature of repression was the prosecution of the editors, printers and publishers of various newspapers and bulletins. The Congress had adopted the device of issuing periodicals, daily bulletins or news-sheets, the object of which was the dissemination of propaganda in favour of the movement in every nook and corner of the country. The Indian Press Ordinance of 1920, promulgated in the first month of the movement, was further strengthened by the Unauthorised News-sheets and Newspapers Ordinance on 2 July 1930. The government could thus forfeit copies of any newspapers and news-sheets which were not compiled under the provisions of the law and also the machines on which they were produced.

H.G. Heig deposed in the Legislative Assembly on 16 July 1930 that there were 131 newspapers, periodicals, monthlies, etc. from whom security ranging from Rs.50/- to Rs.5,000/- was demanded. In West India, those who were ordered to stop their

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1. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
publications were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Name of Editor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congress Bulletin</td>
<td>Jayant Delal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aimal</td>
<td>Abdul Haqid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Samachar</td>
<td>Bhushanlal Jatashankar Pandya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sangram</td>
<td>Ganpat Mahadeo Malavas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>Rewa Shankar B. Joshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinema and Rangbhumi</td>
<td>Sunderji Pandya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swatantra</td>
<td>B. D. Marathe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lathi Raj</td>
<td>P. P. Pathak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awaraj Yacha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Navin Shivaji (Athawa)</td>
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SIND

The preparations for Civil Disobedience Movement in Sind were made in the first week of April. On 3 April 1930 the citizens of Karachi assembled in thousands and their leaders Dr. Choithram Gidwani and Jairamdas Deulatram explained to them the significance of salt satyagraha. They appealed to the people to emulate the example of their mothers and sisters of Gujarat and join the struggle for freedom. A satyagraha committee under the presidency of Dr. Gidwani collected funds and enrolled volunteers for the movement. A satyagraha camp was established in Karachi and the grain merchants gave it sufficient grain to

2. The Tribune, 6 April 1930.
last for a period of two months. Meanwhile, the volunteers became active in Hyderabad, Larkana and Shikarpur.

The National Week was inaugurated all over Sind on 8 April by holding a largely attended meeting where a programme for breaking salt law was announced by Jairamdas Daulatram. A procession of nearly 10,000 persons traversed the main thoroughfares of the city. A noteworthy feature of the procession was that 4,000 sweepers and 400 ladies joined the procession. The procession terminated at Rambagh recreation ground, where a mud fire place was made and fire lighted over which sea water was ceremoniously poured into two large vessels. The salt thus manufactured was offered to the highest bidder, Sambhal Lal Kaloojee who paid Rs. 35/-.

After a few days, the Karachi Satyagraha Piecegoods Association resolved that no foreign cloth be ordered for twelve months.

The government felt alarmed by this developing situation and on 16 April 1930, the police raided the swadesi ashram and the satyagraha camp from where some papers and salt making vessels were removed. Prominent leaders like Swami Govindanand, Krishna Nath, Dr. Sidwani, Meraiadas, Tara Chand and Vishnu Sharma were arrested. During their trial, armed police guarded the court but were soon overpowered by the onrush. The crowd was estimated to be 20,000. There was large-scale stone-throwing

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1. The Tribune, 6 April 1930.
2. Ibid.
3. The Tribune, 16 April 1930.
4. The Tribune, 17 April 1930.
and every window in the court was smashed. The crowd swarmed into the court, threw stones at the pleaders and others who had congregated therein and shouted revolutionary slogans. The police opened fire on the mob as a result of which several persons were injured, one of whom was Jairamdas Baulatram who received a bullet wound in the thigh. Seven persons were seriously injured; 26 others received injuries from stones and lathi blows and one of the injured died. Dr. Gidwani and Beraindas were sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment; Vishnu Sharm and Swami Krishnamand to 18 months and Manilal Vyas to 12 months.

Salt was also manufactured in the satyagrahi centres at Hyderabad and Sukkur. The novel feature was the mass disposal of mounds of salt at one place per seer. On 8 May, Larkana observed the Salt Satyagraha Day when about 4,000 persons including 30 ladies and several children attended a meeting under the presidentship of Jematalal. When preparation of salt was being planned, they were attacked with lathis indiscriminately by a British police officer and fifty policemen. Neither old and aged ladies nor tender-aged children were spared. The total number of persons who suffered injuries were nearly one hundred. The satyagrahis did not retaliate.

The bonfire of foreign clothes was another feature in Sindi. In Karachi, some students and merchants dressed up three

1. Ibid.
2. The Tribune, 20 April 1930.
3. Young India, 24 April 1930.
4. Young India, 1 May 1930.
5. Young India, 22 May 1930.
donkeys with European costumes which they had collected for bonfire.

Ladies also participated in the movement with enthusiasm. They celebrated the ladies' week during which a huge procession of about 5,000 women passed through various bazaars of Karachi. About two hundred women enrolled themselves as active volunteers and 2,000 signed Swadeshi pledges. A third feature of their satyagraha was the picketing of temples and colleges by the Rashtriya Istri Mandal under the leadership of Kamaladevi Joshi and Parbatidevi Lelvani. Only the worshippers in Swadeshi clothes were allowed to enter the temples and those in foreign clothes had to go back. They also picketed the Sind College, the Law College and the Engineering College in Karachi.

The movement thus gained momentum in a few weeks. It spread in the villages, particularly of Larkana district. Two satyagrahi leaders, Bhagwandas and Parasram toured the rural areas and exhorted the people to boycott foreign goods. As a result of their propaganda, cigarette merchants in eight villages promised not to place any fresh orders for foreign cigarettes.

The Karachi Piecegoods Merchants' Association, while congratulating Gandhiji on his arrest, and condemning the extreme repressive policy of the government, passed a resolution urging the boycott of foreign cloth which they communicated by a cable to the Manchester Chamber of Commerce. Besides, panchayats of

2. The Bombay Chronicle, 7 May 1930.
3. ACC Papers. File G-106, 1930; and Young India, 16 May 1930.
4. Ibid.
5. The Bombay Chronicle, 3 May 1930.
vegetable and fruit-sellers, sweetmeat sellers, goldsmiths and other merchants resolved not to purchase foreign cloth and to boycott liquor and foreign cigarettes. By July, almost all the merchants dealing in foreign cloth decided to have their stock sealed by the Congress and communicated their decision to the Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee. In the same month, a comprehensive programme was chalked out by the SIND SATYAGRAHA COMMITTEE. Students were advised to participate in the prohibition programme. Ladies were to participate in a mass TEKLI programme. A Liquor Boycott Week was planned for the second week of August. In Hyderabad, a mass students' meeting was organised to record its emphatic protest against the government circular threatening the students with rustication in case they joined the political meetings or processions and asked them to disobey it and take part in political demonstrations in larger number than before.

The police used force and LATHI-charged the non-violent SATYAGRAHIS at several places. SALT was seized from their hands. The household articles of volunteers picketing liquor shops were taken away. At Shikarpur, a volunteer was severely beaten while picketing a liquor shop. The ears of two volunteers were chopped off. Houses of volunteers were searched. Police also LATHI charged at Kotri, where the volunteers were persuading shopkeepers to observe hartal. A political worker was punished with flogging.

1. AICC Papers, File G-106, 1930.
2. The Bombay Chronicle, 30 July 1930.
3. Ibid.
4. The Bombay Chronicle, 2 July 1930.
5. The Bombay Chronicle, 3 July 1930.
Hussain Bux, a satyagrahi of Karachi, was sentenced on 9 September to twelve stripes on the charge of snatching a bottle of liquor from a customer. The characteristic feature of the trial was that the customer was not produced in the court as a witness and was prosecuted for theft.

The government also laid heavy hand on the Hyderabad Satyagraha Bulletin, the Inquilab Bulletin and the Sindh Satyagraha Bulletin. Their editors were prosecuted and publication of bulletins were stopped. The Hindu of Hyderabad and the Hindu Jati of Karachi suspended publication as a protest against the Press Ordinances. The proprietor of the Tilak Press and the printer of the Sindhi were asked by the District Magistrate of Sukkur to deposit Rs.500/- each as security. Besides, the following associations were declared unlawful by the Bombay Government Gazette Extraordinary. These were the Sind Provincial Congress Committee, Sindh Satyagraha Committee, Karachi District Congress Committee, Karachi Satyagraha Committee, Vidyarthi Sangam, Rashtriya Istri Mandal and Hyderabad Satyagraha Committee.

The repressive measures did not deter the enthusiasm of the satyagrahis and they continued their programme as usual. On 2 October 1930, Mahatma Gandhi's birthday was celebrated in all the towns with bonfires of foreign cloth and manufacture of contraband salt. In this work, initiative was taken by the Sindh Satyagraha Committee. All municipal offices and schools remained

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3. Young India, 29 May 1930.
closed. About two hundred ladies also participated in it.

Several arrests of satyagrahis were made in Karachi, Shikarpur, Larkana and Mirpurkhas.

By the middle of October, the sale, import and despatch of foreign cloth from one place to another was entirely stopped in the province. The Brokers' Association and the foreign piecegoods commission agents agreed to stop further dealings with these mills banned by the Congress. Almost all cloth merchants sympathised with the Congress satyagrahis and promised to abide by their wishes. The visit of J.M. Sen Gupta to Karachi in the second week of October proved effective. His advice to the members of the Mahammali, consisting of five chief mercantile associations of the city, that the most effective weapon to fight the British bureaucracy was complete boycott of foreign cloth, was endorsed and acted upon.

The treatment of political prisoners in Karachi and Hyderabad jails was by no standards good. It was severely criticised. The 'B' class prisoners resorted to hunger strike on account of defective meals supplied to them. The 'C' class prisoners too were equally critical of the government. In Hyderabad jail, where most of the satyagrahis were lodged in 'C' class, hard labour, beating of the satyagrahis and hunger strikes by them were common features.

1. The Bombay Chronicle, 5 October 1930.
2. The Bombay Chronicle, 18 October 1930.
3. Ibid.