

THE
COLLECTED
WORKS
OF
MAHATMA
GANDHI

VOLUME TWELVE



THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

83. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
June 20, 1913

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

The Bill is so bad that passive resistance is a necessity. By the time this is in your hands, some of us may be already in gaol. I propose to go to Johannesburg next week and from there send a final letter to Mr. Fischer reciting our objections and asking him to meet them next year. If he gives a definite written promise that he would do so, the struggle will be suspended. There is very little hope that he would. But before I ask fellow-passive resisters to embark on what would undoubtedly be a very bitter and prolonged struggle, I want to adopt all legitimate methods that prudence may dictate to avert the misery that must result from a renewal of the struggle.

These are the defects in the Bill:

- (1) The Free State difficulty appears to remain and therefore the racial distinction.
- (2) The existing rights are disturbed in that
 - (a) the right of appeal to the Supreme Court is modified,
 - (b) the right of the South African Indians to enter the Cape is taken away,
 - (c) the right of domicile of ex-indentured Indians . . .¹ pay the tax seems to have been taken away,
 - (d) the existing marriage position is considerably modified, though the amendment has eased the tension considerably.

I have only just received the amended Bill by Mr. Schreiner's favour. There may be other defects in it. I shall prepare a full statement² to be sent to you next week. I am not explaining the

behalf of the Zoroastrian Anjuman, the Governor-General informed him that he had given his assent to the Bill the previous week.

¹ The original is illegible here.

² This is not available; *vide*, however, "Letter to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", pp. 120-2.

above-mentioned points, as I am anxious to spare you the trouble of having to read a long letter.

Now for your questions.

1. As you will have seen, the Bill has received the Royal assent.
2. Passive resistance will be resumed probably [at] the beginning of the next month.
3. In order to court imprisonment we will enter all the Provinces in disregard of the new Act and will refuse to show certificates or any other papers. Both educated and uneducated Indians will join the struggle.
4. So far as I can judge at present, 100 men and 13 women will start the struggle. As time goes, we may have more.
5. I do not expect to raise much cash but I do not anticipate any difficulty about getting sufficient food and clothing by begging. If we all go to gaol, Kallenbach has undertaken to do the begging himself. He can be thoroughly relied upon to see that no family is starved so long he has life in him. If no funds arrive unasked from India or elsewhere, we shall perform our wanderings on foot, and no money will then be spent on telegrams and cables. Just at present Miss Schlesin does all the public work in Johannesburg but for her maintenance works elsewhere. I am raising a special fund for the London Committee to be placed at your disposal. I am also getting rid of other pecuniary burdens. *Indian Opinion* staff has been brought down to a minimum and they will be thrown on their own resources. Some of my private burdens are being found by Dr. Mehta¹.
6. The struggle is expected to last a year but if we have more men than I anticipate, it may close during the next session of the Union Parliament. We are making provision for an indefinite prolongation.
7. It is difficult to answer what amount will be required to see the community through the crisis. At the lowest calculation made by me, nothing in cash will be required. But as I get cash, I shall use it for ending the struggle quicker and for giving support to families and *Indian Opinion*. Some people from Natal and the Cape will certainly join the struggle.

My prayer to you is: Please do not worry about us, do not beg for funds publicly and do not injure your health for the cause. This prayer is selfish. I am anxious to meet you in the flesh in

¹ Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta, a friend of Gandhiji since his student days in London

India, work under you and learn, may I say, at your feet, all I want to and must. In some things I want to be disillusioned if I am in the wrong and I want you to be disillusioned if I am in the right and we do not agree. I shall not misunderstand you if I do not receive any letters from you. But whenever you have time and health, I shall value your letters and advice. They would be a source of comfort.

After the receipt of Mr. Hall's letter I had decided not to write to you personally. But your letter leaves me no choice.

I must write another letter regarding your cable to Polak. He will come if it is at all possible. Funds and his family are the chief considerations. I shall discuss the situation with him tomorrow and leave him to write to you on his return to Durban. He will have a day more than I have for mailing letters.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the handwritten original: C. W. 928

Courtesy: Servants of India Society

81. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [-XXV]

6. INFECTIOUS DISEASES [CONTINUED]: SMALLPOX—2

A number of thoughtful men in England have carried out researches on the harmful effects of vaccination and a big anti-vaccination society has been formed. Its members refuse vaccination and oppose the law making it compulsory. Some have suffered imprisonment in this cause. They also advise others against vaccination. Many books have been written on the subject and much discussion is being carried on. The following are the reasons the opponents of vaccination advance in support of their stand:

1. Taking vaccine from a cow's udder, which in fact belongs to her calf, is itself an act of extreme cruelty to thousands of living creatures. This cruelty is no credit to man's sense of pity and it behoves him, therefore, to forgo any benefit that may accrue from it.
2. No benefit is derived from such vaccine. On the contrary, taking the vaccine causes other infections. The sponsors of this movement are of the opinion that, since vaccination was introduced, the incidence of other diseases has increased.