VI

MAHARAJA SAYAJIRAO AND BRITISH GOVERNMENT
MAHARAJA SAYAJIRAO AND BRITISH GOVERNMENT

[The real nature of the brave fight that was given by this distinguished ruler of Baroda against the suzerain power still remains undisclosed to a large extent. Maharaja Sayajirao (B. 1861-D. 2.939) ruled over the state for over 50 years and his fight for independence, personal and administrative, begins early in the nineties of the last century.

The following extracts from the Baroda State Records and from the famous memorandum prepared by the Government of India. (1911) show how courageously and under what physical and mental strain and even harassment he passed through the ordeal. His aim was "to establish better standards of administration for the rulers of British India." And he was out to show it and wanted to assert his independence to do it. For this purpose he had collected very able and distinguished men (like Aravind Ghose, Romeshchandra Datta, Mr. Seddon, Sir Madhawrao, Manubhai Mehta, Khaserao Jadhav, K. G. Deshpande) who worked to make the administration successful. This was perhaps misunderstood and also disliked. The officials tried to trifle with his scheme and the arrogance of the Political department was confronted by a very powerful champion of his own rights. It was a question of asserting his own legitimate rights which the British officials were used to ignore and even insult. The Maharaja would not brook this. He was not prepared to concede the position of equality to the Viceroys and had suggested even to Lord Minto "to let him have a note on the subjects in advance on which His Excellency wanted to discuss". (G. S. Sardesai—his articles in the weekly—Swaraj—1956). The officials believed that "his behaviour was openly suspicious, that he was in sympathy with the extremists". The struggle for asserting each other’s position and prestige reached its climax during Lord Curzon’s regime. The Government desired the Maharaja to be present on the occasion of the Royal visit of the Prince of Wales to India (1907). This the Maharaja was not prepared to promise, and he was bent on seeing through his planned trip to foreign countries. The talks between the Maharaja and the Resident on this point ended in bitterness. One of his (Maharaja’s) personal records states "if His Highness left India the Government of India could not of course take him prisoner, but very unpleasant consequences might follow". This was the gist of what the Resident hinted. The Maharaja asks: "Am I to be considered a servant? If that is the intention let it be said so and I can see how to shape my course" (25th March, 1905). But the Maharaja left the country according to his plan. The officials had found it "impossible to deal with such a suspicious, parsimonious, insincere
ruler and bitter against Government of India." They have reported again and again that " the Maharaja has in no way abated his policy ", practically on all the issues they had yielded upto 1905. The Government of India had also instructed their officials to " obtain his confidence and friendship", as they thought that " the Maharaja's reluctance may be partly due to his early training (which he had received under his tutor Mr. Elliot) and partly due to " somewhat vexatious policy of Government of India." The Maharaja, it appears, had felt sufficiently hurt. He wrote to Major Pritchard " I hope the Government will not interfere with my movements in the future." He wrote to his Diwan (4th September 1906) " I will like to return to India but I feel partly unhappy to do so owing to the strange treatment I have received at the hands of Lord Curzon's Government. My health can now no longer stand annoyance and interference in my movements." That was the strain that he was passing through. His personal records which are voluminous and well kept (but which have not yet come to light) might throw more light or. this side. On the other hand, the officials constantly remained irritated and chafing and have recorded that their " efforts to break down his obstructive and critical attitude had signally failed ". This statement itself is a tribute to the tact and courage the Maharaja had employed in dealing with the official encroachment. Between 1908 and 1910 the whole country was in a flare. The Maharaja in spite of the advice of the Political Department had allowed the Press to function freely in his state. The continued publication of the paper " Pudhari" and the other publications of the revolutionary Narsibhai Patel, who was for the time in the service of the state, had exasperated the Resident. Further the police attempted to connect the Ahmedabad bomb incident to Baroda activities, but that could not be proved. And after these efforts to " break" the Maharaja had failed they prepared a full case, in the form of a memorandum covering about a hundred printed foolscap pages against him. These extracts reveal a number of things which have remained unknown up till now. His meetings with some of the reputed revolutionaries were, it appears, exploited by his opponents to present him as the supporter of the Revolutionaries. Sardesai has described how Madam Cama intruded in the drawing room of the Maharaja in Paris and how the Maharaja evaded her. But the police reports show that the Maharaja had met the revolutionaries on several occasions. He had met Taraknath Das at Vancouver and had received an Address from him. He also had talks with P. M. Bapat. These could not be mere accidents, whatever the motives of the Maharaja might have been. In the days of the Bengal partition agitation the Maharaja wrote to his Diwan (June 1907) " It is a logical outcome of certain forces. What India requires is
more liberal government. I think we need take no steps in our state to pacify the exaggerated feelings of uneasiness. Our attention should be concentrated on progress in our Raj." The Maharaja wanted to be free from any outside control in his efforts to look after the interests of his people and he advised his subjects to activate properly the democratic spirit and build up democratic institutions. His address to his Lokasabha (1912) clearly gives his correct views. Since 1906 he had introduced a number of social and political reforms which it took long for the British Government to introduce in their administration.

BARODA RESIDENT ON NATIONAL CONGRESS

(From Baroda Residency Record.)

Confidential.
Immediate.

THE RESIDENCY:

Baroda, 25th December 1889.

My dear Sir,

In reports of the National Congress Meeting at Broach on the 1st December 1889 I observe the name of "Rao Bahadur Mahadeo-lal Nundlal, Judge, Suddar Court, Baroda" and in that of the 8th December 1889, is the name of "Rao Bahadur Harilal Hurshadrai Dhruva, Judge, Baroda Territory" among the delegates to the Congress from Broach and Surat respectively.

I would take this opportunity of explaining to you that in the opinion of H. E. the Viceroy, it is undesirable for Native Chiefs to be connected in any way with political agitations amongst Her Majesty's subjects, outside their own territories. His Highness the Gaekwar's position, as he himself would be last to deny is quite different from that of even the wealthiest Zemindar and British subject in Territory, and there would be something incongruous, in a Chief's mixing himself up in such matters in any way, by subscribing to the Congress or to Sir Sayed Ahmed's Patriotic Association.

I am quite sure that His Highness quite concurs in the sentiments of H. E. the Viceroy and I believe that His Highness would not approve of his officials appearing as delegates, so I request that you will at once (as the Congress meets tomorrow) take the
orders of H. H. the Gaekwar regarding the desirability of permitting his officers to take a part in the Congress in any capacity except that of spectators.

Believe me
Yours faithfully.

(Signed) H. N. PRENDERGAST.
Baroda, 26th December 1889.

Dear Sir,

Till the receipt of your confidential D. O. of yesterday, I was not aware that Messrs. Madhavlal and Harilal were going as delegates to the Congress from the British Districts of Broach and Surat. Since the receipt of your letter, I made enquiries and was told that they had already left on leave. I did not know yesterday where they were and could not communicate with them. I have however made arrangements that they should not appear as delegates but simply as spectators,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) LAXAMAN JUGANNATH.

To

GENERAL SIR H. N. PRENDERGAST,
K. C. B.. V.C., R.E., etc.
Baroda.

SAYAJIRAO RESENTS RESTRICTION ON HIS TRAVEL. 1904

(In September 1904 His Highness Maharaja Sayajirao wrote to the Resident that it was necessary for the sake of his health that he should have a long change and rest in Europe, that his idea was to return to India at the close of the next cold "weather ; and that he should therefore do what was needed to secure that end. The Resident wrote back to His Highness that if he intended to leave India for reasons of health he should first obtain the permission of the Government of India as laid down in their circular of July 1900.)
Maharaja Sayajirao's annoyance and personal feelings on the subject are reflected in the following notes he dictated to Romesh Chandra Dutt and in His Highness' two personal letters addressed to the Resident at Baroda and to the Dewan.)

Friday Evening,
24th March 1905.

Maharaja went to the Residency according to a suggestion contained in Colonel Meade's letter of 24th March. Resident enquired if His Highness could give it in writing that he would do his best to return by the 1st October so as to meet Their Royal Highnesses. Maharaja said whatever he had to say had been already said in his letter. If Colonel Meade pressed him further His Highness would make a statement about returning which would not be sincere, but would be telling a fib, which he would rather not state. Colonel Meade said that of course he did not want such a statement. His Highness said that if he kept away it was not because he did not wish to receive the Prince of Wales, but because of His Highness' health.

Colonel Meade said His Highness might procure a medical certificate at the last moment against which nobody would be able to press His Highness' return.

His Highness showed unwillingness to follow this course.

Colonel Meade said it would be better in the interests of His Highness' return to receive the Prince of Wales, and that his health was not so bad as to prevent the return. If His Highness promised to return, Colonel Meade would see that every thing was made all right though the difficulties about the administrative arrangements would be the same if His Highness left again for a long period.

And if His Highness persevered in his idea of being away for an indefinitely long period as now proposed the Government of India which holds itself responsible for the peace of the Empire of which Baroda is only a part had asked him to make proposals as to arrangement for carrying on the administration and that he would make proposals somewhat on the lines followed in 1887 and 1693.

Colonel Meade then said His Highness could not leave India without the sanction of the Government of India and until the
administrative arrangements were settled, the letter about which had been sent by us after long delay. If His Highness left India, the Government of India could not of course take him prisoner, but very unpleasant consequences might follow.

His Highness said in reply to all this that His Highness did not know his own position whether he was a servant or a master. His Highness did not know what to say and he did not see why his personal liberty should be controlled in any way. The letter which had been sent about the administrative arrangements was final so far as His Highness was concerned. It was for the Government of India to decide how to deal with it, as in such arrangements His Highness felt that his own wishes carried very little weight.

Colonel Meade said that His Highness' wishes would be considered. Colonel Meade knew that His Highness felt all this very much and suggested that His Highness would consider the matter for a day or two then he would come and have a talk so as to settle matters.

In the course of this conversation Colonel Meade also asked whether His Highness could not postpone his visit this year. His Highness said he could not, as the marriage of his daughter would probably take place next year, and would prevent his going away for any long period.

After leaving the office room His Highness and Colonel Meade came to the drawing room where Colonel Meade talked on the subject to Shrimati Sampat Rao who urged the necessity of His Highness' taking rest for the sake of his health.

(The above note was dictated by His Highness to Mr. Dutt in my presence today and has to be kept on the records connected with ;he subject of His Highness' proposed visit to Europe this year.)

27th March 1905. (Signed) KERSASP RUSTAMJI DEWAN.
SAYAJIRAO'S STAND AGAINST GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE

Memo of instructions given by His Highness regarding matters to be urged before the Resident in the interview that is to come off to-day at the Residency.

I am placed in an awkward position. I don't want to displease the Government of India, but I am forced. My arrangements for departure to Europe are completed, and I am asked to stop. There should be no interference with the departure. It is getting warm and under any circumstances I should leave Baroda for the sake of my health for a cooler place. I have put off the departure as far as I can, because the interests of State are dear to me and I had to attend to them.

2. I do wish to welcome the Royal visitors. I have no idea of opposing the Government in the matter because of any recalcitrancy. But my health prevents and I have said so frankly. It cannot be desired by any body that my health should be impaired. It is wanted for the proper discharge of my duties to my people. Every thing turns on my health, and things would come alright if I were left' to myself.

3. How the treatment given to me has worried me is well-known. It has told upon my health and if there is no change it will become worse. For this and other reasons a long change is needed and if my health is restored fully the first thing I would think of is return to my State.

4. I have already said my say on the whole subject. There is nothing to add. I have proposed arrangements. It is for Government to accept them or not. I am not allowed a voice in the decision. Then why should departure be interfered with? If Government have anything to communicate, I shall always be within reach of such communications. There is the Minister to transact business with. He has to keep the Resident informed of what is passing.

5. I don't understand the present position. I know that—
1st. I have to be loyal to the British Government and that
2nd. I should look after the interests and well being of my subjects.

I am trying to fulfil my duties in connection with these matters and no fault has yet been found in regard to that. But the demand of Government for application for leave, and their cancellation of it after granting it etc., create a novel situation and one not easy to comprehend. Am I to be considered a servant? If that is the
intention let it be said so, and I can see how to shape my course, and to consider the all important.
question whether I should completely sacrifice my health.

25th March 1905. (Signed) KERSASP RUSTAMJI DEWAN.

SAYAJIRAO'S LETTER TO THE BARODA RESIDENT

PALACE HOTEL, INVERNESS:
4th September 1906.

Dear Major Pritchard,

Your letter of the 17th August 1906 concerning my return to India just to hand.
I am sorry I could not answer your other letter on some subject earlier.
I shall not be in Baroda in the next cold weather.
The interests of my subjects prompt me to be back but the harsh treatment I have received at
the hands of the Government of India discourage me to do so.
I hope the Government will not interfere with my movements in the future, which will conduce
to my happiness and to welfare of my people.
Had I been left to myself I should have probably returned earlier.
I enjoyed immensely my visit to Free America.
There is great freedom there which makes people contented and loyal.
I am looking forward to make your acquaintance.

Yours Sincerely,
(Signed) SAYAJIRAO GAEKWAD.

To
Major C. PRITCHARD,
Resident at Baroda, Baroda.

SAYAJIRAO ANNOYED BY GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE

INVERNESS:
4th September 1906.

My dear Dewan Saheb,
There is a letter from the Resident of Baroda. He had written to me before but for various
reasons I could not answer it up till now. Tell him that I shall be in Baroda about November.
I like to return to India but feel partly unhappy to do so owing to the strange treatment I have received at the hands of Lord Curzon's Government. My health can now no longer stand such annoyances and interferences in my movements.

Yours Sincerely,

(Signed) SAYAJIRAO GAEKWAD.

To
Dewan Bahadur KERSASPJI RUSTAMJI,
Baroda.

SAYAJIRAO'S VIEWS ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF INDIAN STATES 1906

To
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOHN MORELY. M.P.,
Secretary of State for India.

Dear Sir,

I have recently returned from my visit to America, and propose to leave England on the 2nd October for India. I am glad to say that our visit to Europe has done much good to me and to Her Highness the Maharanee and also the children. And at the same time I have been able to see something of the educational institutions of the Western Countries which will help me much in improving the system of education in my own State.

When we met last, you were so good as to make some enquiries concerning the administration of Native States in India. I have caused a few notes to be prepared on the subject which I take the liberty of forwarding herewith informally; and I shall feel very glad if they lead to any good results. The notes are by no means complete, and do not exhaust the matters which require consideration in the present relations between the British Government and the Native States in India. They touch only on a few of the more important points, and have been made as brief as possible, so as to convey only a general idea of the subject.

To my mind it appears that a greater degree of autonomy is needed to secure the natural and healthy development of Native States in India. It was not intended that these States should be
reduced to a subordinate position; and it is not desirable that the power of initiative, and all distinctive features of administration should be crushed out of them. And yet the present system of interference and control and needless restriction is calculated to lead to this unhappy result.

It is the right of man to have good Government; and in the present day, the people themselves demand it.

But so long as the Native States of India satisfy this primary condition, and are decently governed, they should I think, be left to themselves. For without such independence of action and without a greater degree of trust and confidence being placed in Indian Princes, they find it difficult to advance the interests and the welfare of the people placed under their care; and any real progress of the Native States according to methods best suited for them becomes impossible.

There has been an idea for sometime past of forming a Council of Indian Ruling Princes. If such a Council were framed on correct principles, and entrusted with sufficient powers, it would, I believe, be productive of much good. Questions relating to Native States might be dealt with and disposed of by such a council with a practical knowledge of their actual requirements. Such a procedure would naturally give satisfaction and inspire confidence in the Princes themselves, and fill them with a healthy emulation to discharge properly the high duties imposed on them. It would give the Princes a substantial interest in the security and welfare of the Empire. And lastly it would give them an opportunity of coming in friendly contact with each other, and of discussing details of administration in their respective States, to the benefit and general improvement of all States.

I should like very much, before I leave this country, to have the pleasure of seeing you once more, either in London or in any place near London, if that be convenient to you. Any date this month will suit me, as I have kept myself free from all engagements.

I am,

Sir,

C/o Messrs. Thomas Cook & Sons,

Lugate Circus, E. C.

September 21, 1906.

Yours faithfully,

SIGN MANUAL,

Gaekwar of Baroda.
Reproduced below is a letter dated 14th June 1907 written by His Highness Maharaja Sayajirao in his own handwriting to his Dewan, Kersaspji Rustamji.

My dear Kersaspji,

I was glad to hear from you and to learn that the rest had done you all good. I am afraid you will find Baroda pretty warm after your stay in cooler climes.

I don't attach much importance to the sense of restlessness in India. It is a storm in a tea pot, a logical outcome of certain forces. To realise them one must visit other civilised countries. What India requires is a more liberal Government. I think we need take no steps in our State to pacify the exaggerated feeling of uneasiness. Our attention should be concentrated on progress in our Raj. The progress should be carried on with tact and wisdom.

The order of allowing the Antyaja people to enter public judicial offices is not earnestly carried out by all. I think you might tactfully enforce the proper execution of the order of the Varishta Court. The principle of liberal treatment should be, if it is not already, extended to revenue and other public offices. I like this liberal treatment in the interest of humanity and I wish you to give effect to it with prudence and rational boldness.

If necessary a hundred places of constables should be reserved in the police forces for these poor and they should be so employed at least to start with as to causs least hubub which some people try to raise. In the Huzurat Paga these people were employed as swars.

I think Dutt is very likely to get into the India Council and he will be a fit man there. Kindly remember me to him and to your family members.

It is beginning to rain here now. I shall be leaving this in the middle of July and be in Baroda about the end of that month.

The weather here has been very pleasant. We are all well and I hope same is the case with you all.

Yours sincerely,

Doty, 14th June 1907.

(Signed) SAYAJIRAO GAEKWAD.
The Baroda Legislative Council was created in 1907 for the purpose of advising the Government of the State in the work of legislation. Its constitution was characterised by a marked proportion of popular representation—a proportion which was in future to develop into a clear preponderence over the official one. Of its 17 members only 8 were officers of the State, 6 elected representatives of the people and 3 were members nominated by Government to represent interests otherwise unrepresented. With certain reservations Government referred its Bills to this Council. The Non-official members had the right of interpellation and of introducing private Bills.

Maharaja Sayaji Rao paid a visit to the State Legislative Assembly on 26th October 1912 when it was in session. The following is the speech delivered by His Highness on the occasion:

I have not come with any idea of making a speech and speaking only on the spur of the moment. Institutions like these are not new things of today, but they nourished even in ancient times in India. They denoted the confidence reposed by the kings in their subjects and to my mind their effect was certain. The present form of our institutions is adopted for a European standard, but I would not digress on that point, or speak at length on the character and growth of representative assemblies. My advice to you is that you should not consider yourselves as representing any separate or conflicting interest, or a separate party, but represent only truth as embracing every party and look upon yourselves as brothers and representatives of one and the same community. No party spirit should be allowed to prevail in the consideration of questions of public interest. There are occasions of temptations to stand, up for or oppose public questions from a sectarian or communal point of view. In such cases you should be guided by moderation, love of truth and fellow-feeling. To give more or less rights depends on various questions, social, intellectual and political. When rights are conferred on a people and they do not understand their responsibility, the result is simply ruinous; but if they recognise their responsibilities and faithfully discharge them, much social good is brought about in consequence. I have started these institutions and I wish that they should progress. They are not only for your own welfare, but they are also a source of strength to the State. As long as you
intelligently carry out their object, success is bound to attend your labour. As to rights if you show yourselves more worthy, time will come to give you more; but if you do not show yourselves worthy you will lose and the responsibility must then lie on you. But I hope such a contingency will never occur. Efficiency of administration does not depend solely on legislative measures, but on many other causes. To achieve that, recognise your duties as citizens and as human beings. The conditions of our State are peculiar and you are intelligent enough to understand them. I would not say more about it, since time does not permit me to do so. But let me say that you would render great service if you will help the social, moral and educational progress of your fellow brethren. If you do it with moderation, love of truth and perseverance, great benefit will be reaped not only by the present generation but also by posterity. Also devote your energies to elevate the position of those of your fellow-brethren who are lagging behind and whom you call degraded or untouchable. Have courage, true courage, for their educational and other reform. By trying to remove moral evils existing in our society, you will please not only yourselves, but would confer a great boon on society.

It is a pleasure to me to hear the speeches delivered today. My ministers, I am sure, guide you with sympathy, repose confidence in you and will receive greater help from you. My advice to all of you is that you should try to promote the interest of society and must not be too anxious for power. Power is good if it is well used, but at the same time it is dangerous if abused. It is good only if it is used in a guarded way and sympathetic spirit. Power carries a load of responsibilities in its trial. Try to promote the moral and material welfare of all your fellow subjects. Get rid of social and moral evils which hinder your progress. As soon as you do that, you will surely rise.

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BARODA RESIDENT’S CHARGES AGAINST SAYAJIRAO

(FROM POLITICAL FILES OF THE BARODA STATS RECORD.)

I have recently had three* personal interviews with Mr. Seddon, the Dewan of Baroda at which the principal subject

* 25th, 27th and 30th August, discussed has been the growth of sedition in this State, the inadequacy of the steps taken to check it, and the dangerous impasse at which matters have now arrived.
The points upon which I laid special emphasis are as follows:

(i) The legislative enactments, in the State dealing with sedition as directed against the King or the Government of India are totally inadequate.

(ii) Following upon (i) and (ii) this State is being used as an Alsatia in, which sedition is allowed to nourish with practical impunity.

(iii) Even where, as the result of representations made by the Residency, prosecutions could and should have been instituted under the existing laws, such as they are, action has not been taken.

(iv) Amongst the principal officials of the state are men who are admittedly extremists and who use their official position to promote their political views.

(v) This condition of affairs, which constitutes a menace not only to the State itself but to its neighbours including British India, cannot be tolerated indefinitely.

2. Mr. Seddon, I should observe, during the year I have been Resident, has not hitherto given me the support in these matters which I had a right to expect from a member of the Indian Civil Service. His views, moreover, on the seditious movement in India, as evidenced by letters in my records, are distinctly unsound if not dangerous.

But during the last three months (if I neglect certain interludes of fitful petulance) the pressure of events, my own strong representations, and the knowledge that, before many months are over, he will be returning to duty in his own province, have caused him to veer slowly round, and I now observe a change for the better. And this change has been particularly noticeable during the past week and since his return on 25th August from leave.

Thus while at the second of these interviews (27th August) he argued hotly that all he intended to do and all that it was necessary to do in order to put down sedition in Baroda was to secure the Maharaja's assent to the new Press Bill, he told me at the last interview (30th August) that he now means to try and get substantive additions to the Durbar's Penal Code as well as an amended Arms Act. And when I urged that an Explosives Act was equally necessary, he assented. What an advance is indicated by this rapid change of front will be more easily recognised when I explain
that on 27th August Mr. Seddon maintained that the earlier sections of Chapter VI of the Indian Penal Code including sections 124A are seldom, if ever, used now in British India thanks to the revised Press laws of 1909. I then asked him how he proposed to deal under the new Baroda Bill—

(a) With Secret societies and conspiracies;
(b) With seditious meetings and plots; and with
(c) the manufacture and possession of bombs.

To this, of course, he was unable to reply.

3. In brief, the Durbar's hands have been forced, and they realise that game of polite incredulity and concealment is played out. An army of facts has slowly been arrayed against them. They can now no longer deny the existence of sedition in their midst. And they are reluctantly forced to admit both its presence as well as their helplessness to cope with it. Thus a big step forward has been made. This, however, is not enough.

The Durbar may hastily frame and pass enactments as the Minister now proposes to do. But unless the laws are rigourously applied and enforced with the mutual co-operation of both the Durbar's executive and judicial officers no valid results will follow. And still less, as Mr. Seddon frankly admits, can we, hope for success unless and until His Highness the Maharaja completely changes his extraordinary attitude.

It is ideal to conceal the fact that the anti-British sentiments which have infected in some degree all classes of His Highness's subjects are merely the reflections of the Chief himself. Except actual criminality there is no phase of sedition, both secret and overt, which the Maharaja has not himself patronised. And his hatred of the British-Indian Government, his intolerance of all control, his resentment of all advice, coupled with the immunity enjoyed, has developed in him a measure of self-conceit which can only be characterised as dangerous megalomania. So patent is this condition of affairs that Mr. Seddon himself in conversation with me openly admits it; and at our last interview informed me that he has little hope of getting His Highness's assent to the legislative changes he is now recommending. When I enquired what course he would pursue in that eventuality, he replied that he intended to resign his post and to inform Government in writing of the reasons which necessitated this action. And those reasons will be precisely the ones which I have enumerated above. In these circumstances it will be admitted, I think, that the policy of drift which has slowly
brought us to the present state of affairs cannot be continued. Equally futile, in my opinion, is a policy of conciliation. For it too has been tried and has failed. There remains only the policy of vigorous action, and the application, if need be, of force. We must strike at the head of the anti-British movement in Baroda, and the head is the Maharaja himself.

GOVERNMENT'S CHARGESHEET AGAINST SAYAJIRAO

[The following is an extract from Calcutta Records 4, 1912, of the Government of India, Foreign Department. It is a collection of Notes and Memoranda exchanged between the Baroda Residency, Government of Bombay and Government of India. It is designated as "Unsatisfactory attitude adopted by His Highness Gaekwad of Baroda relative to the inception and growth of sedition in his state and his opposition to the policy of the Government of India". The following is the secret memorandum sent to the Secretary of State for India by the Government of India, covering a summary of the details covered by all the notes and memoranda included in the file. It gives all the charges levelled against the Maharaja by the Government of India.

This file was made available to the Bombay Committee for a History of Freedom Movement by one of its members Shri D. V. Potdar, who was also a member of the Central Board of Editors for a History of the Freedom Movement in India.]

Secret.
Internal.

To

THE MOST HON'BLE THE MARQUIS OF CREWE, K.G.,

His Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

Simla, —— November 1911.

My Lord Marquis,

We have the honour to address Your Lordship on the subject of the attitude adopted by His Highness the Gaekwar of Baroda relative to the inception and growth of sedition in his State.
2. The circumstances in which the present Gaekwar, Sayaji Rao, succeeded to the gadi in 1875 are well known and need not be recapitulated, but before proceeding to discuss more recent developments, we consider it desirable to review the relations which have subsisted between the Government of India and His Highness since his investiture with ruling powers in December 1881. The exaggerated idea of his own importance and of the position of his State with which the Gaekwar was imbued partly as a result of the injudicious training and advice of his tutor, Mr. F. A. H. Elliot, of the Bombay Civil Service, found early expression in an impatience of all control by the Government of India and in a tendency to put forward pretensions to equality with the British Crown in which it was impossible to acquiesce. This attitude resulted in a chronic antagonism between the Gaekwar and the Government of India which was accentuated during the period of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty, and has culminated, as we shall shortly show, not only in a refusal to co-operate with Government in its attempt to suppress the forces of sedition and anarchy, but in words and actions which can hardly be interpreted as other than actively disloyal.

3. Your Lordship will find in the memorandum* which accompanies this despatch a brief summary of some more important cases in which the Gaekwar came into conflict with the Government of India during the period prior to 1905. They serve at once to illustrate his character and to portray the obstructive policy which has distinguished his administration. The main points of contention it will be observed centre round His Highness's continued and prolonged absences from his State, and his refusal to join the Imperial Service movement which received the support of nearly all the leading Chiefs in India. Lord Curzon's Government in paragraph 4 of their Secret despatch No. 134 (Internal), dated the 13th July 1905, characterised his attitude on the latter question as unreservedly hostile while the Gaekwar's frequent visits to Europe have called forth remonstrances both from His Majesty's Government and from successive Viceroy's.

4. It has been asserted that the Gaekwar's conduct is partly to be attributed to the influence of his early training, to the want of tact which has been displaced by the officials posted to Baroda, and to the somewhat vexatious policy of the Government of India,

Though we admit that his education by Mr. Elliot was far from satisfactory and that the Residents who from time to time have been posted to Baroda may not always have been conspicuous for

* Enclosure No. 1.
tact and judgment, yet it is significant that all these officers, men differing widely one from another in character and ability, have formed the same conclusion as regards the Gaekwar, and all with one exception, have found him impossible to deal with, suspicious, parsimonious and insincere, bitter against the Government of India in proportion as they thwarted the attainments of his ideal of perfect independence. Colonel Biddulph indeed charged the Gaekwad with being disloyal both in thought and action. The one exception was Colonel Martelli. The Gaekwar liked him because as His Highness himself expressed it—" He let me alone ".

It may also be true that, prior to 1905, there was a tendency to intervene overmuch in Baroda affairs, although in estimating the amount of interference which may be legitimate in the case of Baroda, too much stress cannot be laid on the peculiar conditions which make interference in numerous cases necessary and multiply in proportion the possibilities of friction. The map of Baroda will show this at a glance. It consists of innumerable small blocks of territory separated from one another by intervening districts of the Bombay Presidency and scattered among the numerous States of Kathiawar. The difficulties to which this interlacing jurisdiction gives rise are accentuated by the existence in Baroda and Kathiawar and in the neighbouring British districts of Mahi and Rewa Kantha of numerous petty Chiefs and Zamindars known as Girassias and Watandars, who owe fealty to the Gaekwar as suzerain, but the maintenance of whose rights are guaranteed by the British Government. The history of the past 50 years exhibits a series of disputes between the Durbar and the Residency on the subject of these Giras and Watania lights, a final settlement of which it is well nigh impossible to secure.

It is further obvious that the geographical position of the State has had much to do with the trouble which has arisen over railway questions. It has naturally not in all cases been found possible to reconcile Gaekwar's attempts to develop a forward railway policy in order to open communications between the various scattered portions of his territories with the opposing interests of the Paramount Power and the Empire as a whole.

But, since 1905, there has been an important modification in the policy of the Government of India towards Native States. In pursuance of this policy, the keynote of which is the recognition under certain limitations of autonomy in local affairs, the Gaekwar has been treated with marked consideration. The points which were at issue between His Highness and the Government of India prior
to 1905 have been decided in nearly every case in his favour. He has not been pressed to contribute to Imperial Service Troops. The decision that Ruling Chiefs shall be required to obtain the permission of the Government of India before leaving their States has been practically waived. Considerable concessions have been made in connection with jurisdiction over Railway lines; and Durbars are now permitted, under certain conditions and within certain limits, to construct telephone lines in their States without obtaining the prior permission of the Government of India. It is now the recognised practice to consult Durbars before conferring honours on their subjects or employees. The rules regarding the employment of Europeans by Indian Shifts and regulating their emoluments have been considerably relaxed. *Pari passu* with these concessions particular care has been taken in selecting officers for the difficult post of Resident in Baroda and these officers have been instructed to regard it as their primary object to change as far as possible the Gaekwar's attitude of opposition by obtaining his confidence and friendship and by explaining to him frankly, as opportunity offers, the real character of the policy of the paramount Power. They have been further informed that it is their business to look at matters from the point of view of the Gaekwar as well as of the Government and to make it clear to His Highness that Government is anxious that his powers and dignity should not be impaired.

It might have been expected that these indications of the desire on the part of the Government of India to remove all legitimate grounds of complaint would have resulted in the adoption of a more correct and decorous attitude on the Gaekwar's part. But this is far from being the case. His Highness has in no way abated his opposition to the policy of the Government of India and every effort to break down his obstructive and critical attitude has signally failed. The most striking illustration of this attitude is afforded by His Highness's conduct in relation to the State forces in Baroda. As your Lordship is aware, the British Government claims the absolute right to determine the strength of the armed forces of Native States. Against the exercise of this right in the case of Baroda the Gaekwar has never ceased to protest, while every endeavour has been, and is being, made to promote the efficiency of the armed forces of the State. Retired officers of the Indian Army have been appointed to posts of importance to train the State forces and we have received several applications for the services of non-commissioned officers for the same purpose. In 1909 the Gaekwar admitted that he had actually been negotiating with certain officers of the Swiss Army with a view to their entering his service.
5. These facts taken by themselves, we should not be disposed to regard as of much importance were it not that, during the past few years, proofs have accumulated that the Gaekwar has recruited in the service of the State known opponents of British rule, has permitted the publication by the Native Press of articles rabidly anti British in character, and has personally associated with some of the leading spirits in the revolutionary movement. To this line of conduct we are compelled to attribute the development of the state of affairs regarding which we have now found it necessary to address your Lordship.

We shall now proceed to place before His Majesty's Government such information as we possess regarding the growth of sedition in Baroda and to invite attention to the attitude which His Highness personally, and His Highness's Government, have adopted in reference to it.

6. Prior to 1901, when the noted extremist Arabindo Ghose arrived in Baroda, there is little or no evidence on the subject, but that efforts were being made at an early period by the disaffected in Bombay to influence the Maharaja, seems probable. For in 1895, Colonel Biddulph, then Resident, wrote as follows regarding the tendency of Maharattas in Poona and Bombay to interest themselves in Baroda affairs :—" This has been so marked that I cannot avoid the suspicion that there is a settled policy among the disloyal Poona Brahmins to use Baroda as a focus of opposition to the British Government. It is remarkable that no other class except Mahrattas have shown any desire to interfere in Baroda affairs. The most important offices in the State, with one or two exceptions, are in the hands of Maharattas, and recent events have shown to what length they are prepared to go in order to retain predominant authority in the State. Their constant interference in Baroda affairs, the continued irritation kept up in the Gaekwar's mind against the Government of India, the great pains taken about the army, the constant glorification of the Gaekwar by the Mahratta press, all point to a concerted object. The improper support afforded by the Gaekwar to the National Congress can only be due to the instigation of these men. This feature in Baroda affairs requires careful watching as there is the possibility of much trouble in it. It is probable that the Gaekwar is himself unconscious of the use that is being made of him, but his belief that he is the foremost Chief in India and therefore the natural head of the Mahrattas, his assumption of a royal style, and his arrogant claim to sovereignty over the Kathiawar Chiefs and many of the Gujarat Chiefs, all point to political aspirations of a dangerous nature ". Subsequent events have proved the truth of this opinion.
7. In 1902, Arabindo Ghose entered the Gaekwar's service, for a time acted as His Highness's Private Secretary and, subsequently, held an appointment as Vice-Principal of the Baroda College, where his lectures on political subjects led eventually to his leaving Baroda. There can be no question but that his employment in the State gave a great impetus to the anti-British movement. Several Baroda State officials were his close friends, notably one K. G. Deshpande, Assistant to the Sar-Subha of Baroda, who was the prime instigator of a movement to establish national schools. There is ample evidence that the teaching of one of these schools which was originally established at Ganganath on the borders of Baroda and British India and later removed to Baroda, is nationalist and anti-British in character, and that it is closely associated with the extremist party.

In the same year the Resident received information of the existence of secret societies in the State, notably one founded in connection with an Akhara maintained by a Mahant named Manek Rao and of a number of instances in which sedition had been openly preached in Baroda city without any opposition from the State Police. The Durbar whose attention was drawn to the matter, while not admitting that the speeches had been seditious, virtually asserted that they could not be expected to take active steps against individuals trying to excite disaffection against the British Government unless similar action was taken in British India against persons speaking against the Gaekwar or his Government. The Dewan at the same time admitted to the Resident that many officials of the State, especially among the Mahrattas, were extremists.

With the exception of the receipt of threatening letters by the Resident and his Assistant at Amreli, there is no definite indication of the development of the movement during the next few years, until, in 1909, seditious inscriptions were found on the notice boards and walls of the Baroda College and ultra Nationalist speeches were reported to have been made at a social gathering at the Kala Bha-van institute and at the Ganpati celebration at the Ganganath school.

8. Further evidence of the prevalence in the State of a feeling strongly anti-British in character was supplied by the utterances of the Native Press.

In 1909, the Durbar sanctioned the publication in Baroda of a paper named "The Pudhari". Its extremist views were pronounced from the first and it is impossible to believe that the Durbar were not aware of the character of Mr. V. P. Sathe, its editor. In March and
April 1909, the attention of the Durbar was drawn by the Resident to the objectionable articles with the result that the editor was warned. This action was ineffectual and, in March 1910, protests had again to be addressed to the Durbar against this paper.

The editor was then summoned by the Durbar and again warned. The warning, similarly, had little effect as objectionable articles continued to appear so virulently anti-British in character that Lord Minto’s Government were forced to instruct the Resident to move the Baroda Durbar to take more effective measures. The only result was that the editor received a further warning from the Durbar. Subsequently, information was received that two seditious plays of which the editor of the "Pudhari" was the author, and which had been printed and published by him in Baroda, had been proscribed and forfeited by the Bombay Government. The action which the Durbar took on their attention being drawn to this matter was to issue an order that V. P. Sathe had contravened the State Rules and that his Press should be closed till further orders. In September 1910, the Government of India were informed that the "Pudhari" had been permanently stopped. The noticeable feature in the case is that continued protests on the part of the Resident were necessary before any effective action was taken against a paper, the articles in which were of a flagrantly seditious character.

In August 1910, objection had to be taken to the "Chabuk", another newspaper of similarly objectionable type which had been started in Baroda. Seditious articles continued to appear and it was only after considerable pressure had been brought to bear on the Durbar that, in December 1910, the Government of India were informed that the permission to publish the "Chabuk" had been withdrawn.

So lately, however, as January last the attention of the Government of India has been drawn to an objectionable article on the subject of His Majesty’s proposed visit to India which has appeared in the "Baroda Gazette", a paper which also has on previous occasions been the subject of complaint, but so far as we are aware no action has as yet been taken.

We enclose, for Lordship’s information, copies of the articles in "Pudhari", "Chabuk" and the "Baroda Gazette", to which we have referred above.

* Enclosure No. 2.
9. Throughout, the general attitude of the Durbar has been (a) to deny the existence of the information furnished by the Residency on the subject, (b) while professing willingness to assist the Resident, in practice to take no action desired of them without the maximum of pressure and to give no information required except grudgingly and of necessity, (c) at times to afford direct support and encouragement to individuals and institutions of which the Residency had expressed suspicion. Thus, in October 1909, the Dewan maintained that the only signs of sedition in Baroda had been (a) the preaching of occasional itinerant preachers from elsewhere who were always "watched", (b) one or two indiscreet articles in newspapers whose editors were warned, and, in a letter addressed to the Resident subsequently on the subject of the Ganga-na\'th school, while asserting that there was no evidence of sedition in the institute, he acknowledged that, if there was a tendency in the education imparted towards the creation of a class of men not likely to be very actively loyal in the old-fashioned way, "it were best" to recognise the inevitable and meet it with such tact and sympathy as might be possible." In a further letter he wrote acknowledging that the Ganganath institution aimed at Nationalist development and idea incompatible with acquiesence in the present form of British rule, but asseverating that "no good can be done by attempts at suppressing this growth". So far from suppression, in 1910, permission was given to the Principal to open a Printing Press.

10. Consistent with this attitude is the refusal of the Durbar to make any satisfactory provision for the prevention or punishment of acts of sedition or disloyalty in Baroda as against the British Government and in declining to follow the example of other States in introducing or improving Explosives and Press Acts in view of the growth of unrest.

When in 1908, the introduction of an Explosives Act, was suggested to them both the Gaekwar and his Minister professed to consider such a proposal indicative of want of confidence in them and expressed the opinion that no action was called for. A similar attitude was observed in relation to the question of a Press Act and Arms Act. The State Arms Act, which was enacted in 1900, is ineffective for all practical purposes as it contains no provision prohibiting possession or sale of arms without a licence. When the Government of India advised the inclusion of sections to this effect the Durbar replied that it was unnecessary and that their enforcement would be attended with difficulty and danger. One further instance of the reluctance or the inability of the Durbar to cooperate with Government of India may be quoted.
In 1910, one Vasanji Dayalji Ganatra, a noted extremist, who had been prosecuted in British India in connection with a paper called "Hind Swarajya" arrived at Baroda and with the permission of the District Magistrate, commenced publishing a Magazine known as "Dharma Pradip". The Durbar were informed by the Resident of his antecedents, but it was only after great pressure and after it had been clearly proved that he had obtained permission by false pretences that the licence was withdrawn, the continued publication of the journal being allowed though under another editor. The Dewan admitted his inability to prosecute Vasanji and the result is that the Magazine is still published for all practical purposes under Vasanji's editorship.

11. Not less significant is the marked way in which the Gaekwar personally has disregarded the advice of the Resident as to his dealings with individuals known or believed to belong to the extreme party. Two instances may be noted. The first is that of a man named Shankar P. Wagh known to be an extremist and a great friend of G. D. Savarkar. On its being reported in 1908 that this person was in the service of the Gaekwar's son, Sivaji Rao, Colonel Meade, then Resident at Baroda, asked the Dewan to speak to His Highness about him. The result was that Shankar Wagh was, after a time taken into the personal service of the Gaekwar in whose suits he visited England and America. The other case was that of one Saint Nihal Singh, who has been responsible for numerous anti-British speeches and writings. The Resident personally warned his Highness as to this man's antecedents, but, despite the warning, the Gaekwar invited Nihal Singh to stay as his guest in order to write a life of His Highness.

12. In 1909 His Highness visited the Sarvajanik Sabha in Poona. This Sabha the Government of Bombay have declined to recognise. The Vice-President, Anna Sahib Patwardhan, and the Secretary, N. C. Kelkar, are notorious extremists and political agitators, the latter having been committed for contempt of court in the Tilak case. His Highness's speech to the Sabha was characterised by the Government of Bombay as "a thinly veiled disparagement of British rule". A remonstrance from the Government of India resulted in a disclaimer being published by the Gaekwar in a Maha-ratta newspaper to the effect that in case his visit to the Sabha might create an impression that His Highness sympathised with the extremists it was desired to correct it.

13. Further interesting evidence is afforded by a comparison between the speeches delivered by Chiefs whom the late Viceroy visited and that delivered by the Gaekwar on a similar occasion.
in 1909, and also between the Gaekwar's reply to His Excellency's Kharita on the subject of sedition and that of other Chiefs. As regards the former, on receiving a draft of the intended speech, Mr. Bosanquet, then Resident at Earoda, drew attention to the marked absence of any allusion to co-operation with the Government of India, and to an implied distinction between loyalty to the crown and loyalty to the British Government. The Gaekwar explained in conversation with the Resident, that he thought that in an after dinner speech only general expressions of cordiality were looked for, but that he was only too glad to give expression to the sentiments of loyalty and of the desire to cooperate with the Government of India which he really felt. He further referred to the necessity of trusting to the support of the Chiefs and giving them more power. The speech was subsequently altered to avoid creating the impression, as His Highness explained, that he was "sitting on the fence", but even then such references to loyalty as it did contain were vague and half-hearted.

14. It is hard, in the absence of any explanation, to reconcile such verbal expressions of loyalty with the Gaekwar's conduct on his tour to America, Japan and Europe in 1910. At Vancouver he received an address from Babu Tarak Nath Das, the moving spirit of the "Free Hindustan" a notoriously violent revolutionary publication. His Highness could hardly have been ignorant of the character of so notorious an agitator as Babu Tarak Nath Das or of the construction which must inevitably be put on his association with him. There is further the strongest ground for believing that the Gaekwar met the most prominent of the Indian revolutionaries, including Madame Cama, at a soiree near Paris in November 1910. On this occasion the Gaekwar is reported to have said that he had no intention of being in India when the King-Emperor visited the country as he did not wish to pay His Majesty the customary servile homage. Whether this be true or not, it is admitted that the Maharani whose opinions are well known to be extreme and whose influence with His Highness is considerable, when at Vichy in the summer of 1910, established close relations with Madame Cama, associated with her publicity and exchanged visits, while, as Your Lordship is aware, His Highness's second son, Sivaji Rao, has adopted and expresses openly the most extreme Nationalist views. His Highness himself has recently admitted to Your Lordship that when in England he made a donation to the notorious agitator, Bepin Chandra Pal.

15. Even if it be urged that so far as the Gaekwar is concerned there is no evidence of active disloyalty, his words and actions
evince a sympathy with the extremists, which is inconsistent with his duty to the British Crown and incompatible with the interests of our Indian Empire. It is significant that a very general belief of the existence of such sympathy prevails, both within and outside of the Nationalist fold—a belief of which His Highness must be aware (indeed he has practically admitted as much), but which he has never made any attempt to dispel, though attention has frequently been drawn to it in the assertions of extremist agitators and though his picture has more than once appeared among portraits published by the extreme party of Nationalist heroes, etc. It is not without significance that he is the only prominent Chief so favoured.

16. We now desire to invite Your Lordship's attention to the correspondence noted in the margin in which the Government of Bombay and our Resident at Baroda, report the circumstances in which certain seditious publications have been proved to emanate from Baroda.

In the spring of this year violently seditious literature was found in circulation at Bombay. Circumstances seemed to point to Baroda as the distributing centre. A clue was obtained and, as the result of a sudden visit paid by the Bombay Police, between five and six hundred copies of a book euphemistically called "Vegetable Medicines" were found concealed in a well at Naosari, the head quarters of one of the four divisions constituting the Baroda State. This book, which contained such phrases as "To slay white officials is a merit, not a sin", was being systematically distributed in Bombay by means of agents (since tried and convicted) employed by one Abba Sahib Ramchandra, a notorious seditionist and ex-convict, who with another well-known bad character, named Madhava Rao, and assisted by a gang of 34 others, some of whom are known to the British Police, had settled down at Billimora, a place a few miles from Naosari, and were working a press "Commercial Press of Billimora". At the time of the discovery of these books, and as the direct result of strong representations from the Resident, both Abba Sahib and Madhava Rao were already under arrest; the first for his unauthorised management of the "Commercial Press ", the registered proprietor of which had proved upon investigation to be a non-existent or fictitious personage; the other for conducting a swindling lottery, with wide ramifications in British India, in which high Baroda officials, including K. G. Deshpande, a well-known extremist, and the
District Magistrate of Naosari were closely concerned, and one of the objects of which was to support the Ganganath school referred to in paragraph 9 above.

Following upon the find of these books the Government of Bombay suggested a joint enquiry on the part of their own and of the State Police, so as to determine, if possible, who was the author of the book and where it had been printed. In deference to the Resident’s advice the Durbar consented to this enquiry which was concluded at the end of August last. The result has been to establish (1) that the author of the book is a clerk named Narsingbhai Patel, in the employ of the Durbar; (2) that the book was printed at the Shikshak Press at Mehsana, the head-quarters of the Kadi Division of the Baroda State; and (3) that a pleader, named Punjabhai, living in the Kaira District, Bombay, had financed the book’s publication.

Punjabhai has been suitably dealt with in the Court of the District Magistrate, Kaira, but Narsingbhai Patel, the author, having committed no offence against the State laws, cannot be proceeded against.

Such in brief is the outcome of the joint enquiry, a result which in itself in gravely compromising to the good name of the Baroda State. But these facts in themselves, strong as they are, by no means represent the full force of the indictment against the Durbar. And, in order to form a correct view of the position, the following additional facts must be taken into consideration.

In the first place, Abba Sahib and his past record and character were brought to the notice of the Durbar in April 1910.

Similarly, warnings in regard to Madhava Rao and his dishonest conduct of the lottery were conveyed to the Durbar on several occasions in the latter half of 1910. In spite of this no action was taken by the Baroda Government until June 1911, and then only in consequence of the strongest pressure from the Residency.

Even more remarkable are the facts in regard to Narsingbhai Patel, the author of "Vegetable Medicines" and of a seditious life of Garibaldi which was also printed at a Baroda Press. For, early in 1909, the Resident informed the Durbar that Narsingbhai had published and circulated in British India a Gujarati translation of the speeches of Arabindo Ghose. This pamphlet was also published at the Shikshak Press at Mehsana, which was then the joint property of Narsingbhai and his brother. The Durbar promised to prosecute Narsingbhai, and there so far as the Residency
was concerned, the matter terminated. But Mr. Cobb, the present Resident, has recently learnt that this promise was never fulfilled. Narsingbhai has thus been left free to continue unmolested his campaign of sedition against the British Indian Government, to utilise the same press, and to remain in the Durbar's service. The Durbar's breach of faith in this matter is directly due to the influence of K. R. Yadhav, a relation of the Gaekwar who is the District Magistrate of Mehsana.

As to the character of the so called "joint" enquiry it is significant that, though the fullest co-operation was promised by the Durbar, Mr. Vincent, the British officer employed, met with much passive and some active opposition on the part of the Durbar's own officials. In referring to this point our Director of Criminal Intelligence writes as follows:—" The Baroda authorities allowed the British Police to make enquiries in this case because, I am convinced, they thought they would be fruitless. When it appeared they might be successful almost all pretence of co-operation disappeared and Mr. Vincent had to put up with obstruction and insult."

It may be argued that the facts narrated in the preceding paragraphs scarcely warrant any general indictment of the Durbar's methods and policy. But it must be remembered that this is the only instance where there has been an opportunity of employing British Police. Mr. Cobb is of opinion—and his views are supported by a multiplicity of other corroborating facts that only the fringe of the seditious movement in Baroda has so far been touched and that could the operations of our police be extended other and far more serious disclosures would follow. In this connection two further points may be mentioned.

Firstly, out of 167 seditious books and publications which have been proscribed in British India no less than seventeen have admittedly been published in Baroda presses. Though this significant fact has been twice brought to the Durbar's notice by the Resident, no steps during the six months which have since intervened seem to have been taken by the Durbar either to proscribe the books themselves or to bring their authors or publishers to account.

Secondly, statements have been received from several quarters that secret societies of the most dangerous type exist in Baroda, but, without independent enquiry on the part of our own police, it is impossible to verify them.
17. The facts related in the foregoing paragraphs appear to Us to establish indisputably that a movement dangerously anti-British in character exists in Baroda, with which the State laws as they exist at present are inadequate to cope; that the Durbar, if they have not openly encouraged the movement, have declined to frame the legislation which the circumstances require, and that such action against sedition, as they have taken, has been taken grudgingly and only as the result of continual pressure from the Resident. The responsibility for their attitude must rest primarily with the Maharaja. It has been clearly shown that His Highness and his family openly associate with extremists; that he deliberately employs in the State service persons of whose extremist views he is aware; that he alone, of all the ruling Chiefs in India, has failed to co-operate with the British Government in the suppression of sedition; and that open expressions of loyalty, if they have been made at all have been given reluctantly and unwillingly.

18. With this evidence before us of the state of affairs in Baroda, we find ourselves unable to account for the attitude of the Gaekwar and his Government on the supposition that their loyalty is genuine. The plain testimony of facts must be accepted as superior to all verbal professions of loyalty. We fully concur with the Bombay Government that the circumstances are such as to demand prompt and decisive action if further and more serious trouble is to be averted. Had we taken steps at an earlier period we might have been accused of undue precipitation and of refusing to allow the Maharaja a reasonable time to take the measures which the situation demands. Such is not the case. A policy of conciliation has been tried and has failed while forbearance has been pushed to the extreme limit of safety. His Highness now stands without excuse. It was open to him to clear himself of all suspicion of infidelity by doing his manifest duty, but, instead of following the example of the Rulers of other Native States in adopting legislative measures for the suppression of sedition, he has persistently disregarded the advice of the Government of India and the warnings of the Resident, has shown both in word and deed his sympathy with the enemies of the British Crown and has afforded them indirect assistance which may be but the prelude to some more open measures of co-operation.

19. It may be urged in defence of His Highness that he has taken into his employ and even admitted to the highest appointment in the State officers lent to him by the British Government and that he cannot be held responsible if the action taken by his executive officers is inadequate.
We regret we cannot endorse this view. The authority which the European officials exercise is superficial, not real. The powers of Mr. Seddon, the present Minister, are restricted in many ways and his facilities for interference are extremely limited under the system of delegated authority which prevails in the State. He is carefully kept in ignorance of any currents below the superficial work of the various departments. The real and only authority in the State is the Maharaja acting through his Indian Council. Mr. Seddon himself, who for sometimes had maintained that no action was required now admits that the position is serious and that there is no hope of success until His Highness the Maharaja changes his extraordinary attitude. There can be no doubt as to the relevancy of this opinion. The Bombay Government have emphasised the point in paragraph 7 of their letter * and in this opinion we entirely concur. No legislation will have any effect, no measures directed against sedition will be of any avail unless it is clearly demonstrated both to the public and to the officials that the Maharaja himself is determined to stamp it out.

20. The position having thus been made clear we turn now to consideration of the measures which we consider desirable to adopt. In his letter† of the 11th October, Mr. Cobb has analysed exhaustively the provisions contained in the existing laws for dealing with sedition against the Paramount Power and has indicated the extent to which they are deficient for the purpose. We agree generally in his conclusions, but, in asking the Durbar to remodel their laws, we consider that the legislation which they should be required to undertake should be not necessarily on British Indian lines but similar to that which loyal and well-administered Native States have already adopted. The enforcement of the laws, when enacted, must be secured.

To this end we propose to expound the position in a letter to the Gaekwar from the Foreign Secretary and to require him to accept the following conditions: —

(1) That at a special Durbar convened for the purpose he will make a speech condemning in unequivocal terms all and every form of sedition directed against the British Crown and the British Government of India.

This speech which will receive our approval before its delivery will be published in the Durbar’s official Gazette and communicated to the Press.

* Enclosure No. 3.
† Enclosure No. 4.
(2) That he will remodel on the lines of similar laws in force in loyal and well administered Native States elsewhere the Baroda laws dealing with sedition, the Press, and the possession of arms and explosives.

(3) That he will place the State Police force under a British Officer ient by us for the purpose.

(4) That certain of the Baroda officials who are notorious for their extreme and anti-British views will be called upon to resign and required to quit Baroda territory for good.

21. Drastic though these measures may appear we are convinced that no policy more lenient than that which we propose will provide an effectual remedy. As we have already pointed out in paragraph 17 of this despatch and this is a point which we desire to emphasize we are of necessity ignorant of the actual extent of the seditious movement in Baroda. Were we at liberty to pursue our investigations unhindered the result would not improbably be to demonstrate the existence of a state of affairs even more dangerous than that which has hitherto been disclosed. Our recommendations have been made after the most anxious consideration and with a full appreciation of the serious importance of the step which we contemplate. But, when a Ruling Chief, in the position of the Gaekwar, so far from fulfilling his clear obligations to the Paramount Power, constitutes himself directly or indirectly the patron of sedition and permits his State to become a refuge for the enemies of Government and a base for their operations against British India, further forbearance would be fraught with the gravest danger to our administration in India, would be interpreted as a sign of weakness, and would afford a direct encouragement to other Ruling Chiefs in India to follow his example.

22. These considerations have forced us to the conclusion that a vigorous exertion of the authority of the Paramount Power can no longer safely be delayed. We trust that His Majesty's Government will agree with us in our estimate of the gravity of the position and will accept our recommendations which it will be observed have the strong support of the Bombay Government to whose administration the existing position in Baroda constitutes a most serious menace.

We are disposed to think that the Gaekwar, if the question is brought to a definite issue, will comply with our requests rather
than hazard an open rupture, and we need not assure Your Lordship that we shall use every endeavour to arrive at an amicable settlement. Indeed, if the Gaekwar is genuinely anxious to co-operate, he can have no reasonable ground for objecting to the action which we propose. But, should His Highness adopt a different course or suggest abdication, a possibility at which the Bombay Government hint in paragraph 20 of their letter, we should not hesitate in the one case to recommend even more forcible measures, while in the other we should be prepared to face with equanimity any hostile criticism which such a step might evoke.

23. In conclusion we would add, with reference to paragraph 16 of the letter from the Bombay Government that we are not prepared to recommend the reconsideration of the question of the retrocession of the Baroda State to that Government, nor in our opinion is there anything in recent developments which renders such a step necessary or desirable.

We have the honour to be,

My Lord Marquis,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble servants,

(Signed) HARDINGE OF PENSHURST,
(Signed) O. M. CREACH,
(Signed) GUY FLEETWOOD WILSON,
(Signed) J. L. JENKINS
(Signed) R. W. CARLYLE,
(Signed) S. H. BUTLER,
(Signed) SAYED ALI IMAM,
(Signed) W. H. CLARK.
In view of His Highness's impending visit to England, we asked Sir C. Cleveland to furnish us, if possible, with a complete list of extremists and undesirables abroad. The list sent is not exhaustive, nor does the inclusion of a name in the list mean that the individual is under Police surveillance.

His Highness may also be told that there are certain groups of Indians in Europe who busy themselves with spreading lies and incitements against the British and occasionally join such plots as these that resulted in the murder of Messrs. Jackson and Ashe in India. Perhaps the most prominent among these people are Madam Cama, Viren-dranath Chattopadhyaya, Edward Holton James, Shyamji Krishna Varma, S. R. Rana, Sir Walter Strickland, Champakraman Pillai, Edward Delgado, Niranjan Pal and Zafar Ali Khan. Any friends or associates of the above should be avoided. It would not be necessary, true to say, that all the friends and associates are revolutionary plotters or traducers of the British Government, but the majority certainly are and attempts at discriminating might be unsuccessful. There are also in the Continent a group of discontented Egyptians who are thinking of making a common cause with the Indian malcontents and who in their paper "La Patre Egyptienne" have glorified Dhingra and V. Savarkar and others, who have in the name of Indian politics committed serious crimes. The Egyptians should be avoided. There are also many other desperadoes and adventurers all willing and anxious to exploit any exalted personage for their own advantage. In Europe, reliable introductions should be the only passport to acquaintanceships. It is important to impress upon His Highness that the Government of India will expect him before he associates with Indians in Paris or abroad to assure himself that they are not friends of Madam Cama or any of the persons named in the list. They will also expect similar precautions to be taken in the case of his suite.
ROWLATT ACT AGITATION IN BARODA STATE 1919

(POLITICAL FILE FROM THE BARODA RECORD OFFICE, BARODA.)

The unrest which spread all over India as a result of the passing of the Rowlatt Act in 1919, had a contagious effect on Baroda State as well. Meetings were held at Amreli, Navsari, Vyara, Baroda, etc., to protest against the Rowlatt Bill, to wish success to the Satyagraha movement. Meetings were also convened by merchants and chambers of commerce to criticise the food control policy of the Government. (vide Police Commissioner's Report, dated 16th April 1919).

The Minister, Mr. Manubhai N. Mehta, recorded the following minute on the Police Commissioner's report.

"The Amreli Suba should be asked to impress upon the local public that the Rowlatt Act in no way affects them and the Head Master of the High School should clearly explain the tenor of the Act to the schools and leave no misunderstanding.

No strikes on the occasion of arrests of people in British India should be tolerated.

The Police Naib Suba, Navasari should be asked to keep under control men like Tamankar, Dayalji Nanubhai and Dajibhai Rudarji, so as to see that any attempt to create trouble is nipped in the bud. 17th April 1919 ".

REPORT OF HAPPENINGS

(FROM POLITICAL FILE OF THE BARODA STATE RECORDS.)

Meeting at Amreli.

Confidential.

On the 6th instant an open-air meeting was held at Amreli to protest against the Rowlatt Bills and to which success to the Satyagraha movement. About 300 persons attended. Nothing objectionable was said.

A strike was observed on the 12th and 13th, on receipt of the news of M. K. Gandhi's arrest. About 60 students of the High School wore black bands on their arms. A meeting, attended by about 500 persons, was held on the evening of the 13th to pray for M. K. Gandhi’s release.
The meeting of the 6th was convened by Nagarshet Tribhovan Par-manand, Rajratna Hiralal Govindji Vakil, Chaturbhuj Jagjivandas Vakil, Jamnadas Vamanji Vakil, Seth Tribhovan Motichand, Seth Suleman Arbi, Seth Amad Dada, Seth Musa Mahmad and Seth Musa Abharam, whose names appear on the leaflet printed at the "Rano-daya Press", Amreli. I think, that the Suba might be asked to warn these persons that they will be responsible for any evil effects of the movement they are starting and to point out to them that the Rowalatt Bills concern them even less than the people of the Bombay Presidency, where they will not be applied. The Headmaster of the High School might enlighten his students in the same way.

At Vyara.

The P. N. S., Navsari, reports that a strike was observed at Vyara on the 12th, engineered, as he is informed, by Dajibhai Rudaraji. (This is possibly the last Editor of the "Chabuk", now on the staff of the "Vafadar").

Tamankar's efforts to start a strike in Navsari were defeated by the stand made by Mr. Brijbhukandas.

Yesterday Balyogi was bound down by the Suba for six months to refrain from public speaking and writing to the Press. I have not yet been able to obtain the names of Bal Yogi's supporters who held the meeting in the Hind Vijaya Press on the 14th, at which they determined to start a strike if Bal-Yogi were arrested.

After discussing the situation with the Sar Suba, it was decided that he should call up Messrs. Haribhakti, Samal Becharwala and Chiman-lal Girdharlal and enlist their support. The Suba thinks that no action can be taken at present under the Press Act against the "Hind Vijaya".

Baroda, 16th April 1919.

R. G. HIRST,
Commissioner of Police.
THE DIWAN'S ORDER

Confidential.

No. D. 584.

Forwarded with compliments to H.E the Dewan Saheb, for favour of information.

(Signed) R. H. HIRST,
Commissioner of Police.

The Amreli Suba should be asked to impress upon the local public that the Rowlatt Act, in no way affects them and the Head Master of the High School should clearly explain the tenor of the Act to the Schools and leave no misunderstanding.

No strikes on the occasion of arrests of people in British India should be tolerated.

The Police Naeb Suba, Navsari, should be asked to keep under control men like Tamankar, Dayalji Nanubhai and Daji Bhai Rudarji, so as to see that any attempt to create trouble is nipped in the bud.

17th April 1919. (Signed) MANUBHAI N.

DIRECT PEOPLE TO ABSTAIN FROM MOVEMENT

Strictly confidential.

Hузур Политический Офицер:

No. M. 5320.

To

M. H. R. Suba Saheb, Amreli.

My dear Sir,

It appears from a report of the Police Commissioner that on the 6th instant an open air meeting was held at Amreli to protest against the Rowlatt Bills and to wish success to the Satyagraha movement, that a strike was observed on the 12th and 13th, on receipt of the
news of Mr. Gandhiji's arrest, that about 60 students of the High School wore black bands on their arm's, that a meeting was held on the evening of the 13th. to pray for Mr. Gandhiji's release. The meeting of the 6th seems to have been convened by Nagarsheeth Tribhovan Parmanand, Rajralna Hiralal Govindji Vakil, Jamnadas Vanmali Vakil, Chaturbhuj Jagjivandas Vakil, Seth Tribhoven Motichand, Seth Suleman Arbi, Seth Amad Dada, Seth' Musa Mamad and Seth Musa Obharam.

H. E. the Dewan Saheb directs that you should call these and other leaders of the public and impress upon them and through them the local public, that the Rowlatt Act in no way affects them and that they should refrain from any such agitation. The Head Master of the High School should also be called and asked to clearly explain to the students of the schools, the tenor of the Act and to allow no misunderstanding on their part on the subject.

H. E. the Dewan Saheb further directs that no strikes on the occasion of arrest of people in British India should be tolerated.

You will, please, arrange things tactfully and see that any attempt to create trouble is nipped in the bud.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) …………………
Political Secretary.

HANDLE THE SITUATION CAREFULLY

No. M/5337. Huzur Political Office:
Baroda, 19th April 1919.

Dear Sir,

The Rowlatt Act does not affect the Baroda Raj and it is not desirable that the subjects of His Highness the Maharaja Saheb should express their sympathy with the agitation that is being carried on in British India against the said Act. You should therefore, watch the public feeling on the subject and when necessary explain to the leading citizens, informally the intentions and scope of the Act and its inapplicability to the Raj and try to remove any misunderstandings on their part. You should also try to impress upon them, also informally, the undesirability of observing strike, on account of the arrest of any agitators in British. India on in consequence of any action the British Government may take with
regard to them. You should bring home to them the deplorable consequences of strikes and their inevitable tendency to go beyond the control and anticipations of the originators. Strikes are always fraught with evil results and in these days of scarcity and shortage of food supplies the consequences would be disastrous and interruption of communications and of carriage of supplies of food and fodder would mean death by starvation to hundreds of men and beasts. H. H.'s Government trust that you will handle the situation tactfully and manage to prevent any complications.

S. D. V. D.
19th April 1919.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) M. N.,
Dewan.

AMRELI SUBA'S REPORT

Strictly confidential.

SUBA OFFICE:
Amreli, 27th April 1919.

To
THE POLITICAL SECRETARY,
Baroda.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your office communications Nos. M./532C and M/5339 I have the honour to inform you that as reported by the Police Commissioner, a meeting was held on the 6th instant in Kamnath Temple to offer prayers for Gandhi's release and to express regret for his arrest. I was not present on that day in Amreli but was on tour in Kodinar. The members of the meeting as I learnt on my return had waited upon the Police Naib Suba who had allowed them to meet on condition that they should speak nothing against the Rowlatt Bill nor they make any observations concerning the British Government. Thus the meeting was held and was confined only to the offer of prayers without any speeches of a Political character. The shops were closed on the 12th and 13th keeping open certain shops to meet the requirements of the people and that some students had worn black bands and moved in the town is also a fact. There was a public meeting held on the 13th with the permission of the Police Naib Suba who had warned them not to make any political
speeches and the meeting was confined only to speeches praying for Gandhi’s release and long life. There was no word spoken about Satyagraha or Rowlatt Bill. I came to know about this meeting also after it had taken place. The meetings were quiet and not disturbed by any rowdiness or violence or false enthusiasm. No apprehensions should be entertained about any agitation or disturbance occurring in this district. I had already taken precautions to ensure that nothing unallowed happened. However in compliance with His Excellency’s orders I had called the leaders of the Mahajans and persuaded them not to initiate such occurrences in future and also warned the Head Master to keep the boys under strict control so that they may not take part in such occurrences in future. There are no such persons in this district who are likely to lead people astray by their political preaching or in any other way. You will kindly place these facts before His Excellency the Dewan Saheb for his informations.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) N. K. ALENI,

Suba, Amreli District.

Seen

(Sd.) Manubhai N.

VICEROY SENDS GOVERNMENT'S RESOLUTION

Viceroyal Lodge:
Simla, 17th April 1919.

My Honoured and Valued Friend.

I desire to forward for your Highness's information a copy of resolution issued by the Government of India regarding the serious disturbances which have arisen out of the agitation against the passing of the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Bill. The disturbances have been specially grave in the British Districts which lie between portions of the Baroda State. I am glad to think that I can always rely on your Highness's support and cooperation in the suppression of such outbursts of lawlessness,
I desire to express the high consideration which I entertain for your Highness and to subscribe myself. Your Highness's sincere friend,

(Sd.) CHELMSFORD.

His Highness
Maharaja Sir Sayaji Rao Gaekwar Bahadur,
G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., of Baroda,

THE GAZETTE OF INDIA
EXTRAORDINARY.

SIMLA: Monday, April 14, 1919.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
HOME DEPARTMENT.

No. 549, dated Simla, the 14th April 1919.

RESOLUTION.—By the Government of India, Home Department.

The present situation arising out of the agitation against the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act (commonly called the Rowlatt Act), renders it imperative on the Governor General in Council to define the attitude of the Government on the subject of that agitation and the serious disorders which have resulted therefrom, and to indicate the nature of the concerted action which it is now necessary to take for the preservation of law and order.

When the Bill was under discussion, its opponents publicly stated that if it is passed into law, a campaign of agitation against it, on a scale hitherto unattempted, would be organised throughout India, and a section of them indicated that they would support that campaign by resort to what is known as "passive resistance". No one cognisant of the conditions of India could have been ignorant at the time of the dangers of initiating a widespread movement of this
nature. They were clearly pointed out by many public men of moderate views, and the representatives of Government did not fail, during the debates of the Bill, to emphasize the serious consequences to the public peace which would follow from an agitation such as was then threatened.

These warnings were unheeded, and to the agitation which has succeeded the passing of the Act, must be directly attributed the open breaches of the public peace, the defiance which have lately been witnessed in certain parts of India. The agitation has followed a double line of action, namely direct criticism of the Act by means of public speeches and publications, and the initiation of the threatened movement of "passive resistance". The latter movement was ushered in by a demonstration consisting of the observance of a day of fasting, and the closing of shops and places of business. Such a demonstration was not in itself illegal, but there is ample evidence to prove that in more than one place those locally responsible for this organisation overstepped the limits of lawful persuasion, and restored to direct interference with the business of many who were not interested in the movement, and to forcible obstruction of the traffic in the public streets. But the indirect consequences of this aspect of the agitation have been far more mischievous, in that it promoted a sense of unrest and of excitement which was bound to react, and has reacted, on the more ignorant and inflammable sections of the population. The campaign of criticism has involved in many quarters the use of most flagrant misrepresentations regarding the character of the Act. It is clear that large numbers of ignorant people have been deliberately led to believe that the new law gives the police unfettered authority to interfere with public meetings not only of a political, but of a religious and social nature, and to arrest, summarily persons engaged in political work, and that it empowers the executive authorities to imprison without trial any person criticising the action of Government.

The Governor General in Council thinks it necessary to reiterate here the following salient facts concerning this Act. It is specifically directed against revolutionary and anarchical crime, and can only be brought into force in any locality when it has been proved to the satisfaction of the Governor General in Council that such crime or movements tending to such crime exist. It has not so far been brought into operation in any part of India. Its first part merely provides for the speedy trial of certain grave offences, in the second and third parts provision is made for preventive action (similar to but much more restricted in scope than that now provided by the Rules under the Defence of India Act) against persons suspected of
revolutionary or anarchical crime. Action cannot, however be taken against any individual without the previous order of the local Government. There is nothing therefore which can justify the widespread rumour, for which the promoters of the agitation must be held responsible, that unusual, or even extended powers have been given to the police, nor is there anything which need cause fear or apprehension to any person other than the revolutionary or the anarchist. Not only do the terms of the Act definitely exclude its use in any case not falling within the definition of anarchical or revolutionary conspiracy, but Government has given the most categorical pledge (which the Governor General in Council takes this opportunity to reiterate) that the tenor and intention of the Act will be scrupulously safeguarded should occasion arise to put it into operation.

The Governor General in Council considers it unnecessary to detail here the deplorable occurrences resulting from the agitation against this act. The offences which have occurred at Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay and Lahore have one common feature, the unprovoked attempt of violent and unruly mobs to hamper or obstruct those charged with the duty of maintaining order in public places. At Amritsar and Ahmedabad they have taken a far graver form, a murderous attack on defenceless individuals, and a wholesale, and wanton destruction of private and public property. The Governor General in Council thinks it right to state that at Amritsar the loss of life might have been greater but for the protection afforded by unofficial Indians to those who were threatened by the mob, and he takes this opportunity of expressing the gratitude of Government for this conspicuous example of loyalty and humane feeling.

It remains for the Governor General in Council to assert in the clearest manner the intention of Government to prevent by all means, however drastic, any recurrence of these excesses. He will not hesitate to employ the ample military resources at his disposal to suppress organised outrage, rioting or concerted opposition to the maintenance of law and order, and has already sanctioned the application of the State Offences Regulation, 1804, in a modified form, to certain districts of the Punjab. He will further use all preventive measures provided by the Statutes to check disorder at its source, and in Regulation III of 1818, and the corresponding regulations applicable to Bombay and Madras and in the Rules under the Defence of India Act, he has powers which will enable him to deal effectively with those who promote disorder. He has sanctioned the extension of the provisions of the Seditious Meetings Act to the districts of Lahore and Amritsar in the Punjab, and will
authorize a similar extension to other areas in which local Governments see reason to require it. The Police Act of 1861 enables a local Government to quarter additional police to any locality which is guilty of organised offences against the public peace, at the charge of the inhabitants, and to levy from the latter compensation for those who have suffered from injury to their property. The Governor General in Council will advise local Governments to make free use of these provisions where necessary.

The Governor General in Council feels that many of those who inaugurated this agitation must regret the lamentable consequences which have ensued, the loss of life and property, and the damage to the reputation of India. He now appeals to all loyal subjects of the Crown, and to all those who have an interest in the maintenance of law and the protection of the property, both to dissociate themselves publicly from the movement, and to exert themselves in quieting unrest and preventing disorder. To all those who render such assistance to the cause of the public and the State, and to those servants of Government who are charged with the onerous responsibility of suppressing excesses against public peace and tranquillity the Governor General in Council extends the fullest assurance of countenance and support.

ORDER.—Ordered that the Resolution be published in the Gazette of India and communicated to all local Governments and administrations and all Departments of the Government of India.

(Signed) J. H. DOBEULAY,
Secretary to the Government of India.

SAYAJIRAO'S REPLY TO VICEROY
Laxmi Vilas Palace,
Baroda, 28th April 1919.

To
His Excellency The Right Honourable Sir Frederic John Napier Thesiger, Baron Chelmsford, P.C., G.C.M.C, G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E., G.B.E.,
Viceroy and Governor General of India, Simla

My honoured and valued friend,

I have duly received your Excellency's letter dated the 17th instant forwarding for my information a copy of Resolution No. 549
dated the 14th Idem regarding the serious disturbances which have arisen in consequence of the agitation against the passing of the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act.

I was very sorry to learn about the disturbances which were reported to be specially grave in the British District in Gujarat adjoining the Baroda State.

I am glad to inform Your Excellency that, so far as I am aware, the contagion has not spread to my territories. Your Excellency may certainly count on my full support and co-operation in the suppression of outbursts of lawlessness and I am thankful for your Excellency's expression of confidence in me in that regard.

With an expression of the high consideration I entertain for ..Your Excellency, I beg to subscribe myself,

Your Excellency's sincere friend.

SIGN MANUAL,
Maharaja of Baroda.

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THE DIWAN'S CONFIDENTIAL MEMO

Confidential Memo.

The Rowlatt Act, otherwise known as the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes, Act passed by the Government of India, has no application to the Baroda State. It is the express desire of His Highness the Maharaja Saheb that the Baroda subjects should not participate in or show sympathy with, the violent agitation that is being carried on in British India against the passing of the said Act. If the British Government take any action in British India against the agitators, the Baroda subjects should refrain from expressing any views of disapproval etc. with regard to the same. There, should be no strikes in Baroda territory in consequence of any arrest of the agitators in British India, business-men, shop-keepers, etc. should follow their avocations as usual without interruption.
The District Officers should therefore call the leaders of the people, informally, and explain to them the desire of His Highness the Maharaja Saheb. They should be enlightened about the true scope and object of the Rowlatt Act as explained in the Government of India Resolution No. 549 dated the 14th April 1919, and attempts should be made to remove any misunderstanding of the public on this subject. The Head Masters of Schools should be taken, into confidence and it should be impressed upon them that the student class, as a body, should abstain from taking part in this uncalled for agitation.

The Officers should make it clear that any sort of agitation in this connection will not be tolerated by His Highness's Government and they should take immediate steps to nip in the bud any movement in that direction. They should carefully keep a strict watch over the public feelings and the endeavour of mischievous people to foment trouble and should any emergency arise, handle the situation tactfully but firmly and take such precautionary and remedial action as the exigencies of the occasion may require. All untoward occurrences should be promptly reported.

Copy of this should be sent to the Subas of the four Districts and to the Police Commissioner and to the Educational Commissioner for doing the needful.

Proper guard should at once be placed at Telegraph Officers, Stations, Banks and Treasuries if there is any presentiment of approaching trouble.

Huzur Cutcherry,

Baroda, 28th April 1919

(Signed) MANUBHAI N. D.,
Dewan.

(Signed) V. D. S.

No. M/5537
29th April 19

Copy forwarded to M. R. R. the Suba Saheb, Navsari, for information and guidance.

(Signed) V. D. SATGHARE,
Political Secretary,
Both the seditious books were translated from Bengali works, and enquiries elicited the fact that both Punjabhai and Narsinh had studied this language, and that the latter was very proficient in the same. Proof was obtained that this "respectable" pleader Punjabhai was on terms of intimacy with the swindler Abba Saheb and also had the support of Mohanlal Pandya and other State officials, including Mr. K. G. Deshpande, the Suba of Naosari Working on these lines, the Sub-Inspector of the Bombay C. I. D. was able to gain the confidence of Punjabhai, and became the intermediary between him and Narsinh in certain communications and letters which passed with a view to the supply of some of these seditious books. His mission was successful and resulted in the delivery of books by Narsinh, on the direct and personal representation of Punjabhai, who paid a visit for this purpose to Mehsana. Action was there and then taken against Punjabhai under section 108, Criminal Procedure Code, in the Court of the District Magistrate, Kaira, and resulted in his being bound over. At this trial Narsinh gave evidence on behalf of the Crown, and though he spoke to the main facts leading up to the delivery of the books, he tried to shield himself as to his share in their production.

A this was the main point of the enquiry, further enquiries were made in Baroda, Bombay and Naosari. Certain entries were found in account books leading to enquiries at the Shikshak Press at Mehsana. This press was in the possession of one Gangadhar Sakharam Joshi, who undertook therein the printing of Narsinh's educational magazine, the Shikshak. The press had previously been run by Narsinh and his brother.

These further enquiries proved that the book "Vanaspathini Davao" was printed at the Shikshak Press, and Narsinh made full admission before the Resident of Baroda, and later in the day before the then Dewan, Mr. Seddon, as to his connection with the books of which he was the author. The State instituted a case against the proprietor of the press for breach of the Press Regulations the only charge under which, with its admittedly defective laws against sedition, they were able to take action. The case
rested on Narsinh's evidence Corroborated by two employees of the press, a compositor and a binder. Meanwhile the conviction of Punjabhai by the District Magistrate, Kaira, has unfortunately been quashed by the High Court and a re-trial ordered to take place before the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Bombay, Punjabhai's ability to engineer this was due to the enormous support he received from Baroda State subjects.

The laws of the State were such that Narsinh could not be punished for publishing and writing the vilest calumnies and the most virulent sedition against the British Government. When it was seen that it was proposed to make use of him, his supporters and admirers rose up in arms and the enquiry was hampered in every possible way. Narsinh, though a free and voluntary witness, was said to have been abducted and on his side were ranged officers of the State of such position as Mr. Khaserao Bhagwant Jadhav, the Subha of Mehsana, under whom Narsinh was employed. One of the results of this campaign of hostility against an enquiry into sedition in the Baroda State was that the case against the owner of the press broke down hopelessly, Narsinh and two others of the Chief Prosecution witnesses having turned round. The higher officials of the State were convinced that this failure of justice was the result of the direct pressure of the extremist element. With their hands strengthened by the return of His Highness The Gaikwar from England, disciplinary measures were taken, as a result of which Mr. Jadhav was transferred to the Forest Department, Mr. Deshpande was forced to resign, the Shikshak Press was confiscated. Narsinh and Abba Saheb were deported from Baroda territory and, in pursuance of enquiries made by the State Police, Mr. Mohanlal Pandya has also been made to sever his connection with the State. Meanwhile the re-trial of the case against Punjabhai came on in the Court of the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Bombay. Narsinh's evidence was necessary, but he ignored all summonses to attend, attendance not being imperative on a State subject. On his deportation from the State, advantage was taken of the situation, and he was served with a warrant of arrest on which he was brought to Bombay for the purpose of giving evidence. Here he distinguished himself by an extraordinary contradiction of facts which have since led to his prosecution for perjury. This Narsinh, school-master, educationalist, clerk and atheist, imbibed his ideas of independence and hostility to Government at the time when Aravindo Ghose was flourishing in Baroda, and his future movements and activities will require vigilant surveillance. He is a dangerous specimen of the Patidar community, which has rather an unenviable reputation for criminality and the subversion of justice and order.