CHAPTER - FIVE

THE TELUGU PRESS AND THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT

(THE GANDHIAN ERA)
The year 1919 is an important landmark in the history of Indian freedom movement. It saw the entry of Mahatma Gandhi into the arena of Indian politics. He dominated the political scene till the country became free in 1947.  

In 1919 the Government passed the Rowlatt Act which gave the executive special powers to deport individuals, to muzzle the press, and to set up tribunals to try political offenders. These repressive measures provoked criticism from the press all over the country. The Telugu papers especially Andhra Patrika and Krishna Patrika protested vehemently against the Act. Andhra Patrika observed, "If the new bills were to become law, it may be said that even the nominal individual freedom now enjoyed will totally disappear in future. It is very regrettable that at the present time when

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the bond of mutual goodwill between the rulers and the ruled should become stronger, new repressive measures should be under preparation. What the authorities want to do, cannot but come to pass. Still, it is the duty of the Government to foresee the future conditions of India under such Laws and withdraw them now at least". 2 Krishna Patrika said, "The Government of India are determined to pass the recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee into law. In the past they gave Minto-Morley Reforms with one hand and the press Act with the other. While Mr. Montagu is busy in England in preparing a scheme of self-government for India, the Government of India are trying here to enact repressive laws which cut at the root of the fundamental rights of man". 3 Other papers also wrote in the same strain.

Gandhi who was by then the champion of Champaran Satyagraha and Kheda Ryots movement, appealed to the Viceroy to withdraw the bill. On the refusal of the Viceroy, Gandhiji led to the Satyagraha movement and 6th April 1919 was observed as a day of protest and laws were disobeyed by non-violent methods. Response of the Andhras to the call for Sathyagraha was spontaneous. Telugu papers like Deshabhimani, Deshamata, Andhravani, Hitakarini and Andhra

2. N.P.R., 1919, P. 134.
3. Ibid., 1919, P. 211.
Patrika criticised the government. A demand was now made for the declaration of fundamental Rights.  

Hitakarini observed, "The agitation created by the Rowlatt bills in the minds of the people has already given place to the faith that the pledge of Mahatma Gandhi would lead to the withdrawal of those bills. This great vow of peace, this flame of the fire of truth has already spread from province to province. It has moved the king in the palace and the saint in the forest and prompted them to sign the pledge. Truth and righteousness know of no defeat in nature. The passive resistance pledge of Mahatma Gandhi surpasses the roar of a lion from its den. It is more powerful than a bomb". The paper said that people had been waiting for a new plan of action and Gandhi had supplied them with it.

The Punjab atrocities created horror throughout the country. It shocked the sense of forbearance of the people, who termed it as a national humiliation. Meetings were held to condemn the atrocities. Telugu papers like Andhra Patrika, Deshamata, Desabhimani, Andhravani and Hitakarini also became uncompromising critics of the government's


repressive policy. Gadicherla Harisarvathama Rao wrote an article entitled "Cult of the Bullet" in his paper, "The Nationalist" condemning the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, for which the paper was proscribed by the government. Although owing to the strict censorship exercised by the authorities information about the happening reached the Telugu people very slowly and in driblets, their sense of shock and horror was immediate and intense.

The Krishna District conference, which met on April 24, welcomed the Satyagraha movement launched by Gandhiji. While it deplored the outbreak of violence in some places, it protested against the imposition of martial law and disapproved of the deportation of the leaders. Desabhimani pointed out the injustice of such repressive and inhuman measures in the case of a country which had shown "its world-renowned and flawless loyalty when England was involved in a terrible war" Krishna Patrika said that the cup of sorrow was full and that another drop would make it overflow.

7. N.P.R., 1919, P. 1172.
As a result of the persistent demands made by the All India Congress Committee and other public bodies, the Viceroy appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Lord Hunter to enquire into the happenings in the Punjab. But it did not satisfy the public. What they wanted was a Royal Commission independent of the Government of India, which would report directly to His Majesty's Government in England. Krishna Patrika observed: "The Viceroy has appointed a committee to enquire into the Punjob disturbances. How can justice be done then? While the matter on which the committee will have to give its decision relates to a dispute between the people and the government, is it the government of India which is a party to the case that should appoint the committee or the Parliament which exercises control over both?"

The Indian National Congress passed a resolution regarding the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms to the effect that the reforms were inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing and that the British parliament should take steps to establish full responsible government in India. However the Congress declared that it was prepared to work and try out the reforms. The Telugu press expressed its deep sense of dissatisfaction at the inadequacy of the Montagu-

Chelmsford reforms. But, since the Amritsar Congress passed a resolution saying that they were prepared to try out the reforms for what they were worth, the Telugu press also advocated the acceptance of the reforms and for the entrance of Indians to contest the ensuing elections. Andhra leaders like Konda Venkatappaya, Satyamurthi and Kaleswara Rao undertook a tour of the districts in order to educate the people regarding the ensuring elections. 10

The Muslims were sullen because of the Khilafat question. Krishna Patrika observed that there could be no spontaneous enthusiasm among the people unless the government gave an assurance that they would preserve the Turkish Empire and the Khilafat, repeal the Rowlatt Act, release all political prisoners and remove the restrictions on the press. Hitakarini also expressed similar views. Some of the papers supported the resolution passed at the Khilafat conference presided over by Gandhiji, that peace celebrations should be boycotted. Under these circumstances the celebrations in Andhra became purely an officials affair. 11

Desabhimani wrote, "Just as Lord Krishna saved Arjuna, Gandhiji has sounded his conch of Non-Cooperation to save

the whole world. His message is a novel one. This will enable not only the Indians but the whole World to attain salvation.”

NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT:

The more important of the Telugu papers explained why the people had resorted to non-cooperation. As a result of the great dissatisfaction of the people with the present administrative policy of the government, nationalism had gained an impetus in the country. The Khilafat problem and the Hunter Committee's report had created new conditions in India. It was felt that the methods of agitation usually adopted had become useless and whatever hope the people had in the British Parliament had been shattered after their 'shameless defence of the most inhuman acts of General Dyer'.

Therefore, the papers said, the people now meant to help themselves by resorting to the policy of non-cooperation. They observed that the Indian nationalists were convinced that for a satisfactory solution of the Punjab and the Khilafat problems and for the attainment of Swaraj, there was no other alternative left to them but the adoption of non-cooperation. From the very beginning, Indians had tried constitutional means to uplift themselves. But having

failed they had grown despondent. They did not want to be mendicants any longer and sought refuge in non-co-operation. 13

Andhra Patrika from Madras and Krishna Patrika from Machilipatnam, wrote strongly in favour of Gandhi's programme in its entirety, including the boycott of councils. They paid a high tribute to him and his methods and exhorted the people to follow his footsteps. They warmly appreciated the righteous principle of non-violence underlying it, and the spiritual power which formed the very soul of it, 'and commended it for the acceptance of the public. Venkatesapatrika of Chittoor contrasted the Martial Law regime in Egypt and in India, and observed that "though there were many deaths in Egypt there were no massacres, instances of crawling, making people drink urine, and the outraging of women as in Jallianwala Bagh". The paper exhorted the people to adopt non-cooperation and practise it in such a way as to make it impossible for the government to carry on their administration. 14

13. Report on the Telugu newspapers and periodicals for the year 1920 (Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India (History of Freedom Struggle Volumes), A.P. State Archives (H.F.S.), P.18.

14. Ibid.
Hitakarini saw no advantage in the reforms proposed by the government and recommended non-cooperation, with the government, by way of refraining from returning members to the council. While accepting the principle underlying non-cooperation, the paper was opposed to its application in regard to schools and taxes. Striking a different note Darbar of Guntur, Godavari Patrika of Rajahmundry and Nellore Patrika of Nellore disapproved the non-cooperation movement, observing that the boycott of legislative councils was fraught with very grave danger to the country's cause. Nellore Patrika advised the Mussalmans of India to exercise self-control and carry on constitutional agitation with redoubled vigour till a reversal or modification of the peace terms was obtained. Panchanana of Sompet and the Hitavadi of Masulipatnam also declared themselves against non-cooperation. 15

Andhra Patrika and Krishna Patrika observed that to throw the responsibility for defeating the non-cooperation movement on the moderates, instead of findings the real cause of the movement, was of no use, inasmuch as the moderates as well as the nationalists had expressed their disapproval of the acts of the authorities in the Punjab and

of the harm done to the religious feelings of the Mahammadans. Hitakarini of Eluru remarked that it was futile to admonish the moderates or threaten the nationalists. Repression such as that contemplated by the government in their resolution on the non-cooperation movement, had never protected despotism in any country. A better policy to cope with the situation would be for the rulers to satisfy the people by repealing the Arms Act and the Rowlatt Act, seeing that the Indians were treated with respect in the colonies, punishing those responsible for the Punjab outrages, and carrying out the pledges given by the British Ministers in the matter of the Khilafat. 16

The Telugu press usually followed the trend of political thought in India, as shaped by the Indian National Congress. In the year under review, therefore, it was mostly in accord with the resolution of the Nagpur and the Calcutta sessions of the Congress, by way of endorsing the change in the Congress creed regarding the goal of India, and advocating non-violent, non-cooperation, as the last resort left to the Indians for securing Swaraj and for safeguarding the primary rights of Indians, when the expression of public opinion on the burning questions of the day, through the

press, the platform, memorials and deputations, had failed to exercise the desired influence on the rulers. Andhra Patrika, Krishna Patrika, Hitakarini and Desabhimani took the lead and almost all the other Telugu papers followed in their wake, in impressing these ideals upon the attention of the public.

While the Telugu press in general was very vehement in its criticism of the Punjab and the Khilafat questions, some papers such as Desabhimani and Hitakarini occasionally condemned in strong language the Punjab atrocities and massacres. As usual, Andhra Patrika was balanced and comprehensive while Krishna Patrika was eloquent and persuasive. Both these papers were uncompromising critics of the government measures. Desabhimani which had, during the year under review, swelled in volume and increased in its activity and Hitakarni were occasionally very vehement in their criticisms of the government. Bala Bharathi of Anantapur and Venkatesa Patrika of Chittoor were also severe and unsparing in criticising the acts of the government. Andhra Prakasika had yielded place to Nyaya Dipika, which was an organ of the Justice party of Madras, its advocacy of the non-Brahman cause. All the more important papers, had acquired a strongly nationalist tone, and therefore were mainly responsible for the phenomenal
spread of the non-cooperation movement in the Telugu districts. 17

Nyaya Dipika, directed its energies to expose to the people what it regarded as the hollowness and the futility of the non-cooperation movement which was hostile to the government and snatched every occasion to offer to the government wise counsels of a constructive nature, calculated to place the administration of the presidency on a popular and enduring basis. This paper found able lieutenants in Andhra Prakasika, Darbar and Ryot of Tenali which, as a rule, were moderate in the criticism of the Government, and were zealous and faithful in the advocacy of the principles for which it stood in this country. 18

The 'broken pledges' of Lloyd George, the people's desire to gain independence which became more prominent after the war, the Hindu-Muslim unity, the growing self-confidence and the extraordinary awakening among the masses and the 'success which attended the non-cooperation Movement so far as it related to elections, were some of the subjects on which the nationalist papers dwelt at length in the year under review. Krishna Patrika, remarked that the weakness,

18. Ibid., 1921, (H.F.S.), P. 5.
the selfishness, and the dishonesty of the majority of the educated had dispelled the illusion of the villagers, and that the vow of Swaraj taken and the spirit of renunciation manifested by such men as Pandit Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das had inspired self-confidence in them and contributed not a little to the new awakening in the Andhra region too and to the success of the non-cooperation movement in its villages. 19

Andhra Patrika observed that the fearlessness exhibited by the municipal councils in presenting addresses to Gandhiji, the establishment of national schools all over the country, the music of the spinning wheel now heard in every village, and in the educated classes taking to wearing the coarse Swadesi cloth, and the determination of the people to discontinue such vices as drink were all evidences of the awakening in India. Hitakarni, Andhra Patrika, and Krishna Patrika, took every opportunity to place before the public the situation in Ireland in order to show that the goal of Swaraj could not be reached without encountering a series of obstacles deliberately placed in its way. They feared the possibility of a clash between the people and the authorities and assured that if Indians conducted themselves

in accordance with true spirit of non-cooperation, the movement was eventually bound to succeed since it had taken deep root in the minds of the people. 20

The passing of the non-cooperation resolution by the Congress was welcomed by the nationalist Telugu press and the message of non-cooperation was propagated with great zeal. Andhra Patrika wrote that the non-cooperation movement would herald a new era in Indian history21 and praised the non-cooperation gospel as "The greatest ever preached in the history of our country". 22 A number of editorials, news articles and letters in support of the non-cooperation movement were published in its pages. In a series of editorials on "The means to Swaraj", the paper appealed to the people to be prepared to face misery, repression and other difficulties" in order to make the non-cooperation movement successful. 23 It rebutted all criticism of the movement and stoutly defended it. Explaining that all the programmes of the movement were constructive in nature, the paper refuted the charge that some of them were impracticable and harmful to the nation. 24

23. Ibid., August 9, 1920.
24. Ibid., October 2, 1920.
Appealing to the people to devote themselves whole-heartedly for the success of the movement Krishna Patrika wrote: "Cast away your individual opinions and your petty consciences and place yourself entirely at the disposal of the destiny of your country." It also pointed out that the movement was not a negative movement but a constructive movement. In one of its editorials the paper said: "Swaraj does not merely consist in awakening the knowledge, power, love and duty latent in the people."

Congress of Maddoori Annapurnaiah spared no effort for popularising the non-cooperation movement as a means for Swaraj. It argued that non-cooperation with the Government was the only effective and sure means of attaining Swaraj. It further said "There is as much difference between constitutional agitation and non-cooperation as there is between words and action. One's own strength is the foundation of non-cooperation. The basis of constitutional agitation is to cling to the feet of the government, to seek their refuge, to threaten them now and then". It was shameful for 32 crores of Indians to be ruled by a handful of Europeans. It wanted the people to be both patriotic and

26. Ibid., July 2, 1921.
27. N.P.R., 1922, P. 1024.
courageous in this effort to win independence.\textsuperscript{28} Desabhimani described the launching of the non-cooperation movement by Mahatma Gandhi as "Pouring life into the lifeless Indian nation".\textsuperscript{29} Comparing Gandhi's call for non-cooperation with Lord Krishna's call to Arjuna for action the paper said: "Just as Lord Krishna saved Arjuna, Gandhi has sounded his conch of non-cooperation to save the whole world. His message is novel, but this will enable not only the Indians but also the whole world to attain salvation".\textsuperscript{30} Other newspapers such as Hitakarini, Bala Bharati, Andhravani, and Venkatesa Patrika also supported the non-cooperation movement. They supported the various programmes of the non-cooperation movement like, the boycott of schools, courts, Legislative councils, foreign goods and titles.

The leading Telugu papers made a special appeal to the lawyers and urged them to boycott courts. Krishna Patrika wrote: "The time has come when the lawyers have to make great sacrifices. By their power, they can make the bureaucracy helpless. Moreover, the present courts are a nuisance and promote immorality and the lawyers will see the

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., PP. 988-90.
\textsuperscript{29} Deshabhimani, August 29, 1920.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
necessity of boycotting such institutions.\textsuperscript{31} Andhra Patrika in one of its editorials on the non-cooperation movement wrote that the days when "lawyers could spend their time by playing billiards were over", and what was required of them was sacrifice for the sake of the country.\textsuperscript{32}

The remarks of the Telugu press under this head were mostly confined to a consideration of the propriety or otherwise of boycotting the law courts established by the Government. In accordance with the resolution of the Congress, papers like Balabharathi and Krishna Patrika recommended the boycott of courts on the ground that, as constituted at present they had actually impoverished the country and destroyed mutual trust among the members of society. They despaired of any improvement in the judicial administration of the country for the next ten years, in as much as justice was not a transferred subject, and urged that the only means of escape from it was to have recourse to non-cooperation and get the disputes settled by arbitration. Krishna Patrika attempted to dissuade the villagers from cooperating with the Government in the establishment of the Panchayat Courts in villages, on such flimsy grounds as the close relations would subsist between

\textsuperscript{31} Krishna Patrika, December 28, 1921.

\textsuperscript{32} Andhra Patrika, September 25, 1920.
these courts and the Judicial Department, which it was proposed to boycott. It urged the villagers to set up their own Panchayats which should have nothing to do with the Government.33

One of the important features of the Telugu press during the non-cooperation movement was the publication of several inspiring appeals to the students to boycott educational institutions. The following passage from Krishna Patrika is a typical example for such appeals. The passage reads, "Students, Students! in your colleges you do not learn anything better than self-interest, dependance etc. Give them up and devote one year to the attainment of freedom, to thoughts about the country, to the worship of popular force. Then yourself and your Mother Country will be regenerated. The Andhra students should follow in the foot steps of their Bengalee brethren who go from village to village in great numbers to revive and develop village life."34

Krishna Patrika published the inspiring message of C.R. Das, under the heading "Arise! Students! Arise!", asking students of all categories to give up their studies for the


34. Krishna Patrika, January 29, 1921.
cause of the nation. 35 Desabhimani appealed to the students not to think in terms of advantages and disadvantages of the boycott of schools, but to have faith in Mahatma Gandhi and implement his programme of the boycott of schools. The exhortation of Lokamanya's son Sridhar B. Tilak, when he gave up his studies to participate in the movement was well utilised to draw the students and the masses into the movement. 36 Andhra Patrika wrote, "He (Sridhar, B. Tilak) says that if his father was alive now he would approve of the course followed by him (giving up his studies). Indians, if they wish to honour Lokamanya, will do well to strive hard for the success of Congress resolution." 36a

While Desabhimani, an out and out nationalist paper, characterised schools of the day as 'filthy abysses' from which boys had to be rescued, Hitakarini did not approve of the proposal to boycott schools as it thought that the fault lay with the Government and not with the quality of the education imparted in schools. 37 In its issue for the 27th December it said, "Some people support the boycott of schools on the ground that the present day education being

36. Desabhimani, February 6 and 13, 1921.
37. Report of the Telugu newspapers and periodicals for the year 1921 (H.F.S.)
supported by the rulers, who are given to injustice is full of sin. But we are of opinion that this is meaningless. Under certain circumstances, a government may not be popular and our government being foreign, here perpetrated evil acts and are not liked by the people. But to say on this score, that we should not touch the money that is coming through them, is improper. The educational policy has enslaved us but not the education. It lies with the school authorities to change the policy... It is said that as we are in a state of war and that the youth must render service to their country. The statement that we are in a state of war is not true".38

The papers which had full faith in Gandhi's policies, supported the boycott of Legislative councils also. They argued very ably to point out the futility of the nationalist participating in the legislative councils. Their main argument was that it was impossible to carry on the Non-cooperation Movement from within the councils. It was also pointed out that as long as real power did not rest within the people the presence of the nationalists in the council would result in more evil than good to the people.39

The failure of the constitutional methods in Ireland was

38. N.P.R., 1921, P. 71.
39. Ibid., 1920, PP. 1101-2.
also used as an argument to prove that participation in the councils would not bring any useful results. Balabharathi ridiculing the idea of nationalists entering Legislative councils wrote, "Those who wish to waste their time in playing with the toys known as reforms may go for fun to such useless councils if they like".

The Telugu press paid much attention to the programme of boycott of foreign cloth and the wearing of Swadeshi cloth. Promotion of khaddar was undertaken with a missionary zeal by the nationalist Telugu papers. Andhra Patrika in its editorial appealed to people to make and wear khaddar. It said that khaddar was the wheel of Lakshmi for the poor and the destitute. The nationalist Telugu papers believed that khaddar was a means to Swaraj and carried on a relentless and vigorous campaign for the manufacture and wearing of khaddar. In an editorial, Congress wrote, 'It is khaddar alone that will remove poverty and establish peace and self-respect'. The order of the Government prohibiting the introduction of charka in schools also became a subject for much criticism in the press. The campaign for eradication of untouchability and for prohibition of the sale of liquor

40. Ibid., P. 1131.
42. Andhra Patrika, August 12, 1922.
43. N.P.R., 1922, P. 519.
which formed part of the Non-cooperation Movement also received support from a wide section of the Telugu press.

Questioning the wisdom of making bonfires of foreign cloth in some parts of the country and pointing out that a very large number of the people were going halfnaked, Kanthirava of the 6th September in a short note wrote: Some of the non-cooperators themselves did not like the idea of burning foreign cloths as it prevented even the poor people from using them. If the advise of our learned patriots is to be strictly followed, What should become of the thousands of our weavers, a large number of whom are maintaining themselves by wearing cloth made of foreign yarn? If we go to the extent of boycotting even these cloths only because of their being made of foreign yarn, we will make ourselves responsible for the starvation and consequent death of a good number of our own country men. Let our national leaders think over this matter". 44

Other Telugu papers maintained that, to compel the attention of the British towards granting democracy to the Indians, there was no sharper weapon than to cause loss to their trade, the means of their prosperity, and that, to bring about such a result, the only means at their disposal

44. N.P.R., 1921, P. 1115.
was the Swadeshi movement. They felt sure that the Government of India by itself could not render any help in this matter, as they were solely in the hands of the Lancashire merchants. The papers were almost unanimous in impressing on the people with the immediate necessity for the boycott of foreign cloth, which always reminded Indians of their dependence, servitude and misery in the country, and made them extremely unhappy.  

Andhra Patrika, however, differed from certain other papers in regard to the disposal of the discarded foreign cloth. It did not approve of making a bonfire of it, as it might be taken as hatred of the British, a quality opposed to the time-honoured traditions of India which always held sacred the principle of non-violence. Referring to the communique of the Government on the boycott of foreign cloth, the paper feared that the authorities were resorting to repression even in the case of the Swadeshi movement. It exhorted the people to persist in it but cautioned them to observe scrupulously non-violence in the fulfilment of the Swadeshi vow.

Krishna Patrika strongly advocated the introduction of


46. Ibid.
the spinning wheel into every Indian home as a potent instrument for the speedy attainment of Swaraj. It remarked that only when Indians abandoned their slavist-mentality and became national in their tastes and ideals would the political fetters drop from their hands of their own accord, like the seared leaves of the tree, and urged that the revival of the spinning wheel in this country was bound to be followed by her people regaining their lost power and prosperity. 47

The Telugu press in general laid the greatest stress on the universal use of khaddar as the most important item in the constructive programme of the Congress. Besides regarding it as the very first step in the attainment of Swaraj, it dwelt at length on the part it was destined to play in the economic regeneration of the country. It lost no opportunity to urge on the people to realise the necessity to concentrate their attention on the manufacture and use of khaddar on a very large scale. It said that the message of khaddar had found its echo within the walls of prison-houses and reverberated from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari that the nation would acquire self-consciousness as a result of the

development of khaddar and that this in its turn would give birth to Swaraj. 48

While the Telugu press in general supported the Congress in its advocacy of the boycott of British Goods, Ravi of Kakinada characterized the resolution of the Delhi Congress as short-sighted and sounded a note of warning that it was bound to fail like the resolution on the boycott of Government schools and bring the Indians to ridicule. 49 In contrast, Simhapuri of Nellore exhorted Congressmen to picket shops if any marchants still insisted on dealing in British goods and observed that it would form a step in preparing the country to launch civil disobedience. 50 Navvulatota of Masulipatam felt highly gratified at the example set by the corporation of Bombay in adopting a resolution to boycott British goods and hoped that the Municipal Councils in the Andhra region such as those of Bezawada and Rajahmundry which had a majority of nationalists in them, might follow its example. 51


49. Ibid., Public (confd.), G.O. No. 345, dated May 12, 1924.

50. Ibid.

A correspondent to Deshabhimani while urging women to take to the non-cooperation said that the great weapon of non-cooperation had been tried by the Americans against the English in the past, that by the help of this weapon alone, all countries had been able "to drink the nectar of freedom" and that it was not right on the part of women to be indifferent to the movement. He concluded with the exhortation: "Ascend the steps of Swaraj, secure freedom to India, fame to yourselves, happiness to your sons, and disgrace to our rulers".  

Glorification of the 1857 revolt was one of the important methods adopted by some Telugu papers to rouse national consciousness among the people. Congress published a series of articles, glorifying the Indian leaders of the revolt and condemning the atrocities committed by the British generals in that revolt in its writings on 1857 revolt. It made extensive use of the material published in Charles Ball's book, "The Indin Revolt and V.D. Savarkar's Indian war of Independence".  

Congress considered the 1857 revolt as the First War of Indian Independence and published many stories and articles

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52. Desabhimani, March 13, 1921.

praising the heroes of the 1857 revolt, like Jhansi Laxmi Bai, Nana Saheb and Tantia Tope. The sacrifices made by the Indians during the revolt were highlighted in the issue of Congress. Those historians who had described the revolt as a 'Sepoy Mutiny' were criticised. Congress said that the readers understood the deception played by the English historians in this regard. It said distorting and corrupting history was more heinous than the murders committed by English soldiers like Neil and Nicholson.54

In the issue of Congress published a series of articles on Nana Saheb to inspire the younger generation to participate in the freedom struggle. In its issue dated 13th August 1929, the paper asked its readers to reflect on the last message of Nana Saheb who is supposed to have said, "are we robbers in our own country and the foreigners rulers?".55 Congress described Laxmibai of Jhansi as an incarnation of the Goddess Kali. Poems were written in praise of the Rani of Jhansi and the inspiring events of her life were published and women were asked to plunge into the Indian freedom struggle to free India from the yoke of foreign rule.56

55. Congress, July and August, 1929.
56. Ibid.
Congress published a biographical sketch of Peer Ali, a book-seller of Lucknow, who died as a martyr in 1857. The journal said that Peer Ali made the following declaration before he was hanged to death. "You may hang me. But you can not hang my aim. Thousands of heroes will rise from the drops of my blood and fulfil my objective". Satyagrahi wrote an editorial on the 1857 revolt. It said that it was not true to say that the 1857 revolt was a sepoy's revolt and that it was false history to describe it as a sepoy mutiny. May 10th, 1857, on which the revolt started, would remain a golden day in the history of the Independence movement declared the Satyagrahi.

The celebration of the National Week between April 6, and 13th from 1919 onwards provided vast scope for the nationalist press to preach national ideals to the people. The celebrations connected with the week were given wide publicity in the press through editorials and articles. People were exhorted to work with determination for the liberation of the Motherland. In the appeals made in the earlier years, the papers had exhorted the people to contribute liberally to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, to become members of the Congress, to wear khaddar, and to hold

57. Congress, October 29, 1929.
58. Satyagrahi, May 6, 1929.
meetings and pass resolutions opposing the Rowlatt Act. Andhra Patrika writing about the national week in 1922, remarked that it was the most sacred period for lovers of freedom for the country and exhorted the 30 crores of people in India to work unitedly for the attainment of Swaraj.⁵⁹

The nationalist Telugu newspapers never forgot the Jallianwallah Bagh massacres nor forgave the British for those brutal acts. Revival of the memory of that national tragedy through the newspapers was intended to keep the flame of patriotism burning among the people till Independence was achieved. Writing under the heading 'Do not forget' Andhra Patrika wrote that the blood of the Hindus and Mahammadans flowed together in Jallianwallah Bagh and remarked that the memory of Jallianwallah Bagh should make the people remember always that their happiness would be assured only in 'Swadharma' or Swaraj.⁶⁰ Satyagrahi under the title 'The Punjab is a running sore', blamed the people for doing nothing' to emancipate the country, even after the Jallianwallah Bagh massacre and remarked that it would be appropriate to call Indians cowards.⁶¹

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⁵⁹. Andhra Patrika, April, 1922.
⁶⁰. Andhra Patrika, April 13, 1923.
⁶¹. Satyagrahi, April 11, 1927.
The significance of the national flag and the honour which it should receive from the people was also the subject matter of the nationalist Telugu papers on many occasions. In explaining the importance of the National Flag as a symbol of national honour, the press conveyed to the people one of the essential principles of patriotism. The Telugu press was particularly happy that Pingali Venkayya, an Andhra, designed the National Flag. *Krishna Patrika* in an editorial reviewed the book of Pingali Venkayya on the National Flag and commended the necessity for a National Flag for the country. The Nagpur Satyagraha in 1923, which was carried on to protect the honour of the National Flag, attracted nationwide attention and prompted the nationalist Telugu newspapers and periodicals to explain to the people the importance of the National Flag.  

*Andhra Patrika* eulogised the National Flag in the following words: "The National Flag is the symbol of peace. It is the symbol for the emancipation of economic slavery, a symbol for the promotion of Hindu Muslim Unity. It promotes Ahimsa and is the flag for swaraj". *Krishna Patrika* in one of its comments on the National Flag wrote, "It is a national vow. It is symbolical of the nation's genuine

voice. In it we find the vow of independence of new India proclaimed aloud". 64 Satyagrahi characterised the National Flag as the symbol of unity and nationalism and wrote that slavery would disappear on the day on which all the people of the country cultivated deep devotion and respect for the National Flag. 65 Desabhimani also wrote very eloquently about the significance of the flag.

The Telugu press richly drew upon the ancient traditions, Puranas and other religious works to convince the people that the movement for freedom was just and that it was in accordance with the culture and traditions of the country. Desabhimani in its issue dated July 11, 1920 declared that the principle of non-cooperation was acceptable to all religions. The story of Prahlada in the Hindu legend taught this principle. Jesus Christ could give up his life on the cross because he adopted the principle. This was morally and religiously sound.

Hitakarini wrote the story of Nahusha being cursed while he was Devendra and such other puranic incidents showed that a king who swerved from the path of justice could be deposed and punished. 66 Andhra Patrika in its

64. N.P.R., 1931, P. 648.
65. Satyagrahi, 21, 1929.
leader under the heading "The ethics of the Movement" described it as one of "Truth and Dharma". In its editorial it compared the message of non-cooperation of Mahatma Gandhi to the message of Lord Krishna to Arjuna. Some papers, as noted already were critical of the non-cooperation movement. Durbar, Ravi and Nyaya Dipika were the prominently pro-British during the non-cooperation movement. Durbar characterised the movement as a movement of the rich and said that poor people would suffer if they participated in it.

MOULDING THE PUBLIC OPINION IN FAVOUR OF PURNA SWARAJ:

A section of the Telugu press carried on a relentless campaign for Purna Swaraj or complete independence for the country right from 1925. Among the papers which were in favour of complete independence, Congress was most prominent. Satyagrahi and Krishna Patrika also contributed richly to the thinking of the people in favour of the ideal of Purna Swaraj.

The Congress suggested that the politicians who adopted mendicant methods should be driven out of the Congress organisation to see that complete independence was adopted.

as the goal. It even suggested the formation of an independent party for the purpose of carrying on the struggle for complete independence.\(^\text{68}\) The following extract from its editorial of entitled "Ourselves" indicates the strong commitment of that paper to the ideal of complete independence: "It is our firm conviction that complete independence is the ideal for India and that for the full development of the Indian nation, complete independence is supremely necessary. We submit that our paper will place the ideal of complete independence before the people and promote the desire in them for such independence".\(^\text{69}\)

The passing of the complete independence resolution in the Andhra provincial congress of 1925, was applauded by journals like Congress and Satyagrahi. Satyagrahi writing on that Conference, declared that the resolution expressed the natural and unobjectionable desire of the people for complete independence.\(^\text{70}\) Replying to critics, who argued that such a resolution was premature, Satyagrahi wrote indignantly, "Ah! what slavish mentality is this! Has it been predestined by God that the Indians should be with the British empire for ever?".\(^\text{71}\) In another issue, Satyagrahi

\(^{68}\) N.P.R., 1925, P. 48.

\(^{69}\) Congress, September 8, 1925.

\(^{70}\) Satyagrahi, November 12, 1925.

\(^{71}\) N.P.R., 1925, P. 1465.
claimed that the Andhras were responsible for the spread of the ideal of Purna Swaraj all over India and declared that the Andhras were the first to pass a resolution demanding Purna Swaraj.72

Durbar which was completely a pro-British Journal, naturally opposed the demand for complete independence. It expressed the view that complete independence was an unattainable objective and that it was madness to wish to snap all connections with the British empire.73 Trilinga, another Telugu paper, did not support the demand for complete independence.

BOYCOTT OF SIMON COMMISSION:

Sir John Simon was appointed by the British government as the chairman of a commission to study the political conditions in India and the working of the Montego-Chelmsford reforms and to find out whether India could be given independence at all. The commission did not have any Indian on its membership and so Gandhi rightly did not show any interest in it. He gave a call to boycott the commission and others followed suit. Presiding over public meeting held on 3rd February in Madras K. Nageswara Rao declared that the

72. Satyagrahi, November 12, 1928.
73. Ibid.
commission was coming to India only to extend India's period of slavery and that it should be boycotted. Sambamurthi who was touring in Guntur and Tenali to propagate the boycott was arrested at Kakinada. This arrest further strengthened the movement. Other Andhra leaders like Tanguturi Prakasam and Pattabhi Sitaramayya urged people to make the boycott a complete success. The nationalist Telugu papers vigorously and eloquently campaigned for the boycott of the Commission. Papers like Congress, Satyagrahi, Andhra Patrika and Krishna Patrika were in the forefront of this campaign. Satyagrahi under the heading "Duty" wrote: "The Simon Commission should have the same fate as the Milner Commission of Egypt. With unity we must practise boycott. To enforce complete boycott is the duty of the Congress". 74 Andhra Patrika consistently and effectively appealed to the people to boycott the Commission. On a number of days it published eye-catching appeals to the people. On February 2, 1928, on the eve of the Commission's visit, the paper printed in its columns black flags and urged the people to boycott the commission, holding black flags in their hands.

74. Satyagrahi, November 7, 1927.
The Lahore Congress session (1930) gave the call for "Purana Swaraj" and launched the civil Disobedience movement. It was also decided to celebrate 26th January, 1930 as the day of First Indian Independence. Gandhi started the Dandi march to break the Salt laws. There was an upsurge of enthusiasm everywhere. The Andhra Congress Committee appointed Konda Venkatappaiah as the dictator of the whole of Andhra, while each district had its own dictator assisted by a war council. People marched to the seashore and contraband salt was manufactured in several places.

The nationalist Telugu press generally described the Salt Satyagraha as 'peaceful war' and the volunteers who participated in it are "peaceful soldiers", fighting a national war against the foreign government. These papers made an impact on the people during the Salt Satyagraha too, as before. Till the press ordinances were issued in 1930, the nationalist papers carried on much publicity for the movement and appealed to people to participate in it. With the demand for security, under the press ordinance, secret news sheets came into existence in some parts of Andhra and they were able to enthuse the people with useful and

inspiring news of the Satyagraha movement. When villages were asked how they came to know about matters like prohibition and Khadi, they brought the issue of Andhra Patrika which published such matter and read them out. The influence of papers like Andhra Patrika, Krishna Patrika was very great during the Salt Satyagraha movement and they made invaluable contribution to the spread and success of the movement in Andhra.

The papers continued to make strong appeals to the people to boycott foreign cloth and use homespun khaddar only even during the Salt Satyagraha and Civil Disobedience movements. Andhra Patrik, Krishna Patrika and Satyagrahi frequently published prominently in their columns, appeals like the following. "Are the foreign clothes still binding you ? Shame ! Shame ! Give them up. To burn them is your daily duty". Such appeals and editorials in favour of the use of swadeshi goods and publication of speeches of leaders on the subject of Swadeshi newspapers sustained the public spirit in favour of the Swadeshi.

Commenting on the "Vernacular papers and the national movement" Sri Vellala Ramakrishna Sastri, wrote in 1930, that it was the Vernacular papers which convinced the people

76. Trilinga, June 16, 1930.
77. Satyagrahi, July 1, 1929.
about the Salt Satyagraha movement". 78 He said that no other paper did greater service than Andhra Patrika in bringing about an awakening among the people and "wherever prohibition and wearing of khaddar are found, the credit for that should go to Andhra Patrika. 79

Wide publicity was given in the Telugu press to the entire programme of Salt satyagraha, the centres of civil disobedience and to the overwhelming number of volunteers pouring in from different places to participate in it. Zamindari Ryot published regular reports of the Mahatma's march to Dandi. Desabandhu commented that Gandhi's march was observed from Heaven by Maharshis like Vyasa, poets like Kalidasa, emperors like Asoka, heroes like Sivaji and holy women like Savitri. 80

The Telugu press which was in general national in outlook gave wide publicity to the khaddar programme. Zamindari Ryot published several articles describing the history of khaddar, its export from 2500 years ago, its superiority over the mill cloth and its employment potential. 81 An article in Desabandhu described how khaddar

78. Trilinga, June 16, 1913.
79. Ibid.
80. Desabandhu, March 31, 1930, P. 2625.
81. Zamindari Ryot, July 13, 1930.
said that it led to the prosperity of the nation and how it increases the longevity of human beings. It exhorted merchants to discourage foreign cloth and encourage Swadeshi. The Telugu press gave wide coverage to the activities of the Satyagrahis in favour of prohibition. Samindari Ryot published a Telugu translation of Tolstoy's story 'Satan' to expose the evils of drink. Desabandhu gave the details of the meeting of the committee on prohibition in Lahore and described the harmful effects of drink.

Darbar observed that the programme laid down had been well thought out, and that passive resistance was the means best suited to achieve its object in as much as "India is not in a position to adopt violent methods against the government which is fully equipped with the modern weapons of Warfare". The paper said that passive resistance was the only means left for Indians to attain self-government since modern destructive weapons could not shake it as the theories of Gandhi were revolutionising the whole world the paper concluded its argument by urging the people to win self-government by adopting them.

82. Ibid., June 29, 1930.
83. Desabandhu, January 6, 1930.
84. G.O. No. 11 of 1930 for the week ending of March, 1930.
Andhra Patrika characterized the peaceful method adopted for the sake of attaining independence as "unprecedented in the history of the world and observed that a conciliatory reply from the Viceroy would be certainly beneficial to England as well as India. It reminded the government that any attempt to suppress the Mahatma's movement by the employment of force would only make it more widespread in the country, creating a new awakening among the people". In case Gandhiji should achieve success he would be setting an example to the whole modern world. Through non-violence alone such vexatious problems as disarmament would be solved and world peace secured. Andhra Patrika reported that the whole country was showing enthusiasm over the determination of Gandhi. It observed that it was easy to imprison the body of Mahatma Gandhi and not his ideas, and that the campaign of civil disobedience which was going to be started on the 12th would determine not only the condition of India but also the future evolution of the whole world.

Referring to the proceedings of the Lahore Congress Ryot Patrika observed that there was no use in the rulers' hesitating to grant a form of government suitable to the spirit of Independence which was closest to the hearts of

85. Andhra Patrika, March 5, 1930.
86. Ibid., March 6, 1930.
the people. This paper was also critical of the Congress Party. It stated that there was no use of difference of opinion in regard to council entry. It was only due to the persistence of the Congressmen in the boycott of council entry that a good opportunity was lost. Referring to the same subject, Sadhana Patrika took a different stand and observed that though council entry had done much good to the country earlier, it was entirely left to the discretion of the Congress to wait for the appropriate time and effect a change in its policy, if necessary. 87

Some of the smaller newspapers had reservations about non-cooperation with the government and other similar issues. Referring to the Resolution of complete independence which had been passed by the Lahore Congress, Telugu observed that this would undoubtedly prove an obstacle to the whole-hearted efforts being made by His excellency the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India towards the progress of this country. It further remarked that political freedom could not be obtained unless the social evils obtaining in the country were eradicated. Until then, the presence of the mighty British government was indispensable for the maintenance of peace in the country. Swatantra made similar remarks on the subject. It feared that the non-

violent struggle contemplated by Gandhi might result in atrocities worse than those perpetrated in 1922.\textsuperscript{88}

Satyasadhani while making similar remarks on the subject said that it was not possible for the people to free themselves from the British under whom they had remained for such a long time. Adopting non-cooperation, Civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes would only prove detrimental to the interests of this country where the people were not united in their objects and efforts. Andhra Mata said that the complete independence resolution was passed simply to respect the decision of the Calcutta Congress, and strongly objected to the no-tax campaign proposed to be carried on by the Congress, in view of the difficulties attending it. Yugandhara made similar remarks and observed that the resolution of complete independence failed to have any effect so long as there was social disunion in the country and appealed to the leaders to adopt a course which was free from trouble.\textsuperscript{89}

Contrary to the fears of many the Dandi march by Gandhi and his associates and the violation of salt laws, gave a new and significant form to civil disobedience and non-

\textsuperscript{88} Government of Madras, Public (Confd.), G.O. No. 7, dated February 15, 1930.
\textsuperscript{89} Ibid.
cooperation. It electrified the entire country and naturally and appropriately the press responded to it at once. Andhra Patrika and Krishna Patrika, which had been consistently in the forefront of the struggle for freedom, pointed out that the salt satyagraha was not meant just for the abolition of the salt tax, but for achieving independence for the country. These papers used all their influence with the people, to make the salt satyagraha movement a memorable success. The Telugu newspapers during the period of the satyagraha were full of news, comments, and photographs relating to the movement. A perusal of the contents of the nationalist Telugu papers during the period of Salt Satyagraha reveals that more than 90 per cent of the contents related to this satyagraha. Writing about the press in India during the period of salt satyagraha, Margarita Barns states "never before had the press played so important a part in the national campaign and enthusiasm was kindled and maintained by the vigorous action of the nationalist newspapers. Indeed all the methods which a nationalist press might be expected to use in a country were employed by the journals supporting the movement". 90

As noted already, the nationalist papers including the Telugu papers generally described the salt satyagraha as a

90. Margarita Barns: The Indian Press, (London 1940), P.373.
"peaceful war" and the volunteers who participated in it as "peaceful soldiers". They treated the movement as a national war against the foreign government. Krishna Patrika and Andhra Patrika published news of salt satyagraha under the heading "war news". Krishna Patrika gave the title, "Salt War" to its editorial on March 12, 1930. Congress and Andhra Patrika also used such war terminology to describe the salt satyagraha. One of the important features of the nationalist Telugu papers of the period was the appeal they made to women to induce them participate in large numbers in the movement in response Gandhiji's call for women of India to take active part in the salt satyagraha.

Grihalakshmi, a women's journal, wrote that women should take as much interest in national matters as men do. It also pointed out that the revival of nationalism in India should start at home.91 Andhra Patrika published an article by Vedantam Kamala Devi, entitled "An appeal to Andhra Sisters", in which the author recalled Gandhiji's appeal and wrote that Andhra women who had inherited the valour of great women like Palnati Nayakuralu, (a great heroic character in Palnati yuddham) should not lag behind women of other regions in participating in the salt satyagraha. 92

91. Grihalakshmi, March 1929.
92. Andhra Patrika, April 9, 1930.
Referring to the success of the Salt satyagraha movement in the Nellore District Zamindari Ryot 16th March 1930 wrote: A conference of the satyagraha was held in Nellore on 22nd March 1930. Many volunteers for the Salt satyagraha were trained. The satyagraha was scheduled to begin from 11th April 1930 and last till 13th April. In the Nellore town near the Tipparaju choultry Srimati Ponaka Kanakamma and her associates numbering over forty prepared salt defying the laws. She was arrested and convicted on 26th May 1930 to one and half years rigorous imprisonment and was transferred to the Vellore jail. Subsequent reports in the journal show that she took seriously ill in jail in the month of November 1930 causing anxiety.93

Mahatma Gandhi's influence on the bulk of the Telugu press remained unabated. Whatever he said or did carried great weight with it. Krishna Patrika, Andhra Patrika, Bharathi Patrika a weekly of Berhampur, Janmabhumi of Madras and Zamindari Ryot of Nellore, all of them gave their whole-hearted support to him. Their Congress leanings continued as usual. Krishna Patrika and Andhra Patrika were in favour of individual civil disobedience. Samadarsini of Madras maintained its moderate colours. It disapproved of civil disobedience in any form and often urged its withdrawal. It

93. Zamindari Ryot, April 6, 13, May 4, 1930.
was, however, of opinion that the government should create a favourable atmosphere in the country and that this task could be facilitated if the All-India-Congress Committee were allowed to meet and determine the policy of the Congress. It approved of the extension of the term of the legislatures. 94

Trilinga of Madras which was never been known to have any pronounced or consistent policy, followed a characteristically middle of the road policy and urged the withdrawal of civil disobedience. Swatantra of Nellore and Deshabandhu of Machilipatnam remained true to their moderates creeds. Andhra Bhumi of Madras was some what nationalist in its leaning. 95

The year 1934 was an exceptionally calm year. The suspension of the civil disobedience movement by Gandhi, his withdrawal from the leadership of the National Congress, last but not least, the press legislation altogether took the wind out of the sails of militant journalism and created a spirit of docility. The docility brought in its wake, a strong streak of pessimism. The council entry programme resulted in monotonous reiteration of remarks and expression


95. Ibid.
of platitudes. A strong feeling of helplessness was clearly in evidence. Suscipicion survived. Extremism and moderatism were scarcely distinguishable. While the Congress was in the thick of battle, the Third Round table conference met in London in November 1932 without the leaders of the Congress. Its discussions eventually led to the passing of the Government of India Act of 1935. The Act provided for the establishment of an All India Federation and a new system of government for the provinces on the basis of provincial autonomy. The reforms issue became the topic of foremost importance and utmost concern to the newspapers irrespective of their creed. All papers of note condemned the report of the joint parliamentary committee unhesitatingly. Their comments were similar. The difference between extremism and moderatism came in only in respect of the policy to be adopted towards the reforms.

The nationalist section of the press represented by Krishna Patrika and Andhra Patrika stood for the rejection of the 1935 reforms as visualised by the people of the joint parliamentary committee and urged a constitution being drafted by a constituent assembly, while organs of moderate persuasion like Samadarsini of Madras, vigorously advocated

their modification. Once the question of council entry became a live and vital issue, the nationalist papers championed the cause of council entry with ardour not inferior to that of their moderate compeers. These facts go to show that extremism could be wild and moderation grew to be as outspoken as extremism in criticizing the government. 97

Andhra Patrika and Chitragupta of Madras, Krishna Patrika, Subhodhini of Nellore and Prajamitra of Madras belonged to the nationalist type. Their allegiance to Gandhi and the National Congress remained unabated. Samadarsini and Swatantra which were organs of the Justice party, were as outspoken in criticizing as in supporting the government. But they were anti-Congress. Trilinga maintained its usual moderate colour and retained its halting and wooden style and manner. It was anti-Gandhi Deenabandhu of Machilipatnam kept up its sober and restrained tone while criticizing the government. Zamin Ryot of Nellore was wellknown for its vehement advocacy of the ryots cause especially in the estates. It had pro-congress leanings. Ravi of Coconada ranged itself on the side of law and order as a loyal supporter of the government. Among the revived political journals, Srisadhana Patrika of Anantapur deserves special

mention. Years of tribulation seemed to have considerably toned down its vehemance. It is noteworthy that almost all the newly started Telugu journals, with the exception of Satyavani of Anakapalli were non-political and were devoted to the promotion of light literature marked by wit and humour and intended to act as a welcome relief to the public.98

QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT

By July 1942 Indian National Congress was convinced that the British government was not serious about coming to an honourable settlement about Indian problems and that it could not co-operate with the British in their war efforts. It however persuaded Gandhi to resume the leadership of the Congress and lead the people in the struggle for freedom. Even before the launching of the movement, many papers like Andhra Patrika had made it clear that there was no leader like Gandhi and that non-violence advocated by him was the means to achieve independence.99

Gandhi had already started writing in the Harijan suggesting "orderly and timely British withdrawal from

98. Government of Madras, Public (General), D.O.No. 584, dated April 21, 1932.

This was in fact the fore-runner of the famous Quit-India resolution which was passed at Bombay by the All India Congress Committee on 8th August 1942. The A.I.C.C. which met at Bombay on August 7, 1942 resolved to demanded the immediate withdrawal of the British power from India entrusting authority to govern the country to a provisional government. The meeting also resolved on August 8, to start a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale under the leadership of Gandhi.

Already the Andhra provincial Congress Committee has issued an important confidential circular dated 29th July, 1942 to all the District Congress Committees indicating the lines on which the organisation work had to be undertaken and also the programme of the campaign. Briefly stated, the items of the programme were defying prohibitionary orders, picking salt, continuing openly to be members of unlawful associations, lawyers giving up practice, students to leave colleges, jurors and assessors not to respond to summons, arranging labour strikes, picketing foreign concerns in trade and industry, pulling chains, to stop trains, travelling without tickets, cutting down toddy yielding

100. Tarachand, History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. IV, (Delhi, 1972), P. 370.

101. Ibid.
trees, cutting telegraph and telephone wires, non-payment of taxes excluding municipal taxes and picketing of troops.\textsuperscript{102}

Papers like Andhra Patrika, Krishna Patrika, Navasakti and Andhra Prabha (1937), spread nationalistic ideas to build up public opinion, in favour of the Quit India movement. During the time of the Second World War Prajamitra (Vijayawada), Swatantra (Madras) and Janawani strengthened the peasants' to antifeudal struggle. Sadhana and Akasavani (secret cyclostyled) from Anantapur propagated anti-imperialist views. Prajasakti, Swatantra Bharat, Rahasyam, and Renadu, stimulated the people to make great efforts to make the British quit and thus free the motherland.

This period also saw the growth of the popular "paise" newspapers like Janmabhoomi, Navasakti, and Prajasakti, which were started to bring about awakening among the masses in general and the labour class in particular. Songs based on the socialist ideology, that people should awake and that they should all be equal sharers in the country's wealth were published.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{102} B. Kesavanarayana, Political and Social Factors in Andhra, 1900-56.

\textsuperscript{103} Sarojini Regani, Highlights of the Freedom Movement in Andhra Pradesh (Hyderabad, 1972), P. 141.
The government did its best to suppress the movement. During the Second World War the newspapers continued to spread the message of freedom among the people. They made people understand how the proposals made by the Cripps Mission, sent by the British government to negotiate with the India could not be accepted. *Krishna Patrika* wrote editorials on this development. 104

*Andhra Patrika* published the inspiring speech delivered by Gandhi at A.I.C.C. session held in Bombay. The paper advocated that the 'Quit India' resolution to be accepted. Further it reminded the people to follow strictly the policy of non-violence announced by Gandhiji during the Quit India Movement. Besides it also exhorted all other members of the Congress to pay heed to Gandhi's exhortion. 105

Very appropriately the 'Quit India' movement launched by the Congress during the session held at Bombay was given great importance by all the Telugu newspapers. *Andhra Patrika* brought out a special edition on August 1942 in which it said that the time for achievement of Independence or self-rule had arrived. It also published the resolution of Congress, and reported in detail the meetings held. It


also published the speeches of leaders like Nehru, Vallabhai Patel and others. 106

Besides Andhra Patrika and Krishna Patrika the newspapers like Navasakti, Swantantra Bharat, Prajasakti, which had communist leanings, had began to spread the ideals of socialism from 1930s. They helped in organising the people into various groups like labour, peasants, youth and women. During the war period several newspapers like Navasakti and Prajasakti which had Communist leaning were banned in Andhra country. 107 But the Communist party started a secret newspaper called Swatantra Bharat and distributed its issues in the districts like Krishna and Anantapur. Papers like these, though have limited circulation had helped in spreading the nationalistic ideology and in sustaining the spirit of the people. 108

Later in 1940 Thapi Dharma Rao had started the paper Kagada, which spread the socialist ideology among people and

106. Andhra Patrika, August 8, 1942.


made them ready to fight against the British rule. It also made clear to the people about the government's repressive measures and the difficulties faced by the common people during the war. Thus by the time of the beginning of the Quit India Movement, the Telugu press had created suitable atmosphere to start a mass agitation for the liberation of the country.

As soon as Gandhi, Azad and other members of the working committee were arrested. The Telugu papers, made a faithful report of this occurrence. As a result of Andhra Patrika's publication of the news of the arrests, people were roused to righteous indignation. As a consequence there were many more arrests made in the different parts of the presidency. Andhra Patrika also published as a box item the statement of the Mahatma Gandhi that "Now onwards all Indians should regard themselves as independent". In all the subsequent editions of the papers the news of Gandhi being placed as a prisoner in the Aghakhan palace was published. It also reported the arrests of national leaders like Nehru, Sarojini Naidu, Mahadev Desai and Mer Behu.

Prajasakti in its editorial of August 12 1942, strongly condemned the action of government in arresting the

110. Andhra Patrika, August 9, 1942.
national leaders and demanded immediate release of them. Again it called on the people to intensify the movement so as to make the government to form a national government in the place British government in India. Other papers like Krishna Patrika, Jamin Ryot, Sri Sadhana etc., followed similar line of action against the arrests of the national leaders. They also pleaded to ameliorate the war created problems like shortage of food, as the people were suffering to a great extent. 111

In spite of the notice of the British government warning the editors and publishers of the papers reporting news of the agitation and publishing articles in favour of it, the Andhra Patrika continued to do so and criticised the government for issuing warnings. 112 The paper reported from time to time the progress of the movement in the Andhra region and the meetings of protest held at various places. It also published news about the arrest of prominent persons like Kalluri Subba Rao and N. Sankar Reddy and Vanturi. The narration of the events was so compelling that it encouraged many people to participate in the Quit India Movement. 113


112. Andhra Patrika, August 11, 1942.

113. Ibid.
When the Quit India Movement was in full swing there were many disturbances and agitations throughout the country against the government. There were spurts of violence in several parts of the country. Near the railway stations of Guntur and Tenali in the Andhra region the royts removed the rails. Chebrolu, Duggirala and Nidubrolu railway stations were set ablaze. There was firing on the mob in few places. Leaders like Prakasam pantulu were arrested. Andhra Patrika gave coverage to all these events. It also published comments made in favour of the movement without divulging its source of information. It published comments passed by eminent world figures like Bernardshaw who said that independence to India is indespensable.\footnote{114} The British government imposed various restrictions on the newspapers during the Quit India Movement. Editors of all newspapers demanded in chorus the removal of these restrictions by the British government.\footnote{115}

Andhra Patrika reported the journalists meet in which the Editors of English and 14 other vernacular papers participated with Hemendra Prasad Ghose the Editor of Basumathi as the president. In order to show their vehement disapproval of the British government's negative attitude

\footnote{114. Andhra Patrika, August 14, 1942.}
\footnote{115. Ibid., August 29, 1942.}
towards the newspapers, it was decided to stop publication from 21 August, 1942 such papers as Amruta Bazaar Patrika, Yugandhar, Hindustand Standard, Telegraph, Bharat, Lokamanya, Jagrat, Pratush and others.  

The All India Journalists Conference which met at Bombay under the presidency of N. Sreenivasan on October 8, 1942 resolved that they should not abide by any restriction of the government that would damage to their journalistic profession. They also resolved to stop publishing of the newspaper for one day throughout the country as a measure of strong protest against the attitude of the government towards the press.  

The repressive measures of the government affected the Telugu press too. The Collector of Nellore district convened a meeting of the representatives of the daily newspapers The Hindu, The Mail, Andhra Patrika and Printers and Publishers of the Journals published from Nellore on August 22, 1942. The collector read out the restrictions and conditions imposed on the journals by the government, which were totally against the editors and press correspondents. One of

116. Andhra Patrika, August 18, 1942.

117. Ibid., October 8, 1942.
the conditions was that the publishers and news reporters had to register their names. These representatives met separately, and condemned the unfavourable attitude of the government to the press. As a protest the Telugu journals Zamin Ryot, Kesari, Andhra Praja, Subhodini, Simhapuri, Prajaseva, Deccan Vyasa had decided to stop their publication.\textsuperscript{118} Sri Sadhana of Anantapur also stopped its publication from 23rd August 1942 as a protest against the negative attitude of the government towards the journals.\textsuperscript{119} Andhra Prabha while upholding the freedom of the press, condemned the restrictions imposed by the Madras government and questioned the legality of its autocratic powers. It also made it plain that they have plenty of responsibilities to discharge towards people acting otherwise is blame worthy.\textsuperscript{120}

Immediately after his release from the jail on 6 May 1944, Mahatma Gandhi declared that it was not his intention to revive the Satyagraha Movement and that he would whole heartedly support war effort in the event of National Government being formed. He has made it clear that he had no faith in the policy of violence. He also urged those engaged in under-ground activities to surrender themselves to the

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118. Andhra Patrika, August 23, 1942.
119. Ibid., August 25, 1942.
120. Andhra Prabha, January 5, 7, 1942.
\end{flushleft}
authorities. Further he insisted that the Congressmen should carry on the constructive programme. But yet the authorities chose to ban the meetings of Congressmen. It was proposed to hold a meeting of the Andhra Congress Legislators and prominent congressmen at Guntur to consider the present political situation. This was published in all the newspapers. Nothing was done in secret. But before the meeting was held the collector of Guntur issued an order prohibiting the holding of the same.121 Reacting very sharply to this situation Andhra Prabha called the collector's action an abuse of authority. It pointed out that in the Madras province itself the Tamilnad Congressmen had recently met at Trichinapally and discussed various matters. But no official prevented them from doing so. Why was this ban which was not found necessary there was found necessary in the case of the other set of legislators? Did opposition of the Government to the elected representatives and popular leader's meeting to discuss the situation in the country afforded encouragement to secret activities. Who would believe the government, which had encroached on the freedom of speech and of meeting which were the fundamental rights of citizens boast that they are carrying on a people's war? It was reprehensible that the authorities should act in such

121. Andhra Prabha, August 4, 1944.
an autocratic and reactionary manner even at a time when many were striving to end the dead-lock. We the action of the collector of Guntur could not be approved as it went against the wishes of the people. 122

Thus, the Telugu press facing serious hurdles from the government and its officials, continued its mission of liberating the country from the clutches of British rule. Though the tempo of the Quit India Movement was slackened by 1943 it was not totally abandoned till Gandhi practically called off the movement after his release from jail in May 1944. The Telugu press sustained the patriotic spirit of the people. With the Quit India Movement, it may be said that Indian freedom movement practically came to end. It is true that it took three more years to get an independence, but the British by this time realised that it was impossible for them to rule India any further. Hence, it started negotiation with Indian National Congress and paved the way for the Indian independence.

122. Andhra Prabha, August 4, 1944.
GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PRESS

After the conclusion of the first world war and with the implementation of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, the government had relaxed its restrictions over the press. But again in 1930, with the starting of the Salt Sathyagraha the government's repressive measures to curb press freedom came back. The two ordinances issued in 1930 to control the press were very stringent nature. They did greater damage to the Indian press than the Press Act of 1910. Mahathma Gandhi described the press Ordinance as "a veiled form of Martial law". 123

The instructions issued by the Madras government regarding the implementation of the press Ordinance, indicated that the provincial government did not want to follow an excessively harsh policy towards the press. It instructed the authorities to resort to prosecutions only if warning had no effect. Regarding the taking of security also, the government's intention was that it should be used as a preventive and not as a punitive measure. It was also pointed out that the security demanded should be the minimum. 124 In actual practice, however, the pressure exerted on the press was indeed great, as the following facts prove.

123. S.N. Bhattacharya, Mahatma Gandhi, The journalist, (Bombay, 1965), P.51

By July 1930, security had been demanded from 20 newspapers and 31 presses in the Madras presidency. Out of them 13 newspapers and 15 printing presses were closed down as they failed to pay the security. In 60 per cent of the cases, the amount of security demanded was as high as Rs. 1,000. In the case of three newspapers and five printing presses, a security of Rs. 2,500 was demanded. In 50 per cent of the above mentioned cases in which security was demanded, action was taken immediately after the promulgation of the ordinance, on the strength of their "previous reputation". 125

Under the Press Ordinances, by 1931, the number of newspapers and printing presses in the Madras Presidency from which security was demanded increased to 24 and 36 respectively. Of them nineteen newspapers and twenty printing presses were closed down because they did not pay the security. Action under the ordinance VII of 1930, which empowered the government to seize and destroy any unauthorised newspapers and any printing press in which it was printed, was taken in the case of thirty eight publications. All of them were destroyed. 126 An amount of


Rs. 20,000 was collected by the Madras government from printing presses and newspapers by way of security till 1931. 127

By 1932, in the Madras presidency, security was demanded from forty three newspapers and forty printing presses. 128 Almost all the nationalist papers became the victims of the press Ordinance of 1930. The Telugu papers, Krishna Patrika, Congress, Simhapuri, Satyagrahi and Indravati ceased publication on demand of security. On the other hand, Andhra Patrika paid the security of Rs. 2,000 and continued to function. 129

Security was demanded from the printing presses if they were printing Congress leaflets or pamphlets or newspapers preaching the nationalist ideology. Newspapers were asked to pay security if they published Congress resolutions, or news about ill-treatment of political prisoners or such other matters. The vindictive attitude of the government towards the press can be understood when it is remembered that even

128. Ibid., G.O. No. 584, April 21, 1932.
portraits and photos of national leaders were not allowed to be published. In 1932 a notice was issued that such publications would constitute violation of the existing press laws and that action would be taken accordingly. 130

All the successive of editors Congress had the unique distinction of being prosecuted and sentenced to imprisonment for their writings in it. The prosecution of the editors of that journal took place when special press laws were not in force. The much misused sections of the Indian Penal Code 124-A, 153-A, and 505 were used against the editors of Congress. Maddoori Annapoornaiah, its first editor, was sentenced to imprisonment, several times. Tirumal Rao writes in his autobiography that "very few patriots even at the All-India level would have served longer terms of imprisonment than Annapoornaiah". 131 He was the one who boldly attacked the alien government through the columns of his paper and made supreme sacrifices for the sake of the nation. Surely he occupies a front rank in the galaxy of great Andhras.

K. Ramachandra Rao, the second editor of the paper was prosecuted in great haste in 1924. Krovvidi Linga Raju,


Chandupatla Hanumantha Rao and Ramachandruni Venkatappa were the other editors of Congress who also were prosecuted for their writings.

Swarajya, a journal published from Allahabad, "enjoys a unique place in the history of Indian Journalism because it is the only newspaper not only of India but perhaps of the entire world whose successive editors were convicted for sedition." Congress the Telugu journal certainly deserves to be ranked in the class of such great journals whose editors were convicted for sedition.

Tanguturi Prakasam, Pattabhi Seetharamayya, Kasinathuni Nageswara Rao, Mutnuri Krishna Rao, Atmakuri Govindacharyulu and S.G. Acharya who were actively associated with journalism in Andhra and were leaders in the freedom movement also suffered prosecution and imprisonment for their political activities which were sometimes interlinked with their journalistic work.

The general policy of the Government of Madras regarding prosecutions for "Seditious writings" was based on three principles. They were (1) to launch prosecution only against such writings which were "likely to cause serious mischief", (2) to take up prosecution only if they were

132. N. Iqbal Singh. The Andaman Story (Delhi, 1978), P.189.
"reasonably certain of success" and (3) "to deal with lies miss-statements etc., not suitable for prosecution by means of communiques and other publications of the publicity department". 133 The policy of the government of Madras was the same as the policy of the government of India.

Even though the government had the intention to prosecute many journalists, it could not do so because the Advocate General in several instances advised against the launching of prosecution proceedings as the writings were so subtle as to evade the provisions of law.

Krishna Patrika, in its issue dated March 8, 1908, published the secret correspondence between two police officers. The government wanted to prosecute the editor of the paper under the official Secrets Act. But the Advocate General felt that prosecution would not sustain, hence, the government could not prosecute the editor. 134 In 1922, legal action could not be taken against Andhra Vidyarthi for publishing an article entitled. "Those who are blinded by pride and power", because the Advocate General said that


prosecution would not succeed. In 1922 itself, when the Andhra Patrika published two articles on civil disobedience by Maddoori Annapoornaiah, the government initiated steps for prosecution. But the Advocate general reported that the "Articles can not sustain a prosecution". The Governor was not happy with the remarks of the Advocate General. But he was helpless in the face of adverse remarks by the expert.

Again in 1922 the government wanted to prosecute the editor of Andhra Patrika for publishing the "news of the outrage of the modesty of a woman in Guntur by soldiers". Government felt that prosecution should be launched as the editor did not publish an apology even after the publicity bureau contradicted the news. But the Advocate General felt that there was no case for prosecution. Hence the proposal had to be dropped. Andhra Patrika published an article entitled "Civil Disobedience, a speedy necessity". The government wanted to take legal action against the paper. But the Advocate General's remarks were again not in favour


136. Ibid.

137. Government of Madras, Public (Confd.), G.O. No. 204, dated March 6, 1922.

of prosecution. The Chief Secretary to the government of Madras was very much vexed with the adverse remarks of the Advocate General.

In certain instances prosecution proceedings were withdrawn when the persons concerned apologised. In 1921, the government sanctioned the prosecution of P.V. Krishnaiah Chowdary and J. Anjaneyulu, proprietor and editor respectively of Ryot Patrika for publishing an inflammatory article in its issue dated January 16, 1921. But as they published an apology for its publication, the collector recommended the dropping of the prosecution and the government agreed. The editor of Andhra Patrika also had to apologise to escape a defamation case for an article published in its issue dated July 28, 1921, on forest affairs in Guntur district.

Quite a few of the small newspapers which were nationalist in their outlook either had to pay a security deposit or cease publication or offer an apology for publishing matter regarded as objectionable by the government. Trilinga of Madras offered an apology.


140. Ibid.

Vahini published by Brahmayya, had to deposit a sum of Rs. 1000. A demand for security of Rs. 500/- was made on Kisan Mazdoor published by N.G. Ranga. In January 1940, Kranti ceased publication, as it would not pay the security deposit demanded of it.

The office and houses of Sri Nellore Venkatarama Naidu founder of Zamin Ryot (originally Zamindari Ryot) and Sri Chundi Jagannatham, editor of Zamindari Ryot were searched minutely by the government consecutively for three days from 15th February to 17th February 1941, on the strong suspicion that this pro-Congress paper had certain incriminating literature against war propaganda. As a result of the strict restrictions imposed by the government fettering the press the management of the Zamin Ryot decided to stop publication from 1st September 1942. Only in December 1942 the routine publication of this journal was resumed. From 24-8-1942 the following journals and periodicals stopped their publication in Nellore. (1) Andhra Praja, (2) Kesari, (3) Simhapuri Patrika, (4) Prajaseva, (5) Deccan Vysya and (6) Subhodini.

142. Government of Madras Public (Gen) G.O. No. 2057, dated October 16, 1940.
143. Government of Madras Public (Confld.) G.O. No. 604, dated March 18, 1940.
144. Government of Madras Public (Gen) G.O. No. 604, dated April 2, 1940.
145. Zamin Ryot, January 21, 1941.
146. Ibid., August 24, 1942.