

Express

4749

4th June, 1963.

My dear Bhailalbhai,

Only yesterday evening I wrote to you asking about your health and hoping that you are back to fighting form. I am very taken aback, therefore, at receiving today your letter of 30th May and seeing in this morning's Times of India a news item to the same effect. I must confess to a feeling of dismay on reading of your proposal to retire from political life at this stage and in particular from the Presidentship of the Gujarat Party Unit. I am sure all our other colleagues will share that feeling. I seem to recall that only a couple of weeks back at Gondal you had kindly agreed to carry on till after the next General Elections and you will recall that even then I was not happy about the idea.

I would like to plead with you not to take this precipitate decision which is bound to be a blow to the Party as shown by the copy of Chimanbhai Desai's letter, which you have forwarded with yours, but to allow Rajaji, Professor Ranga and the rest of us to discuss this quietly with you so that a way may be found by making things easier for you by arranging for more active support to you in the work of the Gujarat Party and thus enabling it to have the benefit of your leadership and mature and wise guidance. I do hope you will kindly heed this plea and not proceed further in this matter.

In so far as your membership of the Central Organising Committee, Parliamentary Board and General Council are concerned, these are held by you in your individual capacity and not as President of the State Unit. Therefore the question of your resignation from these at this moment does not arise but can be considered as and when these Committees meet.

In any event, may I not request you to put off for the time being the proposed meeting of the State Executive of the Party which Mr. Natwar Singh Solanki mentions will meet on June 16 at Vallabh Vidya Nagar? Where is the need for such a hurried meeting? Surely a decision as important as yours needs to be informally discussed with your colleagues, at least with Rajaji who is ten years older and has not asked for similar relief! I would, therefore, request that the meeting of the 16th be postponed indefinitely for the present and that we would all have a little time to go into this matter.

Since you complete 75 years on Friday, 7th June, which is your birthday, I propose to try and visit Vallabh Vidya Nagar that day in order to be able personally to greet you and to wish you many happy returns of the day. I shall let you know about my travel plans in a day or two.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Bhailalbhai Patel, M.L.A.,
Vallabh Vidya Nagar
Via Anand.

(M.R. Masani)