

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

ELECTIONS WITH AMITY

Shri Jayprakash Narain was at Wardha from August 15 to 17, after a long time, and the institutions of Wardha gave him a suitable welcome. He saw Vinoba at Pauniar on the 15th and held discussion with him for over two hours, on various current problems. The discussion covered a wide range of topics: food, clothing, land, the Five Year Plan etc.

Shri Jayprakash went round the Paramdham Ashram and watched closely the experiment of *swānāmbi samyayoga*: the experiment of self-reliant equality, that is going on in the Ashram.

He stayed on to participate in the evening prayer. Vinoba wants the prayer to be yoked to work; accordingly, for some time past, the prayer is now held at the water-wheel; that is, they pray while they turn the wheel. The wheel has eight poles and each pole can accommodate three workers. Vinobaji and Jayprakashji took hold of the same pole. The prayer and the wheel moved together. While the former watered the hearts of the workers, the latter watered the crops in the garden.

After the prayer, Vinoba said:

"It is a great pleasure to have Jayprakash Narain in our midst today. We are a big family and we should live like the five Pandavas in complete unison. India, our country, is a vast land, its problems naturally are as vast. And we try together to tackle them as brothers should do. But since the problems are vast, there are also differences among us about the way they should be solved.

"There is Jawaharlalji. He has to shoulder the burden of the whole country, an onerous responsibility in all conscience. The situation in the country today is by no means easy. He expects co-operation from all. But he has his own ideas, and inevitably he has to work within the limitations of those ideas. Then, there is Kripalaniji who feels that the most pressing need of the hour is the eradication of corruption. He is working according to his lights. Jayprakash has his own ideas and his own remedy for the country's ills. He is also serving the country, and trying to remove the sufferings of the poor.

Then, there is Kishorlalbhai and others of his way of thinking who believe in *Sarvodaya*. They are also guiding the country in their own way. Thus, all of them have but one aim — the service of the country. They are devoting whatever energy they have to the service of the land. God is behind them, and He is directing them to the service of the nation.

"But at times, when I am alone and think of it, I wonder why we, the servants of the people, devoted to the cause of the service of the poor, should not put only those things before the public on which we are all agreed and keep back things on which we differ, remembering that neither our number is very large nor are the differences in our ideas too great. I, for my part, bear this rule in my mind, in putting my ideas before the public. The elections are impending. Suppose, both Jayprakash and I stand as candidates; then, what should happen is to let the people outside choose either of us, while we work together here, ply the water-wheel jointly, and dine together. Though we stand as separate candidates at the elections, that should not disturb our unity in other spheres. If this happens, elections will pass off peacefully and people will choose whomsoever they like. Shankarcharya said, this world is a big sport. Elections too are a part of the sport; we should enter the sport in that spirit, our love and admiration for one another remaining constant.

"Hence, I say to the villagers; let not the elections destroy the unity of the village. Differences should not be allowed to disfigure your life. I do not care whosoever may be elected. There is no fear that people will elect those who are inimical to our views. But if elections are allowed to create factions, then, even though good and honest men are elected, the loss will far exceed the gain. This should not happen. Let not the cord of love which binds us together be snapped.

"When I look at things from all these sides, and ponder over the part which God wills me to play, I feel at times that He perhaps wants me to act as a lubricant between the different parts of the machine, so that it may function smoothly. And I think that He has also endowed me with the capacity to do this part of the work well.

"I was led to speak these words to you, being inspired by the fact that though Jay-prakashji and I have our ideological differences, yet we have worked together at the water-wheel. It was a sight which we would never forget."

(Translated from Hindi)

D. M.

PROHIBITION IN TRIBAL AREAS

In his reply to the amendments to the draft Election Manifesto at the A.I.C.C. session at Bangalore, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru referred to the programme of prohibition in not very encouraging terms. Particularly, he is reported to have remarked that prohibition in itself is good and desirable. But why go out of our way and enforce it, for example, in the tribal areas? The life of the *Adiwasis* is moulded differently, being woven round peculiar traditions, customs, dances etc. If prohibition is imposed on them, they would rise in revolt.

I do not know whether the Prime Minister has been correctly reported. I read the report in a Marathi newspaper dated 15th July and have rendered its substance freely in English, as above.

Owing to my limited experience I shall not venture to say with regard to the *Adiwasis* in the tribal areas of Assam, Orissa etc. So far as the State of Bombay is concerned, the Prime Minister's statement is incorrect. The Government of Bombay have introduced total prohibition in the whole State of Bombay including the areas inhabited by the aboriginals. I have been working amongst the Warlis, an aboriginal tribe of the Thana District, for over four years now. When in 1947 I first went to this area, I was painfully shocked at the appalling poverty and the degree of social degradation of the Warlis. Nothing, it seemed to me,—not even the lack of facilities for education and their proverbial exploitation by the cruel landlord, the money-lender and the forest contractor—was more responsible for this pitiable condition of these fine hard-working forest people than the deep-rooted evil of drink. As rightly observed by Shri Jawaharlal, the life of these people is moulded differently. Drink constitutes an essential factor in moulding their habits and customs. Every occasion of mirth, sorrow or solemnity used to be utilized by the *Adiwasis* for free and liberal distribution of toddy and liquor. There was no social stigma attached to drinking and hence women and children also participated in it freely.

And yet what a degradation it was! Under the influence of toddy or liquor even good-natured men used to behave like beasts, quarrel with their neighbours and beat their womenfolk. I have witnessed and heard of many auspicious ceremonies, as those of birth and marriage, marred by drunken brawls resulting in permanent feuds and in a few cases leading even to murders. In those days it was a usual sight to see scores of *Adiwasis* lying unconscious in the vicinity of toddy booths in the evening and deprived of the meagre amount of hard cash earned during the day! No upholder of human dignity could view such sights without feeling guilty for not demanding or for not helping to enforce prohibition.

With the introduction of total prohibition in the State of Bombay from 1st April 1950, all this is now a dry area. And yet as feared by Shri Nehru, there have been no complaints, not even a murmur from the *Adiwasis*, let alone the thought of revolt. Only the tapper community thrown out of employment and the vested interests directly affected by the policy of prohibition have, with the chivalrous support of anti-prohibitionist Press, raised an occasional hue and cry. The *Adiwasis*, and their women-folk in particular, are thankful to the Government for having enforced total prohibition. Only being unsophisticated, they have not held conferences and passed

resolutions thanking the Government. This does not, however, mean that there is no illicit distillation of liquor or tapping of toddy. But it can easily be proved that compared to the open sale of spirituous drinks and toddy in the pre-prohibition days, the quantity of liquor or toddy surreptitiously produced and consumed is negligible. Days of births, deaths, marriages and festivals are all celebrated with perhaps the same superstitious belief in evil spirits and with the same scrupulous observance of rites and rituals as of old. The only difference is that tea without milk and with gur instead of costly sugar have taken the place of toddy. There are dances also as enjoyable as ever, though there are no intoxicating drinks.

One has only to stay amongst these *Adiwasis* for a few days and observe their life carefully to be able to appreciate fully the benefits that prohibition has brought to these backward people.

It would be no exaggeration to assert that without prohibition all efforts for improving the social and economic condition of the *Adiwasis* would bear little fruit. It is to be hoped that the ministry which will be formed next year after the elections would be as firm on the policy of prohibition as the present one, in spite of opposition from some great and revered personalities.

VASANT NARGOLKAR

SHRI VINOBA AT SHIVARAMPALLI XIII

April 12, 1951: Inauguration of a Maternity Home.

Vinoba inaugurated a Maternity Home this evening in the village of Shivarampalli. It will minister to the needs of Shivarampalli and other neighbouring villages without distinction of caste and creed.

After performing the opening ceremony, Vinoba said that after the conclusion of the Conference the previous day, that was an auspicious beginning for his undertaking a new tour of service. The Home was just a seedling yet, but it was sure to grow into a big tree and provide shade and shelter to all who needed it.

The people knew how the work of the *Sarvodaya* centre had started there. It had been started by Shri Ramakrishna Awadhoot. He was known as Dhoot, but Vinoba preferred to call him *Awadhoot** for he had renounced everything so that he might devote himself to a mission of service. God would run to the aid of the devotee, whenever he needed it, wheresoever he might be. The *Sarvodaya* Sammelan was held at Shivarampalli, because a devotee had chosen that place for his work. This had a lesson for all. If there was a single true devotee, success is bound to attend him through the grace of God.

It was a matter of delight that a maternity home was being started in a village. There were big cities in India; but the soul of India lived in her villages. Her servants had therefore got to return to the villages. India's life depended on the people of the villages. *Sevaks* gave them a little, and received much more in return. They were not losers. Villagers were grateful for the slightest kindness shown to them. The reason was that the hearts of villagers were always filled with love which manifested itself at the first opportunity. It was good that they had made that beginning in service. Similar activities should be undertaken in the villages wherever possible.

God was tired of those who exploited His name but did nothing. What did He expect them to do and why, asked Vinoba. God was sufficient unto Himself and did not need anything of them. But those who served His children really served Him. God would be pleased and happy, even if His name was not mentioned, provided His work was carried on. The satisfaction which workers

* An ascetic who has renounced all worldly attachments and connections.

derived from their service was a reflection of God's satisfaction.

The centres of such service where there were no differences of caste or creed were the abodes of God. They were the real temples and mosques.

The workers originally intended to serve children. According to Hinduism, service to children—the *Bala-krishna*, i.e. God in the form of children—was service *par excellence*. God had neither name nor form. But His devotees for their own pleasure gave God names and forms. According as one viewed it, both the propositions, namely, all the forms and demonstrations in the world, are but God's manifestations, as also that He is nameless and formless, were right. Man with the help of these forms and denominations could purify his own life. The service to children, i.e. the service to Lord Bala-krishna, had a special significance and was in much vogue amongst His devotees. Hence the service to children, which the people there had inaugurated that evening was the best of all, if at all any distinction was to be made between one form of service and another. Mothers were included in the children.

The Kasturba Trust made its beginning with the service to mothers. Later they realized that such service was impossible without service to children. They therefore started service to children also. At Shivarampalli, they had started with service to the children and found that it led naturally to service to mothers as well. For, unlike the father, the mother could not be separated from her child. In the animal world, the father did not even recognize his progeny. Not that affection did not exist there, but since the father was not inseparable from his progeny, he did not count.

"What a mercy; indeed, what a kindness, that He Who bestowed a mother bestowed also milk with her! In the words of the Quran, God is all beneficent and merciful. He alone is the Bountiful, He alone is the Merciful. He has several names. By which one shall we worship Him? Names like the *Bountiful*, the *Kind*, appeal to us directly.

"It is said in the Quran, 'You sometimes call Him Allah, sometimes Rahman. Do they differ from each other?' And Muhammad had to explain, both these names, *Allah* and *Rahman*, speak of one and the same Lord. He alone is the Lord, the Allah, Who is all-merciful, and the all-merciful alone is the Lord. If we develop the quality of mercy within ourselves and experience a progressive growth of that quality a day may dawn when this flesh may not survive and we may find ourselves very near to God. Mercy is but another name for God. If we look within ourselves we shall know how harsh we are. We are under obligations to many. From our very childhood there are many who have been kind to us from whom we have received in abundance. Is there any limit to His kindness, Who has bestowed and continues to bestow infinite gifts on us? But our hearts do not melt at all this; so stone-hearted are we! Let us therefore realize, brothers, that we must devote ourselves to such acts of service and go on softening our hearts and make them gentle. With gentleness our hearts will also grow broader and we shall experience His presence within our souls. Our body will then no more be ours; it will be transformed into the abode of the Lord. Our eyes will no more remain our eyes; they will shine with His mercy and kindness. Our hands, our minds will all be full of kindness. Whatever will be uttered by our tongue will be a message of relief and happiness to others; it will not prick any one, but will be such as to attract every heart towards it. It will be not a mere word but a drop of nectar. All this realization will come to us when we devote ourselves to the work of service and forget ourselves in it.

"My dear brothers, I have said enough and it is easier said than done. But we have to do, and our only

prayer is that God may give us the necessary strength for it. I am grateful to you for your invitation. God had so desired that I should offer my co-operation at the very inception of this work. My *pranams* to you all."

The volunteers who had been rendering valuable service for the whole of the last week wanted a message from Vinobaji and he gave them this:

"You have rendered good service for the last eight days. But that is not enough to satisfy me. It is not much if I expect you to practise in your life what you have seen and heard here during your stay. Some of you are students. Some are part-time workers and have your other occupations. That is good. Thus you will carry on the work of *Sarvodaya* side by side with your own occupations. There is a vast field of service in our country, and more so in the city of Hyderabad. Not a few are miserable and afflicted. Can you spare an hour a day for their service? You should, if you can. You need not give up your occupations for that. A day in a week will do, if an hour per day is not convenient. There are here men of experience and they are not few. I will speak to them to make use of your services."

He wanted to know how many of them could take up the suggestions. All raised their hands and indicated their willingness to do so. So he said to them again: "You have all responded to my request. And we have such a big army. That is good indeed! I shall surely speak to the elders to chalk out a programme for you!"

April 13, 1951.

This was the last day of our stay at Shivarampalli. We had been there a week. Immediately on arrival, Vinoba had taken a round and seen the work that was going on there. He had also come into contact with the workers of the *Sarvodaya* centre that is being conducted at Shivarampalli by Shri Ramakrishna Dhoot (now Awadhoot). The workers longed for a message from Vinobaji before he left; and even for Vinoba, it would have been difficult to part from them in silence. Addressing them, therefore, that afternoon, he poured out his mind:

"I have spent a week here. I have been very happy. I believe the memory of the Conference will remain alive here in the form of work. Let the people have no occasion to say that the Conference at Shivarampalli is a story of the past. On the contrary, people should be able to avail themselves of the flowers and the fruits and the shade of the tree that has been planted here. Light should spread from here, as it did from the tree of knowledge (बोधिवृक्ष)."

But he had to say something more, and of greater import, for all of us who claim to practise non-violence in our private and public life. So he added:

"Feelings of brotherhood and fraternity should be manifest in us to a greater extent than in Communists or those who do not believe in non-violence. Even communities having faith in violence live with mutual love and affection. We claim to win over even our opponents with love. There should therefore be a constant growth of affection amongst us. Let us realize that we are one and indivisible."

What else can be the message of *Sarvodaya*? Thus closes the first part of Vinobaji's historic tour, now known as the 'Sarvodaya tour'.

Vinoba left Shivarampalli for Hyderabad, with many happy memories in his heart. Before he left, all the auspicious ceremonies were performed—*kumkum*, *tilak*, coconut, yarn garlands and everything else. When will he return?—this was the thought uppermost in the minds of all.

And thus he left for the historic peace mission in Telangana.

D. M.

HARIJAN

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1951

INDIA'S LANGUAGE POLICY (By Dr. Rajendraprasad)

[Various States and Universities in India are considering the question of their official language, the States for their administrative and the Universities for their teaching and examining functions. The Constitution of India has clearly laid down the line of progress in this very important branch of our national, cultural and democratic life and progress. While it has specifically shown the line of progress for the language of the States and the Courts, it has not done so in regard to the Universities. That was thought out by the Tarachand Committee of the Vice-Chancellors of Indian Universities followed by the all-comprehensive work of the Universities Commission presided over by Dr Radhakrishnan. But there are all fears that the States may deviate from the general policy, as can be seen from the suggestion of the Government of Bombay to which I had referred in the previous issues of the *Harijan* (vide issues of August 18 and 25). Hence an authoritative exposition regarding the language policy of the Indian Union and its various States was felt to be very necessary, even to ward off such deviations by the various States. This has been very clearly done by no less an authority than the President of the Union himself. He gave this exposition in the course of his convocation address to the Osmania University on 30th August. This is reproduced below from the *Hindustan Times* of 31-8-51.]

29-51

— M. P. Desai]

I thank you for the honour that you have done me today and I may assure you that I shall always value it highly, coming as it does from this University, which was not only the first University in our country to make one of the languages spoken in this country, the medium of instruction, but which had also done pioneering work in getting text-books in that language on all scientific and non-scientific subjects prepared and published.

In its own way and within the limitations of the language chosen as the medium of instruction, that work appeared to me to be quite encouraging as I was and have always been keenly interested in this question ever since I began taking active part in public affairs. I am glad to say that today public consciousness has been thoroughly aroused on this subject and it is generally recognized by the intelligentsia and the educationists that if there is to be no avoidable and unnecessary waste in our educational effort it is absolutely necessary that education should be imparted in the indigenous tongues. But with all this there is yet some haziness in certain sections of the people about the language policy best calculated to serve the objectives we have in view.

Democratic Society

I would like, with your permission, to say a few words about it. I believe that every one in this country knows—in any case I would like everybody to know—that under the Constitution that the Sovereign People of India adopted

through their Constituent Assembly, it is our duty to establish a democratic society in this country—that is to say, a society in which every individual and every group would have the fullest possible rights and opportunities to realize all his, her or its potentialities as also would have equal opportunities with others to shape the policy of the Government in the States and the Union.

When thinking of the policy to be adopted with regard to the medium or media of instruction we must all keep in our mind this mandatory obligation on all of us. I need not say that education is a power by itself and that in any case a person bereft of it cannot have any chance of either realizing himself to the full or making any effective or worthwhile impression on the policies and actions of the Government of his country and region. It is therefore plain that the methods and means of education should be such as do not permit any discrimination between one man and another or between one group and another.

It would thus appear that all kinds of education—primary, secondary and university—should be available to every linguistic group of any appreciable size in its own tongue. It is only then that it would not have to spend more time, money and energy than any other group for acquiring the benefits of education. Any other course of action would put it at a disadvantage in comparison to the group in whose language its children have to acquire education. This means that education in all stages in each linguistic region must be in the language of that region itself.

Linguistic Regions

I would like to emphasize, however, that this can be feasible only if the linguistic group is of an appreciable size and in a compact region. It cannot be reasonably demanded by those living in very small numbers and scattered in different parts of other linguistic regions that the Governments of those linguistic regions must make arrangements for the imparting of education to their children in their own mother-tongue except in the lowest stages. The financial and other implications of accepting such a demand can be easily perceived.

In each well-defined linguistic region of India small numbers of persons speaking other languages are to be found. If separate arrangements have to be made in each school, in each college, and in each university of that region for the teaching of the children of all these different and differing linguistic groups the cost would be colossal. Moreover, from the political point of view, it is desirable that such scattered remnants of any linguistic group in any other linguistic region should identify themselves with the latter group instead of remaining entirely distinct from the latter and thus keeping up a difference which may bring about ill-feeling and misunderstanding between them and the large

bulk of the population around them. Much of the complexity of the language question in this country would have been solved if each linguistic group recognized this cold logic of facts — financial and political.

Each regional language has to be developed and its literature enriched so as to enable it to become a fit vehicle and rich store-house of knowledge of all kinds — ancient and modern. It is the duty of the regional government or governments to help and encourage this development and growth so far as a government can help. This can be best done by building upon the foundation of the existing form and vocabulary of the language and by embellishing it with whatever can be naturally and easily adopted and adapted from other sister languages. Any purist attempt to exclude words, idioms, and even grammatical constructions on the ground that they were borrowed and did not originally belong to the source from which the language was derived is bound not only to fail but to result in impoverishing the language instead of enriching it.

Purism Condemned

Besides, we have to conserve our energy to the utmost for devoting it to the urgent tasks of the abolition of poverty and ignorance from our country and can hardly spare any for a wholly unnecessary, if not mischievous, purpose like this. I do not see any justification for linguistic purism, for language after all is but a medium of communication and if a word symbol is well understood by the people there is no reason why it should be thrown out on the simple ground of its alien origin. Also the growth of the language should be in a direction in which it becomes more and more acceptable and intelligible to the vast masses of the linguistic region concerned. Its themes, its style, its vocabulary should be as near as possible to the life and the tongue of the common people. I believe that language, like other institutions of society, would benefit greatly by going to the bosom of the demos.

Apart from the urgent need of developing and enriching the regional language there is another question which also demands careful consideration. Ours is a multilingual country. We must have a common language that would enable the different linguistic regions to communicate with one another in matters of inter-regional and national life. After full consideration the Constituent Assembly provided in the Constitution that that language shall be Hindi in the Devanagri script, the form of numerals for the official purposes of the Union being the international form of Indian numerals. It was a unanimous agreement and arrived at after due accommodation of all the relevant interests.

I think there is no reason whatever why any one in this country should feel that his or his group's interests would be adversely affected by this decision in any way. I do not think that I

need say more than that within the educational system of each linguistic region there should be arrangement for the teaching of the Union language. It is necessary to emphasize this so that those speaking languages other than Hindi may not find themselves at a disadvantage in any respect whatsoever. How and at what stage instruction in Hindi can be fitted in with the general scheme of education of non-Hindi regions has to be worked out without delay and steps taken to implement any plan that may be adopted so that within the time allowed by the Constitution we may be able to do without the use of the English language for official purposes of the Union.

This State has three languages spoken by the people in regions which are more or less marked and had been making every earnest effort to develop Urdu which I consider to be only a style or form of what has been adopted by our Constitution as the language of the Union, though it has its own script and distinctive vocabulary. It has thus the same problem that our multi-lingual country as a whole has to solve. But it has had the advantage of having made headway with a language for the purposes of the State which is distinct from the three regional languages. We should conserve and derive what benefit and lessons we can from the experience so gained and I feel that that may prove of great value as giving us a foundation on which to build. It is the duty and privilege of this University to erect on that foundation an edifice which will redound to its credit and to the great benefit of our land.

I thank you once again for your courtesy and kindness in conferring on me the honorary degree and I wish this University ever-increasing success and prosperity.

Land Gifts Mission

The Land Gifts Mission Committee, appointed by Shri Vinoba to carry out the objects of the Land Gifts Mission, has started the work of distributing land among the landless people from August 5, 1951. The Government and the people are helping in the work of the Committee. The Government by removing legal difficulties in the work of land distribution and granting facilities in effecting leases etc. have made the work of the Committee easier.

Now the Committee will move from village to village to carry out the work of land distribution. It is estimated that the expense per acre will be Re 1. The Committee requests those who appreciate this work to help it by rendering financial help. The workers who had taken the pledge at Mancherilal to carry on the work of *Bhu-dan-yajna* are requested to approach the people and take as much help from them as possible in this work.

Money contributions may kindly be sent to Shri Keshavrao, c/o Shri B. Rama Kishanraoji, Education Minister, Barkatpura, Hyderabad.

(From Hindi)

RAMAKRISHNA DHOOT

THE NEHRU-TANDON CONTROVERSY

Shri Vinoba's Statement

Friends have expressed a desire to know my attitude towards the great question that is agitating the country over Pandit Nehru's resignation from the Congress Working Committee. Hence this brief statement.

I must at the outset make it clear that, although I have very great regard for the Congress and although I have had on occasions the privilege of serving it as a soldier, I have not been even a primary member of the Congress since 1926. I should not therefore be expected to give expression to my ideas regarding the internal problems of the Congress. The importance of the present problem, however, is not confined to the Congress only. It is a question that concerns the country at large and is bound to have its repercussions even outside.

Who is to be the nation's leader — Nehru or some one else? The question, however, is not one of personalities and should not be considered as such. Nehru is undoubtedly a great man. But others can also be great. The real greatness of a man is due to the ideas he stands for. We have therefore to forget personalities and to think from the ideological point of view only.

Let us examine the ideas Nehru represents. Let us accept his leadership only if those ideas are acceptable to us. Otherwise let us relieve him of his responsibilities.

The main ideas for which Nehru is fighting with all his might are two and the two together make one complete whole.

1. The attitude of positive neutrality for India in the international sphere. Nehru does not want India to join any of the power-blocs. Instead, he wants to utilize India's moral influence in the interests of world peace and freedom. He therefore upholds an independent foreign policy for India. But there is a group in formation among Congressmen which considers that India will benefit by aligning herself with the Anglo-American bloc.

2. Nehru regards the Hindu, the Muslim, the Christian and all others as equals and is the enemy of communalism. He wants India to be a secular State. I call it a *Vedanti* State. But there are within the Congress men who think that the Hindu culture should prevail in India. Their Hinduism may not be as bigoted as that of the Hindu Mahasabha, but it is of the same stock.

These are the two main issues on which Congressmen have to direct attention and come to a decision. Nehru, the individual, like every other individual, has his merits as well as demerits. But it is not Nehru's person, but his ideology that is under consideration here. In my opinion it is the Nehru ideology that will help the country at this juncture.

I have not taken into consideration here the question of Nehru's administration. There are many, including myself, who are not satisfied with Nehru as an administrator. Perhaps he himself is not satisfied with his administration. We have for centuries been deprived of the experience of running the Government of the country. Mistakes are, therefore, only natural. Even so, the mistakes cannot be defended. They can and ought to be rectified.

I have left out of consideration even Nehru's National Planning. I am greatly dissatisfied with it. But Congressmen do not seem to be so. Hence it is not necessary to discuss it here.

Lastly, I must refer to a question that has been raised by some people recently. It has been asked: Is there no need to check Nehru? Will he not otherwise become a dictator? As far as I have known Nehru, he can become anything but that. He lacks the mental make-up needed for building up institutions and manipulating them which are indispensable for a dictator and in which his opponents might be far more efficient. Perhaps Nehru's followers might desire to supply this deficiency in him. But that will strengthen, not Nehru, but his opponents. In short, I have not the slightest fear of Nehru becoming a dictator. But I feel that some control is necessary even for him; for without such control of public opinion even *Ramarajya* might not last. What then of this *Lokarajya*? I believe that Nehru himself will like to have some control. And the Parliament is there to exercise the necessary control. Why then should we be anxious?

Such, in brief, are my thoughts. I do not regard myself a politician in the sense in which the word is used today. I am a humble worker in the cause of *Sarvodaya* and it is in that capacity that I have given expression to these thoughts.

Paramdham,
Paunar, 28-8-'51
(Translated from Hindi)

THE CONGRESS CRISIS

Shri Vinoba's statement on the Congress crisis is already before the public. It was not necessary to add anything to it immediately, and so I withheld one which I had prepared. Thereafter I had also the advantage of reading Shri Mishra's statement before the M. P. Legislative Assembly.

While the people are perfectly entitled to demonstrate their love and regard for Pandit Nehru, the rage against Shri Mishra for having dared to strike a different note is not fair. Every one knows, Shri Mishra himself knows perfectly well, that he is too small a man in the country to stand against Jawaharlal Nehru. And yet if he has taken courage to attack him, fairness demands that his side should be patiently heard.

In a democracy the tallest man of the land might be criticized by the youngest citizen. The question is not whether Shri Mishra's stand is correct or otherwise. His views might be rejected if they are found to be untenable, after due consideration. But the people should be grateful to him that he has begun to take the public into confidence about the exact difference between Shri Nehru and Tandon. The public know very little about them. Shri Mishra has begun to unravel the mystery, which is very welcome.

Shri Mishra's statement, which seeks to indict Pandit Nehru and his policy, is really an indictment of the Congress itself. It almost says that the Congress representatives in the various Governments and legislatures, the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. never played their part truly and fully and were not loyal either to Nehru, or to themselves, or to the people. In effect, it endorses the complaint of Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, that though the Congress passes resolutions drafted by him and adopts his policies, it elects a President and a Working Committee who have a different approach to the subject-matter of the resolutions, and harbour views contrary to his outlook. They would, if it were possible, reverse the Nehru policy almost on every matter dear to him or take steps different from those pursued by him.

Then, Shri Mishra's statement charges the Nehru Government at the Centre with weak administration, inconstant policies, and too much interference in the States' jurisdiction; and it lays the blame for all this on Nehru personally. It is complained that he does not go into details, and is surrounded by flatterers and so on. He is believed to be an 'administrative zero'. But the remedy for this would be for the administrative 'numerals' of the Congress to go to Nehru's help and work out in detail his ideas, from his point of view and not to ask him to reverse his policies.

Thirdly, Shri Mishra's statement complains that the Constitution has given too much power to the Centre, and made the States helpless in various important matters affecting the life of the people. If there is truth in this charge, it is the Congress and the State Governments that stand to blame rather than Nehru. They were all eager to make the Centre as strong as possible, much contrary to Gandhiji's advice. Indeed, it was with great difficulty that a directive in favour of decentralization and rural uplift was got included in the Constitution. What did the State Governments do when the Constitution was being framed? It is not known if they ever raised their voice against too much centralization of power. So far as the public know, the only point in which the Tandon group created heat was the language controversy, and the adoption of Arabic numerals. But the past may be forgotten. The defects of the Constitution might be

still removed. But it should be confessed that the responsibility for the defects belongs to the Congress and the States, and not to Nehru alone.

Kripalaniji and his people wanted to remain in the Congress as a separate bloc. This was resisted. Ultimately he had to leave. But that has not left a one-minded Congress. It is now a contest between the Tandon ideology and the Nehru ideology. Kripalaniji did not wish to leave the Congress, because he wanted to capture the Congress machinery some day by creating his majority. The Tandon bloc has captured the Congress machinery and now wants to oust Nehru from the Government. Of course, it can be done under the Congress Constitution, if the Congress supports the Tandon bloc.

In my opinion, as between Nehru and Tandon, the latter's is an unprogressive bloc, and if the Congress is not to be dissolved formally, it should perceive the wisdom of giving a line clear to Nehru. It must not seek to have him with fetters. If it believes that it has a real majority in the Congress, it must courageously dismiss him and put an end to the present show of false unity. Of course, if it does not carry the people with it, it will have to bear the consequences.

Several Congress bodies have passed resolutions expressing confidence both in Tandon and Nehru. I am afraid there is insufficient understanding of the word *confidence* here. 'Confidence' does not mean a certificate that they are both honest, good, respectable gentlemen and worthy patriots. This is perfectly true of both and each of them will pay a warm tribute to the other personally. But 'confidence' here has to be in their respective policies. It is clear that the approaches of both are mutually incompatible, and for the Congress bodies to say that they have confidence in both, means that they want both war and peace with Pakistan; they want to join the Anglo-American bloc and at the same time keep an independent foreign policy; they want the predominance of both the Hindu culture and the composite culture of all and so on. They must realize that this cannot be done. They must decide in favour of one, for better for worse.

If Congress wants to build for the future, and to function as a well-knit homogeneous and solid party organization, with a constantly progressive outlook, I humbly suggest that it should combine the post of the leader of the Central Party and the Congress President, and be satisfied with electing a Chairman and an Executive Committee to work under him for non-Parliamentary work. This body should be appointed with an eye to keep in readiness a second line of statesmen and administrators of Congress ideology. Hence, it should be a body of persons, whose approach to various important and far-reaching problems and plans are as much as possible identical, with those of the Prime Minister. Otherwise, the Congress President with his

Cabinet and the Prime Minister with his Cabinet can hardly feel at ease with each other, and sooner or later one would have to leave or suppress himself.

Wardha, 30-8-'51

K. G. MASHRUWALA

PS. Upon reading the above, Shri D. P. Mishra felt that my statement was likely to convey the impression upon the public mind that Shri Tandon and he held the same opinions on all matters discussed by me. He desires to make it clear that the statements made by him in the Press and in the M. P. Legislative Assembly represented his personal views and he was not sure whether Tandonji or others agreed with him on every point.

Wardha, 31-8-'51

K. G. M.

SHRI TANDON'S STATEMENT

"Shri Kishorlal Mashruwala has in a recent statement attributed to me directly and indirectly views which are as far from me as untruth from truth. For instance, he describes me as a representative of the upper class of orthodox Hinduism with something of the Arya Samaj added to it, and he also imagines me as a protagonist of reactionary Hindu culture. This is a caricature, not a portrait, of me. My whole life is a repudiation of what Mashruwala writes of me. I have often said that there is no book in the world which I place above the authority of the intellect. In that one doctrine is contained the repudiation of the false superstitious notions which Mashruwala imputes to me in the name of orthodox Hinduism.

"On the question of culture, I have said several times that I do not recognize that there is anything like Hindu culture, or Muslim culture, or Jain culture or any other variety of culture associated with any particular religion. Culture is to my mind associated with and born out of the soil. I always speak of *Bharatiya* culture which implies the culture of our country. I have compared it to a mighty river which rises from its unseen sources in the Himalayas and flows on to the sea gathering the waters of the tributaries which add to its strength and change its course while merging themselves into it. This culture is thus made up of the continuous contributions of the old and the new, the past and the present. It embraces the thinkers and workers belonging to diverse ways of thought in our land. It is not a narrow thing confined and cribbed within any communal group but a mighty and everlasting current moulding the life and destiny of our people."

(From The *Hitavada*, Nagpur, dated 4th Sept. '51)

(Note: I am glad to learn Shri Tandonji's view of Indian culture and accept it fully. I shall feel glad to be assured that the whole Congress accepts it wholeheartedly.

Wardha, 4-9-'51

K. G. M.)

HUMILIATING AND DISASTROUS POLICIES

Sardar Patel unified India and Pandit Nehru has thus far steered clear of the American-Soviet rivalry for the leadership of the world, and we are deeply grateful to both for these outstanding achievements; but the fiscal, financial and other policies pursued by Delhi during the last four years have been fraught with failure, humiliation and disaster.

Only last year about 1,100 million yards of cloth were exported to foreign countries with the result that our women had to stand in queues before cloth shops and were thus subjected to the insolence and insulting behaviour of traders and their minions. This is an intolerable and inexcusable situation.

Then again we paid cash in importing packard cars, beauty aids, costly textiles, plants for the manufacture of Coca-cola and what not. Let us note in passing, that Coca-cola contains phosphoric acid which destroys tooth enamel according to Dr. Clive M. McKay of Cornell, chief nutritionist for the American Navy during World War II. Dr McKay and his associates reported that white rats for five days or more of drinking 'cokes' suffered severe destruction of tooth enamel, and that monkeys were similarly affected. And when it came to buying food grains for our starving people, we had to ask for 'long-term loan.' Is it too much to hope that now at least every single dollar we earn will be devoted to the full repayment of the loan at the earliest opportunity? For no debtor can long remain independent; sooner or later he must surrender to the creditor unconditionally.

In 1938 only 25,000 tons of wheat and barley moved off farms in U. K. as compared with about 50,000 tons in 1942. If England doubled her surplus grains in 4 years, why cannot we?

Lastly must we persevere in the folly of importing French georgettes in 140 shades each costing a hundred rupees? Can we not do without vanishing cream and soap from Britain, now that sterling balances have shrunk to 800 from 1,500 crores?

V. G. D.

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