

Jayaprakash Narayan

SELECTED WORKS

Volume Four (1946-1948)

*Edited by*

B I M A L P R A S A D

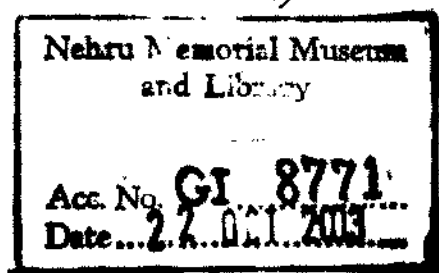
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Jayaprakash Narayan

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*between pages 105-6*

J.P. and his wife with Socialist Party workers

J.P. with women workers of the Socialist Party

J.P. with Socialist Party workers holding a child

J.P. and his wife ascending the dias at a public meeting

J.P. addressing a public meeting

J.P. addressing the welcoming crowd at a railway station

J.P. and his wife with Socialist Party workers

J.P. with a party colleague

*between pages 200-1*

Facsimile of J.P.'s Letter to J.B. Kirpalani

Facsimile of J.P.'s Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel

Facsimile of J.P.'s Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru

Facsimile of J.P.'s Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru

## FOREWORD

It is my pleasure to release Volume 4 of the *Selected Works of Jayaprakash Narayan*, covering the period from the middle of April 1946, when J.P. was released from the Agra Central Prison, to the end of March 1948 when the socialists, under his leadership, decided to leave the Congress and function as an independent party. The documents included in this volume deal with a wide range of topics and throw light, among other things, on the rationale behind J.P.'s opposition to the path of negotiation with the British Government then being followed by the Congress and his advocacy of the path of struggle for the achievement of independence. The volume also documents his involvement in the labour movement, particularly in certain strategic sectors like the railways, his exposition of the principles of democratic socialism without giving up his allegiance to Marxism, the new ideological orientation of the Socialist Party and, above all, his call for a moral regeneration of the country together with his emphasis on the need for adopting certain Gandhian values like the use only of the right means to achieve a rightful end. I hope readers interested in this period will find this volume useful and interesting.

*Nehru Memorial Museum & Library*

O.P. KEJARIWAL





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BIMAL PRASAD



## INTRODUCTION

By the time J.P. was released from prison in April 1946, the Cabinet Mission was already in India and engaged in serious negotiations with its most prominent leaders with a view to evolving a formula for the transfer of power to Indian hands which might be acceptable to both the Congress and the Muslim League. As these tripartite negotiations continued, the political atmosphere in the country became more and more surcharged with communal tension, thereby sapping the morale of the nationalist forces.

J.P. was totally opposed to the path of negotiations being pursued by the Congress leadership and strongly advocated going back to the path of struggle and intensive organization of the Indian people for the final battle for freedom. He thought that if that was not done, the nationalist forces would be demoralized, communal forces would forge ahead and the British would seek to serve their own ends by playing one against the other, as they had done in the past. As will be noticed in this volume, this was the refrain of almost all his speeches and statements during most of the year after his release from prison.<sup>1</sup>

The most detailed exposition of J.P.'s views in this respect is to be found in his third letter to all fighters of freedom issued on 28 July 1946. Here he reiterates his conviction that freedom could not be achieved through negotiations and that there was no real option before the Congress except the path of struggle. As for the method to be followed in that struggle J.P. lays the greatest emphasis on forging mass sanctions through sustained work among the people. Once this was achieved and the people became ready for action, the time would be ripe for launching the final battle for freedom, leading to the seizure of power. The picture of such a battle which J.P. had in mind included 'first, atomization and dislocation of imperialism by such means as are most efficient, second, simultaneous building up of units of free government in both town and country and protection of these from attack'. These local and regional 'Swaraj Governments' were ultimately to coalesce together to form 'The Free Republic of India'.

According to the plan of work elaborated in this letter, the struggle for the seizure of power was to be preceded by intensive work by freedom-fighters in villages as well as towns, in all parts of the country and among all sections of the people, including students, peasants and workers. J.P. gave the highest priority to work in the villages where the overwhelming majority of the people

<sup>1</sup> See items 1-4, 6-9, 13-16, 18-19.

lived. Here the objective would be to usher in *gramraj*, meaning a self-governing village or a village republic. Such villages would become 'centres of struggle and resistance during the revolution and would constitute the bricks with which the structure of the free Indian republic could be built.'<sup>2</sup>

By then the Congress leadership was too firmly set on the path of negotiations with the Cabinet Mission to be swayed by J.P.'s pleadings. This volume will show how strongly J.P. opposed the decision of the Congress Working Committee to accept the Cabinet Mission's Plan of 16 May 1946, when that decision went before the All India Congress Committee in the second week of July 1946 for endorsement.<sup>3</sup> He, however failed to win the support of the majority of its members who endorsed the Working Committee's decision. This was followed in due course by the Congress decision to participate in the Constituent Assembly and join the Interim Government set up in September 1946. With the Muslim League too joining that government about a month later and a powerful wave of communal passion sweeping over the country, resulting in severe communal riots at different places, the Congress leadership found that it had no option but to accept Partition with Independence as the final settlement of the Indian problem under the Mountbatten Plan of 3 June 1947. India and Pakistan emerged as two independent countries on 15 August 1947.

## II

While welcoming the advent of independence J.P. was feeling extremely sad because of Partition and the spate of communal riots which both preceded and followed it. While convinced that all this could have been avoided if the Congress had heeded his advice and left the path of negotiations for that of struggle for securing independence, he did not spend much time in recrimination and assiduously applied himself to extinguishing the fire of communal hatred which had engulfed almost the entire country. He also raised his voice against the Hindu communal forces who were using Partition to foment hatred against the national leaders as well as Muslims and to destabilize the Nehru Government.<sup>4</sup> While engaged most sincerely in this endeavor he was pained beyond measure when the fire of communal passion, then raging among a section of Hindus, claimed its greatest victim: Mahatma Gandhi, who was shot dead by a Hindu fanatic on the evening of 30 January 1948, while on his way to the prayer meeting at the Birla House, New Delhi, where he was then staying. J.P. felt that this tragedy could have been avoided if the Government of India had been fully alert to the danger to Gandhi's life

<sup>2</sup> Item 21 in the present volume

<sup>3</sup> Item 15 in the present volume

<sup>4</sup> Items 51-4.

and taken due precautions to protect him. Together with some of his prominent socialist colleagues he asserted that the Government of India should own moral responsibility for Gandhi's assassination and resign. He particularly emphasized the culpability of the Home Minister, Sardar Patel, and demanded his replacement by someone else. Some of the items included in this volume<sup>5</sup> should help the reader to fathom the depth of J.P.'s feeling in this regard and the reasoning behind his stand, which became quite controversial with many Congressmen accusing him of taking a purely partisan stand on a national tragedy.

### III

While deeply involved with the main developments taking place in the country's politics before and after the advent of independence, J.P. was also paying due attention to the building up of the Socialist Party—as the Congress Socialist Party had begun to be called since 1947—so as to make it a fit instrument for ushering in a new social order in the country based on freedom, equality and social justice. While doing all he could, to build up the party organization, he paid special attention to supporting the demands of workers and peasants. The details of his activities in this regard will be found in several of the items included in this volume.<sup>6</sup> At the same time he also paid attention to the grievances of low-paid government servants, particularly policemen, then fighting for their rights under the leadership of Ramanand Tewary, the hero of police strike at Jamshedpur in 1942, and pleaded for the adoption of suitable measures by the Government for improvement in their living condition.<sup>7</sup> At the same time J.P. ardently supported the popular movement in Hyderabad, under the leadership of Swami Ramanand Tirtha, for the installation of a democratic government there and integration of the state with India.<sup>8</sup> J.P. extended similar support to the movement for democracy in Nepal under the leadership of B.P. Koirala and pleaded their cause with both Gandhi and Nehru.<sup>9</sup>

The most important task which J.P. tackled during 1946-8 related to redefining the ideological moorings and objectives of the Socialist Party after the achievement of independence. In spite of his extremely busy schedule of going round the country and voicing his concern regarding major contemporary political developments, J.P. applied himself to this task even before the advent of independence. He had given considerable thought to this matter even while in jail in Lahore and Agra and that made the

<sup>5</sup> Items 145-6, 148-9.

<sup>6</sup> Items 5, 12, 14, 26, 27, 29, 47, 61, 74, 83, 102-5, 107, 108, 111, 116, 142-3.

<sup>7</sup> Items 28, 44.

<sup>8</sup> Items 85-6, 91, 96.

<sup>9</sup> Items 76, 79, 89, 95.

performance of this task easier for him than it might otherwise have been. Indeed, it can be said without any fear of contradiction, the ideas on the objectives and methods of socialism which he propounded in 1946-8, based on co-mingling of Marxism, Gandhism and Western democratic values, had their making in the years in prison, just before this. This can be noticed in the first major article on this subject entitled 'My Picture of Socialism' published in December 1946. Here he called himself a socialist, but went on to emphasize that the socialist movement in India must evolve its own picture of socialism in the light of Marxist thought of world history since Marx's death and of conditions in this country and its historical background. He further pointed out that Marxism was a science of society and a scientific method of social change and as such there could be no room for any dogmatism or fundamentalism in it. Proceeding on this basis he drew up a picture of socialist India whose economic side would consist of cooperative farms run by village *panchayats*; collective farms in new settlements; large-scale industry owned and managed by the State; community owned and managed industry; and small-scale industry organized under producers' cooperatives.

The last two types of industry as also the preference for cooperative farming under village *panchayats* deserve special attention. For they distinguish J.P.'s picture of a socialist society from that developed by the Soviet Union, then generally considered as containing a model of socialism. They were advocated mainly on two grounds. Firstly, according to J.P., large-scale industry would not by itself be able to provide employment to all able-bodied persons in India, at least for a long time to come. Secondly, in order to safeguard individual freedom he thought it necessary to prevent the State from emerging as the sole source of employment and economic development. 'The State under socialism', he wrote, 'threatens, as in Russia, far from withering away, to become an all-powerful tyrant maintaining a stranglehold over the entire body of citizens. This leads to totalitarianism of the type we witness today. By dispersing the ownership and management of industry and by developing the villages into democratic village republics we break this stranglehold to a very large extent and attenuate the danger of totalitarianism.'

J.P.'s idea of a socialist society differed even more from that of the Soviet society in its political aspects. At the outset he emphasized that there could be no socialism without democracy. Referring to Marx he pointed out that the dictatorship of the proletariat, as envisaged by him, did not represent the ideal, but only the transitional stage, and that too might not be found absolutely necessary in every country. Besides, according to Marxist theory dictatorship of the proletariat does not mean the dictatorship of a single party as was the case in the then Soviet Union. In any case, Marxist theory clearly spelled out

that once the transition to socialism was completed, the dictatorship of the proletariat must come to an end, the State turned into a fully democratic institution. Thus J.P.'s picture of socialism was the picture of an economic and political democracy. 'In this democracy' he emphasized, 'man will neither be slave to capitalism nor to party or the State. Man will be free.'<sup>10</sup>

In 'the Transition to Socialism' published in January 1947, J.P. tried to delineate the path to be followed in order to achieve the goals outlined in the earlier articles. Recalling the observations of Marx at the Hague Convention of the first International in 1872, J.P. asserted that Marx did not always consider a violent revolution necessary for ushering in socialism. For he envisaged two paths leading to socialism: the one peaceful where democratic conditions prevailed, and the other violent, where they did not. Which of the two paths should be adopted, thus depended upon the conditions prevailing in a particular country at a given point of time. Here J.P. was also influenced by the example of the British Labour Party which, having come to power in 1945, seemed to be succeeding in introducing many socialist measures through parliamentary means. India was still under British rule when J.P. wrote this article, but he had no doubt that freedom was going to be achieved soon. He further felt that once that happened the political system to be established in India was bound to be based on democratic principles, his guess proved right, J.P. saw no reason to depart from the peaceful path in order to usher in socialism. 'The method of the violent revolution and dictatorship', he wrote, 'might conceivably lead to a socialist democracy; but in the only country where it has been tried, it has led to something very different, i.e., to a bureaucratic State in which democracy does not exist. I should like to take a lesson from history.'<sup>11</sup>

#### IV

The principles enunciated by J.P. in the two articles discussed above became the bedrock of the Socialist Party's ideology and programme around the time of the achievement of independence. J.P. had, however, left the question open whether the socialists would continue to function as a part of Congress as before or break away from it completely and function as an independent political party. This was, however, the most important issue before them immediately after Independence. They had had, of course, an organization of their own—the Congress Socialist Party—since 1934, but that had functioned largely within the Congress framework. In early 1947, a few months before the advent of Independence the name of the C.S.P. had been changed to just Socialist Party and it had been decided that all its members

<sup>10</sup> Item 56.

<sup>11</sup> Item 65.

need not be members of the Congress as during the C.S.P. days. This was indicative of the fact that J.P., along with other leading members of the party, had begun thinking of the day when they might separate from the Congress. This is also confirmed by what J.P. wrote in 'The Transition to Socialism'. Here he had noted that the question of the nationalist and socialist movements separating had already been raised and added that if the possibility of an open conflict with the British were not present, he would not have hesitated to advise separation.<sup>12</sup> After Independence this consideration lost its relevance, but the widespread communal killings which accompanied independence led to continued hesitation on the part of the socialists on leaving the Congress; they felt that the need of the hour was to unitedly face the danger posed by the communal forces. Besides, most of the socialist leaders had also been functioning as leaders of the Congress and grown as a part of the bigger organization. It was not, therefore, easy for them to decide finally upon separation.

The time, however, came soon when this decision could no longer be postponed. It became clear that under the changed circumstances after the achievement of Independence the Congress had to function strictly as a political party and the socialists could not both retain their separate organization and belong to the Congress. Indeed the Congress adopted a resolution declaring that anyone belonging to any other political party could not be a member of the Congress. In the context of this development the choice before the socialists was either to belong to the Congress or belong to their own party. After considerable thinking J.P. came to the conclusion that the latter was the better option. Some of the socialist leaders then stood quite high in the Congress hierarchy and indeed Gandhi had suggested in 1947 that either J.P. or his elder in the party, Narendra Dev, be made president of the Congress. Although the suggestion was not found acceptable by other Congress leaders, that showed the possibilities then existing for the socialist leaders if they decided to remain within the Congress. The Congress leaders, on their part, while not prepared to allow the privilege of dual membership to the socialists, were willing to welcome their continuance in the Congress as it would enable the latter to acquire a progressive image on socio-economic issues and were prepared to adopt a socio-economic programme on the basis of socialist principles as a further inducement to the socialists to disband their party and remain within the Congress. J.P., however, refused to be tempted by this. He was convinced that the congress, as it was then constituted, with the vested interests in ascendance, could not become a fit instrument for ushering in socialism. 'Looked at from this angle', he wrote in course of his article entitled 'Will the Socialists leave the Congress?' published January 1948, 'the problem of converting the Congress to Socialism is not merely that of defining its objectives and drawing up a programme, but also of

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.



converting it structurally into a labour or rather a proletarian party (embracing both the peasant and the worker)."<sup>13</sup>

The decision to separate from the Congress was formally adopted at the sixth annual conference of the Socialist Party held at Nasik in Maharashtra in the third week of March 1948. Only a few weeks before this had occurred the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, which had had a traumatic impact on many sensitive persons in the country. J.P. in particular was deeply affected by the trauma. He now became finally convinced that politics must be dominated not by pursuit of power but by commitment to certain ideals and values. The General Secretary's report presented by him to the Nasik Conference vividly reflects the working of his mind at that time. Although the occasion marked the separation of the socialists from the Congress and their constitution into a rival political party, there was no rancour or bitterness in that report against the Congress leadership. On the contrary, J.P. took special pains to remind his fellow socialists that there was much in common between them and Congressmen and that they should always be ready to join hand with the latter for the defence of the State and of democracy, and in opposition to the forces of communalism and reaction. Besides, for the first time in the history of the socialist movement in India, J.P. raised the issue of the role of ethics in politics and emphasized the importance of adhering to the Gandhian ideal of purity of means. Further, he pointed out that the use only of right means could enable the socialists to reach their goal of establishing a good society, which was socialism. Finally, he repudiated the view that all politics was power politics as also the assumption that the State was the only instrument of social good.<sup>14</sup> This marked the beginning of a new phase in J.P.'s political thinking, which was to culminate later in his giving up party politics altogether.

## V

The twenty-four appendices to this volume follow the usual pattern. They consist of documents, statements or letters prepared by J.P. in collaboration with others, some important letters received by him and some articles or statements by others to which he referred in his writings or statements. Some of the documents included in the appendices are quite long, particularly those containing the Policy Statement of the Socialist Party, the Programme of the Socialist Party and the Draft Constitution of India issued on behalf of the Socialist Party. They have been included here as J.P. had played a leading role in preparing them. They will, it is hoped, be found useful by all those interested in a detailed study of his life and thought as also by those who may be interested in a similar study of the history of the socialist movement in India.

<sup>13</sup> Item 138.

<sup>14</sup> Item 157.



## **1. To All Freedom Fighters, 15 April 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Friends,

I feel happy at being in a position once again to address you directly. And I am thankful that in *Janata* I find a ready-made medium through which to reach you.

I wish first to pay my homage to the memory of Satyavati Devi,<sup>2</sup> a dear and valued comrade and one of the bravest and noblest fighters for freedom. Delhi, her city, had resolved sometime ago to erect to her a suitable memorial. I hope this memorial would soon be erected and that it would be a means of service of workers and peasants whose cause was dearest to Behenji.

I have been out of prison only for a few days, and there is not much yet that I have to say. But I take this opportunity to send you my greetings and good wishes. Later, when I have taken stock of the situation and consulted with my leaders and colleagues, I hope to be in a position to place my views before you at great length and suggest to you what we should do and how.

It is possible that some of you at least are frightfully excited about the negotiations now being held between the leaders of the country and the plenipotentiaries of the British Government. Such excitement can only serve to deflect us from our work and duty. There are other matters which should engage our attention and our energies. You know what these are, and I hope soon to talk to you more fully about them. The British have not yet quit India. As long as that is so, we may not engage ourselves in any activities but those that are designed to prepare the country for the last all-out offensive if and when that should become necessary. Quiet, steady, planned work to that and is our only duty today and should remain so till the last straggling vestige of British power has quit this country.

Jai Hind!

Delhi

Jayaprakash Narayan

15 April 1946

<sup>1</sup> *Janata*, 21 April 1946, Vol. 1 (12), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> For biographical note on Satyavati Devi see *JPSW*, Vol. II, p. 163.

## **2. Interview to Associated Press regarding the Political Situation, 15 April 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Jayaprakash Narayan: If the present negotiations with the Cabinet Mission break down, another struggle cannot be avoided. I would take all steps to be fully prepared this time.

<sup>1</sup> *Tribune*, 16 April 1946. Interviewed at New Delhi, 15 April 1946.

Question: Could independence be achieved through negotiations and constitutional means?

J.P.: The talks with Cabinet Mission are not the result of goodwill on the part of British Labour Government. It is the result of the greatest national upheaval since 1857 and also of outside pressure and world situation.

Q: What does the Congress Socialist Party plan to do?

J.P.: We are at the stage of formulating our policy. The Congress Socialist Party is part of the Congress. We must take stock of the present political situation and then formulate our plans.

Q: What are your views about the Communist Party?

J.P.: I consider the Communists to be Russia's fifth columnists and as such a perpetual danger to the country, irrespective of what policy they may be following at a particular moment.

### 3. Speech at Public Meeting, Patna, 21 April 1946<sup>1</sup>

I am so much moved by your loving welcome that I find it difficult to speak. I am no speaker. I do not possess the fluency of Shri Babu<sup>2</sup> nor have my words wings like Poet Dinkar's.<sup>3</sup> The great honour that you have shown to me today has not made me regard myself as a leader. I still consider myself as an ordinary soldier of the Congress in the cause of the country's freedom and of the people. Your homage is not for me personally but for those who laid down their lives and suffered during the revolution of 1942. The revolution of 1942 was the greatest after that of 1857 and would compare well with similar upheavals in other countries. Your enthusiasm has convinced me that however mistaken we might have been in the eyes of Gandhiji and the Congress High Command, the people approve of what we did. I feel heartened by your confidence. Our place is with you and we shall advance forward together. I took some part in the revolution but it was not much. I pay my homage to those who bravely laid down their lives at the altar of the country's freedom and to all those who suffered untold miseries for the noble cause and who participated in it, particularly the students, who were in the vanguard.

<sup>1</sup> First speech at a public meeting after his release from prison, delivered at the reception accorded by the citizens of Patna, with Sri Krishna Sinha, Prime Minister of Bihar in the chair. Adapted from a report in the *Searchlight*, 22 April 1946.

<sup>2</sup> For biographical note on Shri Babu (S.K. Sinha) see *JPSW*, Vol. II, pp. 221-2.

<sup>3</sup> Randhari Singh Dinkar (1908-74); eminent Hindi poet and writer; a poet of revolt against social, political and economic injustice; composed and recited a long poem welcoming J.P. at the public meeting in Patna on 21 April 1946; Member Rajya Sabha 1952-5; Vice-Chancellor of Bhagalpur University for a year. Bharatiya Jnanpith Award winner, 1973; author of about 20 books, including *Urvashi*.

It is remarkable that every strata in the society took some part in this revolution. One incident which happened in this province was unique. Seven hundred police constables at Jamshedpur revolted and refused to raise their hands against their own people at the behest of their alien masters or their paid Indian agents. About 10,000 to 15,000 British and Indian troops had to be dispatched to suppress this rebellion. It was only to placate the police force that only 35 of the rebels were arrested. I recall this incident because I hope that when the time comes again for action, the police force will draw inspiration from the heroic gesture of the 700 Jamshedpur rebels and act accordingly.

Although I have not much to say, I consider it my duty to put my thoughts before you, though. I am afraid, some of you and many of our leaders will not relish it. I was really very much pained to hear that many of our great leaders when released from jail hastened to publicly criticize what they considered to be mistakes committed during the 1942 revolution. I have every respect for their advice and would welcome their correctives. At the same time, however, I would say that they also committed a great mistake. They were really guilty of an irresponsible act and it does not become them to denounce certain features of the 1942 revolution. The situation which obtained in those historic days of August, 1942 and the opportunity which offered itself then does rarely come in the life of a country and people. The blunder that our leaders committed was that while raising the standard of revolt they did not prepare the country for the fight. They called upon us to "Do or Die", but the Congress Working Committee did not tell us what to do. Excepting Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru<sup>4</sup> who has admitted this mistake, others have failed to do so. Many arguments are put forward, one of which is that the Working Committee had delegated all its powers to Gandhiji and it was up to him to put forth a programme and plan of action. But this argument does not hold water. They should have known what would be the consequences of challenging the might of the British Government and should have made preparations for the contingency. The great upheaval which resulted cost the lives of about 40,000 of our countrymen, men, women and children; many more had to suffer incarceration and had to undergo other kinds of misery; thousands were widowed and rendered orphan. The responsibility for all this falls on those leaders who did not prepare the people for the struggle while declaring war on the masters of the land. It does not become those who left the people in the lurch to find fault with those who carried on the fight without any proper guidance or plan.

I have come to know that in certain parts of the country specially in a western province, there is a move to brand as traitors those who fought during 1942 revolution and did not conform to Mahatma Gandhiji's ideal

<sup>4</sup> For biographical note on Jawaharlal Nehru see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 41.

of non-violence. I believe in *Ahimsa* as much as Maulana Azad,<sup>5</sup> does and the latter believes in violence as much as I do. I bow my head before Gandhiji's ideal of *Ahimsa*. I would act according to it if I possessed that moral strength which makes a true and brave *Satyagrahi*. I find it difficult to practise a brave man's non-violence. I therefore, prefer to fight with a gun. Twice during the last war the Congress Working Committee discarded Gandhiji's ideal of non-violence as also his leadership. On August 8th, 1942, at the A.I.C.C. session in Bombay Maulana Azad had declared that if there was national government the Indians would fight against the Japanese. Is violence no violence if it is directed against the Japanese? Are the Japanese not human beings? There is no difference between the Japanese and the British. If we could fight the Japanese with violence, why should not we fight in the same way against the British? The fact is that *Ahimsa* is being exploited for power politics inside the Congress.

When I was in jail I was really glad to read Rajendra Babu<sup>6</sup> say that he would take new men. I wonder how far this idea has been implemented. As a matter of fact no organization would remain living if there was no regular influx of new blood. The Congress itself would die if the organization excluded young men. The Party which I represent believes that so long as full freedom is not achieved, unity in Congress must be maintained. Whatever treatment we are accorded and howsoever we are misrepresented and misunderstood we shall work for unity in Congress till we have reached our goal of full freedom.

Although we adopted the "Quit India" resolution in August 1942, the British have not yet left the country. Our leaders say that Swaraj is coming and coming within a short time. I wonder what that Swaraj would be like. You know that independence of a country is not gained by negotiations. But what is today going on in Delhi is not just another round table conference. The Cabinet Ministers of Britain have come over here to negotiate with Indian leaders. This is a direct consequence of our fight for freedom inside the country and the brave efforts of the Azad Hind Fauj<sup>7</sup> under the leadership of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.<sup>8</sup> The greatest achievement of the I.N.A. has been that it has shaken to the very foundation those strong pillars on which rests the power of the British in the country. It is due to their inspiration that the Indian personnel in the fighting forces are today imbued with the spirit of nationalism and independence. It is due

<sup>5</sup> For biographical note on Maulana Abul Kalam Azad see *JPSW*, Vol. II, p. 239.

<sup>6</sup> For biographical note on Rajendra Prasad see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 112.

<sup>7</sup> Indian National Army (I.N.A.): was formed by Rash Behari Bose and Mohan Singh in Singapore in September 1942; its members were recruited from among 60,000 Indian soldiers taken prisoner by the Japanese in Malaya and Singapore during World War II.

<sup>8</sup> For biographical note on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 114.

to our fight inside and outside India coupled with the present international situation which has compelled the British to negotiate with us. I know that through negotiations we cannot get full freedom. This is because our strength is divided. Thus we are likely to get only partial freedom. Some argue that this partial freedom can, through constitutional methods, be extended in course of time to complete freedom as *De Valera*<sup>9</sup> did in Ireland. It is true that he has been successful to a very great extent in widening the scope of his country's freedom constitutionally. I would, however, consider Ireland fully free only when her northern province, the Ulster, are joined to her. In case we get only partial freedom, we may have to fight to gain full independence if the British refuse to allow us to proceed constitutionally to achieve that end. And if the present talks fail then only through another revolution we can reach our goal. In any case we have to prepare ourselves for action. When I was in Delhi, I found Congress leaders hopeful. I am not in a position to say anything about it as I am not acquainted with the trend of the talks. Our duty is, however, simple. Instead of speculating about the outcome of the present negotiations, we should prepare for the next round. We shall never again be caught napping if the negotiations end in failure.

Pandit Nehru says that after the 1942 movement a new life is pulsating the country. I also feel that the revolution of 1942 has brought about a great change and that there is no lack of enthusiasm among the people, and that they are ready to lay down their lives in the fight for freedom. But this in itself is not enough. The question today is how to channelize this force and organize the people—the students, the kisans, the workers and others—for the coming fight for freedom. But what I find is that we are still moving in the rut. There are meetings, conferences, processions and demonstrations. These are meant for propaganda, which is not the need of the hour. The message of freedom has already reached the people and they are ready for action. Their energy should be conserved and they should be given a programme and plan of action.

I have one great complaint against the Congress leaders and I have placed it before Maulana Azad. It is that from the time the Congress was declared a legal body it has been busy with elections only. As a result the attention of the people is directed towards Delhi looking forward to a peaceful transfer of power to Indian hands. I think this has been a very erroneous policy and has harmed to our cause. This is the time when instead of looking for easy gains, we should strengthen our organization so that we are not taken unawares. If and when the negotiations finally fail, it would be too late. The fact that Congress ministries have been installed should not make us

<sup>9</sup> Eamon De Valera (1882-1975); Irish statesman, leader of opposition in the Irish Free State parliament, 1927-32; head of his country's Government, 1932-59, President of the Republic of Ireland, 1959-73; President of the General Assembly (U.N.) 1938.

complacent. These can be unmade by those who have made them if it suits their purpose. If the talks fail the British would not allow us time to prepare. They would very likely manoeuvre, a crisis and try to render us incapable of doing them any harm. That is what happened in 1931. All the time that Gandhiji was having talks with the Viceroy and while the *Round Table Conference*<sup>10</sup> was going on in London they precipitated crisis in the Frontier and the U.P. and when Gandhiji landed in Bombay he found that the *Frontier Gandhi*<sup>11</sup> and Nehru were already in jails and that the machinery of repression was already on the move. He tried to gain time by writing to Lord Willingdon<sup>12</sup> for interview but the latter refused to even receive him. Today also we are in a similar situation. While we are making optimistic speculations about the outcome of the present negotiations and sitting idle, the British are getting ready to nip in the bud any attempt on our part to rise in revolt. We have therefore to prepare for the eventuality of another movement and it is time the Congress organization is geared up for action. The Congress should prepare a plan of action. I am not yet in a position to put forward any scheme for the present because I have still to study the situation in the country and find out what were the drawbacks of the 1942 movement and why it did not succeed. Take for example Ballia (U.P.). That district led the other districts in the country in the 1942 revolution as the province of Bihar was in the vanguard of other provinces. How it was that the district of Ballia where for a few days British rule had ceased to exist—the District Officer and the Superintendent of Police were the prisoners of the people—was reconquered by only 300 soldiers—Indian and British—who succeeded in putting down the revolt with a scorn hand. In fact they created so much terror in the district that none dared go out in streets with Gandhi cap on his head. Some leaders who visited the district after the revolution are reported to have prepared a list of those British officers who terrorized the people. I would not go there for that purpose. For, after all, it is but natural for a British officer to hit back ruthlessly if we try to uproot British power in the country. I would go there to study as to what defects in organization and plan or lack of it led to such a speedy collapse of our power. That is my present task. When I have made a full study of the various aspects of 1942 revolution, I would be in a position to put forward a plan of action for our next round of struggle.

<sup>10</sup> The Round Table Conference was convened by the British Government in 1930 for a discussion of the Indian constitutional problem between British and Indian political leaders. The first session was held from 12 November 1930 to 19 January 1931.

<sup>11</sup> For biographical note on Frontier Gandhi (Khan Abdul Ghaffar) see *JPSW*, Vol. II, p. 234.

<sup>12</sup> Lord Willingdon (1866-1941); Freeman-Thomas, 1st Marquis of Willingdon; Governor Bombay, 1913-19 and Madras, 1919-24; Governor-General of Canada 1926-31, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1931-6.



#### 4. 'Reorganize the Congress: Task for Leadership'<sup>1</sup>

The Congress was never as powerful, never so popular as today. Yet, it was also never as weak, as moribund as it is today. These are contradictory statements but they are both true. The unprecedented power of the Congress derives from the unprecedented hold it has over the mass mind. Its weakness is revealed when we turn to look at its organization, particularly its human material. An organization is strong not because it has an elaborate or iron constitution or large membership, but because it is inspired and driven by certain ideas which have come to exercise a powerful influence over its members. In the final analysis it is the strength of this emotional attachment which binds every individual member of an organization to its ideals that constitutes the strength of the organization. A small organization whose members are fanatically attached to certain ideas and through that attachment bound closely to one another can move mountains, as the phrase goes, and succeed where a huge organization, many times larger, but having no such emotional or psychological climate may fail utterly and be driven to the wall. The history of religious societies and brotherhoods that started with small beginnings but later swept all before them and engulfed whole continents proves the truth of these assertions.

#### *The 1921 and 1930 Movements*

There was a time when the Congress too had an intense emotional climate, when its workers, if not its members, were strongly attached to and driven by ideas and had in Mahatma Gandhi a source of inspiration that was fresh and intimate. This was so in the early 20's of this century. Since those early days, no fresh emotional stimulus has been received by most of the older Congressmen. Their spiritual store built up in 1921 has tended latterly to be depleted, and except in the case of a few, only the shells of the ideas, attachments and loyalties of 1921 remain today. In place of the old spirit of self-dedication and sacrifice, there is a pervading feeling among a large section of Congressmen that after a life time of suffering they have reached a stage in the evening of their lives when rewards are their rightful dues. Hence this indecent struggle for jobs and offices and patronage.

In 1930 again a fairly large number of men and women were caught in an emotional storm and swept into the salt satyagraha.<sup>2</sup> But neither was

<sup>1</sup> *Janata*, 5 May 1946.

<sup>2</sup> Salt Satyagrah; On 23 March 1930, the A.I.C.C. meeting held at Sabarmati endorsed its Working Committee's resolution (11 February 1930) authorising Mahatma Gandhi to launch Civil Disobedience on mass scale. Gandhi decided to inaugurate Civil Disobedience by breaking the salt law. On 12 March 1930 he left his abode at Sabarmati Ashram (near Ahmedabad) along with 78 persons and began his march to Dandi on the sea-coast and

their number as large as in 1921, nor was the emotional climate as intense. Naturally this stimulus tended to wear off quicker.

In 1942 by a combination of various circumstances a rather intense emotional climate was prepared that pervaded throughout the land and brought far larger numbers of people under its influence than ever before. Those competent to express an opinion about it have said that in point of sheer numbers the August Revolution involved larger masses of people than either the Russian or the French Revolution. As for the intensity of feelings generated, the deeds of unarmed heroism, of determined resistance, of unbending will, point to the presence of the highest degree of it.

A common element in the psychological atmospheres of all these three periods was Gandhiji. He was not only a common element; he was the creator of the atmosphere. In this respect only in 1942 was there a difference.

### *Gandhiji and August '42*

The August struggle undoubtedly drew its entire inspiration from Gandhiji. Even when the people deviated from his path, they did it with the cry of "Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai". But later, particularly after Gandhiji's fast, while "Quit India" still remained the battle cry and Gandhiji was still the inspiration, certain ideas and forms of struggle came more and more to be adopted by thousands of those who were then fighting the battle of freedom. Soon those fighters became strongly attached to these ideas and methods and developed different emotional loyalties. These young fighters can become today the greatest strength of the Congress, provided the Congress has the capacity to make use of that strength.

I say the greatest strength because judging from the stand-point set forth above, they possess all those psychological qualities that make for action, sacrifice, suffering and that go to make an organization strong.

The 1921 cadre of the Congress except for a few is fixed and anxious for a haven of rest. Above all it has lost its emotional drive and loves the humdrum politics of elections and party management. I am sure it cannot supply the punch and drive needed for another fight. The cadre of 1930 is perhaps not so stale, but it too or a large part of it, is caught in the politics of office-seeking and job-hunting.

### *Helplessness and Tiredness*

The Congress today, being in the hands very largely of the men of 1921,

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broke the law by manufacturing salt with the sea-water collected there on 6 April, the anniversary of Jallianwala Bagh massacre. The movement immediately caught on and about sixty thousand persons, including the top leaders of the Congress, were jailed.

itself seems to have tired and to have found satisfaction in jobs and offices. Gandhiji and some of the top-most leaders are still there to inspire and guide, but they too appear helpless in the face of lethargy, incompetence and self-seeking. Everywhere in high Congress quarters the moribund state of the Congress organization is common talk but there is also a common realization of helplessness to do anything about it. One attempt to arrest the rot is the effort being made to amend the Congress Constitution. An efficient constitution is of course the sine qua non for any effective living organization. But a constitution is merely the dead framework, it is not the living motive force. The motive force can be only the human material, the psychological factor. I am certain the Congress cannot be made an active, live body today, serving the people, fighting their battles and building up the nation's life on its own initiative merely by constitutional amendments. Perhaps not one but many things would have to be done to convert the Congress to this shape. But I have no doubt in my mind that one of the most important ways of doing this is to absorb organically into the Congress organization those whom one may call Augusters, i.e. all the men and women who took part in the August Revolution. So far, only mechanical and rather ludicrous attempts have been made in this direction. Here and there an Auguster or two have been taken into this or that committee, given this or that office, put in charge of this or that department. These new men have been as it were made parts of a machine that has stopped running. The only result of this can be that they too would fall a prey to the pervading inactivity.

### *Assimilate the New*

In order to bring about an organic assimilation of this new group, it is necessary for the Congress leadership to understand fully its character, views and methods. Then it would be necessary, as it would be easy to my mind, to draw up a plan of work that could give full scope to the new group to function through the Congress organizations. The next step should be to absorb the entire active cadre of the group into the Congress organization beginning from the lowest to the highest Committees.

I have no desire to criticise for the sake of criticism. But I find it necessary to say here that beginning with the Working Committee, every Committee of the Congress is in need of reorganization and revitalization. It appears to me, for instance, that at least half the members of the Working Committee of the A.I.C.C. are there for no particular reason except that they belong or profess to belong to a certain school of thought. What is true of the Working Committee is even more true of the lower committees and organizations of the Congress. In every province there are groups of people who have been in office in the Congress organizations, almost holding the same office, for 15 or 20 years. Many of these are ancient people who have not even taken

the trouble of understanding the changes that have taken place in the world around them since they joined politics in their young days. Their views are narrow, sectarian, static. Their conception of Swaraj (self rule) is limited and of the struggle for swaraj limited merely to periodical trips to prison. They have made their peace with prison life and if they do not feel happy in it, they at least derive a spiritual satisfaction from it by conceiving it as "tyag" (sacrifice/renunciation) and "tapasya" (penance). These dear and estimable gentlemen are incapable even of keeping this vast overgrown Congress on the tracks, much less of supplying any drive or power to it.

### *Violence and Non-Violence*

I may be accused of egotism and other crimes. I would not mind that provided I were able by my blunt words to shake up the complacency of our leaders and compel them to consider the situation with vision and foresight.

A possible objection, among many, to the absorption of the new group into the Congress may be that it "believes" in violence and secrecy. I am afraid it largely does. But there is now no occasion for violence or secrecy. These people wish to work, to serve, to organise, to bring order into our life, to educate. All this is neither violence nor secrecy. Will the Congress allow them to do all this as a part of the day-to-day Congress work? Nothing would make them happier than to be in a position to do so. As for violence and secrecy, if non-violence has self-confidence and faith in itself it should not be afraid of violence but should rather look forward with assurance to the time when it would abolish and transform it. Without further argument, let me say plainly, that non-violence should not be exploited in the interest of power politics, i.e. merely for the purpose of keeping a certain group in power. Here too our leaders must act with faith, courage and vision.

### **5. Statement on Bata Strike, 9 May 1946<sup>1</sup>**

I understand that the workers of Bata Shoe Factory [in Calcutta] have gone on strike since the 18th April and that the strike is spreading to other branch factories of the Batas. Everywhere today the workers are victimized by their employers. My sympathy in all such conflicts can only be with the workers. I accordingly have the fullest sympathy with the Bata workers in their struggle. I have looked into their demands and have found them generally reasonable and moderate. The employers should grant these demands. I appeal to the public to help the Bata workers and to contribute to the Strike Fund which the Union is raising.

<sup>1</sup> *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 14 May 1946.

## **6. Interview to Press regarding constructive work in villages, 10 May 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Some constructive workers are no doubt carrying on their work in their own way but that also needs more impetus and guidance, so that the villagers can be well organized and mobilized for the next struggle which is sure to come. We should not be complacent or be caught napping when the call comes for the task of liberating India. The Congress Committees have become inactive and they must be galvanized into fruitful activity, so that our next fight is successful in winning independence.

We must lose no time but prepare for the next struggle which is sure to come and must not fail like the August 1942 movement, which though a great upheaval could not achieve the objective for want of a planned programme.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 13 May 1946.

## **7. Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay, 11 May 1946<sup>1</sup>**

We must remember that we lost in 1942 and the British are still in India. The people of India must be ready to complete the August 1942 revolution. I have no other message to give to the people but the Quit India message which has gone deep into the people's hearts. They need no other message today.

We must create such revolutionary conditions that this time instead of the Premiers, the Governors are arrested. The coming struggle would have to be fought on a much vaster scale. It will have to be fought by all, by men and women, by kisans, by students, by workers, under the Congress banner. I am not very much interested in the negotiations now under way in Delhi and Simla between the British Cabinet Mission<sup>2</sup> and Indian leaders. It would be a great mistake to suppose that the talks, if successful, would bring us Purna Swaraj. The Round Table Conference of 1931 had created similar hopes. But no sooner had the conference failed the Congress leaders were

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *National Herald* and *Pioneer*, 13 May 1946. The meeting was held at Shivaji Park. This was J.P.'s first appearance in Bombay after four years of incarceration and underground revolutionary activity.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 1 for joint statement by J.P. and others on Cabinet Mission's proposals.

put behind prison bars. And this happened even before Mahatma Gandhi had returned to India from England. Likewise, in case the present negotiations failed, which is very probable, a similar course of action would be resorted to by the British Government. Therefore, we have to be wide awake and not be caught napping. We have to be prepared for another supreme effort to achieve freedom.

The Delhi-Simla talks have created considerable confusion among the people. It is strange that while, on the one hand, the British are carrying on negotiations with the leaders, on the other hand they are putting new weapons into the hands of the police and military to crush any movement they might be faced with. In my province, in Chota Nagpur, the "Adibasis" are being recruited into the army and asked to give the pledge that they would shoot Congressmen if ordered to. In certain places soldiers are being trained to practise shooting on the Gandhi cap as a target. In the army while certain progressive elements are being demobilized the others, comparatively backward, are being encouraged. All this is being done to crush the future struggle in India against the British Raj.

The British just don't mean anything when they say they are ready to leave India. They have created in this country a strong fifth column for them—the Muslim League<sup>2</sup> of Jinnah<sup>3</sup> and of Khan Bahadurs and Nawabs, the Princes, and Ambedkar.<sup>4</sup> In any event, we will have to fight the British Raj whether the talks succeed or fail. We must from now on harness all the new forces released by the August revolution to give the final battle to the British Government.

<sup>2</sup> All India Muslim League: it was born in Dacca in December 1906. M.A. Jinnah entered the League in 1913 and soon became its most prominent leader. It was under his leadership that the Lahore session of the League in 1940 put forward the demand for the partition of the country. This demand soon caught on and the League captured an overwhelming majority of the Muslim seats in the various legislatures in the election of 1946 on the basis of that demand. The creation of Pakistan soon followed.

<sup>3</sup> For biographical note on M.A. Jinnah see *JPSW*, Vol. II, p. 155.

<sup>4</sup> Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1888-1956); Dalit Leader, one of the architects of constitution of India. Graduated from Elphinstone College 1912; went to U.S.A. in 1913 after obtaining a doctorate in Economics; Professor of Economics at Sydenham College of Commerce 1918-20; started legal practice at Bombay High Court 1924; founded Bahishkrti Hitkarni Sabha in 1924; member Bombay Legislative Council 1926-34; fought for equal rights of untouchables; delegate to Round Table Conference in London; founded independent Labour Party in 1936, the Scheduled Castes Federation in 1942 and Republican Party in 1956; Member Labour, Viceroy's Executive Council, 1942-6, Chairman, Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly, 1947-9; Law Minister in India's first Cabinet, 1947-51 and resigned on health ground in 1951; M.P. Rajya Sabha, 1952-6; Publications include, *Castes in India*, 1916; *Problem of Rupee*, 1923; *Evolution of Provincial Finance*, 1927; *Thoughts on Pakistan*, 1941; *Ranade, Gandhi & Jinnah*, 1943, etc.

## **8. Interview to Press at Bombay regarding Political Developments, 15 May 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Question: What is the policy of the Congress Socialist Party towards the current constitutional developments?

Jayaprakash Narayan: The policy is in the making. What the Congress Socialist Party would actually do depends on the form of the settlement. An atmosphere has been created that Swaraj may be achieved in a month or two. It is a dangerous view. I have been trying to counteract that impression. And since no one is certain what the results would be, I am of the view that we should be prepared for all eventualities.

Q.: What are your hopes regarding the move for Leftist consolidation?

J.P.: We are trying. We do not know what the results will be.

Q.: What will be your attitude in the event of Congress accepting transfer of certain powers?

J.P.: I would rather wait and see what amount of power we get. A situation may arise in which the British transfer substantial power to India. In that event there may be scope to win more power by using constitutional means. But if the settlement is unsatisfactory, if the power transferred is a mere shadow, it may be necessary to think in terms of some sort of direct action.

Q.: What is your attitude to Pakistan?

J.P.: I am opposed to it. Pakistan is a mischievous idea. It is no solution of the communal problem nor of the national problem and I oppose it above all because it gives a foothold to British power. Responsible League spokesmen in the Legislators' Convention [April 1946] at Delhi had clearly said that they wanted British power to stay in Pakistan for their protection.

Q.: What is the alternative?

J.P.: There is no alternative except patient work among Muslims. There is no short cut, no royal road.

Q.: Is the Russian policy in Iran a threat to India?

J.P.: No.

Q.: What is the relationship of your Party to the Congress?

J.P.: The C.S.P. is the Left-Wing of the Congress. The Congress is like a bird with two wings. There can be no wing unless it belongs to the body. I regret to note that some Socialists seem to forget this fundamental truth.

The Congress and the C.S.P. have one goal, one flag and are subject to one discipline. The differences are, first that, by and large the C.S.P. is opposed to the parliamentary mentality. Secondly, by and large it is indifferent to the methods used in the struggle. By this I mean that the party is indifferent to the ethical discussion about violence and non-violence.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from report from *Bombay Chronicle*, 16 May 1946.

Thirdly, the Party lays stress on the organisation of peasants and workers on the basis of economic issues. There is also some difference about C.S.P.'s conception of the nature of Swaraj. But these differences are being narrowed down partly due to the development of the Socialist movement in India and partly due to world forces. Maulana Azad has recently expressed himself in favour of a Socialist form of society. If we want a Socialist society in India we must make experiments. We can not take everything from Russia. We should evolve something peculiarly suited to our needs and temperaments.

Q.: What do you think of the suggestion that your arrest was due to a political party?

J.P.: I have the greatest difference with that party.<sup>2</sup> But I would not believe such a thing, unless some positive answer is produced to that effect. I know there was an award announced for my arrest. I don't know who earned the award.

<sup>2</sup> The reference here seems to be to the Communist Party of India.

## **9. Speech on Next struggle at Public Meeting, Dehradun, 26 May 1946<sup>1</sup>**

When the final struggle for independence is launched, if at all it was needed, then the movement will sweep away all the dirt and muddle created by the British in India. This time the Ministers will not resign, but they will order the arrest of Governors if the latter ever attempted to obstruct the national movement.

Coming events cast their shadows ahead. The present happenings in the native states for which the Political Department of the Government of India is responsible are a sure pointer to what is to come in case the Cabinet Mission fails. We should take the hint, get prepared and not be caught napping as in 1942.

The policy of the British Government regarding the Indian political deadlock is inexplicable. On the one hand it is carrying on negotiations to concede independence and on the other it is making gigantic preparations for suppressing popular movements.

When the Congress could fight the Japanese and the Germans with weapons of warfare for a shadow of national Government why can it not fight the British in the same way for complete independence?

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Pioneer*, 30 May 1946.



**10. To A.E. Porter, 28 May 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Mr. A.E. Porter,  
Secretary,  
Home Department,  
Government of India,  
New Delhi.

28 May 1946

Sir,

The British Labour Party has very kindly invited the Congress Socialist Party to send some of its members over to Britain as its representatives to establish contact with the British Labour government. The Party has accepted this invitation with pleasure and has decided to send Dr. Rammanohar Lohia,<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Purnima Banerji<sup>3</sup> and Mr. Asoka Mehta<sup>4</sup> as its representatives to Britain. Applications for passports are being made to the Provincial Governments.

I am writing to request you to be good enough to see that these friends are able to secure priority in the matter of air passage, and that the matter of passport is also expedited, if any difficulty should arise. We are anxious that these friends should leave as soon as possible, and I hope that in view of the fact that they are travelling on the invitation of the British Labour Party it should be possible for you to arrange an early air passage for them.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,  
J.P.

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> For biographical note on Rammanohar Lohia see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 91.

<sup>3</sup> For biographical note on Mrs. Purnima Banerji see *JPSW*, Vol. III, item 43.

<sup>4</sup> For biographical note on Asoka Mehta see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 122.

**11. To Sampurnanand,<sup>1</sup> 8 June 1946<sup>2</sup>**

Calcutta Express  
8 June 1946

Dear Sampurnanandji,  
*Saprem Namaste*

I cannot express how ashamed I am. It is true that I have not been able to have a sound sleep since I was released from jail, but still I do not want to seek your pardon by offering the excuse of lack of time. Perhaps the truth is that it is easy to delay the work relating to close friends. Whatever it is, if you are annoyed at my mistake I have no right to complain.

<sup>1</sup> For biographical note on Sampurnanand see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> *Sampurnanand Papers* (N.A.I.).

I had received your telegram in Delhi. Later received your letter also in which a beautiful couplet was quoted; its words I have forgotten but the gist I still remember. Then I got your second letter in Bombay. I can never forget this affection of yours.

I was pleased to know that our Master Saheb, Shri Mohammad Sayyed Khan, met you. I hope you will be able to help him.

Now I will be constantly travelling. From today I shall be on a tour of Bihar for a month. I shall spend the first half of July & August in Bombay. Then may be I can do a tour of Uttar Pradesh. I hope that I will be able to meet you during that tour. I am most anxious to meet you and have talks with you. Perhaps it may not be possible for us to sit somewhere for two or three days and talk peacefully and talk not only politics—still if we can meet and also have some talk; then I shall be satisfied. Perhaps these days you will be at Nainital only. Write to me where you will be in the second or third week of August.

I hope your health is fine and you are well.

I too am fine. Prabhavati is conveying her regards. Now she stays with me all the time.

Yours affectionately,  
Jayuprakash Narayan

%o Babu Braj Behari Sahay  
A/7 Adalat Ganj Quarters, Patna

Write at the above address.

J.P.

## 12. Statement on Railway Workers' Strike, 13 June 1946<sup>1</sup>

If the Government fail to accept the demands of the workers or to refer them to arbitration, the railway workers are entitled to have the full sympathy of their countrymen in their heroic resolve to fight, through a general strike, for their rights.

If the country faces a crisis today the responsibility is entirely of the Government and the Railway Board. Seventeen years back the Royal Commission on Indian Labour had suggested an early revision in the wages of railway workers as they were scandalously low. Soon the great depression intervened and the wages were revised downwards from June 1931. Since then the All-India Railwaymen's Federation has been agitating for decent scales of wages for the railway workers. Even after the lifting of the

<sup>1</sup> *Bombay Chronicle*, 14 June 1946. Statement issued at Bombay.

depression and improvement in railway finances, the scale of wages has remained as in 1931.

While the question was becoming acute, the war intervened and the Railway Board refused to discuss it while engaged in a war for democracy. Railways became essential services and the railway workers were chained to their jobs under the provisions of the Defence of India Rules. When prices began to soar, the Government were constrained to appoint a committee to inquire into the rise in the cost of living. Its recommendation of dearness allowance of Rs. 45 a month was chiselled down by the Railway Board. The earnings of the railways steadily mounted. Crores have been apportioned to the Depreciation Fund. For the wear and tear of the machines adequate provision has been made, but none for the wear and tear of men. Overworked and underpaid, the railway workers were bound to raise the long-standing demand once the war was out of the way. The Railway Board had made no provision to meet it. Men who, during the war period, were tied down to their jobs as essential service-workers, are today unceremoniously thrown out. A crisis faces the country because of the refusal of the Government to accept or refer to arbitration the major demands of railway workers about revision of wages and stoppage of retrenchment.

Since 1940-1, Rs. 28 crores have been added to the Railway Reserve Fund. The Central Exchequer has benefitted to the extent of Rs. 907 crores from railway earnings. The return on capital has gone up to 6.04 per cent, the highest in the last 20 years. The Depreciation Fund has improved by 54.7 crores. Only Wage Fund remains stagnant. In spite of the operating ratio being less than 60 in India as against 70 elsewhere the Railway Board feels pinched. It is because of the heavy interest payments made annually for the last 90 years to the British investors. The working expenses of Rs. 158.7 crores (in 1943-4) were distributed as follows: 96.9 crores wage bill; 56.5 interest charges. A studied policy of neglect of the rights of workers has brought us to the present impasse.

The appointment of Pay Commission to go into the question of revision of wages is, as even Railway Managers admit, a dilatory move. The workers are in no mood to be trifled with like that. The Railway Managements have got their figures ready and so has the Railwaymen's Federation. Why then refer the question to the Fact Finding Commission? That the Board is unprepared to meet a seventeen-year-old demand of the workers is its greatest condemnation.

### 13. Congress Socialist Party's views on Cabinet Mission Plan, 29 June 1946<sup>1</sup>

The Congress Socialist Party will oppose the acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's long-term proposals<sup>2</sup> at the A.I.C.C. session. The proposed Constituent Assembly would neither lead to a free or democratic constitution nor ensure unity of India. The Constituent Assembly cannot be called a sovereign body even if its recommendations are accepted in toto by the British Parliament inasmuch as its methods of election and composition are not determined by the people but by a foreign Government. The Socialist Party would go ahead with the programme of rousing masses for political action.

Even if the Congress accepts the long-term proposals we would not associate ourselves at any stage with the working out of the scheme. We would on the other hand try to educate the people regarding the positive aspects of freedom. We would tell them that the struggle for Swaraj has not ended and that they would have to fight again and that they should prepare themselves from today for such a fight.

The Congress is working and acting in a very undemocratic manner. It has shown a singular disregard for all democratic norms of politics. The next A.I.C.C. session, I am afraid, is going to be not more than a farce because it is going to be faced with a *fait accompli*.

Our approach to the present situation is three fold; Firstly, we wish to keep the perspective of the struggle before the people as against constitutionalism. Secondly, we wish to continue to prepare the masses for struggle whenever or in whatever form it may come. Thirdly, regarding constitutional issue we would attempt to place before the people a true picture of freedom of the people's Swaraj and of the processes of constitution-making.

<sup>1</sup> Interview to press, Patna, published in *The Hindustan Times*, 1 July 1946.

<sup>2</sup> The British Cabinet Mission: consisting of three Cabinet Ministers, namely Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade and A.V. Alexander, First Lord of Admiralty, visited India from 23 March to 29 June 1946 to seek in association with Viceroy, Lord Wavell, an agreement with the leaders of major political parties of India in order to draw up the constitution for independent India and make arrangements for an interim Government. After all efforts to bring about an agreement between the Congress and the Muslim League failed, it came forward with its own plan on 16 May 1946. This became famous as its long-term proposals.

#### **14. Address to Employees of Controller of Military Accounts, 1 July 1946<sup>1</sup>**

In spite of your being educated and having the privilege of working on chairs and tables and designated as "Babus" (clerks) you are all the same labourers. My reason in calling you as such is that you are not partners of capitalists. But educated mazdoors (labourers) are far inferior to their uneducated compatriots in strength and will. This has been proved by experience. It was the uneducated labourer who at first, took initiative in starting unions. They were the vanguards of labour struggle. They do not betray weakness but their educated brethren do.

The demands of the union of the Patna C.M.A. workers are as modest as they could be at the initial stage. The union wants recognition at the hands of the authorities. You should be aware of the fact that a parallel union might be started by officers or their henchmen to bypass the genuine union. The authorities in order to create disruption and ultimately to break the organization then might resort to victimization in the form of transfer. Workers should be vigilant and should not be swept away by a counter move. The move on the part of the Government to deprive them of their means of livelihood was inspired by insincerity and faithlessness. It was deplorable that the authorities were proposing to disband them without making any provision for their living. There were post-war reconstruction schemes both of the provincial and the Central Governments and the Government would be well advised to provide them with jobs in those schemes. All the local workers should be absorbed. Their demands in this respect were within the limits of reason.

You should muster strong to enforce your demands. You have got the effective weapon of strike which you can resort to only when you have the sanctions of all the workers. The unflinching will and unswerving determination of the railway workers got their demands conceded at the point of strike.

I have much sympathy for you, if you need it. But more sympathy will be of no avail. It will be effective only when you have amassed all the resources and strength for concerted action. This really counts in labour struggles.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 5 July 1946. The meeting of workers was held at Sinha Library Hall, Patna.

### 15. Speech at the All India Congress Committee Meeting, Bombay, 6 July 1946<sup>1</sup>

The "Quit India" movement of 1942 had been launched to rid India of British imperial power, but that struggle did not achieve its end, though it released new forces that had taken the country far towards its goal. The question today before the country is not whether to accept the so-called Constituent Assembly scheme sponsored by British imperialism, but how to utilise the new forces to drive the British out of India.

The British Cabinet Mission had not come to deliver freedom to India but to play the mediator between the Congress and the Muslim League. The British had created the so-called differences, and they are still trying to exploit them. The Muslim League may have a large following among the Muslims of India today, but the League is still the ally and friend of the British. The Cabinet mission was asking the Congress to swallow its principles and compromise with the League, whose leader, in 1942, unashamedly declared that the Quit India movement was not against the British but against the Muslims and sought to perpetuate Hindu domination over the latter. How could the Congress settle with such a leader? I feel confident that the Congress can break the League's hold on the Muslims by going direct to the Muslim masses. Instead of making this direct approach, we are trying to negotiate with the leaders of the Muslim League whom we know to be the friends of our enemies.

I am glad the Working Committee has turned down the proposal for the Interim Government. I feel that the acceptance of the Constituent Assembly scheme also foreshadows danger. The Constituent Assembly, proposed by the British, is far from our original idea, which was given to us by our Rashtrapati (President), Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. This Constituent Assembly is the creation of the British and it can never bring us the freedom that we have been fighting for. The British Government may promise to accept the constitution drawn up by the Constituent Assembly, but then the British Government themselves will pull the wires in such a manner as not to allow us to frame a constitution that we all desire for a free and independent India. Whenever a difference of opinion arises between the Congress and the League in the Constituent Assembly—and differences are bound to arise—then we shall have to go to the British Government for a solution. And do you think we can expect fair play from the British in such a situation? If, on the contrary, the Constituent Assembly is the outcome of the strength of the people, we can solve all our difficulties by an appeal to our people.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *National Herald*, 8 July 1946. Speech opposing the Working Committee's resolution seeking ratification of its Delhi resolution (25 June 1946) providing for participation in the proposed Constituent Assembly.

I am aware that all these and other defects must have been considered by the Working Committee. But I see no reason why we should accept such a defective proposal, knowing the pitfalls in advance and also knowing our own real strength? Any constituent assembly can succeed only if it works in a free atmosphere, and there can be no free atmosphere in India so long as the British power remains and British troops continue to be stationed in the country.

The only proper course for us is to tell the British Government that we do not want such a restricted and curbed Constituent Assembly. We shall weaken ourselves, if we accept the British Government's proposals. The acceptance of offices in the provinces has weakened us considerably. If we accept these proposals, we shall further weaken ourselves. The course of negotiations, adopted by the Working Committee, in my opinion has not led us to our goal. Why then should we not abandon such negotiations and prepare for another struggle?

There is only one way open to us, and that is to strengthen the Congress organization and, when we are sure of our own inherent strength, start a fight with the British Government, compel them to quit India and make them understand that they have to transfer power and that can be done only by negotiating with the Congress.

I wish to make it clear that I am not opposing the Working Committee's decision merely to discredit it. I honestly feel that its decision is wrong and, therefore, it should not be approved. The All-India Congress Committee has a chance of rectifying that mistake and, the opportunity should not be missed.

#### **16. Statement deploring Congress decision to join the Constituent Assembly, 12 July 1946<sup>1</sup>**

The AICC has endorsed the decision of the Working Committee that Congress should participate in the British sponsored constitution-making body, mis-called a Constituent Assembly. After this verdict of the AICC, Congressmen who are opposed to the policy of the Working Committee have to decide their future course of action. In this connection I venture to place my views before them for what they may be worth.

Firstly, in view of our reading of the present situation, I think it undesirable for us to go to the so-called Constituent Assembly. Doing so would distort the perspective in which we wish to view these constitutional developments, distract revolutionary energy from its proper course and add to the general complacency and smugness prevalent, if not in the

<sup>1</sup> *Pioneer*, 13 July 1946. Statement issued at Bombay.

country, at least among overwhelmingly large numbers of Congressmen.

But keeping away from the Constituent Assembly is merely a negative attitude, and is likely to involve but a very small number of Congressmen. The question is what may be a positive policy for today. First and foremost it is necessary to combat smugness, to combat false hopes, to dispel the illusion that discussions in the so-called Constituent Assembly would give us freedom and democracy.

The perspective of a struggle, of a final all-out struggle with the British power, should not be allowed to be dimmed or pushed into the background by the impending constitutional talks. Keeping the perspective of a struggle in the foreview, it should be our most important task now to prepare and organize the people for it. To this end it would be necessary to reorganize and revitalize Congress and rebuild the bridges between it and the people that have been broken and cure its spiritual sickness that has prostrated and paralyzed it.

To the same end it would be necessary to go to the peasant and worker, the student and the youth, the artisan and the middle man, the town and the country, and build up every manner of organizational work; it is sufficient to put this programme, the programme of preparation for revolutionary action in the foreground.

The official Congress too talks of building up the strength of Congress and organizing the masses, but it is so submerged in constitutional and administrative work that these talks become nothing but empty words. So it is the task of those Congressmen who are opposed to the constitutional drift to prepare Congress and the country for the inevitable struggle for Swaraj.

An essential part of the preparation for a struggle is to organize a country-wide campaign to place the positive aspects of freedom and democracy before the people, so that they might be able to put the proposed Constituent Assembly to test, have it ultimately prorogued and make a demand for a real sovereign Constituent Assembly and fight to enforce it.

President Nehru has put a new interpretation on the British sponsored Assembly. The people should be able to demand of their President that either the Assembly he commends to them should declare India immediately an independent republic, establish a free provisional Government sending away the British Forces and other British personnel, and every penny of British capital, and ensure the unity of the country and a free social democracy, or denounce the whole British plan and bring Congress again to the path of revolutionary action.

In every case, the only right course today for Congressmen is to think and prepare in every possible way for the final fight for freedom. Every other activity must supplement it and not divert the country from it.



### **17. Appeal to observe Hartal on 9 August, Bombay, 19 July 1946<sup>1</sup>**

The Ninth of August has come to acquire a significance in our national life equal to that of the 26th January and the National Week. On that day in 1942 started a revolution which shook the British Empire to its roots and during which for the first time since 1857 large tracts of the country were completely freed for varying periods from British rule. August 9 has therefore become a burning symbol of our national revolution. It is therefore our duty to celebrate this day in a manner that not only revives the memory of the brave deeds of the August Revolution and pays to it a fitting tribute but also in a manner that reminds the people of their present tasks and prepares them for the coming Revolution. Accordingly I appeal to all sections of the people to try to make the day a success.

I suggest the following programme for the day: Flag hoisting in the morning, complete one-day hartal and processions terminating in meetings in the evening.

The following pledge to be taken publicly at the meeting and privately by all others: the nation took the pledge of Quit India in 1942. That pledge today remains unfulfilled. I therefore solemnly vow not to rest and slacken in my efforts till the last vestige of British power has been removed from this country.

To the essential items of the programme suggested above may be added any others, such as exhibitions, posters, pageants, publications, etc., according to local resources.

<sup>1</sup> *Bombay Chronicle*, 20 July 1946.

### **18. The A.I.C.C. Session, Where Leadership Failed<sup>1</sup>**

The resolution of the Working Committee asking the A.I.C.C. to ratify its decision that the Congress should participate in the proposed Constitution Making Body was passed by 204 votes to 51. It was a staggering vote, that appears still more staggering in the context of 1942 and of the new India that it gave birth to.

Does this vote represent truly the opinion in the country, particularly in the Congress? I do not think so. The average man in India looked with doubt and suspicion on the Delhi negotiations when they lasted, and now views the result with grave misgivings. And the average man is often a shrewd judge of men and affairs.

<sup>1</sup> Article in *Janata*, 21 July 1946.

As for opinion in the Congress, the present Congress Committees do not at all reflect in their true proportions the views held by large numbers of younger Congressmen. There are many reasons for it, into which it would be irrelevant to enter here.

But I have no hesitation in saying that if fair elections were held, the view represented by the opposition in the last meeting of the A.I.C.C. would be found to be shared by fifty per cent of Congress Committee men.

Whether this large and growing section will ever be allowed to play its rightful part in the affairs of the Congress, the future alone can say. But there is no doubt that up with the answer to that question is very largely linked up with the future of the Congress.

### *No Answer*

The A.I.C.C. debate depressed me. Maulana Azad's reply to the debate depressed me particularly. So did Gandhiji's speech. I was depressed because I had expected someone from the leadership not only to put the case for the Working Committee but also to reply to the criticism of its policy. I found that no one made any serious attempt to reply to the points raised by us. Only some of our arguments were caricatured and a lot of fine words and eloquence were wasted in demolishing a case that never existed.

The case for the Working Committee is well-known. Our case was that India today is in a far stronger position than ever before; that 1942 has brought about a revolution in the minds of the people; that the I.N.A. has brought a new awakening and self-confidence in the country and that the revolutionary urges of the people are at a higher pitch than at any time before. The British are fully aware of this, whereas our leadership does not seem to appreciate the possibilities of the present situation. The British have realized that they cannot carry on in India as before and must settle with her. But in doing this, they attempted to exploit our weaknesses and differences which they have themselves very largely created and nurtured. We, on the other hand, instead of making better use of our strength, felt that we were helpless and had no alternative but to settle with the enemy and therefore agreed to put them in the position of arbitrators and accept their award.

If our leadership had fully realised our strength it would have insisted on the British quitting India, i.e. on their transferring all power to the people, before taking up the country's constitutional problems. Instead the Congress agreed to the British remaining in this country with all their power and settling our internal problems under their guidance and with their help.

We said that this was not the way that led to "Swaraj". We pointed out that while the British had withdrawn themselves from the Constitution Making

Body they had put the Muslim League and the nominees of the Princes there to block the road to freedom and democracy. We pointed out that the proposed Constituent Assembly could not be a revolutionary body intent upon converting itself into a battle-ground for freedom and democracy, but a body anxious to come to a settlement with professedly undemocratic forces and obvious stooges of imperialism. Such a Constituent Assembly could give us no "Swaraj", much less a people's "Swaraj".

We said that the Constituent Assembly as proposed by the British Government was very different from the body which the Congress had always conceived of and which President Nehru had taught us about. This was not to be a sovereign Assembly in as much as it was fathered by the foreign Government; its composition was settled by that Government; the differences that might arise in the course of its sittings had to be referred to that Government for settlement and in as much as large numbers of British stooges were to participate in it.

We said there was no justification, considering the present situation in the country and our relative strength, to accept a settlement of this nature. The alternative was to reject it and to create as soon as possible the sanctions for convening a real sovereign Constituent Assembly.

We said further that acceptance of the British proposals would weaken our real strength which is the strength of the Congress organization and of its hold over the people. Since negotiations began at Simla immediately after the release of the members of the Working Committee, the whole attention of the Congress organization has been centred on settlement with the enemy and on purely constitutional work. Acceptance of administrative responsibility in the Provinces has already brought corruption into the Congress; given full scope to petty ambitions intrigues and power politics; encouraged sectional, communal and caste bickerings and inter-provincial jealousies, as a result of all of which the Congress organization has forsaken its fundamental task of serving the people, developing their inner strength and preparing them for the struggle for Swaraj.

We said that while on the one hand participation in the proposed Constituent Assembly would bring us neither freedom nor democracy, it would, on the other hand, further accentuate and aggravate the maladies from which the Congress suffers today.

We said that the sorry state into which the Congress had fallen required the spirit of 1921 once again to cleanse and revitalize it.

Them sum total of all this would be dissipation of the unprecedented mass awakening and enthusiasm and of the preparedness to fight, to face danger and to suffer that is evident everywhere in the country today. We said, therefore, that instead of running after an illusion or accepting an

unsound and weak compromise, we should forbear and be patient and work quietly to put our forces in proper shape. When we are ready we should make another and this time a final demand that the British quit our country.

It is only when they have quit, or when the physical emblems of British power are quitting, that a Constituent Assembly should be called. We should create a situation and we are sure that such a situation can be created soon enough, in which the British would have to hand over power to the Congress without being allowed to use their stooges, such as the Muslim League, to ensure that the transference of power is neither full nor free.

We said finally that the path of the Congress was clear and that was to reject the British plan and to go to the people once again and organize them for the final struggle for freedom. That was the straight path to freedom, democracy, people's "raj" and national unity.

### *Not Afraid*

To all this there was no reply from the spokesmen of the Working Committee. Mahatma Gandhi who had not heard us speak but who had apparently heard reports of our speeches made great use of the argument that it is not in the nature of brave and courageous people or of "satyagrahis" to be afraid of danger. Apparently he was told that we were opposing the acceptance of the British plan on the ground that it was full of traps and danger. So it was easy for him to say that "satyagrahis" should never be afraid of danger, but should rather be ready to jump into it. The British plan no doubt has dangers but that is not the sole reason or the most important reason why it should be rejected. A group of determined revolutionaries could experiment with any dangerous proposition and hope to emerge from it unscathed. Gandhiji talked of "satyagrahis" being free from fear. I wonder, if he believes that it is "satyagrahis" who are seeking election to the Constituent Assembly. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, warning Congressmen against corruption and gratification of personal ambition, said in the course of his speech at the A.I.C.C. that for every place a hundred Congressmen had applied. These Congressmen could by no test be considered "satyagrahis". I find it difficult therefore to understand why Gandhiji should place himself so far beyond realities as to talk of a Constituent Assembly of "satyagrahis" when probably extremely few, if any, "satyagrahis" are likely to be present there.

Maulana Azad waxed very eloquent on how the British had been forced by India's newly acquired strength to surrender power and to grant a Constituent Assembly of the nature the Congress always demanded. As I have shown above, far from making use of our present strength to force the British to quit, we have allowed them to exploit our weaknesses and differences which also exist to obstruct our path to freedom.

It was a declared Congress policy that no settlement would be acceptable to us except on the basis of India's independence and unity. There is no guarantee or declaration of independence yet and national unity is in grave jeopardy. Yet a settlement has been made.

The proposed Constitution Making Body by no tests is the Constituent Assembly of Congress conception. Making fun of those who were described as being afraid of traps and snares, Maulana Azad asserted with much emphasis that there was no fear at all that the Congress leadership would compromise on any principle or show any weakness or get caught in any snares. Maulana Azad forces me to remind the country of certain unpalatable truths. The same leadership, with all the accomplishments mentioned and praised so eloquently by Maulana Azad, was prepared in Simla some nine months ago, forsaking the path of "Quit India" to enter a so-called National Government and drag India into Britain's war. The same leadership in Delhi nine months later was prepared even to sacrifice the entire national character of the Congress in order some how to reach a settlement with the enemy. In view of these facts Maulana Azad's aggressive eloquence was merely the working of what is known in psychology as defence mechanism.

**19. Reply to Welcome address at Bradlaugh Hall,  
Lahore, 24 July 1946<sup>1</sup>**

From this very moment we must prepare for a struggle against the British in the event of failure of the method of negotiation. That way lies wisdom, for the British are not sitting silent. They are already preparing for an onslaught against our people. Nowhere in the country is there today more evidence of British Raj and power than in the Punjab. Since my arrival at the Lahore Railway station today, I am being hounded and followed by a dozen policemen. It is no time to rest on our oars, I am certain in a few months time we shall be fighting the British. So we are duty bound to go on with our preparations.

Non-violence is only a matter of expediency and policy with the Congress which renounced it in 1942 when it offered conditional help to the Allies against the Japanese and Germans. I worship Mahatma Gandhi's non-violence for his non-violence is truly of the brave, but there is hardly any Congress leader who can reach his non-violence. Gandhiji's non-violence is not meant for weak people like me.

Men of India are not gods. We have to draw huge masses into the struggle by methods they understand. In the next struggle the people must capture all police stations and courts while destroying the citadels of foreign rule

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Bombay Chronicle*, 26 July 1946.

and establish their own Government. We must also work for the destruction of Lahore Fort, a torture chamber where many of our comrades have suffered indescribable tyranny and persecution by the C.I.D. and Police.

## **20. Appeal to Abandon Hartal on 9 August, 25 July 1946<sup>1</sup>**

August 9 is a Congress Day. Naturally when the President of the Congress has issued instructions regarding its celebration, as a Congressman I cannot go counter to them nor can any other Congressman do so. The President has definitely said that there should be no hartal on August 9. In all such matters it is obvious that the President's view must prevail. Accordingly that part of the programme suggested by me must be dropped. The rest of the programme stands.

While as a form of discipline I am thus modifying my previous suggestion, I feel compelled to add that in view of the fact that I consider it desirable that the atmosphere of struggle should be maintained in the country and preparations made for it, observance of hartal on suitable occasions appears to me to be essential. Sometimes there is a vague fear that hartal might lead to communal trouble. I do not rule out that possibility, but I do not think that the Muslim masses are so reactionary and opposed to freedom that when properly approached they would insist on hindering celebrations which are intended to commemorate a revolutionary movement and to be a preparation for a similar future movement.

Finally, if hartals and strikes are to be our weapons in the future, we must, in the manner of military exercise, train the people in the use of these weapons. I look upon the August 9 celebration not only as a tribute to the past but also and more so as a preparation for the future.

I hope the day will be celebrated in a manner fittings both the occasion and the greatness of the task ahead.

<sup>1</sup> *Hindu*, 30 July 1946. Statement issued at Lahore.

## **21. To all Fighters for Freedom-III, 28 July 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Friends,

Soon after my release when I sent you my greetings through *Janata*, I had promised that later I would place before you my views on the present situation and explain to you our present tasks. I regret that there has been so much delay in doing this. The delay was unavoidable, because it was

<sup>1</sup> *Janata*, 28 July 1946.

necessary to meet colleagues and consult with them. All this has been done, and it is possible now to place before you something in a definite shape.

Before this, through various statements jointly or severally issued, my colleagues and I have attempted to place our views before you on important questions as they arose. You have been acquainted with our stand in the last A.I.C.C. Below I attempt more systematically and fully to express my views, and I hope also the views of my colleagues, on the present situation and indicate the tasks that face us and the methods we should adopt to accomplish them.

The present situation is one of transition and rapid change. The A.I.C.C. has agreed that Congressmen should go to the British sponsored Constituent Assembly. An Interim Government under the British Viceroy might soon be functioning. This government whenever it may come into being cannot be a free government of a free country till the Viceroy and British armed forces and other British personnel quit India. To beg that this government be allowed to function as a free government is to beg the question. Those who have the power to hand over power at their pleasure have also the power to take it back at their pleasure. Therefore, let us not be duped by the talk of an Interim Government being "in effect" the government of a free India.

Could then the so-called Constituent Assembly bring us freedom? In other words, could that Assembly declare India an independent republic and enforce that declaration? Could it, for instance, appoint a provisional government and force the Viceroy to hand over all power to it and quit India? Could the Provisional Government pack off all British soldiers and military and civil officers to Britain? Could that government tear up the strangle hold of British finance over this country? Could the Constituent Assembly dissolve itself and empower the free Provisional Government, after the British had quit, to convene a real Constituent Assembly elected by the people on the basis of unrestricted adult suffrage? Could the proposed Constituent Assembly take all these steps, everyone of which is essential to lead India to full freedom and democracy? It would be a grave folly to suppose that in the existing circumstances and with the present co-relation of forces it could ever be possible for the proposed Constituent Assembly to take any of these steps and achieve any of these objectives. But even if we were to suppose, for a moment that the Assembly could make this attempt, the British would be certain to bar its way. Then if the Assembly were sincere and honest it would have to accept the British challenge and invoke its mass sanctions in order to enforce its will. The Viceroy who would have called the Assembly to begin with would then step in and order its dissolution. Thus an all-out war of independence would ensue out of which should emerge a real Constituent Assembly of the people and a free democratic and united Republic of India.

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The Constituent Assembly, however, is not very likely to follow these steps. Aware of what President Nehru has described as the compulsion of facts, i.e. aware of the limitations of its sovereignty, aware of its weaknesses, aware of the British stooges and enemies of freedom and democracy in its ranks, aware of the presence of the British Army and the British Viceroy—aware of all this and more, the Constituent Assembly might choose to tread what I am sure is going to be described as the path of realism. In other words, the Assembly might decide to make compromise after compromise, producing in the end neither freedom, nor democracy, nor national unity. So, the nation, thwarted and disillusioned, would have to turn once again to the path from which it is being misled today—the path of revolutionary action, the path of resistance and struggle, the straight but difficult path of freedom.

Thus we see that in either case, i.e. whether the Constituent Assembly “succeeds” or whether it fights and “fails”, a struggle for freedom is inevitable. Anyone who has a correct appreciation of the present co-relation of forces in this country should not find it difficult to accept this conclusion. Today, it is still possible for British imperialism to face us with the “compulsion of facts”. Till this compulsion is removed by revolutionary action, freedom would be an illusion. Nor can anyone expect to change the facts of the present situation by argument, concession and diplomatic finesse.

We therefore reach the conclusion—and it will be a repetition—that the struggle for freedom does not cease with the acceptance of the British constitutional proposals. That struggle will continue. In fact, the character and scope of that struggle will become deeper and wider. To the struggle for liberty, will be added the struggle for national unity and bread.

### *A Common Struggle*

Acceptance of the British proposals will let loose many forces of national disintegration. It is commonly supposed that one positive contribution that the British have made to Indian polity is to unify the country; and it is a common lament that they foolishly enough are bent today upon destroying that monument of their noble work. Nothing could be greater folly than this view. Far from creating unity in Indian life the British have always done their best to divide us; to divide Hindus and Muslims, to divide Harijans from other Hindus, to create a Sikh minority, to detach princely India from the rest of the country, to set the princes against the people, to bolster up the Zamindars into pillars of British rule, to bribe Capital and the middle class to turn into enemies of their country. That is, in their hundred years' rule they have done all that was possible to bring about a situation in which weakening of British rule was sure to mean chaos and disintegration. The only unity under British rule is the unity of a dictatorial regime and not a people's or a nation's unity. Such positive unity has been created by the



Congress and this unity today is in jeopardy. Therefore, the struggle for national unity is bound to acquire a special importance with the acceptance of the British proposals.

Secondly, the impending constitutional changes are bound to bring to the fore, economic and class issues. The form of Swaraj, the question, "Swaraj for whom", will no longer remain academic or remote questions, but will become matters of immediate and urgent importance demanding immediate answers and affecting all our politics not theoretically but practically. That is, the struggle for bread, always an integral part of the struggle for freedom, will move up to the front line and acquire an importance no less than any other.

I should make it clear that these are not three separate struggles, but aspects or parts of one common struggle of the people. At different stages, one or the other aspect receives greater or less emphasis, but as the present constitutional plans develop, all these are likely to assume equal importance.

As matters stand, this common struggle of the people would have to be waged in the context of a Constituent Assembly, possibly an interim government, and later on in the context of a Union government, Group and Provincial governments.

The Congress, of which we are a part, seems likely to be associated with all these developments. As such, it seems certain that the Congress struggle for liberty, unity and bread will be conducted, if at all, through the constitutional and state machinery. Already the congress is being converted into a parliamentary party. If this process goes on to its logical conclusion, there can be little doubt that the Congress must fail to achieve much success in this three-fold struggle. A constitutional and administrative machinery might be of use in certain circumstances, but situated as we are, the people's struggle must be carried on mainly outside the Legislatures and the portals of government departments.

To carry on this struggle is our job today—the job of all the fighters for freedom.

## II

### *Mass Sanctions*

How shall we wage this struggle? By terrorism? By sporadic violence? By fratricide? By docilities? By incendiarism? Obviously no. At the present moment the only manner in which we can wage this struggle is by forging mass sanctions. The creation of mass sanctions includes, first, the psychological preparation of the masses for a struggle; second, the building up of organizations of the masses, such as peasant and labour unions, volunteer corps, student and youth organizations, village republics and

weavers' co-operatives and myriad other organizations which would help in different ways to develop the collective strength and consciousness of the people. To all this must be added the overall task of strengthening and vitalizing the Congress organization and renewing and extending its effective contacts with the people. A full picture of the task of creating mass sanctions, in so far as it relates to the present phase of our struggle, is laid out below in the section dealing with our programme.

Here let me illustrate my meaning of the term "mass sanctions" in the context of national unity. National unity cannot be imposed from above. It must be based on unity at the bottom. Such unity can be brought about, or at least a considerable success be gained in the task, by patient political work among the Muslims, by the development of economic or class organizations, such as labour unions, kisan Sabhas, weavers' co-operatives, by social reform among the Hindus by encouraging common cultural and recreational activities, by strengthening those forces in society that by their very nature work for national unity, such as the need for a strong frontier, the need for a co-ordinated plan of economic development, the need for a common economic system, the need for a common medium of speech, etc., and in many other ways. The first requirement, I need hardly stress, is for every freedom fighter to be completely free from communal or caste prejudice or arrogance, and to practise in his personal life the principle of the equality of all human beings.

The mass sanctions for national unity are particularly weak at the moment. Their development is a foremost priority on the list of our present tasks.

Lest there should be misunderstanding I must point out that the work of developing mass sanctions cannot be split into compartments and sanctions for each objective created separately from the others. The political, economic and social sanctions overlap, inter-penetrate and supplement each other and form part of one broad movement of the people.

### III

#### *The Problem of Organization*

Before I proceed to explain our present programme of work, it is necessary to place before you my views, which I am glad to say are also the views of most of my colleagues regarding the form of organization through which fighters for freedom could function today. During the August Revolution all of us functioned in the name of the Congress. That was as it should have been, because it was the policy of the whole Congress then to fight. Any Congressman who kept away from the fight or opposed it, opposed and betrayed the Congress. Today the position is different. The official policy of the Congress today is not a policy of struggle or preparation for a struggle; it is rather a policy of compromise and constitutionalism. Therefore, it is

not possible for us today, who still adhere to the policy of struggle and revolutionary action to function in the name of the Congress.

But, at the same time I am very clear in my mind that it would do the greatest possible injury to the cause of freedom in this country if we were to leave the Congress and form a parallel mass organization. There is no doubt that there is going to be a growing divergence between our line of work and that of the present Congress leadership. But the leadership is not identical with the organization. The present Congress is as much the result of your labours and sacrifices as of any other group within it. You have as much right to speak in the name of the Congress as any one else. The Congress represents the greatest organized national and social force in the country and exercises unparalleled and unprecedented power over the mass mind. As such it an instrument *par excellence* for a mass struggle. It would be foolish to give up this instrument *as long as the possibility exists of its being utilized for a revolutionary purpose*. I believe that this possibility still exists today. Therefore I have no doubt in my mind that we must continue to work within the Congress, doing our utmost to strengthen it, trying by active work and service of the people to convert it to our views. If the present Congress leadership persists in its attempt to transform the Congress into a mere parliamentary body with no constructive programme, relying entirely on governmental machinery to serve or rule over the people, turning more and more bureaucratic, keeping its hold over the Congress organization by the distribution of patronage and largesse, we shall no doubt be unavoidably drawn into conflict with it. But, at the same time if we carry on our work among the people with energy and devotion, we shall undoubtedly be in a position to rally the Congress masses around us and resurrect the Congress from its parliamentary debris.

We arrive then at two important conclusions: (1) It is not possible for us now as during the August uprising to work and act in the name of the Congress; (2) We must continue to work within the Congress. The problem now arises, how are we to function so that we may act in an organized and co-ordinated manner and provide all fighters with a political and ideological focus. This question assumes an added importance when we remember that our activities are not confined to our work within the Congress alone. We have to function in trade unions, kisan sabhas and many other organizations which are outside the Congress. It were possible perhaps, had we to work in the Congress alone to function as a loose group, but if we are to fulfil our present tasks efficiently, an organized focus of the type described above has to be created.

I have thought earnestly over this question and consulted with my colleagues and have come to the conclusion that we have in the Congress Socialist Party a readymade basis for an organization of the type we require today. I believe that after proper overhauling and reorganization, the C.S.P.

would serve our purpose admirably. The C.S.P. has a fine record of political work, and the contribution it made to the August Revolution was, even hostile critics agree, worthy of commendation. The old party had certain organizational weaknesses, part of which was due to the experiments it had made in socialist and Left unity. These weaknesses can and will be removed. My recent contacts with August fighters have shown me that while there are a few who cannot rid themselves of old prejudices, the vast majority do look upon the C.S.P. with hope and show a great deal of good-will towards it. I therefore came to the conclusion as I said above that the C.S.P. should become the organization of all fighters for freedom.

I should mention here an additional reason that supports this conclusion. The C.S.P. includes in its platform the objective of national freedom as well as of socialism. I believe ninety-five out of hundred fighters for freedom have today a strong inclination towards socialism. National freedom without socialism can never satisfy them. Therefore the C.S.P. becomes doubly acceptable to them.

### *Left Unity*

Related to the problem of organization is the problem of Left unity. It appears to me that there is a great deal of confusion regarding this subject. The question of left unity is one of the most vexed questions in the world. It is my view that the question, in the form in which it is raised, is insoluble. Left unity in the sense of unity of all left parties and groups is an impossibility. Those who talk of such a unity should first ask themselves why is there Left disunity to begin with. In other words, the question should be asked, why do separate Left parties at all come into existence. I think if that question was examined properly, it would be found that the same causes that first gave birth to separatist and sectarian tendencies would also prevent subsequent unification.

The experience of Left movements throughout the world shows that Left groups have not found it possible to unite or even to work together except on specific occasions and for short periods. This historical evidence has surely a lesson for us.

In our own country our experience has been no different. We made serious attempts on two occasions for Left unity. These attempts not only failed to achieve their object, but also left a trail of bitterness that still hinders work. Our past experience showed that while the C.S.P. sincerely opened its doors to Left and Socialist groups and extended its hand of friendship to them, they only sought in all that an opportunity to enlarge their respective influence, recruit members and build cells, "bore from within" and to play other tricks that have been played all over the world in the name of Left unity.

Therefore, as far as I am concerned, I have no faith in so-called Left unity, and do not wish to experiment with it, any more. I think the far better course is for all Leftists to forget their little denominational enthusiasms and doctrinal fanaticisms, and to come into one wide, roomy fold and build a single party of Left nationalism and Socialism. Such a party today is the C.S.P. It is possible to find fault with it and pick holes in it, but it is far more fruitful to join hands, to rub off our ideological angularities and fit ourselves into one large pattern in which doctrinal differences might be subordinated to one broad and bold design of common objectives, common methods and a broad common ideology. If the Left and Socialist movement in India is to grow, it could do so not through the unsteady and uneasy combination of various groups, who even when combining must explain and justify their separate identities, who even while trying to work together must work to strengthen their respective organizations by fresh recruitment and partisan propaganda, but by the growth of one large single party. I cannot conceive that there is any other party in India that can fill this role except the C.S.P. I therefore appeal to all fighters to make the C.S.P. their own. They have already done so to a very large extent. I appeal to the others also to do the same.

Local difficulties, difficulties of personal equation and old prejudices might stand in the way of some friends, but I should like to assure every fighter that as far as it may lie in our power, we shall see that these difficulties are removed from their way and the path left clear for them to co-operate in building up a real powerful organization.

#### IV

##### *Our Present Programme*

I do not wish to deal here with a comprehensive political programme. Later there will be occasion for it—perhaps in the Party's Statement of Policy. Here I wish to give only a general outline of the work we must take up immediately.

Perhaps we could understand our present tasks better if a picture of the future struggle were before us. The picture I have in view is this: first atomization and dislocation of imperialism by such means as are most efficient; second, simultaneous government in both town and country and protection of these from attack—these local and regional swaraj governments ultimately coalescing to form the Free Republic of India. This pattern will naturally include any form of non-co-operation with the British power. It includes the struggle of the Congress Ministries from within the administrative system. It includes a total industrial strike. It includes the taking over of zamindari lands by the peasants. It includes a movement of

the people of the States against the tyranny of the princes. The outstanding feature that would distinguish this struggle from those gone before, including the 42 rebellion, would be, to my mind, the emergence of responsible local and regional authorities and the carrying out of the further tasks by these authorities themselves. Details could be added to this picture, but I believe its broad outlines are given above.

With this picture before me I shall attempt to sketch briefly an outline of our present programme.

Our immediate purpose, as we have seen, is to prepare for a struggle for freedom. This preparation includes different types of work. Naturally, there are certain types of work which I cannot discuss here.

### *The Worker*

But before I proceed to discuss the work itself, let me say a word about the worker. If I were asked today what was our most important job at this stage, I would reply: *selection and training of the worker*. The agitational phase of our struggle has long since past. We are already in the actual revolutionary phase, the main task of which is to take over power. Today we need a very different kind of Congressman, a different kind of Party comrade, from what was needed before the war. The revolutionary of today should be trained not only in agitational, but also and largely, in organizational work. He should be acquainted with constructive as well as other forms of work. He should be an effective bridge between the revolutionary organization and the people among whom he works; that is, he should be able not only to impart his revolutionary fervour to them, but also to acquaint them with their place and tasks in the revolution. He should be honest, fearless, disciplined and hardworking. The same worker would not do for every kind of work; so, apart from general training, and according to the worker's bent and capacity, specialized training, as for trade union work, village work, press and publicity work, survey work, etc., must be given to selected workers.

Our country is very large; and in an emergency it may not be possible for a central body to issue directions to revolutionary workers in different parts of the country. It is, therefore, necessary to train local leaders who will know how to act in a moment of national crisis.

This training of workers has to be given both through work and study and discussion. For the second part of the training, i.e. for study and discussion, it would be necessary to open study camps and schools, either of temporary or permanent character. For this instructors and literature are necessary.

### *'Specialized' Work*

I shall turn now to the programme of work itself. For the purpose of exposition I shall divide the type of work which it is possible to discuss here into two

parts: general and specialized work. In the second category I place such activities as trade union and *kisan sabha*<sup>2</sup> work, student and volunteer organization, organization of producers, such as weavers or cane growers co-operatives, co-operative farming and work of similar nature. With this kind of specialized work, we have been more or less acquainted. But this work has to be much more systematically done and extended to newer fields. Training, knowledge and study have to be brought to bear on it. Above all, our central revolutionary purpose and social philosophy must animate and integrate the whole of it and prevent it from degenerating into disjointed sectional movements for immediate economic betterment, or into mere demonstrative or agitational channels. A co-operative or a trade union or peasant movement can easily slide into what is known as economism. This has to be prevented. Further, take volunteering or the student movement. It is not enough that a volunteer organization should restrict itself to drill and physical training, crowd control and demonstration. Each volunteer must know some means, however humble, of serving his community, and his officers at least, must know the place of his men in the coming revolution and their posts of duty then. The Students' Congress has very largely become an agitational movement. That is not enough. The Congress must take up constructive activities among the students themselves and in the community in which they live. For instance, educational work (teaching the children of the poor, adult literacy, *Hindustani Prachar*, cultural work—discussions, debates, theatres, art exhibition), health drives, survey work, helping in trade union or similar activities, excursions, work in the villages during vacations, student service centres, self-help groups, etc.

### *Trade Union Congress*

The Trade Union Congress has been a politically backward movement in this country. This backwardness was never more evident than during the war years, when the A.I.T.U.C.<sup>3</sup> was unable to give a political lead to the workers of India. Even when the whole country was convulsed by a revolutionary upsurge and large sections of the working class were drawn into it, the A.I.T.U.C. remained paralysed and unable to say whether it was on the side of the Revolution or the imperialist power. This was largely due to the betrayal of the Communist Party of India.<sup>4</sup> This political paralysis of the T.U.C. must be cured and the Trade Union movement brought in line

<sup>2</sup> For note on All India Kisan Sabha see *JPSW*, Vol. II, p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> For note on All India Trade Union Congress (A.I.T.U.C.) see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 111.

<sup>4</sup> Communist Party of India (C.P.I.); founded as a party representing the Working class, peasantry and toilers of India in 1925. The party demanded complete independence from the British rule and was active in trade union and peasant movements. It generally worked under the guidance of the Communist International which was under the control of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. After the German attack on the latter in 1941 and

with the revolutionary struggle and the workers enabled to play their proper part in it.

The Kisan movement lies disrupted and broken today very largely again due to the tactics of the Communists. That part of the kisan movement which stands by the national struggle must be united again and the whole movement built up a new.

Producers' co-operative and co-operative farming are new types of work which I recommend. A beginning might have been made here or there before, but generally speaking it is new work for us. Wherever suitable cadres are available and other necessary conditions exist, a beginning should be made in this direction.

In a previous section I have said that creation of sanctions for national unity is a high priority on our work schedule. I wish to repeat that here and draw your attention again to what I have said above in that connection.

I have not exhausted the list of special types of work which we have to undertake. The above is only an illustrative list. There is in addition, to give only one instance, a very special type of work to be done among women. Some body who is more competent to speak about it may later advise you regarding this very important work. Then, to give other instances, there is Gandhiji's constructive programme. Such items of it as we may take up, such as removal of untouchability, prohibition, village sanitation, basic education, etc., should be made a part of our programme. In short, there is no dearth of work or means to serve, organize, educate the people and to develop their strength and ability to fight. There is dearth only of workers to do all this work, and to do it properly and well.

### *"General" Work*

I shall turn now to the general type of our work. In the forefront of this type of work, I must place Congress work, i.e. building up, strengthening and popularizing the Congress. The hold that the Congress has over the people is greater today than ever before. But generally speaking the Congress organization has become moribund, and due to the parliamentary programme, a considerable amount of corruption has developed within it. It should be our foremost task first to activate the Congress Committees and re-build the brigade of service that should exist between them and the people. Second, we should ever be vigilant and fight corruption within the Congress in all its forms.

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the advent of British-Soviet co-operation the Communist Party abandoned its earlier policy and began to support the British war efforts. This was the main cause of the political paralysis of the Trade Union Congress (then under Communist Control) to which J.P. refers here.



"Activise the Congress Committees" is a somewhat hackneyed phrase. So, I should perhaps amplify my meaning. It is obvious that the Congress committees can best be activised only if the A.I.C.C. and the Provincial committees give a lead. It should be the job of these committees to give directions from time to time, assigning a certain job of work to be done within a certain time-limit, such as a certain survey to be made, a certain drive to be launched, let us say against untouchability or for communal harmony, adult literacy, grain banks, enrolment of rural volunteers, etc. These higher committees should produce periodical talking points for its workers and produce other literature to help them in their day to day work and to understand their problems. These committees should do research work and political planning I see no reason why the Congress as a whole should not take up and make its own all the items of work described above or those I am about to describe below. Yet, I cannot say when, or if at all, these committees will begin to function in this manner. In the meanwhile whenever we are able to work through the Congress Committees it should be our job to push the whole programme described here through them. But where it is not possible to do so, we would have to work out this programme through the Party branches, which should attempt to associate all other genuine fighters with them.

Coming to other items of general work, let me first explain what I mean by the term. Our specialized work deals, as we have seen, with different sections or classes of our people. But when we take up a community as a whole, such as a village or a town or a ward in a town, and treat it as a whole in our work, I describe that work as general work. In a village we may, for instance, form a Kisan Sabha, or in a town a Labour Union: that would be specialized work. But if we approach the village or the town as a whole, I would call it general work.

### *Village Work*

Let me take up village work first. The ultimate object, say, after six months' work, is to establish a *gram raj*. A *gram raj* is a self-governing village, a village republic, not merely a panchayat. This *gram raj* is to be built up by the villagers themselves, by their own initiative and not by the governmental agencies. The *gram rajs* as I conceive them would make foreign rule unnecessary, would become the centres of struggle and resistance during a revolution and would constitute the bricks with which the structure of the free Indian Republic could be built.

Before a *gram raj* can be formed in a village, a great deal of constructive work will have to be done. I suggest the following types of work for this:

1. Enrolment of Congress members. Attempt should be made to enroll

every adult villager. Meetings of the enrolled members should be held. Flag salutation.

2. A cultural centre should be opened where newspapers should be read and such other activities conducted as adult literacy, dramatics, folk songs, study circle, library, posters, agricultural advice etc.
3. Sevalal and Akhada work (Arena).
4. Problems of sanitation, roads, bunds, etc., tackled in a practical way. Collective labour for common purposes should be encouraged.
5. Untouchability work.
6. Communal harmony work.
7. Prohibition.
8. Survey of conditions.
9. Redress of grievances
10. Founding of Grain Banks
11. Propaganda in neighbouring villages.
12. Co-operative marketing.
13. Women and children work.

In a village where work of this nature has been done by honest, devoted workers who have succeeded in winning the full co-operation of the villagers, it should be possible in a few months to establish a *gram raj*. In such a village then it should be possible also to start co-operative farming and subsidiary co-operative industries.

Here is work that would need the best type of trained workers, and in numbers that can be almost unlimited. Here is work that goes to the very roots of Indian economic, political and social life and that is charged with the utmost revolutionary and constructive possibilities.

I have a similar picture of our urban work. In the towns and cities, wards or mohallas (Rural or Urban locality) should be the community unit that we should take up as a whole. In a ward the same type of constructive work as described for the village with modifications dictated by urban problems should be taken up through one or various centres. In this work care should be taken to approach the poorer classes in the city. Forms of service, educational propaganda, organization, suitable for them should be evolved. Active members of the Students' Congress should be invited to participate in this work.

It is possible to elaborate further this programme of work, but as an illustration it should serve its purpose. Local initiative and further experience may add to or subtract from it. I commend it now to you and I hope you will find it of some use.

Before I close I should like again to draw your attention to our central revolutionary purpose. Remember that the same work can be done in

different ways and with different motives. Our governing motive should inform all the work we do and transform it into a revolutionary instrument.

Yours fraternally,  
Jayaprakash Narayan

## **22. Interview to Press on Rejection of the Cabinet Mission Proposals by the Muslim League, Lahore, 30 July 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Mr. Jinnah's argument that because the Congress or at least Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, is trying to convert the Constituent Assembly into a sovereign body, the League cannot cooperate with it,<sup>2</sup> proves once again that Mr. Jinnah and his Muslim League are not at all interested in the independence of the country but are concerned only with maintaining their communal leadership with the help and cooperation of the foreign power. Any freedom-loving person would welcome a sovereign constituent assembly.

Question: What do you think of the character of the Constituent Assembly?

Jayaprakash Narayan: As far as I am concerned my whole complaint has been that the proposed Constituent Assembly is not a sovereign body and I do not see any reason why Mr. Jinnah should refuse to co-operate with it on that score. Perhaps even the limited powers that the Constituent Assembly enjoys are too much for the narrow and sectarian and undemocratic mind of Mr. Jinnah. We have now to see whether the British Government will go ahead with the Constituent Assembly.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *National Herald*, 6 August 1946.

<sup>2</sup> In his opening speech to the meeting of the Council of Muslim League on 27-9 June 1946, which adopted a resolution reversing its earlier decision to go into the Constituent Assembly and cooperate with the Cabinet Mission Plan. Jinnah had referred to Nehru's assertion, that the Constituent Assembly was going to function as a sovereign body and observed: "It is an Assembly summoned by Viceroy, who has been appointed by the British Government. It is not going to be a sovereign body by any statement or by any show of bravado."

## **23. Statement on Flood Havoc in Chittagong, 2 August 1946<sup>1</sup>**

The floods in the Chittagong district due to abnormally heavy rain in the hill tracts and high tides have reduced lakhs of people practically overnight to utter destitution. Extensive damage has been caused to crops in the

<sup>1</sup> *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 2 August 1946.

affected parts of the district and considerable loss of cattle is also reported. There is likelihood of epidemics breaking out in the district to complete the misery and suffering of the people. The sympathy of all people not only in Bengal, but also in other parts of the country will definitely go at this juncture to the large numbers of men, women and children who have been victims of this large scale calamity.

I appeal to all people in Bengal and in other provinces to come forward with all help they can render to the lakhs of families affected by the floods. Money will be primarily required, but help in kind may also be given. Clothings, medicines, dry milk, building materials and a variety of other articles are urgently needed. As help, both in cash and kind should be sent to the President, Chittagong District Congress Committee.

## 24. 'To Jawaharlal Nehru, 8 August 1946'

Patna

8 August 1946

My dear Bhai,

I know how busy you are. Yet, I hope you will be able to spare a few minutes to look into the complaint I am obliged to make below.

The complaint is regarding Prof. Abdul Bari<sup>2</sup> and his methods. Some months ago Prof. Bari started a campaign in Jamshedpur of abuse and vilification against me and my comrades. He used the filthiest possible language and not unoften held out threats of violence. Suddenly in April last these threats materialized and a number of our workers in Jamshedpur were roughly handled, assaulted and beaten up. Complaints were made to Rajendra Babu, and after that though the abuse continued the violence stopped.

In the meanwhile I visited Jamshedpur in June last in the course of my Bihar tour. Prof. Bari did everything possible to stop me from going there and holding a meeting. He asked the public not to contribute to the purse that was being collected for me. He issued a leaflet, a copy of which I am enclosing. It is an amazing leaflet as you will see for yourself—do read it even if you have no time to read the other papers.

When I arrived in Jamshedpur the first thing I did was to send word to

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> Abdul Bari (-1947); joined Khilafat Movement and Non-Cooperation Movement 1920-1; Professor Bihar Vidyapith. 1921; Member Bihar Legislative Council but resigned in 1930 in response to Congress call, elected to Bihar Assembly in 1937 and became Deputy Speaker; participated in Salt Satyagraha and was arrested in April 1932; Chairman, Reception Committee for All India Conference of Socialists, Patna, in 1934; Presided over Bihar Provincial Conference at Masrak (Saran Dist.), 1937; President Bihar Provincial Congress Committee, 1946; a prominent labour leader and trade unionist in Bihar and Orissa.

Prof. Bari—in spite of everything he had done—that I wanted to meet him whenever and wherever it suited him. He did not agree to meet me. The next day I swallowed my pride and went to the union office to meet him. He was absent. At the public meeting in spite of all the provocation and insults I spoke in support of Prof. Bari's leadership of Jamshedpur labour and of the Tata Workers' Union and in support of working class unity. I should add that Prof. Bari held a rival meeting at the same time in a Maidan nearby. It was only on the third day of my stay when Prof. Bari realized how ridiculous he had made himself that he invited me to tea at his place. I gladly went and had a cordial talk with him. He came to the railway station then to leave me. I thought he had buried the hatchet and I returned far happier than when I had gone.

The hatchet was not buried however. Soon after I left Jamshedpur the campaign of abuse started as before. And in July last two of our Comrades were again beaten up—this time rather severely. One of these was not only beaten up but also kidnapped and shut up in some place, in fact in a room in Feroze Khan's house, who is Vice President of one of Prof. Bari's union, from where he was rescued by the police hours later. I am enclosing herewith an excerpt from a report I have received on this incident. If you have no time to go through this report, Shri Mukutdhari<sup>3</sup> Singh will give you the salient facts.

Prof. Bari's exploits are not limited now to Jamshedpur.<sup>4</sup> Recently he went to the Tata Collieries area (Jamadoba). There at a small workers' meeting at which about a couple hundred of his followers were present he had one of our workers, Baijnath, beaten up in his presence. The relevant statement is also attached herewith.

Prof. Bari is working in Jamshedpur on behalf of the P.C.C. He is at present Acting President of the B.P.C.C. I believe he is also connected with the Hindusthan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh.<sup>5</sup> God alone knows how he squares up his methods with the position he holds.

Now, we do not mind opposition from anybody or Prof. Bari's abuse. It does us no harm while doing no credit to him. But violence is a serious matter. The first thought of my comrades is retaliation in kind—not in a spirit of vengeance but of sheer self-defence. But all these months I have asked them to forbear in the hope that the Provincial Congress machinery

<sup>3</sup> Mukutdhari Singh: a prominent labour leader in Dhanbad; at this time belonging to the Congress Socialist Party.

<sup>4</sup> Jamshedpur: an industrial town in Bihar.

<sup>5</sup> Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh: In 1937, a Labour Sub-Committee was set up by the Gandhi Seva Sangh, Wardha to organize labour on Gandhian lines. As a result of the recommendations of the body, the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh was established in 1938 in Bombay with the objective of carrying on labour work on constructive and peaceful lines.

would be able to set matters right. But, while I am certain that had one-tenth of what Prof. Bari has done been done by us, the whole Bihar Congress would have been shouting against us, no serious attempt has been done to curb this gentleman. The situation is worsened for us by the fact that the local officers are intimidated into supporting and conniving at acts which normally could never have been permitted.

To cut this story short, I am writing this so that I may place the facts before you and seek your protection. I do not think it is advisable to use violence against ourselves, and I am determined that there shall be no violence from our side unless it becomes absolutely essential in self-defence. I hope fervently that with this complaint in your hands, no occasion would arise for this sort of thing.

I am writing to Gandhiji and Sardar Vallabhbhai also in this connection and sending a man to Rajendra Babu at Pilani.<sup>6</sup>

With greetings and love,  
Yours,  
J.P.

<sup>6</sup> Pilani: a small town in Rajasthan, where the industrialist and Congress sympathiser, G.D. Birla, had his ancestral base.

## 25. To Vallabhbhai Patel, 8 August 1946<sup>1</sup>

8 August 1946

Dear Sardar Sahib,  
Respectful greetings.

I am sending Shri Mukutdhari Singh with some papers. I know you are so busy with a variety of urgent matters. Still I hope you will spare a little time in listening to this complaint of mine.

It is regarding Prof. Abdul Bari. I had already referred this matter to you once. I will not encroach upon your time by a detailed letter. Mukut Babu will speak to you in person. If you could spare him some more time he would even read certain papers to you.

What we have to say in brief is that we could put up with the foul language of Bari Sahib, but it was beyond us to tolerate beating of our workers. Tell us what we should do. Please take necessary steps in the matter. I am also writing to Jawaharlal and Bapu.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel  
(Original in Hindi)

Yours sincerely,  
Jayaprakash Narayan

<sup>1</sup> Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50, edited by Durga Das, Ahmedabad, 1972, Vol. II, pp. 400-2.

**26. Speech in support of Bank Strike,  
Patna, 8 August 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Your struggle for bread is a part and parcel of the struggle for Independence. Unity and solidarity are the keys to your success. All your steps should be inspired by these virtues. If you do so you will be crowned with success. Your failure will mean great catastrophe as it will drag us one step backward from our onward march to freedom.

In India where we are groaning under the dead weight of alien rule any struggle whether initiated by the Bank employees, industrial labourers or army men is a part and parcel of our struggle for independence. Viewed from this angle of vision, there is nobody in this country who in any way is opposed to your feelings and aspirations. I for my part am in complete sympathy with the battle which you are fighting for the attainment of a cause that is fully just and upright. I have gone through all your demands and I held them to be within the limits of wisdom and reasonableness.

Our country is poor, but it pays the highest salaries in the world. The Indian Viceroy is the highest paid official in the globe. America is a richer country than India, but there the President's salary is not as high. If you collect comparative figures of wealth and poverty of countries of the world, you will find that America is the richest country, while India is the poorest. But if the figures of salaries are collected, it will be clear that the highest as well as the lowest salary is in existence in this poor country of ours.

Here gap between the highest salary and the lowest is as wide as the sea. This is not the case with America where the hiatus between the highest wages and the lowest wages is narrow. There is a small disparity between the maximum and the minimum. All these are due to our country being in the hands of alien reactionaries.

By looking at the charts of salaries of different employees of the Imperial bank I am convinced that the European employees are receiving exorbitantly high salaries while the clerks and other workers are living on mere pittance. This is highly regrettable and such behaviour of the Imperial Bank merited nothing but denunciation. Your salary should in some cases be doubled and in some cases trebled. This will be the only proper course which the Bank should adopt to meet your grievances.

In 1936, when there was discussion in the Congress circles regarding the fixation of pay of Ministers, it was decided that the maximum should be fixed at Rs. 600 per month. At that time I had suggested the Congress authorities to fix the minimum salaries also but they left this issue undecided and it is so till today.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 11 August 1946. J.P. addressed employees of the Imperial Bank at their meeting at Anjuman Islamia Hall, Patna.

My own opinion is that each member of clerical staff should draw a minimum basic salary of Rs. 100 per month while the menial staff should get Rs. 60 per month as basic pay in view of the present hard times. If I had the reins of the Government in my hands, I could with no loss of time have enforced such scales of salaries. I tell you this with full realization of responsibility. I do not know when this idea of mine will be realized.

Your demand is just and proper. Throughout you have been on the side of reasonableness. You did not precipitate in the strike. You gave notice of sufficient period to the Directors to think and pause and to refer the question to arbitration. They betrayed indifference and unreason. All along you have been on the right path. Your strike is a complete one and because it is disciplined, it has drawn wide support from the public. So far as the Socialist Party is concerned I shall issue directions to it at all places throughout the country to give all assistance to you in your struggle for bread. The struggle for bread is more fierce than that for freedom. In the battle for freedom the fighters are not as many as in the struggle for bread.

Though many of you are educated and worked on tables and chairs you were after all mazdoors (labourers). Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru also had expressed sympathy with your strike. But success of your strike depends not so much on sympathy and well-wishes of Pandit Nehru and other leaders as on your own solidarity and integrity. You should be invulnerable in your resolve and with unity and solidarity you are sure to carry the day.

I make a fervent appeal to the Chambers of Commerce and other industrial organizations in the country to pass resolutions urging upon the Imperial Bank to arrive at some settlement with its employees immediately. I advise you to approach these organizations for help in this crisis.

## **27. Speech at Provincial Rally of C.M.A. Employees' Union, Patna, 10 August 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Class movement must be neat and clear bereft of party politics. In class struggle fighters must come from that particular class although they in times of difficulty may seek the guidance of political leaders of various shades of opinion, not on basis of politics however but purely economics. When you have ventured to take action instead of approaching Pandit Nehru and Mr. Jinnah you should rush to your own rank and file and find out whether there is solidarity and unity, requisite to reach your desired goal. Class organizations of Labour and Kisans (peasants) should be independent of

<sup>1</sup> *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 13 August 1946. Slightly abridged. J.P. addressed the C.M.A. Employees' Union on the eve of their general strike commencing from 16 August at Anjuman Islamia Hall.



all external influences. In class struggle there is no place for Nehrus and Jinnahs. They may be consulted by your organization but their active leadership should always be avoided.

During the proposed railway strike<sup>2</sup> there was every attempt from the side of Mr. Jinnah to break up the morale of Muslim workers by appealing to their sectional and communal senses. In class struggles where fight is only for bread, communalism has got no place. If communalism creeps therein, the movement becomes weak and the party of opponents gains strength. If retrenchment comes, everybody amongst you will be retrenched irrespective of any caste and creed. The employers who exploit by appealing to your communal senses will mercilessly retrench you. Then where is the place for communalism to your battle, which you are going to start in the form of general strike from August 15? Because of communalism I have always stood in opposition against Mr. Jinnah. I am strongly of opinion that communalism has prolonged our slavery and Mr. Jinnah has a great hand in the continuance of the enslavement of India. I was born in Hindu society but I do not consider myself Hindu. I am Indian from top to bottom. Therefore, bread problems are immune from all political complications.

<sup>2</sup> Refers to the proposed strike by the railway workers in 1946 when their seventeen years old demand for revision of their wages was not met by the Government.

## **28. The Coming Struggle and the Role of Government Servants; Address at Patna on Martyr's Day, 11 August 1946<sup>1</sup>**

The greatest achievement of the 1942 struggle is that the "Quit India" spirit has penetrated into the rank and file of the army, navy, airforce, police and other governmental organizations and they are aflame with the sentiments of revolt against British imperialism. Ministerial officers must also raise their head shedding their age-long stupor and each and all fall in line with their compatriots in the aforesaid branches of the Government. Recent happenings in the shape of strikes amidst ministerial servants are pointers to the fact that they are not lacking in that dash and push which is requisite for the coming struggle. They must from now nourish the burning desire to emancipate their mother country from bondage and on a call from national leaders they must plunge in the fight for independence.

The struggle which is going to be launched at no distant date will be waged on a definite programme which amongst other consists of mass scale strikes in the army, navy, airforce, railway, marine, government officers,

<sup>1</sup> *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 14 August 1946. Slightly abridged.

industrial organizations and other arteries of the Government. They must be ready from now. They must keep their powder dry for the spark to make the whole country ablaze.

You as Government servants, are afraid of retaliation at the hands of the British. But you do so under a misunderstanding. The arms of the British today are too weak to break vengeance. The last war has left them as a power completely emaciated and run down. You strike, the British will vanish like morning mist.

In our coming fight we are also seeking active co-operation of the Imperial Service Personnel who are Indians. Wherever I go I appeal to I.C.S. men and other members of the All-India Services to come to our fold and fight on our side in our war of independence, I hope that on the arrival of the zero hour all persons in the employ of the Government will rush to our encampments to strike the British.

## **29. Statement on Victimisation of Tenants in Punjab, 13 August 1946<sup>1</sup>**

I have just received a telegram from Munshi Ahmed Din, General Secretary of the Punjab Congress Socialist Party, saying that ten Socialist Congressmen and many tenants have been arrested by the Punjab Government in connection with the Chetala peasant struggle.

Chetala is a village in the Hissar district where a few malguzars, i.e. revenue farmers hold a large number of tenants at their mercy. These tenants have been in possession of the lands they have been cultivating for a number of years, but as is the case elsewhere, their rights in law are not clearly established. There is no doubt, however, that if the agrarian laws in our country were based on commonsense, justice and equity, the tillers of the soil would have been the real landowners and the State would not have tolerated a host of middlemen whose only function is to exploit the real cultivator. But as it is the actual cultivator, both in the zamindari (landlordship) and ryotwari (tenantry) areas is only a little better than a serf. The Punjab is generally considered to be a province of independent and solvent farmers. But with every passing year the status of the greater number of the Punjab farmers is being reduced to that of tenants and a few big landlords are rapidly swallowing up the holdings.

It is a matter of great pity that the Punjab Coalition Government with a Congressmen as its Revenue Minister should permit the poor muzaharas (tenants) not only to be oppressed in this manner but even to turn into oppressors themselves. That poor helpless peasants instead of being assisted

<sup>1</sup> *Pioneer*, 14 August 1946. Statement issued at Patna.

should be victimised for standing by them shows that the Congress Party in the Coalition has succumbed to the reactionary forces in the Government and failed to put into practice the principles for which Congress has always stood.

### **30. Speech at the Inauguration of the Second Session of the Science College Students' Congress, Patna, 13 August 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Communalism is as harmful to our national interest and to the interest of every community within the nation as any foreign intervention can ever be. Hindu, Muslim or Sikh or any other communalism is equally condemnable and equally harmful. I cannot fail to express my deep concern over the development of caste feelings and caste groupings within the student movement. This is a vulgar development unworthy of nationalist and revolutionary traditions of students of this province.

I need hardly say that the Students' Congress is the only true representative of the student community in this country. The Students' Federation is not a students' organization but merely a Communist front. The role that the Communist Party played in the 1942 revolution is well-known. In the midst of the greatest mass revolution that the country had ever seen, these erstwhile revolutionaries turned into British spies and tools of British imperialism. It would be hard to find another instance in the history which would match this dark betrayal. The basic policy of the Communist Parties all over the world is to follow the dictates of the Russian Foreign Office. It is this fact that must hold our attention even more than the 1942 betrayal.

My Socialism apart, even as a patriotic and nationalist Indian I want my country, when it is free, to maintain friendliest possible relations with Soviet Russia. But that relationship must be based on equality and absolute non-interference with each other's national affairs. With utmost friendship and goodwill with Russia, I will never brook any interference on Russia's part with my country's policies even if India becomes a Socialist Republic. As an essential and important corollary to this, I shall never brook nor should any Indian, Nationalist or Socialist, brook any Russian quislings or puppets in this country. I hate all foreign puppets equally whether they are British or Russian puppets. This is my basic objection against the Communist Party.

National freedom, national development and prosperity must include all communities and require common national effort. It is a pity that Muslim young men particularly are so much infected with the communal virus today

<sup>1</sup> *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 16 August 1946. Slightly abridged.

that they do not only ill serve their country but even their community which they have momentarily placed above their country. No community in India can ever achieve what the country as a whole is denied. If India is not free, Muslims are not free. If India is hungry so are the Muslims. The problems of poverty and freedom recognize no communal differences. I should like, therefore, to ask the Muslim students earnestly to think afresh and reconsider the basic concept of communalism.

I recognize that students cannot keep themselves aloof from the political currents and controversies. Yet I think that it is wrong to convert the student movement into a cockpit of political rivalries. I advise the students to avoid power politics and to take to reconstruction.

Every form of planning and development—economic, cultural technical or social—will have to be undertaken as soon as we are free. Diplomatic and consular services will have to be manned. There are also the armed services. The whole system of administration of the country will have to be recast. Political and economic democracy will have to be made to function. The present day universities are totally unfit for these tasks. We would need different kinds of training and a different sense of discipline and devotion to duty from what we have today. The present educational system is rotten.

### 31. To Jawaharlal Nehru, 17 August 1946<sup>1</sup>

Kadam Kuan, Patna  
17 August 1946

Dear Bhai,

Thanks for your letter<sup>2</sup> from Wardha.

You know yourself how anxious I have been since my release to spend some time with you, but unfortunately our programmes have disagreed. I am spending the rest of this month in Patna and may be a few early days of September. If within this period you are in Allahabad even for a couple of days, please give me three days' notice and I'll be there.

I am grateful to you for agreeing to look into the matter I complained about. May I warn you, however, that Prof. Bari will most vehemently deny everything and also make counter-charges. In order to complete the picture, perhaps I should tell you that it is quite possible that my friends in Jamshedpur have erred occasionally. But the point is that whatever the nature of the quarrel between them and Prof. Bari, no one, least of all a

<sup>1</sup> *Brahmanand Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 2 for Jawaharlal Nehru's letter to J.P. dated 10 August 1946.

responsible Congressman, should be guilty of violence to his co-workers.

I am sorry you find my writings vague. But, I do not know what to do except that I should try to think more clearly and earnestly. I shall attempt that.

Looking forward to meeting you,

Yours affectionately,  
J.P.

### 32. To Yusuf Meherally, 17 August 1946<sup>1</sup>

Kadam Kuan, Patna  
17 August 1946

Dear Yusuf,<sup>2</sup>

I am sorry I have not written to you since I left Bombay. I was too busy in the Punjab to find time to write anything. On returning here, I am afraid, I have indulged myself a little though, God knows, I have been fairly harassed even here. In any case I hope you won't mind my not writing earlier.

The publishers have sent me, or rather to Prabhavati, 12 copies of *Towards Struggle*.<sup>3</sup> I think the book has been fairly well done. I hope the publishers would be able to sell all the copies they have. I know that there is a good demand for the book here. What about the translation rights? Some people here want to publish a Hindi translation. Do you permit me to talk it over with them and settle the terms?

Regarding the collections for the Central Party, I wonder what the position is. Sabita wrote to me that Dr. Baliga<sup>4</sup> and others are collecting a purse of 5 lakhs for Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali. I am very anxious not to enter into any competition with her in this or any other matter. Therefore, I do not want you to proceed with any scheme for a "Jayaprakash Purse". You are, ofcourse, free to devise any other scheme for central finances.

<sup>1</sup> JP Papers (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> For biographical note on Yusuf Meherally see JPSW, Vol. I, p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> *Towards Struggle*: Collection of selected manifestos, speeches and writings of J.P., edited by Yusuf Meherally, Bombay, Padma Publications, 1946.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. A.V. Baliga (1903-64); joined Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920; worked as Professor at K.E.M. College, Honorary Professor at Bombay Medical College; established G.S.B. Scholarship League in Bombay for poor students; founded an educational complex at Kumta, a rural township in North Kanara in 1949; financially supported *Free Press Journal* in its difficult period. In "Quit India Movement" he associated himself with J.P., Achyut Patwardhan, Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali, etc.; joined Congress in 1957. Visited U.S.S.R. in 1951 at invitation of Soviet Peace Council, and while attending Surgeons' Conference at Vienna went also to London in May 1964 and died of heart attack there.

<sup>5</sup> For biographical note on Gunada Charan Majumdar see JPSW, Vol. I, p. 157.

Gunada<sup>1</sup> was here a few days ago, and I am glad I was able to meet him. When he goes back to Bombay he will tell you what we talked about. I am afraid the All India Centre is not developing as it should. I know it's my own fault but, I feel helpless.

I am not quite definite yet about my plans, but I expect to be in Bombay by the 3rd week of September. I will be staying there for a couple of weeks at least.

How is your health. Did you go out of Bombay as you were planning to do and did you apply for the passport?

Affectionately yours,

J.P.

### 33. To Mulraj Karsandas, 18 August 1946<sup>1</sup>

Kadam Kuan, Patna

18 August 1946

Dear Mulrajbhai,<sup>2</sup>

When I was in Bombay last I wanted very much to meet you, but you were unfortunately out of town. I hope I would be able to see you when I go to Bombay next.

Meanwhile I wish to make a request to you. You know what excellent political worker Menon<sup>3</sup> is. I want him for our work. There is some organizational work which none of us can do as well as he. I therefore wish to request you to release him for this work, and also to be good enough to maintain him at his present salary. I know this is an extraordinary request to make, and I would never have made it to any other businessman. But as a political worker you are one of us, and will surely understand the proposal I have made. I know it means a sacrifice for you, but after all I too have a claim on the fortune you have made.

Hoping you are well and with affectionate regards,

Yours,

J.P.

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> Mulraj Karsandas: A businessman in Bombay who was a sympathizer of the Congress Socialist Party.

<sup>3</sup> K.B. Menon: A prominent member and Joint Secretary of the Congress Socialist Party.

**34. To Asoka Mehta, 18 August 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Kadam Kuan, New Area, Patna  
18 August 1946

Dear Asoka,<sup>2</sup>

I am sorry for not writing earlier. I learnt from Gunada<sup>3</sup> that you are joining Ram Manohar in his Assam and possibly Orissa tour. Is it possible for you before returning to Bombay to come for a day to Patna? Our friends here want to discuss with you the Trade Disputes Bill that Phulan Babu<sup>4</sup> is drafting. I am sure it will be very helpful if you can spare a day. If this letter reaches you in Bombay before you leave for East, will you send me a copy of the Bombay Trade Disputes Act and other relevant literature, particularly any notes that the Party or you, or Purshottam<sup>5</sup> might have prepared on it. I understand the Act is to be amended by the Bombay Assembly. Could you also send copies of the proposed amendment?

Have you applied for your passport yet? You should know that I have not dropped the proposal about you and Lohia.<sup>6</sup> It is up to you both to make the necessary arrangements for leaving. In any case your passports must be ready.

Affectionately yours,  
J.P.

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> For biographical note on Asoka Mehta see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 122.

<sup>3</sup> See item no. 32.

<sup>4</sup> For biographical note on Phulan Babu (Phulan Prasad Verma) see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 62.

<sup>5</sup> For biographical note on Purshottam Trikamdas see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 88.

<sup>6</sup> For biographical note on Rammanohar Lohia see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 91.

**35. To Vallabhbhai Patel, 22 August 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Kadam Kuan, Patna  
22 August 1946

My Dear Sardar Saheb,

I thank you for your letter of 15<sup>2</sup> August. I am afraid, the seriousness of the complaint I had made has been under-estimated. However, the matter is in your hands and the hands of Jawaharlalji and Rajan Babu and I can only hope for the best.

Thanking you and with regards,

Yours sincerely,  
J.P.

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 3 for Sardar Patel's reply to J.P., 15 August 1946.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 4 for Sardar Patel's reply to J.P., 30 August 1946.

### 36. Statement on the C.S.P.'s attitude towards the Constituent Assembly, 27 August 1946<sup>1</sup>

The attitude of the Congress Socialist Party towards the Constituent Assembly is well known by now. In view of that attitude, it would have been inconsistent for members of the party to go to the Constituent Assembly. I do not think a question of discipline is involved in this.

Within every large political party in the world, such as the Labour Party of Britain<sup>2</sup> or the Democratic Party<sup>3</sup> of the U.S.A. groups more or less defined grow up and every party is compelled to take notice of such developments and to make necessary adjustments. The British Labour Party for instance has gone so far as to allow members of the party in Parliament to vote in opposition to Government's resolutions. I am sure, it is not part of discipline for the Congress Working Committee to compel Congressmen to accept offices and positions against their wishes.

With regard to the Constituent Assembly due to certain organizational difficulties the attitude of the party could not be made known to all the members of the party in time. Therefore, a few of them failed to withdraw their nominations at the appropriate time and were eventually elected to the Constituent Assembly.

The Working Committee has now passed a resolution that no Congressman once elected to the Constituent Assembly would be permitted to resign on political grounds. I question the wisdom of the resolution, but I recognize that it is quite a categorical decision. It is obvious that, if after this resolution the Congress Socialists, who have been elected to the Constituent Assembly were to resign, they would be guilty of breach of discipline.

I do not think there is need to precipitate an internal crisis on an issue like this. There are not more than five such members and as they find themselves in the Constituent Assembly not for any fault of theirs or as a result of deliberate breach of party discipline and as their being in the Assembly does in no way compromise the position of the party. I think the matter should be left where it is.

<sup>1</sup> *National Herald*, 29 August 1946. Statement issued at Patna before leaving for Delhi to attend the Congress Working Committee meeting.

<sup>2</sup> Labour Party (British): A reformist Socialist Party, closely allied with trade unions, was founded in 1900 and assumed its present name in 1906. It grew rapidly since 1924 and formed Government in 1929. At general election in 1945 it secured a majority. Clement Attlee became P.M. It again secured majority in 1950.

<sup>3</sup> Democratic Party (U.S.): The party was founded in 1792 by a group of voters supporting Thomas Jefferson. It continued under various designations but acquired its present name during Presidency of Andrew Jackson. Woodrow Wilson, Franklin-D-Roosevelt, J.F. Kennedy, among others, were elected President of U.S.A. as its candidates.



**37. To K.R. Menon, 5 September 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Kadam Kuan, Patna  
5 September 1946

Dear Comrade,<sup>2</sup>

Your letter of July 10 has reached me only now. I am afraid my reply may not reach in time, i.e. before the publication of the special number of your paper. However, I take great pleasure in paying my homage through the Sunday Express to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on the occasion of the 3rd anniversary of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. The Azad Hind Government<sup>3</sup> and the Azad Hind Fouz will forever remain an inspiration to us and guide us towards the goal of freedom.

I wish you success in your venture.

Jai Hind.

Yours sincerely,  
J.P.

<sup>1</sup> JP Papers (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> K.R. Menon, ed., *The Sunday Express*, Singapore.

<sup>3</sup> Azad Hind government: Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose took over the command of Indian National Army in 1943. He proclaimed a provisional government of Azad Hind (Free India) and led one division of troops across Burma with the battle cry "Chalo Dilli" or "Onward to Delhi". They entered Assam and took Kohima and Imphal in May 1944.

**38. To Kusum Nair, 7 September 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Kadam Kuan, Patna  
7 September 1946

My Dear Kusum Ben,<sup>2</sup>

I owe you an apology not only for not writing earlier but also for not sending an article for 9th August. I had thought that I would get time to write the article on my way from Bombay to Delhi. But, I had to complete the "Third Letter", and after reaching Delhi and all through my Punjab tour I had not a moment's time to write anything. So I hope you will accept my belated apologies.

I suppose you have heard of Shri Rambriksh Benipuri.<sup>3</sup> He is one of the best Hindi writers. He has written a life of *Rosa Luxemburg* in Hindi. I

<sup>1</sup> JP Papers (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> Kusum Nair (1919- ); born in Uttar Pradesh 1919, graduated from Nagpur University; a journalist since 1943; accredited Indian correspondent for three European newspapers; travelled widely in Europe and America. Publications include *Blossoms in the Dust* 1961. *In defence of Irrational Peasant*, 1979; *Transforming Traditionality*, 1983.

<sup>3</sup> For biographical note on Rambriksh Benipuri see JPSW, Vol. I, p. 61.

wonder if you would be interested in publishing it. I have gone through the manuscript and I can assure you that it would be a valuable contribution to Hindi literature. The book would be of about 300 pages. If you let me know in time I would bring the manuscript with me when I come to Bombay at the end of this month.

Thank you for the cheque of Rs. 50/- as fee for attending the advisers' meeting.

With greetings,

Yours sincerely,  
J.P.

### 39. To Louis Fischer, 11 September 1946<sup>1</sup>

Kadam Kuan, Patna  
11 September 1946

My Dear Fischer,<sup>2</sup>

I have just been able to finish Kravchenko's book.<sup>3</sup> I think it is the most important book that I have read on Russia, so far. I am interested to know what reaction it has produced in thinking circles in the States. When I go to Delhi in a few days I shall give the book to Jawaharlal as you desired.

You had promised to arrange for some New York journal dealing with Russian affairs to be sent to me regularly. May I remind you of it? I shall be glad to pay the subscription. You will remember you said that this was the most authentic journal on Russia. I should also like very much to keep in touch with socialist thought and movement in the States. Can you help me in this matter? As a necessary part of this contact and also for personal reasons, if I may say so, I should like, if it is not too much of a nuisance for you, to keep in touch with you. It is difficult to say yet what course Indian developments are to take but, if things threaten to settle down here for some time, I might undertake a short trip to the States. I shall look forward then to meeting you again.

My wife sends you her greetings and regards.

Hoping you are well and with kindest personal regards.

Yours very sincerely,  
J.P.

<sup>1</sup> *Brahmanand Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> Louis Fischer (1896-1970); American author and journalist. Publications include *The Soviets in World Affairs* (1930); *Men and Politics* (1941); *A Week with Gandhi* (1942); *The Great Challenge* (1947); *The Life of Mahatma* (1950); *The Life and Death of Stalin* (1952); *Russia Revisited* (1957).

<sup>3</sup> Victor Kravchenko's book—Originally in Russian language—was translated into English in U.S.A. under the title *I Chose Freedom* and published there in February 1946.

**40. Interview to Press on joining Congress Working Committee,  
Communal situation and Interim Government,  
13 September 1946<sup>1</sup>**

At Bombay when Dr. Lohia and I had declined the Congress President's<sup>2</sup> invitation, it was not on any ground of principle, but only because of the peculiar situation obtaining then. I had made this clear in the statement I had issued regarding Srimati Kamaladevi's nomination<sup>3</sup> to the Working Committee. I want to make it perfectly clear that it was never the policy of the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) to non-cooperate on principle with the Congress Working Committee, or any other Congress organization. Whenever we were compelled to keep out of any Congress Committee, it was always due to some specific cause.

The situation in the country between Bombay and Delhi had changed considerably, even radically. The Congress particularly was faced with a critical situation and it had become the duty of all Congressmen, whatever their differences, to stand together and to face the common danger and the common task together.

My joining the Congress Working Committee is a token of Congress solidarity. Furthermore, all the prominent members of the Working Committee having joined the Central Government, I felt there was need in some manner to emphasize the popular, non-governmental, revolutionary character of the Congress. I need hardly add that if I ever find that my being on the Working Committee comes in the way of my present work of preparing for a revolutionary struggle, I shall not hesitate to leave the Committee, as I had left it for different reasons before. I should add further that in the present circumstances I believe that being on the Committee would help rather than hinder me in this work.

Question: What attitude your Party would adopt towards the Interim Government?

Jayaprakash Narayan: Fundamentally our reading of the recent political situation has not changed. The formation of the Interim Government does not mean that the struggle for freedom has ended. The main task of Congress and the Indian people still remains the same as before, that is to say, preparation for the struggle for freedom. We were opposed to the whole

<sup>1</sup> *Pioneer*, 14 September 1946, Interview at Patna.

<sup>2</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru Congress President in 1946.

<sup>3</sup> Refers to the statement which Jayaprakash Narayan issued at Bombay on 11 July 1946 saying that it was with his full approval that Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay had agreed to serve on the Congress Working Committee. He further explained that there never was a ban against a Socialist Party member joining the Congress Working Committee. Acharya Narendra Deva, a Congress Socialist, was a member of the previous Working Committee.

constitutional scheme, but when a decision has finally been taken and an Interim Government has been formed with Congress cooperation, we, as Congressmen cannot oppose or obstruct it. Rather it becomes our duty to strengthen our organization in accordance with, and in furtherance of the basic Congress policy of independence.

Q: Do you expect the Interim Government to solve the food and cloth problem?

J.P.: The food and cloth situation is grave indeed and whole economic situation of the country is serious. But I do not expect any miraculous change and I think it is wrong to expect the Interim Government to produce any further change immediately.

There can be no appreciable economic improvement in the country unless drastic and fundamental changes are made in the entire national economy. Such changes are beyond the competence and powers of the present Interim Government. As I look upon the tasks of this Government, they are not constructive, but mainly political, mainly combative, mainly transitional, in other words, I should judge this Government not by its constructive or administrative measures but by its success or failure in forcing the British power to quit India.

Governments when formed must govern and administer but the provisional national Government would make a fatal mistake if it lost sight of its provisional character and of its basic task to function as an instrument in the struggle for freedom. I would deem the Interim Government to have succeeded completely if let us say, at the end of a year, the food situation remained where it is today, but if the British Viceroy together with all that he stood for had left our shores for good.

Q: How do you view the communal situation and its possible influence over the course of constitutional developments?

J.P.: My views about the Muslim League are well known. Soon after Mr. Jinnah had made a somersault and rejected the British proposals, I had stated publicly that he had done so at the instance of the British Tories. That statement has been completely supported by subsequent disclosures. The communal threat which faces us is in reality not a communal threat alone. British imperialist interests represented by the British Tories in Britain and British Bureaucracy and big business in India are making a last desperate attempt to stem the tide of Indian freedom. Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League are only an instrument of this British reaction.

Any honest man in Mr. Jinnah's position would have long before settled with the Congress, for the Congress has offered everything possible to the Muslims.

The Congress is prepared to concede even Pakistan provided the people living in the areas claimed for Pakistan desire a separate state of their own

through a free plebiscite held in a free India. But Mr. Jinnah wants neither mutual settlement nor impartial arbitration. He merely asks Mr. Churchill<sup>1</sup> to stop India from marching on to freedom. That is all. That is what Pakistan means to Mr. Jinnah. The British have ruled over India for nearly a century, but it never occurred to Mr. Jinnah to launch direct action against them. Now when his country has reached the threshold of freedom, he is threatening murder, loot and arson. He is angry with the Congress because it has dared to fight the British and has succeeded at least in forming a responsible Provisional Government at the Centre. But I am sure Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Churchill cannot deflect the course of Indian freedom.

Q: What do you consider as the best way of dealing with Mr. Jinnah's threat?

J.P.: There is no question but that the Central and Provincial Governments must deal firmly with every civil disturbance of an anti-social and anti-national character. At the same time these Governments must do everything possible to find out and satisfy all reasonable grievances and aspirations of the Muslims as a community. The Congress organization too must ceaselessly attempt to reach Muslims of all classes, particularly the Muslim masses, and explain to them fully its policies and activities.

<sup>1</sup> Winston Churchill (1874-1965) British Statesman, soldier and author; Minister of War 1918-21, chancellor of Exchequer 1924-9; Prime Minister 1940-5 and 1951-5; became symbol of British resistance during Second World War, publications include: *My African Journey*, *The World Crisis* and *The Second World War*.

#### 41. To Jawaharlal Nehru, 14 September 1946<sup>1</sup>

Kadam Kuan, Patna  
14 September 1946

Dear Bhai,

Your two letters.<sup>2</sup> I was very reluctant to wire to you regarding that condemned soldier Suleiman Khan<sup>3</sup>, but his relatives turned up at about 9 in the night and implored me in such a manner that I could not say no to them.

Three or four days ago I had a cable from Hellen Reid<sup>4</sup> inviting me to New York to speak at the Herald Tribune Forum. I replied to her immediately

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 5 for Nehru's letter to J.P., 6 Sept. 1946 and also Appendix 6 for Vallabhbhai Patel's letter to J.P., 30 September 1946.

<sup>3</sup> Suleiman Khan: A soldier condemned to death.

<sup>4</sup> Helen Reid (1882-1970); educated at Grafton Hall, Wisconsin, Bernald College, New York; Worked with New York Herald Tribune 1918-58.

thanking her but regretting that it was impossible at present to accept her invitation.

Having been confined to bed on doctor's orders and having no radio in my house I could not hear your broadcast, but I read it the next morning and liked it immensely. Those who heard you said that your voice sounded very tired. That ofcourse is easily understood.

I am leaving tomorrow night for Fyzabad<sup>5</sup> where I will stay for a day with Narendra Dev<sup>6</sup> and reach Delhi on the 18th morning.

I am enclosing herewith a cutting of a press interview which was published this morning in the local papers.<sup>7</sup> As I do not know what the press agencies made of this interview and how it was published in other papers elsewhere. I am sending you this cutting. I would be happy if you could glance through it.

With love,

Yours affectionately,  
J.P.

Encl.: [Not available]

<sup>5</sup> Fyzabad—A district town in eastern U.P.

<sup>6</sup> For biographical note on Acharya Narendra Deva see *JPSW*, Vol. 1, p. 61.

<sup>7</sup> See item 40.

## **42. Interview on the Communal Problem, Bombay, 3 October 1946<sup>1</sup>**

The recent countrywide riots are political riots deliberately engineered by the Muslim League as part of their direct action programme.<sup>2</sup> There may be retaliation from other communities. But such retaliatory communalism is equally bad. My only solution to the communal problem is freedom—complete and real.

Question: Is a Hindu-Muslim settlement possible before launching an offensive against the British?

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *National Herald*, 4 October 1946. Interviewed by the Associated Press of America, Bombay.

<sup>2</sup> Direct Action programme: The Working Committee of All India Muslim League had fixed 16th August 1946 for observing "Direct Action Day" throughout India. While the observance of that day passed off peacefully at most places, serious disturbances took place in Calcutta. A mass rally was held in the afternoon at Calcutta maidan in the observance of the day. This was followed by virulent mob violence unprecedented in the history of India and plunged the city into an orgy of bloodshed, murder and terror. According to an official estimate, more than four thousand persons were killed, many more thousands injured and property worth crores of rupees was destroyed.

Jayaprakash Narayan: Any such solution will be putting the cart before the horse. The British are here and they encourage all internal quarrels. A study of the history of the communal problem shows that whenever there was a possibility of the communities coming together, the British stepped in to prevent it. I have always looked upon the Muslim League as a British front. With the British out of this country, this front will collapse by itself.

Q: Is a settlement not possible if the Congress gives up the Nationalist Muslim seat in the Government?

J.P.: The Congress will not budge an inch from the stand it has taken on the question of the inclusion of a Nationalist Muslim in the present Interim Government. Sixty years of Congress history cannot be negated in a moment. The Congress has gone as far as possible to satisfy the Muslim League's reasonable demands.

The Interim Government was "only a stroke of fortune" for the Congress. The British are now endeavouring to get the Muslim League into the Cabinet so that there may be differences inside the Cabinet. This would allow Lord Wavell to act as the arbitrator. With the Muslim League trying to organize the students, workers and merchants on a communal basis, the British would get a chance to continue their stay in India.

Q: What about the League's direct action programme?

J.P.: I am not afraid of direct action. Why should I be? Has any country attained independence or come to its own without trouble and even civil war? I think the direct action programme will recoil on Mr. Jinnah's own head.

#### 43. To Shah Nawaz Khan, 4 October 1946<sup>1</sup>

4 October 1946

My Dear Gen. Shah Nawaz,<sup>2</sup>

I am sorry it wasn't possible for me to meet you in Delhi at the time of the A.I.C.C., but we must meet soon. There are so many urgent things that I must discuss with you. I shall be on the move throughout October, but will be in Delhi on 7 November. Will you please adjust your programme so that

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> General Shah Nawaz Khan (1914-83): Close associate of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose; joined Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun, in 1935; promoted to the rank of captain in 1942 and sent to Malaya; joined the Indian National Army and was put in charge of the 2nd I.N.A. Division; along with several others surrendered to the British after the latter's reconquest of Burma in 1945; faced trial at Red Fort, Delhi, along with G.S. Dhillon and P.N. Sehgal; elected to Lok Sabha from Meerut in 1952, 1957 and 1962; Minister of State for Steel and Mines, 1970-3, and Agriculture & Irrigation, 1974-7. Publication: *My memories of the I.N.A. and its Netaji*.

you may be in Delhi on that date? I am writing to Gen. Mohan Singh<sup>1</sup> also to be present on that day. We might meet together if you wish or separately. Please drop me a line at my Patna address, P.O. Kadam Kuan.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely yours,

J.P.

<sup>1</sup> General Mohan Singh (1909-89): joined the Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun, 1932 and was promoted to the rank of captain in 1940; organised the first Indian National Army in 1942 in Malaya with the help of Japanese forces, after the defeat and surrender of the British forces; later arrested and detained by the Japanese; after the British re-capture of Singapore, sent to the Red Fort (Delhi), from where he was released in 1946; joined the Forward Bloc in 1950 and became its President; joined the Indian National Congress in 1955 and became M.P. (Rajya Sabha) in 1962.

#### 44. Neutrality, 6 October 1946<sup>1</sup>

"Neutrality is in bad repute" said a friend at Delhi when we were discussing our attitude towards Maulana Azad's resolution ratifying the Working Committee's decisions with regard to the formation of the Interim Government.

I was not particularly impressed with that argument. It has never been my policy to reject a course of action, if otherwise correct, for fear of unpopularity. And I believe it is fatal, apart from being irresponsible and intellectually dishonest, for any organization that claims to provide true leadership to large masses of people to mislead them just because of the fear that the right lead would make it unpopular. If on any controversial issue it is the correct policy for an organization to take a neutral stand and if the neutral stand best serves the causes which is dear to that organization that stand should boldly be taken and maintained. If it causes unpopularity in certain quarters, that must be faced, and the stand explained to the people. If the stand is correct, it will soon be vindicated, and the unpopularity would disappear.

To some people neutrality appears to signify lack of decision or policy. It need not be so. Neutrality in certain circumstances may be and is a positive policy. When an army neither retreats nor advances, it may be due to the commander's indecision or it may signify the best tactical line possible in the given circumstances. When one is faced with two unacceptable choices, one is compelled to accept one or the other, the best course is to accept neither. If the world is divided into two warring camps, India need not join one or the other.

<sup>1</sup> Article in *Janata*.



At Delhi we were faced exactly with a similar situation in which we could accept neither of the two choices offered. What were these choices? We could either accept Maulana Azad's resolution or oppose it. Neither of these alternatives could we adopt. Why? For the following reasons.

The resolution asked us to ratify the formation of the Interim Government. We could not do so, because from the very beginning we were opposed to any settlement with the British at this stage. The formation of the Interim Government was the end-step in a process of settlement to which we were basically opposed. How then could we ratify the end-step? Only those could vote for ratification who were responsible for a particular policy that had resulted in the formation of the Nehru Government. We could neither be asked for our votes nor could we give them.

On the other hand, we could also not oppose the resolution. Opposition meant that we wanted the Interim Government to resign. Had that government not come into being it was open to us to oppose its formation. But having once been formed it would have been the height of irresponsibility to ask it to resign immediately. That would only lower the prestige of the Congress and make it a laughing stock of the world. Also, when the formation of the provisional government in circumstances that have put the Congress in a stronger position vis-a-vis the foreign power and its agent, communalism, has brought the forces of reaction in open opposition to it, creating an unprecedented internal crisis, it would be cowardly and a signal disservice to the nation to demand resignation of the Provisional Government. If any Congressman can ever demand this resignation now, it can only be under one circumstance, namely, when the Government proves incompetent or is found to have deviated from the path of freedom and of Congress principles and objectives. Clearly such a situation has not arisen yet and let us all hope that it will never arise. In that case there may be only one other circumstance left in which the Government may have to resign, namely, when a conflict arises between the Provisional Government and the British Government that can only be resolved by an appeal to open direct mass action. Short of these two situations, the Interim Government having once come into being must carry on and function in such a manner as to help the Indian people to usher in as soon as possible a real free government of a real free India.

In this manner we see that the issues were simple enough and the decision clear and straight. We could neither support nor oppose the Azad resolution, the only course open to us was that of neutrality.

There would have been no need for me to write this clarification had not some people made it their particular job to defame our Party and to try to beat it with any available stick. It is this defamation and propaganda that frightens some of our comrades, particularly our younger comrades. But

the remedy is not to be frightened into wrong decisions but to fight boldly for what one considers to be right and healthy policies. Left-wing infantilism is as harmful as right-wing reaction. Scientific revolutionaries who understand dialectics when applied to day-to-day problems must know that the path of revolution is never a straight royal road, but one with ups and downs, twists and turns and detours. At all times it is a difficult path, often it becomes obscure, like Lenin's New Economic Policy,<sup>2</sup> which to many Marxian Pandits had appeared to be a betrayal of Marxism,<sup>3</sup> but was in fact only a detour on the path leading resolutely to the determined goal.

<sup>2</sup> Vladimir Illyich Lenin (1870-1924); Marxist revolutionary; in October 1917 led the Bolshevik revolution, becoming head of the first Soviet Government; at the end of civil war (1918-21) introduced "New Economic Policy" which his critics saw as a compromise with capitalism and a retreat from strictly socialist planning.

<sup>3</sup> Marxism: a philosophy of history and a body of social doctrines worked out by Karl Marx in cooperation with his friend, Friedrich Engels with contributions from others from time to time.

#### **45. Appeal to Enlist Support of Bihar Policemen for freedom struggle, 10 October 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Police constables are ill-famed people and they are generally looked down upon by the public. The latter have some reasonable grounds for this attitude towards the former. But for the past few years there has been a discernible change in the outlook of the Bihar constabulary. To the great 1942 Revolution the constables had made appreciable contribution, though their rôle in 1920 and 1930 movements for the sake of their country was negligible. A survey from 1920 uptill now has brought in bold relief the fact that patriotic feelings have been kindled in the hearts of constables and they are also feeling the same urge for the motherland as the people at large are doing. There can be found sufficient evidence of the sacrifices and sufferings undergone by these men of the police force in the cause of the country during the grim days of August 1942.

They are very honest and reliable men in Government service. If properly organized they will rally round our banner on the sound of our bugle in the coming struggle. We cannot advance even an inch towards our goal without their co-operation and help. Army and police are the two hands of British imperialism in this country. These hands must be paralysed and broken. This is an important item in our programme for the preparation of the coming

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the *Searchlight*, 12 October 1946. Speech at public meeting, Patna. Ramanand Tiwary, leader of the strike by police constables at Jamshedpur in 1942 also spoke at the meeting.

struggle. To achieve this end we must draw the entire Bihar constabulary under our influence and protection. We can do this if we evince full interest in all their problems and strive for their solution. We must attend to all their grievances and obtain their redress by prevailing upon the Congress Ministry. But it is a matter of regret that we are not treating this matter as urgent and hence we are not putting forth necessary efforts in this direction.

While on our part we are not active in organizing the constables, ceaseless endeavours are being made by Britishers and their henchmen in the services to thwart all attempts at mobilizing the constables to fight for the country. Do not even for a moment think that with the Congress Ministry in the saddle, the British leopards have changed their spots. They are as ready to devour us as before. Mr. Creed<sup>2</sup> and Mr. Tenbrooke<sup>3</sup> will never like that constables should organize themselves. They are committing all sorts of mischiefs in the name of discipline. Before the advent of the Congress Ministry, the steps to strengthen the hands of the Police Chief and to make him free from the control of the Prime Minister have been completed. Alterations have been made in the Police Manual entitling the Inspector-General to send files to the Governor without referring them to the Ministry. This is a striking instance of the Britishers' efforts to prevent the police from siding with their countrymen in the event of struggle. The British officials and their hirelings are openly justifying the prevalent victimisation of the constables under the false cover of indiscipline, but actually these are steps which they are taking to suppress patriotic feelings and aspirations of the constables.

Constables are very honest people in Government services. By virtue of this they are distinguishable from the remaining ranks of the Police force. All officers down to Assistant Sub-Inspector are most dishonest and unreliable and hence possess no character. They are most corrupt and always in wait of opportunity to betray the country and her people. Today they dance attendance on Ministers and are always ready to carry out their behests, but tomorrow if there is a change in situation they will set their back against the Ministers and, as before, break their heads.

Constables are highly reliable persons. There have been cases of corruption amongst them as well, but for these too the higher ranks of officers have been responsible. The constables must be organized for the sake of the country and, under proper direction, they will be good freedom fighters. The Congress Ministry has accepted the principle that the constables can also start organizations of their own if they so choose. But when they have done this, they are being victimised under the false plea of indiscipline. Ostensibly it appears that they are being punished for want of

<sup>2</sup> Creed—Senior Police Officer in Bihar.

<sup>3</sup> Tenbrooke—Senior Police Officer in Bihar.

discipline but actually they are being victimised for working for their organization. From Mr. Creed down to A.S.I. there is a deep conspiracy to defeat all attempts of the constables at setting up their organizations.

There is a great misconception of "duty". Duty today means carrying out of any and every order of the Government by constables, however injurious it may be to their own prestige and that of the country. This is not the meaning of the term. Duty must be discharged with due respect for the country's interests.

No body can accuse us of arousing party feelings amongst the police force because we are not doing so. We ask them to refrain from party politics. We are asking the constables to look to the country's interests at every step. In the next struggle we would not ask them to resign from their posts, but would like them to stick to their jobs and carry out the programme in utter disregard of the British.

#### **46. Speech at the inauguration of Patna City Students' Conference, 11 October 1946<sup>1</sup>**

You are labouring under a great misconception if you think of constructive work as meaning inactivity and without any revolutionary significance. Constructive work makes the stage ready for revolution. Without it no revolution can fructify. It alone can enable us to make the final push for freedom.

In spite of changes in the personnel of the Government both at the Centre and in the Provinces, our task of attaining independence still remains unaccomplished, though we have advanced a good deal towards the goal. I have always maintained that holding of a conference is of secondary importance in our programme. What really counts is the actual work of organization. Organization is a work of primary importance for the realization of our ideal. It is a task which must be attended to every day and a stock of progress frequently taken.

We have now reached the threshold of freedom. Only one push will suffice to let us in. How to give this final push is the only question before us. The ground must be prepared to enable us to give this final push. This can be done only through constructive work.

So far as the students in lower classes in schools are concerned, they are immature to be of any help to us in the execution of our programme. Higher class students in schools and college students will be of much use in this task. Instead of organizing conferences, your daily routine should consist

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Searchlight*, 13 October 1946.

of mobilizing forces of liberation in your areas and working for the social, cultural, educational and political uplift of the people.

I visualize a great scramble for power amongst our countrymen themselves after the British leave the shores of India. Today we are all united against the common enemy. But when this enemy disappears, we shall be divided into various groups and will begin to wrangle for power amongst ourselves. There will be a class of people who will seek to establish an autocratic state and other sections will like to set up a plutocratic State in free India. So we must decide now the form of Government in liberated India. To take this decision before hand is essential in the interest of the people.

Free India would not like to have an autocratic State. Neither we would seek to establish a plutocratic rule in our country. We also hate monarchy. If any of these systems of administration is introduced in free India, our woes and miseries will continue.

We aim at a Government and a society in which sovereignty must reside in the masses and in which every body must have unfettered freedom for self-realization. This can be possible only in a completely democratic system of Government with socialism reigning supreme. This should be the form of Government in liberated India. Its consummation will see the dawn of peace and progress of the country and her people.

#### 47. To Vallabhbhai Patel, 23 October 1946<sup>1</sup>

Delhi

23 October 1946

My dear Sardar Sahab,

I thank you for your letter<sup>2</sup> of Oct. 17. The facts about the meeting of 10th Oct., and the report of my speech that have reached you are somewhat misleading. I am enclosing, herewith, a correct report of my speech<sup>3</sup> and I request you to be good enough to go through it or have it read to you. The meeting in question was not held in the Patna Police Lines, but in the "lawn" or Maidan where most public meetings are held in Patna. Policemen from the Lines were prevented from attending the meeting.

The police situation in my Province has been rather difficult since the last police strike just when the Congress Ministry took over: and subsequent events have aggravated rather than eased it. Contrary to the impression you

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 7 for Patel's letter to J.P. dated 17 October 1946.

<sup>3</sup> For J.P. speech see item no. 45 in the present volume.

have been allowed to form I saw Shri Babu twice in this connection, and had occasion once to write to him also. The last time I saw him, I had taken Babu Phulan Prasad Varma<sup>4</sup> with me in order to add weight to my representation to the Premier. But I am sorry to say that the matter never received the attention of Shri Babu that it deserved. I should add that the situation is not likely to remain at standstill, and that unless some sympathetic action is taken one must be prepared for its further deterioration.

I also wish to thank you for your previous letter regarding Prof. Bari. Thakkar Bapa's<sup>5</sup> opinion of men and affairs must always be respected, but may I point out that I have known Prof. Bari for years and have had far greater opportunities to have a much nearer and a vastly more intimate close-up of him. I am therefore inclined, while respecting Bapa's views, to be guided by my own experience and knowledge.

Thanking you and with the highest regards,

Yours sincerely,  
J.P.

Encl.: [Not available]

<sup>4</sup> For biographical note on Phulan Prasad Varma see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 62.

<sup>5</sup> For biographical note on Thakkar Bapa see *JPSW*, Vol. II, p. 206.

#### **48. Statement on the Atrocities by Zamindars in Bihar, 20 October 1946<sup>1</sup>**

During my stay at Patna, after my Bombay and Dhanbad tours, certain facts have come to my knowledge which, I think, must be brought to the notice of the public and government.

The prospect of the abolition of zamindari has made the zamindars so desperate that they are resorting to tyrannical oppressive methods to put down the kisans. They are everywhere trying to dispossess the kisans of the "bakast" lands which they have been cultivating for years. And to do this zamindars are unhesitatingly using goondas [bad characters] and lathials [hired assailants].

The recent history of the Pipra and the Barahia ilaqas [localities] of the Monghyr District bears witness to this. The zamindar of pipradhih seems to have excelled others in his high-handed ways. He has taken steps to eject the kisans forcibly from their lands and has gone so far as to utilize the services of goondas for this purpose and has even used elephants for breaking a meeting of the peasants. Every attempt is made to involve kisans in various false litigations.

<sup>1</sup> *Janata*, 27 October 1946.

Similar things are happening at many places and it is time that severe steps are taken immediately to curb these desperate zamindars. It is strange that they do not see the signs of the times and desist from their old tyrannical ways. They do not seem to be deterred by the fact that there is a Congress Government in the province. It is the duty of the Congress Ministry to see that kisans and kisan workers get timely help and guidance.

**49. Message to the People of North West Frontier Province  
through *Rai Ama*,<sup>1</sup> Peshawar,<sup>2</sup> 30 October 1946<sup>3</sup>**

Our country is passing through difficult times. The foreign power is retreating against the onslaught of the national revolution, but is trying desperately to hold on with the aid of the princely order and communalism. The princes and communalists of all communities are the two remaining mainstay of imperialism. In all this conflict and clash the Indian National Congress stands like a rock as the sole representative of national resurgent India. If ever there was time to rally round the banner of the Congress it is now. Freedom must come first and everything else afterwards.

<sup>1</sup> *Rai Ama*: An Urdu daily of Peshawar.

<sup>2</sup> Peshawar: Capital city of N.W.F.P. now in Pakistan.

<sup>3</sup> *National Herald*, 1 November 1946. Statement issued at Peshawar.

**50. Speech at Public Meeting, Gorakhpur,<sup>1</sup>  
1 November 1946<sup>2</sup>**

The British are digging ditches in our path to freedom by creating civil strife. If the Hindus and the Muslims fail to be warned and fall into these ditches there will be no coming out of them for years together.

The communal disturbances in Noakhali<sup>3</sup> will benefit neither the Hindus nor the Muslims but only the British. We say that the Muslim League is responsible for the disturbances but let us not forget that behind the League is the British Government. If the Hindus start attacking the Muslims in Hindu majority provinces it will serve no purpose other than strengthening the British hold on India, because for suppressing these riots we have to seek the help of British forces and thus give an opportunity to the British to justify their presence in this country before the eyes of the world.

<sup>1</sup> Gorakhpur—A divisional town in eastern U.P.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from *National Herald*, 3 November 1946.

<sup>3</sup> Noakhali—A predominantly Muslim district in Chittagong Division of Bangladesh.

We must understand it once for all that the common enemies of both the Hindus and the Muslims in India are the British and they all must join hands in driving out the common foe first. We will always fall if we try to settle our differences first and then proceed to drive out the British. It is a pity that we do not realize the enormous accession to our strength by the Revolution of 1942 and the trial of the officers of Indian National Army of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. The country-wide strikes that followed in its wake bear immense evidence of the change in the outlook of Indians, who are serving the Government today and are the props and pillars of British rule in India. If they can organize strikes on sound lines at the call of our leaders, the fight against the alien Government will be rendered much easier. The Britishers have come to realize this enormous strength of the Indian people and are anxious to divert their energies into channels calculated to dissipate them.

Violence and non-violence do not matter much. If the fight has to be waged there should be no quarrel on the methods. If we were ready to shed the blood of Japanese and Germans only if the British guaranteed freedom after the war, what is the point in not waging a violent war today against the British who have been oppressing us for more than 150 years.

### **51. Interview to Press regarding Congress Policy towards the Muslims, 6 November 1946<sup>1</sup>**

The policy of appeasement hitherto pursued by Congress to placate the Muslim League must stop here and now. This policy has led us nowhere. On the other hand, it has created difficult and ticklish problems for us. Instead of talking to League leaders, Congress must now talk direct to the Muslim masses. If a proper approach is made, I am sure the Muslims will come out of Jinnah's parlour.

Question: What steps Congress should take to ease the communal situation?

Jayaprakash Narayan: If we start concentrating our energies on preparing the people for the coming fight and work among them as we had been doing in the past, the present communal strife will decidedly lessen and ultimately disappear.

Q: Will renunciation by Congress of office both at the Centre and in the provinces help ease the situation?

J.P.: Muslim League leaders have been able to rouse the passions of Muslims by painting a ghastly picture of Congress rule. But when Congress

<sup>1</sup> *Pioneer*, 8 November 1946. Interview at Jhansi.



leaves office, it will be a different story and the sacrifices of Congressmen will change the attitude of Muslims towards them.

However, since Congress has accepted office, it must remain there so long as it does not get a suitable opportunity to quit but, side by side with parliamentary work, Congress must concentrate on constructive and mass-contact programme.

Q: Will the Muslims actively oppose Congress and display open hostility if Congress started another struggle against imperialism?

J.P.: In 1942, some Congress leaders apprehended this situation but what actually happened was that though Mr. Jinnah openly declared that the Quit India movement was primarily and essentially aimed against Muslims, the Muslims never displayed any hostility towards our movement. Moreover, 1946 is different from 1942.

## **52. Address to Students at Patna, 8 November 1946<sup>1</sup>**

In Bihar people were shot down because they stood in the path of freedom. What was Government to do if people started to loot and murder those who did not subscribe to their views. The action of these lawless people could not be countenanced by any civilized Government. There was no reason why they should not be shot down. By creating such disturbances these elements had proved traitors to their country and put obstacles in the path of the cherished goal of freedom. Why should any one feel mercy for them?

In Stalin's Russia people had to be shot down in hundreds and thousands because they retarded the country's cause. There was no reason why people who had helped in retarding the cause of freedom by creating these disturbances, killing and maiming people of another community should not deserve the same fate.

The policy of the Muslim League was responsible for such a state of affairs. The root of the trouble was the mischief being done by the British rulers who were using the Muslim League as a pawn in their nefarious game of holding India in bondage. Communalism will take India 50 years back from where it stands today. Noakhali can be avenged only by driving

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Sunday Pioneer*, 10 November 1946 and *Searchlight*, 11 November 1946. After touring the Hilsa area in East Patna district of Bihar, which had witnessed fierce communal riots a few days back, with Hindus attacking Muslim minorities in villages, supposedly in retaliation against similar attacks by Muslims on Hindu minorities in Noakhali (Bengal), Nehru and J.P. addressed the meeting of students at the Wheeler Senate Hall at Patna. Nehru was not allowed to complete his speech by the students, as they were enraged by police firing on Hindu rioters. J.P. addressed the gathering just after him and was heard in pin-drop silence.

the British out and making the country free. It is, therefore, the duty of every patriotic Indian to foil that game by refusing to be led away by communal passions which are being stirred up deliberately.

The student community should rise up to the occasion and take up the task of restoring normal conditions even at the cost of their studies. They should go to villages, holding aloft the tricolour in their hands and help in the rehabilitation work. By doing so they will be fighting India's battle for freedom. A special responsibility has devolved upon them just now and they must do their utmost. They will face numerous odds but need not be deterred by that.

### **53. Interview to Press regarding Communal Disturbances in Bihar, 9 November 1946<sup>1</sup>**

The only radical remedy for the stoppage of communal disturbances in India is the uprooting of British rule, which is the source of all these troubles; that is the lesson of 150 years of British rule in India.

This becomes clear when we pause to consider that neither the Hindu nor the Muslim community stands to gain anything at all by killing each other. The British have everything to gain by this internal turmoil. That has been ever their game. The overall and the prime cause for the beginning of these riots is the policy of the League in preaching hatred and bitterness and inciting violence by appeals to direct action.

I am absolutely certain that behind this policy of the League is the hidden hand of the British, or else the League would have no courage to start a programme like this on such a scale.

Question: What is your impression after visiting some of the riot affected areas of Bihar?

Jayaprakash Narayan: I personally visited Nagar Nausa and discussed the situation with the non-officials and the military officer commanding the armed forces in the area. Fantastic reports have appeared in the press about Nagar Nausa killings. In my estimate, only 40 were killed in the area by rioting, and when the military, taking a serious view of the situation, opened fire less than 100 more were killed. Some reports have been published of military excesses in restoring order, but it is difficult to say how far they are true.

My impression after the tour of the affected areas is that the situation is definitely under control and frenzy is positively going down. It is very

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Pioneer*, 11 November 1946. Interview to Associated Press of America, Patna.

difficult to give accurate figures of casualties, but the number cannot be over 2,000 killed, including those killed by military action. After the immediate remedy is applied by the use of force against all mischief makers, the next important task will be to bring back the public mind to normal health by a sound campaign in their midst.

Q: What were the causes that started the trouble?

J.P.: Firstly there was the mass feeling among Hindus aroused by the Noakhali riots; secondly, criminal elements and anti-Congress organizations, including the big landholders—the Congress stands pledged to the abolition of the zamindari system—worked from behind, thirdly, the Muslim League lunatics and hirelings started some troubles here and there; and fourthly, and the most important of all, the British element in the police and civil services had a hand in the whole thing, especially those who stood to suffer under the Congress Government for their activities in crushing the 1942 August uprising.

Coalition governments will be no solution to the present ills. Real coalition can only come about if there is understanding, a spirit of goodwill between the parties concerned. To demand coalition at the point of dagger is blackmail, and cannot lead to coalition.

#### **54. Statement on Communal Riots in Bihar, 11 November 1946<sup>1</sup>**

I regret that being engaged elsewhere I was not in a position to know in time what was happening in Bihar. It was only when a wire reached me in Gwalior State that I learnt of the seriousness of the situation here and returned immediately.

I cannot say yet that I am in full possession of the facts, but it is clear from what I have been able to gather that terrible and gruesome things have happened in Bihar, to the eternal shame of the province and of the majority community here. Hindus of Bihar have been guilty of heinous crimes and have committed deeds of abject cowardice and barbarity.

How a calamity of such proportions befell the province, it is difficult to say yet. But a few facts are beyond doubt. It is clear that the Noakhali tragedy had turned the entire province, particularly the rural areas, into a veritable ammunition dump. It is also clear that the ignition was supplied by various factors, such as Hindu communalists, Muslim League provocateurs, and anti-Congress elements of every type. There are indications that big Zamindars, whose vested interests are threatened, had

<sup>1</sup> *Searchlight*, 13 November 1946. Statement issued at Patna.

a hand in the disturbances, and also the British and communal elements have [tried to fish] in the troubled waters.

The situation happily seems to have been brought under control now, due largely to the whirlwind tours of Pandit Nehru, news of Mahatma Gandhi's contemplated fast unto death and the military and other security measures taken by the Provincial Government. But peace established with the help of military forces is no peace at all and cannot be permanent. Therefore, normal peaceful conditions cannot be said to have returned to the province till the mass mind is cured of its frenzy and madness and till neighbourliness and mutual good-will return to both the communities.

In this connection I feel perfectly assured that the Congress organization which has always had a unique hold over the people of this province will soon be able to reassert itself and master this civil calamity as it did the physical calamity of the last earthquake. But, its task might be made difficult, even impossible, if the Muslim League does not return to the path of sanity and forsake the politics of hatred and falsehood and of deliberate and planned incitement to violence. The events in Bengal and Bihar have proved the utter folly and futility of such politics, and have completely vindicated the stand and policies of the nationalist Muslims, who have always held that the good of every community lies in the good of the country as a whole and that all communities have common objectives such as freedom and removal of poverty, illiteracy, and disease, for the fulfilment of which all must work unitedly. It is high time therefore that the Muslim masses look around for better and true leadership.

I understand much resentment has been created in the Hindu mind by mischief makers and anti-Congress agents on the issue of shooting of mobs by the military. Exaggerated reports of casualties have been circulated and anti-Congress feeling worked up. Where the army is called in to restore order, restraining of force is always a difficult problem. But as far as I have been able to find out, I am sure there has been no improper or excessive use of the military.

Finally, I wish to warn the people of the province that we are not yet out of danger and that Congressmen and other agencies working for peace must not relax or slow down their activities yet. I appeal particularly to youngmen and students to do all they can to restore peace in the province and to bring the two communities together. I want every one to remember that the present riots are a part of the British plan to impede and obstruct India's progress towards freedom. Whoever creates ill-will among the communities is an enemy of his country and an agent of British reaction.

**55. Statement on the situation in Riot-Affected Areas  
of Bihar, 17 November 1946<sup>1</sup>**

I saw heart-rending scenes of devastation and ruin, but was glad to find that the situation was quiet everywhere. More tragic than material devastation is the devastation of the mind; therefore it should give us hope and encouragement when we find, as I did, that at least the mind of the Hindu masses, even in the most affected areas, is fast returning to health and ordinary humanity. Even the sufferers, among whom, we should not forget are Hindus too, though their number is small, show signs of mental rehabilitation that should make the problem of physical rehabilitation vastly easier and simpler. But there are agencies at work which are interested, in order to serve political ends, in delaying and thwarting the process of rehabilitation. It is agreed on all sides that the most crying need of the moment is for the Muslim refugees to go back to their villages and resume their normal course of life. Every attempt to this effect is being made and the Hindu villagers in nearly every case are willing and eager to welcome back their Muslim brethren and do all in their power to make good their loss and start them afresh on their road to life. But everywhere Muslim League workers are sabotaging these efforts. There are instances in which these workers have actually taken refugees returning to their villages back to their refugee camps. The Muslim League is interested in showing the world that Hindus and Muslims cannot live together, and therefore, Pakistan is a necessity. To this end they wish to persuade, or if necessary, even to force the Muslim refugees to migrate from Bihar to the neighbouring districts of Bengal. To the same end the League workers are preventing the mental rehabilitation of Muslim sufferers by doing venomous propaganda. The League knows fully well its responsibility for the sufferings of these simple Muslims, but it persists cynically in a form of politics which it again knows fully well can only cause further suffering to the gullible victims of its propaganda. Let us not forget here that the mainsprings of this cynical and poisonous politics are British Imperialists here and in Britain on whose support and guidance League thrives and prospers.

All this makes the immediate task of rehabilitation of the devastated areas in Bihar very much more difficult and complicated. But the task has to be fulfilled, if not only normal life is to return to the province, but also if the country's march to freedom, which these British machinations are attempting to check, is to continue uninterrupted. I have no doubt that inspite of all attempts of the Muslim League to prolong the sufferings of innocent Muslims, this task will soon be fulfilled and India's nationalism will emerge from this treacherous attack stronger and victorious.

<sup>1</sup> *Searchlight*, 20 November 1946. Statement issued at Patna.

### **56. Speech on the resolution of Congress Election Manifesto, Meerut Congress, 24 November 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Hon'ble Chairman, brothers and sisters! The resolution that I want to place before you is as follows:

This Congress adopts the principles and programmes outlined in the August resolution and the Congress Election Manifesto in regard to the content of Swaraj. In the opinion of this Congress, Swaraj cannot be real for the masses unless it makes possible the achievement of a society in which democracy extends from the political to the social and economic spheres, and in which there would be no opportunity for privileged classes to exploit the bulk of the people, nor for gross inequalities such as exist at present. Such a society would ensure individual liberty, equality of opportunity and the fullest scope for every citizen for the development of his personality.

I am a little apprehensive in placing this resolution before you. I would like to place some of my views also on the resolution. Secondly, by proposing this resolution, people may think that the revolutionary spirit of the Socialist Party has somewhat weakened. I can answer this also. The resolution states that this Congress accepts the principles enshrined in it [the resolution].

I would like to tell you the contents of the Election Manifesto, which are related to this resolution. Some basic things about economic freedom have been mentioned in the Manifesto. The people will see the same words in this resolution and in the Manifesto that was released by the Congress. I shall read out these points.

The Congress has stood for equal rights and opportunities for every citizen of India, male or female. It has stood for the unity of all communities and religious groups and by showing them the path of tolerance and goodwill, always provided them ample opportunity to progress as per their will and wisdom. The Congress has given freedom to each group and territorial area within the nation to develop its own life and culture within the larger framework. Hence, the Congress has decided that, to whatever extent possible, the provinces should be formed on the basis of their language and culture. The Congress has always tried to protect the rights of the victims of social injustice and tyranny and is always engaged in removing from their ways all barriers of inequality.

The Congress has envisaged a free democratic state with fundamental rights and liberties of its citizens guaranteed in the Constitution. This Constitution, in its view, should be a federal one with full autonomy for its constituent units, and its legislative organs elected under universal adult franchise. All the provinces should join the federation willingly and lay the foundation of a federal government. The provinces should be given maximum autonomy and for this it would be necessary that the compulsory subjects governing all the provinces should be minimum.

<sup>1</sup> Report of the 54th session of the Indian National Congress, Meerut, 1946. Original in Hindi.

With the concurrence of the provinces joining the federation a list of such subjects be made whose adherence by provinces should be voluntary.

Now, twelve basic points have been put forward for carrying on our struggle for independence. These basic points are before the Congress since the Karachi Congress. They are as follows:

1. Every citizen of India has the right of free expression of opinion, the right of free association and combination, and the right to assemble peacefully and without arms for purposes not opposed to law and morality.
2. Every citizen has the right to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess and practise his religion, subject to public order and morality.
3. The culture, language and script of the minorities and of the different provinces shall be protected.
4. All citizens are equal before the law, irrespective of religion, caste, creed or sex.
5. No disability attaches to any citizen, by reason of his or her religion, caste, creed or sex, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour and in the exercise of any trade or calling.
6. All citizens have equal rights and duties in regard to wells, tanks, roads, schools and places of public resort, maintained out of state or local funds, or dedicated by private persons for the use of the general public.
7. Every citizen shall have the right to keep and bear arms in accordance with regulations and reservations made in that behalf.
8. No person shall be deprived of his liberty nor shall his dwelling or property be sequestered or confiscated, save in accordance with law.
9. The state shall not interfere in religious matters.
10. Universal adult franchise shall be implemented.
11. The state shall provide for free and compulsory primary education.
12. Every citizen is free to move throughout India and to stay and settle in any part thereof, to follow any trade or calling, and to be treated equally with regard to legal prosecution or protection in all parts of India.

What has earlier been said about the economic question is as follows:

The most vital and urgent of India's problems is how to remove the curse of poverty and raise the standard of the masses. It is to the well-being and progress of these masses that the Congress had directed its special attention and its constructive activities. It is by their well-being and advancement that it has judged every proposal

and every change, and it has declared that anything that comes in the way of the good of the masses of our country must be removed. Industry and agriculture, the social services and public utilities, must be encouraged, modernized and rapidly extended in order to add to the wealth of the country and give it the capacity for self-growth, without dependence on others. But all this must be done with the primary object of benefiting the masses of our people and raising their economic, cultural and spiritual level, removing unemployment, and adding to the dignity of the individual. For this purpose it will be necessary to plan and coordinate social advance in all its many fields, to prevent the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of individuals and groups, to prevent vested interests inimical to society from growing, and to have social control of the mineral resources, means of transport and the principal methods of production and distribution in land, industry and in other departments of national activity, so that free India may develop into a cooperative Commonwealth. The State must, therefore, own or control key and basic industries and services, mineral resources, railways, waterways, shipping and other means of public transport, currency and exchange, banking and insurance, must be regulated in the national interest.

About industrial planning, it has been said (in the Manifesto) that it should be progressive and should not be concentrated in the hands of a few individuals. The big industries should be controlled by the state. What has been said about agriculture is as follows:

Agriculture has to be improved on scientific lines and industry has to be developed rapidly in its various forms—large-scale, medium and small—so as not only to produce wealth, but also to absorb people from the land. In particular, cottage industries have to be encouraged both as whole-time and part-time occupations. It is essential that in planning and the development of industry, while maximum wealth production for the community should be aimed at, it should be borne in mind that this is not done at the cost of creating fresh unemployment. Planning must lead to maximum employment, indeed to the employment of every able-bodied person. Landless labourers should have opportunities of work offered to them and be absorbed in agriculture or industry.

There should be no intermediaries between the peasant and the state. The tenant (cultivator) should be directly linked to the government. The landlord and all other middlemen should be removed. The rights of such intermediaries should be acquired on payment of equitable compensation. It is necessary for the progress of the tenants (cultivators) that they should cooperate with the Kisan organizations.

Besides the question of independence, I consider this the most vital issue before us. A year back when such questions were raised by anyone, it was said that they be raised only after independence. There are other points also in the Manifesto but cannot be attended to immediately. Now, we are on the threshold of freedom. Therefore, we have formed the Interim Government. The Constituent Assembly is to meet from 9th December.

Today the nation has strength and because of that we can achieve freedom.



What will be the shape of freedom? We have to decide the foundation on which an independent India can be built. If the foundation is not right, I feel that all the sacrifices made for India's freedom will go waste. Today the future of the country is in the hands of the Congress. Some communal forces within the country are creating hurdles in the path of its independence. But only the Congress can answer the question; what will be the future of the country? It can decide what the picture of Swaraj will be, what its map and area would be.

In my opinion, it is such a big question that we shall have to take a decision on it only after considerable deliberation. I request the President to call a meeting of the A.I.C.C. at the earliest possible. This meeting can be called for seven days. Mustafa Kamal Pasha of Turkey had also called a meeting of its national leaders for this purpose so that they could settle the [future] picture of the country. I do not know what will be the opinion of the Working Committee on this issue. The picture of Swaraj would have to be decided on the basis of some ten to fifteen fundamental principles. It is for the All India Congress Committee to settle these fundamental principles and forward them to the Provincial Assemblies with a view to drawing up the picture of Swaraj. This picture will be finally settled by the Constituent Assembly. We should decide these basic principles as early as possible because only on the basis of these principles that the Constituent Assembly would complete the picture of Swaraj.

It is necessary to understand the principles placed before you today. The A.I.C.C. is the real Legislative Council of the country. It should decide some ten to fifteen fundamental principles. We fought and won the elections [earlier] on the basis of these principles. All the points of the Congress Manifesto are covered in this resolution.

Ours should be an economic, social and industrial democracy. In other countries of the world where there was only political democracy, people found it insufficient. Therefore, we should establish a different type of democracy which is economic, social and political. How can we establish economic democracy in the right manner has been enunciated by our Hon'ble President, J.B. Kripalani, in his speech yesterday. All must have the right to vote and we should try to educate them. . . . However, we do not want a hollow freedom; we want a freedom where everyone is free from hunger and there is no exploitation. Just as he has the right to vote he should also have the right to employment so that he can earn his livelihood through his own labour. Till now the society fed its slaves just like the peasants feed their bullocks to make them work. The human society put shackles on the feet of its slaves just like the peasants do to their cattle. On the one hand, we have to preserve our independence and, on the other, we must ensure that there is no economic pressure on the people.

We need social freedom along with economic and political freedom. Socialism is not a dangerous term. Various forms of socialism prevalent in the world today have convinced people that some principles borrowed from socialism can also lay the foundations of Swaraj. On the other hand, there are people who consider Gandhism dangerous and are alarmed by its idea of decentralization. Our friends who have a limited understanding of socialism will not agree with my study and understanding of socialism. This resolution is a good combination of Socialist and Gandhian principles. On the one hand, it has been said that our country will have big industries and that they would be nationalized and placed under the control of the nation, and not concentrated in the hands of a few individuals. But there may also be a danger if all the industries are controlled by the Government. The conclusion emerging from all this is that there will be an economic organization on socialistic pattern. And it will be under the control not of the State, but of villages and towns. We have to prepare a plan for the industrial progress of our people numbering forty-four hundred million. Today agriculture is over-burdened. Under the new dispensation at least 25 per cent of the population will be diverted from agriculture and they will be provided with jobs and small scale industries will be started so that hundreds of persons will find employment and means of livelihood. Small industries, like spinning, weaving, etc., are necessary for our industrial development. This will provide employment to millions of our workers. They will be organized on a socialistic pattern. If they have a separate organization the Socialists will have no objection.

No one can oppose this resolution. I have just to say that if you want to develop India on a new basis, before giving it a new shape you must fully understand its circumstances. We shall be able to move ahead by the absorption and synthesis of the prevalent ideologies, particularly Gandhism and Socialism. Finally, I would like to say that if we synthesise the two and work unitedly, we can march forward. The resolution which I have placed before you contains all these points. Some of you may like to add some new things. I would like to say to you that this resolution contains the basic principles of this synthesis. It is based on certain principles which would pave the way for the future.

## 57. My Picture of Socialism, 24 November 1946<sup>1</sup>

No intelligent person today will doubt that the next stage in the evolution of human society is socialism. But there will not be a like agreement on the

<sup>1</sup> Article in *Janata*, 24 November 1946. Also published as a pamphlet by Delhi Congress Socialist Party, 1946.

question, "What is Socialism". Different theories of socialism and different pictures of socialist society have been presented from time to time by socialist thinkers and workers. These differences are reduced somewhat when one takes into consideration only one of the several broad schools of socialist thought. Thus, if we accept Marxism, or belong to the Marxist School, as I do, the differences are greatly narrowed down, but they are by no means removed or obliterated. There are socialist movements in the world today professing allegiance to Marx that widely differ among themselves, even quarrel and fight with one another. The Stalinists and Trotskyists, for instance, both profess to march under the banner of Marxism, but they not only differ from each other, but are even thirsty for each other's blood. Which of these two "Marxian" schools presents a true picture of socialism? Those who belong to neither of these warring camps would doubtless say, neither.

In our own country the Communists and Royists<sup>2</sup> both swear by Marx, but we have seen the kind of "socialist" policy they have followed in the name of Marx. We have seen that to them Marxism included even working as hirelings of Maxwell<sup>3</sup> and spying over Indian revolutionaries. Moreover, both these "Marxist" groups are each other's bitter enemies. There are other little groups too in this country flying Marxist colours, but never agreeing among themselves as to what is Marxism.

It seems to me, therefore, that in view of all this confusion and rival claims, the socialist movement in India must evolve its own picture of socialism in the light of Marxist thought, of world history since Marx's death and of conditions in this country and our historical background. Marxism is a science of society and a scientific method of social change, that includes social revolution. As such, there can be no room for dogmatism or fundamentalism in Marxist thought. Those who on the one hand call Marxism scientific and on the other introduce dogmatism into it do it great disservice. In science there is no such thing as final truth. Science progresses by the progressive elimination of untruth from human knowledge. If Marxism is a science, Marx could not have expounded ultimate truths, but only made approximations to them. Today with a vastly developed store of human knowledge and vastly greater experience and observation of capitalist society, we are in a position to make far nearer approximations to the truth than Marx. The unending merit of Marx, however, is that he has given us a method to understanding and change history even as Darwin gave us a method of understanding life. Darwinism and Marxism were born almost together, but not even the most ardent Darwinist today believes in the theories of evolution as they were propounded by Darwin. Yet he would

<sup>2</sup> Royists—Followers of M.N. Roy.

<sup>3</sup> For biographical note on Maxwell see *JPSW*, Vol. III, item no. 33.

proudly call himself a Darwinist. My professor of Biology at Wisconsin ranked the Origin of the Species only next to the Bible amongst the world's books, but he never thought for a moment that he was being disloyal to his master when he proceeded to show where modern research had proved Darwin false or only partially true. It is open in the same manner for a Marxist to give not the second but even the first rank to "Capital" and yet to seek to develop and refine the partial truths of Marxism.

## II

With these introductory remarks let me turn now to the subject in hand. The creation of a socialist society involves two stages: the stage of the transition, and the stage when socialism has been established. It is obvious that the form of the transitional period will be determined by present conditions and final objectives, that is, the final picture of socialism in view.

I shall consider here only the final picture of socialism. The objectives of socialism are: elimination of exploitation and poverty; provision of equal opportunities to all for self-development; full development of the material and moral resources of society and utilization of these resources in accordance to the needs and wishes of society as a whole rather than in accordance to the dictates of profit; equitable apportionment of national wealth and social, educational and other services between all who labour and serve society.

A system of social organization that serves these ends is a Socialist society. Anything that does not is not socialism. No pre-conceived theories, no matter by whom propounded, need detain or confuse us if they do not subserve these ends in practice.

### *Vital Changes*

I believe that these ends can be achieved only if certain vital changes are made in existing society and the economic and political organization of the future society is based on the foundations described below.

First of all, there must be complete political freedom. In other words, India must become an independent nation. There can be no socialism under British rule. This point needs no emphasis.

Second, there should be no privileged economic or political class, as at present, i.e. a self-perpetuating class wielding economic and political power. In other words, the Ruling Princes and the zamindars (not the peasant farmers of the Punjab but the landholders of U.P., Bihar and some other provinces) and the capitalists must be made to surrender their economic and political power and privilege.

After the removal of the British power, the abolition of princes and of the zamindari and capitalist systems should be a comparatively simpler problem. If the Indian people proved strong enough to destroy the British Raj in India, nothing could stop them from destroying feudalism and capitalism if they desired to do so. The only limiting factor would be the stage of development of the political consciousness of the masses. In other words, if the socialist movement were to become strong enough to move the masses in the right direction, all these changes could be made without much difficulty or opposition.

Abolition of princedom hardly raises any technical problem for socialism to solve. Bourgeois society has the solution ready at hand, and we could draw upon the history of bourgeois revolutions. The princes will only have to be removed from their gaddis [thrones] and reduced to the status of the ordinary citizen and their states made part of regions scientifically determined with due regard to geography, economic resources and cultural affinities.

Abolition of the zamindari system is also only the first step in a socialist reorganization of our agrarian economy which indeed involves rather difficult questions of theory and practice. By merely saying that there will be no zamindars in socialist India, we say practically nothing as to the real form of socialist agriculture we wish to develop in this country. I shall describe below the main outlines of our socialized agricultural economy as I visualize it.

Abolition of capitalism is undoubtedly a great step forward towards socialism, but by itself it can hardly be called socialism. It is merely a negative half of which the positive half has yet to be created. In what manner capitalism will be abolished and what will take its place will determine to a large extent the kind of socialism that we are going to have. I shall try to give below the picture I have in mind of socialist industry in this country.

To a consideration of agriculture and industry I shall have to add a few words about banking and trade. That would give us a fair picture of socialist economy. The political half of my picture would then remain to be drawn up. I shall first deal with the economic part of my picture.

### III

Let me take up agriculture first.

The land systems in this country are complicated beyond description, but they all agree more or less in exploiting the tiller of the soil in the interest of a small landed and moneyed class. All these systems have to be scrapped completely and a new system created in their place. In building up socialist agriculture, we will have to pass through two stages—the co-operative and collective stage. I shall naturally deal here only with the first stage.

After the abolition of zamindari, there will be a re-distribution of land with a view to breaking up big holdings and making the smaller holdings economic. No peasant would have more than a certain maximum acreage of land, let us say, 30 acres, and none less than five. No one shall be allowed to own land who does not reside in the village and actually tills his land. The unit of agricultural economy would be the village. The legal ownership of land would vest with the village, as a whole, and the village panchayat would have the power, according to laws made by the State, to settle its lands with individual peasants. Thus the peasant will have a sort of proprietary rights over the land settled with him. Present proprietary rights will be respected except where found necessary to alter them in order to bring about a fairer redistribution of land and remove gross inequalities at both ends. But the proprietary rights would be restricted merely to the right of the peasants to receive from the produce of the village lands his share in accordance with the size of his holding. No peasant will be allowed to sell land to anyone except to the gram panchayat. Peasants will not be allowed to carry on cultivation and other farming operations separately. Each gram panchayat, among other things, will also function as a farmers co-operative. The co-operative will conduct all farming operations including buying, selling and borrowing. All who labour in the fields will receive wages in kind or money according to the wage laws of the State and the produce will be distributed after deducting costs according to the size of holdings.

### *Collectivism*

This is the co-operative stage of socialist farming. The next stage is the collective stage in which no individual proprietary rights in agricultural lands (in Russia each collective farmer is allowed to own privately up to three acres of land around his homestead for kitchen gardening, raising poultry or other similar purposes) are recognized and all lands pertaining to a village, or farming unit, are owned and run by village collectives. In Russia collectivization was pushed through at great human cost and under a ruthless dictatorship. Estimates run up to as high a figure as twenty millions of those who had to be "liquidated" in order to make collectivization a success. I do not favour such a colossal repression of the toiling peasant masses, nor does socialist theory permit it. Abolition of landlordism, re-distribution of land and breaking up of big holdings would require State coercion to be used against fifteen to twenty per cent of the agricultural population perhaps. But collectivization might require sixty to seventy per cent of that population to be repressed. I do not find any justification for any political party, speaking and acting in the name of the toiling masses, to indulge in such wholesale repression. Twenty per cent may be coerced in the interest of the remaining eighty per cent, but there is no justification

for repressing seventy per cent of the peasants even "for their own good". Co-operative farming itself would require a good measure of coercion. But, in that case a wise mixture of coercion and persuasion, as also concession of certain economic advantages, might be, and I am sure will be, found to be sufficient. Collectivization on the other hand would require a degree of wholesale repression that is repugnant to socialism, which above all is the expression of the will of the toiling masses. Therefore, collectivization will follow as the second stage and its pace would be necessarily slower and adjusted to the results of propaganda and demonstration. I need not, however, emphasize that new agricultural colonies and settlements need not pass from the co-operative to the collective stage. They can and will be put on a collective basis from the start.

Conversion of peasant agricultural economy into the sort of co-operative economy described above would result in a considerable part of the present agricultural population being thrown out of employment. Place will have to be found for this surplus agrarian population in industry, particularly in industries subsidiary to farming.

### *Industry*

We turn now to a consideration of socialist industry. I visualize two types of industries in a socialist India, large scale and small scale. It goes without saying that both large and small scale industries together with agriculture will form parts of a balanced national economy, democratically managed and controlled.

All large industries would be owned and managed by the Federal or Provincial Governments. Representatives of trade unions would have appropriate voice in the Management from the lowest to the highest levels.

I visualize all small industries to be organized into Producers' co-operatives, who would own and manage their industries. Apart from passing legislation for the regulation of these co-operatives, the State will not interfere with their work. These industries will include subsidiary agricultural industries as well as existing and new handicrafts and other small industries.

I visualize and advocate another type of industrial ownership apart from State ownership and Producers' co-operatives, that is, municipal or community ownership. A township or a city may own and manage, if not large, middling and small industries. The representatives of the workers in these community-owned industries would naturally have adequate voice in their management.

I advocate development of these co-operatives and community owned industries, firstly, because I do not believe it is possible to find employment for many years to come for our surplus population, which would swell

further at least by twenty per cent by the revolution in agriculture, in large industry alone; secondly, because I desire to prevent the State from acquiring the sole monopoly in industry and employment. The State under socialism threatens, as in Russia, far from withering away, to become an all-powerful tyrant maintaining a strangle-hold over the entire life of the citizen. This leads to totalitarianism of the type we witness in Russia today. By dispersing the ownership and management of industry and by developing the village into a democratic village republic, we break this strangle-hold to a very large extent and attenuate the danger of totalitarianism.

### *Trade*

In the field of trade I have the following picture in mind. Foreign trade will be entirely in the hands of the State. Internal trade will be shared between the State, the local community, and the co-operatives. All banking will be in the hands of the State.

Here then is the economic picture of my Socialist India: co-operative farming run by gram panchayats; collective farms in new settlements; large-scale industry owned and managed by the State; community-owned and managed industry; and small industry organized into Producers' co-operatives.

## IV

### *The State*

I come now to the political part of my picture.

The State in socialist India must be a fully democratic State. There can be no socialism without democracy. It is a common mistake these days to think that there must be dictatorship of the proletariat in a socialist State. This is against the teaching of Marx. The dictatorship of the proletariat has a place only in the transitional period from capitalism to socialism. And in this period too it is not inevitable in every case. Marx visualized a capitalist State, such as England, where political democracy was in full vogue and there was no large standing army, where democratic processes could be used to bring about socialism. But apart from such rare cases, dictatorship of the proletariat has been considered in Marxian thought as essential for the transitional period. It is, however, the very essence of Marxism, that once the transition is over, the State must become a fully democratic institution. When the old ruling classes have been destroyed and society has been converted entirely into a society of workers it is idiotic to talk of a dictatorship of the proletariat because the proletariat cannot dictate to itself.

Let me stop here to say a word further about the dictatorship of the



proletariat. Whether our transition in India from present society to socialism takes the democratic or dictatorial form—I personally think it would take the democratic form—it should be remembered that dictatorship of the proletariat in Marxist theory does not mean the dictatorship of a single party, such as the Communist party in Russia. It means the dictatorship of a class or in industrially backward countries such as India and post-Czarist Russia, of a combination of the toiling classes, such as the workers, peasants and the lower middle class. These classes may have one or more political parties and these parties must all be united in the dictatorship or have freedom to function freely under the dictatorship. The dictatorship of the proletariat never meant that parties of the working class or other toilers would be suppressed; it meant only the suppression of the ruling classes and their political and economic institutions.

Coming back to the question of democracy under socialism, it is necessary to explain in some detail what this democracy should mean concretely. First of all, it should mean that there will be no one party rule and that there might be more than one political party of the working people and that the workers, the industrial and peasant co-operatives, the trade unions, etc., might form different political parties and that these parties should function freely. It should mean that there should be full freedom for expression of opinion and to form voluntary organizations for political purposes. The trade union, the local communities, the co-operatives and other such corporate bodies of the working people might have their own newspapers and broadcasting systems and conduct their own schools and educational institutions.

Democracy under socialism should further mean that the trade unions should not be limbs of the State and subservient to it, but independent bodies supporting the State, and also exercising a check over the government of the day. In Russia the trade unions have no independence whatever and have been subjected to the will of the State on the theory that the State being a workers' state, all workers' organizations must be subject to it. Here the State and government have been confused. A particular State may be a workers' State, but the government of the day might be making mistakes and willfully or unwillingly acting contrary to the workers' interests. In that case there must be independent organs of the working class, such as trade unions—and in a socialist society the trade unions will be second in importance only to the Government itself—in a position to check or correct or change the government in power.

Thus my picture of a socialist India is the picture of an economic and political democracy. In this democracy man will neither be slave to capitalism nor to a party or the State. Man will be free. He will have to serve society which will provide him with employment and the means of livelihood, but within limits he will be free to choose his avocation and

station in life. He will be free to express his opinions and there will be opportunities for him to rise to his full moral stature. There will be no great difference between man and man except the difference of physical and mental endowments—for there will be no great difference in incomes.

## 58. To J.B. Kripalani, 2 December 1946<sup>1</sup>

Kadam Kuan  
Patna

2 December 1946

My dear Dada,

I have seen your statement about the Working Committee and the final list of names. While this has not surprised me, I do not mind saying that I have been considerably perturbed. When I gave you my consent in Meerut I pressed on you my views regarding the Committee. You promised to do your best. In Delhi I took an opportunity to speak to Sardar Vallabhbhai about this matter. I find, however, that I had only wasted my time. The final picture is even more unsatisfactory to me than the one I had seen in Meerut. In Meerut I had been told that the General Secretary would be some one from the U.P. and one who would command our confidence. I am happy at Acharya Jugal Kishor's<sup>2</sup> appointment. But while I have personally nothing against Shri Shankar Rao,<sup>3</sup> you should know that he does not at all command the confidence of my friends. Then Dr. Pattabhi<sup>4</sup> has been replaced (i.e. in the Meerut list) with Rajaji.<sup>5</sup> Further, you did not see your way to include Mridulaben<sup>6</sup> and Lohia.<sup>7</sup>

You will remember that it was my view in Meerut that the least change should be made in Jawaharlalji's Committee, for you had become the President in extraordinary circumstances and due to the inevitable resignation of the elected President for the year.

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> Acharya Jugal Kishore (1893- ); a patriot, an educationist and social worker; first Principal of *Qaumi Vidyapeeth*, Lahore upto 1925; Imprisoned for one year on account of his speech on Jallianwala Bagh in 1930; General Secretary of Indian National Congress 1932-3; elected to U.P. Assembly in 1936; Minister Labour and Social Welfare, U.P. 1954-8; first Vice-Chancellor of Kanpur University in 1966, retired from active life in 1970.

<sup>3</sup> Shankarrao Deo (1894-1974); a leading Congressmen of Maharashtra; member Congress Working Committee, 1938-50; member Constituent Assembly, 1946; later joined the *Sarvodaya* movement.

<sup>4</sup> For biographical note on Pattabhai Sitaramayya see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 126.

<sup>5</sup> For biographical note on C. Rajagopalachari see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 174.

<sup>6</sup> Mridula Sarabhai (1911-74); Freedom fighter and social worker; studied in Gujarat Vidyapith; participated in Non-Cooperation Movement and later joined Gandhiji at *Saharmati Ashram*; worked for Indian National Army Enquiry and Relief Committee; General Secretary, A.I.C.C., 1945-6; organized relief and rehabilitation of refugees including abducted women in India and Pakistan; closely associated with Sheikh Abdullah.

<sup>7</sup> For biographical note on Rammanohar Lohia see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 91.

I feel extremely depressed at all this. You wanted my cooperation and as I too was anxious, in the existing situation in the country, not to strike a note of non-cooperation. I agreed to serve on your Committee. But it does not seem that my cooperation has any value; so, I would be obliged if you would permit me to resign. I do not wish to make any noise about it, and would like to get out quietly. I hope you will let me do this.

With kindest regards,

Yours affectionately,  
Jayaprakash

**59. To J.B. Kripalani, 12 December 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Kadam Kuan, Patna  
12 December 1946

My dear Dada,

I received your telegram when I returned to Patna on the 7th. At Benares where I had gone for the marriage of Narendradeva's son I had learnt from Keskar<sup>2</sup> that the Working Committee had been called on the 8th. It seemed difficult for me to go to Delhi at such short notice, particularly when I had fixed up a rather heavy programme till the middle of the month. There was some particularly important work to do at Patna and as I was shortly to leave the province for a couple of months, I could not put off this work. I had therefore to be unavoidably absent from the Working Committee for which I hope you will excuse me. Furthermore, I do not think I could have been of any use for the type of work that was before the Committee these last days.

As regards the question of my resignation, I shall be glad to have an opportunity of discussing the matter with you if you think it necessary. Personally, I would urge you to accept it on my mere request and be done with it. In that case you could immediately nominate some one else more useful to you in your present labours and one who could fit better in the present set-up of the Working Committee.

I shall be in Delhi on the 27th December on my way to Lahore. I shall see you then if you are there.

With the highest regards,

Yours affectionately,  
J.P.

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> B.V. Keskar (1903-74): active Congress worker in U.P. since 1920; General Secretary Indian National Congress 1946; elected to Constituent Assembly from U.P. 1948; member Indian delegation to U.N. General Assembly 1950; elected to Lok Sabha, 1952, re-elected in 1957, Dy. Minister External Affairs, 1948-52, Minister of Information & Broadcasting 1952-62.

## 60. Speech at Public Meeting, Banaras, 18 December 1946<sup>1</sup>

I am against an understanding with the British Government from the very start. But when the Interim Government was formed some people thought that India had been put on the path of freedom. Subsequent events, however, belied the expectations. When the British Government gave its latest interpretation about the enforcement of the decisions of the Constituent Assembly the last hope vanished. If the British Government did not accept the decisions of the Constituent Assembly then there would be no way open for India except to fight for freedom.

The British game at present is to turn our fight for freedom into a domestic fight between the communities. The killings of Bengal, Bihar and Bombay were promoted by the British. The British were using the Muslim League as their tool in their game of divide and rule. It was the British who were the real enemies of the Hindus in Bengal and Muslims in Bihar. By talking of revenge for the happenings in Bengal and Bihar we would be just playing the British game.

The Viceroy at the head of the Political Department was behind the attempt to crush the Praja Mandals in the native states. All these British attempts to divide and rule in the provinces and to crush people's movement in the native states could be frustrated only by a revolution. We should prepare for a countrywide revolution (cries of *Inqilab Zindabad*).

Previously our programme was to fill the jails, but now we are not to fill the jails. We have strength enough to arrest our enemies. We should put into prison those who are the enemies of the revolution. This is not an ordinary task. If the fight followed disagreement of the British Government with the decisions of the Constituent Assembly then our fight would be on a very high plane in the eyes of the people of the world. The premiers could at once order some magistrates and police officials to arrest the Governors and other anti-Indian officials and put them into prison (cheers). If we start making preparations now we should be completely ready within a few months. We should start preparations in such a way that when the bugle for the fight is sounded, then we should be able to start the work immediately to end the British Raj at once (shouts of long live revolution).

All Government offices and institutions such as post offices, law courts, treasuries and police stations should be captured. After capturing these institutions people's Raj should be established with the help of those officials who would be willing to work for the new Government. All pro-British officials should be driven out or jailed and new officials appointed in their place. The new Government should also recruit a police force and an army

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Searchlight*, 20 December 1946.

and equip them with all imaginable weapons, including guns made by local iron-smiths.

You will say that all this is a difficult task. I will say however it will be an easy task because I know the hollowness of the British Government. If we can bring about such a revolution in the whole country, it would be outside the power of the British to reconquer the country (cheers).

With the commencement of the revolution there should be a country-wide strike so that all means of communications and all British institutions should come to a stand still. If such a fight continues for three months, the British Government will end all over the country for ever.

The revolution which I have outlined is not against the Congress ideal of *Ahimsa* as the Congress had already agreed during the war to the killing of Germans and Japanese in return for a mere national Government in Delhi under a British Viceroy.

When I was confined in Lahore Fort I had come to the conclusion that if a hundred top ranking Congressmen had agreed to start fasts unto death, India would be free before many of them had died. I was myself prepared to be one of those hundred fasters.

People should be prepared to sacrifice their lives for freedom. We die every year in lakhs due to hunger and disease. Is it not good that we should die as brave men for the freedom of our country and for the coming generations?

The women of India should not shed tears when their sons, brothers and husbands go to fight for freedom, but put *Tilaks* on their foreheads.

## **61. Appeal to Muslims to join in the fight for Freedom, 19 December 1946<sup>1</sup>**

I am born in a Hindu family but I call myself a Hindustani and my religion is Revolution. Today the great question before the country is how to attain complete freedom. We have been fighting the British for freedom for a long time. I have come here to invite you to join us in the fight for freedom.

The Muslim League never fought for freedom. It can never fight because it consists of Nawabs and title-holders, who are henchmen of the British. The Muslim League is there only to obstruct our path to freedom. The League is playing the game of the British by trying to incite Muslims to attack Hindus, thus making the people, who have been living peacefully for centuries, to fight each other. They are misleading you by saying that your enemies are Hindus. Actually your enemies are the British. It is the

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the *Pioneer*, 21 December 1946. Speech delivered at a meeting of Muslims at Banaras in a maidan from where the recent Hindu-Muslim riots had begun.

British who wiped out the Muslim kingdoms from India and reduced the Muslims to a state of slavery, poverty and misery. All these 150 years the British neglected you because it was not in their interests to fraternise with you.

Now that Hindus are determined to drive the British out of the country, the British are trying to find shelter and prolong their stay in India by befriending the Muslim League. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan recently said that every Britisher has become a Muslim Leaguer. This is so because they hope thereby to remain in India longer and to continue to exploit the country. Their game is to convert the fight for freedom into a fight between Muslims and Hindus, so that both Hindus and Muslims should feel insecure and beg the British to remain in India for their protection.

The British tried this game in Bengal by using the Muslim League as a tool to attack their Hindu brethren. The result of this was that some misguided Hindus retaliated in Bihar. This was exactly what the British had planned for. They had thought that in this way Muslims of the Punjab would retaliate against the Hindu excesses in Bihar and the Hindus of the U.P. would retaliate against the Muslim excesses in the Punjab and so on. They had planned to convert the whole country into shambles.

Fortunately their plan did not work as saner people in both communities realized what was taking place. But in Bengal and Bihar Muslims and Hindus are still suspecting their neighbours and even hesitating to go to their Mohallas. The British on the other hand move about freely in the Mohallas of both Hindus and Muslims. Is it not a matter of shame to all of us?

I admit that there are quarrels among different communities in India. But in which country there are no domestic quarrels. In this country they are magnified by the British. In order that there should be no quarrel and all communities should live in peace and prosperity it is very necessary that there should be no British Raj. As long as the British remain in India there can be no peace.

The need of the hour, therefore, is to launch a big struggle to drive the British out of the country.

## **62. Reply to a welcome Address by Press Workers Union, Kanpur, 22 December 1946<sup>1</sup>**

The Congress will have to come out of the Constituent Assembly sooner or later and tread the path of revolution. I believe that the country is fast heading towards a revolution. Even Dr. Rajendra Prasad in his recent convocation

<sup>1</sup> *National Herald*, 24 December 1946.

address at the Benares Hindu University declared that we should keep ourselves in readiness for there may be another struggle soon.

When we oppose compromise we have good reasons for it. The struggle of 1942 gave birth to a new India. It shook the foundations of British imperialism in this country. The pillars which supported the imperialist structure are worn-out today. The army on which the British relied most is today infused with the idea of revolution. Troops have revolted on a minor scale at many places throughout the country. Reports of such uprisings are suppressed where they can be suppressed but some of them have leaked out. One of the biggest efforts at revolt was that of the cadets of the Royal Indian Navy. They laid down their arms, not because they were afraid, but only because leaders like Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel appealed to them to do so. The members of the air force organized a strike throughout India. The police force is discontented. The lower staff of the police department has staged strikes at many places. There has been strike in the Posts and Telegraphs Department. Railwaymen also have been contemplating a strike on an all-India scale. All this is a proof that the pillars on which the British raj rested in India are fast decaying. In the international sphere the British occupy only the third place among powerful nations. They are in debt. They are indebted even to such a poor country as ours. Their trade and industry have suffered a serious set back.

With this picture in mind and conscious of our strength and British weakness, we asked for a revolution, a revolution to sweep away for ever the last vestiges of imperialism in the country. But we were told by our leaders that the British Cabinet Mission was coming to negotiate with us. So how could it be refused the courtesy it deserved.

We said: All right. Talk to the Mission. But put to it only one question—When will the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, leave India? When will the British army withdraw from our country? When will British capital and interests cease to exist in India? Three months have elapsed since the compromise was effected and the Interim Government formed. The Constituent Assembly was also meeting but nobody knew when Wavell would leave India. What the Socialists predicted has come true.

When the Nehru Government was formed the country was hopeful that though freedom had not actually been achieved, it was somewhere round the corner. But Wavell played a shrewd game in consultation with the British Government and brought into the Interim Government five members of the Muslim League. The League members were just like five British members in the Government, who put all sorts of obstacles in the way of the freedom of the country.

The other hope of the country was the Constituent Assembly. But the Muslim League members were not participating in it. The British

Government had openly declared their partisanship with the League. Even if a constitution was evolved and elections held according to it, as in any independent republic, and a president was also elected, the president would have to ask the Viceroy to hand over the reins of government. Then Wavell would say: "The League and the states haven't accepted your constitution; how can I do so." Thus the Constituent Assembly will ultimately have to give the call for a mighty struggle.

But even if the Muslim League participates in the Assembly, we can say from past experience that Jinnah will object to it being called a sovereign body. Then how can the participation by the League lead the Assembly anywhere? The entry of the League members into the Interim Government has reduced the Government's status to that of the old Executive Council which had as its members such ardent supporters of the British as Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava,<sup>2</sup> Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar<sup>3</sup> and Sir Sultan Ahmed.<sup>4</sup>

The British realize fully our strength and their own weakness. They know they cannot stay in this country for long but they still hope to linger on. In their desperation they are trying to play their old game of divide and rule. Riots started in different parts of the country despite the fact that the Interim Government was there at the centre.

I do not wish to injure the feelings of the Muslims present at the meeting. But if they consider the situation dispassionately they will arrive at the conclusion that whatever the Muslim League is doing is only with the support of the British. Had the Congress given a call for 'direct action' of the sort given by the League, Congress leaders would have been put into jails and their organization declared illegal. But this was not done with the Muslim League. Not because the British had any sympathy with Muslims, they took the reins of Government from the Muslim emperor, Bahadur Shah.

<sup>2</sup> For biographical note on Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava see *JPSW*, Vol. III, p. 172.

<sup>3</sup> A. Ramaswami Mudaliar (1887-1976); Vice-Chancellor Travancore University; Member Legislative Council Madras 1920-6; President Municipal Council Madras, 1928-30; Member Council of State 1930; Member Indian Legislative Assembly 1931-4; Honorary editor *Justice*, 1927-35; Member Viceroy's Executive Council for Commerce, 1939-42; Supply member, 1943; Leader of Indian Delegation to the San Francisco conference of the United Nations, 1945; President of Economic & Social Council of U.N.O. 1946, 1947, Member International Civil Service Board of U.N.O., Dewan Mysore State 1946-9.

<sup>4</sup> Sayyid Sultan Ahmad (Sir) (1880-1963); a judge of Patna High Court (1919-20); first Indian Vice-Chancellor of Patna University (1923-30); participated in Round Table Conference, London (1930-1); member of Viceroy's Executive Council (Railway & Commerce) (1937); nominated for a temporary vacancy in the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague (1938); Law Member of the Govt. of India, 1941; Adviser to Chamber of Princes, 1947; Member of Negotiating Committee of Nizam to discuss Hyderabad's accession to India; resumed his practice at Patna High Court, 1948. Publications: edited and Dinshah Fardunji Mulla's, *Principles of Muhammadan Law* (1951, 1961); *A treaty between India and the United Kingdom* (1944).



Under their rule the Muslims have become poorer than the Hindus. Out of the 35,00,000 people who died from hunger in Bengal, a big majority were Muslims. But today whatever is said by the League is repeated the next day in London and at the Viceregal Lodge. Today, the British have become friends of the Muslim League. Every collector is a Muslim Leaguer. This is so because it suits the British game.

What has the Muslim League done for the freedom of the country? The premiers of Bengal and Sind did not win their governments by any efforts of their own. It was the fruit of the 25 years' hard struggle of the Congress that they are enjoying. The Muslims must consider all this. They have a double responsibility. Their freedom will mean opportunity to liberate other Islamic countries under British domination. The recent riots are not communal but political in character. And behind them all is the hidden hand of our imperialist masters. If anything can check these riots, it is the marching out of the British from India. Retaliation cannot stop riots. It will lead only to counter-retaliation elsewhere.

Another obstacle in the way of a successful revolution is the presence of the Indian states. On the one hand, the British are talking of leaving the country, and on the other the Political Department is launching a drive to crush popular movements in the states.

The only solution to all this that I can suggest is a revolution. The revolution will hit at the roots of communalism. It will overthrow the British. We are to prepare for such a revolution. The first step towards it is a strong resolve on the part of the people. I would ask the youth to resolve that if a fresh struggle is started they would liberate their country or die in the attempt.

The picture of the struggle that I will place before you is not that of an unplanned struggle, like those in the past. We cannot afford to repeat our past mistakes. This time we will not go to prison ourselves. I will not like the Governor of your province to order the arrest of Pandit Pant.<sup>5</sup> This time it should be Pandit Pant who should order his men to arrest the Governor. But all this cannot happen spontaneously. We have to plan and prepare from now.

This time wherever we succeed in driving out the British we will proclaim our independent government, employ our own men to run it and raise our own army with whatever arms and weapons we have. And when the British come to reconquer us, we would rather perish than yield to them an inch of our land.

We must prepare our workers for a countrywide strike during the coming struggle. This will paralyze the British forces. The students should be prepared to declare a strike in their schools and colleges. Normal life must

<sup>5</sup> For biographical note on Govind Ballabh Pant see *JPSW*, Vol. II, p. 243.

not be allowed to continue. Those who can take up assigned tasks will join the struggle; others will do better to sit at home.

The Government that will emerge out of such a struggle will be a government of the poor—of the *kisans* and *mazdurs*.

### **63. Interview to Press on the possible breakdown of Interim Government and the need of a massive Struggle, 28 December 1946<sup>1</sup>**

I foresee the possibility—if not the probability—of a breakdown of the Interim Government within the next six months. Such a breakdown may precipitate a revolutionary struggle against the British, on the basis of a constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly. No organization, except the Congress, can launch such a struggle. Whether the present situation in the country requires an active struggle or not? I definitely think that it requires that we do prepare for an active struggle. We do not want to be caught napping.

Question: What would be the issue on which a breakdown might occur?

Jayaprakash Narayan: That will take me to a discussion of British policy as I understand it today. On the one hand, the British talk of their preparedness to leave India and on the other they wish to utilize every reactionary and anti-nationalist element in this country to prevent their leaving India. By reactionary elements I definitely mean the communal elements, outstanding among which is the Muslim League. Every communal element in this country, for instance the Hindu Mahasabha, is standing in the path of freedom. I suppose the greatest supporters of this policy of underhand sabotage are the communalists and the princes. Next, come big business, with this difference that the capitalists will want some advance, not freedom but self-government, so that they may have a free hand in the economic development of the country. But they will certainly come in the way of a revolution, even a national revolution. Big business will certainly do everything to prevent a revolutionary outbreak in this country, even if it means a compromise with freedom.

I think the statements of the Congress leaders that freedom is round the corner arouse false hopes. Freedom is not round the corner in the sense that the Constituent Assembly is going to give us freedom in a short time. I also think freedom is round the corner but before we get freedom an all-out struggle, I presume, is necessary. The obstacles put in our path cannot be removed except by a revolutionary struggle, unless of course we compromise on our principles.

As far as the constitutional developments are concerned, there has been

<sup>1</sup> *National Herald*, 29 December 1946. Interview at Delhi.

a fundamental difference between the Socialists and the Congress leaders from the very beginning, but inspite of that difference, I agreed when Pandit Nehru asked me in Delhi to join the Working Committee after the outbreak of the Calcutta riots. I said we might stand together and face this common danger jointly. The fundamental difference between us is not the only thing that has made me think of leaving the Working Committee. There are other considerations also into which I would not like to go till I have had a discussion with Acharya Kripalani (Congress President). My decision to resign was my own and not of the Congress Socialist Party. The issue will come up when the Congress Socialist Party executive meets just before the meeting of the A.I.C.C.

I agree broadly with Pandit Nehru's resolution before the Constituent Assembly. If the Congress sticks to the objectives<sup>2</sup> mentioned there in, it will coincide with the Congress Socialist Party's viewpoint. I am one of those in the Congress who would rather leave the Muslim League alone and not bother about the absence of its approval of the resolution. I have said so many times that I do not distinguish between the Muslim League and the British. If, the League comes into the Constituent Assembly, the Assembly will become what the Interim Government has become and all its capacity to work towards freedom will be destroyed.

Mr. Jinnah's great objection to the policy of the Congress towards the Constituent Assembly is that the Congress wants to make it a sovereign body. Mr. Jinnah is afraid of sovereignty and freedom. He would not like the Constituent Assembly to become sovereign but would like it to work under the arms of the Viceroy or the British Government.

Q: Does it mean that if the League does not come into the Constituent Assembly, the Constituent Assembly as it is constituted today could lead to freedom?

J.P.: I would repeat that in no case is the Constituent Assembly going to lead to freedom, but if the League does not come in and the Congress sticks to its fundamental policies then the Constituent Assembly will lead to a struggle for freedom—not towards freedom but the struggle towards freedom. I have said that the Constituent Assembly, as I visualize it, may become the mother of the Indian revolution. Left to itself, the Congress should not take more than six months to draft a constitution and we should then try to put that constitution into force. Pandit Nehru says he wants a republic. Let him ask Lord Wavell to hand over power. Probably Lord Wavell will not do it and that would lead to a struggle on a very large scale.

There are two ways of working in the Constituent Assembly. One is to try to get whatever is possible out of it, which cannot be full freedom, and the other is to stick to our principles and refuse to compromise on any issue

<sup>2</sup> For Objectives Resolution see Appendix 9.

and convert the Constituent Assembly into an organ of struggle like the French National Assembly [in the eighteenth century].

Q: The League has the confidence of a great part of the Muslim electorate in the country. How do you intend to bring the 90,00,000 Muslims into line with the nationalist programme?

J.P.: First, by doing no business with the Muslim League. If the British want to settle with the League, I would say: 'All right; you settle with the Muslim League and give them all power. But if you require me to go and talk to Mr. Jinnah, I am not prepared. You must recognize that the Congress is representative of the people of this country.'

I would not leave it at that. I would go to the Muslims directly and appeal to them on the basis of nationalism, national struggle and socialism. I would place economic issues before them. I think in the present circumstances I would not meet with a very large measure of success, but I do not apprehend that in the event of a national struggle, the Muslim masses will actively oppose it. At the most they may be apathetic towards it and keep out, but if the struggle develops on the lines I visualize, for instance, if I say in the course of the struggle, the land belongs to the peasants take it, I think a large number of Muslim peasants may be drawn into the struggle. What the Congress will do I cannot say.

I am not foreseeing a civil war but I see no alternative to a war with the British, say a war with the British started by the Constituent Assembly. In the course of a war like that I do not fear that it would be converted into a civil war, though that will be the British game. Pethick Lawrence<sup>3</sup> says a settlement between the Congress and the League is a settlement between two communities of India. I am amazed to read that statement coming from him. Either he is completely misinformed or he is deliberately trying to misinform others.

There are two forces in India; first the force of nationalism represented by the Congress, the T.U.C., the Students' Congress, merchants' chambers of commerce and so on—composite bodies not based on communities but either on class interests or national interests; second the parallel development, very much helped by the British Government, of political forces based on communalism, like the Muslim League, the Scheduled Castes Federation, Muslim chambers of commerce, Muslim students' federation, Muslim trade unions, etc. Ultimately there can be no compromise between these two.

<sup>3</sup> Pethick-Lawrence, Frederick William (1871-1961); Social Worker and politician, educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, called to Bar (Inner Temple), 1899; Owner and editor of *Echo*, 1902-5; Labour M.P., Leicester, 1923-31; Financial Secretary to Treasury, 1929-31; re-elected to Parliament 1935; Secretary of State for India and Burma, 1945; led Cabinet Mission to India, 1946; resigned 1947.

Q: Will your struggle be against Lord Wavell or your fellow-socialists in Britain?

J.P.: Unfortunately our fellow socialists seem to be following a policy which is leading us into a struggle against them. After all they are the Government and Lord Wavell merely represents them. He may try to sabotage their policy; I do not know to what extent he has already done so but, if he has, he ought to be sent home. The socialist brotherhood seems to be behaving rather queerly everywhere. The Stalin brotherhood behaves more or less in the same fashion and Blume and his French socialists are following the same policy.

The C.S.P. has very considerable strength in the Congress organization. I shall put it at fifty per cent. but the Congress machine is like any other machine and it seems very difficult to capture it. However, I am quite optimistic about the general growth of the party within the Congress. What we may have to do in certain circumstances to capture the machine I do not know.

There is no question of the constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly being approved by the British Parliament. We should not ask or wait for their approval, but go ahead with our decisions. I visualize a conflict with the British, if in the meanwhile we have not given up our fundamentals.

Q: There is a report that you have called for the arrest of the British Governors in the next struggle?

J.P.: The press always highlights sensational things. The arrest of British Governors, picked out of a two-hour speech, is sensational but it loses much of its meaning. By a struggle in India we have so far understood the filling up of jails. What I said in that speech was to debunk that idea. We have left that stage behind. At a certain stage jail-going is necessary when the people are cowed down. We have had a leader who put self-respect in us by giving us the programme of jail-going. But we have left it behind. In the next struggle, I said in this connection, if anybody has to go to jail, it will be the other party and not us. In a conflict naturally the British will put us in jail in some places and we will put them in jail in others.

For instance, if there is an uprising in a particular district and the collector there decides to go over to the side of the revolutionaries, he will administer the district on behalf of the revolutionaries. If not, he will try to arrest the revolutionaries while the revolutionaries will try to get him arrested. But the arrest of Governors is not the main programme. The main programme is the rising of the people, general strikes and so on.

It will be a struggle not like the old struggles—a slave India fighting for freedom—but a free India fighting to protect her freedom from aggressors. In that case, there is no question of jail going and instead of our being put into jail, those who come in our way—whether they are Governors or British

officials or Indian officials—will have to be dealt with—something parallel to the American Revolution.

Q: How much opposition do you think the British Government can be expected to put up in the event of the outbreak of a revolution?

J.P.: I do not think very much in the present world context.

Q: Do you expect the Indian army to join the revolution?

J.P.: I think there has been a great change in the Indian armed forces. Their experience during the last war—the INA, the general political ferment in the country and all that—has affected them but to what extent it is difficult to say. Of one thing I am certain, I do not think the British will be able to use the Indian army effectively against the revolution.

#### **64. Press Interview, Lahore, 5 January 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Question: What type of State you seek to establish in India and is revolution the only way to achieve it?

Jayaprakash Narayan: I desire a democratic socialist state which can be established by peaceful means. But before such a state can be established in this country, British rule has to be destroyed. This, I believe, cannot be done without a revolution.

I have numerous reasons to think that Britain does not intend to give India freedom. For instance, the persistent policy of the British Government, particularly its representatives here, to use the Muslim League and other communal elements and the Princes to put obstacles in the path of freedom. The British have encouraged and inspired Muslim League intransigence. The latest instance is the British Government's statement of December 6.<sup>2</sup> Further the Viceroy and his Political Department have conspired with the Princes in crushing the democratic movements in the Indian States and in enabling the Princes to bar India's way towards an independent sovereign republic. Being in the Punjab at present I cannot omit to mention the rule of the police in this province regardless of the popular ministry.

Q: How would you comment on Sardar Patel's recent statement<sup>3</sup> that the British are prepared to quit India and that no further struggle is required.

<sup>1</sup> *Searchlight*, 7 January 1947. Interview to the representative of the Associated Press of India.

<sup>2</sup> On 6 December 1946, the British Government declared that the decisions of the sections of the Constituent Assembly set up under the Cabinet Mission Plan should be taken by a simple majority vote. This was in accord with the stand of the League, but the Congress was opposed to it on the ground that it violated the principle of provincial autonomy.

<sup>3</sup> Addressing a meeting at Bombay on 2 August 1946, Sardar Patel had observed "The British had already declared their willingness to leave the country."

J.P.: Sardar Patel is at perfect liberty to hold any view on the question. But so far I am concerned I do not think that the British are prepared to quit India. They will, however, be forced to do so. I think it is a disservice to the country to lull it with false hopes. Granting for a moment that there is a possibility of freedom being achieved through the Constituent Assembly I still hold that it is the duty of the Congress leaders to keep the people ready for direct action in the event of the expectation not being fulfilled. An alternative should also be ready. The British are prepared for all eventualities. We should also be prepared for all eventualities. Let not the mistake of 1942 (unpreparedness on the part of the Congress) be repeated again. We had then taken a momentous decision but people who were unprepared did not know what to do. By peaceful settlement Britain is bound to gain far more than if India's question is to be settled by a revolution.

Q: On what evidence do you base your contention that the British wish to utilize every reactionary and anti-nationalist element like the League and the Mahasabha to prevent their leaving India?

J.P.: A part of the evidence has already been given. There is also further evidence. Pandit Nehru himself in his speech at the Meerut Session of the Congress<sup>4</sup> described the Muslim League as a King's party. It is well-known in India that every British officer in this country from the Viceroy downwards has become a Muslim Leaguer. The Viceroy deceived the Congress deliberately when he gave the false assurance at the time the Muslim League entered the Interim Government that the League would work in a spirit of common responsibility and would co-operate with the Constituent Assembly. The demonstration against Pandit Nehru in the tribal areas of the North-West Frontier<sup>5</sup> was engineered by the British who made the Muslim League their tool. The Governor of Sind has openly supported the Muslim League party in all its ill-doings, including the dishonest practices in the last elections.<sup>6</sup> These reasons should be enough, though the text can be lengthened indefinitely.

<sup>4</sup> The 54th annual session of Indian National Congress was held at Meerut from 21 to 24 November 1946.

<sup>5</sup> Nehru visited North West Frontier from 16 to 21 October 1946, and toured tribal areas like Rajak and Londi Kotwal. He not only faced violent demonstrations, but his car was stoned and he was verbally abused as an infidel and intruder. While travelling with Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his brother, Khan Sahib, they were attacked near Malakand Fort and all of them received slight injuries.

<sup>6</sup> On 5 September 1946, Nehru wrote to Wavell, that the Governor tried his utmost to induce the three European members to support the Ministry. Thereafter when a no-confidence motion against the Muslim League Ministry in Sind was scheduled for discussion on 11 September 1946, the Governor prorogued the Assembly before the discussion could take place. This was described by the Congress as an unwarranted interference by the Governor in order to save the Muslim League Ministry.

Q: Where do you differ from fellow-socialists like Pt. Nehru?

J.P.: Pt. Nehru is inclined to put too much trust in the assurances of the British.

Q: How do you look at the communal divide in India?

J.P.: The real division in India is neither communal nor one between the right and left. It is rather between the forces of nationalism and those of reaction, which include communalism, and the princes who are backed by the British. There are differences between the right and left today, but a real division between them can arise after the Indo-British issue is settled.

Q: Do you prefer a peaceful settlement?

J.P.: Certainly I prefer a peaceful settlement. But I do not think a peaceful settlement is possible except by giving up the independence of India.

Q: Don't you think that revolution will lead to civil war.

J.P.: Civil war only comes when there is a fight for loaves and fishes.

## 65. Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, New Delhi, 6 January 1947<sup>1</sup>

This resolution<sup>2</sup> represents one more step forward on the slippery path of compromise, the end of which will be ultimate acceptance of even Pakistan, just as a leader of Rajaji's eminence proposed we could do some years ago. I feel distressed sometimes by the way the A.I.C.C. invariably sets its seal of approval on every decision of the Working Committee and I feel it may be a good thing if I resigned from the A.I.C.C. also.<sup>3</sup> If ever there was a time to disagree with the Working Committee it is now.

My speech may sound like a threat, but that is not my intention. I realize that our party is a small minority in the A.I.C.C. and the majority can afford to disregard its views altogether. We have accepted your decisions till now, but the time may come when we shall have to part company.

There are only two ways open to us. We can carry on with the Constituent Assembly and do only such things as are approved by the League, the British and the princes. That can be one course. It will be a course dear to the heart

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the *National Herald*, 7 January 1947.

<sup>2</sup> The A.I.C.C. session was held in Delhi on 5-6 January 1947. The resolution moved by Nehru on the 6th wanted the Congress to "Proceed with the work of framing a constitution for free India with the goodwill of all parties concerned and with a view to removing the difficulties that have arisen owing to varied interpretations, agree to advise action in accordance with the interpretation of the British Government (on 6 December) in regard to the procedure to be followed in the sections."

<sup>3</sup> J.P. had resigned from the Congress Working Committee in December 1946.



of men like Dr. M.R. Jayakar<sup>1</sup> and Pandit H.N. Kunzru.<sup>2</sup> If we take that road then we can regard every issue as a side issue. The second course is to act in the Assembly as if it is a sovereign body and frame a real revolutionary constitution and then ask for complete transfer of power to those elected under that constitution. It may be that the Constituent Assembly will not be allowed to take this course which is the only honourable one.

The Congress was strong enough to come to grips with the British Government, but the Congress instead of using its strength entered into compromises which only enlarged India's internal trouble. We agreed to the Congress joining the Constituent Assembly and Pandit Nehru's resolution moved on it gave a new hope, but that hope has disappeared after the way the League and Lord Wavell have conspired together. I do not know how any one can hope for any advance towards freedom as a result of the Constituent Assembly's work. It was a great mistake to have allowed the League to join the Interim Government without insisting on assurance of cooperation by it.

We are told that the British are quitting India. I saw no sign of it in my recent tour in the Punjab and in Kashmir. I see no sign of it in the way the League has been brought into the Interim Government. The Congress is supposed to be helping the British to pack their bedding, but it looks as if the British during their 200 years in India have collected so much that the bedding takes years to pack (Laughter).

<sup>1</sup> Mukund Ramrao Jayakar (1873-1959): leader of the Swarajya Party in the Bombay Legislative Council, 1923-6; deputy leader of the Nationalist Party in the Central Legislature, 1926-30; delegate to the Indian Round Table Conference in London, 1930-2; judge of the Federal Court, India, 1937; member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, 1939-42; member of the Constituent Assembly, 1947; Vice-Chancellor, University of Poona, 1948-56.

<sup>2</sup> H.N. Kunzru (1887-1978): a member of the Servants of India Society; later its President; member Indian Legislative Assembly, 1927-30; President, National Liberation Federation, 1934; member, Council of State, 1937-46; member, Constituent Assembly, 1946-50, provisional Parliament, 1950-2, and Rajya Sabha, 1952-62; member, States Reorganisation Commission, 1953-5; President, Indian Council of World Affairs, 1948-77.

## **66. The Transition to Socialism, article in *Janata*, 26 January 1947<sup>1</sup>**

A socialist India, it should be clear, cannot spring up overnight from the womb of history. A period of gestation, a transitional period from the India of today to the future must intervene. This period may be long or short

<sup>1</sup> Also published in the *National Herald*, 26 January 1947.

depending upon internal and external circumstances and the wisdom or unwisdom of socialist policies. But a period of transition there must be.

In my last article<sup>2</sup> I had written: "It is obvious that the form of the transitional period will be determined by present conditions and final objectives, that is, the final picture of socialism in view." That picture is now before us. It was necessary to depict that picture first, because we can choose our path only when we know where we are going. Well, the goal is before us: so is the starting point, i.e. the present situation in the country. Which is the path that leads from here to that final goal? Have we a choice; are there many paths from which we may choose? I believe there is only one correct path; any other will lead us not to the objectives we already have in view, but to other goals. Therefore, we must be extremely careful in choosing our way to socialism.

Perhaps, we may enquire first what help we get from Marx in making the choice. At the Hague Convention of the First International in 1872, Marx, speaking on tactics, made the following remarks:

The worker must one day capture political power in order to found the new organisation of labour. . . . But we do not assert that the way to reach this goal is the same everywhere. We know that the institutions, the manners and the customs of the various countries must be considered, and we do not deny that there are countries like England and America, and, if I understood your arrangements better, I might even add Holland, where the worker may attain his object by peaceful means. But not in all countries is this case.

Marx here plainly conceives of two ways to socialism, one peaceful, the other violent. Which of the two ways must be adopted depends on the conditions in each country. In Russia there was no democracy, so Lenin took the path of violent revolution, though it may be doubtful today how far was Lenin justified in disbanding the Constituent Assembly when he had no majority in it. There is democracy in England, and its scope has developed greatly since Marx's days. Accordingly, we find British Labour installed in Government by a democratic process and putting socialist schemes into practice in a democratic fashion. Not even the blindest fanatic would dream of the possibility or necessity of a violent revolution in Great Britain today.

In India there is no democracy, and Indian society is far from being democratic. There is no democracy because there is British rule, which exists not by the force of democratic sanctions, but by virtue of its armed might. Indian society, with its princes and nawabs, its landlords, its higher and lower castes and its untouchables is wholly undemocratic both in spirit and fact.

<sup>2</sup> "My Picture of Socialism", November 1946. See item no. 57.



J.P. and his wife with Socialist Party workers.



J.P. with women workers of the Socialist Party.



J.P. with Socialist Party workers holding a child.



J.P. and his wife ascending the dias at a public meeting.



J.P. addressing a public meeting.



J.P. addressing the welcoming crowd at a railway station.



J.P. and his wife with Socialist Party workers.



J.P. with a party colleague.

For the past many years India has been struggling to achieve a free democracy. As everyone knows the Indian National Congress has been the main instrument of this struggle. Its efforts have brought the country very near to success, but a great deal of further effort has yet to be made. Our path to socialism will very largely be determined by the outcome of these efforts. It is not yet clear what the outcome is going to be. In any case, we are not spectators in this process, but active participants exerting our utmost to shape and influence that outcome.

The problem of the transition to socialism has two parts at the present juncture. The first part is concerned with the achievement of a free Indian democracy and the second with the transformation of that democracy into a socialist democracy.

Let me deal with the second part first. Let us assume that a full democratic State has been established in India. In such a democracy, if we go by historical parallels and the prognostications of Marx and Lenin, the bourgeois class would come at the top. How could the working class and the city and rural poor displace the bourgeoisie and establish socialism: through the democratic process or a violent revolution?

Speaking for myself, I would choose the democratic method. Remember the goal I have laid down is that of democratic socialism. The method of the violent revolution and dictatorship might conceivably lead to a socialist democracy; but in the only country (U.S.S.R.) where it has been tried, it has led to something very different, i.e. to a bureaucratic State, in which democracy does not exist. I should like to take a lesson from history. If the socialist movement in India had no freedom to use the democratic method, there could be only one way of destroying bourgeois society and bourgeois rule, that is to say, the way of violent revolution and dictatorship. But I have assumed that a full democratic State will come into being.

We have seen that Marx, as early as 1872, when political democracy had not yet risen to its full height, visualized a peaceful transition to socialism. If we were to take into consideration, as it is our duty to do as Marxists, all the social changes that have taken place since then, we would be strengthened in Marx's view. Political democracy has become far more democratic today than in Marx's time and the economic, political and ideological forces of capitalism have been completely shattered on the European continent and become much weaker in Great Britain. The power of socialism and Labour is generally on the ascendant in large sectors of the globe and democratic socialist parties are in the seats of power in many countries. Even communist parties, though they do not believe in democracy, are found working today through democratic instruments, and at least in words eschewing dictatorship. The Communist Party of France, even though the largest party in the country, participated in the Constituent Assembly and is now working the democratic constitution.

In our own country, the capitalist class, even when sitting at the top in a democratic State, as we have assumed, will not have the strength of the British or American capitalist classes. It will be far weaker. Furthermore, it would be impossible to solve the economic problems of the country within the framework of capitalism. This will strengthen the forces working for socialism. There will be yet another factor working in the same direction. The forces gathered today in the fold of the national movement represent various sectors of the people, but overwhelmingly they represent the peasant masses and the urban middle class. This would be true if we took into account not only the leadership of the movement but the movement as a whole. When I assumed the capitalist class to have come on top, I assumed too that it could do so only by riding on the wave of nationalism. Apart from the fact whether this would be possible or not, such a leadership, or success in so exploiting the national forces, would invest that class with certain responsibilities which it could not discharge consistently with its interests. The resulting disillusionment could only further strengthen the forces of socialism. Capitalism when it was a growing force in the world found it possible to assume the role of national leadership. The decadent capitalism of today cannot play this part any more.

The conclusion to which all this leads me is that in a fully democratic India the transition to socialism can be and should be a peaceful democratic process. That is to say, the future Socialist Party of India into which the present C.S.P. must evolve, should, by a victory at the polls, take over the Government and the Legislature and use them in accordance with law to destroy capitalism and create socialism.

Let me turn now to the problem of creating a fully democratic India. I have said above that the fight for democracy, which has been waged these many years under the leadership of the Congress, is very near success today. But the imperial power together with its main supports, namely the Muslim League and the Princely Order, stands even now pretty solidly in our way. The soothing talk that the British have made up their minds to quit is calculated merely to deceive the people and quieten their fears, the fears being that instead of eliminating the obstacles in our path we might compromise with them and thus jeopardise freedom and democracy. Indian democracy built on the foundation of that compromise cannot be full democracy, the kind of democracy I assumed above, a democracy that would offer the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism.

British rule is undemocratic, Princely rule is undemocratic, communalism is undemocratic. All these three are ranged against us today. They make a powerful combination. How can we conquer these forces of reaction? Surely not by giving in to them, surely not by making concessions. Our nationalist leadership believes today that by making a few compromise with these



forces it would be possible to acquire so much political power as to be able to destroy later the enemies of democracy. But it is forgotten that the political power so acquired will not be held exclusively by the forces of nationalism and democracy but also jointly by the forces of reaction. Having got into power these forces will be strengthened rather than weakened. Recent history has shown that every concession hitherto made to communalism has only made it stronger till it has become the present Frankenstein. There is no reason to believe that concessions made in the future will produce a contrary result. Rather, the danger is that concessions made with regard to the basic principles of our national life would result in such a sickly and diseased India that life for her would hardly be worth living. Only a major revolution could then bring her back to healthy life.

What then is the way to defeat the forces of reaction and the enemies of democracy ranged against us? The only way is to renew the demand of "Quit India" and to mobilize the people into a final challenge with the foreign power. It is that power which is our primary enemy and which instigates and supports the reactionary forces in this country. It is that power which has to be destroyed first. It is likely that faced with a final challenge to its existence that power would attempt to rally its reactionary allies, but this danger has to be met. Even today when a policy of conciliation is being followed, the same game is being played and every effort is being made to thwart the forces of freedom and democracy. In the present circumstances these efforts are succeeding to a degree where freedom and democracy are not only gravely imperilled but are being denied. It is my firm conviction that in the course of a direct struggle these efforts would not succeed to the same degree, if to any degree at all. I believe that in the fire of revolution alone, can be burnt down the edifice of imperialism together with the supporting edifices of feudalism and communalism.

In other words, I clearly see a major revolution intervening on our road to socialism. I see further that the success of that revolution depends as much on its political as on its social ends. In fact, I do not see that revolution succeeding if only "Quit India" were inscribed on its banners. Other objectives too its banners must proclaim: "land to him who tills it"; "wealth to him who produces it"; "Prajā Raj<sup>1</sup> in the States" and others. The revolution must mobilize fully the peasants, the workers in the factories, the students, the city poor and the middle classes. Such a revolution will not only lead to the establishment of full democracy in India, but also take us to a considerable way on the road to socialism. Such a revolution will place at the top not the capitalist class, but the toiling and the middle classes. While such a revolution will not destroy capitalism in one stroke, it would put it on the defensive and start it on a losing race.

<sup>1</sup> People's Government.

How can such a revolution be brought about? Does the present situation justify a faith in such a revolution? I believe it does. India is clearly passing through revolutionary times. There is discontent among the people: among the peasants, among the workers, among the states people. The youth of the country is restive. There is universal anger and disgust with the machinations of the British. The people are fed up with riots and mutual murder. Only there is no requisite effort to gather and organize these forces of revolution.

The Congress has so far been the spearhead of the national revolution. But, at the present moment the Congress leadership seems to have decisively and resolutely turned its face away from revolution. Even the mention of the word irks and angers our leaders and they poke fun at and make light of those who utter that word. The attitude of the leadership affects the whole Congress organization which has become today an appendage of the Congress governments. And yet the fact remains that a nation-wide struggle against the British power can be launched only if the Congress takes the initiative.

Thus we are faced with a difficult position. Congressmen who are convinced of the necessity of a revolutionary struggle have a two-fold task before them:

- (1) To prepare the people through the Congress organization where possible and other organizations such as trade unions, kisan sabhas, student and volunteer bodies, etc., for a revolutionary struggle.
- (2) They have to exert the utmost pressure on the Congress from within to persuade or compel it to accept a revolutionary course of action.

It is likely that they may not achieve much success in the second task, but as I read the immediate future I feel convinced that circumstances themselves will force the Congress once again as in 1942 to take recourse to direct action. Therefore notwithstanding what support our point of view receives in the counsels of the Congress we should be ready for the eventuality I have just mentioned.

I have said above that the success of coming revolution depends upon the extent to which the economic and social urges of the masses find in it their expression. Therefore it is the task of socialist Congressmen particularly of the Congress Socialist Party to ensure that in the preparatory work every care is taken to develop and intensify the social consciousness of the masses and strengthen the class organizations and struggle through which alone that consciousness is best expressed and developed.

The Congress, which has been and remains the spearhead of the national revolution, has been slowly taking note of the economic urges of the people.

The resolution on social objectives adopted by the Meerut session of the Congress goes a very long way towards socialism.<sup>4</sup> The difficulty, however, seems to be that to the dominant section of the Congress, which seems at the bottom to be guided by capitalistic ideas but which exploits the name of Mahatma Gandhi, these declarations of social policy are merely tactical moves to placate the masses in order not to lose their support. If we review the work of Congress Governments in the provinces and at the centre, we shall find, apart from words and resolutions, no concrete proof that the social policy laid down in Congress manifestos and resolutions has any binding or compelling force behind it. Therefore, the course of the transition to socialism would depend to a very large extent on the success of the socialist movement in influencing, not only in words but also in deeds, the national movement. How best can this influence be exercised? The C.S.P. has tried to fulfil this task by working both within and without the Congress. But already the question of a separation between the socialist and nationalist movements has been raised. If the possibility of an open conflict with the British were not before us, if the possibility of the Congress being driven willy-nilly into this conflict were not present, if also it were not true that a national struggle could be launched in the near future only under the auspices of the Congress and not in opposition to it, I would not have hesitated to advise that the socialist movement should now part company with the Congress. But today these possibilities and considerations make such a step fraught with danger, even disaster. If, however, it is found that the Congress had forsaken the revolutionary path and was determined, whatever compromises it might have to make, to remain in the offices of the Government, we should have come to the parting of ways. Under those conditions the Congress would be bound to pass more and more under the influence of vested interests and its structure to become more and more rigid and undemocratic, barring the growth of socialist forces within its fold. We have to go forward keeping both these possibilities in view.

Thus we see that the transition to socialism is not a straight path, but a tangle of conflicting paths. Therefore it is not possible to be doctrinaire about the policies of this period. I have reaffirmed my faith in democratic socialism, which is the only true socialism. I have stated clearly that in a

<sup>4</sup> This session was held in November 1946. The resolution referred to here was moved by Jayaprakash Narayan himself on behalf of the Working Committee of the Congress. It declared: "In the opinion of this Congress Swaraj cannot be real for the masses unless it makes possible the achievement of a society in which democracy extends from the political to the social and economic spheres, and in which there would be no opportunity for privileged classes to exploit the bulk of the people, nor for gross inequalities such as exist at present. Such a society would ensure individual liberty, equality of opportunity and the fullest scope for every citizen for the development of his personality."

full and untrammelled democracy I shall adopt democratic means to achieve socialism. But faced as we are with undemocratic forces which have to be defeated and destroyed before socialism can be ushered in, I conceive a period of trouble and turmoil, a revolutionary phase of the transition, a phase in which not only the democratic revolution should be completed but also considerable progress made towards socialism. A State and society emerging from such a revolution should then be able to pass in democratic manner into full socialism.

But there may be all manner of upsets in this scheme of development. The coming revolution as visualized may not come at all, and the country may be saddled with an undemocratic rule. Democratic methods would be of no avail then, and a different sort of revolution might take place, a revolution based on a different alignment of classes and led mainly by the socialist forces in the country which should then be organized independently as the Socialist Party of India. Or again, taking advantage of the troubled times ahead, the capitalist, feudal and communal elements might make a bid, in alliance with the right wing of the national movement, to establish their dictatorial rule. Democratic means would again be of no avail, and the only alternative would be to counter the reactionary move by establishing a dictatorship of the toiling masses, a dictatorship not of any party or the working class alone, but of the workers, the peasants and the city poor. Other developments would require other tactics, other solutions.

I said at the outset that there was only one correct path to our goal. I have not gainsaid it by what I have just written. There is indeed only one correct path from each given situation; if we follow the same unchanging path in every changing situation we can only end in disaster. What I wrote at the outset was in the context of certain ideal assumptions. It was necessary to do so in order to put my views clearly. But we cannot experiment with socialism under controlled conditions as in a laboratory. Therefore keeping our objectives in view and not departing from basic principles, we must be ready to adopt whatever methods and tactics a changing situation might demand. I realize that there are pitfalls and dangers in such a course, but it is better to face these dangers than to lose everything by being rigid and doctrinaire.

Whatever form the transition to socialism might take, I should make it clear in conclusion that the over-all requirements for socialism to be achieved is the existence of a well-organized, powerful socialist party, supported mainly by workers' and peasants' organizations and organizations of the youth (volunteer, student, etc.) and the city poor. From a small beginning the C.S.P. has reached its present position of strength and influence. The C.S.P. is the party of socialism in this country: the party of the future. Like the country itself the C.S.P. too is passing through a transition and it must

soon acquire forms that would represent and express the political and economic and social urges of the oppressed masses.

### **67. Time to Prepare for the Coming Struggle, 5 February 1947<sup>1</sup>**

On my release from prison in 1946 I had opposed the negotiations with the British. I thought that those who were busy in the negotiations and were anxious to have some settlement were most likely to be entrapped and deceived by the fraudulent ways of the British. It was my conviction that while the enemy's strength had greatly decreased, the people of the country were strong enough to snatch their freedom in six months time. Both in India and abroad British imperialism had lost its hold.

The military in India, the source of British imperial might, was in a state of ferment. Small revolts were taking place throughout the whole country. Their news was suppressed. Then followed the revolts in Bombay and Karachi.<sup>2</sup> The naval ratings held up the banner of revolt. The navy put down arms not out of fear of the British but on account of the orders of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel. There was a new life in the armed forces and the British Government had lost faith in them. In the police department as well there are signs of awakening. The postal employees recently launched a country-wide strike. The strike of the railway workers could with great difficulty be averted at the intervention of the leaders of the country. All that was positive proof of the fact that the country had awakened from its long slumber and that the British had lost their strength. Before the war the British were placed among the first grade powers but after the war they became a third rate power. They had sustained irreparable losses and incurred heavy debts. I was, therefore, opposed to the idea of starting negotiations with them regarding our country's independence.

According to me, we had only one thing to settle with the British and that was the date on which they would quit India. Regarding the method of governing independent India or solving the states or the communal problem we had nothing to discuss with the British. These matters related to Indians and could best be settled by them. Although the talks continued for three

<sup>1</sup> Speech delivered at Fatehpur (U.P.). Adapted from the *National Herald*, 6 February 1947.

<sup>2</sup> On 18 February 1946, ratings of the Signal training establishment, Bombay, went on hunger strike in protest against bad food and racial discrimination by their British superiors. The agitation attained serious proportion when the strike spread and was joined by 20,000 ratings from 20 shore establishments and 78 ships. In Bombay mill-workers joined the strike and two army battalions were deployed to restore order in the city.

months nothing was known as to when Britain was leaving India for good.

Their delaying tactics gave the British a renewed footing and weakened the freedom movement. India has been becoming weak day by day. Indians are now more particular about sugar, kerosene oil, cloth, licences and offices than for real service and sacrifice for the country. Had we prepared and given a fight, a year ago, independence would have been attained by now. The formation of the Interim Government created some optimism. But Lord Wavell played a trick. He brought the Muslim Leaguers into the Interim Government and the shape of things drastically changed.

Pandit Nehru's resolution in the Constituent Assembly on the objectives of the Constitution was passed and it gave some pleasure. But the intransigence of the Muslim League and the states stood in the way of the smooth working of the Assembly. If the Congress went ahead with the framing of a constitution for free India in accordance with its idea of a sovereign republic, the British would surely have put hurdles in its way. Their supporters would also have come in the way of the Congress. The British could say that as the constitution had not been framed in consultation with Muslim League and the states, the Congress should find out a course agreeable to both of them. But the Congress need not care for what the British would say. As Mahatma Gandhi recently said at Noakhali, no stamp of British Parliament's sanction was needed for the constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly.

The president of the Indian Republic would be elected, according to the new constitution, and he would ask the Viceroy to quit India. The Viceroy would say that that constitution was not binding upon him and he was not going to quit. Then there would be a fight. It would be a fight between two free nations and would assume an international character. Independent India could appeal to Russia, America and China. Other countries of the world would participate in the fight. It is my firm conviction that a fight was inevitable.

I refute all assertions of British sincerity towards India. The British had created dissensions between the Hindus and Muslims. The Frontier Gandhi<sup>3</sup> had correctly said that every Englishman had become a Leaguer. Today from the Viceroy down to every district magistrate every British official has become a Leaguer.

I plainly say that the Muslim League is the only obstacle now in the way of India's freedom. I am confident that if Pandit Nehru and Mr. Jinnah

<sup>3</sup> Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan (1890-1996); popularly known as Frontier Gandhi; scion of Mohammadzai Pathan tribe of Peshawar, N.W.F.P. now in Pakistan; closely associated with Mahatma Gandhi, and other top ranking leaders; took part in the Freedom movement, 1920-47, and spent 14 years in jail; founded the Khudai Khidmatgar organization and opposed the partition of India.

together demand independence there is no power in the world which can prevent them from getting it. There can be no worse treachery to one's community than Mr. Jinnah's. Can Mr. Jinnah quote even a single instance when the Muslim League sacrificed even a small bit for the sake of independence? What fight had it given to the British? If today we see the country so advanced it is due to 25 years of continuous struggle by the Congress.

I would like to warn the Indian people against the traps laid down by the British. We have to keep our eyes open, lest we may fall on the way. Communalism is the worst of evils. To postpone her downfall Britain has taken recourse to her old trick of creating differences amongst parties and communities. All communal quarrels were in reality political. Behind all disturbances there was the hand of the British, who wanted to strengthen their sway over the country. The recent exhibition of the spirit of vengeance in Bengal and Bihar<sup>4</sup> has strengthened the roots of Pakistan. The events of Bengal and Bihar have helped the British a great deal to remain in power to rule over us. We should go to every Muslim even though he may not hear us and tell him that Hindus and Muslims are one.

There is a golden opportunity for the people to prepare for struggle while Nehru and Pant are in power. Indians must organize themselves. I am sorry that the followers of Mahatma Gandhi are not working out the constructive programme with zeal and sincerity. I believe if a fight for freedom commences, all railways, ships, banks and mills will come to a standstill. The last few years have been the days of primary education in a political fight. India has now to take the master's degree.

I demand from the young men present at the meeting an assurance that they will take a vow to die in the coming struggle for freedom. I assure them that victory will be theirs. The poor, naked, and hungry today will be the rulers of the country tomorrow.

<sup>4</sup> The reference here is apparently to the communal riots in Calcutta and Noakhali in Bengal and in the district of Patna in Bihar in the second half of 1946.

#### **68. Interview with Nationalist Muslim Workers, Bombay [before 9 February 1947]<sup>1</sup>**

Question: Your attack on the Muslim League in your recent speeches is justified, but you do not make any appeal to the Muslims to march along the path of revolution. What will be the role of the Muslims in the revolutionary struggle for freedom?

<sup>1</sup> *Janata*, 9 February 1947.

J.P.: I have tried to explain fully my views on this point in my speeches. Unfortunately, the press summaries of long speeches retain things which appear sensational, cut off from their context and leave out constructive suggestions. The Press reports, therefore, are generally incomplete and ill-balanced.

The position at present is this: excepting a little bit of work among the working class, the Congress has given up all work among the masses. Neither has the Congress any plan of work at hand nor any programme. It appears that the old leadership has lost confidence and is apprehensive of the growth of new forces. Under these circumstances the task of planning and organizing mass work devolves on the Congress Socialist Party.

The Muslims have an important role to play in my plan of revolutionary struggle, not on religious but on socio-economic issues. Sometimes people say that my attack on the Muslim League will prejudice it against the Socialists also. This is wrong. An attack on the Muslim League from the socio-economic standpoint is always right. The Leaguers consider me dangerous because I take up the question of poverty and suggest the remedy through socialism.

The correct path is one of freedom. Even if Pakistan is desired, it cannot be there without freedom. How and when the Congress will launch a struggle, we do not know. But once the struggle is launched, we will mould it into a revolutionary frame by stressing the economic issues before workers, peasants and city poor. Here comes the role of the Muslims as also of every other Indian. Our work among the masses must be along these very lines.

Q.: In your "Third Letter to All Fighters for Freedom" you suggest social work among the Hindus and political work among the Muslims. Why not social work among the Muslims also?

J.P.: What I meant to say was that the social customs of caste ridden Hindus hamper communal unity. I want reform in Hindu social life for communal unity. Social work may be done among all communities to remove social barriers. I only want to link up political work with economic, social and cultural work.

Q.: How can we work effectively among the Muslims under the present situation? The Nationalist Muslims, targets of the Muslim League hostility and Congress indifference, are nowhere in the picture these days. How should they work among the masses?

J.P.: The difficulty is no doubt there, but the difficulty has to be faced. The path of revolution is not one of roses. Nationalist Muslims must strengthen and organize the economic aspect of political work, such as trade union work and Kisan sabhas. They should take up and tackle the problems of the masses not in their capacity as members of this or that community but in their capacity as kisans and mazdurs. Success is bound follow such



work. I will cite the instance of Darbhanga in Bihar. While few Muslims would ever agree to join the Congress, 2,000 Muslims have joined the Kisan Sabha there. Consequent upon such work when contact and intimacy grow up, the ground will be ripe for political and anti-imperialist propaganda. Then, finally, the Muslim League should be exposed.

The Muslim League may tolerate the Hindus but the Nationalist Muslims are "traitors" in its reactionary estimate. Direct political work, though difficult, should be carried on all the same as during the last elections to the legislatures when men like Maulana Madani fought the battle unmindful of insults. Difficulties can be removed only by being faced.

Q.: What should be our programme in the immediate future?

J.P.: My views on this point are well-known. The Congress leadership is not for fight. According to it, the era of struggle has ended in 1942. Not it wants a compromise with British imperialism. But such a compromise will never make us free, because we have to yield at every step before the British rule and its allies—the Princes, the Muslim League and so on. The British had lost their hold over the situation in India, now their snare has revived it. They have succeeded in creating problems that have retarded freedom. However, as in 1942, once again revolutionary forces will compel the Congress to launch a struggle.

The Congress is not preparing for a fight. We have to do it, firstly, by preparing the people mentally through propaganda for the coming struggle and, secondly, by work among the Kisans, the mazdurs and the city poor.

Q.: What should we do if the Muslim League hampers the fight for freedom with other reactionary forces?

J.P.: The Muslim League's attempt will be to change freedom's battle into a communal strife. Our endeavour must be to direct the whole attack on the British authority, scrupulously avoiding all issues leading to communal strife. Emphasis on the economic issues will help us a great deal.

Q.: Should we oppose the Muslim League Government, say in Bengal, during the revolution?

J.P.: Yes, such a government is only a part and parcel of the British Government.

Q.: Can a fight be started without the Congress?

J.P.: The C.S.P. cannot start the fight, the Congress alone can. But once the Congress starts it, the C.S.P. can transform it into a revolution inspite of the former's attempts to keep it under restrictions.

Q.: If the Congress avoids the fight at all costs?

J.P.: Then the Congress finishes itself. We will leave the Congress and form the Indian Socialist Party. The leadership of the country will change. Already our strength is growing and the old leadership realizes it.

Q.: What should we tell the Muslim Leaguers who ask what the C.S.P. rule will be like and what place the Muslims will have in it?

J.P.: C.S.P. rule will be a socialist rule—restoration of the toilers in fields and factories to their rightful place in the social order and end of exploiters and exploitation of all kinds. I have drawn a picture of socialism in my article in the Meerut Congress Number of *Janata*, which I request you to read. We will accept some of the things of Soviet Russia and reject others. Ours will be a socialist democracy where other political parties will be tolerated.

For the C.S.P. the question is of the rich versus the poor, and not of this community or that. One is a Hindu or a Muslim only because one follows a particular religion. In politics, in the economic sphere the problems of all Indians who are poor are the same. Socialist rule will not interfere with religions. Islam and other religions will enjoy complete freedom.

Q.: How to save labour from the difficulties created by the communalists and the communists?

J.P.: It is easy to wipe out communalism from the sphere of labour work with a little patience and in the course of normal trade union work because economic issues have greater appeal for the toilers than the communal issues. They can be made to understand that communal divisions would ruin their solidarity essential for the betterment of their lot. Thus there must not be any communal unions which make the workers fight among themselves to the advantage of the employers.

As regards the communists, they only stand for their own party and Russia whose fifth-column they constitute in India. While we wish to be on the friendliest terms with the Soviet Union, we will never brook any interference, direct or indirect from any source with our domestic affairs. Indian communists are, in the last analysis, anti-labour and anti-Indian. We must face them and we must oust them from the working class movement, carefully preserving the solidarity of the workers.

#### 69. To J.B. Kripalani, 24 February 1947<sup>1</sup>

Cawnpore,  
24 February 1947

My dear Dada,

Your telegram was redirected here.<sup>2</sup> I have already replied to it by wire. Kindly do accept my resignation. I have not asked Bapu about it, nor is

<sup>1</sup> *J.B. Kripalani Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> Dated 24.2.47 the telegram stated that Kripalani had kept J.P.'s resignation pending, and asked whether the latter had taken Gandhi's consent. He added: "Let me know your final decision before the Working Committee meet on 5 March."

there any need now to do so. I know now from your Bihar speeches<sup>3</sup> how you feel about me and my friends. There is also the Jharia episode—the high-handed action of the Congress government and the official Congress.<sup>4</sup> After all this my being on the Committee has become meaningless and a source of embarrassment both to you and me. So, I hope you will accept my resignation now and announce it in the papers.

With the best regards,

Yours affectionately,  
Jayaprakash

<sup>3</sup> In his Bihar speeches Kripalani, while expounding the Congress policy on administrative and economic decentralization and stressing the need of non-violence along with self-searching and self-discipline, had also criticized the socialists for opposing the principles and policies of the Congress.

<sup>4</sup> The Jharia coal-field workers were organized under the leadership of socialists and started agitations demanding higher wages and better living condition. The Congress administration instead of calling the socialist leaders for negotiation, arrested Mukutdhari Singh and other members of the Bihar Socialist Party in an attempt to suppress the workers' movement.

## **70. Socialist Attitude towards Social and Economic issues, 14 March 1947<sup>1</sup>**

The decision to change the name of the Congress Socialist Party to the Socialist Party at the recent Cawnpore session does not amount to parting of ways of Congressmen and Socialists. We have decided to admit non-Congressmen into our Party, and by adopting a new name for our party, we have come out as an independent political party in this country. But it should not be construed as a step against the Congress organization. Our relation with the Congress will remain the same as before, and the question of snapping the bonds of the Socialists with the Congress has not arisen.

We have taken this step in order that those elements of our political life who are sympathetic to the Socialist movement but do not want to be associated with the Congress may not be captured by reactionary or communal bodies. We shall not admit into our party those individuals who belong to any communal organization like the Muslim League or Hindu Mahasabha.

In view of the new situation created by the latest declaration of the British Government, it will be the endeavour of the Socialist Party to emphasize more and more on socio-economic issues and our relationship with the

<sup>1</sup> Press Interview Bombay, 14 March 1947, as reported in the *Hindustan Times*, 16 March 1947.

Congress will depend on the pace with which the Congress will move towards the solution of these problems.

A time may come soon when the Congress organization will have to become either Socialist or split. What will actually happen, only the future will show. The Congress, however, cannot sit on the fence all the time and claim to represent all the classes of this country—both the capitalists and the workers, the zamindars and the peasants.

If the British Government had handed over power to the present Interim Government right now, instead of prolonging their stay in this country till June 1948, all this carnage and bloodshed and communal conflict in all parts of India could have been avoided. The present Interim Government is composed of all groups and communities of this country, and the British Government could have safely handed over power to such a Government.

I welcome the Central budget<sup>2</sup> and approve of it generally. I hope that the pressure brought forward by capitalist interests will not succeed, and the fundamental principles of the budget will not be changed.

<sup>1</sup> Presenting the Central Budget on 28 February 1947, the Finance Member, Liaquat Ali Khan, had provided relief to the poorer classes—by abolishing the Salt Tax, subsidizing imported food, grow-more-food grants and other measures. He further proposed the setting up a commission to investigate the "great private accumulation of wealth in recent years which is concerned with our taxation".

## **71. Statement on Disturbances in the Punjab, 21 March 1947<sup>1</sup>**

The present disturbances in the Punjab are carefully planned and are part of a conspiracy to install the Muslim League in office as a step towards the creation of Pakistan. Among other participants in this conspiracy are assuredly Governor Jenkins<sup>2</sup> and his British colleagues in the province.

It cannot be an accident that the districts where serious rioting broke out are precisely those districts which are ruled by British officers. It too cannot be an accident that when people in distress go to these officers who are paid by the province to do their duty, they are made fun of and are taunted and told to go to the Congress as these gentlemen are quitting any way. It too cannot be an accident that the police, which inspite of the influence of the communalists over it is essentially and effectively under the control of the British rulers of the province, have openly aided and abetted the rioting.

<sup>1</sup> *National Herald*, 22 March 1947. Statement issued in New Delhi on 21 March 1947.

<sup>2</sup> Evan Meredith Jenkins (1896-1985); joined civil service, 1920; Chief Commissioner, Delhi, 1937; Secretary, Department of Supply, 1940-3; Private Secretary to Viceroy and Personal Secretary to the Governor General 1943-5; Governor of Punjab 1946-7.

Whatever else may or may not be necessary for the peace of the Punjab, I have no doubt in my mind that it is absolutely essential to pack off to England immediately Governor Jenkins and all his British colleagues in the province.

The question that underlies the Punjab disturbances is whether the League wants to follow the path of intimidation and violence. Recent League propaganda in the Punjab shows that the League is determined to use force in order to secure its aims. If that is so, there can be no settlement short of a civil war. The League must face this question squarely now and say if it is a civil war, it is preparing for. If it is not, it must change the tenor of its propaganda and sit down around a table determined to find a solution. If after discussion no peaceful solution is found and if India has to be divided and divided peacefully, the division must be based on the consent of the people concerned.

## **72. Statement on Agreement with the Princes, Lahore, 21 March 1947<sup>1</sup>**

The States Committee of the Constituent Assembly<sup>2</sup> and the States Negotiating Committee of the Chamber of Princes have agreed that not less than 50 per cent of the total representatives of states shall be elected by the elected members of the legislatures or where such legislatures do not exist by other electoral colleges.

This agreement between the two committees goes against the resolution of the States People's Conference as well as against the policy of the Congress in this regard. Both the Congress and the States People's Conference have been insisting that all the representatives would be of the states' people and none of them should be Prince's nominees. If the Constituent Assembly has to draft a constitution, the Princes or their nominees have no place in it.

This agreement becomes all the more objectionable when it is realized that most of the so-called states legislature are wholly unrepresentative and even their elected members in many cases are little better than hand-picked nominees of the Princes. It should also be remembered that in some states such as Kashmir recent elections were boycotted by the people's

<sup>1</sup> *National Herald*, 24 March 1947. The statement issued at Lahore on 21 March 1947.

<sup>2</sup> On 21 December 1946, the Constituent Assembly set up a Committee consisting of Azad, Nehru, Patel, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Shankarrao Deo, N.G. Ayyanger and three others to be elected later, to confer with the Negotiating Committee of the Chamber of Princes, on the distribution and method of return to the Constituent Assembly of 93 representatives of the Indian States.

organizations as a result of which the legislatures there are no more than assemblies of court favourites.

Furthermore in the states where no legislatures exist—and their number is far greater—it is not clear how the proposed electoral colleges will be constituted.

I, therefore, hope that the forthcoming conference of the States People at Gwalior will firmly reject this agreement and demand full and unfettered representation of the people which is their natural and self-evident democratic right. I hope further that the All India Congress Committee will also instruct the Congress representatives in the Constituent Assembly not to ratify this reactionary agreement.

### 73. To Louis Fischer, 24 March 1947<sup>1</sup>

Patna

24 March 1947

Dear Fischer

I am very sorry for not replying earlier to your letters. J.J. Singh<sup>2</sup> has been here [in India] for some time now and I have met him several times. He is here at the Asian Relations Conference<sup>3</sup> and I am meeting him again tomorrow. The Asian Relation Conference by the way is quite a success inasmuch as no less than 250 delegates have come from almost every country, in Asia. Not much is expected from this Conference excepting the establishment of contacts and the emergence from it of some sort of an Asian Institute to maintain and develop Asian relations and study common problems. We are trying to contact the socialists among the delegates and hope by the end of next winter to call a conference of socialist groups and parties of Asia.

The riot situation here need not trouble you over much. These are political riots and inevitable concomitants of the transitional period. I feel confident that we shall be able to master them.

Our Party met in conference recently at Cawnpore, after many years. We took some rather important decisions, i.e. decisions which will have a

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> J.J. Singh (1897-1976): founder and first President of the Indian Chamber of Commerce America, 1938; President of the Indian League of America, 1939-59.

<sup>3</sup> Convened by the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi, at the suggestion of Nehru, the Asian Relations Conference met in New Delhi from 16 March to 2 April 1947. The Conference discussed and adopted resolutions on racial problems, transition from colonial to national economy and agricultural and industrial reconstruction.

considerable influence over the development of the socialist movement in the country.<sup>4</sup>

I am sending you a copy of the *Janata* of this week in which you will find two portions of the statement of policy adopted at Cawnpore which define the socialist goal of the Party and its international policy. As soon as the conference material is printed I shall send you copies of it.

Regarding the communists we have adopted a very clear cut policy. I am enclosing a typed copy of that portion of the statement of policy dealing with the Communist Party of India.

One of the important decisions was that we changed our name from the Congress Socialist Party to the Socialist Party. This indicates the shift of the emphasis from the national to the social struggle. One is not sure about the future of the Congress, but it seems doubtful for us to capture the Congress, i.e. capture it ideologically. I think the best thing to do would be for the Congress to dissolve itself so that new parties based on socio-economic programmes might come into being.

Minoo Masani has given me a copy of *The Great Challenge*.<sup>5</sup> From what little I have seen of it I am sure I am going to like it tremendously.

Yusuf Meherally<sup>6</sup> has at last and to our great relief and joy decided to leave for the United States. He will have to go via London and might be sailing from India on the 20th or 28th of March. We are arranging so that he may not be held up in London. Meherally takes rather a long time to make up his mind so I would like you to so arrange that after he reaches New York he leaves for the clinic as soon as possible. I do not know how it would be possible for you to arrange for a bed for him in the clinic without knowing the exact dates. I expect him to reach New York in the first week of May. Tentative arrangement may be made on that basis and I am sure he will inform you of the exact dates from London. We are also writing to Mr. Asaf Ali at Washington in this connection.

My wife joins me in sending greetings to you.

Sincerely yours,  
Jayaprakash Narayan

<sup>4</sup> The Kanpur Conference of the C.S.P. decided to drop the word Congress from its name, enabling non-Congressmen also to become its members. It also adopted a policy statement based on democratic socialism instead of Marxism as was the case earlier.

<sup>5</sup> A book by Louis Fischer.

<sup>6</sup> For biographical note on Yusuf Meherally see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 156.

**74. To the Secretary, Bihar Socialist Party,  
27 March 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Dear Friend,

It has been decided to launch an All-India Fund for Rs. 10 lacs to meet the growing demands upon our resources for the better organization of Party activities all over the country. A disturbing aspect of party organization is the uneven development of work which is fatal for the political effectiveness of any revolutionary party.

Please let us know how much out of this Fund you will be prepared to raise. While the Fund should be subjected to a controlled central budget it is not desired to expend all collections centrally. However a definite percentage will have to be allotted for the central organization which includes the financing of retarded parties in backward provinces as also such essential activities as publications, research institutes, etc. Acharya Narendra Deva will be the President of the Fund Committee.

Since it is desired to have a Central Publication Unit, it would be more judicious not to multiply our expenditure and diffuse our resources upon multiple publication trusts in different provinces. The Central Office would be grateful if your Executive will suggest concrete proposals for helping the Central Publication Unit to utilize our resources all over the country effectively and to make the Central Publication Unit an effective instrument of Party Propaganda and Organization. Please let us know if important Party Members individually or the Provincial Party itself formally or informally has taken any steps to set up a publication unit. This does not of course cover Party.

Yours Sincerely,  
Jayaprakash Narayan  
General Secretary

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML). Similar circulars were sent to all Provincial Secretaries of the Socialist Party.

**75. Address at the East Indian Railwaymen's  
Annual Conference, Lucknow, 27 March 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Though the British know only too well that they cannot stay in India any longer they will certainly take advantage of the differences among the people and will welcome an opportunity to prolong their hold.

If the people do not prepare themselves to snatch power and hold it, a

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *National Herald*, 28 March 1947.



day may come when the declaration of February 20 announcing Britain's intention to quit<sup>2</sup> would appear to be a fraud.

I disagree with those who think that the British declaration indicates any change of attitude. Self-interest is the life-blood of every colonial Government and they change themselves according to their self-interest. Britain today is helpless and knows well that it is impossible to retain India in the empire. It is the revolutionary urge of the people as shown by the '42 struggle and which the Congress has nurtured during the last 20 years and the energy unleashed by INA which have forced Britain's hand. Britain has read the signs of time. That is why the Cabinet Mission was sent here. Britain's only interest in offering to quit India by June 1948 is to take the maximum benefit from India's friendship.

The Socialists have always been against a negotiated freedom and their fears are coming true. If the leaders of the country were in jail today instead of being in the Interim Government, the communal frenzy raging at present would never have attained such proportions.

Socialists knew that negotiations would involve waste of energy and time and therefore advocated a struggle. But our leaders had their own fears of struggle and therefore consented to negotiations. The results have given abundant proof of the failure of their policy. If we had followed the path of struggle we need not have waited for June '48 and would have been free even by June '47. Now we are fighting among ourselves and wasting our energy while Britain is successfully playing its game of giving something by one hand and snatching it away by the other.

The Congress entered the Interim Government to give it the status of a sovereign cabinet but the Viceroy managed to defeat its aim and brought in the Muslim League, without any promise or undertaking, only to strengthen his own hands. The Constituent Assembly, which was to frame the constitution of a free India, was also facing a deadlock. When the Congress protested against the conspiracy and gave an ultimatum, the British Government came out with a deadline for withdrawal from India.

The country's salvation lies in the establishment of a socialist state. It is silly to talk of Pakistan or of Hindu Raj for both would mean suffering for the people. The numerous Hindu and Muslim states bear testimony to the wretched plight of the people in a communal state.

The Labour movement should cease to be merely agitational and become constructive. There is a need for a rational basis for the labour movement. Labour should have a political party. There are two alternatives before

<sup>2</sup> Attlee stated in the House of Commons on 20 February 1947 that the then existing state of uncertainty was fraught with danger and could not be indefinitely prolonged. Hence the British intended to take necessary steps to effect "the transfer of power to responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948".

labour in this respect. They can either work for a broad-based democratic and socialist state or for a totalitarian communist state. The Soviet State is a one-party dictatorship, and trade unions are run there like government departments.

I stand for representation of workers on management of railways. Representation of workers on the Railway Board and management is a basic demand and I appeal to the Interim Government to accede to it.

## 76. To Mahatma Gandhi [after 27 March 1947]<sup>1</sup>

Dear Bapuji,

I had mentioned Nepal yesterday night. A friend<sup>2</sup> has just now written hastily about the conditions prevailing there.<sup>3</sup> If you consider it proper, give a statement or do whatever you may consider right.

Humbly,  
Jayaprakash

<sup>1</sup> *Pyarelal Papers* (Original in Hindi) NMML.

<sup>2</sup> Devendra Prasad Singh.

<sup>3</sup> Under the leadership of B.P. Koirala, President of the Nepal National Congress, the workers of Biratnagar Jute Mills and Cotton Mills went on strike on 4 March 1947, demanding 35 per cent increase in pay with better living and working conditions. The negotiation having failed, workers began to demonstrate and tension increased. The situation worsened when Army was called on 23 March leading to firing and assault on peaceful demonstrators. On 25 and 26 March several arrests including those of B.P. Koirala, his brothers and sisters took place. Three women were killed and many more manhandled and injured. On 27 March the struggle took the shape of a regular Satyagraha.

## 77. Circular to all Provincial Secretaries of the Socialist Party<sup>1</sup>

Central Office  
Comrade Chambers  
21 Govindji Kani Road  
Dadar, Bombay 14  
27 March 1947

Dear Friend,

You will appreciate that in order to implement the decisions reached at the Cawnpore Conference, it is essential for the Central Office to be in close touch with the Provincial Parties. The Central Office would therefore like to have full details of your work in the form of fortnightly Reports district-wise. A Fortnightly Report on labour organization including information

<sup>1</sup> *Ramanandan Misra Papers* (NMML).

about any labour dispute that has or is likely to occur either in Unions organized by Party Members or in others led by Communists and others of that ilk, should also be forwarded along with the general Fortnightly Report. Similarly a factual report, district wise, of Kisan organization activities as well as of any conflicts, either with the Zamindars or with the State, is also to be included therein.

2. We would further be thankful if your Party could entrust to some senior and responsible member the work of writing a Report on the following lines, in Weekly (or Fortnightly, if so suitable) instalments:

- (a) A review of one year of Congress Government in office in your Province. The work of the Government should be briefly tabulated under (i) Law-making (ii) Administrative (iii) Economic planning and other departmental heads and a critical analysis should be made to find out as to what extent the Ministry's work has been hampered or delayed by the subtle influence of the propertied classes. An effort should be made to assess the priorities of ministerial efforts and to juxtapose them with the priorities as would obtain from the socialist point of view. Price control and the entire working of controls should also be reviewed appreciatively. The Central issue of control vs. decontrol should be taken first and then the nature, scope and administration of controls subjected to a scrutiny.
- (b) Apart from this annual review it is desirable to request one member to review the Provincial Governmental policy and administration for the *Janata* every week. It is desirable to publish the Annual Review of Congress Governments for the *Janata* in special articles. It is hoped that some senior Member will undertake this important work which will help to give a sense of reality to the Party's extra-parliamentary activities.

3. It is further proposed that every member of the Party should hold a Membership Card. A card index would, however, be meaningless unless factual Reports about every member's locus of activity, type of activity as also his grade of efficiency are noted and followed by a monthly report (which need not be sent by you by post) so that the card index at the Central Office will portraiture a fairly accurate idea of the level of efficiency and organization in each Unit.

4. In pursuance to the decisions taken at Cawnpore it is also desirable to prepare a list of industrial centres in the Province, showing the type of industries, total number of persons employed—organized and un-organized—in each of them, the political colour of their organization, i.e. whether controlled by the Party or by other groups, the number of Party workers engaged in Trade Union organization in each centre or alternatively

in other than Trade Union work such as social welfare work in the working class "bustees", etc. Similarly an inventory of Kisan Centres where other than agitational activities on more or less Trade Union lines (registering of grievances, attending to complaints, invasion upon Kisan rights by Zamindars, etc.) are being conducted, should also be prepared, district and thana wise. Such a survey of the Party's field work is an essential preliminary to the new organizational drive.

5. The Central Office would also like to have 2 copies each of all your publications and one copy each of the journals or magazines published by your Party. This should be regularly sent to the Central Office.

6. The demands of the Central Office upon your Provincial Party may briefly be thus summarized:

- (i) A Report of the Survey of Labour Centres industry wise with statistical facts taken from the Labour Department of the Government of your Province plus factual data about the number of Party Members engaged in Trade Union and other labour work in each industrial centre and their competence, as also information about labour disputes going on or likely to take place. What efforts does your executive propose to make to increase the number of your Trade Union workers so that at least 25% of your Party membership is devoted to Labour organisational activity.
- (ii) Do regarding Kisan Front.
- (iii) Fortnightly Reports district-wise and separately for Labour and Kisans.
- (iv) One year's Review of the work of Congress Government in Office in your Province.
- (v) Weekly Report for *Janata*, regarding (a) Party activity (2) Your Provincial Government at work.
- (vi) Regular supply of Party Journals.
- (vii) Does the Party propose to co-ordinate and grade the running of Training Camps during this vacation. Does it want to make definite demands on these camps so as to increase the cadre of our workers.
- (viii) Complete information about members as mentioned in para 3 above.

7. The *Janata* has been more closely linked up with the Party than before. However it must get continuous Reports and cooperation from the Provincial Parties. If it is to be a mirror of Party activities and growth it will not be very flattering unless an effort is made to reflect not our intentions but our efforts and achievements in building up a strong Party in each Province. We recognize that we are making exacting demands upon your Provincial Executive. However in view of the gravity of the decisions we have taken, the Party must either build itself or perish as an effective political force during the next 18 months. We hope the mood of grim determination which

characterized the proceedings at Cawnpore will project itself unflinchingly in the coming weeks. The best index of a Party's efficiency is its capacity to supply information about itself, for it is necessary to know our exact weakness as a team if we are to fight it ruthlessly. We hope your Party will reciprocate this spirit of grim earnestness which has forced the Party to stake its existence on the present orientation of policy.

Yours sincerely,  
Jayaprakash Narayan  
General Secretary

**78. To Jawaharlal Nehru, 30 March 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Patna  
30 March 1947

My dear Bhai,

You might remember that I spoke to you at Kripalaniji's party about Meherally's passage from London to New York. The next day when I spoke to him on the phone he told me that he was not able to leave on 29th March as he had intended to do because the boat by which he had to go turned out to be a trooper with extremely bad accommodation. His doctors would not permit him to sail on a boat of that kind. Meherally then asked me to talk to you and Sardar Saheb to help in securing accommodation in a tolerable boat in April or early in May—the sooner, the better. You may recall that he suffers from a very serious heart disease, and his only hope seems to be a cure in America.

I was not able to meet you after I had talked to Yusuf, but Minoo might have spoken to you in the matter. Will you please do the needful? I have written to Yusuf to write direct to you and tell you about his requirements. I might add that I am not writing to Sardar Saheb.

As ever,  
Jayaprakash Narayan

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

**79. To Yusuf Meherally, 30 March 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Patna  
30 March 1947

Dear Yusuf,

I was so fed up with that deaden trunk operator I shouted at him but he wouldn't give any more time. However, after I had talked to you I could not meet Jawaharlal, but saw Minoo. He undertook to speak both to Jawaharlal

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

and Sardar. I have written to Jawaharlal from here. But you, too, should write to him direct; he expects you to do so. Tell him what your requirements are in the matter of accommodation and also tip him as to the probable boats in which he should try to fix you up.

Thanks for the parcel of books.

I'll be in Bombay on the 6th May and again from the 10th to the 14th.

The situation here is depressing. But let me not trouble you about it.

Since I left I have been rather worried about Sabita.<sup>2</sup> By the way, I found out from Dr. Gujral that [the] sari story was a pure fabrication.<sup>3</sup> I believe the other stories are also the same or gross exaggerations. Did you clear up that matter<sup>4</sup> about Asoka?<sup>5</sup> I wish you would do that if you haven't. Regarding her work, has anything been done about the cooperative business? She looks upon you as her guide, friend and philosopher. You only in Bombay can guide and help her.

I am leaving tomorrow for North Bihar and Biratnagar in Nepal. I'll return here on the 5th and leave for Calcutta the same evening.

With love,

Yours,  
Jayaprakash Narayan

<sup>2</sup> Sabita Parikh, a young worker of the Socialist Party in Bombay.

<sup>3</sup> The content of this story could not be found out.

<sup>4</sup> Not known.

<sup>5</sup> For biographical note on Asoka Mehta, see *JPSW*, Vol. 1, p. 122.

## 80. The Party and the Congress<sup>1</sup>

The Party was formed in 1934 by Congress workers who had come to accept socialism and who felt the need of giving to the ideals and programme of the Congress a socialist orientation. As such the relations of the Party with the Congress were intimate and almost filial. The Party was no recognized limb of the Congress, nor was such recognition ever sought. Nevertheless, the Party was closely associated with the Congress, all its members were devoted workers of the Congress, and it always worked to strengthen and develop the Congress as the people's front against imperialism.

The aims which the Party followed with regard to the Congress were: firstly, to link the programme of the Congress with the economic struggles of the exploited classes and to put the organization of labour and the peasantry in the forefront of that programme; secondly, to check all drift towards constitutionalism and weakening of the struggle for freedom; thirdly, to define Swaraj in terms of the urges and needs of the masses. The

<sup>1</sup> Article in *Janata*, 30 March 1947.

last aim, naturally, was to bring the whole Congress ultimately under the influence of socialism, i.e. to convert it into a socialist body.

In the fulfilment of these aims the Party has achieved considerable, but not adequate success. Meanwhile the development of events has invested these questions with an immediate urgency.

The Congress thus far had been a common national front against the foreign power. As such all classes that were in opposition to foreign rule were found within its ranks, and so were all opinions, provided they were agreed on the issue of independence. Recent political developments and the growing strength of revolutionary forces in the country brought the issue of freedom very near solution. The common or united front character of the Congress is naturally weakening and a struggle for power within the Congress is growing daily in intensity. The Congress, because it grew as a united front, because it wrought successfully for freedom, commands the confidence of all classes of the people. Therefore, control over the Congress means a passport to power. Vested interests in order that they might control the State are trying desperately to capture the Congress. They have powerful allies within the Congress, and there seems to be every danger of this alliance of vested interests and the power politicians of the Congress succeeding. The cry to undemocratize the Congress constitution, the mounting corruption in the Congress workers by the Ministerialist groups through the distribution of jobs and patronage—all these are symptoms of the threatened conversion of the Congress into a conservative party of India.

The alternative course for the Congress is a conversion into a socialist party. There is no middle course. Nor does this evolution admit of much delay. Basic socio-economic issues are arising and the Congress must make up its mind now. It can no longer defer decision by taking shelter behind its national character: it must decide where it stands in the struggle of interests and classes.

The Party shall endeavour to push the Congress towards socialism and to prevent its capture by the vested interests. If this endeavour succeeds, the Congress will rise to greater heights of influence, effectiveness and service. If it fails, the Congress must split.

In this struggle between the forces of socialism and the vested interests, a great deal of confusion is created by the loose use of the word socialism. The political climate in the country is so favourable to socialism that even the representatives of the vested interests and all manner of opportunist vote catchers raise its slogans and sing its praises. The only way to clear up this dangerous confusion is to demand action rather than words. Those who profess socialism must give proof of their faith when they are in power. they must take concrete steps towards socialism, they must break the power of the vested interests, they must back up and support the struggle of the

workers, peasants and other exploited classes against oppression and exploitation; and they must draw their main strength and inspiration from this struggle. It shall be the endeavour of the Party by developing this struggle to give concrete shape to socialism and to bring it from the realm of theory to that of practice. The extent to which the Party succeeds in this task will determine the measure of its success in converting the Congress to socialism.

### 81. Statement on Situation in Nepal, 2 April 1947<sup>1</sup>

A very serious situation has developed in Biratnagar arising out of a strike in a cotton and jute mill. A peaceful strike was in progress when suddenly the Nepal Government intervened with a heavy hand of repression.<sup>2</sup> An ordinary strike, the like of which daily occurs in India, was turned by the Nepal Government into an affair of exceeding seriousness. About fifteen persons have been arrested, including my friend, B.P. Koirala, who is the president of the Nepalese National Congress, the general secretary of the Congress. Koirala's two brothers and two sisters and the secretary of the Purnea District Socialist Party.

Those arrested were assaulted and beaten till many of them lost consciousness. The women arrested were maltreated and were knocked down and fist-fulls of dust literally thrown into their eyes. A peaceful procession was fired upon resulting in the death of three women; children have been beaten with rifle butts. The situation continues to be tense and the strike has taken the form of a kind of satyagraha.

When I was in Delhi recently in connection with the Asian Conference, the leader of the Nepalese delegation who is also the Director-General of Industries and the Consul-General met me and expressed their eagerness to settle the Strike.<sup>3</sup> I had offered them every co-operation and had suggested that the Nepal Government should refer the dispute to arbitration and they had accepted my suggestion. My surprise and pain was therefore, the greater, when I learnt the very next day after our talk of the arrests and subsequently of the mounting tide of repression. As a friend of the Nepalese people and if I may say so, also of the Nepalese Government, I believe it is not still too late to bring the dispute to a settlement. The least that the Nepal Government should do is to release all those who have been arrested and refer the dispute to impartial arbitration, acceptable both to the labour and the mill owners. I need hardly add that full inquiry should be held into the firing and the families of those killed or injured should be compensated.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *National Herald*, 3 April 1947.

<sup>2</sup> See ante, f.n. 2 of item no. 75.

<sup>3</sup> B.S. Jung Bahadur Rana led the Nepalese delegation to the Asian Relations Conference in Delhi.



Finally, may I warn that the strike may not be used by the Government to wreck vengeance on Koirala and his family for their devotion to the cause of democratic rule in Nepal. I am sure nothing but harm can come out of such unfair means.

## **82. Press Interview on transfer of power and the Partition of Bengal and the Punjab, Calcutta, 10 April 1947<sup>1</sup>**

The British have no alternative but to quit peacefully and save what they can, unless they are prepared to face a revolutionary upsurge. In any case, what will happen in June 1948, depends not so much on British motives as on what the country does between now and then.

As for Lord Mountbatten's personal role in creating conditions for the transfer of power by June next year, there are four tests which he must pass before his bonafides can be accepted by the country:

1. He must stop British Governors such as those of the Punjab, the Frontier and Sind, and other British bureaucrats, high and low, from doing mischief and stirring up trouble;
2. He must make it absolutely clear to all parties in India that none of them can get any support from the British Government and that there is no premium on intransigence and further that whether there is agreement among them or not, the transfer of power is inevitable;
3. He must curb activities of the Political Department, which during Lord Wavell's regime did its best to encourage autocracy and to suppress the democratic movements in the states and to tamper with the loyalty of the princes to the unity and well-being of their country. He must bring the Political Department, whatever the legal quibbling may be over Paramountcy, under the domain of the Central Government; and
4. He must not interfere in the affairs of the Government of India and must let the Interim Government function here and now as a free provisional Government.

So far as the question of the partition of Bengal and the Punjab is concerned, the Socialist Party wants no division either of the country or of any province, except where the people concerned want it on a linguistic and cultural basis and without affecting the integrity of the country. The Socialist Party believes in a united India and united Bengal and united Punjab. But this is a matter that does not rest with our wanting or not wanting certain things. Events may take a course contrary to our desires and we

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *National Herald*, 13 April 1947.

may not have the strength to check it. In other words, if the forces of reason, patriotism and socialism combined cannot prevent the division of the country, it becomes axiomatic that the division must be made on the basis of self-determination, territories choosing their centre of loyalty by their free will. In such an eventuality the partition of Bengal and the Punjab becomes inevitable. I, therefore, believe that it is the duty of nationalists, including socialists, to make it clear to those who are bent upon dividing the country that they cannot do so without dividing the Punjab and Bengal.

### **83. Statement on Andhra Tour, Rajamundry, 10 April 1947<sup>1</sup>**

I was touring Andhra Desa from April 7 to 16. On the evening of April 9, I was to address a public meeting in Cocanada. I was late for the meeting and a little before I could arrive Mr. Pallam Raju, M.L.A.,<sup>2</sup> reached there and it appears occupied a seat on the platform. Immediately pandemonium broke out and the crowd demanded that he should leave the platform. It seems that on account of his role in causing Mr. Prakasam<sup>3</sup> to resign, the audience had taken objection to his presence on the platform.<sup>4</sup>

I had heard something about the impending trouble and had left for the meeting with the decision that an announcement would be made to the effect that there was to be no President for the meeting as, a fact, has been the usual custom during this tour. When I arrived at the meeting there was great excitement and general disorder, the temper of the audience being further exacerbated by the fact that ordinary and armed police had been called in by Mr. Pallam Raju and his friends to keep order.

As soon as I saw the police at the meeting I made them to clear out immediately. After that I tried to speak to the people gathered there. But they were not prepared to give me a hearing till Mr. Pallam Raju left the platform. I wanted to tell them that there was going to be no President at all

<sup>1</sup> *Hindu*, 12 April 1947.

<sup>2</sup> Mallipudi Pallam Raju (1899-1962); participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930-1, and Quit India Movement, 1942-4; Minister for Forest, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries in the Ministry of Sanjiva Reddy in 1956-9 and in the Ministry of Sanjivayya in 1960-2.

<sup>3</sup> Tanguturi Prakasam (1872-1957); lawyer and prominent member of the Congress in Andhra; Chief Minister of Madras, 1946-7; Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, 1953-4.

<sup>4</sup> Prakasam resigned as Chief Minister of Madras on 23 March 1947. His supporters among the Congress in Madras were greatly displeased with the presence of Pallam Raju, one of the dissident Congress Legislators, who were responsible for the fall of the Prakasam ministry. They believed that Jayaprakash Narayan and the Socialists were also supporting the dissident group.

and so they could have no cause for grievance. But they would not give me a chance to explain. Therefore I went down into the audience myself and tried to persuade the people to listen to me. But yet they would not calm down. Finally I had to leave the meeting, sad and depressed.

I do not think I had ever felt so beaten and humiliated as when I left that Cocanada meeting. I had never for a moment imagined that young men would refuse even to give me a hearing. After this experience I feel too broken hearted to continue my Andhra tour. I do not wish to impose myself on the people of this Province if I am not wanted. So I am cancelling the rest of my tour.

I should like to say here a word about the ministerial controversy<sup>1</sup> which has so excited the people of this Province that some of them, at any rate, have forsaken their ordinary sense of courtesy. I should like to remind the people of this Presidency that the Socialist Party had nothing whatever to do with this controversy. I should like further to say, as I said at Vizagapatam the other day, that I had the highest respect for Mr. Prakasam and his integrity and that I believe that during his regime he loyally carried out the Congress policy. I further more believe that such controversies in the South shall not end till Andhra is constituted into a separate Province.

Finally before going back I should like to thank cordially those Andhra friends who helped me in my tour.

<sup>1</sup> Factionalism and mutual distrust among the Congress legislators in Madras deepened and led to the ministerial crisis. The situation in Madras worried even the Congress High Command. On 28 February 1947, ten months after Prakasam took charge as Chief Minister of Madras, a vote of no-confidence was passed by a majority of the Congress legislators forcing him to resign.

#### 84. About the Lahore Fort, 15 April 1947<sup>1</sup>

Those who have experience only of prison life cannot understand what it means to have spent sixteen months under the watchful, malignant eye of the Punjab C.I.D. in the Shahi Qila, Lahore. A prison gave one company, and, at least in the higher divisions, opportunities of recreation, and ordinarily fair treatment. In the Lahore Fort you were surrounded with an evil atmosphere, and with people who, to say the least, were dehumanized, having no human standards or values, and who accordingly treated you not as a human being but as an animal that they called *mulzim*.

A *mulzim* (accused) in the world outside is an ordinary enough creature, but in the Lahore Fort he is definitely a sub-human. No human sympathy should be shown to him; the sweeper or the bhishti should never speak to

<sup>1</sup> Jayaprakash Narayan, 'Preface', *In the Lahore Fort*, Sahityalaya, Patna, 1947.

him, no superior being such as a C.I.D. constable should show him any courtesy or talk to him as a brother-creature or an equal.

The *mulzim* should be kept under lock and key all through the day and night, and a sentry with rifle and bayonet must stand guard at his door which is barred, bolted and heavily padlocked anyway. When talked to, the sentry must turn deaf or into a statue of stone, but his everwakeful eyes must follow faithfully every move that the animal made in the cage.

Whenever this *mulzim* creature left his cell, or, rather, was taken out, he had to be put in handcuffs and chain; and when he was taken out for exercise, two sentries with loaded rifles had to parade, fore and aft, supporting a C.I.D. officer who formed the middle, carrying a loaded revolver at his hip and a garland of bullets around his neck.

Sometimes, on an evening, when the *mulzim*, alone in his cell, grew philosophic and attempted to assert to himself his humanity, his philosophies suddenly came tumbling down as a shriek, half human, half animal, pierced through into his cosmos, followed by other strange noises that seemed, to have no relation with life's normal functions. Was the ogre at it again, beating and degrading his victim?—the *mulzim* asked. And as the answer formed in his benumbed mind, he turned into an insane, raging brute, filled with uncontainable hate.

This was one's normal life in the Fort. What happened when one was summoned, as one often was, into the presence of higher C.I.D. worthies was a story of human degradation which I have no inclination to relate. It was not the number of days and nights one was kept awake, nor the abuses, taunts or the filth one had to listen to, that affected one so much as the sight of creatures having all the apparent human traits and endowments, behaving utterly as brutes and obviously enjoying their part.

Such was the Shahi Qila where I lived from September 1943 to the end of January 1945. Those were sixteen nightmarish months for me. No words that I can find can describe the atmosphere of that vicious place and the effect it had on one.

I was arrested on the morning of 18th September, 1943, at the Amritsar Railway Station, and my captors took me in the same train to Mughalpur station. From there I was driven straight to the Lahore Fort, where I was dumped in a filthy cell. For nearly two months no one took any interest in me. Then started the so-called interrogation that lasted for fifty days. The facts of the interrogation are given in the letter (reproduced here) I wrote later to the Punjab Government. The interrogation was stopped owing to the scandal caused by the arrest of my friend, Homi Pardiwala,<sup>2</sup> who had

<sup>2</sup> Homi Pardiwala (1905-90); barrister and trade union leader; member Congress Socialist Party; arrested during Quit India Movement, 1942; member, Bombay Legislative Assembly, 1946-51; left Congress in 1954.

gone to Lahore from Bombay, to move a habeas corpus petition, in connection with my detention, on behalf of Purnima Banerji,<sup>3</sup> who had the courage in those dark days, in spite of delicate health, to take such a risk. The petition, of course, was rejected, but Robinson, Superintendent of Police, and an Inspector, C.I.D., were fined by the High Court for contempt of court. All this appears so distant at present that there seems little use to tell the story now.

After the interrogation was over I was kept for some time as a State Prisoner, when I received somewhat better treatment. Then I was made a security prisoner again, and the treatment deteriorated.

Most of the sixteen months in the Fort I had to spend alone without meeting or talking to anyone except the C.I.D. staff who condescended to talk to me. For only a part of the time, after long intervals, was I given a companion whom I was allowed to meet for an hour every day. Indra Prakash Anand,<sup>4</sup> Jayachandra Vidyalkar<sup>5</sup> and finally Rammanohar Lohia<sup>6</sup> were my companions.

For some months at the beginning no books or writing materials were allowed. When finally books were permitted and a parcel arrived from Minoo Masani, it was quite an exciting event. Writing materials were also allowed then, and I bought some exercise books. It was then that these prison jottings took birth. No serious work was possible there, nor was the material available to make any kind of a serious study. So, I took to writing whatever thoughts came to me, more as a means to organize my thoughts, and sometimes to give vent to pent-up feelings. Some of these writings will therefore appear moody, and I hope the reader will allow for their subjectivity.

These jottings—all of them written in the Lahore Fort—are arranged chronologically. There is no organic relationship between them except that they are the product of the same environment. Many of them are comments on books read, or on the news of the day. Many are reflections of a political nature. The letters I wrote to Minoo, to whose kindness and care I owed so much of my happy moments in the Fort, were important events in my life there, for they allowed me in some measure to establish an intellectual

<sup>3</sup> Purnima Banerjee (1911-51): sister of Aruna Asaf Ali; imprisoned several times during the freedom movement; member Constituent Assembly 1946.

<sup>4</sup> Indra Prakash Anand (1916- ): a life-long friend of J.P.; arrested in the wake of J.P.'s arrest in 1943, as he at that time was Secretary, Indian Chamber of Commerce Calcutta—had been host to J.P. during his stay in that city in his underground days in 1943; member, Governing Board, International Labour Organisation since 1993; currently Chairman, Holding Trustees, Gandhi Samarak Nidhi.

<sup>5</sup> Jayachandra Narang (Vidyalkar): writer, historian and political activist; works include *Bharatiya Itihas Ki Rupreksha*, published from Allahabad.

<sup>6</sup> For biographical note on Rammanohar Lohia, see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 91.

contact with the world outside. Therefore, some of those letters too have been included here. The letter I wrote to the Punjab Government, complaining against the maltreatment and torture is of some importance and so is the third *habeas corpus* petition I wrote to the Chief Justice,<sup>7</sup> Lahore High Court. These letters give a dispassionate account of my experiences in the Fort. So these too are reproduced here.

It was on the morrow of the hearing of the third *habeas corpus* petition that I was transferred to the Agra Central Prison, where I stayed till my release in April, 1946.

Jayaprakash Narayan

<sup>7</sup> Sir H.A. Trevor.

### **85. Address at Coimbatore District Textile Workers' Conference, 18 April 1947<sup>1</sup>**

What is happening today will vitally affect the future of the working class in India. We are passing today through a critical and difficult time. I am one of those who believe that the working class has a great part to play in the revolutionary changes that are now taking place.

The struggle for freedom has now reached a stage where our objective is almost near our grasp—the objective of freedom for which we have been fighting over a decade now. A few weeks ago the British Government declared that by June 1948 they will hand over power to Indian hands. This declaration has many possibilities and dangers. Our great leaders want us to believe in the sincerity and the honesty of the British declaration. Talk of sincerity in this context may be out of place. Individual morality differs from group morality.

Historic circumstances have forced the British Government to take this decision. Today the British Government and people must choose one of the two alternatives, either to settle peacefully with India and save part of their vested political and economic interests or to face another revolution. Britain is not prepared to face a revolution.

There was a new awakening among the people of India after the revolution in 1942. The workers of India had played a glorious part in that revolution. The people today are quite different from what they were in 1939. The British Government understands this better than we ourselves do. Under the glorious leadership of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, an army was raised in South East Asia created out of the patriotic elements of the British Indian Army.<sup>2</sup> They brought new hope and new life to this country and a new vista opened up before our people. Rapid changes all over the world have shaken

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Janata*, 4 May 1947.

the very foundations of the British empire. The armed forces are no longer loyal to Britain. The spirit of hostile rebellion is in the air everywhere, among the forces within the country and without.

The 1942 revolution has raised our prestige. On the one hand India acquired a new strength and power, on the other hand British investments became greatly depressed. Britain has lost her supremacy in India. The revolutionary cry, not merely of "Quit India" but "Quit Asia" is heard everywhere. Britain is weighing her strength. The Secretary of State Pethick Lawrence observed in Parliament that Britain had to face either of the two alternatives; transfer of power peacefully or a revolution. Fortunately for the British for various reasons, our leaders have adopted the path of compromise. During the Cabinet Mission's visit we pointed out the pitfalls and told our leaders to follow the path of struggle. If that path had been adopted, the British Government would have had to quit much earlier than June 1948. We might not have had to wait and compromise with reactionary forces.

Through this method the British hope to get economic concessions and naval and air bases in India. They also hope to maintain part of their army here. They want to create pockets of British influence in this country. If the Congress had wrested power through revolutionary means this kind of British hold would have become impossible. This is the British policy. This is the British game.

As far as those provinces where the Congress is in power, where the national spirit is strong, where youth movements are strong, where workers and peasants are organized, these parts, there is no doubt, will become free by June 1948. But other parts like the Punjab and Bengal and the Indian states the British might control by taking advantage of our weaknesses and divisions. They might create spheres of influence. The fight for complete independence then will be shifted to freedom movements in the States and in these areas. The movements of States people should reach such a stage where no prince will have the courage to say that he will be free to have foreign help. Neither the Nizam of Hyderabad nor Maharajas of Travancore or Kashmir should be able to declare that his state will be independent and sovereign. The people in the States are for a united India. It is the princes who betray the people's interests.

<sup>2</sup> Indian National Army was organized under the leadership of Rash Behari Bose and Captain Mohan Singh with encouragement and assistance from Japan in September 1942. It consisted of the officers and soldiers of the Indian army taken prisoners by the Japanese at the fall of Malaya, Burma and Singapore. Later on, because of some differences between Mohan Singh and the Japanese leading to the arrest and imprisonment of the former, the future of this army became uncertain till Subhas Chandra Bose came from Germany and took charge of it as its Supreme Commander in August 1943, and generated a new life in it.

There is then the danger of division of the country on a communal basis. The Congress had made it clear that India should not be divided, unless it is on the principle of self-determination. Then it will be for the provinces of the Punjab and Bengal to separate if their people want to do so. Our task is to prevent the British from deriving advantage from the present position.

Those parts of the country that accept the constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly will become free. Other parts will be under the influence of the British. Under such an arrangement it cannot be said that we have achieved complete independence. The fight against the British therefore becomes the fight against the division of the country.

As far as the people of provinces like Madras are concerned they have entirely different tasks to perform. They should regard themselves as free forthwith. It is for them to see that power is transferred to the hands of the people. They have passed through the stage of national revolution. They have now to think about social revolution. Power in such provinces should not be transferred to a small class or group of capitalists, landlords or zamindars. It will be dangerous if that happens. When power is transferred it should come to the workers, the peasants and the middle class who are also a toiling class in this country.

People who in 1942 were miles away from the Congress, who even feared to utter the name of the Congress on seeing that the Congress had attained some power overnight robed themselves in Khadi, flew the national flags on their cars and began hovering round our leaders in Delhi.

With the help of their moneybags they want to capture the Congress. Before 1948 these rich people think of capturing the Congress. Suppose they succeed in doing so—I hope they won't—what will happen to the national organization?

There is a difference between the Congress as a fighting organization and as a ruling body. So long as it was a fighting force, there was room in it for everyone, whether rich or poor. The Congress was a multi-class organization. After power has come into Congress hands, when the Congress has become a ruling party, it finds that it cannot maintain that character. It cannot ignore the conflict of interests within itself. If the Congress sides with the mill workers, it cannot at the same time side with the mill owners. The interests of the landlords are quite opposed to the interests of the peasants. The Congress has therefore to make up its mind. The Congress after becoming a ruling party cannot say that there is room for capitalists and workers alike in it. I do not know what is going to happen in the struggle for power within the Congress.

The constitution of the Congress is to be amended. I was also present at the meeting of the committee which went into the question. There are now 60 lakhs of Congress members. I do not know how many of them wear khadi. The workers do not wear khadi. They may have a khadi shirt or a



towel. The peasants too do not wear khadi. Who are the people who can afford to buy khadi? The rich can afford to buy yarn from the black market and purchase fine khadi. According to the new constitution they alone will have the power to vote. The khadi clause will make it difficult for the young generation of workers to capture the Congress.

Rich Congressmen have already corrupted the Congress. In the municipalities and district boards they take contracts. They alone can afford to wear khadi. They are not going to vote for radical ideas. By and large this is the situation now in the Congress and the country.

Rather than let this great organization which we built with our blood and our sweat be captured by those who will corrupt and make it betray the causes for which it stood, the Congress must dissolve itself. The work that the Congress had undertaken once achieved, a great ceremony should be performed either in Delhi or Wardha and it should be dissolved. Let not the Congress become the tool of anybody either of the capitalists or of any other group. Let them not come in the name of the national flag, in the name of the national organization and seek our people's support. Let them come in their true colours. New parties can be built up on the basis of political and economic programmes. I have made this suggestion not as a socialist but as a Congressman who has worked and suffered in the organization for about 20 years. This great organization should not be dragged into the mire of power politics. This is my suggestion. Some of our greatest leaders hold the same view. They will give expression to it in due course. Meanwhile it should be the task of Indian socialists between today and June 1948 to develop the consciousness of the people and to strengthen the organization of the people through trade unions and kisan sabhas to such an extent that power will have to be transferred to the people.

When I mention tasks for the socialists you may ask me why I want to create a Socialist Party when we have the Congress. To me the Congress means a national front against imperialism. When freedom is achieved questions like Whose Freedom? Whose Power? arise. These questions have to be answered first.

Sardar Patel<sup>3</sup> appeals to us not to leave the Congress. It was Sardar and his friends who tried for five years to send us out of the Congress. But we remained inspite of these efforts. We have now reached a new stage. We do not want to exploit the name of the Congress, but will proceed with policies and programmes of our own. The Socialist Party of India will approach the masses on its own behalf.

The Socialist Party is your party. It is the people's party. We will remain as honest Congressmen till freedom is won. The Socialist Party is the poor man's party. We want that wealth created by the labour, should be enjoyed by the labour. The mills which belong to a few should be made the common property of the workers.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 10, Vallabhbhai Patel's letter to J.P., 26 April 1947.

**86. To Jawaharlal Nehru, 3 May 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Delhi  
3 May 1947

My dear Bhai,

As you are very busy I have not thought it proper to take your time.

I am writing to inform you that the National Executive of the Socialist Party has now allowed, in the changed circumstances, its members to join the Constituent Assembly if invited to do so. If it is proposed to take some members from our group to fill up the vacancies that are to be created, I should like to recommend the following names: Acharya Narendra Deva, Aruna Asaf Ali, Rammanohar Lohia, Purushottam Trikamdas, Kamaladevi, Rao Patwardhan, Asoka Mehta, among others. Achyut is not in India, but if he comes back in time, he too should be included.

I should like my name to be left out. I am saying this not out of modesty, but I do not have the time to attend to fresh tasks nor have I the aptitude for this kind of work.

I have hesitated to write this letter, for it goes against my grain to ask for things. Had I to write to somebody else, I am sure the letter would have been unwritten.

With love and regards,

Yours,  
Jayaprakash

<sup>1</sup> *Ramanandan Mishra Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 14 for Nehru's reply to this letter.

**87. To Aruna Asaf Ali, 6 May 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Bombay  
6 May 1947

Dear Aruna,<sup>2</sup>

This is the copy of a letter<sup>3</sup> sent to Gandhiji by the President of the Harijan Sevak Sangha, Maharashtra, Kaka Saheb Barve.<sup>4</sup> The letter was posted at

<sup>1</sup> *Pyarelal Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> For biographical note on Aruna Asaf Ali see *JPSW*, Vol. III, item dated 8 March 1946.

<sup>3</sup> This refers to the copy of a letter written by Kaka Saheb Barve to Mahatma Gandhi describing the circumstances under which Sane Guruji undertook a fast to throw open to all the Vitthal temple at Pandharpur. The Sanatanis had propagated that there would be a good deal of physical violence at Pandharpur if Sane Guruji went on a fast. Barve made it clear that there was no danger of physical violence and Sane Guruji's fast took place in a peaceful atmosphere.

<sup>4</sup> V.N. Barve, President Harijan Sewak Sangh, Maharashtra.

Pandharpur, so it might not have reached Gandhiji yet. In any case, the letter very clearly and cogently puts the case for the fast. It will help you to plead Guruji's<sup>1</sup> case with Gandhiji. You may show the letter to him.

Achyut<sup>2</sup> is not here at the moment, so I am writing this note. Anna Saheb gave me this copy of the letter.

Yours  
Jayaprakash

<sup>1</sup> Pandurang Sadashiv Sane alias Sane Guruji (1899-1950); a freedom fighter and Congressman; joined the Congress Socialist Party in 1947.

<sup>2</sup> For biographical note on Achyut Patwardhan see *JPSW*, Vol. II, p. 162.

### **88. Speech at Public Meeting, Secunderabad, 7 May 1947<sup>1</sup>**

The British are quitting India because circumstances have compelled them to do so, but they still hope that if Pakistan is established, they will get bases and airfields in it, and further that they will be asked to establish factories there in return for wheat and jute.

Britain is trying her best to break the solidarity of India through the Muslim League and the princes. Mr. Jinnah has been saying that the 1942 movement was aimed at establishing Hindu raj after driving away the British.

He is another Mir Jafar<sup>2</sup> and has been placing obstacles in the attainment of Indian Independence. His British friends rely on him and on the Indian princes to retain whatever hold they can over India. In the face of the new spirit born out of the 1942 movement, which now permeates India, as shown in the new awakening in the armed forces and among the working classes, and Britain's reduction to a third class power as a result of the last war, the British realize that if they attempt to retain their hold over India, what little goodwill there is for them would be lost for ever. Hence the British decision to quit India.

Quitting of India by the British would mean quitting of Asia. And yet the British have been endeavouring to hold as much of India as they possibly can for military bases and for trade and commerce. It is now certain that the British have absolutely no place in certain provinces of the country where the Congress is in power. They are now trying their best to settle in places where the Congress has less influence. How far they succeed in this, time alone would show.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *National Herald*, 9 May 1947.

<sup>2</sup> Mir Jafar (1691-1765); Commander-in-chief of Sirajuddaulah's army, whose betrayal was responsible for the defeat of Sirajuddaulah and the beginning of British rule in India.

If Pakistan becomes inevitable, the partitioning of the Punjab and Bengal is essential. A truncated Pakistan can not survive without British aid because it would be uneconomical and impracticable.

A major part of India will be independent by June, 1948, but it is not clear whether India as a whole will be free. It will be meaningless if some parts of India become free while others remain under subjugation.

The British also hope to keep their hold on the Indian states by encouraging the rulers to become independent after June, 1948. The British know that the concensus of opinion among the people of the states is to unite with the Indian union. They also know that a ruler can not stand up against the will of the people. The British are supporting the princes through the Political Department. But the people can not be kept under subjugation for long and will sooner or later assert their will.

If there is a struggle between the people and the rulers, it will be harmful to the interests of the rulers. The best course for the rulers, therefore, is to go along with the will of their subjects. I urge the rulers to join the Indian union. The people of the states should be prepared to make sacrifices and bring about conditions which will induce the states to join the union. Sovereignty ultimately vests in the people.

### **89. Statement on Externment from Hyderabad, Bombay, 8 May 1947<sup>1</sup>**

I arrived yesterday noon in Hyderabad and was to be in the state till the 10th morning. The big enthusiastic crowd at the aerodrome and the great crowds that lined the route all the way to Hyderabad city heartened me a great deal. In the evening yesterday I addressed a record meeting at Secunderabad.

This morning at about 4 A.M. I was awakened by the Deputy Commissioner of Police at my friend's residence, where I had put up. He served on me a notice under the orders of the Nizam's Government that I should leave the State immediately. The reason given in the notice was that my speeches were likely to lead to a communal trouble.

I told the police officer that I regretted that I could not comply with their Government's orders because I considered Hyderabad to be as much a part of India as any other and because I considered it to be the most elementary right of every Indian to go wherever he wished in his country. The Deputy Commissioner announced that in that case he had orders to put me under arrest and remove me outside the borders of the State. I asked for a little time to wash and get ready. My wife and I were ready in half an hour and we were all put in a car and driven away while Secunderabad was still

<sup>1</sup> *Tribune*, 9 May 1947.

asleep. On the way we were told that we would be taken to the aerodrome and put into the plane for Bombay. Till it was time for the plane to leave we were detained in an inspection bungalow in a "jagir", a few miles away from the aerodrome. Just before departure time we were brought to the aerodrome and put into the plane which brought us to Bombay at noon today.

The plea of communal tension, which was put out in the notice served on me, was obviously a convenient pretext. The main theme of my speech was democracy and freedom and unity of India. My tour was likely to strengthen the forces of freedom and patriotism and this, rather than the imagined fear of communal trouble, was found too dangerous to be permitted.

I must await the advices from the State Congress and the socialist group in the State. I do wish, however, to visit the State again. And this time I would like to make it clear, so that no false pretexts are available to anybody, that I would not touch upon any communal issue, whatever in my speeches. But the final decision can only be made after the people from the State have come and met me, which may be in a day or two.

#### **90. Statement on Sane Guruji's Fast, Bombay, 9 May 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Sane Guruji, the idol of young Maharashtra and one in whom nobility and humility are always contending for supremacy, is fasting from the first of May. His fast is unto death unless the Vithal Temple at Pandharpur is thrown open to the Harijan community. I have never found Guruji in robust health, and I fear the eight days of his fast must have brought him already to a condition of danger. This must fill every Indian with anxiety and compel him to do what he can to save a noble life from perishing.

It is true that Gandhiji has disapproved<sup>2</sup> of Guruji's fast, but that does not alter the facts which are serious enough in all conscience. One of the noblest and humblest sons of the country is dying inch by inch, approval or disapproval apart, so that public conscience might be awakened to right a wrong which is degrading the whole Hindu community and imperilling its very existence. To my mind it is a great pity that while Mahatmaji and the Bombay Government found it necessary to advise Guruji to abandon his fast, which he has undertaken to discharge a personal moral obligation,

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML). An abridged version was published in *Bombay Chronicle*, *National Herald* and several other papers on 10 May 1947.

<sup>2</sup> Fasting by Sane Guruji for the cause of Harijans' right of entry into the Vithal Temple at Pandharpur was not approved by Gandhi on the ground that this would lead to tension and violence.

they spoke not a word to the trustees of the Temple, who are not only perpetuating a grievous social wrong but also holding in their power a valuable human life.

The Act<sup>3</sup> that the Provincial Government have in mind to regulate such matters should have made it easier for them to exert moral pressure on the trustees to do voluntarily now what they must do later under the compulsion of the law.

I appeal to all the parties concerned and particularly to the people of Maharashtra to see that the great wrong against which Guruji has staked his life is rectified without further delay and Guruji himself is spared to serve his country in the future as he has served it in the past. A good act done voluntarily strengthens the individual and the community. The same act done under legal compulsion produces moral impoverishment. So, let not the contemplated legislation become an excuse for doing nothing and for merely exerting pressure on Sane Guruji to abandon a course of action which he has adopted after deep and prayerful deliberation.

<sup>3</sup> The Harijan Temple Entry Act, passed by the Bombay Legislature on 11 September 1947, enabled the Harijans to enter and worship in the temples of Maharashtra.

## 91. To Jawaharlal Nehru, 9 May 1947<sup>1</sup>

Bombay  
9 May 1947

My dear Bhai,

Your letter about Nepal<sup>2</sup> through Aruna.

I hope you will recall the genesis of the present satyagraha in Nepal. There was a strike in two mills in Jogbani in the course of which a large number of arrests had been made, three women were shot dead, and peaceful processions were regularly lathi charged for a number of days. Among those arrested were B.P. Koirala<sup>3</sup> (President, Nepalese National Congress<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 11.

<sup>3</sup> Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala (1914-82); took part in the Civil Disobedience Movement, 1931-2; member, Congress Socialist Party, 1935; imprisoned for participating in the Quit India Movement, 1942-4; founder-member and acting President, Nepali National Congress, 1947; led an armed struggle against the Rana regime in Nepal in 1950; founded Nepali Congress, 1950; Prime Minister of Nepal, 1959-60; imprisoned, 1960-8; lived as an exile in India, 1968-76; imprisoned again after return to Nepal in 1976; released in 1977.

<sup>4</sup> The Nepali National Congress was established in Calcutta in January 1947, with the objective to overthrow the Rana regime and establish a democratic government under the constitutional leadership of the king of Nepal. Shortly after its formation, it participated in a labour strike at Biratnagar Jute Mills. On 9 April 1950 the Nepali National Congress and the Nepal Prajatantrik Congress combined and formed the Nepali Congress which came to power in 1950 under the leadership of B.P. Koirala.

and a particular friend of mine) and his mother and two sisters. Those arrested were beaten up in the lock-up and otherwise maltreated. When these things were happening, I sent a special messenger to New Delhi, to meet you and the Nepalese Consul-General and the leader of the Nepalese Delegation to the Asian Conference. Our demand, or request, was very simple: release of all those arrested in the course of the strike (no satyagraha had been started till then on the broader issue of civil liberties) and arbitration of the industrial dispute. But neither you nor the Nepalese Government could do anything in the matter. You were not even able to reply to my letter. Since then events have taken their own course. The strike has naturally failed—the backward workers being unable to stand up to the leonine State violence.

It should interest you to know that among those arrested in connection with the strike are five members of the Purnea District Committee of the Socialist Party, including the District Secretary; and further that eighty per cent of the labourers in the mills are Indians.

The Nepalese National Congress naturally considered that the occasion offered a fine opportunity to extend the issue (which indeed the Nepalese Government itself had converted into a political issue) to the broader issue of civil liberties. If an irresponsible, tyrannous government starts arresting people without rhyme or reason, what more natural than for the people to come forward and offer themselves for arrest so that the policy of the government might be reduced to an absurdity and the awakening of the people might result in the assurance of civil liberties? While I consider this natural enough, I should add that I personally was not consulted when the Nepalese National Congress decided to start the satyagraha. I should also add that the Satyagrahis are all Nepalese and most of them are Nepalese residing in Nepal.

So much for the history of this business. Perhaps I should warn you here that the Nepalese Government people are rather polished liars. For instance, Rana Daman Shamsheer told my messenger that it was fantastic to believe that any women had been arrested by the Nepal Government. And as for the killing of the three women processionists, they have all conspired to completely falsify the facts. The dead bodies were removed by the troops and the authorities just deny blandly that any body was killed!

Regarding the withdrawal of the satyagraha, I cannot think of making such a suggestion till the Nepal Government agrees to release unconditionally all those who have been arrested, and refers the demands of the workers who were on strike to a board of arbitration. Even if the strike has failed that should be no reason why the Government should not take such a step. I should consider it highly irresponsible for any public body such as the Nepalese National Congress to withdraw a popular movement, i.e. a movement for popular rights, without cause. However, I shall be in

Patna on the 17th and shall try if possible to get in touch with the Nepalese Congress and send you their reactions.

With the highest regards,

Yours affectionately,  
Jayaprakash Narayan

**92. To J.B. Kripalani, 10 May 1947<sup>1</sup>**

10 May 1947

My dear Dada,

I thank you for your letter of May 6.<sup>2</sup> When we were in Delhi last both Bapuji [Gandhi] and Jawaharlalji spoke to some of us about the need for solidarity within the Congress, particularly in view of the critical times ahead. We told both of them that we completely agree that there should be solidarity, but I fear that those in power in the Congress do not want cooperation of the Socialists. However, we told both Bapuji and Jawaharlalji that we would be very happy to discuss this matter and arrive at some agreement. In our talks with Jawaharlalji it was suggested that casual conversations with one or another of our leaders are not likely to lead to any fruitful result and that if any seriousness is attached to this it would be better for two or three of our top ranking leaders including the President of the Congress to thrash out the matter with a few Socialist representatives. Jawaharlalji thought that this could be done and he suggested that when the Working Committee met next such a conference could be arranged. I do not know how you feel about this, but I hope you will also agree with this view. I will be in Patna on the 16th and shall be obliged to hear from you there.

With regards.

Sincerely yours,  
Jayaprakash

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> In his letter to J.P., Kripalani had written that he was "prepared" to meet J.P. and his friends to discuss the points of differences between them with a view to "bring about solidarity and strengthen the Congress organization".

**93. To Jawaharlal Nehru, 10 May 1947<sup>1</sup>**

10 May 1947

My dear Bhai,

I am enclosing a letter from Kripalaniji which will speak for itself. As you will see he is "prepared" to meet us!

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).



I do not exactly know what to do in this matter. I personally feel very diffident because on many occasions I brought serious questions to their notice but never got the least satisfaction. However, as both you and Gandhiji wish that the problem should be discussed and as I agree whole-heartedly with you in principle, I am prepared to do whatever you advise. When we met in Delhi you suggested that at the time of the next meeting of the Working Committee some of us might meet some of the important members of the Committee and discuss this matter. I don't think that by our just talking to Kripalaniji any result would be obtained. I am returning to Patna on the 16th. I shall be obliged if you let me know there what you wish us to do in this matter. I am enclosing a copy of my reply to Kripalaniji.

Sincerely yours,  
Jayaprakash

#### 94. To Swami Ramanand Tirtha, 13 May 1947<sup>1</sup>

Bombay  
13 May 1947

My dear Swamiji,<sup>2</sup>

Thanks for your letter.<sup>3</sup> Achyut and I have discussed the problem with Shri Ramchandra Rao.<sup>4</sup> He will tell you everything. Achyut is writing to you at some length. There is not much that I have to add to what he is writing. I would only emphasize the need—the very urgent need to my mind—to start a struggle in Hyderabad both on the union and responsible government issues. I hope fervently that the State Congress would not be deflected from its inevitable course of struggle.

I am also anxious to visit the State, preferably in connection with the initiation of the struggle. I hope you may be able to arrange this.

It has been arranged that Mr. Ramchandra Rao should meet me in Andhra on the 2nd or 3rd of June so that we may discuss how the Andhra friends may help the movement in the Andhra districts of the State [Madras].

<sup>1</sup> *Narendra Chapalgaonkar Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> Swami Ramanand Tirtha (1903-73); educationist and freedom fighter; President of the Hyderabad State Congress 1942-50; launched a Satyagraha Movement in 1947 on Nizam's refusal to join India; member Lok Sabha 1952-62.

<sup>3</sup> In his letter Swami Ramanand Tirtha had expressed shock over the way J.P. was arrested and interned from Hyderabad as soon as his speech favouring the union of Hyderabad with India got publicity. However, he thought that "continued defiance" like satyagraha for union and responsible government in Hyderabad—a goal of Socialist Movement there—would not be advisable at that point when people were disturbed and the communal situation had deteriorated.

<sup>4</sup> Ramchandra Rao: Socialist Party worker, Warangal; participated in the Join Indian Union Movement; imprisoned, 1946-8.

We have advised the Socialist Group in the State to support your candidature for the Presidentship.

With regards & greetings,

Yours sincerely,  
Jayaprakash

## 95. To Jawaharlal Nehru, 17 May 1947<sup>1</sup>

17 May 1947

My dear Bhai,

Your letter this morning.<sup>2</sup> As desired by you I would be in Delhi on the 31st morning. I am also asking Narendra Deva, Lohia, Achyut, Asoka and Purushottam to reach there the same day. Our National Executive shall meet from June 1.

Regarding the Nepal affair, I am meeting the leaders of the Nepalese National Congress on the 19th and shall write to you more fully after that. In the meanwhile, I should like to say a word about one of the points raised by you. I hesitate to join issues with you on any question and I hope you will not take my criticism amiss. I do not agree with you that the nationals of another country cannot take shelter in India or run an organization to bring about political changes in their own country. If Afghanistan became the base for any movement in India we will strongly object as you say, but if Afghanistan at all values her independence she would not be coerced by India into preventing that base from functioning. I need not remind you how Great Britain particularly, and also Switzerland, France and Belgium, had always been a haven of refuge for political revolutionaries from the backward countries of Europe such as Germany and Russia and how they had established bases for movements in those countries. Lenin, for instance, could not have guided the revolutionary movement in Russia had he not found refuge in Switzerland and other progressive countries. India, I am sure, would like to build up a similar liberal tradition. It does not appear to me to be the duty of an Indian Government to suppress or forbid the political activities of the nationals of any foreign country. I am afraid you have not laid due stress on this aspect of the question.

Regarding the other questions concerning Nepal that you have raised, I would write to you after consulting the Nepalese Congress representatives.

With the highest regards,

Yours affectionately,  
Jayaprakash

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

<sup>1</sup> *JN Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 12.

**96. To Vallabhbhai Patel, 17 May 1947<sup>1</sup>**

17 May 1947

My dear Sardar Saheb,

Your letter of April 26th<sup>2</sup> reached me in Bombay only on the 12th of this month. All this time the letter apparently was chasing me around the country. I am very sorry that I could not reply to you immediately.

Regarding the speech I made at Calicut, it is true that I had said that you were among those of our leaders who did not look with favour on the socialists and even tried to destroy their influence in the Congress. I may be mistaken, but this is the impression that I have gathered during my many years of experience of inner Congress politics. Your sharp attacks on us within and without the A.I.C.C., the activities of some of your trusted lieutenants like S.K. Patil<sup>3</sup> and Shankerrao Deo and the attitude towards us of the entire Congress machine in every province which is under the control of the so called right-wing—all these have conspired to create this impression in my mind. In my own personal experience, I have found that apart from general talk whenever I raised any specific question such as Bari's vituperous campaign against me in Jamshedpur or the Jharia affair or Bari's presidentship of the B.P.C.C. or securing our cooperation in dealing with the critical riot situation in Bihar, I never got the least response from those in power in the Congress including yourself. Similar has been the experience of my colleagues in every province except one or two. However, I shall be the last to divide our ranks and weaken our forces. I think it is the Congress Ministries in every province which by their ineptitude are weakening the Congress and the country. I and my colleagues are prepared to sit down with you and some of our other leaders to thrash out this question of cooperation between the two wings of the Congress. We are as keenly conscious of the critical times ahead as any of you and should like to put our shoulders to the wheel and take full responsibility in guiding the country towards a safe destiny. When we were in Delhi last, both Bapuji and Jawaharlalji had called us and impressed upon us the necessity of working together and strengthening the Congress. We agreed whole-heartedly with the suggestion in principle but were doubtful of its being worked out in action. In our talks with Jawaharlalji it was suggested by us that individual talks would not produce any result and, therefore, if any seriousness was attached to this question, it was desirable that two or three of our top ranking leaders sat with two or three of us and thrashed out this matter fully.

<sup>1</sup> *Sardar Patel Collection* (NAI).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 10.

<sup>3</sup> For biographical note on S.K. Patil see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 73.

Jawaharlalji has written to me to be present in Delhi by the 31st of this month so that we might have these talks together. I hope you will approve of this suggestion.

Prabhavati and I send you our best regards,

Yours very sincerely,  
Jayaprakash

### **97. Statement on Widening Gulf between Bihar Ministry and Socialists, 18 May 1947<sup>1</sup>**

I returned to Bihar two days ago after an absence of nearly a month and-a-half. The rapid deterioration in the situation in the province during this short period fills me with dismay.

The most disturbing aspect of the situation, as I find it, is the widening gulf between the Ministry and Socialist Congressmen and the growing disregard shown by the Ministry for civil liberties and the democratic freedom of the people. Congress workers who happen to be members of the Socialist party have been arrested on the flimsiest grounds. And the Maintenance of Public Order Act, which the Prime Minister had solemnly assured the Assembly and the people of the province, was meant to be applied only to cases of communal disturbances, has been freely applied in the Ministry's political warfare against Socialist Congressmen. The arrest of Mr. Suraj Narayan Singh<sup>2</sup> and Mr. Gita Prasad Singh,<sup>3</sup> both workers of the highest integrity, under this Act is a matter of abiding shame.

I find further that the situation in relation to the police has also deteriorated greatly.<sup>4</sup> The Government is showing vindictiveness and pettiness in dealing with the strikers and there is no doubt in my mind that the course chosen

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the *Pioneer* and the *National Herald*, 20 May 1947.

<sup>2</sup> Suraj Narayan Singh (1908-73); revolutionary nationalist; participated in the Non-Cooperation Movement, 1920-2, and the Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930-1; joined the Hindustan Socialist Republican Party in 1931, and the Congress Socialist Party in 1936; imprisoned in December 1940; escaped from the prison along with Jayaprakash Narayan and again imprisoned on 11 November 1944, and released in 1947; associated himself with the Kisan and Trade Union movements.

<sup>3</sup> Gita Prasad Singh, a prominent young Socialist leader of Bihar.

<sup>4</sup> Long standing grievances for better pay, allowances, family quarters and other benefits led the Bihar police constables to go on strike in March 1947. The situation frightened the Bihar Government and the army was called to suppress the agitation. The military crackdown led to armed clashes, casualties and arrests of policemen in Patna, Gaya and Munghyr. The repressive measures followed by the Bihar Government with large number of suspensions, retrenchments and detention without trial led to further deterioration in relations between the Government and the policemen.

will only make the Government's task more difficult. The strikers might have committed a wrong but I am sure their loyalty could be easily won by sympathetic handling. It is a matter of great pity that those in power are not prepared to be guided in this matter even by the advice of Mahatma Gandhi. It appears that the matter is very much left in the hands of the departmental chiefs who, I am sure, are more interested in settling their own scores with the constables than in laying the foundations of an honest, patriotic and public-spirited police force.

In this connection it is in public interest that I should draw attention to an alarming disregard shown by Government for law and legal processes. I have been advised by reliable authority that over 300 constables are detained in the Patna Camp Jail for nearly six weeks without any order of remand. Uptill now they have not been produced before any magistrate. The hutch brought from Arrah has been detained in the camp jail all these weeks without even a proper warrant of custody, which was received only four or five days ago. This is a grave failure of Government and deserves the highest public censure. I have no doubt that the necessary legal proceedings will be launched in this matter by the defence.

I know that these words might widen the gulf that already exists between the Ministry and independent Congressmen. But I should like to assure all concerned that I have been compelled to make this statement in the interest of the fair name of the Congress and of the principles which we have held dear for many years past. The country is facing critical times ahead, and it is necessary for all Congressmen to stand together and face the future unitedly. I, therefore, appeal to those who are in power in the Congress in Bihar to give up partisan feelings and narrowness at this moment of crisis. On behalf of my co-workers in the province I have no hesitation in giving the assurance that we will be happy to meet more than half-way if any attempt is made to close up ranks in this province.

#### **98. Statement on Strike in Nepal, 20 May 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Since the strike<sup>2</sup> in Joghani started, leading eventually to Satyagraha by the people of Nepal for the achievement of civil liberties, distressing reports of torture in the Nepal prisons have been persistent. Spokesmen of the Nepal Government always denied these reports. But I have now received

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> See ante, item dated 27 March 1947. fn. 3.

unassailable confirmation of these reports. Shri Kapildeva Singh, a member of the Socialist Party and an ardent labour worker has just been released from the Biratnagar Military Barracks and has come to see me at Patna.

The story he has told me is distressing in the extreme. The mill workers were on a perfectly peaceful strike since 4th March. For twenty days the Nepal Government watched without interfering. In the meanwhile decisions were taken it seems by the reactionary circles at Kathmandu and even when the labour representatives and the President of the Nepalese National Congress were urging His Highness the Prime Minister to refer the dispute to arbitration, a reign of terror was suddenly let loose on the 25th March to crush the strike. Nine arrests were made on this date, including the arrest of Shri B.P. Koirala, President, Nepalese National Congress. My informant Shri Kapildeva was also arrested on the same date and imprisoned in the Biratnagar Military Barracks. On the 27th March Shri Narsingh Narayan Singh, a prominent Congressman of Purnea and secretary of the Purnea committee of the Socialist Party and Shri Vidyadhar Tripathi, another socialist worker, were arrested. I learn from Shri Kapildeva Singh that when they were taken to the Military Barracks they had bruises on their body and both complained of severe pain in their backs. For some time afterwards they were not physically assaulted but when they protested against the conditions in which they were imprisoned and demanded their improvement their physical maltreatment started. The military captain, whenever he came to the Barracks began to kick them around and slap them and at night orders were given to wake them up twice every hour. In the night too, whenever the Captain came, and usually he came three or four times, he kicked them with his boots. Every time an officer came into their cell he demanded that they should make a written apology and when they refused they were abused and slapped in the face and kicked and beaten. When this treatment started all the three prisoners in the Military Barracks went on a hunger-strike. One of them, i.e. Shri Kapildeva Singh, has since been released, his thumb impression having been taken on some bit of paper by force, but Shri Narasingh Narayan Singh and Vidyadhar Tripathi are still undergoing that suffering and humiliation and are still on hunger-strike.

That the Nepal Government should so treat Indians in its prisons is an intolerable state of affairs. I hope the Provincial Government and also the Central Government would immediately demand the release of these prisoners, who are being detained without trial, and demand from the Nepal Government proper compensation for ill-treating Indian nationals. This is a matter of utmost seriousness and I hope the Provincial and Central governments will give it their most earnest consideration.

99. To Swami Ramanand Tirtha, 20 May 1947<sup>1</sup>

20 May 1947

My dear Swamiji,

I hope you received my previous letter. I forgot to inform you earlier that I have asked my friend, Mr. Purushottam Trikamdas<sup>2</sup>, to accept the invitation from the State Congress and to attend your annual conference.<sup>3</sup> He would probably reach Hyderabad on the 29th. I have written to Gore<sup>4</sup> also to go for the conference if possible, a couple of days earlier.

I have not heard yet of the election results, but I hope that you have been elected. Please send me a wire at Patna when the results are known.

Sincerely yours,  
Jayaprakash

<sup>1</sup> *Narendra Chapalgaonkar Papers* (NAI).

<sup>2</sup> For biographical note on Purushottam Trikamdas see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> The Conference date was fixed on 16 June 1947.

<sup>4</sup> Narayan Ganesh Gore (1907-93): Freedom fighter; imprisoned during Quit India Movement; founder-member of the Congress Socialist Party; Joint Secretary, Socialist Party, 1948; General Secretary, Praja Socialist Party, 1953-4; member, Lok Sabha, 1957-62; Chairman, Praja Socialist Party, 1965-8; Mayor of Poona, 1967-8; member, Rajya Sabha, 1970; High Commissioner to United Kingdom, 1977-9. Works include *History of the United States of America*; *Gandhiji's Many Aspects* (both in Marathi).

100. To Vallabhbhai Patel, 29 May 1947<sup>1</sup>

Patna

29 May 1947

My dear Sardar Saheb,

I thank you for your letter of May 23 from Mussoorie.<sup>2</sup> In spite of its underlying bitterness, I am rather glad that you have enabled me to understand you better.

Let me first answer the points raised by you. I do not yet seem to have cleared the point about my Calicut speech. You seem to think that I did not tell the Calicut public what I told you in my letter. That is not so. I said at Calicut exactly what I said in my letter. I was speaking on the relation of the socialists with the Congress and was emphasizing the fact that as far as the fight for freedom was concerned the socialists had no difference whatever with the Congress and that in that regard they were as true and loyal Congressmen as others. I referred them to your Bombay speech and said that Sardar Vallabhbhai has appealed to us not to leave the Congress till freedom is achieved. I said I was rather surprised at that appeal because

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 13.

it was Sardar Sahab and his lieutenants particularly who had done so much in the past to oust the socialists from the Congress and to prevent their growth within the Congress. I added finally that the appeal in any case was unnecessary because the socialists had never decided to leave the Congress.

This in brief is what I had said at Calicut. I cannot help it if the newspaper report you saw, gave a different version. The best thing to do in the circumstance is to call for a copy of the verbatim C.I.D. report.

As regards the Naval Rating incident,<sup>1</sup> I do not know how you got the impression that I disapproved of what was done by my colleagues then. It is possible that when you gave me a certain version of happenings I said that it was wrong for any one to have done what you described. But I knew nothing about the actual facts, and I remember that my friends gave me a picture of events materially different from the one I had got from you. At this distance of time I find it hard to remember all that we talked about this matter but I have one distinct recollection. I remember your telling me of certain things done by Aruna and Purushottam when I had suggested that since the account I had heard from them was different it would be useful for all of us to sit together and remove misunderstanding. But you made no response to the suggestion and the matter rested there. May I say that even at this late hour it might be useful to straighten out this Naval Rating affair, because I doubt if even now you have an unbiased account of all that happened then. For instance, you say in our letter that my friends colluded with the communists in creating an embarrassing situation. That certainly is not true. You should know by now that whatever they may or may not have done they had nothing whatever to do with the communists.

You feel bitter about what Aruna and my other friends said about the manner in which you handled the situation. They too complain of the strong language, verging on abuse, which you used then against them.

You write that on several occasions you made earnest endeavours to make reconciliation and secure our cooperation, but every time you met with a rebuff. This is a rather astounding statement. As far as I am concerned, I know only of vague talks in which remarks such as getting old and our taking your places were made, but I never knew of any serious attempt made to secure our cooperation. On the other hand, my personal experience has been that my cooperation has not been accepted even when offered at a critical time. The instances that I gave in my previous letter were to show that whenever I attempted to have the cooperation talk translated into practice I faced a blank wall.

You say that it is your sad experience that although I often agreed with your decisions and policy, I disagreed afterwards on grounds of party discipline. I agree that this has happened sometimes, though not often. But

<sup>1</sup> See item no. 66, fn. 2.



may I submit that this is not a matter of which any grievance can be made. It is rather a part of the logic of the situation. In any case, I hope you will concede that there never has been deception in my conduct. I have always been straight-forward in the expression of my views and when my individual opinion has differed from that of my group I have made no secret of the fact that in order to take the Congress in the direction which we wish to take I shall stand by and advocate our group's view.

You say, again, I have made certain charges against the Congress Ministries. I made no specific charge in my letter but only wrote of their ineptitude. You say further that the Ministries have graver charges against me. I am surprised to hear this. If they have anything against me it was open to them to send for me and put the matter before me. But not even once has any minister done so. On the other hand, I have gone to them not once but several times.

You say that I have embarrassed the Ministries by my indiscreet speeches about arresting governors. It would be an awkward business to investigate into the spoken indiscretions of Congress leaders, and it might be found then that a hot-head like Jayaprakash is a lesser culprit. As for the arrest of governors I never said that the Ministers should arrest them now. All I used to say was that if and when there is another fight with the British, I should like that the Ministers continued in office and, instead of allowing themselves to be arrested by the Governors, had the latter arrested. If this embarrassed the Ministers, I am sorry for them. It may be wrong or right politically to say such things, but why should they cause embarrassment to our Ministers?

Then you accuse me of spreading general disloyalty and indiscipline in the Police. I deny this charge completely. If there is "disloyalty" among the Bihar Police, the Bihar Ministry is largely responsible for it. I think I wrote to you once that I had seen the Bihar Premier thrice in this connection and also written to him once or twice but there was absolutely no response from him. I hope the free Indian governments will not follow the British policy of inventing "agitators" behind every incident provoked by their misrule. In Bihar a socialist here or a socialist there might have said an indiscreet thing about the Police or given them an indiscreet advice, but it would be foolish to believe that a big incident like the last Police strike could have been caused merely by socialist incitement. I should also like to warn you that the way the Bihar Ministry is handling this affair is sure to lead a deep-rooted discontent and greater disloyalty. You might know that the Bihar Ministry have gone so far as to believe that even Bapu's help and advice would embarrass their administration.

I hope you will forgive me for saying that I am surprised at the extent of your misinformation and one-sided views. You say that in the Jharia coal mines I employed a man who I knew well enough was expelled from the

Congress organization. The man you refer to, Mukutdhari Singh, was never expelled from the Congress. He is a prominent Congress worker of Shahabad and is still a member of the P.C.C. You say further that I entrusted him with the work of bringing about a strike in the mines. Surely, if you think this is the way the Socialist Party works among labour, you should have nothing to do with us. Mukutdhari Singh among others (such as Awadhesh Narayan, Mundrika Singh, Aliknarayan Jha, all graduates) was sent by the Bihar Socialist Party to work among and organize the miners in Jharia and not just to foment strikes. In an industry where wages and working and living conditions have been so low and unsatisfactory, organization of a union leads immediately to formulation of demands. Sometimes the employers were sensible, i.e. they recognized the union and settled with it. In the case of the Kustore Colliery, the owners were not prepared to settle on fair terms and that led to strike. The strike was on when the Central Government appointed a Conciliation Board. I need not go into the injustice there done to us and the mine-workers organized in our unions only because Prof. Bari<sup>4</sup> was not prepared to sit with a socialist. You say again that Mukutdhari Singh has been expelled by our local party for misappropriation of funds. This again is an astounding piece of misinformation. The facts are these: Mukutdhari Singh, President of the Lodna Colliery Workers Union (the largest colliery unit I believe in Jharia), was negotiating with the management. The negotiation had continued for two days when on the instigation of Sutto Sen (who was Bari's lieutenant) and his workers, a strike was precipitated.<sup>5</sup> Mukut Babu's colleagues in the union—all socialists—felt that they must support the strike even though it was not properly declared. Mukut Babu differed and kept away and in private conversation spoke against the unauthorized strike. The local party took objection to his conduct and recommended to the Provincial Party to take action against him. No charge of misappropriation of funds was ever made. I know of this matter rather intimately because I have just returned from Jharia after spending two days there.

Lastly, let me say a word about the Bari episode. Why I mentioned the matter in my letter to you was that that was one of the rare occasions when I tried to find out if the High Command would take an impartial view and correct a wrong. I was completely disillusioned then. Prof. Bari had many

<sup>4</sup> Moulvi Abdul Bari; freedom fighter, participated in the Khilafat and Non-Cooperation Movements, 1919-22, and Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930-1; President of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee, 1946, assassinated on 2 March 1947.

<sup>5</sup> All the collieries in Jharia went on strike from 24 April 1947 following the apparent breakdown of negotiation between the union leaders and the management with regard to full payment to workers who could not do work during the breakdown period, reinstatement of a retrenched Assistant Manager of the colliery; increase in pay and better living conditions. Socialist leaders of the colliery workers complained that the Congress officials and Congress Union leaders had ignored and slighted them during the course of negotiation.

virtues, though those who knew him at close quarters would not be so enthusiastic about them as you have been in your letter. His hold over Jamshedpur labour was also spurious inasmuch as it was based on tall promises, self-praise and the support of the Provincial Congress, the Provincial Government, the Congress High Command. To compare the Tata Workers Union with the Ahmedabad Union is to insult the latter. However, when I wrote to you and some other members of the High Command about Prof. Bari, I did not want any of you to help me to win the leadership of Jamshedpur labour—I was not interested in that. Prof. Bari was abusing me and my friends day in and day out—not politically but personally—in indecent bazar language; his men were assaulting our workers and in one case had kidnapped one of them and illegally confined him and beaten him up to unconsciousness. I brought these facts to your notice and to the notice of our other leaders in the hope that such things would be stopped. But nothing happened and all that we were told was that “you know how Bari is etc.”, I naturally concluded that I could not expect impartial treatment from the High Command.

Regarding Prof. Bari’s election to the Bihar Congress Presidentship, I do not hold you responsible for it. Sometimes in my letter I used the word “you” collectively and included other members of the High Command. When I heard that Prof. Bari was to be made the President of the B.P.C.C. I wrote a short note to Rajen Babu saying that that would be a tragedy for the Province. I felt that if our cooperation was at all valued, no one who was so personally and violently inimical towards me and my group should be made President. To talk of democracy in this connection is irrelevant.

You say Bari had serious charges against me. If that was so, it is strange that I was never told about them.

Regarding your complaint against Munshi Ahmed Din;<sup>6</sup> I am sure you have been wrongly informed that he has been attacking you for years past. But it is true, I believe, that he has had rather hard things to say about your Meerut speech and your right or wrong hand in the communal evolution of the Punjab Congress.

You accuse me of not forgetting the past. You misunderstand me. I wrote of my past experiences not because I cannot let bygones be bygones, but because I was anxious to point out that though in the past you and our other leaders talked of wanting our cooperation, nothing was done in practice to obtain or accept it when offered.

This letter has already grown unconscionably long and I must close now. I had to write at some length in order to remove the misunderstandings abounding in your letter. But I wish to assure you that nothing that has

<sup>6</sup> Munshi Ahmed Din (1906-67). Socialist leader in Punjab and freedom fighter; after Partition organized Pakistan Socialist Party in Karachi; attended Socialist Party Conference at Nasik, March 1948.

happened in the past can stand in the way of cooperation and understanding in the future. But, I should point out that, as we are not a power group in the Congress, cooperation for us depends not on the distribution of loaves and fishes but on political adjustments between the ideologies and programmes of the High Command and our group. I believe such an adjustment is not impossible. But it depends more on you than any one else in the Congress, and so I hope you will pursue this matter till we have come to concrete conclusions.

With the highest regards,

Yours affectionately,  
Jayaprakash Narayan

### 101. To K.B. Vaidya, 1 June 1947<sup>1</sup>

1 June 1947

Dear Mr. Vaidya,<sup>2</sup>

Asoka has passed on your letter<sup>3</sup> to me. I am very glad to know that you and other friends associated with you have taken so much pains about the collection of funds and I am also glad to know that you will be able to raise the whole amount that we wanted at this stage. I do not think you need my thanks, but please do convey my thanks to your other associates. I might be in Bombay at the end of this month, but that is not very certain yet.

K.B. Vaidya, Esq.  
Bharat Building  
Bombay

Sincerely yours,  
J.P.

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> Keshav Balakrishna Vaidya (1893- ): Business executive and writer; assistant manager Scindhia Steam Navigation; director Benett Coleman & Co. Ltd. (*Times of India*); Secretary Bombay Textile Ltd.; in far East, general manager of Amritlal Ojha & Co. Ltd. (Hongkong; Canton and Shanghai); Chief editor, *Canton Daily, Sun & Canton Truth*; president Indian Chamber of commerce, Hongkong Works include *Reflection Canton Revolt and After*; *Where will Japan Move and When*; *China's Resistance*.

<sup>3</sup> Vaidya in his letter dated 26 May had requested Asoka to assure J.P. that he had not lost sight of the work and that "the collection would be completed within a few days".

### 102. To Vallabhbhai Patel, 4 June 1947<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
4 June 1947

My dear Sardar Saheb,

I am leaving for Gorakhpur to attend the All India Railwaymen's Federation

<sup>1</sup> *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Papers* (N.A.I.).

Convention and shall return on the 8th morning. Dr. Lohia, Mrs. Kamaladevi are staying on. Acharya Narendra Deva also fortunately arrived yesterday and he is also staying on. I am anxious that the talks we have had should result in something concrete and definite. As you may remember, I wrote to you that you alone could bring these talks to a definite conclusion.<sup>2</sup> I am writing to request you to take the initiative in this matter and see that it is not just talked out. I was not present in the Working Committee when this matter came up for discussion, but I understand that the Committee showed little interest in this question and the discussion was listless. If this is the attitude, nothing hopeful can be expected.

Narendradeva is staying with Aruna, Lohia with Kripalaniji & Kamaladevi is in the Constitution House.

With greetings and regards,

Yours affectionately,  
Jayaprakash

<sup>2</sup> See J.P.'s letter to Sardar Patel, 29 May 1947, item no. 100.

### **103. Speech at Public Meeting, Gorakhpur, 5 June 1947<sup>1</sup>**

I wish to make it clear today that Indian Socialists were always opposed to any compromise at the price of the country's division. At present there are only three parties, who knows tomorrow there may be more. There is the rumour that the Pakistan area might like to remain within the British Commonwealth. The Britishers' stay in any part of the country is perilous enough and it will not help us in achieving complete independence.

The question arises what are we to do then? Will Hindus and Muslims organize themselves separately for domination of each other? If we think on those lines there would be internecine civil strife not only between Hindustan and Pakistan, but in every village of the country. It is true that barbarities and brutalities practised in the Punjab know no parallel in the history of the world, but we must exercise caution and give the coolest possible consideration to the problems.

Our future lies only in making the masses of Hindustan realize that the basic problems of food, clothing, wages, etc., are the same, be they in Hindustan or in Pakistan and are not connected with communities and that their solution also is one and the same, that is elimination of exploitation when tension dies down. We should realize that programmes for the

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Pioneer and Searchlight*, 8 June 1947.

peasantry and labour of both Hindustan and Pakistan will be the same if we are able to convince our masses that their future can only be safeguarded by a non-communal, political and economic programme. But we must do so by peaceful means. The use of violence will land our country in utter chaos and reactionary forces may gain an upper hand.

I have had discussion with Mahatma Gandhi on these problems recently, and it is highly probable that he may assist us in our endeavours in this direction. If this happens what we might achieve in years, we can achieve in months.

I call upon all youngmen and particularly educated ones to join our ranks and become soldiers for establishing an ideal society in this country.

**104. To His Highness, the Maharaja of Nepal,  
New Delhi, 9 June 1947<sup>1</sup>**

1 Narendra Place  
New Delhi  
9 June 1947

Your Highness,

Since my release from prison in April last year it has been my desire to write to Your Highness to explain and express my regrets for the incident that took place in Hanuman Nagar during 1943. Soon after my release I had the good fortune to meet the Consul General of Nepal at Delhi. By a stroke of good luck I was also able to meet then General Bahadur Shamsheer Jung Bahadur Rana.<sup>2</sup> I had explained to these high representatives of your Government that when I and my colleagues escaped forcibly from the custody of the Governor of Hanuman Nagar, we had no intention to commit an offence against the laws of Nepal nor to do anything whatever to injure the interests of your country. I had explained to them that as our country was fighting for freedom and as we had been arrested<sup>3</sup> in the course of that struggle on the insistence of the then Government of India, we had to secure

<sup>1</sup> Vijayalakshmi's ed., *Jayaprakash Narayan sixty first birthday celebration: Commemoration volume*, Madras, 1962. The date of the letter given here has been taken from this publication. However, the Maharaja's reply (for text see Appendix 15) gives 3rd July as the date.

<sup>2</sup> Mohun Shamsheer Jung Bahadur Rana (1885-1965); Chief of the Staff 1902-29; in charge of War Office, 1939-45; Commander-in-Chief, Nepalese Army, 1945-8; Prime Minister and Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Nepal, 1948-51; Prime Minister and Defence Minister May to November 1951; resigned and settled in Bangalore in 1951.

<sup>3</sup> After his escape from Hazaribagh Central Jail in November 1942, along with four of his comrades, J.P. visited several places in India to meet the underground freedom fighters who were engaged in continuing the struggle launched in August 1942 and then proceeded to the terai area of Nepal, accompanied by Rammanohar Lohia and others, with a view to organizing an armed force of guerrilla warriors, to be called *Azad Dasta*. However, the

our freedom at any cost. I take this opportunity to offer to Your Highness personally and to your Government my sincere regrets for that incident. I further take this opportunity to assure Your Highness that I and my colleagues, both as Congressmen and socialists, have the greatest goodwill for Nepal and wish her all prosperity and progress. I should also like to assure you that we fully respect the independence of Nepal and wish to do nothing that may limit or injure that independence.

I am anxious to send a small sum of money, viz., Rs. 2,000 as a token of deep sympathy, to the families of those guards who were killed in the fighting at the time we escaped. I hope Your Highness would permit this. I shall have the amount sent directly to the families concerned or through the Governor of Hanuman Nagar as Your Highness may desire.

When we were arrested, all our books and personal effects were seized by the Nepal Government. The other articles were of no value, but among the books there were some rare volumes which are not available anywhere now. Therefore, may I request Your Highness to be good enough to order the books to be returned to me? The books may be sent to my friend, Colonel Daman Shamsher, your Consul-General here. He will be able to pass them on to me.

I should like to have Your Highness, permission to say a few words about the present Satyagraha for civil liberties. I have every hope that as a result of the declaration issued by Your Highness and of the advice tendered by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Satyagraha will be withdrawn. But I am anxious to impress upon Your Highness, in the interest of the peace and progress of Nepal, the need to release unconditionally all the political prisoners arrested either during the Biratnagar strike, the subsequent Satyagraha or in the course of earlier political movements. Such an act of amnesty will enhance a great deal the prestige of Nepal in India and among civilized nations everywhere and ensure fully the success of the constitutional reforms that Your Highness is contemplating.

Regarding those in prison, may I draw the attention of Your Highness particularly to the Koirala family of which not only three men but even three ladies are in prison. The imprisonment of ladies for political offences, I am constrained to say, brings any Government into ill-repute. Further Pandit Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala who is the President of the Nepali National Congress is a very dear friend of mine, and as he is in delicate health, I am rather anxious for him. I hear present rumours that whatever

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British intelligence got a scent of it and at their instigation the Nepalese Police arrested J.P. and some of his friends including Lohia and put them in a prison at Hanuman Nagar (modern Raj Biraj, in the Saptari district). The volunteers of *Azad Dasta* stormed the place at night and got J.P., Lohia and others released. In the encounter several policemen were injured and one died. J.P. was apparently troubled by that and wanted to do something to help the victims.

may happen he will not be released. I do earnestly hope that these rumours are false and that there will be no vindictive policy pursued in regard to any family or any individual and that Your Highness will be gracious enough to grant a generous amnesty to all.

Further, in regard to the contemplated reforms may I emphasize, as a friend and well-wisher of Nepal, that freedom of speech and organization should be granted and that all bodies that are prepared to function constitutionally and within the law should be permitted to work without let or hindrance. One such body is the Nepali National Congress, which is a loyal and patriotic organization, zealous of the independence of Nepal and devoted to its progress and happiness. I would earnestly request Your Highness to allow the Nepali National Congress to function legitimately in Nepal. This would remove much conflict and bitterness and smoothen the relations between the Government and the people.

With best wishes for Your Highness health and happiness,

I remain,

Yours respectfully,  
Jayaprakash Narayan

#### 105. To C.P. Scott, 10 June 1947<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi,  
10 June 1947

Dear Sir,<sup>2</sup>

I thank you for your letter<sup>3</sup> of yesterday and am sorry for the delay in replying. Will you be good enough to convey my thanks to the Viceroy for his desire to see me? I regret, however, that I am unable at present to avail of the opportunity he has offered.

Yours faithfully,  
Jayaprakash Narayan

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> C.P. Scott, Private Secretary to Lord Mountbatten, Viceroy of India.

<sup>3</sup> On 9 June Scott had informed J.P. about the Viceroy giving him an appointment at 3.30 on 10 June and requested him to confirm it.

#### 106. Statement on the Socialist Party's Policy regarding the Trade Union Movement, 10 June 1947<sup>1</sup>

The National Executive of the Socialist Party has decided to withdraw from the All-India Trade Union Congress and not to join the Indian National

<sup>1</sup> *National Herald*, 11 June 1947. The statement was issued to Press on 10 June 1947 and published in many daily papers the next day.



Trade Union Congress. The trade union movement is already splintered. The Socialist Party faced with this division and a situation wherein the trade union organizations are functioning as adjuncts of different political parties has no alternative except to keep aloof from the three trade union organizations<sup>1</sup> and to concentrate in building up a sound, healthy socialist trade union movement.

Among the tasks the socialist movement faces in the country today, the most important is the unionisation of industrial workers along lines that will enable them to build up industrial democracy. For the establishment of a democratic socialist society, a trade union movement, impregnated with democratic socialist ideals, is absolutely necessary. The Socialist Party has to build up such a trade union movement. The party, in its turn, will be strengthened and vitalised by the organised trade union movement. The political and trade union wings of the labour movement must necessarily share the same ideals and loyalties.

In pursuance of this policy, the national executive has further decided to set up a labour bureau to guide and develop the trade union movement connected with the Socialist Party.

Because of the inability of the Socialists to join the INTUC sponsored by the Hindustan Mazdur Sevak Sangh, the national executive directs its members to withdraw from the Sangh.

<sup>1</sup> The three Trade Union Organizations were All India Trade Union Congress, United Trade Union Congress and the Indian National Trade Union Congress, founded by the Indian National Congress.

### **107. Appeal to Railwaymen, 20 June 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Comrades, the convention of the All India Railwaymen's Federation at Gorakhpur has fixed June 27 as a special day when railwaymen, throughout the country should demonstrate once again the solidarity for which they are famous and when they should raise their united voice in support of the demands which the Gorakhpur convention framed after examination of the Central Pay Commission's report.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Searchlight*, 23 June 1947. Appeal issued at Ranchi.

<sup>2</sup> These demands included protection against reduction of dearness relief by allowing option to choose between the quantum of relief hitherto given in kind or cash or cash allowance proposed by the Pay Commission whichever might be more favourable; fixation of a minimum scale of Rs. 55 to 130 for artisans and skilled staff in railway workshops, sheds and other departments; ensuring that on fixation of the scales no employee should suffer reduction in the basic pay and allowance or denied the next higher stage in the proposed scale; and lastly, continuance of assurance against retrenchment, pending the publication of the Railway Adjudicator's Report and its consideration by the Federation.

I wish hereby to remind you all of this decision of the Convention and appeal to you to make on June 27 such an exemplary demonstration of your strength and solidarity that no one may ever deny to you justice and a fair deal. Hundreds of meetings should be held and the resolution of the Convention reiterated. Wherever desirable in order to appeal to wider public for support, there should be processions and other suitable demonstrations. But all demonstrations must be orderly and peaceful and there should be no strikes on that day.

I have been informed by the General Secretary of the Federation that the Railway Board will meet the representatives of the Federation on July 10. Let railwaymen show on June 27 what sanctions their representatives will have behind them when they meet the Railway Board.

#### **108. Press Interview on Socialist Party's Labour Policy, 22 June 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Labour as such was never united in India. Mr. M.N. Roy<sup>2</sup> set the ball of division rolling by seceding with his followers from the parent body and forming a new organization.<sup>3</sup> In the A.I.T.U.C. itself differences among primary unions always existed. In the Trade Union Congress there was an unseemly scramble for office at the time of election, which resulted in intensification of differences. Unity was further affected when the Congress felt that it should not lend its goodwill to the A.I.T.U.C., which to all intents and purposes was guided by Communists, and decided to form a separate organization.

The Socialist Party has not yet decided to support the new organization. For the present, Socialists would only be watching the progress, or otherwise, of labour movements under these two organizations. The Socialist Party, however, follows a different policy from that of the newly formed I.N.T.U.C., because the new organization believes in compulsory arbitration to settle labour disputes with a view to avoiding trouble to the governments at present run by the Congress.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *National Herald*, 23 June 1947. JP expressed his views in the course of a talk with the representative of the United Press of India at Balasore.

<sup>2</sup> Manabendranath Roy (1887-1954): one of the prominent Indian revolutionaries and thinkers; went abroad—Java, China, Japan—in search of arms, 1915; reached America, then Mexico and organized Mexican Communist Party, 1917; went to Moscow on Lenin's invitation, 1919 and addressed the second conference of the Comintern; returned to India and sent to jail 1930-7; joined Congress after release from prison but left it in 1940 to found the Radical Democratic Party, which later developed into the Radical Humanist Movement. Works include *Fascism, Revolution and Counter Revolution in China*, *New Humanism*, *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution*.

<sup>3</sup> Trade Union Congress.

The programme of the Socialist Party in regard to labour is to strengthen the primary unions and organizations on the basis of one union for each of the trades, and to eliminate the existing territorial divisions of the unions. After this stage the formation of an all-India Congress of Unions is contemplated.

The structure of trade unionism must be built on the solid bricks of strong primary unions over which there must be laid the super structure of an all India Congress of such unions. This will be an invincible fortress protecting the interest of labour against political and communal onslaughts.

### **109. Statement on some Railway Workers' Strike, 28 June 1947<sup>1</sup>**

I was surprised to find from this morning's papers that the workers of the railway workshops of Parel and Matunga [Bombay] observed a strike yesterday in accordance with the decision of the G.I.P. Railwaymen's union.<sup>2</sup> June 27 was fixed as Railwaymen's Day by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation so that railway workers by holding public meetings and taking out processions could demonstrate their solidarity and their active support to the Gorakhpur decisions of the federation on the pay commission report. In this connection the federation had made it particularly clear at Gorakhpur that there should be no strikes—token or otherwise—on this day. A few days ago when I, as president of the federation, appealed to railwaymen to observe the day in a befitting manner, I again made it clear that there should be no strikes.

The G.I.P. Railwaymen's Union and the workers of Parel and Matunga are parts of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation and bound to accept its decisions and abide by its discipline. But the G.I.P. Railwaymen's Union and its branches at Parel and Matunga are controlled by members of the Communist Party, and this is not the first time that the Communists have flouted the discipline of the federation and brought disunity and disruption into that splendid labour organization. However, I am sure that this will be the last time that they will be allowed to act in this manner. If they remain within the federation they will have to accept its discipline unreservedly.

Regarding the Parel-Matunga affairs, necessary action will be taken by the federation after a proper inquiry has been made.

<sup>1</sup> *National Herald*, 29 June 1947. Statement issued at Patna.

<sup>2</sup> 15,000 workers of the four railway workshops in the city of Parel and Matunga of G.I.P. Railway and Mahatma and Lower Parel workshops of B.B. and C.I. Railway went on strike. During the strike some of the workers took resort to violence and attempted to set fire on wagons. Police intervened and opened fire twice to bring the situation under control.

I should like to take this opportunity to warn all workers against the disruptive tactics of those who weaken the organized strength of the working class by indiscipline and by acts calculated to bring the trade union movement into disrepute and to create a wider gulf between the worker and the public. Such acts as stone-throwing cannot lead the workers to success or add to the strength of their organization.

I am grieved to learn that fire was opened twice on the workers. But, as it is difficult to say at present how far this action was necessary in the interest of public safety, I desist from making any further comments. I however, offer my heart-felt sympathy to the railway workers who have suffered on account of the folly of their leaders, and also to the members of the public who suffered injury and other loss on account of the stone-throwing by the workers.

#### **110. Presidential Address at Delhi Provincial Political Conference, 30 June 1947<sup>1</sup>**

The Congress must decide whom it would represent—the peasants and workers or zamindars and millionaires. One could not benefit both the worker and the zamindar at one and the same time. As long as we had to fight the British, there was a united front and everyone, millionaire or peasant could become a member of the Congress. But that stage was past. The Congress has become a Government party and its character has changed. Any party that assumes office changes its complexion and no such party can say that it represents peasants and workers as also zamindars.

There is a struggle within the Congress for control of the organization. Various sections, who did not support the Congress in 1942, are joining it now and trying by their wealth to gain control. They are achieving some measure of success. They have bought up big newspapers and are making preparations to capture the Congress. I cannot say what the final outcome of the struggle between the rich and the poor within the Congress will be, but if for the sake of argument, we assume that the Congress is captured by the rich, will that Congress satisfy the people? The Congress belongs to the peasants and workers and they must try and see that the rich do not control it.

Some people claim that there are only two ways—the Socialist way and Gandhiji's way. They say that the people who control the Congress today are Gandhites and the socialists should be ousted. They are wrong. I do not think that Gandhiji's way and the Socialist way are totally separate. The Socialists are very close to those Gandhites who are not connected with

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *National Herald*, 3 July 1947.

power politics but are engaged in the constructive programme and it is possible for them to co-operate with each other. In many ways they are alike. The governing section uses Gandhiji's name only for election purposes. It is not hidden from the people what tears Gandhiji has been shedding over the condition of the Congress today and how he has made every effort but failed to stop the deterioration in the Congress organization. Gandhiji does not want zamindars or millionaires or princes to dominate the Congress. On the other hand, the Socialists want to usher in Socialism in a non-violent way and through constitutional means.

I strongly condemn those who talk in terms of Hindu Raj or Muslim Raj. What the people want is neither Hindu Raj nor Muslim Raj, but the raj of the workers and peasants. The ultimate effect of such a state in India will be that Pakistan will perforce have to follow suit and the two parts of the country will be reunified.

Regarding communal riots I would like to point out that the road to revenge has no end. Its only result will be that the British or some other power will again enslave the country and the world will say that we are barbarians unable to govern ourselves.

Regarding the political developments in the country it is possible that there is no alternative to the Mountbatten Plan today, but I am not prepared to accept that a few months ago or perhaps a year ago there was no other road open to us. Nobody is happy over the present settlement, not even those who made it. If there had been a revolution then perhaps all our internal differences would have been settled, including the Hindu-Muslim problem and the question of the princes.

As far as economic policy is concerned, I agree that we must step up production as much as possible, but at the same time we should remember that until the workers and peasants feel that what they are producing is for the benefit of the country as a whole and not for the profit of a few, we can not expect them to work on low wages. We must convince the railway workers, for instance, that they have a major role in the running of the railways otherwise, it is no use asking them to sacrifice. If we give them an equal voice with the Railway Board in the administration of railways, then the whole picture will change.

#### **111. Appeal to Railway Workers to Resume Work, 1 July 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Since I issued the statement<sup>2</sup> from Parel on the basis of newspaper reports regarding the trouble in the Parel and Matunga Workshops in Bombay I have met my friend Comrade Khedgikar,<sup>3</sup> President of the G.I.P. Railway-

<sup>1</sup> *Pioneer*, 3 July 1947.

<sup>2</sup> See item no. 109, fn. 2.

men's Union. I am relieved to find from him that not only had the G.I.P. Union not called the workers to strike but it had also persistently, through handbills, posters and public meetings warned them against a strike. The Parel and Matunga branches of the Union, which I now understand are not controlled by Communists, had done likewise. The present trouble therefore seems to be instigated by groups that are interested in disrupting the labour movement and in fomenting unnecessary civil disturbance.

As President of the Railwaymen Federation I appeal to all the workers of the G.I.P. and B.B. and C.I. Railways to go back to work immediately and restore order and peace in their shops and lines. The lock-out declared by the administrations should in these circumstances be immediately withdrawn. The case of the railway workers is in the hands of the Federation and if there is any kind of action necessary for railwaymen of the country to enforce their demands, the Federation will give the call at the appropriate moment.

Unless we all act in an organized and disciplined manner, we ourselves and the fine movement that railwaymen have built up will suffer. I trust the workers will heed my advice and be content to act through their accredited representative and their unions.

<sup>3</sup> For biographical note on R.A. Khedgikar see *JPSW*, Vol. 1, p. 93.

## **112. Inaugural Address at Bombay Labour College, Bombay, 12 July 1947<sup>1</sup>**

I Congratulate the Bombay Socialist Party on its success in organizing this Labour College.<sup>2</sup>

Those who are acquainted with the labour movement in this country know very well how few trained labour workers there are today and how the trade union movement suffers on that account. Today the trade union worker, more often than not, is a mere agitator without any knowledge of the industry with which he is connected or of labour problem or of any other trade union activity but that of framing demands and precipitating strikes. In such conditions our trusting and credulous workers are at the mercy of any demagogue who knows how to abuse the employer and the government and how to make promises and formulate exorbitant demands.

<sup>1</sup> *Janata*, 20 July 1947.

<sup>2</sup> The Bombay Labour College had been organized by the Bombay Socialist Party to train its trade union workers.

There is hardly a trade union in this country today except perhaps one or two where any constructive work, educational, co-operative or other, is being done or where the membership is regular and steady. Also, there is hardly a trade union which is interested in creating a sense of responsibility which the working class in India must soon have to do. If the present conditions continue, the Indian worker will become a prey to communal or any other irrational social or political movement. I therefore welcome the organization of this labour College which you have invited me to inaugurate this evening.

With our country entering the threshold of freedom in a few days, the Indian working class must be prepared to play its role in the creation of a free and prosperous India. This cannot be done unless we have in a few months colleges such as this opened in every important industrial centre, where a new type of trade union worker may be created.

The industrial prospect is rather gloomy today. Workers everywhere in our country are restless and worried. The dawn of freedom has on the one hand, created hope of a new life, free from want and exploitation and improved economic conditions and higher production and, on the other hand, created a feeling of despair and despondency. This is a very dangerous situation. Irresponsible elements such as the Communists who hope to gain their objective by fishing in troubled waters are interested in creating conditions of anarchy in the country. In this transitional period in which our newly won freedom is fraught on all sides with danger, such anarchy will only lead to untold suffering and complete political and economic collapse of the country.

The trade union worker must know that there is a great responsibility resting on his shoulders today. He has on the one hand, the task of organizing the worker and educating him, of protecting his interests and fighting for them, and at the same time he has the task of making the workers aware of their larger responsibilities to the State and to the society as a whole. It is my firm conviction that if the workers in India are to reach their economic and political goal, they must conduct their movement in an organized, disciplined and peaceful manner. It is the worker's universal demand today that his wages must rise and his conditions of work and living must improve. I have not the least doubt that this must be so. The primary need of our worker, i.e. the need for a living wage and for adequate shelter must be fulfilled. The industry that fails to give its worker a living wage has no justification to exist. At the same time it is for the worker to realize that his wages cannot rise in reality unless he produces more. If his wages rise and production remains at a stand still or comes down, the result would be the rise in prices which will cancel out the rise in wages. If there are not more commodities produced the worker cannot have more commodities to consume.

In recent months production has been steadily going down. The blame is not all of the worker's though he too, must share it. The communal disturbances, the political changes, and uncertainties of the future all these have created a feeling of unsettlement in the minds of the worker, and his heart has not been in his work so much as it should be. It is the duty of the trade union movement to tell the workers that in their own interest they must produce more. At the same time I should like to draw the attention of the Government and those responsible for economic policies in this country that unless there is a psychological revolution, the worker is likely to remain listless and disinterested. Unless the worker is assured that he is getting a new deal; that he has acquired now a stake in the industry and the economic and political life of the country; that he has become a partner, both in the ownership and management of the State and the economic resources and institutions, his attitude towards his work is not likely to change. If the worker feels that he has a stake in the industry in which he is working and is not merely a hired employee, he is bound to work harder even if his dinner plate is not full. Industrialists talk of incentives for private enterprise, but there are few who think of the labourer's incentives for work. The capitalist is not prepared to work unless he is assured of an adequate return, but the vast majority of the Indian workers today are expected to put forth their best effort with empty stomach. This is a very unreasonable state of affairs. If there is to be private enterprise there is no doubt that adequate incentive must be there, though in a poor country like India even capitalists must realize that their incentive must be lower than that of the more prosperous countries. Likewise, if labour is to be fully productive, it too, must be provided adequate incentives. And where material incentives may be wanting, real psychological incentives must be created by a change in the social order.

Living wage and shelter are however, not the ultimate objectives of labour. Labour in India as elsewhere must eventually come into its own and become the government of the country. A Worker's Democracy, including in the term worker all those who live by their labour, whether they work in fields, factories or offices, is the ultimate objective of a labour movement. In the conditions of India such an objective is not difficult of fulfilment but it is necessary for this that the labour movement should now enter the political field and the field of constructive work. A Worker's Democracy will be a lie unless the workers are developed morally, intellectually and politically. The Labour movement in this country must create an extensive worker's educational movement, which through visual and oral instructions, can bring about a mental change in the worker and raise him to a higher level of understanding and culture. I hope that the beginning made here with this labour college will soon grow into a nation-wide educational movement of the type I have visualized. I further believe that the Labour movement must



develop such and other constructive activities as workers' co-operative, prohibition, etc.

The new type of trade union worker must be trained in all these activities and he must also be a political worker. The time has come, to my mind, when the Indian working class should have its own political party. Such a party to my mind is ready at hand—I mean the Socialist Party—the Bombay Branch of which has organized this College. I am looking forward to the day in the near future when the Indian workers in their millions will gather under the flag of the Socialist Party. That will be a great day for Indian Labour and the beginning of a new political life in this country. I hope the students who will be educated at this Labour College will go out as missionaries of this political era and be the vanguard of a victorious socialist movement.

### **113. Address to Students, Bombay, 21 July 1947<sup>1</sup>**

We can reclaim Pakistan to the Indian Republic by the establishment of workers' rule in both the States, for, the workers will vote for unity, but all thoughts of seizing power through terrorist activities must be given up. So long as we have a Constitution which guarantees democracy, it is possible to establish the government we want by peaceful means. It is the vote of the people that can bring in a change of government.

There is not a single patriot in the country who can express satisfaction and be happy over what has happened to our country. This is not the dream of freedom we had dreamt all these years. The picture as a whole has been shattered to shreds. Then you might ask me why the Socialist leaders were silent all along when important happenings were taking place. You might ask me whether our promise of revolution has gone into thin air.

When we did not oppose the resolution on Partition at the last A.I.C.C. meeting<sup>2</sup> some people said we were bribed with promises of ministries and such other offers. If we wanted to go into the Government, we could have done so much earlier. Holding high office is not the aim of the Socialists. Revolution at that time was out of the question. Developments in the Punjab and Bengal and all over the country had reached such a crisis that bloodshed had to be ruled out as a method to achieve unity. But the responsibility for the acceptance of the Partition plans lies entirely on the shoulders of the rightist elements in the Congress. What the Socialists stand for and what they have done to the country are facts which would convince the people of their bonafides.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Janata*, 27 July 1947, and *Bombay Chronicle*, 21 July 1947.

<sup>2</sup> All India Congress Committee met at New Delhi on 14 and 15 June 1947.

August 15 cannot be said to bring freedom to India, for on that day India will not remain as one whole. Even after India becomes a Republic, there will be existing independent States and Pakistan. Where there is any kind of Government other than formed by the workers, freedom will not be complete.

There are two ways of bringing about unity—to muster an army in Hindustan and march upon Pakistan or to conquer it by the establishment of the rule by workers in both the States. The first, suggested by the Hindu Mahasabha, has to be ruled out. We have not fought the battle for freedom to install in power fattened capitalists and opportunists. There shall be equality of all men and no difference of religion, and no class privileges. There shall not exist opulence and abysmal poverty. When we establish the rule by workers in Hindustan and Pakistan, we will have proved our *bonafides* to the Muslims who will, in that case, cease to fear the possibility of domination by the Hindus. There can not be unadulterated freedom as long as India is divided and torn. A weak and vivisected India would be an invitation to the greedy powers of the world. What the Indian People had achieved after twenty-five years of struggle and sacrifice would be lost in five years. The cry of Hindu Raj raised by the Hindu Mahasabha and other communalists would lead to internecine communal warfare. If the Mahasabhaites were aspiring to bring back Pakistan by force there were imperialist minded Muslims in Pakistan who were dreaming of installing a Muslim Raj all over India.

The Muslims who voted for the League will realize when the State of Pakistan is established that it will be a Raj of Nawabs and Nawabzadas. The Muslim youths in Sind have started realizing the implications of Pakistan. The only way of winning the confidence of the Muslim peasants and workers of Pakistan is to establish a socialist society in the Republic of India and demonstrate to the Muslim brethren in Pakistan that it is not a Hindu Raj but a Government of the people. Only when the Muslim proletariat in Pakistan find, out that they have been betrayed by their leaders there, they would ask for reunion with India. As the Socialist Party has failed to turn the Congress into a socialist organization, we have to decide after August 15, whether to remain in the Congress or to quit it and go ahead with our socialist programme. I see that the Congress becoming a socialist party is a remote possibility under the present circumstances.

The Socialist Party was so far small because it had remained within the Congress. The present leaders of the Congress are in league with capitalists and most of them seem to have abandoned the aims and objects which the Congress stood for. They have forgotten the workers and the poor. Day by day the capitalists get fattened. They wear Khaddar, stick up the Congress flag in front of their motor cars, and earn enormous black-market money. We find it impossible to stay within the Congress which supports such people and has forgotten the workers.

We have a plan which will change the face of the country in the next five years. We hope to make marked and immediate improvements especially in agriculture. Industries will be nationalized, but for sometime controlled capitalism will be allowed. There shall be co-operatives, but landlords will be allowed to hold limited land and be given compensation, if necessary.

The Socialist Party will gain enormous strength in the country. The Kisan, the worker in the factory, and other people are behind the party. But, I would like to make it clear to you that all our programmes for the achievement of the socialist State are to be of a purely non-violent nature. The Burmese episode<sup>1</sup> should not be attempted here to finish a leadership, we do not want such things here. At present, it is the votes that decide who shall govern you. It is by mass awakening and support that we can establish the Mazdoor Raj.

It is not by shooting Pandit Nehru that you can establish a mazdoor government. Any party that aspires to form a government through terrorist activities clearly shows that it has no support of the people. So long as we have a constitution, which guarantees democracy, we need not resort to violence in order to establish a Government we want.

<sup>1</sup> After being freed from Japanese control in 1945, the leftist, Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League leader, U Aung San, signed an agreement with the British in January 1947, through which the latter conceded the independence of Burma in principle. Thereafter, in April 1947 Aung San's party gained an overwhelming victory in the election for a Constituent Assembly and he formed Government in June 1947 as the Prime Minister of Burma. But soon, afterwards, Aung San and seven members of his cabinet were assassinated on 19 July 1947.

#### **114. Comment on Shankarrao Deo's Statement regarding the future role of the Congress, 3 August 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Mr. Deo's<sup>2</sup> statement published<sup>3</sup> today has come to me as a very pleasant surprise. For the past many months I have been stressing the point of view that either Congress must turn Socialist now or dissolve itself, for in my

<sup>1</sup> *Pioneer*, 8 August 1947.

<sup>2</sup> Shankarrao Deo (1894-1974); a leading Congressman of Maharashtra; member Congress Working Committee, 1938-50; member Constituent Assembly, 1946-50; later joined the Sarvodaya Movement.

<sup>3</sup> The statement by Shankarrao Deo sought to suggest the future role of the Congress after attainment of complete independence. The Congress, according to him, should maintain unity and carry on constructive programme in the political, social and economic fields. Its aim should be the establishment and maintenance, by all peaceful and democratic means (including strike and satyagraha) of a socialist democracy in India in which power rested with the people. In the economic field, Deo preferred the policy of decentralization both in industry and agriculture.

view it would be a tragedy for the nation if Congress were to be captured by vested interests.

The Socialist Party has worked ceaselessly to urge Congress towards Socialism. It will therefore, welcome the views expressed by Mr. Deo and give him the fullest cooperation in making Congress a fit instrument for the establishment of Democratic Socialism in India.

There must be a drastic transformation of the Congress organization and a purge of corrupt, opportunist and other anti-social elements before Congress can become a fit instrument of Socialism. The Socialist Party would watch with interest the measures that Mr. Deo might take to carry out this transformation, and if invited, would cooperate in this task. The success or failure of this task, rather than paper programmes will decide the future of Congress as also the relation of the Socialist Party with that body.

The general outline of the programme published by Mr. Deo follows in the main the views propagated for many years by the Socialist Party. But the time for generalizations is now past, and it has become necessary today to draw detailed programme. The Socialist Party is working on such a programme and will place it before Congress and the people when it is ready.

Together with all this, I should like to emphasize another aspect of the matter which is of vital importance, namely that the preparation of a programme on paper is only a small part of the job. Congress resolutions and manifestoes have always read well and aimed high. But compare Mr. Deo's fine words with the practice of the Congress Governments, or compare them with the state of the Congress organization, the rapid growth in them of vested interests and the mounting corruption and communalism—all enemies of socialism. Mr. Deo knows how in his own province Congress has fallen a prey to these evils.

### **115. Statement on the Demands of Railwaymen, 9 August 1947<sup>1</sup>**

The General Council of the Federation at its last meeting showed great patience and sense of responsibility by deferring action till September 15.<sup>2</sup> Railwaymen throughout the country are feeling extremely restive and are chafing at the restraint the Federation has imposed on them.

<sup>1</sup> *Hindustan Times*, 11 August 1947.

<sup>2</sup> On 4 August 1947, the General Council of Railwaymen's Federation had unanimously resolved to reverse their decision, which they had taken a day before, to go for strike immediately as a protest against the railway board's apathetic attitude towards their minimum and just demands.

I am glad to say that both the Railway Minister and the Chief Commissioner of Railways, whom I saw in Delhi soon after the General Council meeting, appreciated fully the stand of the Federation and the difficulties and feelings of railwaymen. I hope it would be possible for them to meet the Federation's four irreducible and urgent demands.<sup>3</sup>

In the meanwhile, I appeal to railwaymen all over the country to work actively to strengthen their organization and maintain discipline and solidarity. It is likely that certain people might try to mislead you into hasty and unauthorized action. You should be on guard against such disruptive efforts and refuse to participate in any action unless it is sanctioned by your Union or the Federation itself. With unity discipline and organization, victory is bound to be yours.

<sup>3</sup> See fn. 2, item no. 107.

#### **116. Speech at Public Meeting, Ahmedabad, 10 August 1947<sup>1</sup>**

The independence celebrations that are being organized in the country do not produce any joy in the heart of the people. The Swaraj that is being obtained on August 15 is not of the type for which lakhs of people had gone to jail during the last 25 years or so.

The happenings during the last few months show that the country is being dragged towards destruction. Instead of telling the British to quit India, the leaders accepted their plan of dividing the country. They did not listen to the advice of Mahatma Gandhi.

The destruction that would have been caused by another freedom struggle would not have been one tenth of the destruction that took place in the country in consequence of communal disturbances. The divisions in the country would multiply in course of time and lead to internecine quarrels.

The dreams that are being cherished of establishing Hindu and Muslim 'raj' would set the whole country ablaze. They will not lead to the establishment of Hindu or Muslim 'raj', but will re-establish foreign domination. The freedom that has been won will be lost in a few years. There was Hindu 'raj' as well as Muslim 'raj' in Indian States, but there was no freedom there. After the winning of freedom, efforts should be made to establish 100 per cent 'Swaraj' of the poor people.

The hungry should be fed and the naked clothed. After the British exploitation had ceased, social injustice that is seen in the country should be abolished. The establishment of 'Swaraj' of the poor people will lead to

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Pioneer*, 12 August 1947.

the reunion of Hindustan and Pakistan. But if instead a spirit of vengeance is fostered in both the parts, they would be reduced to ashes.

The trend of the world is towards socialism. Instead of raising mere slogans of socialism, Congress should put socialism in to practice. The Congress Socialist Party, that had fought the freedom struggle, will form a constitutional opposition and capture power with the support of the people if Congress did not shake off the control of the capitalists. The Congress administration in the provinces does not differ from the Section 93 administration that had been carried on in the provinces before.<sup>2</sup> It is worse in some respects.

The grow more food campaign had led the country to starvation. Black-marketeers, whom Congress leaders once threatened to hang, are flourishing more than before. The Congress ministers, who were guided by the ICS, should take the help of youngmen to produce a nationwide social revolution. Congress is falling and it should either end or mend its ways.

India had fought many a struggle for freedom under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Thousands had sacrificed their lives during the last struggle which was supposed to have brought freedom, but so long as Lord Mountbatten continued to be the Governor General and the King of England called himself the Emperor of the Indian Union, it was not complete independence for which they had fought.

<sup>2</sup> As per Section 93 of the Government of India Act 1935, the Governors had to assume all the powers and responsibilities of the provinces soon after the Congress Governments had resigned.

### 117. To R. Brown, 10 August 1947<sup>1</sup>

Dear Mr. Brown,<sup>2</sup>

I am writing in connection with the Tribunal appointed by Govt. to adjudicate upon the Lodna dispute.<sup>3</sup> You may recall that the Union representatives were assured by Government of India officials that among the points referred for adjudication would also be the question of wages or relief for the strike period. But the Government have failed to carry out the assurance. As a

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> Robert Sindhey Brown (1889-1959); Member, Board of Trade, 1909; joined India office, 1911; military work Services, India, 1919; Commonwealth Relations office, 1947; Secretary Services Department, Commonwealth Relations office, 1948.

<sup>3</sup> The workers of Lodna collieries (Jharia) were agitating for increased pay and better working conditions. The demands, referred to the Tribunal, appointed by the Government, were mostly accepted with some conditions, such as: the Union had to be registered, the workers would not go on to strike without 14 days notice, securitymen not to be withdrawn in case of a strike, and finally no meeting or any sort of violence within the enclosed property of the company. No agreement was however reached on the question of wages during the strike period and reinstatement of the Assistant Manager retrenched by the company recently.

result there is discontent among the workers. and I am afraid there may be trouble. In an industrial dispute, after all, the two parties primarily concerned are the workers and the employers; and it is in the interest of both that they should be able to settle their disputes among themselves. I therefore wish to suggest that the point which the Government have failed to refer to the adjudicator might be settled directly between the Management and the Union. In the Kustore dispute the Management were good enough to agree to strike relief (as distinct from strike pay). I suggest that you should agree to a similar arrangement in the present case, and I hope you will give to it your earnest consideration. I am writing to Mr. Carpenter<sup>1</sup> also about this matter.

I may add for your information that recently the Bombay, Madras and Bengal Governments had referred to adjudication the question of strike pay in certain disputes, such as the Calcutta tramway and the Buckingham Carnatic Mills (Madras) disputes.

I hope fervently that your intervention on this behalf in the case of the Lodna mine-workers will succeed and result in establishing good relations between the workers and the management.

I am,  
Yours sincerely,  
Jayaprakash Narayan

<sup>1</sup> F.W.A. Carpenter, Manager, Indian Mining Association.

#### **118. Statement to Press regarding Sardar Patel's Offer, 11 August 1947<sup>1</sup>**

It was not in the power of either Sardar Patel or of anyone else to offer to Socialists the formation of government in any province.<sup>2</sup> The Socialist Party does not want to shirk responsibility, but it cannot form a government unless it is in a position to carry out the party's programme.

If the Congress carries out the socialist programme, the Socialist Party will offer its cooperation. Mere paper resolutions will not do. This is the Socialist Party's policy, and there is nothing new in it.

We are not in a hurry to leave the Congress. We have not in mind the next elections. We are free to express our views like every body else and carry on propaganda so as to create an atmosphere for the socialist programme to be carried out by the National Government.

<sup>1</sup> *Searchlight*, 14 August 1947.

<sup>2</sup> Addressing a meeting at New Delhi on August 10, Sardar Patel had asked the Socialists of India to take over the responsibility of administration of one province and solve the problems which had arisen due to prolonged war, instead of restricting themselves to agitational activities and talking of a Socialist Republic.

Before the Socialist Government in England called upon the workers to sacrifice, they had nationalized coal, transport and banking. Workers cannot starve and work for the country. A psychological revolution should be created in their mind.

We have a sense of responsibility and we are not encouraging strikes. Before the workers are called upon to sacrifice and work more they should be made to feel the change in their status. The primary needs of the workers must be satisfied first so that they should feel that they have a share in the government.

Holding a key position in the country the Socialists can make it impossible for the Government to function just as the Muslim Leaguers did. In Bihar our comrades are being put in jail without trial. We are waiting for the development of events after August 15. The Socialists would leave the Congress when they find that their cooperation is not wanted.

Gandhiji is a revolutionary in his own way. His views are well defined, but no one can tell what application he would make of them. In spite of differences, it is easier to work with him than with power politicians. Gandhiji holds views similar to mine on the working of the Congress organization and the Congress Governments. But he has not shared those views with the public. Though he is not going to join the Socialist Party I have sought his blessings.

A socialist Party would be formed in Pakistan. It would be independent of the Congress as the Congress was looked upon as a Hindu body in Pakistan. It is not so in India as the Congress here cannot be identified with the Hindu revivalist movement.

**119. To Siddharaj Dhadha, 16 August 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Bombay  
16 August 1947

Dear Siddharajji,<sup>2</sup>

Received your letter,<sup>3</sup> thanks. That so much hue and cry has been raised

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> Siddharaj Dhadha (1909-); Advocate; Secretary, Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industries, 1934-42; participated in the Quit India Movement and gaoled, 1942-4; Minister for Industries and Trade in Rajasthan government, 1949-51; joined the Sarvodaya Movement in 1952 and founded the Sarvodaya Centre at Khenapil, Rajasthan; Member, Khadi Gram Udyog Board, 1952-6; President, Rajasthan Khadi Sangh, 1952-64; Secretary, All India Sarva Sewa Sangh, 1955-60; closely associated with J.P. in the movement against authoritarianism, 1974-7; still active in the Sarvodaya Movement.

<sup>3</sup> In the letter dated 10 August 1947, Siddharaj Dhadha wrote that in Rajasthan some persons like Shri Ishwari Singh asserted that the Jaipur Socialist Party was formally affiliated to the Socialist Party. They did not hesitate to use J.P.'s and Acharya Narendra Deva's names in news letters for the propaganda of the ensuing political conference in Jaipur and requested J.P. to issue a statement to stop this.



about the Rajasthan Political conference has not had a good effect on me. Rather there has arisen now suspicion as to what is the matter which has caused so much worry. If the matter simply is that persons want to take advantage of our names, it is not such a big danger. They cannot carve out a permanent place for themselves by just convening a conference. We shall certainly conduct an enquiry and if they are proved wrong, we shall give our opinion. Those persons who rise with our support, will be finished the moment we withdraw our support. There is no need to bother about it.

I hope you are cheerful.

Yours affectionately,  
Jayaprakash Narayan

#### **120. Statement on an Official Announcement of the Railway Board, 23 August 1947<sup>1</sup>**

The announcement is unfortunate in its wording and rather ambiguous.<sup>2</sup> It seems to go contrary to the signed agreement arrived at between the federation and the Railway Board in June last year, that no matter when the Pay Commission submitted its reports, its recommendations, when accepted, would take effect from January 1, 1947, the statement said.

It was on that basis that a general strike was averted last year. The federation cannot brook any breach of that agreement.

I have telegraphed today to the Railway Member and the Railway Board seeking clarification. In the meanwhile, I ask all railwaymen to hold their patience. The general council of the federation has already fixed September 15 as the deadline for negotiations with the Railway Board. If no satisfactory settlement is reached by then, the way for further action will be clear and the federation is sure that railwaymen throughout the country will march forward when the call is given. Till then let there be order and discipline in the ranks.

<sup>1</sup> *National Herald*, 24 August 1947.

<sup>2</sup> The Railway Board's Communique was issued to the press on 23 August 1947. It announced that 16 August 1947 had been fixed as the date of implementation of the railwaymen's revised salary and dearness allowance, along with the revision of civil employees' pay, as per rule.

**121. To Jawaharlal Nehru, 26 August 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Nagpur  
26 August 1947

My dear Bhai,

I have received several letters and telegrams from various places from the Supervisors employed by the Central Excise Department in 1943 under the Tobacco Scheme. They say that they were served with removal notices with one month's notice on August 14 when they were preparing to celebrate Independence Day. They argue that during the war they were tied down to their jobs by the Essential Services Ordinance and thus lost the opportunity for better employment, while they are being retrenched now to make room for men with war service though the Congress never stood for cooperation with war efforts. Their argument has some weight.

I have brought this matter to your notice in the hope that you will see that justice is done to these men.

Yours affectionately,  
Jayaprakash

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

**122. Statement to the Press in support of the struggle in Mysore, 2 September 1947<sup>1</sup>**

On the 1st of September, the people of Mysore began the last phase of their long struggle for attainment of full responsible government. The decision to launch a direct action movement was taken after all constitutional methods of reaching agreement had failed.

The Mysore State Congress which is directing the struggle had for long waited patiently for the Mysore Government to show a more responsive attitude towards their desire to arrive at a constitutional settlement by negotiation. Instead the Government has been enforcing their power in ways that checked the freedom both of association and of expression. So now the State Congress has called on the people to assert their will to attain full responsible government. I congratulate the people of Mysore, especially the workers in mines and factories and the youths and students, for their brave and determined stand in the cause of freedom. I hope the railwaymen of Mysore will rally to the struggle and do their duty in this critical hour for Mysore.

I pledge the support of the Socialist Party to the people of Mysore in their struggle for freedom. The political power we have achieved in the

<sup>1</sup> *Bombay Chronicle*, 3 September 1947.

Indian Union will be a frail instrument of good for the people unless we remove all the dangers that face the Union today. The autocratic regimes in Indian States are a challenge to our security and freedom. So the struggle of the Mysore people must be supported by every citizen of India.

### **123. Statement on Indonesia Day, 2 September 1947<sup>1</sup>**

The General Council of the Socialist Party has fixed September 13 as Indonesia Day. I appeal to all Party branches to observe this day in a fitting manner and to make collections during the day for the Party's Indonesia Medical Relief Fund. I hope that the people will show their solidarity and sympathy for Indonesia by contributing and making the day a success.

<sup>1</sup> *Bombay Chronicle*, 3 September 1947.

### **124. Address to the Second Bihar College Teacher's Conference, Chapra, 15 September 1947<sup>1</sup>**

I always appreciate a teacher's profession. Now that India has achieved independence the teacher has a very important role to play in our national reconstruction. However, the political situation of the country, which is vitiating the atmosphere here, is fast enveloping every section of our society. The country has been partitioned, and it has left a trail of deep distrust and suspicion. There are people who want to build a Hindu Raj in India, there are others who think of a Muslim Raj. I must say that it is not for any particular community or religious sect that our national heroes fought, suffered and sacrificed, but for all the people irrespective of caste or creed. On the other hand, those people who today talk loudly about a Hindu or Muslim Raj never sacrificed anything for the cause of the country.

There is a general clamour for the improvement of the standard of living. But the country is passing through a serious shortage of production. Unless the production increases any increment in wages will be nothing but deceptive.

I feel greatly pained at the general moral degradation in the society. I am of the opinion that corruption was encouraged by the British for their own ends. During the last war black-marketing and bribery were most rampant all over the country. Our leaders, however, promised that they would hang the black-marketeers. It is now seventeen months that our own Government have been in office, but instead of hanging the black-marketeers the Bihar

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Searchlight*, 18 September 1947.

ministry has released a notorious one on the auspicious day of August 15. In this connection the importance of an educational institution should be emphasized. A school or a college is more important than a Constituent Assembly or a Socialist or Congress Party. The students must strive above all things to achieve moral elevation. Then alone can we retain our independence.

I can give some practical suggestions to the college teachers as to how they can help in building up a new life in the province. The professors may chalk out some useful reconstruction schemes on a voluntary basis and present them to the Government. Till now the Bihar Ministry has not developed any reconstruction plan worth the name. The teachers must produce students who will not be merely clerks but social workers working for the new India of our dreams. The Association must prepare forthwith a scheme for the educational reconstruction of Bihar. I shall give all my cooperation and help to the demands of the teachers.

#### **125. Address to the Bengal Socialist Conference, 21 September 1947<sup>1</sup>**

I appeal to Socialists everywhere to support Congress Governments at the centre as well as in the provinces and to launch a relentless crusade against communalism and riots. Congress administration may have some defects but in spite of this it is imperative on all to support the National Government. The defects in the administration can be remedied in a constructive way. Socialism is the aim of the Socialist Party but there is no hope of socialism being established unless perfect peace prevails. If peace is there the achievement of socialism will be a matter of a few years.

<sup>1</sup> *National Herald*, 23 September 1947. The Bengal Socialist Party Conference was opened at Shyam Nagar, on 21 September. Jayaprakash Narayan presided over the Conference as Munshi Ahmad Din, the president elect had failed to arrive from Pakistan.

#### **126. To M. Blum, 2 October 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Patna

2 October 1947

My Dear M. Blum,<sup>2</sup>

It is kind of M. Fancolin,<sup>3</sup> whom it was such a pleasure to meet, to take this

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> Leon Blum (1872-1950): French Socialist leader; Prime Minister of popular front government, 1936-7; arrested by Vichy Government and imprisoned in Germany, 1942-5; Prime Minister again, 1946-7.

<sup>3</sup> M. Fancolin: associated with French Socialist Party.

note to you. Yours, Sir, is the most popular living European name known to socialists and democrats in the East, and your heroic sufferings have endeared you greatly to the people of India who have known suffering so well. I feel proud therefore to greet you as a leader of world socialism and democracy.

The world seems daily to be divided more and more into two hostile camps. We Indian Socialists reject the claims of both these camps. Neither totalitarian communism nor American capitalism is worthy of the support of those who have faith in socialism and democracy, which we believe are inseparable. We believe further that beyond these two powerful camps is a third camp of the oppressed and backward peoples of Asia and Africa and of the democratic socialists of Europe. To the extent to which this third camp is consolidated, to that extent, to my mind, the peace and progress of the world are assured.

The Asian and African peoples have their own difficulties, but as they march forward to freedom, the circumstances of their economic and social life would drive them more and more towards socialism. In India, as in so many countries in the East, there is already a deep urge discernible towards socialism. And I have no doubt new India would be happy and eager to cooperate with the forces of freedom and social and economic justice to save the world from conflict and devastation.

Sincerely yours,  
Jayaprakash Narayan

### **127. Problems of Policemen in Bihar, 6 October 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Police constables come from poor peasant families. Therefore it is natural for them to be sympathetic to the Socialist Party. But this natural sympathy has caused them great harm, because it has been misunderstood by their officers and the Government. In no democratic country in the world are men of the services victimized for their political affiliations. In Britain even army men and officers voted for the Labour Party, without any prejudice to their interests. But in Bihar the general sympathy of Policemen for socialism has been misunderstood to such an extent that whatever they have done has been construed by the authorities to be a hostile act and an act based on disloyalty. This distrust led finally to the police demonstrations that took place some months ago in Gaya, Patna and elsewhere. I believed then and do believe now that had the situation been handled with tact and vision, complete and willing discipline would have been established immediately and the widening gulf between the Government and the constables would have been closed perhaps for ever. But the departmental

<sup>1</sup> *Janata*, 19 October 1947.

chiefs wrongly advised the Government and the situation went from bad to worse.

The fifteenth of August (1947) offered a fine opportunity to make a clean break with the past and give a new tone to the Police force and win over its ranks by a generous gesture. But the Government once again acted in a bureaucratic way and satisfied itself with half measures that satisfied no one. Seventy-two constables are still in prison charged with various serious offences, and the four hundred and odd who were released are being asked to agree to humiliating terms before being readmitted into the force. This is a state of affairs that may satisfy officers, whose ways of thinking were moulded during the British regime, but cannot allay public anxiety in the matter. The crying need of the hour is suppression of corruption in the Police Department, but no one seems to take the slightest notice of it and while corruption grows daily, time and energy are wasted in a vendetta by officialdom against the new spirit that animates the ranks.

As the Socialist Party has come in for a great deal of abuse in this matter, I should like very frankly to put the Party's position with regard to this problem. Before the 15th of August as long as the possibility of another conflict with the British remained, the Socialist Party was definitely interested in the policemen. But its interest was not partisan; it was purely revolutionary. In other words, the Socialist Party was interested in so organizing the policemen that in the event of a national revolution, they could come over with their arms to the side of the Revolution. After August 15, the situation has completely and radically changed. The Socialist Party does not intend now, unless civil liberties are suppressed, to overthrow any Government by force of arms. The Party, as it has declared more than once, believes in using democratic means in a democratic society to establish a socialist Government. As such, while the Party is interested in enlisting the support of the services, including the armed forces, for socialism, it does not desire to create disloyalty in them or do anything to lower their morale and efficiency. The Party is prepared to co-operate fully with the Government in the task of establishing a clean, honest and efficient administration. The pity is that the Government evinces so little interest in this vital problem.

During the British regime the relationship of high officials with the lower ranks was very largely on a master-servant basis. This must radically change, and the humble public servants must be allowed some means to protect themselves and to improve their condition. If official arrogance and autocracy are to be checked and the humble constable is to keep his self-respect and protect his interest, I have no doubt that statutory provision should be made, as in England, for an organization of policemen, run and managed by themselves, and with statutory authority to present their case

to Government and negotiate with it. There was a police strike in England in 1919 which compelled Parliament to establish by statute a Police Federation to enable the members of the Police forces of England and Wales to consider and bring to the notice of the Police authorities and the Home Secretary matters affecting their welfare and efficiency (other than questions of discipline and promotion, affecting individuals). With this outlet provided, there was no further trouble and strike was completely avoided.

This English example should be copied here. Some time ago, the Provincial Government had actually agreed to the Policemen forming an association, but it appears that this right was withdrawn after the last strike.<sup>2</sup> I do hope this matter will be reconsidered. I should like once again to emphasize what I have repeatedly pointed out, namely that discipline is never based on compulsion but on willing acquiescence.

Before I close I should like to plead with the Government not to be vindictive in their treatment of the seventy-two undertrial prisoners. It would be a wise act if the Government were to withdraw these cases also. In any event Government would not do any wrong if they ordered them to be treated as upper division prisoners as they are not guilty of any offence involving moral turpitude. I should also plead with the Government to provide them with proper defence at Government cost, as they are doing for the accused in the Professor Bari Murder case.<sup>3</sup> The accused constables are men of poor means and many of them will probably be committed to Sessions. In these circumstances it is only fair that they should be provided with proper defence.

<sup>2</sup> See ante, item no. 97, fn. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Professor Abdul Bari went to Dhanbad to attend a meeting of the coalfield conciliation board on 27-8 March 1947. On his way back to Patna by car, he was attacked by an armed gang who declared themselves as former INA men and shot him dead.

## **128. Address to Students, Kolhapur, 11 October 1947<sup>1</sup>**

The cry for Hindu raj is a reactionary cry, and is intended to deflect young men from their efforts to remove inequalities in life.

The people should beware of those Maharajas and capitalists who are at the back of this movement. They are the very people who had supported the British Government. The leaders who are crying for Hindu raj now were absent when the people were fighting against the British rule. The Hindu raj they contemplated would only be a fascist raj.

<sup>1</sup> *National Herald*, 13 October 1947.

Retaliation is no solution to the communal problem. They cannot evacuate all Muslims from India to Pakistan and in exchange bring all non-Muslims from there. Such exchange of population will take a long time and the country's economy will be shattered.

The supreme need of the hour is the strengthening of the Government and establishment of peace in the country.

## 129. To S.M. Joshi, 29 October 1947<sup>1</sup>

29 October 1947

Dear S.M.<sup>2</sup>

I am glad Madhu<sup>3</sup> is in a position to go to Europe.

The International Socialist Conference is meeting on Nov. 28 at Antwerp. There is very little time in which to make all arrangements. Madhu will have to travel by sea, I am afraid, because air travel would be too expensive for us. Therefore, the immediate thing to do is to secure sea passage. Passport and visa should present no difficulty at all, but the passage business might prove difficult. We might claim priority, however, on the ground that we have to attend an international socialist conference to which we have been invited. If no boat accommodation is available in time, we might have to give up the idea entirely. However, please find out what difference there is between air and sea fares. If the difference is not too great, we might send Madhu by air and he might return by sea.

I am here till the 5th.

Regarding my programme, there has been a slight change in it. As the A.I.C.C. is meeting a day later than previously announced, I would not be able to leave Delhi on the 17th. I can do so only on the 18th, reaching Bombay on the 19th. And in Bombay I should like to stay a couple of days longer in order to have Prabhavati medically examined. That is, I would

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> Shridhar Mahadev Joshi (1904-89); freedom fighter; participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930, and the Quit India Movement, 1942; founder-member, the Congress Socialist Party, 1934; Chairman, Praja Socialist Party, 1963-4, and Sanyukta Socialist Party, 1964-9; member, Bombay Assembly, 1952-62, Lok Sabha, 1967-72; participated in J.P. Movement, 1974-5; founder-member, Janata Party, 1977; President, Maharashtra Janata Party, 1977.

<sup>3</sup> Madhu Limaye (1922-95); associated with the Indian National Congress, 1938-48; took part in freedom struggle, imprisoned in Goa Liberation Movement, 1955; Member, Congress Socialist Party, 1938-48, Socialist Party, 1948-52, PSP, 1952-5, Socialist Party 1955-63, SSP, 1964-77; Secretary, Asian Socialist Bureau, Rangoon, 1953, Socialist Party and PSP, 1949-55; Chairman, Socialist Party, 1958, Gen. Secretary, Janata Party, 1977-9; Member, Lok Sabha, 1964-70, 1973-6 and 1977-9; General Secretary, Lok Dal, 1979-82.



leave Bombay for Poona on the 22nd night by the night train, reaching Poona on the 23rd morning. I hope this change would not upset your arrangements too much.

Affectionately yours,  
Jayaprakash

### **130. Address at a Public Meeting at Patna, 31 October 1947<sup>1</sup>**

If you want to establish People's Raj, if you want to remove poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy, if you want to build up a state where all may have equal rights and opportunities, then get rid of the canker of communalism. This canker has gone deep down and has poisoned the whole body-politic. It has not only divided the Hindus from the Muslims; it has divided the Hindus from Hindus. If allowed to go unchecked it will spell disaster for the whole country.

The idea of a Hindu Raj, if encouraged, will result in the Balkanisation of India. Ram Raj is not Hindu Raj. Ram Raj, as visualized by Gandhiji, was Samajvad. That can be attained only if they tear the Bhagwa flag to tatters and follow the way of the Mahatma.

With the division of the country in the wake of independence, new and baffling problems have arisen. I was in Delhi sometime back, and I was moved to see the disturbed conditions obtaining there at that time. The thought then came to me—is it the freedom for which we had been fighting since 1857? What was the purpose of our suffering and sacrifice? Did Bhagat Singh and his brave colleagues from Bengal, Bihar and other provinces mount the gallows for this end? Possibly people here may not realize what was happening in the capital of India. They may not realize they are passing through a crisis of unprecedented magnitude when they are in danger of losing all that they have achieved through their blood and toil. But, if they had been in Delhi they would also have felt the same way. What will be the gain if the Delhi happenings are repeated in every other town and if the same situation is faced by the popular Governments put into power by the people everywhere. Where will they take refuge? It is high time for our people to realize the position and extend all their support to Pandit Nehru in the great task of controlling the forces of disorder.

There is, however, a section of the people that dreams of Hindu Raj. They say they cannot support the Nehru Government as it is not a Hindu Government. This dream of Hindu Raj has infected even some erstwhile revolutionaries who want to replace the National Flag by the Bhagwa Flag and the Hindustani Raj by a Hindu Raj. I warn those day-dreamers that

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the *Searchlight*, 1 November 1947.

their efforts can only lead to the further dismemberment of the country and spell ruin. Forces of anarchy will be let loose; there will be internecine conflicts and once again they will fall prey to some foreign power. That is the lesson of history. What happened after the decline of the Moghul empire? It is known to every student of history. The outcome was the establishment of British Raj. The same scene will be re-enacted if they talk loosely about Hindu Raj. Already we find that Sikhs are demanding Sikhistan, Jats demanding Jatistan and Marathas clamouring for Maratha Raj. Soon it will be the Rajputs crying for Rajasthan and the princes moving ahead to claim their lost territories. This is the prospect before us if we weaken our National Government. Without a strong central power the country can never remain in peace or make progress.

And who are these champions of Hindu Raj? The reactionaries who were in the British camp when the common man of India was engaged in a life and death struggle for political emancipation. And do they not have Hindu Raj in the Native States even today? What are the conditions over there? The people are denied the ordinary civil liberties that were conceded even by the imperial rulers. Surely, the masses had not fought with the British for such a Raj. Hindu Raj is certainly not Ram Raj. Ram Raj of Gandhiji's conception is a Raj where there would be justice and equality, where there would be no distinction between man and man, where all would enjoy full freedom. I will call it Samajvad without quibbling over words. This Ram Raj can be achieved only by following the way of the Mahatma. Two ways are thus open before the Indian people; one of destruction and the other of progress. They have to make their choice and the choice is clear if they want to make the nation prosperous.

The sinister implication of Hindu Raj is to drive out the vast mass of Muslims who are still with us on the point of bayonet and that can never be done. If some people make the attempt, it will disrupt the whole economy and we will all perish.

Muslims in India have already realized the folly of Pakistan and the Muslims of Pakistan will also soon be disillusioned. Pakistan is a losing concern. It is weak and tottering. It can never stand the test of time. The refugees in Pakistan are in great distress. They cannot even be provided with two square meals properly. Thousands of them would have simply died of cholera and other epidemics if the India Government had not come to their rescue by sending medical supplies.

Under the circumstances if the Hindus should treat the Muslims as brothers there is no reason why they cannot live happily once again. Hindu and Muslim masses have the same economic problems and they can be solved only when they establish a Socialist State. Neither Hindu Raj, nor Pakistan can deliver the goods.

But the common man's ideal cannot be attained through anarchy and chaos. The people must have peace and harmony. To that end they must strengthen the hands of the Congress Governments.

**131. Address to the Socialist Autumn School of Politics,  
Chapra, 4 November 1947<sup>1</sup>**

All of us have now to realize our responsibility to the society and the country after the 15th August. Though we have not been able to achieve the type of freedom which we dreamt of and for which we struggled, though we have got a divided India which mainly is the result of our own weakness, still it is the foremost duty of every Indian to do everything in his power to protect the present Nehru Government and to strive utmost to save this Government from the various onslaughts which the reactionary forces are administering to it on various fronts. We have to boldly face the problems of poverty, disease, corruption, communalism black-marketing, etc., and find out a proper solution for them. The country is passing through a very critical period and we all must remember that we have to make ourselves worthy citizens of the country so that we may be able to preserve this freedom which we have got.

What is happening at present in north India is shaking the very foundation of the Government. No country can think of any plan for the amelioration of the condition of the masses when it is preoccupied with maintaining law and order. Progress in any direction is impossible in such a situation.

While in Delhi, I saw that the police and the military failed to protect the citizens and deliberately disobeyed Government orders. These very people used to obey the Government during the previous years when they were ordered to suppress and shoot the soldiers of freedom. I had asked in Lahore Fort one simple question to some C.I.D. officers as to why they were torturing me and obeying the illegal, improper and inhumane orders of the Government. Their reply was that as they were eating the salt of the British Government, they had to obey its orders. My question to them today is, whose salt they are eating today and why they are not proving themselves loyal to this Government? The reason is that all the reactionary ideas and forces, which were occupying the Government then, have taken possession of Government servants and they are all opposed to the new freedom that has been secured. We have to face this danger too.

We are hearing today from some sections of young Hindus that their ideal is to establish Hindu Raj. I wish to warn you that you should not be misled by this slogan. Hindu Raj will not be a people's Raj. It will be a Raj

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Searchlight*, 9 November 1947.

of reactionaries. Ask those who are raising this slogan as to what do they mean by Hindu Raj. Will that be the Maratha Raj or Rajput Raj or some other Raj? They also say that they will establish it by the method which is being practised in the Punjab, by removing all except Hindus from this country. The R.S.S. is capturing the imagination of some young boys who used to shout *Inqilab Zindabad* and used to honour the tri-colour. These very people are at present shouting the slogan of Hindu Raj without having any idea as to what this slogan connotes. I ask these young men to put one question to their organizers as to where were they when the struggle for freedom was going on in India and they will find that they were on the side of the British. Behind the slogan of Hindu Raj it is that section of the people who, being afraid of the coming changes, want to perpetuate their present position and are raising the slogans of establishing Hindu Raj, forgetting that it is not religion but the economic forces that change the social structure and bring about a certain form of Government. They are misleading the people in order to save themselves. There is a Hindu Raj in Nepal as well as in some Hindu States of India. Will the coming Hindu Raj of their imagination be of that type? They also say that they want to establish Ram Raj but I ask them—can they establish Ram Raj by loot, arson and rape? I, therefore, want the young men to keep before them an ideal for which they want to live and die. That ideal can only be one, and that is for a democracy in a socialist society. I suspect that behind the R.S.S. there are some so-called Congressmen. The people have to see these dangers and try to uproot them.

I am pained to find today that some of the Congress leaders are again avoiding to approach the Muslim masses and are contacting the Muslim League leaders, who by their propaganda in the recent past and by their faith and conviction today are traitors. The Muslim League leaders are not only traitors to India, but are traitors to their community also. They bought arms and ammunitions for the purpose which they know best and deposited them with the poor Muslims. Look at the searches that are taking place in the country and the recoveries made. All these are not from the houses of the Muslim League leaders but from other places. Such activities of the Muslim League leaders will again land us in a dangerous position. We have to keep them away and watch them carefully. We have to approach the masses direct and through patriotic Muslims, who stood with us in the past in our battle for freedom.

On the other hand, some Hindu leaders are suggesting an exchange of population on the basis of religion. It is a most dangerous solution of the communal problem. Imagine what will happen if a population of 4 crores can be physically uprooted from India and thrown over to Pakistan. Imagine the consequences of this madness. The Government of Pakistan would then

raise a demand for a larger area for inhabiting these refugees. They would demand eastern Delhi upto Aligarh. They may demand the whole of West Bengal and Assam. They may raise the issue in the U.N.O. and would they not be justified in making the demand? Ask any refugee whether he wants to go back to his original place and you will get a reply that he is too anxious to return provided his life and property are guaranteed by the State.

Communalism is the greatest enemy in the country at present. The same is true of castism in Bihar. The Congress is fast becoming lifeless. Its leaders are no longer enjoying the confidence of the masses. They are at present joining hands with all the reactionary forces in the hope that they will exploit the latter in the next elections. That is the reason why some of them are patronizing the R.S.S. behind the *parda*. Also I am afraid the present leadership is becoming incapable to fit into the present condition of the country. Most of them have been possessed by the idea of earning wealth and power and prestige by all possible means.

Socialism at present has become the most attractive thing in our country. It was so even in Nazi Germany and the Nazis also used to swear by socialism. Acharya Kripalani also in Bombay characterized the present Indian Cabinet as a Socialist Cabinet which includes Bhabha<sup>2</sup> and Chetty.<sup>3</sup> In the coming A.I.C.C. meeting we are going to press the Congress to adopt our programme which we have published. If they accept it we are there, but if they do not we have no place in it. Our party has not yet formally decided this issue, but personally I feel that through the Congress we may not reach our aim nor can we establish a society which we aim at. The Congress is no longer a national organization with the one aim of winning freedom. It is now a party having a definite programme. That programme is not the programme of the Socialist Party. I agree that there is no room for any other party with different aims and objects in the Congress. Every party is a separate entity with a definite and distinct programme.

The days of slogans, processions and meetings are gone. You have now to take up one of the many problems facing the country, study it, and find out a solution for it. You have to speak correctly and think correctly. I find that most of you are not able to pronounce correctly and use wrong grammar. This should not be there in future. We want our literature, drama, art, poetry, engineering, agriculture, science and such other departments to be manned by the best available men. I wish, that you all who are here, will keep this

<sup>2</sup> C.H. Bhabha (1910—): Director of many business concerns before joining the Interim Government; Minister for Commerce, September-October 1946, for Works, Mines and Power, November 1946-August 1947; Union Minister for Commerce 1947-8.

<sup>3</sup> R.K. Shanmukham Chetty (1892-1953); Member of the Swaraj Party who later joined the Justice Party; President of Central Legislative Assembly 1933-4; Dewan, Cochin State, 1935-41; Finance Minister, Government of India 1947-8.

in mind. Try to be the bricks of the foundation of the new building and do not try or aspire only to be outward show and decoration of the building. That way lies your destruction as well as the destruction of India.

**132. Speech at a meeting of Muslims at Patna,  
4 November 1947<sup>1</sup>**

The Indian Muslims have done the greatest harm to themselves by supporting Pakistan. The time has come when they must abandon the League leadership, its policy and programme, else, there are certain fascist organizations in the country which will try to exterminate them, and in that case not even Gandhiji and Pandit Nehru will be able to save them. With these conditions obtaining in the country following the establishment of Pakistan, it at once becomes the duty of the Muslims, 90 per cent of whom had voted for Pakistan, to chalk out a programme for themselves not based on communal organizations, groups, and affiliations but in the interest of the establishment of poor men's Raj along with other poor sections of those inhabiting this country.

So long I remained in the bad book of the Muslim League because I took particular care to criticize the League leadership, its policy and programme. This is the first occasion when I am addressing the Muslims directly. If I had done so previously, I am sure the League stalwarts would have thrown stones at me.

The history of the Muslim League and Mr. Jinnah is a sad commentary. This communal organization which was backed by the British imperialism always acted as a road-block on the path of the freedom struggle of the people of this country. The League leaders characterized the fight for freedom as a fight to dominate over the Muslims and put spokes in the freedom wheel. This was a grievous wound which the people of this country could not manage to forget.

In 1940, the Muslim League under the influence of Mr. Jinnah passed a resolution demanding creation of a separate state for the Muslims in the name of Pakistan. It was pointed out that the Hindus and the Muslims were two nations. They could not live together. It is preposterous to think that different people living in the same country can become different nations on the basis of religion. Besides, most of the Indian Muslims were originally Hindus and it seemed ludicrous that they became altogether a different nation after their conversion to Islam. The Congress stood for common men's Raj, not of the Hindus or Muslims, but of all the Indians where there

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the *Searchlight*, 6 November 1947

would be no disease, illiteracy, nudity, and starvation. In spite of this honest and sincere declaration of the Congress, the League insisted on the demand of Pakistan. The passage of time had seen the establishment of Pakistan. But today the condition of Pakistan is worse than any other country in the world. All trade and commerce lie paralyzed there. There is hunger and starvation and if the Britishers and the Americans had not come to the rescue of Pakistan it would have collapsed in no time. Moreover, with the creation of Pakistan the very unity of the Muslims has been disrupted. Their voice has become feeble. Their backbone has been broken. A careful study of the position of Pakistan will reveal that its economic condition is just pitiable.

The interest of the Indian Muslims under the changed circumstances, lies in finding out a proper leadership, policy, and programme for themselves. To me it seems that there is only one path open to them and that is to join the rest of Indians and work for the establishment of poor men's Raj. The days of the establishment of communal Raj have gone. The people have to proceed with their eyes open to what is happening in the world. To talk of the expulsion of the Muslims from India is foolish and stupid. The Muslims have as much right to live in this country as the Hindus. The organizations which talk in such tones are reactionaries and are poison for the country whose ship will founder on the rock of these organizations.

The Muslims should repudiate the League's two-nation theory and its leadership. Now about the loyalty of the followers of the Muslim League. I can say that I do not believe in the professions of the League leaders, and Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman<sup>2</sup> is a glaring instance.

I appeal to the Muslims to get out of the rut and work in the best interest of India for the establishment of common man's Raj. I also advise them to abandon the League and join the Congress or the Socialist party or at best organize themselves in such party which will not be called a communal one. The term nationalist Muslims has outlived its utility. It has no meaning. In independent India every one has to be a nationalist, else, he will find his way to the jails.

<sup>2</sup> Choudhary Khaliquzzaman (1889-1973): participated in Khilafat and Non-Cooperation movements 1920-2; joined the Swarajists in 1923; Chairman, Lucknow Municipal Board, 1923-6; Secretary, Muslim Unity Board, 1932; Member, Congress Parliamentary Board, 1934; Member, U.P. Legislative Assembly, 1937-9, 1946-7, and Constituent Assembly 1946-7; migrated to Pakistan, 1947; President, All-Pakistan Muslim League, 1948-50; Governor of East Pakistan, 1953-4; appointed Ambassador to Indonesia and the Philippines, 1954; main publication *Pathway to Pakistan*.

**133. Press Conference at Calcutta, 7 November 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Q: Would you please let us know your opinion about the present state of affairs in the country. How do you think it can be improved?

J.P.: Our country is passing through a grave crisis. Nothing less than the life and liberty of the nation are at stake and only an all-sided effort can pull us through.

The present emergency demands from every one of us and from every section of the people vigilance, unity, and devotion to duty. Not only the Government, but the individual citizens and organizations of every sort must play their part. Not only our soldiers must fight but our railways must run and run effectively; our industries must produce and industrial truce established. The peasantry must be enabled to produce more and save and save better so that there may not be starvation. This requires sound and farsighted leadership. Our youth must be organized, not for the purpose of rioting, but for national defence and defence of the undefended. For this purpose I strongly support the formation of National Guards on a large scale. Reaction and communalism must be annihilated. Corruption, nepotism and inefficiency must be fought. At the same time the goal towards which we must drive should constantly be kept before the people so that they may not take to wrong paths and be attracted by false slogans and flags. This goal, I believe, can only be the goal of socialism.

Q: How do you think Muslim separatism should be dealt with?

J.P.: Muslims in the Indian Union must be weaned away from the treacherous League leadership. There should be a big drive among the Muslim masses and proper approach made to them—an approach not merely on the basis of Hindu-Muslim unity slogan, but also on that of the economic issues. Muslims should be told that if they do not disown League leadership, they can never inspire confidence among their other brothers in the Indian Union. They should be told that there is no need now for any separate communal organization. Even the nationalist Muslim organizations have lost their reason for existence.

Q: Do you favour the idea of banning the Muslim League organization in the Indian Union?

J.P.: I do not want the organization to be banned. If banned, it will get to work underground and then its activities will be more dangerous. One should meet the Muslim League in the open and try to destroy its influence over the Muslim masses by creating a new psychology among them. I suggest that those who hold prominent positions in the League organization should not be given any post in Government, because, they can do injury to the minorities under them. Those who are already in government services should be keenly watched.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Hindu*, 8 November 1947 and *National Herald*, 9 November 1947.



Q: Please tell us something about the present activities of the Socialist Party?

J.P.: The party, at present, is interested in developing primary organizations of workers and in shaping the trade union movement on the basis of industrial organization. I want a single party of all the leftist organizations and I think the Socialist Party is in a position to become such a single party.

Q: What is your opinion about the Communists?

J.P.: The question of unity with them does not arise at all.

Q: Whom do you hold responsible for the Kashmir situation?

J.P.: The Government of Pakistan, with British support, is responsible for the undeclared war against the Indian Union. I think, however, that Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah,<sup>2</sup> the present Premier of Kashmir State, would have been in a much better position to meet the raiders if the Congress had supported his movement earlier and if he had become the head of the Kashmir Government six months ago.

<sup>2</sup> Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah (1905-82); campaigned for responsible government and founded Kashmir Muslim Conference in 1932; later named it as National Conference in 1939; launched Quit Kashmir Movement 1946; Prime Minister of Kashmir, 1947-53; detained for 4½ years from 9 August 1953; detained again in 1958 and released in 1964; again came to power as Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir in 1974 and retained that position till his death in 1982.

#### **134. Address to Workers at the Loyahad Colliery, Jharia, 8 November 1947<sup>1</sup>**

If the aftermath of the partition of the country leads to the collapse of the Nehru Government then it will encourage the Indian princes to attempt to seize Delhi and capture the administration.

Although I am a strong protagonist of Mazdoor Raj yet I realize that at this juncture my primary duty is to strengthen the Nehru Government. I, therefore, advise you not to be misled by false slogans and not to resort to strikes on the smallest pretext, but to cooperate with your employers, secure in the knowledge that if your demands are just then no one in the world can resist you. You all should maintain your solidarity and strengthen the Nehru Government for the establishment of which the people of India had sacrificed so much and struggled so valiantly.

The colliery owners had decided to restrict coal output by 25 per cent in view of the transport bottleneck. I have already discussed the matter with the colliery owners and am doing my best to see that this decision does not prove prejudicial to workers' interests. I shall take up the matter with the

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Searchlight*, 10 November 1947.

Central Government in Delhi, and I expect that a tripartite conference of labour representatives, employers and the Government will be able to settle the question to the satisfaction of all concerned.

**135. Speech at a Peace Meeting at Jama Masjid, Delhi,  
17 November 1947<sup>1</sup>**

The Hindu Mahasabha, the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh, the Akali Party and other communal organizations in India are deluding themselves by aspiring to establish Hindu Raj in India.

Where were those members of the R.S.S., who are now dishonouring the tricolour, when India was fighting for freedom. They were afraid to face the British bayonets then. And now when the Nehru Government has come into power because of the sacrifices made by Congressmen, it is a matter of shame that they are raising this cry of Hindu Raj. By continuing their nefarious activities, by continuing this cycle of retaliation, they will only succeed in inviting foreign rule again.

I pay my heartiest tributes to Mahatma Gandhi for restoring peace in Delhi. Today I am seeing a new Delhi and I am happy to find Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs in this meeting sitting side by side. But this miracle is due to that magician who is still in our midst.

If Hindus and Sikhs want that Pakistan should be made to realize its mistakes, then it is their duty to rehabilitate Muslims and create conditions in which they can feel secure in India.

To achieve this, there is no other way than to follow Mahatma Gandhi's advice. The resolution of the Congress Working Committee, defining its attitude towards refugees, is the correct lead given to the nation.

I hope that the country will be reunited when people succeed in establishing kisan-mazdoor Raj in India and I appeal to them to prepare themselves for the new revolution.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Hindustan Times*, 18 November 1947.

**136. Speech at a Public Meeting, Poona,  
27 November 1947<sup>1</sup>**

I am afraid that the Socialists will have to break away from the Congress in the near future. In such an eventuality what will be the relations between

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Hindu*, 28 November 1947.

the Socialists and the Congress? In the past when the country was fighting its battle of freedom, a united front of all groups under the Congress banner was necessary. Today with the achievement of freedom, that necessity has disappeared, and the Socialists now will organize themselves separately if they find that they cannot carry the Congress with them. I am not much hopeful today, that we shall succeed in the latter task.

Attempts are being made to show that socialism and Gandhism are two extremes which cannot meet. This misleading propaganda is being done with an eye of the future vote of the people in the coming elections. The present provincial Ministries cannot with confidence approach the people and point out steps they have taken either to reduce the influence of the capitalists over the country or remove the people's wants. The Socialists are striving for a Socialist order in the country and I believe that it is the duty of all to support and help them in organizing and strengthening the party, for the world is rapidly heading towards socialism.

I am hopeful that a socialist opposition front to the party in power, under the new constitutional set-up, can offer constructive opposition and help to shape the country on socialistic ideas. Such an opposition is a necessity, otherwise one-party Government is likely to drift towards dictatorship.

I understand the necessity of the Standstill Agreement of the Central Government with Hyderabad<sup>2</sup> for one year under the present conditions, for we cannot reasonably expect the India Government to fight simultaneously on so many fronts. But the Government of India should bring it to the notice of the people that there cannot be any satisfaction either in Hyderabad or outside till a fully responsible Government is set up in the State and Hyderabad accedes to the Indian Union. I wish the Government to embody in the pact two conditions, one that Swami Ramananda Thirth and all his colleagues, who are now in jail, should be released and given power, and second, that steps should be taken to rehabilitate all the Hindus who were forced to go out of the State owing to the conditions prevailing therein. I ask the people all over the country to help their brethren in Hyderabad in all possible ways to realize their aim of establishing responsible Government in the State.

<sup>2</sup> The Standstill Agreement between the Indian Union and Hyderabad was signed on 29 November 1947. It provided that until new agreements were signed later on, all the agreements and administrative arrangements regarding matters of common concern, including external affairs, defence and communications, which were existing between the British Government and the Nizam prior to 15 August 1947, would continue between India and Hyderabad.

### 137. Press Statement on the Struggle in Hyderabad, Bombay, 15 December 1947<sup>1</sup>

The Standstill Agreement between the Nizam and the States Department<sup>2</sup> is at best a partial victory. It is unfortunate that the two aspects of the struggle which are inseparable in fact, have been split up by postponing the issue of accession for a year; the issue of immediate and full responsible Government, however, is a matter that brooks of no further delay. The question of accession is the crucial test of Hyderabad people's sovereign status.

This Agreement opens a new phase of the struggle. The release of Swami Ramanand Tirth, the veteran Generalissimo of the Hyderabad State Congress, restores to the people the experienced leadership of which they were robbed in the beginning. Under his able guidance the struggle will forge ahead without any compromise of principle.

The fundamentals upon which we enter this final chapter of India's battle for independence must be clearly restated. The accession of Hyderabad to the Indian Union does not depend upon the whim of the Nizam. That issue must be decided without delay in accordance with the will of the people, expressed in a general election based on adult franchise. Sovereignty emanates from and must always rest in the entire people. The Nizam must, therefore, finally renounce his pretensions of divine right of kingship.

There is a vicious tradition in Hyderabad which creates in practice two classes of superior and inferior citizenship. The Nizam is seeking to perpetuate it by his claim for weightage and parity. By claiming such special privileges for Muslims a clean political issue is being perverted into a communal conflict. Such an effort would do grave damage to the interests and well-being of all the Muslims in the south, within Hyderabad and also in the neighbouring areas of the Indian Union.

The Hyderabad State Congress has fought the present struggle valiantly and the people of Hyderabad have given a heartening response to the call of the struggle. In the face of wanton repression and lawless terror, they have adhered steadfastly to the Indian Union and the principles of liberty and democracy.

The Socialist Party extends its comradely greetings to Swami Ramanand Tirth and the State Congress in the new phase which the struggle now assumes.

At this juncture it is desirable clearly to reaffirm our determination not to yield on the fundamentals, which are:

<sup>1</sup> *Searchlight*, 18 December 1947.

<sup>2</sup> See ante, item 136, fn. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Swami Ramanand Tirth (1903-73); led the fight for liberating Hyderabad State and suffered imprisonment in 1940, 1947 and 1948; General Secretary Hyderabad State Congress in 1940 and its President from 1942-50; elected twice to Lok Sabha 1952, 1947.

1. The right of the people of Hyderabad to determine the issue of accession to the Indian Union by their own unfettered will.
2. Power must be completely transferred from the Nizam to the people of the State according to the decisions of the constitution-making body elected on adult franchise.
3. The Interim Government must not be based upon separate representation on the basis of caste and religion; the President of the State Congress to invite such public-spirited men to co-operate with him as would, as a team, enjoy the confidence of all classes of the people.
4. Equal and common basis of citizenship for all and the end of all rules, laws and practices which divide the common people into two groups—the favoured few and the harassed many.
5. Guarantee to every citizen of his life, security and honour, irrespective of his caste or religion and full compensation to the victims of State or communal aggression after a judicial enquiry.

There is no doubt that in the medieval autocracy of Hyderabad these principles can only be established through a successful struggle. Any effort to seek short-cuts would only prolong the agony of the people. The Socialist Party, therefore, offers its fullest co-operation and support to Swami Ramanand Tirth in the historic struggle that now opens before us.

### **138. Presidential Address at the Second Convention of the Assam Socialist Party, Jorhat, 15 December 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Let the Congress continue with the present leadership, but it must move towards Socialism both in programme and action. If it does not do so, we must part company. Our aim is clear—to establish Socialism with or without the Congress. We are today completely free. Now our task is to make our free country a true democratic Socialist Republic.

The salvation of our country can only be under Socialism. We want a Government where every Indian will have full meals to eat, a comfortable house to live, physicians to attend to him and medical aid. There must be full liberty of speech in civic life and a society where there will be no poor and where no child will go without education. It will be a society where there will be no capitalists, Rajahs and Maharajas. It will be a society which will be rich and plentiful, but where only those who labour with pen or hands, will share wealth and income, where there will be no exploiters. The welfare of the country is possible only under Socialism under which

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Tribune*, 16 December 1947.

our industry will be state controlled and not handed over to capitalists. Our agriculture will be organized on the basis of cooperatives.

We want to fulfil the Congress aim that is to establish People's Raj, which is possible only under socialism. We want to supplement the Congress.

My advocacy for Socialism is because of the fact, I am convinced of, that the country's welfare today depends only on it. The world is moving towards Socialism, the message of Socialism is not that of our party alone, but is the message of history. We have completed our political struggle. Now we have to achieve social revolution.

### **139. Press Interview, Gauhati, 24 December 1947<sup>1</sup>**

**Q:** Would you please tell us whether the Socialist Party will accept seats in the Central Cabinet under the present set-up?

**J.P.:** We will not. However, if the present set-up of the Government is changed, the Socialists may reconsider their decision. We want to play our part in building up the country and do not want to be mere critics. We do not want to shirk responsibility, but if we have no effective voice in the Government there is no use of going into it.

On the other hand, the possibility of breaking away from the Congress is not ruled out, if the present state of affairs in the Congress continues. If Congressmen broadly agree with our policy and programme and if Socialists grow stronger in the Congress, we will not go out of it, but will work through it. If the opposite results and anti-Socialist feelings in the Congress increases, we will leave the parent body. If we decide to part company with the Congress, we will also contest the coming general elections on behalf of our own party.

**Q:** Do you think India and Pakistan will unite in future?

**J.P.:** I foresee a united India after the present feelings generated by the partition die down. I am sure that there is a general desire both in India and Pakistan for such unity, which is possible only if there is Socialism in the two Dominions.

**Q:** Do you think the Socialist Party will be allowed to function independently in Pakistan?

**J.P.:** Yes, I think it can. In fact I already have an invitation from the Socialist Party in Pakistan to visit there, but I do not intend to do so right now, and may go there later on.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Hindustan Times*, 25 December 1947. J.P., on his visit to Gauhati, met the press on 24 December 1947.

Kalam Kuan  
Patna  
2.12.46

My dear Dada,

I have seen your statement about the Working Committee and the final list of names. While this has not surprised me I do not mind saying that I have been considerably perturbed. <sup>haha</sup> I gave you my consent in Delhi Meerut. I also pressed on you my views regarding the Committee. You promised to do your best. In Delhi I took <sup>an opportunity</sup> ~~occasion~~ to speak to Sardar Vallabhbhai <sup>Patel</sup> about this matter. I <sup>found</sup> ~~found~~, however, that I had only wasted my time. ~~for~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~final~~ picture is even <sup>more</sup> unsatisfactory to me than the one I had <sup>seen</sup> ~~before~~ in Meerut. In Meerut I had been told that <sup>the</sup> General Secretary would be some one from <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ P. and one who would command our confidence. <sup>I am happy at Ashwini Kumar's appointment.</sup> While I have personally nothing against Shri Bankar Rao, ~~but~~ <sup>at all</sup> you should know that he does not <sup>at all</sup> command the confidence of my friends. <sup>(i.e. in the Meerut list)</sup> Vallabhai has been replaced with Rajag. Further, you did not see your way to include Mr. Dalaben or any others.

You will remember that it was my  
view in March that the least change should be  
made in the Jawaharlal's Working Committee,  
for you had become the President in  
extraordinary circumstances & due to the  
inevitable resignation of the elected President  
for the year.

I feel extremely depressed at all this.  
You wanted my cooperation & as I too  
was anxious, ~~not to~~ in the existing situation  
in the country, not to strike a note of non-  
cooperation, I agreed to serve on your Committee.  
But it does not seem that my cooperation  
has any value; so, I would like to be obliged  
if you would permit me to resign. I do  
not wish to make any noise about it and  
would like to get out of it quietly. I hope you  
will let me do this.

With kindest regards,

Yours affectionately  
Jayaprakash



12th New Delhi.  
4-6-47

My dear Sardar Sahab

I am leaving for  
Gorakhpur to attend the All India  
Railwaymen's Federation Convention & shall  
return on the 8th morning. Dr. Lohia  
Mrs. Kamaladevi are staying on. Ashwarya  
Narendrakumar also fortunately arrived  
yesterday and he is also staying on.  
I am ~~so~~ anxious that the talks  
we have had should result in some-  
thing concrete and definite. As you  
~~say~~<sup>may</sup> remember I wrote to you ~~that~~ you  
that you alone could bring these  
talks to a definitely conclusion. I am  
writing to request you to take the  
initiative in this matter & see that  
~~the~~ it is not just talked out. I was  
not present in the Working Committee  
where this matter came up for discussion,  
but I understand that the Committee  
showed little interest in this question  
& the discussion was listless. If this

is the attitude nothing hopeful  
can be expected

Narendradev is staying with  
Aruna & her with Kripaldev, &  
Kamaladev is in the Contribution House

With greetings & regards

yours affectionately  
Jyotprakash

Bombay  
11.1.48

My dear Bhai,

I hope Purushottam will get an opportunity to talk with you. The recent strike in Bombay and the Bombay Party's decision to participate in the municipal elections might have irked you. Purushottam will explain both these. The token strike, I assure you, did not mean repudiation of the industrial truce idea. In fact, the National Executive of the Party is issuing a statement tomorrow supporting the truce.

The decision of the local party to fight the municipal election is a local affair.

Purushottam will explain the circumstances that led to this decision with which I have concurred.

As for the larger issue of our relation with The Congress which has been our King Charles's head, a time has come when a decision has to be taken. The decision, I am afraid, is likely to be

that we leave the Congress. In the Province  
our work as Congressmen is daily growing  
more and more difficult. In Bihar,  
for instance, nearly 500 of our workers  
are either under arrest or wanted by the  
police. The distance between us and the  
Congress is becoming wider every day. I  
doubt if any arrangements made at  
the top can be put into effect lower  
down. On the other hand the need of an  
opposition party of the right sort daily grows.

The other side too has decided to force  
the issue. The Constitution Committee  
has decided, for instance, that no one who  
is a member of any other political party  
(than the Congress) can become a member of  
the Congress. They had never gone so far  
before. And Sardar Patel has lately  
delivered himself of such arrant nonsense  
that it makes of the Programme Committee  
of the A.S.C. even a greater nonsense.

The Party Convention that is to meet

on Feb 22 will finally settle this issue  
Indeed the issue would have been settled  
much earlier, had it not been <sup>for</sup> your &  
Papers, advice. It is not going to be easy  
at any time to make a decision which  
goes against your wishes, but we all  
hope that homoeve we function, if we  
honestly work for the country, we will never  
forget your affection and your blessings.  
And we also hope that as an opposition  
party we will not weaken but strengthen  
your hands.

I am sending herewith a copy of  
an article I have sent to the press on this matter.

With love and regards,

Yours  
Jagaprakash

New Delhi

10.2.48

Dear Bhai,

I am writing about certain misleading reports that, I think, should be corrected.

I don't mind being abused, but don't like to be called a liar. Patil has contradicted my statement that "it was Gandhi's wish that a socialist should be Congress President." ~~when Kripalani~~ The facts are so well known, but no one has thought it necessary to come to the rescue of one who is not in the good graces of the mighty.

Then there is that report of the meeting in which you are supposed to have characterised as "dishonourable the attempt being made <sup>by</sup> certain individuals and groups to exploit Gandhi's death for Party ends". I believe this report is not true, but it has not been corrected yet, though the Secy. of the Congress Party has corrected other mis-reports.

I am enclosing herewith the relevant cuttings, with <sup>the</sup> relevant portions underlined in red.

With regards, Affly yours,  
Dyepishah

**140. To Kiran Shankar Ray, 15 January 1948<sup>1</sup>**

My Dear Mr. Ray,<sup>2</sup>

A worker of Burnpur,<sup>3</sup> Sardar Gian Singh,<sup>4</sup> was served with an externment order on 15-11-1948. The reason given in the notice was that the Provincial Government was satisfied that the person concerned was doing or about to do subversive act and so it was necessary to extern him in order to prevent him from doing such an act.

I happen to know this worker who was at one time employed in Jamshedpur.<sup>5</sup> I do not know what material your Department had before it but I am sure that the man was not doing any subversive act whatever. The truth of the matter is that he was critical of the manner in which Mr. John, the INTUC President of the Union (also President of the 'Tata Workers' Union) was conducting the affairs of the Union. Gian Singh was found to be a rather inconvenient person and it was thought to be the easiest way to get rid of him by persuading the Government to extern him. I am distressed at the light manner in which the citizen's liberties are treated by our present Governments. I would earnestly request you to ask for the papers in this case and satisfy yourself personally that the man concerned was really guilty of any subversive act. If you are satisfied that it was so, I would have nothing to say, but if there are no valid reasons found for the externment notice, I hope you would order it to be cancelled.

I hope you will excuse me for giving you this trouble.

With best regards,

Sincerely yours,

J.P.

The Hon'ble Mr. Kiran Shankar Ray,  
Home Minister,  
Government of West Bengal,  
Calcutta

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> Kiran Shankar Ray (1891-1949); joined Non-Cooperation Movement in 1922; Secretary, Swaraj Party, 1923; Secretary Bengal P.C.C. in 1927; arrested in 1930 for Civil Disobedience Movement; elected to Bengal Assembly, 1937; leader of opposition in Bengal Assembly in 1940; after independence became leader of the Congress Party in East Pakistan Legislative Assembly but came over to India in 1948 and was appointed Home Minister of West Bengal in the cabinet led by B.C. Roy.

<sup>3</sup> Burnpur: A town in West Bengal.

<sup>4</sup> Sardar Gian Singh, a worker of Burnpur.

<sup>5</sup> Jamshedpur: An industrial town in Bihar.

**141. 'Will the Socialists Leave the Congress?'**<sup>1</sup>

Will the Socialists leave the Congress and form an opposition party or will they merely talk about it and never make up their mind?

This question is agitating many minds today. The "indecision" of the Socialists and my own "vacillation" in this regard have come in for a good deal of criticism, and the vacillation has even caused amusement to our cartoonists.

First, a few words by way of personal explanation. I confess that it has been a difficult issue to decide and recent national developments have not eased the difficulty. But though the criticism of both friends and foes has perhaps been justified, I wonder if the difficulties that beset the question have properly been appreciated. For any one who is in the habit of looking at a question from every side and who does not wish to act in huff or haste, the subject is an extremely complicated one.

I have been accused of talking too much and too often on this subject and of saying contradictory things. It is true that I have talked much and often on this question, but not because I am a talkative person. The fact is that in the past month I have had to do a great deal of talking in connection with the organization of the Socialist Party. And during these tours at every important meeting I was specifically asked to speak on this question. Sometimes I had to speak not only daily on this matter but several times a day.

As for self-contradiction, press reports have been entirely responsible for putting contradictory things in my mouth. Not that the pressmen deliberately wanted to misreport me. But in a long speech when a subject is dealt with in all its bearings, in my school-masterish way, and pros and cons are all discussed, it is possible for pressmen to pick out what interests or impresses them most or what is sensational. And when that is done to a balanced treatment of a subject, one-sided versions are bound to appear which seem to contradict one another. Perhaps the confusion could have been avoided if authorised versions of my speeches could have been supplied to the press. But when one speaks the same thing at half a dozen meetings every day, this is not easy to do.

Be that as it may, I like here to share with the public my thoughts and hesitations on this subject. We are on the eve of a decision and I would like friends and critics alike to understand us.

What is the main issue involved in the question, within or without the Congress? As far as we Socialists are concerned the issue is: can we build up a socialist India by remaining within the Congress or by working outside it? In other words can the Congress be made an instrument of socialism?

<sup>1</sup> Article in *National Herald*, 15 January 1948.



Of course, there will be many to whom this issue will appear academic or dogmatic. They would say the main issue today is of national survival and of building up a powerful state and a prosperous country. Only the other day Sardar Patel disparaged "isms" and denounced the parrot-cries of socialism. We do not think there is any contradiction between the issue of "isms" and the issue of national survival and national construction. Rather, not only is there no contradiction, but we believe that in building up the national state and the new India, a consideration of "isms" is essential. We believe that on the basis of Socialism alone is it possible to build up a strong and prosperous India.

It is also essential to remember that those who decry "ism" have their own "ism" nonetheless; only that the "ism" that is already reigning in society, so that it does not have to be talked about. When Sardar Patel decries Socialism he is defending the status quo, and is saying that his "ism" namely status-quo-ism is superior to all others.

However, to return to the question whether the Congress could become an instrument of Socialism, there are many contradictory trends and forces in the Congress. Some of these tend to pull the Congress in the direction of Socialism. There are Socialists for instance, and a small number of other leftists. There are also many, whom one may describe as constructive Gandhians, who are in sympathy with Democratic Socialism. There are towering men in the Congress such as Pandit Nehru and Maulana Azad whose sympathies are the same. And above all, there is Gandhiji who as a servant of Daridranarayan, is a socialist in his own original way. It was perhaps not wrong to believe that these forces together could succeed in taking the Congress and the country towards Socialism. And therefore there were many among us who did desire, and some still do, to give this course a chance.

This naturally gave offence to those of our friends who had lost faith in the Congress and grown impatient with its ways. But for those who have deep attachments with the Congress and who have given the best part of their lives to its service, it was not possible to act in impatience. And for some of us whose love and admiration for Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru are not circumscribed by Marxian dogma or the Party line, it was, and is, not an easy task to disregard their advice.

And we thus carried on in the Congress playing our ineffective part there, and coming more and more in conflict with it and its government in the field of work and action.

Such a state of affairs, it is obvious, cannot long be prolonged. It is bad both for the Congress and the Socialist Party. But it is equally obvious that the question whether the Congress can become a socialist organization will take long to answer; and even at the end no one can be sure what the answer would be.

In the meanwhile the present situation cannot be allowed to drift. If the Socialists are to continue to work within the Congress in the hope of converting it, they cannot run with the hare and hunt with the hound. It is clear to me that in that case we must disband our party and cease functioning as a body almost parallel to the Congress. If we did not do so, conflicts that have already appeared would so accumulate and grow that they would defeat the very purpose of our remaining within the Congress, that is the conversion of the Congress. The constitution committee of the Congress, as reported in the press, already seems to have recommended that no one who is a member of another political party should be allowed to join the Congress. But even if the other side did not force the issue, it is clear to me that if we have to remain within the Congress much longer we can be there only as Congressmen. We may at the most work as an ideological group, but not function as members of an independent party, owing to its primary loyalty and allegiance. This sort of an arrangement worked when we were fighting together for freedom and might still work for a short transitional period; but it cannot indefinitely be prolonged.

And here is the rub. The Socialist Party cannot dissolve itself until it is sure that the Congress would fulfil the task of socialism. This surety is impossible to have at present.

I have written above of the forces that are pulling the Congress towards socialism. Let me now consider those that are barring that way, and are making its future course uncertain.

The strength of the Congress till now sprang from the fact that it was an organization of active servants of the people. In this form the Congress is fast becoming defunct. On the other hand, it is fast changing into a purely parliamentary party. When Acharya Kripalani resigned the other day, it will be recalled that the main issue he raised was: would the official or the non-official wing of the Congress dominate it? In other words, the issue was: would the Congress become a predominantly parliamentary party or a body serving the people largely through non-official agencies and activities. The resignation of Acharya Kripalani and the entire recent trend in the Congress shows that the issue has already been settled and all those from Mahatma Gandhi downwards, who wished to retain the old character of the Congress as a body of voluntary servants of the people have lost the battle.

As a result of this great metamorphosis the Congress has become a source of power and personal advancement. Naturally, vested interests have grown and are fast growing within it, and with them corruption and jobbery. Congress elections beginning with enrolment of members have become a racket and self-seeking and power politics have become rampant. This rising tide of selfish politics is the greatest barrier today in the path of the Congress

advancing towards Socialism. People interested in self-advancement, primarily, do not worry over much about ideologies and questions of social policy. They will mouth any 'ism' that may be popular, whether Gandhism, Socialism or other and pursue quietly their own practice.

It is necessary to understand this sudden transformation of the Congress, this rapid downfall from its lofty ideals. To my mind, this change is due mainly to the middle class character of the Congress. It is characteristic for the middle class man to think not in terms of group but personal interest. A worker will naturally tend to unite with his fellow workers and fight for the betterment of their collective lot. On the contrary, the man from the middle class will try to push himself up on the ladder of advancement. Most of the workers of the Congress came from the lower middle class. Now that freedom has been won and the jail-going process is at an end, for many of them—I do not say for all because there are many happy exceptions—there are no moral urges left; and their attention now is centred on themselves and their personal interests. They are anxious now for jobs, positions and opportunities to seize the good things of life, and they are busy elbowing their way to these.

This is why the moral edifice of the Congress has so suddenly collapsed. It is not so much the fact that capitalist interests have already captured the Congress as this fact of middle class selfishness, that obstructs its way towards socialism. It is this fact, again, that makes it easy for the vested interests to penetrate into and entrench themselves within the Congress. It is this fact, which makes even Mahatma Gandhi feel so helpless in stopping the rot that is spreading so fast. Any one who moves about as much as I do, knows that the hold of Mahatma Gandhi over the common people is greater today than ever. And yet, because the bridge of workers that he had built between himself and the people is broken, Gandhiji finds himself alone and helpless. This is why Pandit Nehru too, second only to Gandhiji in moral stature and leadership, though Prime Minister, finds himself checked and thwarted at the very centre of the Government over which he presides. This is why, again, nobly worded resolutions of the Congress remain unheeded on paper and the canker of corruption and communalism, its twin brother, eat deeper and deeper into its heart.

It is also this middle class engrossment in self-interest that is at the bottom of much of the corruption, nepotism and lack of policy that one finds in the Congress Governments today.

Parenthetically, I should add that any organization that bases itself mainly on the middle class is bound to meet the same fate. The Socialist Party, for instance, cannot deliver the goods until it bases itself on the trade unions and the organized peasantry.

Looked at from this angle, the problem of converting the Congress to

socialism is not merely the problem of defining its objectives and drawing up a programme but also of converting it structurally into a labour or rather a proletarian party (embracing both the peasant and the worker). On paper, the programmes and policies of the Congress have never been reactionary. And, there is no doubt that the committee of the A.I.C.C. that has recently been appointed will also produce a satisfactory programme. But the social interests that are at present working within the Congress will in their pursuit of self-interest by-pass this programme without openly opposing it. And there will always be enough crises at hand to justify their policy of doing nothing.

The question then is, can the Congress change structurally? Can it become a real labour or toilers' party? Here, I think, the answer is rather uncertain. At least to me it does not appear to be possible. All the individual self-interests will join together, as they are doing today, to obstruct such a change and thwart Mahatma Gandhi as well as to check Socialism. Later, when the section of the middle class that is on top today gets disillusioned and finds itself in the grip of those who represent larger vested interests, it would try to change. But it would be too late then. The Congress would have become a bourgeois party.

In view of these basic considerations, it seems futile for the Socialists to continue longer within the Congress. It seems more desirable to go out and create a real socialist party, both ideologically and structurally grounded in the toiling masses of this country. Such a party is necessary also to function as an opposition party, which is so sorely needed in view of the complacency and ineptitude of the party in power and for the success of democracy.

This is how the trend of our thought runs. But it is not for me to settle the issue. The annual convention of the party, which is meeting on February 21, will settle this question finally.

#### **142. 'Eschew Violence to save Gandhiji's life', 17 January 1948<sup>1</sup>**

Gandhiji's fast<sup>2</sup> is the supreme sacrifice offered by him in order to make the people see things in true perspective. Gandhiji is the only man who can reunite the two Dominions.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Tribune*, 18 January 1948.

<sup>2</sup> Mahatma Gandhi's last fast: Mahatma Gandhi declared at his prayer meeting on 12 January 1948 that he was going to undertake a fast unto death to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. He started the fast on 13 January 1948 and said that he would be satisfied if reunion of hearts of all communities took place without any outside pressure but as a result of an awakened sense of duty. After the members of the Peace Committee assured him that the conditions which he had stipulated for giving up the fast had been fulfilled, he broke his fast on 18 January 1948.

If Mahatma Gandhi does not survive this fast, the void thus created in India's life would never be filled. It pained me to hear that certain misguided young men had raised slogans against the greatest man of the age.

Mad retaliation is doing more harm to India than to Pakistan. The question before India today is to provide the bare necessities of life to millions of her inhabitants. Freedom would mean nothing if that is not done immediately. Corruption is rampant in the country and general morality is low. The princes and the capitalists are exploiting the masses.

#### **143. Statement on the breaking of Mahatma Gandhi's Fast, New Delhi, 18 January 1948<sup>1</sup>**

The citizens of Delhi of all creeds and classes, our refugee<sup>2</sup> brothers and sisters, deserve praise and congratulations for choosing the path of goodness and creating such a condition of good will as could persuade Mahatma Gandhi to break his fast.<sup>3</sup>

The whole country, with bated breath, was looking anxiously towards Delhi. The country breathes freely again that a great national calamity has been averted. Mahatma Gandhi has once again succeeded in his unique way to wean the people from wrong and self-injury.

The people of this country too have proved again their deep abiding faith, despite temporary lapses, in goodness and the path of righteousness and virtue. The greatness of a country depends on the character of its people. The people of India, by choosing right and rejecting wrong, have proved that they are worthy of the great traditions of their past and capable of building a future no less great.

The people of Delhi by the decision they have taken today<sup>4</sup> have undertaken a grave responsibility. Their task is not finished when they have saved the life of Mahatma Gandhi. Rather, their task begins.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Pioneer*, 20 January 1948.

<sup>2</sup> Refugees—refers to the people who had migrated to India from Pakistan after Partition.

<sup>3</sup> Gandhiji had broken his fast on 19 January 1948.

<sup>4</sup> See fn. 2 of item no. 142.

#### **144. Speech at a public meeting, New Delhi, 20 January 1948<sup>1</sup>**

Young men in the country have to bear increased responsibilities arising out of assurances given by their leaders to Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji, by

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Bombay Chronicle*, 22 January 1948.

undertaking a fast at the risk of his life, has shown you the road to peace and prosperity. It is now for the young men to implement the assurances given to him on your behalf. It is up to the youth of the country to build up a new India, an India which should be a matter of pride to everyone.

When we have succeeded in establishing complete peace and order in the country, we can ask the world to force Pakistan to do justice to its minorities. There is no justification for us to punish the minorities in India for the wrongs done by the people of Pakistan to their minority.

We have to end the capitalist system in the country which is at present responsible for the exploitation of the masses. We must enact such laws in the country as would make it obligatory for every one to work, excluding only the children and the aged ones.

But progress in the country is possible only if the Government of the country is assured of permanent peace on the home front, which cannot be achieved if people do not follow the lead given by Mahatma Gandhi.

#### **145. Circular issued to all Railwaymen, New Delhi, 21 January 1948<sup>1</sup>**

The All-India Railwaymen's Federation has been in the past months securing many advantages for railwaymen of all classes, but particularly for the lower paid staff. The anomalies and injustices of the Pay Commission's report have in some cases at least, been removed.

There are, no doubt, many points yet to be settled between the Federation and the Ministry of Railways. But the Federation allowed twelve months to the Central Government, in view of the difficulties a new State has to face, for the settlement of these points will be settled to your possible satisfaction. I say best possible and not entire satisfaction because our country is faced with a serious political and economic crisis. In these circumstances, all of us have to make sacrifices. These sacrifices no doubt should be equally distributed but we must, nevertheless realize that when the nation is in difficulty, we cannot have all that we want or all that is our due. Inadequate output as regards both new construction and maintenance in workshops and sheds, an appreciable falling off as compared with the past few years in operating efficiency, and indifference, carelessness and even discourtesy and corruption on the part of some railway staff in dealing with the travelling and trading public and a marked decrease in standards of discipline have substantially affected control by supervisory staff and cooperation between various departments.

<sup>1</sup> *Bombay Chronicle*, 22 January 1948.

I am sure that you will agree that there is substance in these complaints and that these difficulties are real. If the indifference, carelessness, discourtesy, corruption are not removed, output does not improve. If the spirit of indiscipline (which is not always due to the misbehaviour of officials) is not suppressed, the railways cannot but go under. And then they will take the whole country down with them. It is the duty of an organized labour movement not only to look after the immediate interests of the workers, but also to ensure honesty, discipline, a high standard of work and production which are essential in the larger interest and which naturally embraces the interests of the workers themselves.

I, therefore, urge you earnestly to remember that while you have to fight for your cause you must ever be mindful of your duties and responsibilities. The future of the country is in your hands and with it your own. If India suffers you too suffer. If India marches onward you too march with her. If you forget this, if you lose sight of the essentials, nothing and no one can save you.

**146. Statement on the Congress Working Committee's  
resolution on the Labour Situation in the Country,  
New Delhi, 28 January 1948<sup>1</sup>**

The resolution<sup>2</sup> is laughable. There are able men in the Working Committee, but they seem to have lost touch with reality. Industrial truce, at least during these critical times, is a proposition that has been accepted by all parties in the country, except by the Communists. But, mere words or threats in the fashion of Sardar Patel cannot bring about truce.

The recent Industrial Conference<sup>3</sup> laid down certain very commendable principles as essential for truce between labour and capital. But the principles have so far remained on paper. The Working Committee apparently thinks that it was enough to have passed resolutions. The worker, however, wants tangible evidence that the principles were meant seriously and are being applied.

<sup>1</sup> *National Herald*, 29 January 1948.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 19 for the text of Congress Working Committee's resolution on labour situation in the country, 26 January 1948.

<sup>3</sup> Industrial Conference: It was convened by the Government of India and was held at New Delhi on 18 December 1947 to bring about management-labour collaboration in the maintenance of Industrial peace with a view to ensuring maximum production through avoidance of all causes of friction between employers and labour and resolution of all disputes by resort to negotiation, conciliation and arbitration. Representatives of provinces, states, industry, commerce and labour took part in the Conference. Dr. S.P. Mookerjee, Minister of Industry and Supply, presided.

It is foolish to believe that the worker has no regard for the national interest and is not actuated by patriotism. But he can hardly work up any enthusiasm when he finds that while he is treated to sermons and threats, the profiteers are getting on merrily with their loot and corruption, and the salaries at the top, where patriotism is the stock in trade, have been placed so inequitously high.

Building up of India requires sacrifices but if the sacrifices are to be forthcoming, they must be equitably shared. The worker must be made to feel that he is working for the country and not the profit-seeker. He must be given a share in the management and control of industry. The basic problems that face him as a worker, such as that of a living wage, must be settled. There must be a machinery for the speedy and just settlement of day-to-day disputes.

All these conditions were conceded by the industrial conference. Fair wages, control of profits, national, regional and functional joint boards, works councils, were all conceived of in the fine resolutions of the conference. But though it is some time now since those pious decisions were made, nothing tangible has yet been done.

The Working Committee instead of meeting periodically and making pontifical declarations, should get down to business and do something concrete.

#### **147. Speech at a Public Meeting, New Delhi, 2 February 1948<sup>1</sup>**

I urge for the immediate banning of all communal organizations in the country like the Hindu Mahasabha<sup>2</sup> and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.<sup>3</sup>

The people should give no quarter to communalists in the society. However, while trying to eliminate these forces of evil from their fold, they should not resort to any sort of violence because that was not the creed of Mahatma Gandhi.

If any organization thinks that it can set up a government based on communalism and capitalism, it is mistaken. All governments set up on these lines will have to surrender to the popular demand for democracy and freedom.

A general election should be held in the country to make the government fully democratic.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *National Herald*, 4 February 1948.

<sup>2</sup> All India Hindu Mahasabha: founded at Hardwar in 1915, engaged in championing the interests of Hindus as a community.

<sup>3</sup> Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh: founded in 1925 with the objective of strengthening Hindus physically, intellectually and morally.



**148. Government Must Formally Resign and Home Minister Replaced, New Delhi, 3 February 1948<sup>1</sup>**

Gandhiji's removal from our midst in the manner that it took place is both a crisis of our culture and crisis of our State. The peer of Buddha in the spread of cultured living and of Asoka in the founding of the Chakravarti Raj has been assassinated. The assassin is not one person, not even a team of persons, but a big and wide conspiracy of a foul idea and of organizations that embody it. On Hindu Mahasabha, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Muslim League and such like organizations rests the responsibility for this two fold crisis of the spirit and the State.

As a first step towards overcoming the crisis, the State must crush these organizations and the people deny them every kind of support or sympathy. Preaching of hate and war between the various faiths of communities of our country by the written or the spoken word must be made a treasonable offence against our nascent State. Too long have evil men been permitted to preach civil strife and Government has not shown full awareness of the great harm done to our new-born State. In its unawareness, Government did not even do all that it could to protect our treasure from a prowling assassin.

In accordance with the approved norms of democracy, Government must formally resign in symbolic atonement of the evil deed, and, on reconstitution, the Home and Information Ministries must change. The Home Ministry must be entrusted to the care of a minister who will have no other portfolios to administer and who will be able and willing to curb and crush the organizations of communal hate. In the reconstituted Government, there should be no place for communalists and for those who stood on the other side in the battle of freedom. The reconstituted Government and, in particular, the Home Ministry must push through at top-speed the programme of purifying Government services of all communal elements and of educating them into a national citizenship.

Our final appeal is to our people, in particular to the youth, conscious of the eternal war that has taken place in the long history of the Hindu faith between narrow bigotry and factions of caste and province and the sway of dark evil on the one hand and broad sunlit levels of vigorous democracy and expansive governance on the other, a war that has today reached the all-time low of killing a heart than which none warmer or wiser ever beat in this country or another. The young men and women of India must prepare to protect the culture and the State that Mahatma Gandhi has bequeathed them.

<sup>1</sup> Statement issued jointly with Rammanohar Lohia and Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya in the wake of Gandhi's assassination on 30 January 1948, *Pioneer*, 4 February 1948.

We have no doubts about the ability of the Home Minister. But a man of 74 has got departments which even a man of 30 probably would find it difficult to bear the burden of. For instance, the Home Minister is also in charge of the State Ministry, which is running one-third of the country. Therefore, he has not as much time for the Home Ministry as is necessary. I am not censuring him.

While we want all communal organizations to be banned, we do not want that ban to apply to cultural or religious bodies. Congress will succeed because the people are behind Congress and not behind communal organizations.

A party which is outside Congress can co-operate fully with Congress in dealing with the present situation. Those who are in Congress, of course, should close up ranks in order to fight reaction. Even supposing that on account of certain other things the Socialist Party has become an Independent party, that would not mean that as an independent party they would not co-operate with Government in dealing with this situation.

#### **149. Demand for Reconstruction of the Government: Some clarifications, New Delhi, 5 February 1948<sup>1</sup>**

For demanding reconstitution of the Central Government and a change in the Home Ministry, we have been attacked as seeking party advantage out of a national calamity. This is a remarkable distortion. If even after a calamity of such intensity, we do not learn to probe into our weaknesses and correct our mistakes, there is no hope for the country. We can obtain no party advantage from a reconstitution of the Government or a change in the Home Ministry. These measures we consider essential in the national interest. Unless the Central Cabinet is reformed according to the principles we laid down in our previous statement, so as to make it reflect faithfully the ideals of nationalism and the social urges of the people, the Government would fail to master the present national crisis.

We should like to make it clear that our demand for a reconstruction of the Government has no relation with the question whether we join the Government or not. It will be recalled that in our statement at the press conference we had said nothing about our relation with the Government. It was only when we were asked directly what our policy would be if we were invited into the Government that we said we were prepared to accept any responsibility.

<sup>1</sup> Statement issued jointly with Rammanohar Lohia and Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya. *Searchlight*, 7 February 1948.

Our remarks about the Home Ministry did not mean at all that we desired the resignation of Sardar Patel from the Government. Nothing could be farther from our mind. We have no doubt that he is indispensable to the Government and that it is in the highest interest of the country that he and Pandit Nehru should work together. The assurances that both these leaders have given to the country that there are no differences among them will go a long way to fortify the country and inspire faith. What our remarks about the Home Ministry did mean was that Ministry should receive the undivided attention of a Minister, and further that the attitude of Sardar Patel, till at any rate the great tragedy overtook us, towards the danger of Hindu and Sikh communalism was not in accord with Congress policy, which presumably guides the Government. The result was an unchecked growth of this danger, which now has proved so disastrous. We do believe that we were not wrong in feeling thus though we realize that truth is sometimes unpleasant and gets one in difficulties. We should add here that in the reconstruction of the Government, the general principle that no minister should be burdened with several important departments should be followed.

Sardar Patel at the Congress Party meeting is reported to have attacked us for not shouldering responsibility, and to have recounted the various offers he had made to us. We were always of the opinion that all the public shouting about offers that were supposed to have been made to us was part of a propaganda campaign against us. We have been confirmed in this view. Every time a test came, these offers vanished. The last time it happened was when Mahatmajī and Pandit Nehru proposed that Narendra Deva should be President of Congress. A testing time has come again. For our part, we have offered fullest and unstinted co-operation.

#### **150. Appeal to the voters of Bombay on the eve of Municipal Elections, 14 February 1948<sup>1</sup>**

The Socialist Party is contesting elections to the Bombay Municipal Corporation. For 106 seats in General Wards, the Party has put up 50 candidates; in the predominantly labour wards, however, the Party is contesting over 60 per cent of the seats.

The Socialist Party has put before the voters a Manifesto that has evoked universal encomiums. The Party has put forward a practical programme of Municipal Socialism and has made concrete and institutional suggestions for the working of democracy. The Right of Recall gives the voters the final control as well as the necessary initiative in civic affairs. The

<sup>1</sup> *Bombay Chronicle*, 14 February 1948. The names of candidates have been omitted.

Community Centres, if well organized, promise to revolutionize the life of the people.

The Socialist Party's programme of functional democracy brings dignity and worth to every Municipal employee. I am confident that the enlightened voters of Bombay will support the Socialist candidates both because of their record of disinterested work, and their well thought-out programme.

It is worth noting that no candidate of the Socialist Party is either an estate-owner or a capitalist. Our candidates are drawn from the ranks of industrial workers, professional men and social workers. Few other parties can show a list of clean and competent candidates.

I had hoped to come to Bombay and make my appeal on behalf of the Socialist candidates, personally to the voters. I actually reached Bombay for the purpose on January 30. The tragic event of the day made me cancel my Bombay programme. I therefore appeal through the press to the million voters in Bombay, and more particularly to the working people, to vote solidly for the Socialist candidates. The Socialists alone, in the changed conditions of today, can carry forward and enrich the glorious traditions of the Municipal Corporation set up by such great patriots as Phirozshah Mehta<sup>2</sup> and Vithalbhai Patel.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Phirozshah Mehta (1845-1915); prominent figure of the Liberal School of Indian Politics; remembered as maker of modern Bombay Municipal Corporation which he served for nearly half a century; one of the founders of *Bombay Chronicle* in 1913; founded Bombay Presidency Association with Telang in 1885; served as its Secretary for many years; presided over the annual Congress session, Calcutta, 1890; represented Bombay in 1894 and 1897 in the Imperial Legislative Council.

<sup>3</sup> Vithalbhai Patel (1873-1933); eminent freedom fighter and politician, entered Bombay Legislative Council in 1912, responsible for passage of the Primary Education Bill along with others which empowered municipalities to introduce free and compulsory Primary education, condemned the recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee 1919, elected to Bombay Municipal Corporation in 1922 and became its President in 1923; elected to the Indian Legislative Assembly in 1924 and was its President in 1925-6.

## **151. Reconstitution of the Government of India, An urgent Necessity, Patna, 15 February 1948<sup>1</sup>**

I deny the charge levelled at the Socialist Party that it is trying to make political capital out of the national calamity into which India has been plunged as a result of Mahatma Gandhi's death, in order that some members of the Party may thereby lever themselves into the administration.

I have nothing to benefit personally from a frank and free criticism and an over-all estimation of the events leading up to Mahatma Gandhi's

<sup>1</sup> Speech at a public meeting, adapted from *Hindu*, 17 February 1948.

assassination.<sup>2</sup> Personally I am no believer in fate and am convinced that if prominent Congress Ministers had not patronized and attended R.S.S. rallies and had warned the youth of the country clearly against joining the organization and provided other suitable outlets for their energies, Mahatma Gandhi would never have been taken away from us, when we most needed him. Even after the bomb was thrown at him during the prayer meeting no strong action was taken to unearth the conspiracy.

It is wrong to say that I desire a Cabinet portfolio. That I could have got long ago and in fact, I have renounced several opportunities for the same. I do not think that I am so able or important as to deserve the honour, but had I deserved it, than flattery and not frank criticism which invited official disfavour would have been the best method of achieving that. I am also taunted with having exaggerated differences between Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel, but I have mentioned these differences only on one occasion and that too with the sole intention of clearing the atmosphere of rumours which are rampant in Delhi from the highest to the lowest.

Even the London papers, on the morrow of Mahatma Gandhi's assassination, carried captions suggesting the resignation of Pandit Nehru and the formation of a new Ministry by Sardar Patel. By bringing this controversy into the open, I have given those involved a chance to quell these rumours and establish a more stable atmosphere in which they could work together and strengthen the country. After the radio broadcasts of both Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel all such doubts had been laid at rest and I am pleased to know that even after Bapu's death the old spirit of cooperation and unity would survive.

To fight communalism wherever it may exist is not wrong. Therefore, to demand the removal of communal elements from the Government is to strengthen the Government in order to meet the crisis which confronts the country. It is the practice in all Democracies when they are faced with a critical situation.

I also demand the removal of all such elements who did not take part in the campaign against the British rulers and some times acted against the national movement in the past. There is no reason why the spokesmen for big business should have been included in the Cabinet and, therefore, I am surprised when a responsible Minister said that a member had been selected because he represented capitalist interest.

Police Raj alone can not crush communalism unless the Administration

<sup>2</sup> Gandhi's Assassination: Gandhi left his room for prayer meeting on 30 January 1948. As he walked on the steps leading to the prayer ground, a youngman aged 35 years came upto there and offered Pranam. Gandhi returned the salutation. Just at that moment the youngman (Nathu Ram Godse) pulled out a revolver and fired three shots piercing the frail body just below the heart; immediately Gandhi collapsed.

had first been purged of all who were not democratic-minded nationalists. I call upon the legislatures to enact laws for depriving people of obstinate communal views of the right of franchise, because those who do not believe in democracy have no right to democratic privileges.

Communal Raj is the high road to Fascism and I strongly condemn the murder and arson gangs which are financed by reactionary princes and business magnates.

## **152. Government Must Own Responsibility for Mahatma Gandhi's Assassination, New Delhi, 21 February 1948<sup>1</sup>**

I was astonished when I went through the resolution.<sup>2</sup> It contains certain things which are incorrect and hence should not have been included in it. At the same time certain other important things have not been mentioned. After the tragic assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, it was incumbent on the Government to admit their fault. For Gandhiji's death, blame must be laid not only on communal organizations but also on the Central and provincial Governments. Why was it that the Government realized the danger of communalism only after Mahatma Gandhi's assassination? Where was the secret police? If the secret police did inform the Government in advance about the real position, why was no action taken to meet the danger. The nature of work done by the R.S.S. and the propaganda carried on by them was a matter of common knowledge. But instead of taking any action against them some of our responsible ministers attended their rallies and even praised their work.

These organizations were described as a menace in the resolution passed at the last meeting of the A.I.C.C. The A.I.C.C. now has a right to ask what steps were taken in pursuance of that resolution to put down the menace. The government services are the stronghold of the R.S.S. and similar organizations. But the steps taken to counteract their influence are not only mild but also belated. Surely the A.I.C.C. could not congratulate the Governments on not acting properly.

Communalism today is not confined to Hindus and Muslims only. It has

<sup>1</sup> Speech at a meeting of the All India Congress Committee; adapted from *National Herald*, 22 February 1948.

<sup>2</sup> J.P. was particularly irked by the absence in the resolution, moved on behalf of the Working Committee, of any mention of failure on the part of the Government to protect the life of Gandhi and the inclusion of a paragraph congratulating the central and provincial governments for speedy action in banning such communal organizations which were deliberately trying to spread the poison of communalism.

For the text of the A.I.C.C. resolution adopted on 21 February 1948 see Appendix 20.

now intensified itself in the form of caste distinctions and constitutes a serious danger to the democratic, secular State of our dreams. The country is faced with the danger of disintegration through the working of many other forces. India's future constitution should therefore include a specific clause disallowing communal organizations from contesting elections.

The duty of the A.I.C.C. at the present moment is to give a lead to the country and also issue a directive to the Working Committee as to how communalism should be ended.

### **153. Speech at a Public Meeting, Bombay, 28 February 1948<sup>1</sup>**

I reiterate the demand for removal of some of the ministers of the Union Government who were either associated with communal organizations or were siding with British imperialism.

This was what I meant in my statement two days after Mahatma Gandhi's death.

I may mention the names of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee<sup>2</sup> of the Hindu Mahasabha, Sardar Baldev Singh,<sup>3</sup> of the Akali Dal,<sup>4</sup> Mr. Shanmukham Chetty, former British stooge and Mr. C.H. Bhabha, a capitalist.

Is it for this that millions of Indians had made sacrifices for achieving freedom? Arguments were advanced that their experience was necessary. If that was so they could have been consulted in an advisory capacity.

I may make it clear that what I demanded was not the removal of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel from the Cabinet, but that one person should not be allowed to hold three important portfolios of Home, States and Information. Are there not sufficient persons in India that one man should handle the

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *National Herald*, 29 February 1948.

<sup>2</sup> Syama Prasad Mookerjee (1901-53); elected to Bengal Provincial Assembly, 1937; joined Hindu Mahasabha, 1939 and became its working President, member of Nehru's first Cabinet as Minister of Supply and Industries, 1947-50. In 1951 founded Bharatiya Jan Sangh, the predecessor of Present Bharatiya Janata Party; elected Member of Parliament in 1952; supported the Praja Parishad's campaign of full integration of Kashmir with India; entered Kashmir against advice of Shiekh Abdullah, was detained and died there in prison in 1953.

<sup>3</sup> Sardar Baldev Singh (1902-61); Member of the Akali Party; M.L.A. Punjab, 1937-46; Minister for Development Government of Punjab, 1942-6. Member for Defence, Interim Government, 1946-7 and Defence Minister in Nehru's Cabinet 1947-52.

<sup>4</sup> Akali Dal: Initially a band of volunteers organized in 1920 in order to establish Sikh control over the management of Sikh shrines, contested elections in Punjab in 1937 as a political party; led campaigns for Punjabi Suba in 1955 and in 1966; adopted the Anandpur Sahib Resolution in 1973 in favour of greater autonomy and Sikh hegemony in Punjab, and started a non-violent movement for achieving them; disassociated itself from the militant campaign for Sikh rule in Punjab led by Jarnail Singh Bhindrawala.

three portfolios? That clearly indicates that Sardar Patel seeks power which is likely to lead to dictatorship.

As for the charge levelled against socialists that they were opportunists and enemies of the country, I say that the real enemy of the country is the demon of communalism and the narrow provincialism prevalent everywhere. Though the R.S.S. and other communal organizations were described by Mahatma Gandhi as a "menace to the nation" some of the members of the Government of India had been openly encouraging them. I appeal to every Indian to preserve the nation's freedom by fighting the evil of communalism.

#### **154. Speech on the Role of Teachers in India, Surat, 29 February 1948<sup>1</sup>**

Individuals are bricks of society and it is on the nature and quality of the bricks that the strength and character of the social edifice depends. It is for our teachers and educationists largely to apply the remedy to the very roots of the national disease.

Our educational system should be so reformed and our educators should so endeavour that the young men and women who leave our schools are inspired by the ideals of patriotism and national service, and no matter where or how employed, work for the creation of an India which would be the pride of the world and a fit memorial to the Father of the Nation. It is for you friends to instill this ideal into the minds of the young generation.

The erstwhile system of education had the sole purpose of equipping the students to earn a livelihood. Now it must also have a purpose in life which goes beyond bread-winning.

The recent events culminating in the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi have forcefully brought to light the depths to which Indian humanity has sunk. The mounting corruption in quarters high and low in public life, in business and in the administration also points to the same decline of human character. Communal, provincial and caste hatreds are striking serious blows at the foundations of that Democratic and Co-operative Commonwealth which we want to establish in the country. The remedy lies with the teachers and our educationists.

The Government must take over entire control of education particularly as there appears to be dangerous smugness in that sphere. I emphasize the need for planning in education, as in economics. I think that that field of activity is the one field where great energy and awareness of purpose should be visible and with that end in view the whole educational system from the

<sup>1</sup> Address at the fifth session of the Gujarat Provincial Primary Teachers' Conference, Surat, 29 February 1948. Adapted from *Bombay Chronicle*, 1 March 1948.



primary school upwards should be so overhauled that it produces skilled, trained and educated men and women to answer a pre-determined social and national need.

I congratulate the primary teachers of the province on fine organization and admire their success in improving considerably their lot and in inculcating in themselves a high sense of duty.

**155. No Quarter to Separatism in any form,  
Surat, 29 February 1948<sup>1</sup>**

Gandhiji was our beacon light and the man responsible for elevating us from the low levels of degenerated humanity. It is a great calamity that we have lost our greatest leader when we needed him most. His death is a loss not only to our country, but to the whole world. This has nothing to do with communal passion raging in the country, but something far more sinister—the designs of princes, zamindars, millionaires and reactionaries who, learning the lesson of divide and rule from the British, are now trying to use the same weapon against the infant state of free India.

As far back as the Delhi riots<sup>2</sup> I had warned the Government that this menace of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh should be crushed before it gathered force. During riots in Delhi, our police and the military who had been ordered to shoot at sight just looked on without trying to check the nefarious activities of this organization. It speaks rather badly for a government that wants to rule.

This gave impetus to the growth of that organization and it was able to expand and gather arms almost under the very nose of the Government. Many big Government officers are openly associated with it and even some Congress leaders attend its rallies. Sardar Patel who as late as the Lucknow meeting of the A.I.C.C.,<sup>3</sup> had endorsed Mahatma Gandhi's

<sup>1</sup> Speech at a public meeting at Ahmedabad, 29 February 1948; adapted from *National Herald*, 1 March 1948.

<sup>2</sup> The reference here is to communal riots in Delhi in the immediate aftermath of partition and the influx of a large number of Sikh and Hindu refugees from Pakistan.

<sup>3</sup> The Lucknow meeting of the All India Congress Committee was held from 15 November to 17 November 1947 and was presided over by Acharya Kripalani. The following resolution on communal organizations was adopted on 16 November 1947:

The AICC has noted with regret that communal organizations like the Hindu Mahasabha, the Muslim League and Akali Party have sought to promote their respective interests based on so-called religious considerations in conflict with the national interests. The national interests must mean and include a healthy synthesis of all interests based not on religious but political, social, material and moral grounds. Political activities must accordingly be conducted by political and economic organizations which are open to members of all communities.

suggestion to do away with communal organizations, openly praised the R.S.S.<sup>4</sup>

After a bomb had been thrown at the prayer meeting at Birla House, no concrete steps were taken to safeguard the precious life of Gandhiji. The bomb incident was even ignored with the words that nobody could be mean enough to wish the death of Gandhiji—an illusion which was falsified by the distribution of sweets at some places after the death of Gandhiji. We are being told that Gandhiji refused to allow anybody to be searched or due precaution to be taken. Can one expect Gandhiji to go to the authorities with a request to make arrangements for his protection? The Government ought to have followed in the steps of Mr. H.S. Suhrawardy<sup>5</sup> who, during Mahatma Gandhi's tour of Noakhali, had said, "Whether you want or not, it is the duty of my Government to protect you and as such I shall take adequate measures."

Even on the actual spot of assassination we are told that there were 30 policemen and it is reported that the assassin came walking from a distance of about three yards and was able to fire three shots, yet no policeman either went forward to stop him or even to arrest him after the act was done.

This has certainly shaken the confidence of the people in our present Government. The best course for the head of the Government was to come forward and hand over the resignation of his Government and thus acknowledge his failure in not being able to protect Mahatma Gandhi.

This does not mean that we want to step into the shoes of the present Government. We could easily have got into the Government when we were offered seats in the Cabinet or by flattering those in power. What we want is that the present Government should be reorganized in such a way that those reactionary elements like the Hindu Mahasabha and the Akali Dal, whose representatives are sitting in the assembly, should be removed. The agents of capitalists like Mr. Shanmukham Chetty and Mr. Bhabha, who have contributed nothing towards the struggle for freedom, should be removed instead of being encouraged by giving assurances to the industrialists that these agents of theirs are a certain proof of the

<sup>4</sup> For a note on R.S.S. see item no. 147 of this volume.

<sup>5</sup> Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy (1893-1963); started his career as barrister; became Deputy Mayor of Calcutta in 1924; Minister of Labour, Finance, Public Health and Local Self-Govt. in Bengal, 1937-43; Minister of Civil Supplies and Food during 1943-5; Chief Minister of undivided Bengal in 1946, supported the movement for united Bengal at the time of Partition and stayed on in India; finally moved to Pakistan in 1949 and founded Awami League in East Pakistan which swept the poll in the first election in East Pakistan; appointed Pakistan's Law Minister in 1954-5 and played a major role in framing Pakistan's new constitution, Prime Minister of Pakistan 1956-7.

Government's intention of giving protection to them as Sardar Patel had done at Calcutta. If they are indispensable, they may be included in an advisory capacity in a sort of an economic council to advise the Government, but they should not be there to execute the policies of the Government.

The charge against the Socialists that they want to remove Sardar Patel from the Government is false. Nothing can be farther from truth. Both Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel, each great in his own sphere, are indispensable to the country at the present stage, particularly when there is a void caused by the death of Gandhiji. But we do believe that the three important portfolios of Home, Information and States should not be concentrated in the hands of one man. Particularly the home affairs should be in the hands of a man whose ideas are definitely known to be entirely free from communal bias in any form, as that is the greatest necessity of the day.

Let me explain the evils of the cry of Hindu Raj. Pakistan was a great mistake in the first instance as it had not resulted in the lessening of communal troubles. But now that it is an accomplished fact, we should try to create such a situation in the country that persons irrespective of caste, creed or community can live and be free to develop their own modes of life. It is wrong to ask the Muslims of India to go away from India. By asking them to go we would be creating a solid block of ten crore Muslims with one ideal instead of the existing three blocs dividing them in widely distributed areas. Once they are consolidated they will ask for more space and no international tribunal will be able to say 'no' to them as they will rightly be able to accuse us as barbarians who do not allow anybody having a different religion from our own to stay inside our country.

The cry of Hindu Raj has today resulted in the Hindu community itself being divided into separate castes who are now coming forward to form their own organizations and thus again splitting up the community and the state into bits and pieces after our united struggle to oust the British from our country.

I, therefore, appeal to the people of India to sink all differences and banish all ideas of separatism in any form, like linguistic provinces, communal associations or special privileges and to follow the tenets of Gandhiji. I also appeal to the Constituent Assembly to end separatism in any form by law and not to tolerate communal organizations in any form in our body politic though they may have their place in social spheres.

156. To E. Narayanan, New Delhi, 4 March 1948<sup>1</sup>

4 March 1948

Dear Narayanan,<sup>2</sup>

I am enclosing herewith minutes of the first meeting held at Sodhani's<sup>3</sup> place (you were present at the second meeting for the formation of a study group). I am not writing the names of those present, but you will know them from Sodhani. Please get in touch with all the people and if possible hold a meeting or two to chalk out the line of work of the group. I shall be sending you in a day or two my own suggestions regarding the subjects of study. I am sending a copy of the minutes to Sodhani, Principal Gurmukh Singh<sup>4</sup> and Dr. Rao.<sup>5</sup>

I need not remind you that you had undertaken to act as secretary of the group or the August Club, as it is to be called, till a permanent secretary is appointed. Please do not forget to invite Tilakraj Chaddha,<sup>6</sup> Editor of the *Bandemataram* to the group meeting.

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).<sup>2</sup> E. Narayanan; Editor *Janata*, New Delhi.<sup>3</sup> Refers to Madan Lal Sodhani, a sympathiser of the Socialist Party and J.P.'s host in Delhi for a few years.<sup>4</sup> Gurmukh Nihal Singh; Principal, Khalsa College in Delhi and active member of C.S.P.<sup>5</sup> For biographical note on V.K.R.V. Rao see *JPSW*, Vol. III, p. 109<sup>6</sup> For biographical note on Tilakraj Chaddha see *JPSW*, Vol. II, p. 199157. To Jawaharlal Nehru, 5 March 1948<sup>1</sup>

5 March 1948

My Dear Bhai,<sup>2</sup>

Your second telegram. I am glad the strike has been called off. I have sent for Tripathi<sup>3</sup> and Reyasat Karim,<sup>4</sup> who is Secretary of the District Committee of our Party in Jharia. In the meanwhile may I say a few words about the situation as I see it developing in the collieries? Members of the Socialist Party have been working in Jharia for the last couple of years, if not more. Neither Tripathi, nor any of the others is new to the coal field. In the past we have conducted many strikes, each one of them peaceful. Whereas in

<sup>1</sup> *Brahmanand Papers* (NMML).<sup>2</sup> Refers to Jawaharlal Nehru.<sup>3</sup> Tripathi; a Socialist Party worker and an active trade union leader in Jharia Colliery workers union.<sup>4</sup> Reyasat Karim; Secretary, District Committee, Socialist Party, Jharia, Bihar.

the same field strikes led by others had resulted in repeated police firings. The last strike at the Tata collieries, led by our workers, was a fine example of peaceful labour action. Therefore, it rather surprises me that so much feeling is being worked up against the Socialist Party in the collieries. I have just received a letter from C.J. Jani,<sup>5</sup> a representative of the colliery owners. He sends me various reports from colliery agents and managers. If these reports from colliery agents and managers are to be believed, the only conclusion one would be led to is that the Socialist Party's workers have completely gone off their head, and are abusing all and sundry and threatening murder and worse without rhyme or reason. Tripathi is a decent chap but hot-headed, and while I would be prepared to believe that he sometimes used violent language, I just cannot bring myself to believe that men like Mundrika Singh<sup>6</sup> and B.P. Sinha<sup>7</sup> and others would be guilty of such misbehaviour. As for the outcry against the Socialist Party having been raised so suddenly, I have a suspicion that there is a move, initiated perhaps in high quarters, to oust the socialists from the coal fields and let the I.N.T.U.C. come in. Most of the Indian Jharia colliery owners are Gujratis.

I am enclosing a copy of a letter from a mine manager to the President of the Indian Mine Managers' Association. This letter, which I hope you will go through, is, on the face of it, a political document and is motivated by partisan considerations. The writer plainly asks Authority to outlaw the Socialist Party in Jharia.

Regarding the pumps in the Digwadih mine having been put out of order for two years, I would not accept any statement from the owners, or the local authorities, till I have all the facts before me. In the first place it has been our policy not to call out safety men, and secondly I have personal knowledge of at least one case in which the owners' exaggerated reports of damage done was completely unfounded. During a strike which representatives of the Indian Mining Association and I were trying to settle, the European owners—and they are far more truthful than the Indian owners—told me that the plant had already been so damaged that it would have to be closed down for months. As a matter of fact, after the strike was settled the plant started working within a week! I have no doubt that the Digwadih pumps too will be working much before the two years for which they are supposed to have closed down.

Regarding the fear of coal production going down, you will perhaps remember that only three or four months before colliery owners were moving heaven and earth to be allowed to shut down part of their collieries on the

<sup>5</sup> C.J. Jani: a representative of the Colliery Owners, Bihar.

<sup>6</sup> Mundrika Singh: an active Socialist Party worker from Bihar.

<sup>7</sup> B.P. Sinha: a trade union leader belonging to the Socialist Party.

plea that the railways were not able to move the coal already amassed. While the Railway situation has improved, I do not think the collieries are getting the wagon supply regularly. In the circumstances, a colliery or two shutting down would be no blow to industry as such, though it may be a great hardship for the workers concerned. But as far as labour is concerned, surely the unions are more concerned with their interests than the short-sighted and selfish colliery owners.

I therefore hope that you will not allow yourself to be stampeded into any precipitate action against us in Jharia. If I may make a suggestion, I should like you to send for Mr. S.C. Joshi,<sup>8</sup> the Chief Commissioner of Labour and find out from him how things stand in Jharia. He is an impartial person and knows Jharia intimately.

Affectionately yours,

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,  
New Delhi.

Jayaprakash

<sup>8</sup> S.C. Joshi, then Chief Commissioner of Labour, Government of India.

## 158. To K.K. Menon, 8 March 1948<sup>1</sup>

8 March 1948

Dear Mr. Menon,<sup>2</sup>

I thank you for your letter of January 12, which my friend Mr. Saksena<sup>3</sup> brought from your office only a few days ago after I have had a talk with the Hon'ble Mr. Jagjiwan Ram.<sup>4</sup>

I am enclosing herewith a little pamphlet containing some resolutions of the National Executive of the Socialist Party. I draw your attention to Resolution No. 4 (on page 5) which deals with the question of industrial truce. As you will see our Executive has endorsed the idea of such a truce and offered the cooperation of the Socialist Party. The conditions mentioned in the resolution are not very different from those that the Industrial

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

<sup>2</sup> K.K. Menon; one of the senior officers in the Labour Ministry.

<sup>3</sup> Saksena; An active member of the Socialist Party.

<sup>4</sup> Jagjiwan Ram (1908-86); President, All India Depressed classes League, 1936-46; played a prominent role in the struggle for freedom and was jailed in 1940 and 1942; member Bihar provincial legislature, 1936-46; member Constituent Assembly of India (1946-9); Provisional Parliament (1950-2) and Lok Sabha (1952-86); had long innings in the Government of India as a Cabinet Minister from 1946 to 1979 with a three year break from 1963 to 1966; revolted against the authoritarian regime of Indira Gandhi in 1977, resigned from the Cabinet and contributed significantly to her defeat in the general election, 1977; became Minister of Defence in 1977 in the Janata Party Government and continued in that position till the fall of that Government in 1979; later left the Janata Party and founded a new party called Congress (J).

Conference<sup>5</sup> itself had laid down. These conditions should be fulfilled without further delay. Particularly where the Government themselves are the employers there should be no delay in the implementation of the decisions of the Conference.

In the end, I once again offer the cooperation of the Socialist Party in bringing about conditions of peace in industry and raising production.

<sup>5</sup> For a note on Industrial Conference see item no. 146, fn. 3.

### **159. Speech while presenting the General Secretary's Report of the Socialist Party, Nasik, 19-21 March 1948<sup>1</sup>**

The Annual Report is divided into two parts. The one I am submitting—the Policy report—is already with you. Shri Suresh Desai<sup>2</sup> will later submit the second part—the Organizational Report.

The Party has made rapid progress since 1942. We have a far better organization, since Kanpur. We have taken rapid strides in building up provincial units. At the same time, I have to remind you that we have not been able to do all that we wished to do after Kanpur. Our Central Secretariat is not yet functioning properly. We must evolve and build up a Secretariat which will give regular and consistent guidance to the provincial units. Our Central Office is as yet in the nature of a postal unit. Responsibility for this state of affairs in the Central Office is entirely mine. Setting up an efficient office needs consistent effort and a continuous attention on the part of the General Secretary. I have not been able to do this. Why? You have always wanted me to tour, visit places and address meetings. What has come out of these tours? It is difficult to answer the question satisfactorily. Not that we have not benefited. We have benefited to a great extent. Yet we shall have to admit that the Central Office has suffered. Achyut Patwardhan<sup>3</sup> and K.K. Menon<sup>4</sup> have been ill. Suresh Desai is new to the Party and has had very little experience of political work. He did all that he could. But after all how much can one man do?

What is true of the Central Office is equally true of Party literature. But without an up-to-date office, literature cannot be issued regularly. Yusuf Meherally is ill. He is the best person to handle literature.

Most of our leaders have been keeping indifferent health. If it were possible for them to undertake tours of some parts of the country, I would

<sup>1</sup> *Socialist Party sixth Annual Conference, Nasik, 19-21 March 1948*, pp. 5-7.

<sup>2</sup> Suresh Desai—Joint Secretary of the Socialist Party.

<sup>3</sup> For biographical note on Achyut Patwardhan see *JPSW*, Vol. II, p. 162.

<sup>4</sup> K.K. Menon; one of the leaders of the Socialist Party from Kerala.

certainly have given more time to the Central Office. Be that as it may, I must face your complaints and criticisms of the Central Office.

It has been an year of uneven developments, setbacks and growth. Wherever groups of self-reliant workers existed, the Party has grown in strength. Where the workers have always looked to others for guidance, our organizations have been weak. I do not propose to spend much time reviewing the achievements of our provincial parties. I wish to make passing remarks on some important developments in our provincial organizations.

Partition has split up our Punjab party. It pains us to lose Lahore where the Independence Resolution<sup>5</sup> was passed. A few of our comrades—workers of the Pakistan Socialist Party—are here. I extend them a hearty welcome on your behalf. The Pakistan Party cannot work as a branch of the Indian Party. We certainly do not wish them to be branded as India's fifth column. *Dawn* had said that the Pakistan Socialist Party gets its orders from Delhi. Pakistan is a theocratic state. It is difficult for the Pakistan Party to thrive there. We must redefine our relations with the Pakistan Socialist Party. It is very painful to consider our comrades from Pakistan on the same footing as Socialists of Burma or any other country. It is a depressing decision. But we could not prevent the division of India.

Due to the partition, our band of workers in the Punjab got scattered. Still, Prem Bhasin<sup>6</sup> and Meherchand Ahuja<sup>7</sup> are doing very good work in the East Punjab. I am sure the East Punjab Party will be a very strong organization before long.

In the Madras Presidency we now have four branches—Tamilnad, Andhra, Kerala and Madras City. Party work in Andhra is not progressing satisfactorily. More efforts will have to be made to put it on a sound basis.

Under the signature of ten of our top leaders we had issued an appeal for rupees ten lakhs. I am sorry to note that this work has been neglected. Wherever they went personally money could be collected. At other places where thousands were promised not even hundreds have come. We want all that money for Socialist Research Institutes and Labour Colleges. These cannot be set up without money.

Yet another example is the appeal issued for funds to help and support our Party workers hit badly by the partition. There has been no response

<sup>5</sup> Refers to Lahore Congress, 1929, at which the Independence Resolution was adopted.

<sup>6</sup> Prem Bhasin (1917- ): Joined Congress Socialist Party in 1937; imprisoned during the freedom movement; elected to National Executive of Socialist Party, 1947; Joint Secretary, 1948-52; Joint Secretary Praja Socialist Party October 1952; Secretary First Asian Socialist Conference, Rangoon, 1953; toured Europe, Israel and Pakistan, 1953; General Secretary Praja Socialist Party, 1963-4; member Central Parliamentary Board Samyukta Socialist Party, 1964-5.

<sup>7</sup> Meherchand Ahuja; member of the Socialist Party from East Punjab.



from the provincial organizations inspite of repeated reminders from the Central Office.

My Policy Report is with you. I want you to read it, criticize it, make suggestions, discuss it.

**160. Annual Report of the General Secretary,  
(Policy Section), Nasik, 19 March 1948<sup>1</sup>**

*Looking Back*

This is a historic conference as you are about to take a decision here that should mark a new beginning for the socialist movement in the country and greatly influence the course of national politics.

At such an historic occasion therefore I may be pardoned if in this Annual Report I look back at the years past and assess our successes and failures and also place before you certain suggestions for the future.

Having come into existence in 1934, the Party is passing through the fourteenth year of its life. During these years the Party has grown steadily, till it is today in respect of popular support—though its membership is still confined to a small band of active workers—the second largest political party in the country.

Up till now, and except for the Bombay Municipal elections, the Party has not functioned as an independent political party. Though it has had its separate membership, constitution and rules, and functioned among the working class and the peasantry independently, politically it functioned as a part of the Congress. In other words, for purposes of political action, the Party was not separate from the Congress; and on political issues the Party did not go beyond propagating its views and putting them before Congress committees. Being in a minority, the policies that the Party sponsored in the Congress were, more often than not, rejected. This gave rise to the impression that the Party always played a negative role. But its role appeared to be negative not because the policies it advocated were negative, but because, being in a minority, it was not in a position to get them accepted by the Congress, i.e., to make them the basis of positive action. A minority, or for that matter, an opposition, must perforce appear to play a negative role till it acquires sufficient strength to become the majority.

The fact is that on every major issue that came up before the country, the Party had a positive policy. The year the Party came into being saw the resurgence of “parliamentary mentality” in the Congress—five years after

<sup>1</sup> *Socialist Party, Sixth Annual Conference, Nasik, 19-21 March 1948*, pp. 84-103.

Pandit Motilal Nehru<sup>3</sup> had declared at the Lahore Congress<sup>4</sup> that his experiments with parliamentarism without freedom had finally convinced him of its futility. In 1934, even before the Congress had formally called off (individual) civil disobedience,<sup>5</sup> Doctors Ansari<sup>6</sup> and Bidhan Roy<sup>7</sup> had raised aloft the standard of a new Swaraj Party.<sup>8</sup> In May 1934 the A.I.C.C. succumbed to this manoeuvre, and not only withdrew civil disobedience but decided that the Congress should contest the forthcoming elections to the Central Assembly.

The first "negative" role of the Party, which was born a day before the A.I.C.C. met at Patna, was to oppose this parliamentary mentality and fruitless incursion into the ineffective and shadowy Central Legislative Assembly. The Party's plea was that such a step would divert the nation's attention from the main job of preparing for the next struggle, and would fritter away the energies of national workers inapid debate.

Another "negative" policy to which I wish to refer here is the opposition of the Party to the acceptance of ministerial responsibility under the Act of 1935. The Party, however, was not alone in this opposition; Pandit Nehru

<sup>3</sup> For biographical note on Motilal Nehru see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 45.

<sup>4</sup> Lahore Congress: The Indian National Congress met in the Congress Pandal at Lajpat Nagar (Lahore) 29-31 December 1929. Jawaharlal Nehru presided. It was here that the resolution making complete independence the goal of the Congress was adopted.

<sup>5</sup> For note on Civil Disobedience Movement see *JPSW*, Vol. I p. 41.

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari (1880-1936): received higher medical education in London and worked in hospitals there for a few years; while there became Secretary Indian Medical Association and later its President; established his medical practice in Delhi refusing the offer of Principalship of Lahore Medical College; led Medical Mission to Turkey in 1912 to provide medical/surgical aid to the Turkish Army in the Balkan war; presided over the annual sessions of the Muslim League in 1918 and 1920; held various high positions in the Congress, becoming its General Secretary in the years 1920, 1926, 1929, 1931 and 1932 and its President in 1927 (Madras Session); Chairman Congress Parliamentary Board, 1934-6; helped in the establishment of two national educational institutions, namely Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi and Kashi Vidyapeeth at Banaras; was Chancellor of Jamia Millia, 1928-36.

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy (1882-1962): received medical education in London and joined as Professor in Carmichael Medical College, Calcutta; later joined Politics and became a member of A.I.C.C., 1928; nominated to Congress Working Committee, 1930; Mayor of Calcutta, 1931-2; President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, 1934; nominated again to Congress Working Committee, 1939; Chief Minister of Bengal, 1948-62.

<sup>8</sup> Swaraj Party: Founded in 1923 by some leading members of Congress including C.R. Das, Motilal Nehru, Hakim Ajmal Khan and others, who differed from the then official policy of the Congress based on continued non-cooperation with Government, including participation in the Legislatures and wanted the members belonging to the new party to enter legislative councils and compel the British authorities to concede the popular demand for self-government. It was wound up in 1934 when the Congress itself decided to enter the legislatures.

himself and other leading Congressmen had opposed that policy. On the initiative of the Party an anti-ministry committee of Congressmen had been formed with Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar, who had resigned his seat on the Working Committee on that issue, as chairman and Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai<sup>8</sup> and Mr. M.R. Masani<sup>9</sup> as joint secretaries. Masani was then a joint secretary of the All-India Party.

That opposition was also a "negative" stand. Looking back, however, and in spite of the gap of years, I still believe that it was wrong to have accepted office then. While it yielded no advantages, it gave birth to a mentality of power politics within the Congress that threatens now to become its undoing.

It is not my purpose here to review the work of the Party during this whole period when the Party functioned within the Congress. My purpose rather is to look back and assess the work done. When I do this I find that most of our time during these years was taken up with Congress work or with our efforts to influence the Congress.

I should like to point out here that while we often played the role of a left minority within the Congress, there were many occasions on which we were completely at one with the majority. Particularly, during periods of national struggle members of the Party acted as zealous soldiers of the Congress and worked as one team with other Congressmen. This positive aspect of our work is often overlooked by critics.

Summing up the total result of our work within the Congress, one might say that we acted as a check on the politics of compromise; we strengthened the organization as an instrument of struggle; and we were able to produce a climate of socialism within the Congress. The fact that every Congressman today is anxious to describe himself as a socialist, whether or not he is actually one, is a tribute to the work of our Party.

There is one criticism, however, regarding our work within the Congress that I should like to make here. Looking back it seems to me that we would have done well to associate ourselves with the constructive work of the Congress to a far greater extent than we did. We were responsible—and I more than others perhaps—in creating the feeling that all constructive work was unrevolutionary, and for socialists, a waste of time. I should like to put

<sup>8</sup> Rafi Ahmad Kidwai (1894-1954); freedom fighter and prominent Congress leader; jailed several times; served as Private Secretary to Motilal Nehru; elected to Central Legislative Assembly, 1926 on Swaraj Party ticket and resigned in 1930 at the call of Congress; Secretary, U.P. Congress Committee, 1931; President of U.P.C.C., 1935; Minister of Land Revenue in U.P., 1937-9; Home Minister in U.P., 1946; Minister for Communication in Central Cabinet, 1947; elected to Lok Sabha, 1952; Minister of Food & Agriculture, 1952-4.

<sup>9</sup> For biographical note on M.R. Masani see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 66.

on record that that was an immature and mistaken view. Possibly, if we had come into the field of constructive work we might have developed aspects or types of it that would perhaps have enriched it. But whether that would have happened or not there is no doubt that we have impoverished ourselves a great deal by keeping out of that valuable field of activity, which would have given us experience and wider mass contact and enabled us to understand rural India in a more intimate manner.

While most of our time was taken up with our work within the Congress, our activities were not restricted to the Congress alone. From the beginning there were two main departments of our work: one within the Congress, the other without. While most of our political work was within or around the Congress, work that dealt with economic and class issues was all done independently of it. Building up of class organizations of workers and peasants so as to conduct through them the struggle for the removal of class injustice and fulfilment of immediate class demands was from the beginning placed in the fore-front of the Party's programme. It was rightly believed that this would prepare the masses not only for the ultimate achievement of socialism but also for the immediate struggle against imperialism.

At the time the Party was formed the trade union movement was split into three national organizations: the All-India Trade Union Congress,<sup>10</sup> the communist Red T.U.C.<sup>11</sup> and the National Federation of Trade Unions. Out of these we selected the A.I.T.U.C. to work with, because politically this body was nearest to us. An agreement was early signed between the Party and the A.I.T.U.C. according to which the former undertook to affiliate its unions with the latter and treat it as the central organization of labour, and the latter pledged to support the Party as the political party of the working class.

At the same time, in full concurrence with the A.I.T.U.C., the Party raised the slogan of trade union unity and played a considerable part in bringing the three national bodies together. The united body took the name of the A.I.T.U.C., as this was the name of the parent body from which the other two had split away.

After the agreement with the A.I.T.U.C. and till the three bodies had combined, the Party was the dominant group in the A.I.T.U.C. This was the result not so much of new trade union work done under Party auspices as of the fact that many leading trade unionists came over and joined the

<sup>10</sup> All India Trade Union Congress: was set up in Bombay in 1920 with the objective of coordinating the activities of labour organizations in all trades in India. About 107 unions were affiliated to it. Starting as a broad-based organization it passed in 1925 under the control of the Communists.

<sup>11</sup> For note on Communist Red T.U.C. see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 111.

Party. While it must be admitted that the trade union work done then by Party members was not much to boast of, it should be remembered that the claims of the freedom movement were so heavy and most of us were so intimately connected with it, that there was little time to attend to other work. It was only after the August Revolution when there was a large influx of new blood into the Party, that we were able to spread out in the trade union movement. The Party can well be proud of the work that has been done subsequently in this field. It is a pity that a great deal of the work done in the Punjab has perished due to the recent disasters that have visited both parts of that unhappy land.

The post-war split in the A.I.T.U.C., caused by communist methods, is too recent to require detailed treatment. It is a pity that the trade union movement should be so split. But when political policies diverge so greatly and unscrupulous means are used to exploit labour for political ends, a split becomes inescapable. Had the Congress not attempted, in the name of applying Gandhian principles to the labour movement, to drag labour behind the Government, the non-communist forces in the trade union movement might at least have stood together. But the sectarian and authoritarian methods of the I.N.T.U.C. have left no choice to these forces but to stand outside. It appears to me inevitable that they should come together in another national organization of labour.

In spite of the fact that the peasantry in this country is so oppressed and exploited, there was no peasant organization worth the name when the Party came into existence. Spasmodic peasant movements there had been, such as the movement of the Oudh peasantry in the U.P. There was also a Kisan Sabha in Bihar which had been formed by the Provincial Congress in 1929 to fight certain tenancy legislation which the provincial dyarchy and zamindari interests together had sponsored. It was mainly on the initiative of the Party, assisted powerfully by Swami Sahajanand Saraswati<sup>12</sup> and later by Professor N.G. Ranga<sup>13</sup> that the All-India Kisan Sabha<sup>14</sup> was created.

<sup>12</sup> For biographical note on Swami Sahajanand Saraswati see *JPSW*, Vol. I, p. 147.

<sup>13</sup> N.G. Ranga (1900-95); Professor of Economics and Politics, Panchaiyappa's College, Madras, 1927-30; member, Indian Legislative Assembly, 1930, 1935-45, A.I.C.C., 1931-51, and Congress Working Committee, 1947-51; President, All India Kisan Conferences, 1936, 1946, 1949, 1951 and 1952; member, Constituent Assembly, 1946-50, and Provisional Parliament, 1950-1; resigned from Congress and formed Bharat Krishikar Lok Party, 1951; rejoined Congress, 1955, elected Secretary, Congress Parliamentary Party, resigned on cooperative farming issue, 1959; Vice-President, Indian Cooperative Union, 1955-60; one of the founders of the Swatantra Party, 1959, its President, 1959-69; member, Rajya Sabha, 1952-6, and 1977-9, and Lok Sabha, 1957-70, and 1980-91; writings include: *Agony and Solace, Credo of World Peasants, History of Kisan Movement*.

<sup>14</sup> All India Kisan Sabha: founded in April 1936 at the All India Kisan Conference held at Lucknow under the presidentship of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, the leader of the Kisan Movement in Bihar.

At the beginning the communists were not in the picture, but when the disastrous policy of socialist unity was translated into action, they too trooped in. Thereafter, the history of this organization has been one unbroken tale of intrigues and splits: a tale, sadder than that of the A.I.T.U.C. One of the difficult questions before the Party today is that of the proper organizational form to be given to the peasant movement. Should we carry on with the same old Kisan Sabhas, which are political platforms rather than class organizations, or should a better form of organization be devised? I hope this Conference will find the right answer to this question.

There were other two fields of activity of the Party to which mention might be made: student and volunteer movements. Wherever the Party formed volunteer bodies outside the Congress volunteer organizations, the work has survived the passage of years. And now one task awaiting us is to integrate all these provincial and district bodies into a national organization.

The student movement did not escape the inevitable results of communist affections. The All-India Students' Federation<sup>15</sup> in the formation of which the Party played a notable part, soon became a platform of the Communist Party, resulting in inevitable split. The Students' Congress, over which the Party has had considerable influence, played a fine role in the freedom movement. But today there is again confusion in the student movement. I hope all non-communist students will be able to hold together on the one hand, and on the other, will refuse to walk into the communist parlour lured by the false slogan of unity. I have always held that Party members should keep out of the scramble for office and position in the Students' Congress. Recent events have further strengthened me in this view. It appears to me to be more profitable for our student comrades to form socialist students' clubs for study and discussion, and to do specific Party jobs.

This hurried assessment of past work would be incomplete without a reference to the disastrous policy of socialist unity that the Party followed almost from its birth. The results of that policy are too well-known—at any rate, they have already been related in a Party publication—to require further narration here. Communist bad faith and double-dealing have not yet allowed the Party to recover its strength in the South. But though the results of that policy were disastrous, it was worthwhile having made that mistake because it taught us a valuable and unforgettable lesson. No theory, nor the experiences of other countries, could have enabled us to understand and

<sup>15</sup> All India Students' Federation; founded in the year 1936, with the objective of organizing the student community. The Federation held its first conference under the chairmanship of M.A. Jinnah at Lucknow on 12 August 1936 and received messages from Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Tej Bahadur Sapru and Srinivasa Sastri. From 1937 onward its leaders were inspired by the Congress leadership. Later it passed under the control of the Communists.

know the communists so intimately as we were able to understand and know them through our own painful experience. The lessons of that shall guide us now when once again the slogan of left unity is being blared forth from communist trumpets.

I shall close this review after dealing with two common criticisms that are made of our past work.

There are some who have tried to trace the underlying cause of the civil strife that has been raging in the country during the last many months to the cult of violence that was preached during the August Revolution.<sup>16</sup> This is an over-simplification. The civil strife in origin was not spontaneous but a planned and directed movement; and its roots go down to imperialist policies. The theory and strategy of the strife have drawn liberally upon European fascism and were much influenced by the human disintegration caused by totalitarianism and the world war. In a small measure some of the dark aspects of the August movement might be responsible for recent disorders; and while that may be granted, it is necessary for our social doctors to attend to another symptom of the present national malaise. Along with civil strife, there is visible on every side a sudden deterioration in the standards of public conduct. Men who till the other day talked of the high ideals of non-violence and truth seem suddenly to have put all their ideals away and are found submerged in the game of power politics, nepotism and some even in corruption. Why is this so? Why is it that even our nationalism has proved in so many cases to be only skin deep? Why is communalism creeping into our hearts, and why provincialism, caste-feeling and other kindred poisons? I submit that the reason is that the non-violence and truth that many so loudly professed were merely make-beliefs and convenient covers and not articles of faith. It seems to me that it was better to have believed in the clean weapon of violence than to have used non-violence and truth as mere cloaks. I am not justifying violence, which too, it should be remembered, has its own moral limits; all that I am saying is that while violence may lead to harmful results, false non-violence might do greater harm.

Another criticism that has recently been made is that we always failed to anticipate events or that our estimate of future events has more often than not turned out to be false. For instance, it is said that history proved us

<sup>16</sup> August Revolution or Quit India Movement: On the 14 July 1942 the Congress Working Committee called upon Britain to withdraw from India and let the Indians run their own government. This call was endorsed by the All India Congress Committee at its meeting in Bombay on 8 August. The Quit India Movement is the name generally given to the mass upsurge which followed in almost all parts of the country in the wake of the arrest of Gandhiji and other Congress leaders on 9 August and the struggles against the government going on till 1945.

wrong when we suggested that the settlement with the Cabinet Mission was not going to bear any fruit and that another conflict was unavoidable with the British. In the same way, we are accused of wrong judgement when we boycotted the Constituent Assembly on the ground that it was not to be the final authority to draft the constitution of free India. It is easy, as the common saying goes, to be wise after the event; but there are apparently some whom even events do not seem to teach wisdom.

I fail to see how our judgement has been falsified by history. I have no doubt that had we not given up our fundamentals, a conflict with the British was inescapable. What the form of that conflict would have been it is difficult to tell. But, after the conspiracy hatched by Wavell and Jinnah<sup>17</sup> had succeeded, the Congress had clearly no alternative but to throw overboard the entire agreement and go into the wilderness again. That was avoided at a great price, a price that none of us ever thought the Congress would agree to pay in any circumstances.

The whole strategy of the Socialist Party and our reading of the situation were based on the assumption that the Congress would never accept partition. If partition had not been accepted, the Congress had no alternative but to resign from the Interim Government and face the British once again on the issue of full independence and undivided India. It is true that the Congress had accepted, with the concurrence of its socialist wing, the principle of self-determination. But that principle was to be applied after the British had quit and not with their help and under their aegis. When the Congress accepted partition, it accepted partial and not complete independence. One would have thought that those who did this would at least have fairness enough not to accuse others of wrong anticipation of events.

I repeat once again that had the Congress not deviated from its true path and compromised with its principles, there was no alternative for it but to follow the course of action that the Socialist Party had suggested.

Coming to the Constituent Assembly, it has been suggested that, having once boycotted the Constituent Assembly, we now feel sorry that we have been left out of the picture. People are wont to judge others by the same standards of conduct as their own. As far as we are concerned, we do not at all regret having boycotted the Assembly. We were anxious by doing so to make it clear to the country that the whole basis of compromise with the British was wrong and should be rejected in toto. To accept a part of that

<sup>17</sup> The reference here is to the induction of League representatives into the Interim Government, till then dominated by the Congress, in the last week of October 1946 without any firm commitment on the part of the League to accept the long-term plan of the Cabinet Mission and join the Constituent Assembly, thereby putting a check to Congress and helping the League to increase its influence.



compromise and reject the whole would have been the height of political opportunism. As events developed, and the Muslim League walked out of the Constituent Assembly, it was clear that what remained of that body was no longer capable of drafting the constitution of free India. The only thing that remained to be done then was, as I have said above, to tear up the whole agreement with the British, to get out of the Interim Government and of the Constituent Assembly, and to call finally a real Constituent Assembly elected by the people. The assembly would then have become the centre of revolutionary power and challenged the British authority to a final show-down. The Socialist Party would have heartily co-operated with such an assembly and taken full responsibility for enforcing its decisions.

We were told that such a course of action would have led to civil war, which the acceptance of Pakistan would avoid. We replied that, in the first place, the risk should be taken, and, in the second place, acceptance of Pakistan would not remove but accentuate that risk. Easily gained power, however, was too much of a temptation to be resisted, with what tragic results history has already shown. And yet there are people who boast of their victory and their wisdom and accuse others of talking hot air.

The Socialist Party, as any other body, has made mistakes but the stand it took on the deal with the British was surely not one of these. In fact, that was a stand of which the Party may ever be proud.

### *Looking Ahead*

I shall now deal with a question which after a long career of controversy is approaching its final answer. We have long debated the question: within or without the Congress? There have been weighty arguments on both sides, but the weight has lately been shifting to one side alone. Some weeks ago I had published an article examining the pros and cons of this question, and indicating the inclination of my own mind.

Since that article was written, developments have further clarified the issues involved. The A.I.C.C. at its last sitting adopted certain fundamental principles of a new constitution of the Congress. These principles make it clear that the Congress is no longer to remain a national front—not even at the time of a national crisis. The Congress is to become now a party and the Indian National Congress which stood for the whole nation and fought for its freedom and received the allegiance of all sections of the people is no more, or lives only in name. Logically the name too should have gone, so that the great traditions associated with that name should have been kept unsullied by party politics.

In these circumstances the Party must leave the Congress. That is the clear demand of the needs of Indian Socialism.

There is another set of very weighty considerations which too point to the same conclusion. In the article referred to, a passing reference was made to the need for an opposition party. That need has grown in the weeks that have elapsed since.

The presence of Gandhiji in our midst was a powerful guarantee of civil liberties and people's freedoms. In his absence the dangers of authoritarianism and totalitarianism have grown. These dangers would further be accentuated if there were no opposition party in the country—a party whose patriotism and faith in democracy were out of question.

Those in Government are individually good men and undoubtedly wish to serve their country, but while a few among them are ardent democrats, others have shown scant regard for the liberties of the people. The old administrative machine, which was tuned to British authoritarianism and taught to disregard the popular will and the popular good, is still functioning much as before. In fact, wags like to sum up the present situation in the quip: The British have gone, the I.C.S. have come.

In the days of the British, the Congress was the conscience of the people and their tribune. Now, the Congress is so identified with the Government that it has lost the power to protect the rights of the people. As a matter of fact, its main task today is to defend the Government and justify to the people its every act—right or wrong.

The result of all this is a frightful situation. Criticism, even fruitful criticism, is resented and sought to be suppressed. There have been instances in which publishers have been hauled up before authority and ticked off for giving publicity to offending, though truthful, news or views. Means of propaganda that are in the hands of the State, such as the A.I.R., have been used for party ends by the party in power. Administrative authority is exercised illegitimately to curb the activities of political workers who become thorns in the side of supporters of the Government. There are examples of trade union workers being put into prison on the recommendation of I.N.T.U.C. bosses. Liberal use is being made of Sections 144 and 107 of the Criminal Procedure Code to put down political rivals. The Public Safety Acts are being misused to the same end. There have been cases of persons showing sympathy for the Socialist Party and contributing to its funds being threatened with dire consequences. Members of the Services are being reduced to the position of lackeys of the party in power. While the Services except those in commercial, industrial or other similar public undertakings should be kept out of politics in the sense that their members should not take active part in party politics, they should have full freedom to belong to the party of their choice—provided the party is an open political party functioning within the law—and to subscribe to it, and cast their votes for it at elections. This right is being denied today.

and there are ridiculous instances in which even school teachers have been asked to keep out of politics! As we advance towards Socialism, ever widening sectors of citizens would be brought within the sphere of Government employment, and if all of these were to be denied opportunities to participate in politics, we would end up in a dreadful totalitarian system in which no other party than the party in power had any chance to exist. In view of all these very serious considerations, the need for an opposition party becomes imperative. One-party rule or at any rate the absence of a popular opposition party, which itself believes in democracy and is loyal to the country and the State, is sure to encourage the growth of totalitarianism, particularly in view of the fact that present disturbed conditions have vested the Executive with very large powers.

In the conditions existing in the country today, the Socialist Party alone can fulfil the need for a popular opposition party. This is not said in boasting, but as an objective statement of fact.

Thus taking into consideration all the aspects of the question, the conclusion we reach is that we must leave the Congress now and function as an independent political party. I have no doubt that this conclusion will commend itself to you all.

The decision to separate from the Congress places on us heavy responsibilities. I should like here in all humility to lay down certain principles which should guide us in our new career.

First of all, our decision to break away from the Congress will cause serious anxiety to many friends, who may have no interest in party politics but are deeply concerned over the future of the nation. I refer to those friends particularly who believe that at a moment of national crisis it was not parting of ways that was necessary but joining of hands.

We must set the minds of these friends at rest and allay their anxiety. We have not been familiar in this country with parliamentary government, and necessarily, with the nature of democratic opposition. The sense in which we are prone to understand an opposition is the sense in which the Congress was an opposition to the British Government. The Congress used the method of direct action to destroy the British Government in India root and branch. That cannot be the nature of an opposition in a democracy. In a democracy the party in power and the party in opposition (assuming it is a democratic party itself) are both united in their loyalty to the State and pursuit of democratic methods; in times of national crisis, both parties bury the hatchet and, while keeping their identities and organizations apart, join hands to serve the nation together. In a democracy an opposition party is not an anti-national party; rather, it is always a party that advocates a different, and according to it, a better way of serving the nation than the party in power. During the British period, to be anti-Congress was to be anti-national,

because the Congress stood for the nation as against the foreigner. Now in a free India we must accustom the people to the idea that to be opposed to the Congress is not to be opposed to the nation, but rather to be opposed to certain policies and methods of government and to advocate alternative policies. Further, to be opposed to the Congress means to attempt by democratic methods to replace it as the party in power.

That the country is passing through a great internal crisis and there are external dangers of incalculable gravity no one can deny. At such a time all parties in the State, sharing common objectives and common ideals, should come together and co-operate in facing the crisis. There is much in common between the Congress and the Socialist Party: their faith in secular democracy brings them nearer together than any other two parties in the country. This naturally means that the Socialist Party shall ever be ready to fight for the defence of the State and of democracy and against the forces of communalism and reaction; and, in this fight, it would be happy always to join hands with the Congress.

It would be our job to reassure the country of all this by deeds rather than words.

May I finally say in this connection that I am conscious that when we leave the Congress we shall leave behind many friends and valued comrades with whom our bonds of personal and ideological attachment will never snap. Even when working outside, it shall be our endeavour to strengthen their hands; and I hope that by functioning as an opposition we shall make their task lighter and their path easier.

I seek your indulgence now to bear with me in examining a problem that has deeply worried me of late. The problem is that of methods or means. It is important for us, both in the light of our impending decision to break away from the Congress and of the tragic events that have recently taken place.

In the West, opposition parties do not consider it wrong to use lies and falsehood to bring the rival party into disrepute; they do not consider it wrong to practise bribery and corruption to achieve favourable results at elections. There are certain parties, which go much beyond lies and corruption. For them, even murder, loot and arson are a part of political strategy. We have witnessed this strategy unfold its bottomless tragedies in the past months.

From time immemorial there have been politicians who have preached that there is no such thing as ethics in politics. In the old times, however, this amoralism did not spread its corrupting influence beyond a small class that played at politics, and the mass of the people were left uncorrupted by what the leaders and ministers of State did. But since the rise of totalitarianism, which includes both Fascism-Nazism and Stalinism, this

principle has been applied on a mass scale and every individual in society has been affected by it. This has resulted in such an eclipse of moral values from social life that not only its political sector has been darkened but every sector of human life, including even family life.

Since the victory of Stalinist methods in Russia, it has been commonly believed that there is no room for moral values in Marxism, and it is usual for a socialist who talks of such matters to be branded as a renegade or, at the least, a deviationist. I should therefore like to state before you in the clearest possible terms that I for one have come to believe that for the achievement of Socialism a strict regard for means is of the highest importance. Socialism means different things to different persons, but if by Socialism we mean a form of society in which the material needs of every individual are satisfied and also in which the individual is a cultured and civilised being, is free and brave, kind and generous, then, I am absolutely clear that we will never reach this goal except by strict adherence to certain human values and standards of conduct. It is too often believed that all would be well only if there were no exploitation in society and everyone was well fed and clothed and housed. But a society of well fed and clothed and housed *brutes* is a far cry from Socialism.

There were many things that Mahatma Gandhi taught us. But the greatest thing he taught us was that means are ends, that evil means can never lead to good ends and that fair ends require fair means. Some of us may have been sceptical of this truth but recent world events and events at home have convinced me that nothing but good means will enable us to reach the goal of a good society, which is Socialism.

When, in a statement the other day, I talked of the need of spiritual regeneration, some of you might have thought perhaps that I had been so deeply shaken by recent happenings that I was trying to escape from the hard realities of life. Those of you who might have thought so are completely mistaken. I have no knowledge of matters spiritual, if the term is understood in a religious or metaphysical sense. I have not suddenly come to acquire faith in something called the spirit or the soul or Brahman. Such philosophy as I have is earthy and human. I am concerned merely with the problem of the type of men I should like to live with in society. Clearly, I do not like to live in a society of liars and murderers, of men who have no kindness in them, no tolerance, no fellow-feeling.

No one can say what human nature is; but this much can be said that it is what you make of it. A good man is not born. He becomes good by training. Therefore, if the aim of our Party is not only to produce well-fed, well-clothed and well-housed animals, but also to produce good men, then I say that all our political work must be inspired by certain ethical values. I hope that you will give this viewpoint the consideration it deserves.

I crave your indulgence again to permit me to examine another problem from a somewhat unorthodox point of view.

There is a view held by some that all politics are power politics. I consider this to be a disastrous point of view.

I shall examine here two important aspects of this way of thinking. First, let us see how it affects Party organization. Those who hold this view should logically make every attempt—I do not say that they are actually doing so—to secure power within the Party itself. And power, according to this view, being the quintessence of politics, the use of every kind of means may be considered justified to secure power, including means such as lying, scandal-mongering and cheating at Party elections. Clearly—and I hope all of us would agree—such means could only result in the complete disintegration of the Party. I, therefore, hope and pray that every one of us will reject all such means and eschew all quest for power within the Party. It is human to yearn for recognition and aspire for positions of influence and leadership. But one should be content to reach these positions by virtue of one's work and service done to the cause.

The second aspect of this view which I wish to examine here has a far deeper and wider significance. The theory that all politics are power politics has the necessary underlying basis—though this may not be obvious to the protagonists of this theory—that the State is the only instrument of social good. In other words, those who subscribe to this theory believe—unless they are mere self-seekers, in which case unworthy of notice—that they must capture the State in order to be able to serve society and bring about the social transformation they desire.

I reject this view completely. The Congress today has captured the State, but every thinking Congressman will agree that the Congress would completely undermine itself if it depended on the State for every effort at social change and development. In fact, the view is growing among the constructive workers in the Congress that they must cut themselves off from the parliamentary machine and function independently so as to serve both society and the State.

The experience of totalitarian countries, whether fascist or communist, has shown that if the State is looked upon as the sole agent of social reconstruction, we get nothing but a regimented society in which the State is all-powerful and popular initiative is extinct and the individual is made a cog in a vast unhuman machine. Such a society is surely not the objective of our party; nor could a society of this nature ever be an intermediate stage in the evolution of the democratic socialist society that is our aim.

Democracy requires that the people should depend as little as possible on the State. And, both according to Mahatma Gandhi and Karl Marx; the highest stage of democracy is that in which the State has withered away.

Totalitarianism, as distinct from a transitional "dictatorship" of millions of toilers over a small defeated class of vested interests, can hardly be a half-way house to full democracy. It is necessary for the growth of full democracy that popular effort has the freest possible chance, and that the people, through varied kinds of economic and cultural organizations and institutions, are enabled and encouraged to improve their condition and manage their affairs.

Accordingly, the type of mind that I should like to see develop within the Party is one that would make every one of us indifferent to whether one is Prime Minister of the Republic or a trade union or other field-worker. I believe that whether or not we have the government in our hands, if we succeed by constructive work in creating a sound trade union movement capable of running industry; in educating the working class in the arts of citizenship; in creating co-operative communities in the villages; in mobilizing the youth and children as voluntary servants of the nation; in creating cultural influences that go down even to the most backward sections of the people; if we succeed in eradicating caste, superstition and bigotry; if we succeed in enlisting the co-operation of hundreds of thousands of selfless workers to whom the seats of power offer no attraction—if we succeed in all this, we shall also succeed in building up a socialist society. In this event, the State will inevitably become a socialist State, and will play its inevitable and appointed role, which would go little beyond the *imprimatur* of the law on what has already been accomplished, or on what cannot be prevented from happening. The State in this manner will only be an instrument in the hands of a popular socialist movement—i.e. of the people organized independently of the State for a socialist way of living—rather than the source and fountain-head of all authority and will.

These observations are of particular significance in the context of the historic decision we are about to take. The temptation for members of an opposition party to look always to the seats of power is great. We must keep this temptation in check. We must remember today, and never forget it in the coming years, that it would be by constructive work, rather than by the tactics of a parliamentary opposition; by positive service rather than by exploiting the mistakes and faults of others, that we would succeed in establishing a democratic socialist society.

I might refer here briefly to an important corollary to what I have said above. In a revolutionary party, i.e., a party that aims at fundamental social change, there are always a parliamentary wing and a wing made up of field workers. A time inevitably comes when a conflict arises between these wings as to which should dominate the other. Such a conflict has already arisen within the Congress, which at least has had a revolutionary past; and the victory has already gone to the parliamentary wing. In this event, the field or constructive workers of the Congress would probably separate and

form themselves into an independent body of social servants. We, on the other hand, should so develop our Party that constructive and parliamentary work are integrated together and the constructive workers have the dominant voice. Only then could the Party become a fit instrument of full democracy.

Before I close I feel I should say something about the problem of left unity. Since the re-organization of the Party, the problem has often come up for discussion at Party meetings and in the Statement of Policy there is a clear declaration about our relations with the Communist Party. Recently a meeting of something like eighteen left parties and groups was held at Patna where a sort of a consolidation was formed. The question has thus been raised again, and members of the Party have wondered what our policy should be. I should like to deal with this question of left unity in two parts: (1) unity with the Communist Party and (2) unity with the others.

As far as the Communist Party is concerned, our policy has been unambiguous. World events have underlined that policy. The fact that communist parties are subservient to Russia has received the endorsement of current history—the latest proof coming from Czechoslovakia. Those whose eyes even Czechoslovakia has not opened can be nothing else than conscious tools of the communists.

Is unity possible with the fifth columnists of a foreign power? We may be as friendly as we wish to the foreign power itself; but surely we would be mortgaging the freedom of our country if we let foreign agents grow in prestige and influence.

Recent developments have also shown up the character of communist "democracy". In the Statement of Policy, we have said that not only we differ from the communists on the question of loyalties but also on that of objectives: whereas we aim at democratic socialism the communists believe in totalitarianism. To that the communists reply that they have their own form of democracy. What that form is in reality has once again been demonstrated in Czechoslovakia. Prof. Laski<sup>18</sup> has described it in a recent confession of disillusionment, and further touches to that picture have been given by the march of time. Communist democracy is so perfect that democrats like Jan Masaryk<sup>19</sup> cannot survive its foulness and

<sup>18</sup> For biographical note on Professor Laski see *JPSW*, Vol. II, p. 95.

<sup>19</sup> Jan Garrigue Masaryk (1886-1948); Czechoslovak Statesman; had a long tenure in the diplomatic service; minister in the Czechoslovak Embassy in London, 1925-38, but resigned after the Munich crisis in September 1938; appointed Foreign Minister in Czechoslovak government in exile, set up in London in July 1940 and continued to hold the same post when the government returned to Prague after the defeat of Germany in 1945. When on 25 February 1948 the government was re-constituted under communist control he remained in office but found the atmosphere around him suffocating and committed suicide on 10 March 1948.



Benes<sup>20</sup>, the head of the State, cannot be allowed to be at large.

The third basic difference between the Socialist and Communist parties to which the Statement of Policy refers, is the difference regarding methods. Reverting to Czechoslovakia again, communist methods are in full bloom there for all those but the blind to see. In our own country those methods are once again being unfolded. A lying propaganda has been let loose against our Party by the communist press and its various fronts. I have a personal taste of this propaganda as President of the Railwaymen's Federation. Till the time the communists subscribed to the slogan, "Nehru Sarkar Zindabad", every settlement with the Railway Board was welcomed as a great victory. Now, when their line has been reversed, and they are out to strike at the very roots of the Indian State, settlements no less generous, are being described as sell-out and I am personally being attacked as having been bought out by the Railway Board. That is the kind of method this party follows, while raising simultaneously the slogan of left unity. There can be nothing in common between our and communist methods.

The conclusion, therefore, at which I arrive is, that unity with the Communist Party must be resolutely ruled out if the Socialist Party seriously believes in freedom and democratic socialism.

In this connection I must warn you all that, as elsewhere in the world, the communists are going to take advantage of the democratic character of our Party to infiltrate into it, to plant their stooges within it and try to split it and finally destroy it. If you are not vigilant, if you are taken in by their special pleading, if even for a moment you come to believe in their bona fides, you open the door to the ruin of the Party. Every one of you must be on guard and must make the people aware of the communist menace. There are signs that suggest an Eastern Cominform. This makes the communist menace more menacing.

After the 15th of August the tasks of our Party are constructive. We have to build up a new India. The communists, on the other hand, are not interested in building up anything at all. Their interest is in creating disturbances and troubles so as to exploit them to popularise their party, and to weaken the Indian State. A strong India becoming the focus of a third force will not suit the communists and they will do everything in their power to prevent the regeneration of their country. So much for the communists.

As far as other left groups are concerned, it would be necessary to go into the programme and policy of each group and then only the question of

<sup>20</sup> Eduard Benes (1884-1948); Czechoslovak statesman; Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1918-35 of the Czechoslovak Republic; President of the Republic, 1935-38; President, Czechoslovak Government in exile in London, July 1940; returned to the liberated Republic on 28 October 1945 and continued as President of the Republic; re-elected as President for 7 years in 1946, but was forced to resign in 1948.

unity can be settled. Just because a group is dubbed leftist, it need not follow that we must work with it. There are several leftist groups in the country whose difference with the Communist Party is as narrow as between twiddledum and twiddledee. These groups accept in toto the objective of totalitarianism and the amorality of communist methods. Their only quarrel with the communists is that they do not worship Stalin but they have other Gods to worship and their attitude towards Russia is only a little removed from subservience. Further, the appreciation that some of these left groups have of the situation in India is fundamentally different from ours. For instance, there are groups which say that the Nehru Government is a Kerensky<sup>21</sup> Government which has to be over-thrown by violence; and these groups endeavour towards that end. In these circumstances how is unity with these groups possible?

I have always held, and nothing has happened recently to compel me to change that view, that there is only one method by which the left can consolidate its forces and acquire sufficient strength to challenge the right and play an effective part in national politics. A number of small leftist groups, each with its own denominational dogmas and petty rivalries, banded together in a loose consolidation can hardly give the type of united lead to the masses that would be necessary. Differences and jealousies would arise and would ever be a source of weakness. Any fundamental issue may threaten to disrupt it. The left, if it has to become a political force, must be organized within the folds of one single party, which should have strength enough to lead the people on the basis of a consistent programme of action. Without any sense of partiality, merely as a statement of objective fact, I state that today the Socialist Party is the only party in the country which can play this role. Now, when we are emerging as an independent party, I have no doubt that we shall invite such leftist groups or individuals as may agree with the basic policies of the Party to join forces with it and build up one single socialist movement in the country. I have no doubt the Socialist Party would welcome with open arms all such leftists as may agree to join forces.

I had intended to place before you some suggestions about the structure of the new party. But this has not been possible. I shall only say that the whole structure of the Party must change, enabling it to become a mass party and properly representative of the organized masses. I am sure that you would recommend steps to be taken to examine this problem and evolve a new constitution for the Party.

<sup>21</sup> Kerenski Government (July to November 1917): It was a provisional Government set up after the overthrow of the Tsarist regime in Russia and headed by Aleksander Fedorovich Kerenski, leader of the Menshevik Party, which commanded a majority in the Russian Constituent Assembly. His Government was overthrown by the Bolshevik Party, headed by Lenin.

I have not attempted in this policy report to deal with national problems and suggest policies in that behalf. The Conference will no doubt deal with it in its resolutions. My purpose here has been merely to deal with certain questions over which my mind has been exercised so that you may share my thoughts. Whether you will endorse all that I have said is too much for me to say, but I hope you will give your serious consideration to the views I have placed before you.

#### **161. Reply to the debate on the General Secretary's Report, Nasik, 21 March 1948<sup>1</sup>**

I welcome the criticisms made and the suggestions offered. It would have been better if you had accepted the Report as it is. I am not going to accept any amendments. I do not feel I am called upon to do it. They are mostly my personal reactions and thoughts. This Report is not submitted to you for adoption. I wanted the debate in order to know your views on the Report, to understand you.

Some of you have complained that Party leaders express different views in their statements and that there is a seeming contradiction in them. I don't think so. Personally, I would like what is happening to continue. It is perfectly democratic and healthy. If you wish to put restrictions on your leaders, you are at liberty to do so.

I have said in my Report that if the Party has to become a fit instrument of full democracy, then we must so develop our Party that constructive and parliamentary work are integrated together. I would put greater emphasis on constructive work. It is through intensive constructive activity amongst kisans and mazdoors that we will be able to achieve a socialist society and build up democratic socialism. Can this task be achieved by mere capture of power? If you think so, then I am very much away from you. We have to go amidst the people and work. We have to prepare the masses for democratic socialism. Government should not be the only instrument of social good. We have to so train the workers in the fields and factories that they will become strong enough to look after themselves. It should be our aim to so educate the mass mind that socialism will become the basis of their life, nay—their very life.

All politics is not power politics. Politics means service. If by the capture of political power this service can be rendered more effective, then we would certainly capture it. But capture of political power should not be our sole objective.

<sup>1</sup> *Socialist Party Sixth Annual Conference, Nasik, 19-21 March 1948*, pp. 11-14. For a summary of the debate on the General Secretary's Report see Appendix 27

Your main attack has been on spiritual regeneration. I have not made much of spiritual regeneration. The happenings of the past few months have made me reconsider the whole position. Humanity has been uprooted. There have been mass murders. Women have been raped. Children have been cut to pieces. Blood has flown freely. Corruption is rampant. Black-marketing has not stopped.

And the greatest of the tragedies has been the murder of Gandhiji.

What is the solution for all this? Communalism has been let loose in the country. The pattern of our society is communal. It is a deep-rooted, all-pervading poison and we have to eradicate this poison. We must crush communalism once and for all. Can we do it single-handed? Is everything due to economic inequalities? Is capitalism the only evil? Can we entirely depend upon class struggle? I do not think so. Economic approach cannot be the only approach. We have been preaching this all these years. I feel that our approach has a limited appeal. If ours was the only method, class struggle the only weapon, economic approach the only alternative, then India would not have been partitioned. There would have been no Pakistan. The R.S.S. mentality would not have assumed present dimensions. There would not have been mass killings and above all Gandhiji would not have been assassinated.

And, therefore, my appeal to Shri Aurobindo<sup>2</sup> and Ramana Maharishi<sup>3</sup> to come out of their seclusion and lead the people. I do not mean what is commonly understood by spiritual regeneration. I do not believe in *adhyatma*. My philosophy is worldly and human. I feel that every man should develop a capacity to recognize evil and to tell good from bad.

Why must you talk of materialism all the while? There are people in society who are orthodox in attitude. They readily accept moral values. We must have a correct psychological approach towards these people as they are not influenced by our phraseology of class struggle. This work can only be done by people like Shri Aurobindo. I have not invited them to lead the Socialist Party. I have not appealed to them to give a political lead to the masses.

<sup>2</sup> Shri Aurobindo (1872-1950); one of the pioneers of radical Indian nationalism and eminent philosopher and thinker, returned to India in 1893 after a long period of stay in England, where he received both school and college education; first appointed to Baroda State Service, he went on to become Professor of English at State College Baroda and later its Principal; emerged as a prominent nationalist leader during the agitation against the partition of Bengal in 1905; started the famous Bengali daily *Yugantar* and joined *Bande Matram*, the English daily started by Bipin Chandra Pal; arrested and prosecuted in 1907 and again in 1908-9; on release from the jail resumed political activities but after sometime left British India, settled in Pondicherry, then a French territory, withdrew from politics and devoted himself entirely to philosophy and yoga, acquiring great fame in these fields.

<sup>3</sup> Ramana Maharishi (1879-1950), a great saint, original name Venkataratnam; left home at the age of 7, on 31 August 1896 in search of the Divine; in due course became widely acclaimed for his piety and spiritual teachings.

After my Delhi press conference I had talks with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Babu Rajendra Prasad. They are in full agreement with what I had said about spiritual regeneration. I have progressed a little in what I wished to do in this connection.

We have been carrying on the socialist movement for a long time now. I do not believe that the Socialists alone can eradicate this poison of communalism. Religious antagonism has assumed such proportions that we alone cannot fight it. A countrywide cultural movement is necessary. Gandhiji has been murdered. Ramana Maharishi and Aurobindo can raise their voice against these tendencies. They can put forth basic moral values before the people. They alone can appeal to those people who countenance undesirable things in the name of religion. I feel that all these things should happen. A countrywide cultural movement is necessary. It should spread and spread rapidly. What will be the harm, if the help of spiritual leaders is sought? Socialism will not die because of it. I do not think I have betrayed the socialist movement.

We had differences with Gandhiji regarding 'ends and means' before the dawn of freedom. But then we were slaves. Today we are a free people. I have given the utmost thought to this question of 'ends and means'. The results and effects of classical revolutionary ethics must be reconsidered. International socialist thought has debated this question from higher planes. I have very carefully considered these controversies. Socialism will never be full and complete without democracy. We certainly do not want to establish a totalitarian State even though it might be a socialist one.

Even Godse who murdered Gandhiji had no personal axe to grind. He murdered Gandhiji in the name of an ideology as he understood it. There was organized thought behind that murder. Godse's ideology needed murders and assassinations for its fulfilment.

Our means must be fair and pure because our ends are fair. I do not want you to get lost in a discussion on ends and means. Some say ends determine means. Others say means determine ends. There are yet others who maintain that means and ends are inter-convertible. Gandhiji has taught us that evil means can never lead to good ends and that fair ends require fair means. Recent events both at home and abroad have convinced me. You may have a dislike for Mahatmaji's precepts. But I have not.

Lokamanya Tilak<sup>4</sup> has in his *Geeta Rahasya*<sup>5</sup> discussed at length this question of 'ends and means'. Where is the harm in searching for the correct

<sup>4</sup> Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); led the radical nationalists in rousing the Indian people against the ways of British administration; his call for National Education, Swadeshi and Boycott fired the imagination of Indian nationalists, particularly during the agitation against the Partition of Bengal; charged with spreading disloyalty against the British Government in 1908 and sentenced to transportation, spent six years in Mandalay jail, Myanmar, released in June 1914; launched the Home Rule agitation in 1916.

<sup>5</sup> *Geeta Rahasya*: Commentary on the *Geeta* by B. G. Tilak which he wrote while undergoing a prison sentence at Mandalay, Myanmar, 1908-14.

answer? We should always be on the lookout for fair means. We will not practice evil. That ends determine means is a naive thought. We are now becoming an independent party. Are we going to follow evil practices in elections? Are we going to play the game of power politics within our Party and without? Are we going to resort to bogus voting? We do not wish to use lies and falsehood. We will not practice bribery and corruption.

And, therefore, along with ends, we must think and think seriously about means.

Some of you have complained that I have not condemned capitalist democracy and particularly America, as a positive danger to world peace. Does the omission of America mean otherwise? No. We have already recognized capitalist democracy as a menace to world peace.

It is true we have no dailies. But the fault is not mine; nor is the Central Office to blame. Dailies need money—thousands of rupees. Give me a lakh of rupees and we will start a Hindi daily. Our Party is a poor party. We do not get funds from abroad.

### 162. Three Letters from J.P. to Nehru sent in January-February 1948<sup>1</sup>

Bombay  
11.1.1948

My dear Bhai,

I hope Purushottam will get an opportunity to talk with you. The recent strike in Bombay and the Bombay Party's decision to participate in the municipal elections might have irked you. Purushottam [Trikamdas] will explain both these. The token strike, I assure you, did not mean repudiation of the industrial truce idea. In fact, the National Executive of the Party is issuing a statement tomorrow supporting the truce.

The decision of the local party to fight the municipal election is a local affair. Purushottam will explain the circumstances that led to this decision with which I have concurred.

As for the larger issue of our relation with the Congress which has been our King Charles's head, a time has come when a decision has to be taken. The decision, I am afraid, is likely to be that we leave the Congress. In the Provinces our work as Congressmen is daily growing more and more difficult. In Bihar, for instance, nearly 500 of our workers are either under arrest or wanted by the police. The distance between us and the Congress is becoming wider every day. I doubt if any arrangements made at the top can be put into effect lower down. On the other hand the need of an opposition party of the right sort daily grows.

<sup>1</sup> *Jawaharlal Nehru Papers: Files at Home* (NMML). Due to the complicated and lengthy procedures involved in securing access to this source, these letters became available to us only after the main body of this volume had been printed. Hence their placement here.

The other side too has decided to force the issue. The Constitution Committee has decided, for instance, that no one who is a member of any other political party (than the Congress) can become a member of the Congress. They had never gone so far before. And Sardar Patel has lately delivered himself of such arrant nonsense that it makes of the Programme Committee of the A.I.C.C. even a greater nonsense.

The Party Convention that is to meet on Feb. 22 will finally settle this issue. Indeed the issue would have been settled much earlier, had it not been for your and Bapu's advice. It is not going to be easy at any time to make a decision which goes against your wishes, but we all hope that howsoever we function, if we honestly work for the country, we will never forfeit your affection and your blessings. And we also hope that as an opposition party we will not weaken but strengthen your hands.

I am sending herewith a copy of an article I have sent to the press on this matter.

With love and regards.

Yours  
Jayaprakash

## II

New Delhi  
26.1.1948

My dear Bhai

I understand a Madras seat in the Constituent Assembly has fallen vacant upon the resignation of Mr. Kala Venkatrao, the Revenue Minister. The resignation, I am told, is by arrangement to provide a place for some Mr. Tirumal Rao, who is a friend of the gentleman who has resigned.

I should like very strongly to recommend Mr. Guruswamy, General Secretary of the All India Railwaymen's Federation, for the vacant seat in the Constituent Assembly. Mr. Guruswamy was a member of the Central Assembly till it ceased to be some months ago, and he represented labour there like Mr. N.M. Joshi. Mr. Guruswamy has been general secretary of the Railwaymen's Federation for years past, and I have no doubt he is the ablest man in the organization. Dr. Mathai, who has known him at joint conferences, will testify to his ability. Guruswamy has been and is a Congressman. He does not belong to any party in the Congress or outside. I am sure that he will be great value in the Assembly, and I also feel that as a labour representative, which position he had in the last assembly, he should be given a seat when an appropriate vacancy has been created. I hope it will be found possible to do this. I should add that I am rather keen about this matter.

Yours affectionately  
Jayaprakash

III

New Delhi

10.2.1948

Dear bhai

I am writing about certain misleading reports that, I think, should be corrected.

I don't mind being abused, but don't like to be called a liar. [S.K.] Patil has contradicted my statement that it was Gandhiji's wish that a socialist should be Congress President. The facts are so well known, but no one has thought it necessary to come to the rescue of one who is not in the good graces of the mighty.

Then there is that report of the party meeting in which you are supposed to have characterised as "dishonourable the attempt being made by certain individuals and groups to exploit Gandhiji's death for party ends". I believe this report is not true, but it has not been corrected yet, though the Secretary of the Congress Party has corrected other mis-reports.

I am enclosing herewith the relevant cuttings, with the relevant portions underlined in red.

With regards.

Affectionately yours

Jayaprakash



## APPENDICES



## **Joint Statement on Cabinet Mission Proposals<sup>1</sup>**

By Jayaprakash Narayan, Achyut Patwardhan,  
Aruna Asaf Ali and Rammanohar Lohia

The Indian people are facing a momentous decision which will finally determine the direction of their political effort in the present and immediate future. The Indian National Congress has shaped and directed this effort for over 60 years, and it has evolved and established through many struggles the unalterable essentials of real freedom for the people of this land. Whatever decision we are called upon to make must be examined strictly in terms of the fundamentals of our nationalism:

- (1) Abolition of every vestige of foreign domination.
- (2) Political and economic unity of our people.
- (3) A growing equality in our political and economic relationships expressed through democratic forms of administration.
- (4) A common code of fundamental rights establishing a uniform and equal status for every citizen in the political and economic spheres, overriding religious or regional differences.

Should we hold fast to those fundamentals, refusing to whittle down our essentials and count no cost too great to achieve them? Such a decision may lead us once again into conflict with the powers that are, with all that follows in the wake of that conflict.

Or should we, in the alternative, accept to work along with parties and persons, who have heretofore opposed us at every step, in a spirit of co-operation and compromise?

The former course may seem to lead us again in the wilderness of bitterness and strife. The latter course would spell the disintegration of the forces of resistance which Congress has gathered to its bosom.

We are at the cross-roads and whatever decisions we take on the British Cabinet Mission's proposals must be determined by the essentials which have sustained us in every crisis during the past.

Complete independence demands the withdrawal of British troops even before the meeting of the constituent assembly as it must possess a sovereign status. It is equally necessary to eliminate the British capitalist interests, who either act of themselves or in alliance with Indian capitalists and who have distorted India's destiny for over a century.

<sup>1</sup> *Sunday Pioneer*, 9 June 1946; statement issued on 8 June 1946.

Similarly the powers exercised by the Viceroy, both as the Governor-General and as the Crown Representative, must end in the interim period itself, if a free India is to emerge out of our present deliberations. The absence of primary civil liberties in the States and their violation by the Princes during this period of transition would defeat our very objective. These are some of the necessary first steps without which freedom is not possible.

In the second place, we want to found our freedom on national unity and democracy. Any compromises, which we are called upon to make, must always be subjected to a single test. Do they consolidate our unity? A central government cannot establish unity in any state in the world of today by its control over foreign policy and defence alone. Foreign policy may be defeated by the lack of cohesiveness and solidarity in relation to foreign trade and economic relationships. These along with planning, must be recognized as the irreducible minimum of effective central authority. It would be futile to create a central government that presides over its own ineffectiveness by lack of sufficient authority.

The compulsory grouping of provinces opens the door for the exercise of backdoor influences in India's economic life by British monopolist interests, which the central authority would be powerless to resist. When its foundations are being laid in a totally undemocratic fashion, independence must remain a mirage.

We cannot forget that hundreds of Congressmen were still in jail when in the present legislatures the electorate in the Muslim constituencies were tampered with in more than one province. These legislatures are therefore, not at all representative of the real forces of Indian nationalism. A constituent assembly elected out of them would merely caricature democracy. The only honest course would be to convene a totally fresh constitution making body.

The British Government has not approached its self-chosen duty with honesty of purpose or directness of effort. They have thus further encouraged the forces of disruption by refusing to demand from the Princes a clear and uniform charter of civic rights. This single instance would suffice to throw light on their motive. The Labour Government has proved that socialism at home does not mean liquidation of imperialism abroad.

The proposal of compulsory grouping denies autonomy to the provinces and thereby removes the key-stone from the constitutional arch. The interim government is to be cluttered with parity and veto powers—evils that will inevitably get woven into the fabric of the new state.

Under these circumstances, participation in these plans can only lead to further disruption of our national forces. Congress must reject these proposals, refuse to elect members to such a constituent assembly and move forward

to the convening of a constituent assembly directly elected by the adult men and women of India.

India would have to wait for many decades if we were to depend upon British co-operation or goodwill for attaining our freedom. It will arise out of our own unaided effort. Let every village and every mohalla of our town seek to build its own parallel authority. Let us strive to assume authority over our own affairs and seek to act as a sovereign free state of India.

The Hindustan of our desire shall have no place for a soldier who is not our national, none for capital which we do not dispose of as we will, and it will grow with the glory of its free men as one and united.

Constitutional devices are here of little avail. A new state must be born. To create this state of free India, the unretreating strength of our people is our sole weapon and the Indian National Congress its edge and point. So onwards to this final spurt of creative action, of work and organization, that will steel up our people and their Congress into a force irresistible like the elements.

## APPENDIX 2

### Jawaharlal Nehru to Jayaprakash Narayan, 10 August 1946<sup>1</sup>

Wardha  
10 August 1946

My dear Jayaprakash,

Mukutdhari Singh has given me your letter and has also shown me some other papers. The story you unfold is almost incredible. Indeed if you had not written it I would have found some difficulty in believing it. I know Abdul Bari of old. I know also that his methods are rough and tough. Still there is a limit even to roughness and what you write passes that limit. Jamshedpur has long been notorious for the violence and rough methods of labour workers. Homi excelled in this and then came Bari who opposed him and beat him at his own game. Certainly I shall look into this matter and do what I can. You are perfectly right in telling your people not to retaliate in kind. For the present I am writing to Bari and I shall pursue this matter further.

You had told me that you would visit me early this month in Allahabad. I was looking forward to meeting you and was disappointed, for there is a great deal I want to talk to you about. We are living in rather strange times which cannot easily be measured by normal methods. I hope you will give me an early opportunity of meeting you. I cannot tell you what my own programme is likely to be except that I go to Bombay on the 14th and stay there for four or five days. Then Delhi or Allahabad.

It is quite possible that there may be curious developments in the future and it is desirable that at least you and I should understand each other. I should have liked you to be present here at the Working Committee meeting, but I wanted to have talk with you previously. That did not come off.

I have been reading your articles in the *Janata*. They are helpful in many ways but, to be frank with you, they seem rather vague and not definite enough.

I shall not write more now but I do hope that I shall meet you soon.

Shri Jayaprakash Narayan

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

APPENDIX 3

**Vallabhbhai Patel to Jayaprakash Narayan,  
15 August 1946<sup>1</sup>**

15 August 1946

My dear Jayaprakash,

I have received your letter of the 8th instant sent through a messenger to Wardha. Jawaharlalji has also received your letter and he has written to Prof. Abdul Bari about it. I have also written a letter to him. You know him well but with all his defects, everybody agrees that he is honest and hard-working. This is no defence for what is said against him. I had a long talk with Mukut Babu and I will try my best to set matters right.

I am going to Delhi on the 17th.

I hope you are doing well and keeping fit. Please convey my blessings to Prabha (wife of Jayaprakash Narayan). I hope she is also keeping good health.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai Patel

Shri Jayaprakash Narayan  
Patna.

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

APPENDIX 4

**Vallabhbhai Patel to Jayaprakash Narayan,  
30 August 1946<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
30 August 1946

My dear Jayaprakash,

I have received your letter of the 22nd instant.

You are, I am afraid, mistaken in thinking that the seriousness of the complaint you had made has been under-estimated. I have only pointed out to you the difficult nature of the problem due to Prof. Bari's personality and his own way of handling these labour problems. But that does not mean that I have attached no importance to your complaint. At present there is a possibility of a serious conflict between the management at Jamshedpur and labour. Dr. John Matthai is expected to go there in the first week of September to discuss matters in controversy with Prof. Bari. I do not wish to disturb him at this juncture but as soon as this dispute is settled, I will call him and try to set matters right.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai Patel

Shri Jayaprakash Narayan  
1 Narendra Place  
Parliament Street  
New Delhi.

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).



APPENDIX 5

**Jawaharlal Nehru to Jayaprakash Narayan,  
6 September 1946<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
6th September, 1946

My dear Jayaprakash,

I received your telegram about sepoy Suleiman who had been condemned to death. Your telegram reached me at midnight and the execution was due at sunrise the next day. On the previous day, however, I had received telegrams from Suleiman's mother. I enquired into the matter personally from the War Department, and the facts of the case were explained to me. The case was one of murder, pure and simple, and after the sentence every avenue of appeal and reconsideration had been exhausted. I hate a death penalty in any case, but in the circumstances I really did not know what I could do. I could advance no reason except my dislike of a death sentence, and as all the normal avenues of appeal had been exhausted I felt reluctantly that I had to leave it at that.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

Shri Jayaprakash Narain,  
Member, Congress Working Committee.  
Kadam Kuan, Patna.

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

APPENDIX 6

**Vallabhbhai Patel to Jayaprakash Narayan,  
30 September 1946<sup>1</sup>**

The Indian National Congress  
Central Election Board  
Congress House  
Bombay  
no. \_\_

*Chairman:*

Abul Kalam Azad

*Members:*

Vallabhbhai J. Patel

Rajendra Prasad

Govind Vallabh Pant

Shankar Rao Dev

B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

Asaf Ali

I Aurangzeb Road  
New Delhi  
30 September 1946

My dear Jayaprakash,

I am enclosing herewith a copy of a confidential letter which I have received from Thakkar Baba, which will interest you, I am sure. This will explain that we have to be patient with Professor Bari. You thought that I was indifferent to your complaint, but that is not so. We have been tolerant and patient with him because of his sincerity, integrity and energy. We are not blind to his defects, but we are trying to induce him to accept discipline and stick to the principles of the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh. It is a difficult task. If you suggest anything which would improve the situation without losing him from our camp, I am prepared to do so. But you know his nature and temper and at this juncture we cannot afford to let him go.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai Patel

Sjt. Jayaprakash Narain,  
Kadam Kuan,  
Patna.

<sup>1</sup> JP Papers (NMML).

APPENDIX 7

**Vallabhbhai Patel to Jayaprakash Narayan,  
17 October 1946<sup>1</sup>**

SECRET

I Aurangzeb Road  
New Delhi  
17 October 1946

My dear Jayaprakash,

I have got a report that on the 10th Oct. you addressed a public meeting held under the Patna Police Lines, where you made a virulent speech against all the Police Officers beginning from I.G. down to A.S.I. You said that the constables are being victimized for political awakening that they have now got. You also said that the constables are highly reliable persons and that they must be organized for the sake of the country, and under proper direction they could be good as freedom-fighters. You resented the retention of Mr. Creed and Mr. Ten-Brooke in the Police and visualized the great uprising amongst the constables of Bihar to demand their immediate removal. These were officers who, according to you, had acted inhumanly during the August Revolution, and their presence in the services was intolerable to the constables.

In the same meeting, Mr. Ramanand Tewary and Mr. Bermeshwar Singh, an ex-havildar, made speeches which were violent and made personal reflections against certain Police officers. Mr. Bermeshwar was dismissed from Hazari Bagh Police recently.

A resolution was passed in this meeting asking Government to re-instate all of them who have been discharged since 1942 on political grounds.

I do not know how far this version is true, but would it not be unwise to agitate about this matter in this manner publicly, instead of approaching your own Ministry in the Province in a proper constitutional manner? Surely, you, as a Member of the Working Committee, would be expected to bring the matter to the Working Committee or the Parliamentary Board, if you have any grievance against the Ministry; but your agitation and propaganda of this nature is sure to embarrass the Ministry and also to some extent, us here who are working under a very difficult situation, particularly owing to communal tension. Your speeches are often quoted against any attempt to take action against those who are inciting people to violence on communal grounds. There may be little justification for it, but you know that those who

<sup>1</sup> *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's Papers* (NAI).

want excuses can easily take advantage of quoting your speeches or citing your actions, whenever occasion arises.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Sri Jayaprakash Narayan,  
Kadam Kuan,  
Patna.

## APPENDIX 8

M.R. Masani to Jayaprakash Narayan,  
30 November 1946<sup>1</sup>

Bombay House  
Fort, Bombay  
30 November 1946

My dear J.P.,

I have received your message through Ashoke asking for my comments on your "Picture of Socialism" in *Janata*. I am touched and flattered at your wanting my views before revising the article and publishing it as a pamphlet.

To start with, I need hardly say that I am delighted that you have laid such stress on democracy, both political and economic, and have ruled totalitarianism out of your picture. You have said certain things of great value in your article which are new to orthodox socialism in India, such as, for instance, that the elimination of capitalism cannot by itself be called socialism and that what will take its place is the really important thing. It is perhaps a pity that you should think it necessary to concede, at the foot of column 3 on page 4, that the transition from the order society to socialism *can* take a dictatorial form and to content yourself with indicating only a personal preference for the democratic method. Is there not now enough evidence for the proposition that any departure from democracy in the transition will almost inevitably perpetuate itself beyond the needs of the Marxist case?

Since you want my personal reactions to your Picture, I would say that, by and large, I accept it as an *ultimate objective*. Even there I am not quite clear that your "co-operative" agriculture is really "co-operative" or that collectivized agriculture is a necessary part of the socialist picture. I take it your keenness for collectivization is based on its comparatively higher productivity? If that is so, may I suggest your going into the literature on the subject which I have cited on page 56 of *Picture of A Plan* (namely, *Economics of Peasant Farming* by Doreen Warriner; and *Agrarian Problems from the Baltic to the Aegean* (Royal Institute of International Affairs) which shows that at the outbreak of the war in 1939, the peasant proprietorship in Eastern European countries showed both a higher yield per acre and a higher output per head than collectivized farming in Russia?

My real difficulty in encouraging a republication of your article in its present form is, however, of a different nature. You have chosen to describe

<sup>1</sup> JP Papers (NMML).

the end without a discussion of the means. As you say in your article, "I shall consider here only the final picture of socialism". Now while, as you say, it is true that "the form of the transitional period will be determined by present conditions and final objectives", it is equally true that the final picture will be determined by the methods pursued in the transition. The danger of leaving the intermediate stage undefined is that a proper perspective on the part of the reader is rendered unlikely. Your average reader is likely to jump to the conclusion that this is the kind of society that Jayaprakash Narayan and his colleagues will create within a few years of receiving the popular mandate. Now, I do not know how long you think the transition from the present society to your Utopia would take. For myself, I cannot conceive the process taking anything less than, say, fifty years. You may say you are more impatient and hope to telescope the process, which is where the danger lies. Lenin was impatient too, with the result that, as someone has put it, Russia is today further away from a socialist society than even an average capitalist country. If my estimate that at least two generations would be required to complete the transition is fairly near the mark, then the question arises whether there is much point in painting a picture which those who live today cannot possibly hope to see achieved *unless* it is accompanied by a description of the methods and stages by which such a revolution can be democratically worked out. That is why I feel that, in fairness to yourself and to the ideal, your "Picture of Socialism" should only be published along with another essay on the problems of the transition, even if this should mean a few weeks' delay in publication. To publish the "Picture" now and to leave the analysis of the transition to a later stage may perhaps be justifiable as the normal political expedient of (hanging the carrot before the donkey's nose), but one would like to think that what you are after is the education of your constituents and the "development of political consciousness of the masses" which you yourself describe as the "limiting factor" to the speed and progress of the social revolution.

If you try to work out the question of methods and stages of transition, I do not think that your picture will differ in fundamentals, though I am sure it will in presentation, from that which I have outlined in chapters 4 and 5 of *Picture of a Plan*. But whether it does or not, it is important that you should place it before your readers for it is *that* which will be the socialist programme in so far as *our* generation is concerned. In case you have by now managed to shed your copy of *Picture of a Plan*, I am sending another one under separate cover.

As ever,  
Minoo

Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan,  
New Kadam Kuan,  
Patna,  
Bihar.

## APPENDIX 9

### **The "Objectives Resolution" moved by Jawaharlal Nehru in the Constituent Assembly, 13 December 1946<sup>1</sup>**

This Constituent Assembly declares its firm and Solemn resolve to proclaim India as an independent sovereign republic and to draw up for her future governance a constitution wherein the territories that now comprise British India, the territories that now form the Indian States, and such other parts of India as are outside British India and the States as well as such other territories as are willing to be constituted into the independent sovereign India shall be a union of them.

And wherein the said territories whether with their present boundaries are with such others as may be determined by Constituent Assembly and thereafter according to the law of the constitution shall possess and retain the status of autonomous units, together with residuary powers, and exercise all powers and functions of Govt. and administration save and except such powers and functions as are vested in or assigned to the Union, or as are inherent, or implied in the union are resulting there from:

And wherein shall be guaranteed to secure to all the people of India justice, social, economic and political; equality of status, of opportunity, and before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action, subject to law and public morality;

And wherein adequate safeguards shall be provided for minorities, backward and tribal areas, and depressed and other backward classes;

And whereby shall be maintained the integrity of the territory of the republic and its sovereign rights of land, sea and air according to justice and the law of civilized nations, and this ancient land attain its rightful and honoured place in the world and make its full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind.

<sup>1</sup> *Hindustan Times*, 14 December 1946.

APPENDIX 10

**Vallabhbhai Patel to Jayaprakash Narayan**  
**26 April 1947<sup>1</sup>**

My dear Jayaprakash,

I am enclosing herewith a cutting of the press report from Calicut. I have been surprised that you have been able to read in my speech that I was trying to suppress the growth of the Socialist Party. Since my release I have tried my best to bring about a fusion between your party and the Congress. Unfortunately I have failed to convert you, although I have succeeded in convincing many important individual members of the correctness of my views. I have done nothing either in thought or in action to injure the cause of your party or to do any harm to any individual manner. I can only say that I am sorry that I have not been able to convince you of my bonafides. It is regrettable that at a time when we need to stand together you are consciously or unconsciously trying to divide our forces.

I hope Prabha and you are keeping fit,

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai Patel

Sri Jayaprakash Narayan,  
Kadam Kuan,  
Patna.

<sup>1</sup> *Sardar Patel Correspondence* (NAI).



## APPENDIX 11

**Jawaharlal Nehru to Jayaprakash Narayan,  
New Delhi, 6 May 1947<sup>1</sup>**

My dear Jayaprakash,

The other day in the course of our talk I mentioned Nepal. I felt then that this was not the right time for any kind of Satyagraha to be offered there. Since then I have had further and additional reason for thinking so. I am writing to Rammanohar on this subject. But I do not know when my letter will reach him. I am, therefore, writing to you also as you may be in touch with people in Bihar who are interested in this Satyagraha. I suggest that this Satyagraha should be withdrawn. Otherwise it will come in conflict with some of our activities in regard to Nepal. I am perfectly willing to have my name mentioned in this connection if it is thought necessary. That is it may be said that the withdrawal was at my request.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

Shri Jayaprakash Narayan

<sup>1</sup> *JP Papers* (NMML).

## APPENDIX 12

### **Jawaharlal Nehru to Jayaprakash Narayan, New Delhi, 13 May 1947<sup>1</sup>**

My dear Jayaprakash,

I have received your two letters, one regarding Nepal and the other containing your correspondence with Kripalani.

2. About Nepal I should very much like to have some kind of proof, if that is possible, about the killing or torture of women. As you yourself have stated, this is denied by the Nepal authorities. Rajendra Babu, who went to Kiratnagar, inquired into the matter and could not find any substantial proof. I have repeatedly asked for names and details and they have not been supplied to me.

3. However, this is not why I wrote to you. As a socialist you will appreciate that action is taken not in the air and purely in furtherance of an abstract principle, but because the conditions are such as to demand action and there is some hope of results; those results might even be just strengthening of a cause. If action results in the breaking up or the weakening of an incipient movement, then it might be injurious.

4. The very backwardness of Nepal and the strength of the forces opposed to any kind of satyagraha would lead one to hesitate before starting a movement. The result might well be a setback. It is possible that the Nepalese of the lowlands might irritate the Gurkha elements who are the strongest in the country and thus the movement may come into clash with a large and virile element in the population.

5. Another point to remember is that Nepal, though certainly a part of India, is an independent country. It is not easy to function in an independent country from a base in another country. This raises international questions. If Afghanistan became the base for any movement in India, we will strongly object.

6. It is difficult to judge the Nepalese authorities from standards in India. They are totally unused to strikes and the like and are likely to deal with them in their own crude ways. It is possible, I think, to get relief from and even progress in Nepal to some extent by other means. Their authorities are anxious to do something and seek our cooperation.

7. In the larger context of India today on the verge of big happenings and

<sup>1</sup> JP Papers NMML.

possibly changes, it would be unfortunate to divert our energy to any smaller cause. It would also be wrong to create ill-will with Nepal. More I cannot say now. I hope to talk to you about it when we meet.

8. The Working Committee is meeting on the 31st. I have requested Bapu to come here about the 25th so as to allow us ample time to discuss various matters. I would very much like you to be here about that time also, not only to discuss the future of the Congress but also the future of India which is taking shape in painful ways before us. So please try to come and, if possible, bring some of your colleagues.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

Shri Jayaprakash Narayan,  
Kadam Kuan,  
Patna, Bihar.

## APPENDIX 13

### **Vallabhbhai Patel to Jayaprakash Narayan, Mussoorie, 23 May 1947<sup>1</sup>**

My dear Jayaprakash,

I have received your letter of the 17th instant here early this week. I was wondering why no reply was received from you, but your letter explains the cause for delay.

Your speech at Calicut, as reported in the Press, of which I sent you a cutting, had reference to my Bombay speech only, and I was surprised that you should draw any such inference from that speech. In fact, my Bombay speech was an earnest appeal for co-operation; instead, you read therein a desire on my part to destroy your party.

From your letter I find that you do not justify your criticism as having been based on the Bombay speech, but instead you suggest that you have formed your conclusions from your impressions which you may have gathered through many years experience of inner Congress politics. I am sorry that you did not say so to your audience in your speech, but you led them to believe that my Bombay speech was the basis of your conclusions.

I do not wish to say anything about your impressions gathered from your long experience of many years, as I do not think any useful purpose would be served by raking up the past, in which I may have much more to say against you than you may have against me. It may all be due to lack of contact, or misunderstanding, or other reasons. I had formed my impressions of you and your party during those years, but I challenge you to point out any single instance in which, since my release from jail, I have done anything against you or your party from which you could base that inference. Of course, I have defended myself against unfair and violent attacks from individual members of your party, but that has always been done in self-defence.

You have referred to my sharp attacks within and without the A.I.C.C. against you. As I have stated above, these were attacks, if at all, that were in self-defence against those who made sharp attacks against me.

You refer to the activities of Sri S.K. Patil and Sri Shankerrao Deo, whom you describe as my "trusted lieutenants". In the first place, you are unfair to them in describing them as my lieutenants. No doubt they are my

<sup>1</sup> *Sardar Patel Correspondence* (NAI).

colleagues in the Congress, working in the organization for many years, but they are leaders in their own capacity with independent judgement and freedom of action. I had never claimed them as my lieutenants any more than I can claim many of my colleagues in the Congress. It is unfair, therefore, to make me responsible for their actions or attitude towards you. I do not hold you responsible at all for the conduct of many of your colleagues in your party, who have made very violent and vicious attacks against me continuously for many years and described me as "an agent of the capitalists" or even as a communalist. I do not think you can be ignorant of the conduct of your trusted colleagues, but I cannot for a moment hold you responsible for that. Munshi Ahmed Din, for instance, has carried on vulgar and violent campaign inside and outside the Congress against me, both on the platform and in the Press, for many years, but I have taken no notice of it. Nor have I ever referred to you about it, because I did not hold you responsible for it.

When you were in jail, the Naval Rating incident took place in Bombay. I happened to be in Bombay at the time, and I had to deal with the ugly situation that had been created by some of your colleagues who, in combination with the Communists, created a very difficult and embarrassing situation for the Congress in Bombay. I know that you definitely disapproved of their action in this affair. Your colleagues have carried on a vigorous campaign against me about the manner in which I handled the situation on that occasion, for a long time since that incident, even after your release from jail. You have never openly disapproved of their attitude against me, although you disagreed with them. I had no alternative but to defend myself by making sharp attacks, and you cannot blame me for that.

On several occasions, I have made earnest endeavours to make reconciliation and to secure co-operation from you and your party, but every time we have met with a rebuff. It is my sad experience that although often you have agreed with our decisions or our policy when you were with us, you disagreed afterwards on grounds of party discipline or party interest.

There are many in the Congress who feel that much of the indiscipline in the Congress is due to the existence of your party in the Congress and also of the party members working solely in its interest or for strengthening it. This naturally brings conflict and distrust, but so far as I am concerned, I have, since my release, said nothing or done nothing to come in the way of your working or your party's working in the manner you think fit, however much I may have disagreed with it.

You refer to the actions of Professor Abdul Bari and his attitude towards you, and hold me responsible for it. I am afraid at this rate you can hold me responsible for the conduct of every Congressman. When you wrote to me about Bari, I gave you a frank reply. He was a good, honest and sincere man, and he was incorruptible. He made many sacrifices in the cause of the

Congress. I have not met any non-communal Congress Muslim of his calibre. He had built up his influence in the Jamshedpur Labour, which was the envy and admiration of many; and I have not seen any Congressman holding such influence anywhere over Labour except in Ahmedabad. I do not mean to defend all his actions, but who is perfect? And it would have been better if you would not have referred about his action and conduct when he is no more with us. You do not know how I tried to persuade him to change his attitude towards you, but he had his grievances against you. You complain about his being elected as President of the Provincial Congress Committee and hold me responsible for not preventing it. I do not understand how, in a democratic organization, I can interfere in the free choice of the Provincial Congress Committee. Nor do I understand what authority you think I had in such matters to intervene.

You have made certain charges against the Congress Ministries. They may be right or wrong. I do not want to defend their actions or their conduct. Nor have I got any authority to control them in any manner. Perhaps you are labouring under a misapprehension that I am the Chairman of the Parliamentary Board. I have ceased to hold that office since my release. I have no time, nor have I any inclination, to take such a heavy responsibility. But I would be unfair to the Ministries if I did not point out to you that their charges against you are very grave. You have embarrassed them considerably in the discharge of their responsibilities on many occasions. Surely a Congress leader of your experience would not fail to appreciate the amount of embarrassment and difficulties created by your indiscreet speeches suggesting the arrest of Governors. Nor can you justify the spreading of general disloyalties and indiscipline in the Security Services such as the Police. If the Police have any genuine grievances, you can get them redressed through the Congress Organizations, or through the Congress Working Committee. But you cannot, as a principal Congressman, lightly allow—much less foment—indiscipline in the Police ranks.

I am glad to hear from you that you do not want to disrupt the Congress organization, but you will excuse me if I am frank enough to say that your activities are fast leading certain Congress organizations to that end.

In the Jharia Coal Mines, in the labour field, you employed a man who, you knew well enough, was expelled from the Congress organization. He was trained by us at Ahmedabad. He is your trusted lieutenant, perhaps in your party's pay. I am not suggesting anything wrong, but a man of such confidence of yours was entrusted with the work of bringing about a strike in the Coal fields. I hear he has now been dismissed or expelled by your local party for misappropriation of funds.

I do not wish to prolong this unpleasant and fruitless controversy. I have done so only in reply to your letter as a matter of duty. I have never mentioned

any of these things to you up to now and I tried to forget the past, but you seem to keep your past impressions and experience alive. I am afraid if we meet with that background there is hardly any chance of any successful outcome of our discussions. I wish I could believe to the contrary. Anyway, I am always prepared to do my best, because you know we are getting old and the burden of responsibility is getting much heavier on our shoulders that are now getting weak for obvious reasons.

With kind Regards,

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Sri Jayaprakash Narayan

APPENDIX 14

**Jawaharlal Nehru to Jayaprakash Narayan, Delhi,  
5 July 1947**

New Delhi

5 July 1947

My dear Jayaprakash,

I have received your letter of the 3rd May. I am very glad that you have decided to allow members of the Socialist Party to join the Constituent Assembly. We shall welcome the persons you have suggested and we shall try to get them in, but I may point out that it is no easy matter now for vacancies to be created or to be filled. This is largely a provincial matter and there is a tremendous desire among Congressmen to come into the Constituent Assembly, more especially as this is going to function as a Legislative Assembly. It is difficult to issue orders from here as to who should be elected and who should not. In some Provinces it will be relatively easier than in others. So far as I know, there are not likely to be many vacancies, as most people want to stick on to the Constituent Assembly anyhow.

I have sent a copy of your letter to Rajendra Babu.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru.

Shri Jayaprakash Narayan



## APPENDIX 15

**His Highness the Maharaja of Nepal, to J.P.,  
29 July 1947<sup>1</sup>**

Nepal  
29 July 1947

Dear Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 3rd ultimo giving expression to your regret for the sad incident that took place in Hanuman Nagar during 1943 when you and your colleagues were forcibly rescued by your partisans from the custody of the Bada Hakim of that district. It was good of you to have expressed a desire to send Rs. 2,000 as a token of your sympathy to the families of the guards who were killed in the fighting that took place at the time you escaped. You will be interested to know that a family pension has been awarded to the family of the guard who was killed while rewards have been granted to the guards who were wounded when the incident took place. As such there is no need of your giving anything to the bereaved family.

Regarding the books and personal effects said to belong to you and your companions and which were recovered from huts belonging to Rameswar Singh, I write to inform you that on the request of the Indian Police which was investigating on the British Indian side the shooting incident referred to above, books and personal effects as per list here which had been made over to the British Legation Chancery here in November 1944 for being handed over to Mr. Stallard of the Indian Police who was then here and thought they would be of great value in connection with the investigations which were proceeding in India. Under the circumstances I am sorry to have to tell you the books are not available here for being returned to you. But in view of the eagerness you have expressed to have them back His Excellency the British Minister here is being requested to arrange to have them made over to you. If you so desire you may contact the External Affairs Department at New Delhi to expedite matters.

The Koirala brothers are still in custody pending trial and you can rest assured that they shall have a fair and just trial when their case comes up

<sup>1</sup> Vijayalakshmi's ed.: *Jayaprakash Narayan sixty first birthday celebration: Commemoration volume*, Madras, 1962.

for hearing in the near future. Regarding your friend Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala you have nothing to be anxious for, as he is keeping well.

Yours sincerely,  
Maharaja of Nepal

Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan,  
1, Narinder Place,  
New Delhi.

## Policy Statement of the Socialist Party<sup>1</sup>

This Statement of Policy of the Socialist Party was first presented to the delegates at the Annual Party Conference held at Kanpur in late February 1947. The Statement as generally approved of by the delegates was revised and submitted for consideration to the General Council of the Party when it met at Nagpur in August last. After two days' deliberations the General Council adopted the final thesis herein contained. It represents the basic policy of the Socialist Party.

Jayaprakash Narayan

30th September 1947

### CHAPTER I

#### PICTURE OF SOCIALISM

##### *The Objective of Socialism*

1. The basic policy of the Congress Socialist Party, as the Socialist Party was then known, was first defined in the short document known as the Meerut Thesis. This policy was elaborated at Faizpur in a statement that came to be known as the Faizpur Thesis. Ten years have gone by since, ten years into which were packed events and experience of a whole epoch of history. Naturally, during these momentous years, our Party policy developed and grew, till now a stage has been reached where the old theses fail to give adequate expression to it. The need has therefore arisen, while affirming the fundamentals of the earlier theses, to state once again the basic policy of the Party in the light of recent experiences and the new tasks and problems that face us today.

2. A policy is only a means to an end. Therefore, it is necessary in a definition of policy to state first of all the ends, the objectives, to which that policy is intended to lead. The objectives of the Party as stated in the Party Constitution are achievement of complete independence "in the sense of separation from the British Empire" and the establishment of a socialist society.

<sup>1</sup> Pamphlet published by the Socialist Party of India, Bombay, 1947.

3. The concept of complete independence is clear enough, and the Constitution makes it clearer by emphasizing the severance from the British Empire. In view, however, of the formation of two dominions and transference of power from the British Parliament to the two Dominion Constituent Assemblies, it is necessary further to clarify this objective of independence. Severance of the British connection is an essential aspect of the country's independence. But independence cannot be complete until a republican form of government is established in every part of the country including the States.

### *Description of Socialism*

4. The objective of "socialist society" needs further elucidation. This need is greater today, first because we have nearly achieved our first objective, and second, because conflicting pictures of socialism have come into view forcing us to a choice.

### *Totalitarian Communism*

5. The main choice today is between democratic socialism and totalitarian communism. In totalitarian communism, to which it is wrong to apply the name of socialism, every other but the ruling party is suppressed; there is no opposition permitted to the Government, i.e. to the bureaucracy in power; the trade unions are not independent organizations of the workers but subordinate limbs of the all-powerful State with no right to strike or to take any other action independent of the State and the ruling party. Under such "socialism", as totalitarian communism is sometimes called, the individual is not free and enjoys no protection against arbitrary loss of his already restricted freedom, his job or even his life. The State in such a system acquires an unchallenged control over the life, liberty and happiness of its "subject". On the other hand, thanks to the single-party system, the State passes entirely out of the democratic control of the community of workers and becomes a tool in the hands of the ruling clique of the only party in existence. Party leaders and leaders of industry, agriculture and the armed forces become a class, apart from the mass of workers, perpetuating themselves through a system of special privilege, drawing incomes far in excess of ordinary wages and ruling in the name of the workers but wholly beyond their control.

### *Democratic Socialism*

6. The Socialist Party rejects such "socialism". The socialist society which it aims at is a society in which there is the fullest economic and political democracy. It is an axiom of Marxism that there can be no socialism without democracy. Therefore, in the socialist society of our conception the individual,

i.e. the worker, is free and the State has no power to deprive him of his rights and privileges except through due processes of law. Further, in such a society, the trade unions are free and may even exercise, if need be, their right to strike; other voluntary organizations of workingmen are also free; political parties other than the party in power may be formed and may function freely. The State has no monopoly over the press, the radio or other means of propaganda. Associations of workingmen, their parties, collectives, co-operatives, municipalities and other corporate bodies of workers have their own press and means of propaganda and the State Press is open to every individual worker, whose right to criticize or oppose the Government, or any limb or servant of it, is guaranteed by the Constitution. In such a society, economic power, i.e. the power to plan production, the power to determine the conditions of work, prices, the distribution of the national produce between saving and spending and between the forms and grades of these—all these powers—are held not exclusively by the State bureaucracy, but shared by trade unions, co-operatives and other suitable representative bodies of workingmen. In such a society, the servants of the State, particularly on the higher levels, including police officers and magistrates, are elected by appropriate constituents and are subject to recall by the same. No incomes in such a society are much removed from the ordinary wage level and the children of the higher grade of wage-earners have no special privileges or opportunities. Government and management of economic affairs are made as simple as possible, enabling immediate participation in these activities of the greatest possible part of the community.

7. These are the basic principles of democratic socialism to which the Party adheres, and which shall guide its future policy. But these principles do not in any way complete the picture of socialism which the Party has in view; they merely state the conditions that will prevent socialism from being submerged by totalitarianism.

### *Failure of Social Democracy*

8. While the experience of the inter-war years in Europe brought out the defects of totalitarian communism, they also demonstrated the weaknesses, particularly during the German Revolution, of Social Democracy. The Social Democratic movement in Germany and elsewhere in Europe exhibited an utter lack of decision in revolutionary and critical movements. When history demanded decision, revolutionary action, Social Democracy afraid of violence and disorder and inhibited by doctrinaire ideas, forswore its historical role and allowed capitalism to re-entrench itself under the garb of democracy and constitutionalism. This weak-kneed policy and the disastrous mistakes and disruptive tactics of world communism ultimately made possible the enthronement of Nazism.

9. The Socialist Party, therefore, while firmly believing in democratic socialism and fully aware of the dangers of totalitarian communism, adheres steadfastly to the path of revolution. The Party sees no conflict between democracy and revolution. The bourgeois revolution was the mother of bourgeois democracy; so, the social revolution is the mother of socialist democracy.

*Abolition of Capitalism and Feudalism and the emergence of one class or classless society*

10. Capitalist society is based on exploitation of labour for private profit. In free capitalism the degree and manner of this exploitation are determined by the capitalist class. Under controlled capitalism, this task is performed mainly by the State; but then the State itself is very largely controlled by the capitalist class. Therefore, the result of State control of profits, wages and prices in a capitalist society makes little difference to the economic basis of that society. In a socialist society, that basis is completely, basically altered. In this society, there is no capitalism, i.e. there is no class of private owners of productive property to which labour power may be applied for the production of more property. The abolition of capitalism might be achieved by an insurrection or through a democratic process. Whatever the process, in a socialist society there is no capitalist class in existence. Nor is there any other exploiting class, such as the class of landlords and capitalist farmers. The disappearance of the exploiting classes means that there is only one class left in society—the class of workers whether they work in fields, factories, offices or in the professions. The State in such a society is a workers' state and, if the democratic forms of political and economic life already described are in existence, it may not be turned into a bureaucratic or totalitarian state.

*Socialization of Production*

11. The property that under capitalism belonged to the capitalist and the landlord belongs under socialism to the worker not individually, but corporately. In other words the State, its subordinate limbs, the municipalities, village communities, co-operatives and similar corporate bodies become the property owners, and, together, the managers and directors of all economic activities. All large-scale industries, such as defence and basic industries, are owned and managed by the State; consumption industries and industries of small and middle sizes are owned by other corporate bodies. Land is owned by the village community as a whole from which individual cultivators hold within certain minimum and maximum limits of acreage; and the actual

farming is done through co-operatives or individual cultivators working as members of a co-operative society.

### *Socialization of Trade and Banking*

12. Trading establishments too become the property of the State or the co-operatives who carry on all the trade, except very small neighbourhood trade that may be left in the hands of individuals. All banking is in the hands of the State.

### *Industrialization and Development of Technology and Science*

13. The economic organization of present society is geared to the need of creating private profit. In socialist society, the purpose of economic activities is to produce goods and services for the satisfaction of human wants. India is poor beyond description. Not enough of goods and services are being produced to go round. Even if the few who are in a privileged position at present did not misappropriate the share of their fellowmen, there is not enough to satisfy even the primary needs of the population. It is obvious therefore that production must increase manifold.

14. But production cannot increase unless human labour is made more productive by the use of science and technology. Furthermore, in socialism the aim is not merely to increase the productivity of human labour but also to make it less irksome and fatiguing and to leave to the labourer more time for rest, recreation and the pursuit of happiness. Thus, both to make labour more productive and less toilsome, it is necessary to make the greatest possible use of science and technology.

### *Large vs. Small Industry*

15. In this context the controversy that ceaselessly rages regarding large industry and handicrafts is beside the point. The aim in socialist society is to attain the highest possible standard of living, materially and culturally. Therefore science, technology, art, all are pressed into service to achieve that aim. All forms of production—large, small, concentrated, dispersed—are made subservient to the needs of production, employment, health and aesthetics.

### *Planned Economic Development*

16. In capitalist society, production is not adjusted to the needs of the community but to the dictates of the market, which, in its turn, reflects not

social needs but the relationship between spending and saving, in other words, the relationship between wages and profits. Therefore, capitalist production is wasteful and planless.

17. In socialist society, as production has to satisfy the needs of society, it is adjusted to those needs. That is to say, a plan is drawn up in accordance to social needs and production follows the plan.

### *Decentralized and Regional Planning*

18. There is, however, a danger in planning. It has been found that, if completely centralized, planning leads to bureaucracy and dictatorship. But the very nature of planned economy is such that in certain spheres, as key industries, imports and exports, currency, finance, prices of basic commodities, reinvestment, etc., central planning is imperative. Yet, if the evils of regimentation are to be avoided, it is necessary to leave as much local initiative as possible in the matter of regional planning, particularly with respect to commodities locally consumed. At the same time, the Central Planning Authority too should be so constituted as to be a representative body; that is to say, it should consist not only of the representatives of the Central Government but also of the Provincial Governments, the trade unions and the co-operatives.

### *Village and Town*

19. In capitalist economy, particularly in India, the villages are a prey to the cities. In socialist India, this conflict is removed and the exploitation of the village by the money economy of capitalism is stopped. There is no discrepancy in the standards of living of the rural and urban areas and the peasant and worker both receive equal values for their labour.

### *Abolition of the Princes*

20. With the formation of the two Indian Dominions, most of the Princes have joined one Dominion or the other. Some have declared their independence or are still undecided. In socialist India, the princes and feudal lords have no place. Whether the Princes and their vassals go as a result of revolution or by the votes of their peoples, they will have to go before socialism is fully established.

### *Tribal Peoples*

21. The tribal peoples of India are on different cultural levels, and all are backward economically and politically. Taking advantage of their



backwardness, foreign missions have tried systematically to denationalize them. The tribal peoples are an integral part of the Indian nation; but their distinctive culture entitles them to regional autonomy and the fullest cultural freedom.

### *Religion*

22. While socialism is a rational way of life, it does not interfere with religion. Religion would be completely free in socialist India.

### *Caste*

23. In India, apart from economic inequalities, there are social inequalities, particularly among one of the communities, namely the Hindus. The system of caste is anti-social, undemocratic and tyrannous, inasmuch as it divides men into high and low, touchable and untouchable, curtails human liberties and interferes with economic activities. In socialist India, this system cannot exist and no distinction or discrimination based on caste is permitted.

### *Woman*

24. Woman in present-day society is suppressed and exploited. In socialism, woman is the equal of man, and no distinction or discrimination based on sex exists.

### *Socialism*

25. Here then is our picture of socialist society. It is a democratic society where everyone is a worker and all men are equal, including women; where there are equal opportunities for all and wages do not differ so much as to create distinctions of class; where all wealth is owned by the community; where progress is planned; where labour is joyful and fruitful; where life is richer, fuller, beautiful.

## CHAPTER II

### TRANSITION TO SOCIALISM

26. The society described above cannot be created all at once. Present society is far removed from socialism. Therefore, there must be a period, short or long, of transition from the present to the ideal.

*The Class Struggle*

27. The forces that drive society toward socialism are the forces generated by the struggle of classes. It is not merely socialist intellectuals who by the powers of logic and persuasion bring about socialism. Socialist intellectuals play an important part in the process, but they do not provide the motive force. That force is provided by the working class and the other exploited classes in capitalist society who struggle against their exploiters in order to improve their position and to free themselves from exploitation. This struggle leads them ultimately to destroy the social system that upholds and sanctions their exploitation and to establish a society free from exploitation, i.e. a socialist society. The intellectuals who identify themselves with the exploited class give ideal or ideological expression to this struggle and the objectives it drives at in a more or less elemental manner. In brief, the class struggle is the motive force in the transition to socialism.

28. Looked at as a historical process, this transition has two stages; one, the stage where the class struggle leads to the capture of power by socialists; the other, when the socialists in power build up socialism.

*Insurrectionary or Democratic Method*

29. In theory, State power can be captured by either of two methods, i.e. by an insurrectionary overthrow of the State in existence or by democratic means, which include both extra-parliamentary and parliamentary means such as organization of the masses, education and propaganda, strike, civil resistance, election, etc.

30. Democratic means can be used for the capture of State power only where full political democracy is functioning and the working class, the peasantry and the lower middle class have reached a high level of maturity and have created a powerful political party. Where these conditions do not exist, democratic methods must be ineffective and inadequate and sometimes dangerous.

31. When the first stage is complete, i.e. when State power has been captured, socialists may proceed to build up socialism either in a democratic manner or through a dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e. of the toiling masses who in India include workers, peasants and the poor middle class. The democratic method can succeed only where the danger of counter revolution does not exist, i.e. the danger that the old ruling classes would overthrow the socialist state by force and establish their dictatorial rule.

32. In India and Pakistan the course towards socialism shall be determined by the success or failure of the efforts now being made in the respective Constituent Assemblies to create a democratic State. Should this effort fail, that is, should democracy be limited or perverted by theocratic concepts, or

by feudal and vested interests, the capture of State power by socialists could only be possible by insurrectionary means. In the alternative event, it could be accomplished through normal processes of democracy.

33. It is likely that the establishment of democracy in India and Pakistan should follow an uneven course, greater advance being made in certain parts than in others. If the revolutionary forces are strong enough to overcome the obstacles of communalism and feudalism, this uneven development might be corrected. On the other hand, if events followed the alternative course, the progress of democracy, as already stated, is bound to be uneven and unequal. The progress of socialism too, in that event, would follow a more or less parallel path, unless the growth of the forces of socialism were not dependent upon the growth of democracy. It shall be the endeavour of the Party to remove this dependence and to develop the forces working for socialism equally in all parts of the country. In the parts where democracy does not exist, or is retarded, these forces will find expression in other than democratic processes. At the same time socialists must also carry on the fight for fully democratising these areas.

#### *Democratic Transition or Dictatorship of the Proletariat*

34. The new State in the hands of Socialists becomes an instrument for building up of a socialist society. The State might function democratically, or it might be compelled to suppress the liberties of those who might threaten its existence. If the Socialist movement has succeeded in mobilizing an adequately large sector of the toiling masses and if the influence over them of the propertied classes has been destroyed, the new State would have so broad a basis and such stability that the danger of counter-revolution should be inconsiderable. The building up of socialism can then proceed on democratic lines. If, on the other hand, the new State is threatened and insecure, the counter-revolutionary elements in society would be suppressed by force. In other words, a dictatorship of the proletariat would have to be established. Such a dictatorship, however, shall not be the dictatorship of a single class, or worse, of a single party. Under this dictatorship of the proletariat, all the classes forming the proletariat shall share in the state power, and all the parties of the proletariat except those that believe in totalitarianism shall function in complete freedom; only the anti-proletarian elements being disenfranchized and their liberties suppressed.

35. As stated above, the motive force in the transition to socialism is the struggle of the classes. In India, the working class, the peasantry, the toiling middle class, are neither organized nor fully aware of their historical role, i.e. of their role in the transition to socialism nor has their struggle become a central fact in the political and economic life of the country. Large sectors

of the toiling masses are today wholly under the sway of irrational, undemocratic, anti-socialist forces, such as the forces of caste and communalism. Socialism would remain a distant dream till the masses are weaned away from these influences and made aware of their true interests and their historic destiny. Therefore, the primary task of the socialist movement today is the creation of the class organizations of the toiling people and the development of their class consciousness and of their struggle for freedom from want and exploitation and social injustice.

### CHAPTER III

#### ANALYSIS OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

##### *Unbalanced Economic Relationships*

36. India is in the grip of major social changes. The advent of freedom will further accentuate the tempo of change. Those whose domination is threatened by this transformation are seeking to retain it under new forms. This attempt, if it succeeds, will only prolong the travail and make unrest and conflict a chronic aspect of our social life. It is necessary to analyse how the existing economic relationships, on the advent of freedom, are unbalanced, and in what way we can evolve a balanced reconstruction of our economy, which will raise the living standards of our poorest countrymen in towns and villages.

##### *Three Factors*

37. In this effort we must take into account the three causal factors which determine the character and direction of social changes. The political and psychological factors have to be understood in relation to their economic import.

##### *Effect of Foreign Domination*

38. Indian economy was unbalanced mainly on account of foreign domination. Agriculture and rural industry suffered a severe reverse when it came in the vortex of the industrialized economy of Britain. This imbalance was never corrected even after the development of industry in India between the two wars. The last war further increased the imbalance of our economy.

##### *Rural Production*

39. Agricultural prices suffered a more severe reverse during the great depression of 1929-31, than industrial prices. They never recovered in the

same degree. Up till 1943, industrial prices rose far more rapidly under the stress of the war. After the Bengal famine rural price levels began to catch up. But even today labour on land, which is more essential than urban labour, is far less well-paid. This makes agriculture less solvent as an industry. There are also many other causes working in the same direction. How to put our extensive sector of rural production on a really sound basis so as to expand per capita productivity and income is the first question which faces us today.

40. This effort calls for extensive changes in the system of ownership of land and also new investment of capital to increase the output by planned scientific cultivation. This effort cannot be initiated by private enterprise and demands a socialist outlook inspiring vigorous State policy.

41. The revolution of our rural economy cannot be effected unless we take into account the necessity of developing power-driven medium-scale industry to absorb the displaced labour force from the reconstructed rural economy. This is again a field which private enterprise is shy to pursue on account of its lower margins of profit.

### *Currency*

42. The war expanded our currency by 550 per cent. While the total number of rupees increased by five and a half times, they could not be distributed in the same proportion among the different sections of producers, labourers or the owners of economic resources. This has made the burden of inequality even heavier than it was before the war.

43. The worst victims of the economic processes set in motion by the war are however not the agriculturists as they used to be. Those whose earnings could not rise along with prices are the low-salaried office employees, the petty fixed-income group of retired pensioners, primary school teachers, etc. This section of society is temperamentally conservative yet politically more conscious than other impoverished sections in the fields and factories. The war has forced them into the ranks of those who cannot survive without major economic and political changes. A determined effort to anchor the lower middle class to the socialist cause must form an important item of our programme.

### *Industry*

44. The war provided a golden chance for the owners of industry to reap the fullest advantage of the greater demand for war purposes, the greater demand stimulated by rise of incomes due to inflation and of the rising prices which seemed to know no limits.

45. Total profits during these years easily range between 200 per cent to 250 per cent. To this must be added the incalculable fortunes in the black markets made by manufacturers, their middlemen and by various grades of retailers. The State shared a part of the loot by means of the Excess Profits Tax. The industrialists became willing tax gatherers from the helpless consumers. This unholy partnership of the war years has strengthened the domination of propertied classes in our society. Industry however developed in a haphazard manner.

### *Big Business*

46. A notable aspect of war industrial expansion is the increased development of industry in the Indian States. This was due to several factors: one of the factors was the laxity of control machinery in the States which facilitated greater exploitation of the consumers and workers. There is also a growing integration of feudal interests with the Indian Big Business, which increases their influence in the political life of India.

47. While nationalists languished in the inactivity of prison, Indian Big Business watched the transformation of the "do-little" Government of India into an administrative instrument wielding great domination over the lives and economic activities of the people. The State would hereafter control the entire economic life. Indian Big Business recognized this inevitable world trend long before our politicians did. Big Business decided that since the State would control their activities hereafter, they must set about betimes to control those who control the State.

### *Real wages fall*

48. As contrasted with this fabulous prosperity of those who own and direct our economic resources, there is the growing impoverishment of the "men without means" in towns and villages. Currency increased five times and prices by more than three times; profits increased to more than cent per cent; however, wages of the industrial worker could only rise by one and a half times of the pre-war level. This rise of money wages was not even enough to compensate the increased cost of living. However, war-time industrial activity provided employment to about twenty-five lacs of men in factories. Fuller employment indirectly increased earnings of the family and thus kept the workers within the margin of subsistence.

### *Betrayal of the Working Class*

49. One section of labour leadership represented by the Socialist Party and other nationalists were driven into wilderness for their resistance to the

Imperialist war. Another section of trade unionists led by the Communist Party and the Royists betrayed the working class by preventing even economic strikes. The workers in industry have lost a golden opportunity to secure substantial increase in their basic wages during the war boom. It was the most suitable moment for such a concerted effort, to snatch their due share of the prosperity. Even in England where the Labour Party was part of the Coalition Government, there were more strikes during the war years than in India. As a result, real wages in England did not fall below the pre-war levels but actually rose higher on account of expanding economic activities. The political sins of the Communist Party of India of joining hands with the enemy in the hour of revolt are well-known. Their betrayal of the working class in its hour of crisis is not yet fully recognized.

### *Controls*

50. To correct this extensive imbalance of our economic life, we have to turn to a vigorous programme of State action. It is not true that the removal of controls would automatically expand production and regulate distribution on a more honest basis.

51. What we require is a more efficient and comprehensive system of controls, with this difference, that we must clearly set down the criteria of controls required by our economic system. Granting the needs as stated in the previous paragraphs, what would be the character of regulation and controls which would lead us in that direction?

### *Regulation of Prices and Wages*

52. As an immediate task, the State must guarantee to the cultivator a remunerative price for his primary products. This calls for an effort to reduce middleman profits to the minimum. A price fixing mechanism, co-ordinated for all the provinces and States must be our first demand. It cannot of course by itself make our uneconomic farms solvent. Yet it would go a long way to make the rural economy more stable. In like manner, the present system of pre-war wage scales plus dearness allowance must be speedily ended and a new scale of basic wages more in harmony with the price levels must be fixed industry by industry. With these two items defined in advance, the State can control the *quantity* and *quality* as well as prices of *manufactured commodities*. Profiteering whether in industry or trade can of course have no place in our economy which must be geared to average profits and efficient running. The State must have the authority to take over any concern that resists these regulations.

*Control of Investments*

53. During the war years when the total volume of money increased by five and a half times and prices and profits also rose by two and a half to three times, the volume of fresh investments per year only increased by 4 per cent, an increase of about 30 per cent during the whole war period. This method of finance and control of industry cannot serve our needs at present.

54. In the first place, investment control must be used to determine the structure of fresh annual investments. The sectors of direct State-owned industry must be determined in advance to ensure that essential industries will not lack capital resources on account of a lower prospect of the rate of profit. Scarce resources must also be brought under a complete State control; it would be unjust to allow scarce resources to follow the trail of profits. Such a course would starve our essential industries of necessary resources. The State ownership of coal and electricity, of steel and engineering, are examples of this form of direction and control.

*State Monopoly of Foreign Trade*

55. In order to put our available resources to the utmost possible use, imports and exports must immediately be made a State monopoly. Only by this means can the State impose its directives in the field of production.

*Private Enterprise*

56. In the sector of private-owned industry, which it is not profitable to socialize in the present stage, the control and regulation of quality, quantity and prices as well as marketing of manufactured goods must be determined in advance. The expansion of industries under private ownership can be treated as one aspect of this control.

57. Apart from these fields of State-owned, State-controlled or State-regulated industry, the State may permit some fields of industry for private enterprise in the present stage.

58. In these matters States policy during the past three years had no clear-cut direction. The sins of omission are as grave as the sins of commission.

59. Free and private trading is positively anti-social in a period of acute scarcity. The regulation of prices and quantities (rationing) should be applied to industrial resources as well as to consumers goods.

*Planned Economic Development*

60. All this calls for a planned economic development, with the specific object of correcting the imbalance of incomes as well as productivity. It is



obvious that the incentive of profits will not help us to evolve such a system. We have to evolve some fixed targets, both of production as well as standards of living for the workers.

61. This demands that working class standards should not be measured by wage levels alone but also by extending housing and other social amenities which are only alternative forms of remuneration.

#### CHAPTER IV

#### INDIA AND PAKISTAN

##### *Partnership of the two States*

62. The division of India into two states is now a settled fact. It can be unsettled only by mutual consent and by a free and voluntary choice of the people of both the countries. At any rate, a partnership of the two states can be secured for achieving common purposes. But this is possible only by establishing mutual goodwill and a new understanding of each other. With this end in view, the two states should cultivate friendly relations with each other and should not harbour feelings of hostility towards each other. The minorities in each state should pledge their loyalty to their state. Maximum approximation to each other of the new economic and social structures in the two states will ultimately lead to the establishment of mutual friendship and co-operation. The more the two states accept the same political ideals of democracy and social policies, the greater will be the prospect of partnership between the two states. Each state should therefore strive to realize within its territories the ideals of modern democracy, irrespective of what happens or does not happen in the other state. Each should organize itself on a broader democratic basis and should see that the people in its charge live decent and prosperous lives whereas they struggle for a hard existence today. Each should build a secular state and should become the pioneer of a new and more progressive democracy. If this happens, the impact of the progressive state on the other will be significant and it will decisively influence events and ideas in the other state.

##### *The Socialists' Tasks*

63. The Socialist Party calls upon its members in both the states to give their best to their states and to work for the betterment of their peoples in consonance with the principles and ideals that have inspired it and claimed its adherence. The two States are now free to shape their destiny according to the sovereign will of the people and a new perspective has now opened before the Socialist Party to realize its aims.

*Changes in Organizational Structure*

64. Under the political conditions of the country, certain changes in the organizational structure of the Party have become necessary. The application of the basic policies of the Party will naturally vary with the conditions obtaining in each state. The Party in the Pakistan Dominion will be faced with its peculiar problems and it is but proper that the branches of the Party functioning in its provinces should be vested with a large degree of autonomy to conduct their future relations with the Congress organization, so much so that they can completely sever their connection with it. They shall also have the freedom to establish a single organization for the whole of Western Pakistan in which case it will have regional autonomy to frame its policies not inconsistent with the basic principles of the Party.

65. The case of Eastern Bengal stands on a different footing. Its separation from the territories of Western Pakistan by long distances and its different social structure preclude the possibility of its being included in the organization that may be set up for Western Pakistan. It may, however, be necessary to constitute a separate branch of the Party for this area. This branch also, if established, will have the same freedom to regulate its affairs and to determine its policies as will be accorded to the branch or branches functioning in Western Pakistan.

66. It is hoped that the Socialist Party will prove a powerful instrument for evolving a common rhythm of political and economic development in the two states. Such a policy alone can promote harmony and friendship by developing a common outlook on life.

## CHAPTER V

## PARTY AND THE INDIAN STATES

*Genesis of the States*

67. Before the advent of British rule, the whole of India existed in terms of States. In the ninety years (1757-1848) that the British took to subjugate India, two thirds of India was annexed; the third purchased its survival by helping the British in the conquest of the country. All the coastal states, except Travancore, Cochin and a few minor ones, were annexed because the British depending on sea power were unwilling to leave coastal regions outside their direct control. In the interior only such States have survived as became subservient to the British in their wars of aggrandisement, the chief among the "faithful allies" being Hyderabad. As the British frontier slowly advanced from the Karmnassa River to the Hindukush, it had thrown

forward glacis; these buffer belts were later leapt over and have survived as Indian States.

### *Pawns in the Imperialist Game*

68. Between 1858 to 1906, the heyday of British *raj* in India, the States were maintained in subordinate isolation, and were controlled by the administrative apparatus of the Indian Government. With the outbreak of political unrest in 1907, the rallying of the Princes as a counterpoise to the popular forces began. The Narendra Mandal was conceived simultaneously with the Montford Reforms. The Simon Commission was followed by the Butler Committee. Every instalment of reforms to the people has been accompanied by the strengthening of the Princes and furthering their estrangement from British India. Communal divisions and princely intransigence were the two devices used by the British to frustrate the growing forces of Indian nationalism. The Princes have been the willing pawns in the imperialist game.

### *States and Communalism*

69. There has been in recent years a drawing together of communal forces and the feudal autocracy of the Princes. In Hyderabad, Kashmir, Patiala and other States, communal support is evoked to buttress the authority of the Princes. In many States, the rulers have entered into partnership with big capitalists for the exploitation of the economic resources of the States. All the reactionary forces appear to be converging to a focus in the States.

### *Struggle of the States People*

70. On the eve of the Kanpur Party Conference the crisis in the Indian society was maturing at a quicker pace in the States than in the rest of India. The States people were everywhere striving to wrest full democratic rights from their rulers and it appeared that with the withdrawal of the British, the Congress in alliance with the States people would make a bold bid for a single sovereignty for the whole of India, reject the untenable claims of the rulers to sovereign power and integrate India into a homogenous democracy.

### *The Instrument of Accession*

71. Since June 3rd, the map of India has undergone a complete transformation. Not only is India divided between the Dominions of Pakistan and the Indian Union but the Indian States have succeeded in suppressing

for yet a while the sovereignty of their people and the Princes have usurped the rights and liberties which should in justice devolve upon the people of the States. The Instrument of Accession, as it stands, on the one hand robs the States people of any constitutional status in the framework of free India and makes on the other, the integrity of the Republic depend abjectly upon the princely caprice. The policy embodied in the Instrument of Accession is the culmination of a viewpoint which the Congress mistakenly espoused at Haripura—the policy of non-interference. It was claimed then that the sovereignty of States people would emerge as a first priority after the attainment of freedom. These hopes are once again belied and it would appear that the Indian Union, which is the creation of the Congress, as well as the Dominion of Pakistan will at best maintain a policy of friendly neutrality, while extending constitutional recognition to the autocratic order of the Princes almost unconditionally. Clause 7 of the Instrument of Accession confers on the Princes the right to opt out. Thus the relationship of India to the British Commonwealth may well come to depend on the vote of the Princes rather than upon the freely-expressed will of the people.

### *States vs. Democracy*

72. Though the majority of the States have joined the Indian Union which has accepted the republican form of government as its fundamental principle only a few of them have anything like a responsible form of government functioning there and others are still continuing the feudal traditions of absolute monarchy. The States people, on the other hand, are organizing and struggling to achieve full, complete democratic rights; some have even demanded the elimination of their rulers and the merger of their territory in the adjoining provinces. In Hyderabad, where the Nizam has chosen to declare his independence, the struggle has assumed special importance. A sovereign, independent Hyderabad ruled by an absolute Nawab, not only does not fit in with the pattern of Republican India but threatens its very existence.

### *The Socialist Party and the States*

73. The Socialist Party pledges its full support to the people in the Indian States in their efforts to achieve democratic objectives and undertakes to organize to the best of its ability the people in the States where such organizations are lacking. The entente between the Government of India and the Princes may help to draw still closer the reactionary forces within the Indian Union and Pakistan, and their combined strength would be a serious menace to the socialist or other egalitarian movements. It is all the

more necessary therefore that we should constantly endeavour to reforge the snapped links between the democratic forces in the States and similar forces outside.

74. Further, the Socialist Party decides to state categorically that any agreements or pacts which will adversely affect the sovereignty of the people in the States, or is likely to weaken the powers of the Indian Republic, or jeopardise its defences will not be deemed binding on the people.

## CHAPTER VI

### LABOUR POLICY

#### *A.I.T.U.C. and the Socialist Party*

75. On the formation of the Congress Socialist Party in 1934, the Party entered into an arrangement with the All India Trade Union Congress. The agreement provided for the recognition of the A.I.T.U.C. as the central organization of trade unions and of the Party as the political expression of the working class. If this arrangement had been adhered to, a healthy labour movement would have grown up in the country.

76. The trade union movement, thanks to the machinations of the Communists, was split up into three organizations; the moderate National Federation of Trade Unions, the parent organization A.I.T.U.C. and the Communist-sponsored Red Trade Union Congress. The C.S.P. took upon itself the task of uniting the trade union movement as a part of its wider efforts at the consolidation of Marxist forces in the country. the Party succeeded in effecting the merger of all trade union organizations into the A.I.T.U.C. by 1937.

77. From the time of the merger to 1942, the Party played a prominent role in the A.I.T.U.C. and most of its key posts were occupied, in those years, by the nominees of the Party. The merger, however, snapped the political link between the Party and the A.I.T.U.C. The trade union movement grew in a haphazard manner and little was done in the directions of developing collective bargaining or securing labour legislation.

#### *Weakness of Trade Union Movement*

78. The weakness of the trade union movement was exposed during the war years, when the A.I.T.U.C. played an insignificant role in the great crisis. The unity proved to be artificial and the A.I.T.U.C. broke up into

various parts that functioned as appendages to different parties. The Royists detached a part of the organization and integrated it with the war efforts of the Government. The Communists stultified the trade union movement to suit their political ends. The A.I.T.U.C. was seized by political paralysis.

### *Failure of the A.I.T.U.C.*

79. The 1942 revolution accelerated the political consciousness of the working class and has attracted it towards the Socialist Party. This new relationship cannot find expression in the A.I.T.U.C. from which the Royists and the Congressites have withdrawn and which is now dominated, by means of inflated membership and other artificial devices, by the Communist Party. The Socialist movement, to achieve maturity, must organize links between the Socialist Party and the trade union movement. Such links cannot be established with the A.I.T.U.C. as it is composed today.

80. The A.I.T.U.C. has also failed to give sustained assistance and guidance to workers on strikes. It allowed the standard of life of the workers to suffer heavily during the war years and has not so far moved forward towards the realization of the new objectives. Both in the political sphere and in industrial conflicts, the A.I.T.U.C. has failed to play any vital part.

### *Congress and Labour*

81. Congressmen, who evinced limited interest in the labour movement before 1942, have now taken to labour organization. Especially after the formation of the Congress Governments, this interest has been intensified. The Hindustan Mazdoor Sangh and the Indian National Trade Union Congress are the organizational expressions of the new policy. Through these organizations labour is sought to be brought under the control of the Congress and its governments. Governmental aid is being given to foster the Congress-sponsored trade unions. Unions, thus fettered and conditioned, have failed, as experience has shown, to preserve internal democracy or to safeguard the class interests of the workers. Under these circumstances, the Socialists cannot work in the I.N.T.U.C. or the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh.

### *Socialist Party and the Trade Union Movement*

82. The Party, therefore, resolves to foster an independent trade union movement and bring together, in course of time, the trade unions under its influence into a new central organization, which may be called the Congress of Industrial organizations. All those active in the trade union movement will do well to remember that to unionize workers to the largest extent is their

principal aim and when the slogan of the working class unity obstructs the realization of this aim, this false slogan should be combated.

### *The C.I.O. and National Industrial Unions*

83. The C.I.O. will not like the other T.U.C.s in the country, affiliate myriad factory unions. It will mostly affiliate nation-wide unions or federations. The Party must move in the direction of creating national industrial unions with their locals for different factories and trade councils for different localities. Only national industrial unions run by full-time paid organizers can realize the uniformity of wage rates and of conditions of work over the vast country. The C.I.O. and its national unions will guide and fully assist the constituent units in strike as in normal times. Its immediate task is to better the standard of life and conditions of work of the workers in consonance with the new objectives that the war-quickenened social consciousness has thrown up.

### *Political base of the working class movement*

84. The position the industrial workers occupy in the economic life gives them a pivotal position in the struggle for socialism. Without their participation, social transformation cannot be realized. Political democracy can broaden into social democracy only to the extent the workers assume responsibility. The Socialist Party must therefore be rooted in the working class. The Party units in industrial areas must be composed of the best elements in the working class. A two-way relationship must therefore grow up between the Party and the trade unions. Each must support the other and become the warp and woof of the common fabric of socialism.

85. In the European countries different relationships have grown between the trade unions and working class parties. In Great Britain the trade union movement nurtured the Labour Party to maturity. In Imperial Germany the relationship was just the reverse. The political organizations of workers under Lasalle and Liebkneit, from the beginning, dominated the trade union movement. In the Latin countries the political and the functional organizations of the working class often came in conflict and it is no accident that France gave birth to Syndicalism. In Russia, under the totalitarian philosophy of the Bolsheviks, the trade unions are shorn of all independent powers and are mere appendages of the Party in power.

### *Schools of Democracy*

86. In India, where we are striving to realize democratic socialism, the trade unions, together with co-operatives, must become the principal schools of

democracy for the working class. They are the means for training the working class for assuming responsibilities in political and economic spheres. The trade unions and works committees must train the workers in the art of industrial management and organization. The test of a successful union is the ability to control an industry that it has imparted to its members. In socialist economy, it must be remembered, that the trade unions and co-operatives will share the responsibility of the governance and administration of industry.

### *Workers' Education Movement*

87. The Party, in conjunction with trade unions, must develop a Workers' Education Movement that will remove the cultural backwardness of the working class. A demand must be made on the government and the employers to provide facilities to the workers for technical training.

88. The Party must endeavour through its trade unions, labour colleges and cognate organizations to build up a cadre that will be able to shoulder the responsibilities of nationalized industries.

The Party's labour policy is directed towards winning through trade unions, co-operatives, labour colleges and works committees, the total allegiance of the working class.

## CHAPTER VII

### FOREIGN POLICY

89. The world after the war is repeating most of the outward expression in the pre-war period. Europe together with the U.S. holds the attention of the world. The sources of war or peace, progress or reaction, still seem to lie in Europe.

#### *Foreign Policy and the Traditional Rival Blocs*

90. Most men including our countrymen take their opinions from newspapers. These are full of the same old rivalries, the Anglo-Russian or the Russo-American, with sometimes a hint of conflict between England and U.S. thrown in. The issue on which these rivalries express themselves are changing, but events, such as make the world nervous about its fate or sanguine by turn, are still woven around the words that fall from the lips of American or Russian or British statesmen. Even in its stupid aspect of the small countries



of Europe and their petty conflicts outwardly threatening peace, the world before the war is repeating itself.

*Asia hitched to Western Rivalries*

91. The result is that the common man, also in Asia, is made to detect the basic feature of the international situation in Europe and the U.S., and he is led to believe that its most important aspect is the Russo-American rivalry. This belief tends him to conclude as he did before the war that two worlds, one capitalist and the other communist, are poised in conflict with each other. The six years of war when two parts of the world were ranged against each other, not on the basis of their ideology or their social structure but on the basis of their national interests and other factors, seem to have made no difference either to men's beliefs or to the world's manifestations.

*Socialist need for re-examination of  
International Forces*

92. Is this outward vision of the world true? Do the seeds of peace or war, of progress or reaction, lie in the Russo-American rivalry or in any of the inter-European conflicts? Any socialist must ask himself this question, in particular an Indian or an Asian socialist.

93. Indeed, the picture seems to be all too true in its Asian revelations. In the midst of the war, the Big Four on the Allied side included China and the other camp had Japan. The Allied camp has won and the Big Four are three of them in Europe and the fourth in the American Continent. Asia is completely eliminated from the supreme councils of the world and Africa and most countries of America continue to appear to be what they were.

*The shift to colonial-imperial conflict*

94. And yet underneath these outward shadows and the false film of an abstract capitalist-communist conflict is the gigantic shift in the power of continents, the great drive towards national freedom and towards a world whose constituent powers are equal in prosperity. Sometimes the obscuring film bursts and, except that our eyes are too long accustomed to an inadequate vision, this mighty continental shift is there for all to see. From Cairo to Canton, the cry everywhere is "quit". Even those who raise this cry underrate themselves and each other and their eyes are fastened on the doings of others. And yet the keynote of our country is this cry and the great continental shift and the freedom of nations. Not the abstract capitalist-communist conflict but the concrete colonial-imperial conflict is the basic feature of the international situation today.

95. The politics of this continental shift have their firm basis in world economy. The countries of the world yield an abysmally unequal return to every man-hour of labour. Between U.S. and Hindustan, the ratio of returns to man's labour is 20: 1. Barring minor variations, this ratio operates between West Europe and U.S. on the one hand and Hindustan and other retarded economies on the other.

### *Economic Advancement of the Retarded Peoples*

96. It is this economic fact more than any other that influences the entire complex of the world today. The world struggling to be born is essentially one in which man, whether in U.S. or Hindustan, gets a comparatively equal return for his labour, while the world that is, attempts in large part to repress such an outcome. This attempt at repression is foolish, for the precondition of an expansive world economy is expansion of the productive equipment of retarded economies. Until the tools and the system through which retarded peoples produce their wealth are so altered as to bring their production on par with advanced economies, the world will suffer poverty and slumps, rivalries and wars. Such an altering will probably have to be brought about through a new technique.

97. Who wants to expand the production of Hindustan and China and such like countries and is striving for it, who is opposing it or claiming a share in the contracting spoils and who is sitting on the fence? The answer to these questions will largely determine the enduring role of a group in the international field.

### *Class Struggle and the Colonial Struggle*

98. Socialists are wont to describe the world of today as a contradiction between surplus value and wages, between forces of production, in short, as the expression of class struggle. These phrases awaken the anguish of inadequacy. While it may be true to fix upon the class struggle as an impulse of any single economy, world economy as a whole is rocked by the still more powerful struggle of nations. One wishes there were a single phrase that combined these two economic features of the world, the class-struggle on the one hand and the conflict between free productivity and shackled productivity on the other.

99. The colonial-imperial conflict from Cairo to Canton and in the Middle and South American countries is economically and politically of more enduring consequences. Without its resolving, the equipment of retarded economies and therefore world production cannot expand. But men's beliefs, even those of acute sufferers as in Hindustan, and institutional action such as in the U.N.O., lag behind the realities.

*Imperialism and Retarded Economies*

100. The question whether the returns to labour can be made fairly equal in all parts of the world has an economic as also a political aspect. We are not concerned here with its economic practicability. Suffice it to say that this must be done. Its politics, however, are obvious. Without overthrow of the rule of one nation over another, science will continue to be a monopoly. Agriculture and industry in retarded economies will stay deprived of its application.

*Revolts in Asia, Africa and Middle and South America*

101. Also, this overthrow appears unavoidably to be attended by revolts and wars. The mid-war rebellion of Hindustan and disturbances afterwards, the turmoil in Egypt, wars in Indonesia and Indo-China and the crisis in China are examples of how the new world is made to fight against the old. West Europe, unable to expand, is yet blindly afraid of letting go its political grip in the world; U.S., although in part expansive, is in large measure the leader of the world as it is; Soviet Russia, essentially a European power, is plainly after national strength to the point of obscuring it under an international garb.

102. The revolts and wars of today may yet culminate in another world war. But the obscuring film may fuddle men's eyes and the world appear to be divided into two camps, the leaders of either being in Europe and U.S. Against this the world must guard itself.

*Socialism and the Nationalist Revolt*

103. In fact, the only way to avoid a world war or to shorten it when it comes, is to increase continually the political strength of Asia, Africa and Middle and South America, so that the armed might of advanced economies may quail before it. A socialist in these countries must be an assertive nationalist. Indeed, a socialist in U.S. or Europe would do well to fix his eyes on the political strength of these retarded countries. The battle-ground of progress versus reaction has already shifted here, although it may be some years before this fact is universally recognized and made part of man's habitual background.

*Economic and Social Aspects of the Freedom Movements*

104. The movements of freedom from foreign rule everywhere and particularly in East Asia have been more than the effort to overthrow foreign

rule. They have also been economic and social movements directed against the old order, specially the feudal order which allied itself with foreign rule everywhere. The end of imperialism in many of these countries as also the end of militarism in Japan has necessarily meant the emergence of socialist or socialist-dominated governments. Even where this has not already taken place, as in India and China, the orientation of the people and the country's politics is towards socialism and away from capitalism. At the same time, the progress of the peoples towards socialism is not restricted to the working class as in European countries; the exploited classes which have hitherto struggled for freedom and are now struggling for socialism are as much farmers and city dwellers as factory labourers. Such a general advance of the Asian and other peoples to socialism opens out a wholly new and glorious perspective for world socialism.

### *The Third Bloc in the International Sphere*

105. The international idea is today vitiated by the domination of two powerful states, each with its own satellites, seeking to divide the world, its resources and all human relationships into two warring camps, vulgarising the international basis of any world effort. A genuine international order can be attained only by a bloc of nations which stay independent of these two powers. The effort to reinvigorate imperialist influence in the Near West and also in North and South-East Asia threatens the integrity of the new system of sovereign States that is emerging in post-war Asia. In such a conflict of interests, the third camp stoutly supports the sovereignty of those States which are struggling to overthrow alien domination. On the socialist forces of Asia, therefore, rests largely the responsibility of creating such a bloc in the international sphere. The Indian people already laid the foundations of the third camp through their policy and action in the war years.

### *Socialist Party's Role in International Action*

106. The Socialist Party is willing to assume the share of responsibility for achieving genuine international action. The Socialist Party in India desires close contact with the socialist parties in the world. It is determined to strengthen the socialist elements in every country and to resist with all its might the concentrated efforts of international combinations to frustrate the people's assertion of their rights. It welcomes the effort of the British Labour Party to socialize Britain alike as it is on the side of the Indonesian Republic when it is beating back the Dutch assault. The Socialist Party assures its fullest support to such peoples and governments as are battling against attacks to smother freedom or obstruct their progress to socialism.

107. The Inter-Asian Conference which met in India was a good beginning. It had its numerous blemishes. A later conference will perhaps be more representative, have a carefully planned agenda and fix as its pivotal theme the vigorous pursuit of political power and of equal returns to man's labour in all countries of the world.

108. Likewise, the Socialists of India must plan for a world socialist conference, which will divest socialism of many of its bases and accretions that are essentially West European. Democratic socialism as opposed to dictatorial communism of limited application, well aware of its essential task to increase the political strength of retarded peoples as much as to abolish capitalism, may then become a conscious tool of world progress.

### *On Foreign Policy*

109. The foreign policy of India is being formed. We must achieve the most friendly relations with our neighbours Lanka, Burma, Malaya, Viet Nam, Indonesia, Tibet, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, East Africa and others, not only because we can know each other better than we can distant peoples, but also because India has a role to play in building up their political strength and economic prosperity. Our friendship with the Chinese people must become unshakeable.

110. Our relationship with all other countries of the world must be extremely correct and, wherever possible, friendly. With U.S. and Russia the warmth of our relations would depend on the extent that they do not hinder the creation of strong republics of the retarded peoples. We shall have friendly relations with England, after she has ceased obstructing nations in their growth. We hope that the peoples of Japan and Germany shall pursue with us the path of democratic socialism.

### *The New World*

111. So will the new world arise. A world federation is possible in no other way. The two ways currently elevated into the competing principles of world government are those of the U.N.O. and of the "U.S.S.R." Neither can succeed.

### *Defect of U.N.O.*

112. The United Nations Organization cannot basically reduce national sovereignties. Its decisions are taken on the basis of the world as it is with the armed forces and other sources of power in different countries so wildly varying. Such decisions are at best amending expedients. They can check a

malady but cannot remove it. They cannot bring nations under an international sovereignty, for they are powerless to alter materially the differences in economy and armed strength of the sovereignties of different nations.

### *Future of the "U.S.S.R."*

113. The United Soviets of Socialist Republics are speedily contracting into a name for Russia. It cannot be otherwise. Never can a world idea mature into reality, if it is linked up with the fortunes of a single country. Under Communist thinking, the achieving of a world government and the expansion of Russian reach have an interchangeable meaning.

114. The only way to achieve world government is the one here outlined. Disparity between free productivity and colonial productivity must be removed. Returns to man's labour must be made fairly equal, wherever he may live. Not full employment so much as equally yielding employment is the key to a world state. The constituent parts of the world must first reach equality in power and then in prosperity and so shall be set on the road to world government.

### *Socialist Party and International Organization*

115. The Socialist Party will work for an international organization in which peace is not precariously sought at the expense of principles, in which issues are decided on the merits of the case and not on the strength of weapons, secret or other, in which no country can cancel the judgement of mankind, where fear and threats of war do not prevail and where men and women of different countries plan through their chosen delegates of equal authority lives of plenty and joy and dignity, none higher than the other.

## CHAPTER VIII

### POLICY REGARDING THE COMMUNIST PARTY

#### *Communist Party betrays Socialist Unity*

116. In the Faizpur Thesis the Party still believed in socialist unity, and understood that unity chiefly in terms of unity between itself and the Communist Party of India. This policy of socialist unity continued till as late as the Ramgarh Congress, i.e. till March 1940. But at Ramgarh this policy was changed when the National Executive decided to expel the Communists from the Party. That decision was taken after the experience of many years had conclusively shown that the Communists wanted not unity but just the

opposite, that is to say, the disruption and ultimate dissolution of the Socialist Party. The Communists do not consider any party other than their own to be either revolutionary or socialist; accordingly, a policy of unity is to them only a means of infiltration into other parties in order either to capture or destroy them. So there can never be unity with the Communists.

#### *Anti-National Role of the Communist Party*

117. But the war years revealed a yet more fundamental obstacle to unity or co-operation with the Communist Party. These years showed conclusively, what was previously only vaguely felt, that the Communist parties all over the world are completely under the control of the Russian Government. Their policies everywhere are attuned to the policies of that government and, under the ideological cloak of communism, they function everywhere as its permanent and loyal fifth column.

#### *Communist Party is an Extension of Russian Policy*

118. The Communists in this country, as elsewhere, are often described as leftists, but they are neither leftists, nor rightists; they are merely Russian nationalists; and they swing from either extreme to the other with the utmost ease, as dictated by the swings in Russian policy. Whether they support Britain or line up against her; whether they rally round the flag of Pakistan or haul it down; whether they come into or go out of the Congress, they are not being guided by Marxism or by the interests of the Indian working class but by the demands of Russian power politics.

#### *Communist Party and Democratic Socialism*

119. There is a third basic difference between the Socialist Party and the Communist Party. The Socialist Party aims at the establishment of democratic socialism, whereas the objective of the Communist Party is totalitarian communism. The Socialist Party desires to establish a proletarian democracy, a *Kisan Mazdoor Raj*, while the Communists desire to establish the dictatorial rule of their party over the workers and peasants. There can be nothing in common between the two parties working for such divergent aims.

#### *Communist Party Unity is a Strategy of Disruption*

120. The Communist Party has again raised the slogan of unity. This slogan should be understood in the light of the above analysis. The new slogan does not mean a change of heart on the part of the Communist Party. Its

basic policy with regard to all other parties has always been to exploit every situation in order to destroy or discredit them. Sometimes this policy finds expression in an all-out offensive against others and sometimes in a slogan of "unity" or of "united front". But the underlying policy remains always the same.

## CHAPTER IX

### POLICY REGARDING SOVIET RUSSIA

#### *Socialist Party assures friendship with Soviet Union*

121. Denunciation of the Communist Party as a Russian fifth column is represented by the Communists as hostility to Russia herself, and they denounce the Socialist Party in turn as anti-Russian. This is only an example of their dishonest tactics. The Socialist Party declares that it is not only not hostile to the Soviet Union but even its friend. The Party firmly believes that free India, in her own interest, must live on the friendliest possible terms with Russia. While the Party shall always endeavour to promote this friendship, it wishes to make it clear that this friendship must always be on the basis of complete equality and that free India will never brook any interference with her affairs by any country, however friendly.

122. The Party wishes further to make it clear that while it does believe that valuable work has been done in Russia in the sphere of planning and nationalized economy, and while it also believes that it is not for outsiders to meddle in the affairs of Russia, the Party considers it a duty to the socialist movement in this country to draw lessons from the success and failure in Russia.



## **Programme of the Socialist Party<sup>1</sup>**

The Socialist Party presents this programme as a basis for discussion and invites those who are interested in the task of building a socialist India to offer their criticism and suggestion. The present programme is mainly suggestive and concerns only some of the most vital problems of reconstruction. The Party is preparing more detailed plans and studying other fields that have not been dealt with here. We hope soon to be able to place before the country our programme regarding education, health and local self-government.

Jayaprakash Narayan

15th October 1947.

The Socialist Party stands for the establishment in India of a democratic socialist society.

A socialist society is not created in a day. There must be a period of transition from the present to the future form of society.

The Socialist Party believes that, where democracy and civil liberties are in existence, the transition to socialism must be peaceful and through democratic means.

The ultimate form of a socialist society is fairly well known. It is a society in which all are workers—a classless society. It is a society in which human labour is not subject to exploitation in the interest of private profit; in which all wealth is truly national or common wealth; in which there are no unearned incomes and no large income disparities; in which human life and progress are planned and where all live for all. While this ultimate picture is familiar enough, the stages through which a country must pass to reach the ultimate goal are pragmatic and depend on conditions in each country. The determination and planning of these stages are of such vital importance that a mistake made in regard to them might change the entire course of social development and lead to a destination far different from socialism.

Having considered the situation in the country, the Socialist Party presents the following programme for the first stage in India's evolution towards socialism.

<sup>1</sup> Pamphlet published by the Socialist Party of India, Bombay, 1947

## I. POLITICAL

*1. The New Constitution*

In the opinion of the Socialist Party, it is vitally important that the new constitution of India should be ready for promulgation within the next few months. Dominionhood must be ended as soon as the constitution is promulgated. Elections under the new constitution should be held by the middle of 1948, and the Republic established immediately thereafter. To this end, preparation of electoral rolls should be immediately taken in hand.

The new constitution must be a fit instrument of full democracy, i.e. political as well as social democracy.

The new Indian State must be a sovereign, democratic, federal Republic.

The will of the people must be recognized as the source and foundation of the authority of the State.

There must be a single, uniform citizenship.

The State must be secular. All religious communities must be guaranteed equal freedom of conscience and worship.

Equality in all forms should be guaranteed to all citizens without distinction of caste, community, sex or creed. Backward classes and sections of society should nevertheless be assured special facilities for their economic and cultural advancement. Full cultural autonomy should be guaranteed to minorities.

The constitution should also guarantee to all citizens, including those residing in the federated States, fundamental civic and political rights enforceable by the Supreme Court of India.

The property of the entire people should be regarded as the mainstay of the State in the development of the national economy, and private property and private enterprise should be guaranteed only to the extent they are consistent with the progress towards socialism. Private property and private enterprise may be expropriated or socialized, with or without compensation, in accordance with the law, the State being the sole judge of the extent of the compensation when offered.

The constitution should provide, through the creation of statutory bodies such as economic councils and planning commissions, for the reorganization and development of economic life on the basis of social ownership and control of the means of production.

The constitution of the Republic and the constituent units (Provinces as well as States) should be democratic, that is to say, they should provide for responsibility of the executive to the legislature.

All legislatures should be unicameral; and all elections, including to the Federal Legislature, should be on direct, secret and adult suffrage under a system of joint electorates. There should be multi-member constituencies

and voting should be according to the system of cumulative votes, thus providing for minority representation.

The constitution should provide for a strong federal centre.

Yet, the provision for a strong centre should not involve any substantial diminution of the freedom of a unit to push forward its programme of social, cultural and economic advancement in pursuance of the mandate of the people.

Except for the elected legislatures, no other authority in the State should have power to promulgate ordinances and other extraordinary powers of a similar nature.

Recruitment and promotion of persons in public services should be on the basis of merit, except that special consideration should be given in recruitment to backward classes.

The judicial and executive functions should not be combined in the same officer.

There should be a social and economic council at the centre as well as in the units, authorized to plan economic and social measures, investigate and examine economic, social or other schemes or matters referred to it and generally advise the governments on matters requiring special or expert information.

These councils should be constituted on a functional basis and should provide representation among others to scientists, engineers, physicians and surgeons, educationists, political and administrative experts, business, economic and agricultural experts and to trade unions, co-operatives, peasant organizations and other similar bodies.

These councils should replace the present second chamber and supervise the cultural and economic policies through appropriate committees.

## *2. Reform of the System of Administration*

The bureaucratic administrative machine, efficient in its own way for the limited purposes of a police state, is completely outmoded and unsuited to the tasks that would devolve on it in a social service state. It must be remodelled and reconstituted to suit new conditions and serve new social purposes. A new outlook must be generated in the services—the outlook of service and nation-building and the disciplined zeal of an army. Most of the old members of the services, particularly on the higher levels, used to a different mode of thought and conduct, must be replaced by new men with fresher outlooks and inspired by a high social purpose. Entire new services, such as a variety of economic services will have to be created.

Promotion should not be merely by seniority, specially in the top ranks. They may be recruited by special promotion from the ranks or by direct recruitment.

Grave inequality that exists between the emoluments of the highest and lowest public servants must go.

Recruitment to public services should generally be by competition. After recruitment, suitable specialized training should be given to the recruits.

Clean, conscientious public service is one of the essentials of sound democracy. Every effort must, therefore, be made to root out corruption from the public services. This cannot be done unless the public also co-operates. Members of the public are today as much responsible for the rampant corruption as the corrupt public servant. Ultimate purity of national life depends upon the purity of the individual citizen.

While the economic transformation of society proposed in this programme will remove some of the most powerful influences tending to corrupt social life and public administration, it would be necessary for ministers to deal strongly with corruption in the services. It will also be necessary to eliminate extra-constitutional interference by public men with the decisions and activities of the services.

The development of a keen sense of public responsibility would act as a powerful solvent. In order to infuse such a spirit of responsibility and responsiveness to the people among the public services, it is necessary that there should be intimate, democratic contact between them and the people immediately concerned and provision made for the exercise of a certain degree of control over the administrative services by the local self-government authorities or by advisory boards set up for the purpose.

Another method that the Party suggests for checking corruption in the services is to require every public servant to make periodical declaration of his property.

With these general considerations, we turn to more particular suggestions.

The basis of the whole administrative structure should be the village *panchayats* elected by adult suffrage. The *panchayat* should exercise all the functions of administration, including that of law and order, and also function as a unit of self-government and be responsible for village roads, primary education, sanitation, etc. Judicial powers should not be vested in the *panchayats*.

Because of the complexity of the work which will have to be done as well as of the danger of village feuds and communal attitudes interfering with the work, it would be necessary for a period to have servants of the State as secretaries of the *panchayats*.

For the higher units of the administrative system it will be necessary to make a distinction between those administrative offices which deal with maintenance of law and order and other routine matters and those offices

which would be concerned with nation-building activities such as planning, co-operatives, etc. The district officer, as at present, should not have omnibus powers, but should deal with the limited sphere of law and order and collection of revenue. Other officers of equal authority in their spheres should be created to look after development activities. These new officers, as well as the others, should be assisted by advisory boards nominated by interests concerned with each department. These boards should have mainly ex-post-facto powers but should also advise the officers concerned about matters of policy. Rules should be made for dealing with cases where differences of opinion may arise. In such cases the matter may ultimately be sent to the relevant committee of the legislature, in the meanwhile the officer acting according to his own discretion.

At the provincial level, heads of departments must likewise be assisted by advisory boards composed of representatives of interests concerned. Each minister, too, should have a committee of the legislature to assist and advise him in his work. These committees should have the power to investigate any matter falling within their purview and of calling in any relevant evidence, as also the power to formulate and recommend policies.

In order that these advisory boards from the district upwards may be properly constituted, it should be the duty of Government to help in the organization of functional interests.

This new system of administration should be fitted in with self-governing local bodies, such as local, taluk and district boards. The administration should provide the expert and technical guidance and administrative efficiency and the local bodies the people's initiative, the local point of view, and the democratic sanctions.

The problem of local self-government requires fuller examination, and an attempt will be made to present a clearer picture at a later stage.

### *3. Reform of the Law and Legal Procedure*

The law in our country is well known for its intricacy and complicated nature. It must be simplified.

The law, further, is written in a foreign language which a vast majority of the people does not understand. This leaves them ignorant of the law and places them unduly at the mercy of professional lawyers. The most urgent need, therefore, is for the law to be translated into the Indian languages.

More than the law, it is the administration of law that needs simplification. Courts of law should go nearer to the people; and elaborate and dilatory processes should be eliminated.

The Party suggests the following judicial system in this behalf:

(A) CIVIL

(i) Petty claims up to a certain sum should be disposed of by elected village courts. There should be no appeal except on the ground that the decision was perverse or was induced by corrupt motives.

(ii) Bigger claims should be disposed of by *ad hoc* judicial *panchayats* selected by the parties out of a panel maintained by the Judicial Department. The *panchayat* may, if they feel necessary, invite a trained judge to sit with them or seek his advice on a point of law. There will be no appeal except on the ground of perversity, corruption or failure of justice.

(iii) Specialized cases involving intricate problems of law will be tried by a trained judge sitting with assessors.

In courts (i) and (ii) above lawyers will not be allowed.

(B) CRIMINAL

(i) Elected village courts should try petty crimes such as insult, hurt, abuse and trespass.

(ii) More serious crimes should be tried by *ad hoc* individual *panchayats* assisted by a trained judge if necessary. Fact-finding and punitive functions must be separated.

(iii) Investigation should not be entrusted to the village council; the danger is that the councillors may stifle investigations or turn them into improper channels in cases in which they are interested. As in Russia, there should be a separate investigating officer who should be a judicial officer and not a police officer. This should apply to major offences only.

(C) SPECIALIZED COURTS

These should be based on the same principle as above, namely of associating the public with the administration of justice, e.g. juvenile courts to deal with juvenile delinquents to be composed of teachers, doctors and respectable citizens, male and female; divorce courts to be composed of male and female citizens and doctors.

Lawyers should not be allowed in these courts.

(D) COURTS OF APPEAL

The subordinate courts should have power to refer questions of law for final decision to these.

*(e) The Legal Profession*

The legal profession needs to be drastically reorganized. The Party suggests organization of a collegium of lawyers, as in Russia. The collegium would admit lawyers after education and allot them work according to ability and also fix their remuneration.

## II. ECONOMIC

*General Considerations*

Any economic programme prepared now must above all determine the course of development of our national economy. If the ultimate objective is socialism, steps must be taken now to start the nation on the road to that goal.

The present policies of the Congress Governments have no direction or aim; and they can lead to no other result but a virtual perpetuation of *status quo*. The existing economy is based on private enterprise, that is, based on private profit and exploitation of labour. It should be obvious that perpetuation of this economy cannot ever lead to socialism.

To make a start towards socialism, the present economy must be brought under social control and subordinated to an overall plan of development; certain sectors of it must be socialized immediately; investments must be rigidly controlled and directed by the State; taxation must tone down vast income-disparities; such property relationships as zamindari must be abolished forthwith and a living wage, a decent shelter, must be guaranteed to the worker.

These measures would fairly set the country on the road to socialism. But they do not exhaust the economic policies that are called for today.

Next in importance to the direction of economic progress, but not in isolation from it, is the crying need today of raising production, i.e. firstly of utilizing present equipment and man-power to the best advantage, and, secondly of further industrial and agricultural development.

Of immediate and vital importance are such problems as of shortage of food, cloth and housing; the criteria and mechanism of controls and their maladjustment resulting in black markets also raise urgent issues.

And last, though not the least, is the human problem. The social state must evoke in the individual citizen a new consciousness of social cohesiveness. The individual must respond to new incentive and assume larger responsibilities.

With these general remarks we turn to a more detailed statement of our economic policy.

*I. Industry*

## (A) PLANNING

The first need is to have an economic plan in which diverse aspects of economic activity are viewed as an integrated whole. A planned co-ordination of resources can lead a community to levels of economic and cultural advancement almost unpredictable in terms of the routine development under free enterprise.

The allocation of economic resources and manpower at present pursue the dictates of profitability. This method pays scant regard to the essential needs of the economy, which are starved at the expense of unessential activity with a higher margin of profitability. Unless our resources and manpower are directed on a central criterion of stepping up per capita productivity, irrespective of the margin of profit in each individual concern, the economy as a whole becomes stunted and unbalanced. Certain investments yield a poor return by themselves but their total contribution to general productivity of a region is very considerable. Such, for instance, are schemes for improving the terrain of the soil, afforestation and river regulation. Central planning can facilitate such a shift in the current investments.

While planning commissions and boards at central and provincial levels will have to be created, unless the whole community participates in the work of planning, it cannot become a co-operative venture and cannot evoke that popular enthusiasm, without which no plan can succeed. Every village and every industrial unit must participate in this great undertaking.

In the first stage of socialist reconstruction, our economy is bound to be a mixed economy, that is, it would have sectors both of socialized and private economy. But to be effective, planning must cover the economy as a whole in the sense that even private industry will be controlled and regulated to fit into the common pattern of economic advancement.

## (B) SOCIALIZATION

The Socialist Party advocates immediate or early nationalization of the coal and mica mines, iron ore and bauxite and other mines, of iron, steel and other large metallurgical industries, of all defence industries and aircraft and ship-building, and of power. These are basic industries and their nationalization is essential for a socialist development.

The Party further advocates nationalization of the textile mill industry, because this industry supplies one of the primary needs of the people.

The railways are already almost wholly nationalized. The Party advocates nationalization or municipalization of all power transport.

For the administration of the nationalized and socialized industries, national,



provincial or local statutory boards should be set up for each industry, representing the State, the consumers and the workers, including the technicians.

#### (C) CONTROLLED INDUSTRY

Other industries should be brought under the control of the State. The control should be exercised in the following ways:

- (i) a system of licensing of industries should be introduced with regard to location and size;
- (ii) control of capital issues;
- (iii) control of building materials;
- (iv) control of motive power;
- (v) compulsory regulations with regard to wages and labour conditions;
- (vi) control of remuneration of management and of dividend;
- (vii) compulsory State audit on the basis of a model balance sheet;
- (viii) control of prices of raw materials and finished goods as also of qualities and quantities of the latter.

Our country is desperately poor. Though there is an acute shortage of foodgrains, the rate at which a man-hour of agricultural labour exchanges for a man-hour of non-agricultural labour is highly unjust and unfair.

The whole problem of incentives to production will have to be viewed in this perspective of the general level of earnings and incomes. Profits of industry could not under such conditions be allowed to rise beyond the highest salaries paid by the State.

#### (D) NEW INDUSTRIES

For any programme of industrialization, the State must fix priorities, i.e. must single out those industries which have to be developed first and those that must come later. It is not possible for us in India to concentrate on heavy and basic industries to the exclusion of medium and consumption goods industries, because the re-adjustments of ownership and the size of holdings of land will displace large numbers of men and women for whom suitable employment will have to be provided mainly in the rural areas.

All key industries must be owned and managed by the State—national or provincial.

Of the other industries some should be developed by public corporations and co-operative bodies.

Some others may be developed by the State in partnership with private enterprise.

Other industries might be allowed to be developed by private enterprise, subject to public controls indicated above.

In order to be able to prepare a programme for industrial development, the State must immediately undertake a nationwide economic census of national resources, capital equipment, present production, consumption needs, occupational distribution, national income, etc.

## 2. *Labour*

If a beginning is to be made towards socialism, the place of labour in industry and society at large must receive special attention. Dignity of labour must be accepted in all walks of society and the master and employee relationship must undergo a change, placing the labourers on a basis of equality with the employer—State or private. The workers must be regarded as equal partners in a common undertaking. In all nationalized and socialized industries, workers' representatives should have a share in the government of industry. Such rights however must be forfeited wherever the collective social sense of the workers does not instill a new sense of obligation and responsibility to the quality and output of the industry. Only when the workers act as an adult unit of production can such rights be maintained and extended. In private sectors of industry, works committees must be established giving the representatives of the workers a share in the running of the industry on the same conditions stated above.

The first charge on the profit of industry, private or public, must be the primary requirements of the worker, viz., a living wage and adequate housing. With the development of production, provision of social amenities for the workers and their family, must form a primary charge on industry.

In the sphere of nationalized and socialized industry, the whole concept of remuneration of labour must change. In a regime of private enterprise, wages are a necessary *charge* on production, and the tendency always is to reduce them as much as possible so that profits may be as large as possible. In nationalized industry, both the concepts of wages and profits must change; and the remuneration of labour must become a means of determining the *share* of the worker in the total output. Here the tendency should be to raise remuneration as production rises consistent with the needs of the industry and of national economy. The concept of profit likewise must change in nationalized industry. It no longer is a source of private income, but should become a means of determining what share of the total output should be ploughed back into the industry and what spent on national development.

### *3. Banking and Trade*

The Party advocates nationalization of all banking and insurance.

Foreign trade should be a monopoly of the State, but the State should exercise control over internal trade through price control and rationing.

### *4. Taxation*

Public finance should be reorganized as functional finance. The essential idea of functional finance is very simple. It is that the financial activities of the Government should not be judged by any traditional canons of fiscal propriety but by considering the effects of each act and deciding if these effects are desired or not.

The entire tax system needs to be critically re-examined further in terms of the incidence of each tax. Certain taxes have become highly repressive with the passage of years. Certain types of economic activity escapes contributing its just share of the tax burden. Certain forms of functionless ownership actually pays a far lesser share than those who are actively advancing the productive effort. It is necessary to divide incomes into two clear categories, those unearned incomes which are a tribute enacted by ownership over the national resources and those which arise from direct or indirect contributions to production. The rate and method of taxing these two categories need to be precisely defined and our social outlook must find its reflection in the system of taxation.

It is desirable to require an annual statement of income and total possessions. War profits must be taxed out of existence. A tax on capital gains, death duties and even capital levy are the obvious methods, for using the tax system as an instrument of social policy.

### *5. Black Markets*

The Party advocates vigorous measures to fight black markets. These measures are punitive as well as economic.

The punitive measures hitherto taken are inadequate. In the opinion of the Party, punishment to be effective should extend to confiscation of the property of the black-marketeer and forfeiture of his civic rights.

The Party proposes the following economic measures to fight black-marketing.

In the use of manufactured articles that are rationed, such as cloth, the productive capacity of each factory should be ascertained by Government experts, helped by labour representatives. After that each factory should be assigned a fixed quota of goods to be produced for the Government. The

Government should distribute the goods so obtained to the consumers through controlled price shops and consumers co-operatives, the membership of which should be restricted to families below a given income level.

Each factory may be allowed to produce in excess of the quota fixed and to sell it in the "free", i.e. uncontrolled market.

## 6. Agriculture

Employing nearly three-fourths of our manpower and comprising over two-thirds of our primary resources, agriculture is the pivot of our economic life. It has, however, received scant attention from the previous Government as well as from the industrial planners of the capitalist variety. It is no exaggeration to say that a full and balanced development of our economy would not be possible without basic changes in rural economy. The direction of the changes and the precise immediate tasks must first be precisely defined.

In this scheme the immediate objects of the Party are:

- (a) An increase of direct State investment, with a view to expand the acreage under cultivation, and an increase of the per capita productivity of land labour. The rate at which each man-hour of labour on land exchanges for a man-hour of non-agricultural labour must be examined, with a view to put agricultural production on a solvent basis.
- (b) Drastic changes in the system of land ownership, with a view to create normal holdings suitable for each agent, which will be economically units capable of scientific cultivation.
- (c) The creation of new economic organizations such as co-operative and multi-purpose societies, grain banks and medium-scale industries, localized in rural areas to absorb the surplus labour force.
- (d) The landlord in his many varieties, the moneylender and the trader—these are the three main agencies which exploit agriculturists today. Therefore, in order to give the agriculturist a new deal, landlordism of all kinds must be abolished. The land should belong to the State, and between the State and the tiller of the soil there should be no functionless, rent-receiving interests. At present there are many such intermediary interests.

Compulsory consolidation for creating economic holdings is also necessary.

An essential corollary of the above forms would be that the normal size of holdings would have to be fixed according to the quality of the land and as to whether it is dry or wet. This will involve a certain amount of re-distribution.

If the village economy is to be free from maladjustment and economic

exploitation, agricultural labour too must have a new deal. For each agricultural zone, a minimum standard of wages should be determined.

Such an effort however demands the measurement of the total man-hour labour during each season and its distribution during the year. There is a great deal of concealed under-employment which will be laid bare. This will have to be absorbed through suitable medium-scale industries located in the vicinity. The problem of the exploitation of the agriculturist by the trader and the moneylender is dealt with.

#### RURAL FINANCE

Agriculture has never received the same type of attention as commerce and industry. The present methods of rural finance are uneconomic as well as unfair to the cultivator. The creation of economic holdings and the ending of fragmentation by law would open new avenues for the investor in land improvement as well as for organizing the financing of seasonal operations. Crop insurance can and must further stabilize the new holdings. For purposes of current finance, a suitable instrument would be the *Samagra Grama Sahayak Samiti* (a multi-purpose society) and a grain bank. Law should require every cultivator in the village to join this *Samiti*. This *Samiti* should express the corporate life of the village; and the economic activities of the cultivators would be taken up by the *Samiti*. The supply of seasonal credit, selected and graded seeds, improved implements, better strains of cattle and the marketing of rural produce, would all be undertaken not individually but through a multi-purpose society. There should be similarly a consumers co-operative retail shop.

Over and above these seasonal operations, rural finance must be available for improvements of land and terrain, drainage, afforestation, electrification, organization of medium-scale industries and the undertaking of minor irrigation works and roads. These activities would be sponsored for a region by the district agency of the provincial government in co-operation with the village societies. Here finance will come from without, labour force from within, on a previously determined basis. The development of these district activities with the help of the village will create fresh employment and helps absorbing the displaced labour force.

There are, however, two factors which will work against the smooth implementation of such a plan:

(1) Compulsory consolidation will restrict the ownership rights of sub-marginal landholders, some of whom may find themselves displaced or reduced to the status of land labourers. While as a land labourer he would, under the new conditions, be definitely better off than the old landholder of

fragmented and insufficient strip of land, his social status in the village would suffer. This class is not inconsiderable and it would put up a resistance to the new order which must not be underrated. This fact must be borne in mind while working out the projects of the *Samagra Gram Sahayak Samiti*.

(2) The wide disparity of earnings for each man-hour output on the land in comparison to non-agricultural output per man-hour has been referred to above. This has led to certain serious consequences in the rural economy. Men of initiative, ambition and ability have tended to desert the village and to seek their fortune in urban employment. Certain less adventurous types stuck on to land. The village remains secluded in its semi-static and depressed atmosphere. Lack of initiative among the village people is also a serious handicap. This has made the villagers, victims of certain anti-social elements who exercise a semi-feudal domination over the corporate life of rural communities. To restrict and expel the activities of these factional, anti-social village bosses and to instil greater initiative, drive and ability among the villages are tasks which must be fulfilled by a special effort. Until they are accomplished, the economic as well as the political stream of rural existence is bound to remain sluggish and muddled. For these reasons, in the initial stages of this plan, initiative must rest with the district authority. In order to accelerate the pace of progress, it would be useful to mobilize advance brigades recruited from selected elements of the rural population. Six months' training for such rural brigades would help to avoid the liabilities of requisite manpower shortage and it would also step up efficient and effective team work. Normally, a raw village lad can become a fairly trained infantry man within six weeks of strenuous training. A similar pattern for the training of an army of rural reconstruction with different implements and tools would alone solve the problem of requisite local response to a dynamic impulse of change in the rural economy. For this reason, in the first phase initiative would belong to the district and would shift as rural brigades come into their own in village after village. Thus the Party puts forth a perspective which can best be expressed in the modern military term "Combined Operations".

Such a plan can however be fitted into larger schemes of regional planning on the model of the T.V.A. However, unless there is such a many-sided simultaneous approach, the rural economy would not secure its rightful place in our national life. The Socialist Party advocates that these rural problems should receive the primary attention of every national reconstruction plan, for what we are out to achieve is the creation of a new type of villager as well as a new-model village.

### *7. Subsidiary Rural and Small Industries*

The measures and policies described above would go a long way towards the resuscitation and material enrichment of agricultural life. But they would not be enough in themselves. It would also be necessary to revive and develop subsidiary rural and small industries. A great deal of local study is necessary at the same time for planning this development, but the broad principles may be stated.

As far as possible all such industries should be organized into industrial co-operatives.

Every effort should be made by encouragement and research to improve technique and output.

Those industries should be particularly selected for encouragement, the technique used in which is not far removed from machine technique in large-scale production.

**Draft Constitution of Indian Republic by the Socialist Party<sup>1</sup>**

## FOREWORD

The Constituent Assembly has been at work for over a year now, and its labours will soon reach their end. But, strange though it may seem, its work has so far failed to enthuse the country or create adequate interest. Its deliberations have been dominated by cool and sedate lawyers who give no evidence that they comprehend the significance of the troubled birth of a nation. There have been no passionate controversies raised in the Assembly, nor have we witnessed there the din and dust of any stubborn fight of interests and ideologies; nor even the flash and spark of a collision of personalities. Thus, the Assembly has carried on its hum drum work for a year, inspired not by the revolutionary mood and aspiration of the people but by the natural conservatism and timidity of worthy *diwans* and legal luminaries.

The Indian Constitution is not likely to be, unless drastically amended, a fit instrument of full political and social democracy. The parts of the Constitution so far prepared by the Assembly confirm this fear.

Here in this Draft Constitution prepared and published by the Socialist Party is suggested the type of fundamental law that Free India should have. In the Review the defects of the law as being drafted in the Assembly have been brought out and the salient points of the suggested constitution have been given.

The Socialist Party had intended to publish this volume much earlier, but it was not possible to avoid the delay. I hope, however, that even now when the final draft of the constitution has yet to be discussed in the Assembly, this publication will be of some value. Some time ago, a short statement on this subject was issued by the National Executive of the Party and the Party's programme, recently published, also briefly deals with the fundamental principles of the constitution. In the present volume the subject has been dealt with more fully.

It remains for me to acknowledge the help that Professor Mukut Behari Lal, Head of the Department of Political Science, Banaras Hindu University, has rendered in the preparation of this volume. It was entirely due to his labours, and the keen interest he took in it, that this work has been possible; and I have pleasure in expressing the Party's gratitude for the time and thought he gave to it.



**Draft Constitution of Indian Republic by Socialist Party  
18 December 1947<sup>1</sup>**

PART I

REVIEW

CHAPTER I

THE STATE

The Constituent Assembly of India has no doubt done much good work. Many of its propositions are based on sound democratic principles and deserve full support.

*Sovereignty of the People*

It has rightly maintained in the preamble that the constitution is decreed by the people through their representatives. But it would have been better if it had also positively asserted through a substantive proposition in the constitution that "the will of the people is the source and the foundation of the authority of the state", as has been done in many constitutions of the world. This is specially necessary in India because of the pretension of the rulers of the Indian States with respect to sovereignty.

*Sovereign Democratic Republic*

The Constituent Assembly has declared the Indian federation to be a sovereign independent Republic. It would have been better if the word "democratic" had been substituted for "independent". The sovereign republic is always independent but need not be democratic. Republics of oligarchical and dictatorial character are not unknown to the world. But we surely wish our Republic to be democratic.

*Complete Independence*

It is to be regretted that the Constituent Assembly has not so far resolved that India's membership of the British Commonwealth will terminate at the commencement of the new constitution. Dominionhood can only be tolerated during the transitory period. It cannot be allowed to be a permanent feature of our political life. The Congress is pledged to complete independence which was always understood in the sense of the severance of the British connection and was so specified in the Congress pledge taken on

<sup>1</sup> Book published by the Socialist Party of India, Bombay, 1948 (Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Smarak Trust).

Independence Day. It would be a desertion of our proclaimed ideal, if we allowed ourselves to be cajoled and humoured by British Statesmen or to be guided by the attitude of Pakistan.

It is not possible for us to interlink our foreign policy with British diplomacy. We are determined to lend our full diplomatic support to the oppressed peoples of Asia in the cause of their freedom and work for the democratic organization of peace. Can this be expected of Great Britain when even the British Labour Party failed to lend its support to Indonesia? The Irish Free State could be indifferent and sullen and even neutral during the last war, because De Valera, its prime minister, had all along opposed its membership of the Commonwealth. But if India chooses to be a member of the British Commonwealth voluntarily, how can it be passive and indifferent towards the problems of the Commonwealth? Like Canada and Australia, India shall willingly and voluntarily have to share with Great Britain the responsibilities of the defence of the British Commonwealth. It cannot then be free from entanglements which may make it impossible for India to remain neutral in the next world war. It may be said that India needs the protection of the British Navy which is possible if it is a member of the British Commonwealth. But to rely on the British Navy and defence forces will hardly be wise. During the last war the British could with difficulty spare two battleships for Singapore. But as no aircraft carriers could be spared to accompany them, they were sunk without much difficulty by the Japs. There is no reason to believe that Britain will be in a position to help us more in future. Its economic conditions do not warrant us to cherish such hopes. India's membership of the Commonwealth may than easily turn out to be a political liability. Nor will it be wise to link Indian economy with the economic system of the Commonwealth. India has all along been opposed to the policy of Imperial preferences and it is doubtful if it will be proper for India to belong to the Sterling Bloc. Nor can it be said that Indians are better treated by the members of the Commonwealth than by other nations of the world. Thus, India may have reason to forget the past and develop amicable contacts with Great Britain, but will not be justified in remaining a member of the British Commonwealth.

The constitution must positively declare:

"India's membership of the British Commonwealth shall terminate at the commencement of the new constitution."

### *Secular State*

The state is an association of territorially demarcated community.<sup>2</sup> It is "essentially territorial in nature"<sup>3</sup> and is distinguished from the old tribal

<sup>2</sup> Mac Iver, *The Modern State*, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> H J Laski, *Grammar of Politics*, London, 1938, p. 69.

organization by "the grouping of its members on a *territorial basis*".<sup>4</sup> It comprehends within its fold all persons permanently domiciled in a territory and cannot justifiably be identified exclusively with any particular community. Religion has no relevance in the organization of the state. In middle ages the society was dominated by religion and so the state assumed theocratic character in some countries. The state was, thus, made subservient to the church and heretics were made to suffer inquisitions and persecutions. But the religious bond failed to stop internicine feudal wars, while crusades added to human misery. In the beginning of the modern age religious uniformity was regarded as essential for political and national unity. The idea forced nations to suffer civil wars and massacres and had ultimately to be discarded as unsound and dangerous. The political life is being increasingly differentiated from religion and has assumed secular character. Today in some European countries, like Great Britain, the state church is no doubt allowed to exist but mainly because it has ceased to count in matters of the state. Religious political parties are also to be found in some European Countries, but their role has invariably been reactionary in character. Though in the past Indian society was largely dominated by religion, the Indian state remained largely secular in character. The state was recognized by *vedas* to be composed of persons of "different faiths and languages",<sup>5</sup> and neither religious nor linguistic uniformity was ever insisted upon. Harmony and not uniformity has been our social ideal. Indian politics has not been free from religious influences, favouritism and prejudices. But all this not only vitiated our political life but also endangered peace and harmony. What we need most are the recognition of the territorial character of the state and complete differentiation of politics from religion. Even Gandhiji, essentially a man of religion, has begun to insist on the secular character of the state. Secularization of politics is urgently needed and must be declared as our ideal.

The constitution must, therefore, lay down that "the state is secular".

### *Currency, Customs and Economic Zone*

A federal union has always been an economic union. Its territories have always formed a customs and currency zone. No federation has ever been formed merely for the purposes of defence, foreign affairs and communications. The freedom of trade and commerce within the federation is an essential feature of federal polity. Customs barriers and federal unity are contradiction in terms. The existence of free ports is repugnant to federal

<sup>4</sup> F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, And the State*, Moscow, 1948, Chap. IX.

<sup>5</sup> Atharv Veda: Prithwi Sukta.

link. Tariff policy is an integral part of foreign policy. The two cannot be separated and assigned to two independent authorities. Federal authority has invariably been assigned jurisdiction over customs, currency and inter-unit trade and commerce. This must also be done in India. States cannot be federated with the Republic of India on any other terms. The economic unity of India cannot be allowed to be broken up by the States. They must be prepared to assign to the federation necessary economic functions and form part of the common economic, customs and currency zone. Their own interests can also be best served thereby. Most of the States being landlocked have to carry on trade with foreign lands through ports of other units, and can, therefore, have no effective voice in the tariff policy unless customs is a federal subject. The development of ports of Indian States also requires a common tariff policy and the abolition of all customs barriers between States and provinces. Common currency will also be to the obvious advantage of States, which are too small to form separate currency units. The constitution should, therefore, declare that "the territories of the Republic shall form a common economic, currency and customs zone". Such a provision formed part of the constitution of Austria, passed in 1920.

### *Towards Unity*

We have achieved our freedom but not yet realized political unity. Certain provinces, States and territories have not yet joined the Indian Union. It should be the primary duty of the federal authority to promote the political unity of India through democratic and peaceful means. Complete unity of the whole of India may not be realized soon. Partial unity may be possible earlier. So it may be laid down in the constitution that "territories which do not form part of the Republic may by treaty or agreement be included within its currency, economic and customs zone or its administrative jurisdiction". This partial unity may turn out to be a precursor of complete unity of federal character. But independent of this consideration partial economic or administrative unity is to be welcomed for its own inherent advantages.

### *Indian States*

It is obvious that a large majority of the States in India are too small to function as administrative units. Neither area and population, nor financial resources entitle them to be retained even as a district or a taluka for administrative purposes. More than fifty per cent of these States have an area of less than 30 sq. miles, population of less than 5 thousands and annual financial income of less than a lakh of rupees. Indeed, eighty per cent of the

States have a population of less than a lakh, area of less than 500 sq. miles and annual financial income of less than 10 lakhs of rupees. Free India cannot allow these States to enjoy the freedom of stagnation and misery just to enable their rulers to pose as sovereigns. For the sake of the progress of their peoples these States will have to forego the honour of being distinct political entities and their territories will have to be either annexed to adjoining districts or welded together to form suitable administrative zones or districts. The question is too complicated to be solved by a declaration in the constitution about the abolition of their distinct political entities. The constitution should, therefore, provide for the appointment of a commission to enquire into and report on ways and means and authorize the federal legislature to deal with the problem on the basis of the report.

Most of the remaining States may well serve as administrative units, but cannot shoulder the responsibilities of provincial administration. They do not deserve to be treated on par with the provinces as constituent units of the federation. Wherever possible they should be grouped into sub-federations, which shall serve as constituent units of the federal Republic of India. There is a general demand for the establishment of unions in Rajputana, Central India, as well as Gujarat-Kathiawar. But public opinion has not sufficiently crystallized about the extent of the authority and territorial jurisdiction of these unions.

The constitution should, therefore, provide:

The federal authority shall promote the formation of sub-unions in Rajputana, Malwa-Bundelkhand and Kathiawar-Gujarat. It shall also encourage States of medium size outside the zones of the aforesaid unions to attach themselves to the provincial units with which they are geographically connected.

The constitution of these unions should be modelled on the principles of the constitution of the Indian Republic. It should be settled by mutual agreement and endorsed by a federal law. The people of the federated States attached to a provincial unit should have the power to return representatives on the legislature of the province concerned and such representatives should have the right to take part in the deliberations of the legislatures and to look after the administration of such matters and departments as are ceded to the provincial units by the federated States. The Union of federated States should be in charge of the Public Service Commission, the Audit Department, the High Court and such other subjects placed by the new constitution under the exclusive legislative jurisdiction of the unit as may be assigned to the union by agreement among the States concerned and endorsed by a federal law. The union should also have power of concurrent legislation over all subjects placed by the federal constitution under the concurrent legislative jurisdiction of the federation and the units.

## CHAPTER II

## CITIZENSHIP

The federal state is a single body politic. It has common citizenship. The Constituent Assembly has, therefore, wisely decided to assign to the federal legislature exclusive jurisdiction over matters regarding citizenship and naturalization. To indicate clearly uniformity of citizenship, it may be specified in the constitution, as was done in some other federal constitutions, that "the Republic shall have a single uniform citizenship with common and equal rights, privileges and responsibilities".

The Constituent Assembly has decided that "at the date of the commencement of the constitution

Every person domiciled in the territory subject to the jurisdiction of the Republic

- (a) who has been ordinarily resident in those territories for not less than five years immediately preceding that, or
- (b) who, or whose parents, or either of whose parents was or were born in India,

shall be a citizen of the Republic, provided that any such person being a citizen of any other state may, in accordance with federal law, elect not to accept the citizenship hereby conferred."

Indians who have recently migrated from Pakistan to the territories of the Indian Union are not at all satisfied with this definition of the citizenship of the Indian Union. They resent being designated as refugees and claim to be equal citizens of the Indian Union, specially because partition was imposed on them against their will. Their contention deserves a careful consideration. It will not be wise to keep them as refugees and aliens in their motherland on the ground that before partition they resided in such territories in India as today form part of the Dominion of Pakistan. To facilitate their rehabilitation and assimilation it is necessary to recognize them as citizens of the Indian Republic, provided that they have been ordinarily resident for not less than five years in any part of the Indian peninsula. Due provision will have to be made to exclude from Indian citizenship persons who have voluntarily migrated or opted out to Pakistan, irrespective of their intimation to the Indian Government that they did not choose to accept the citizenship of the Indian Republic. It will not be possible or advisable for the federal government of the Indian Republic to shoulder any responsibility for the protection or conduct of millions of persons who have migrated to Pakistan. Of course, if any of them, who was forced to leave his home because of communal

disturbances, intimates his wish to retain his citizenship of the Indian Republic and comes back to his home in the Indian Republic, he should be allowed his citizenship.

It should, therefore, be laid down in the constitution that

- (A) At the commencement of the constitution every person domiciled in the territory subject to the jurisdiction of the Republic,
  - (a) who has been ordinarily resident in those territories for not less than five years immediately preceding the date, or
  - (b) who, or whose parents, or either of whose parents was or were born in India,  
shall be a citizen of the Republic unless he (i) is a citizen of another state or (ii) has migrated to a territory outside the jurisdiction of the Republic.
- (B) Any Person
  - (a) who is excluded from citizenship under sub-section A (i) and A (ii), or
  - (b) who or whose parents or either of whose parents was or were born in India and who was domiciled in a territory outside the jurisdiction of the Republic but migrated to a territory within the jurisdiction of the Republic for permanent residence before the commencement of the constitution, shall acquire the citizenship of the Republic, provided he, or in case he is a minor his guardian on his behalf, intimates to the federal government in the manner prescribed by law that he wishes to be a citizen of the Republic and to reside permanently in a territory within the jurisdiction of the Republic.
- (C) Every person, who or whose ancestors was or were born in India, and who is domiciled outside Indian peninsula and has not acquired citizenship of another state, shall be a citizen of the Republic.

### *Citizens' Obligations*

Citizenship confers rights and imposes obligations. Rights and obligations go together. A citizen cannot just claim protection of the state and enjoyment of other civic and political rights. He will also have to respect the rights of others and discharge his obligations to the state and community to which he belongs and whose protection he enjoys. The constitution must guarantee to citizens the enjoyment of fundamental rights. But it should also indicate his obligations to the state and impose such limitations on his rights as are necessary for the protection and promotion of vital social interests.

With regard to citizens' obligations to the state, the constitution should prescribe as follows:

"Allegiance to the Republic shall be the supreme duty of a citizen.

"Every citizen shall obey the law, serve the interest of national unity,

defend the country and carry the national burden in proportion to his means according to the provisions of law."

To preserve national unity, which is badly threatened by communal bitterness and conflicts, it is also necessary to lay down in the constitution that

"Any advocacy of communal, racial or national exclusiveness or hatred or contempt shall be an offence."

### CHAPTER III

#### GENERAL FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

The Constituent Assembly has rightly decided to guarantee to citizens fundamental rights with respect to freedom of speech, association and assembly; inviolability of person, dwelling and correspondence; equality of civic and political rights irrespective of caste, creed, community and sex; and religious and cultural autonomy to all citizens and communities. It has also assured to them equality before law, proper observance of due legal process, the enforcement of fundamental rights by law courts, specially the Supreme Court of India; and required the federal legislature to prescribe punishment for those acts which are declared to be offences by constitutional provisions regarding fundamental rights.

The Constituent Assembly has, however, failed to assure to the citizens the right to approach law courts, without previous sanction of any executive authority, for the purpose of demanding redress against illegal acts done to them by the government, local self-governing bodies or their agents in official capacity. Due provision for it deserves to be made in the chapter pertaining to fundamental rights.

The constitution must, therefore, lay down:

Every citizen has the right directly and without any one's approval to bring complaint to a law court against official persons or the government or self-governing bodies for illegal acts which they may commit against him in their official capacity. Special provisions may be prescribed for ministers, judges and soldiers under colours.

For the preservation of fundamental rights it is also necessary to lay down in the constitution that

The establishment of extraordinary tribunals shall not be permitted save only such military tribunals as may be authorised by law for dealing with military offences against military law, and

The jurisdiction of military tribunals shall not be extended to or exercised over the civil population except in times of war or armed rebellion when ordinary law courts cannot function.



*Cultural and Educational Rights*

The Constituent Assembly rightly guarantees protection to minorities in every unit in respect of their language, script and culture and prohibits the enactment of such laws as may operate oppressively in this matter. It also rightly prohibits discrimination against any minority—whether based on religion, community or language—in regard to the admission into state educational institutions.

It prohibits compulsory religious instruction to all students in state aided schools and the students of minorities in state educational institutions. There does not seem to be any reason why students of majority community should be compelled to attend religious instruction in state educational institutions. Indeed, the state being secular should provide secular education and should not shoulder the responsibility of religious education of a religious majority or minority.

It must, then, definitely be laid down that

“No religious education shall be imparted in state educational institutions.”

Of course, it shall be the duty of the state to impart moral instruction to students. But such education must be secular and social in character. It should neither be based on religious convictions of any particular community nor confined to students of a particular class or community. Moral education will have to be universal and humanistic in character and broad based on social ideals and civic needs with a view to promoting the development of a social personality.

It must be laid down in the constitution that

“In all educational and cultural institutions efforts shall be made to promote moral integrity, civic sentiments and sense of social responsibility.”

The Constituent Assembly lays down that all minorities whether based on religion, community or language shall be free in any unit to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. The provision is very wide and needs to be redrafted. The Indian nation is divided into various castes and sections on all conceivable grounds and each caste or section claims to be a communal entity. Educational institutions with narrow communal restrictions in respect of personnel of management and teaching staff are established all over the country by members of these sections. Such institutions hinder the growth of national unity and tend to narrow the vision of students. Sound education requires better social atmosphere than is provided in these institutions. It will not, therefore, be advisable to guarantee to minorities based on community the right to open their own institutions. Indeed, it will be the duty of the state to free existing educational institutions of their narrow communal basis.

It is almost universally recognized by all progressive thinkers that denominational institutions have in most cases done considerable harm to

national unity. They have tended to promote religious bigotry and communal exclusiveness and bitterness and have been a hindrance to the growth of territorial nationalism. India cannot allow religious bigotry and narrowness to cloud the vision of its youth. Religious autonomy, no doubt, includes freedom to every religious community to organize education in one's faith and tenets. But it does not necessarily include freedom to organize in any manner whatsoever the general education of the children of the community concerned. General education is being increasingly secularized all over the world and India needs its secularization more than any other country of the world.

It must, therefore, definitely be laid down in the constitution that

"Denominational and communal educational institutions are forbidden except for the purposes of the study of religion and oriental learning."

In regard to the prohibition of denominational and communal educational institutions the question of the education of Harijans, workers and aboriginal tribes deserves special consideration. Harijans are provided special facilities for educational advancement. Special schools are opened for them and freeships and scholarships are liberally granted to them by the state and various public organizations. All this has, no doubt, promoted their educational advancement. But it is generally recognized that separate schools are a hindrance to social assimilation and education should be imparted to Harijans in common public schools. Of course, they may continue to be granted special fee concessions and scholarships. When untouchability in all forms is prohibited, special schools are not needed. But to facilitate the process without a jerk, a special provision may be made for the continuance of such institutions for a period not extending ten years.

The Socialist Party has decided to develop, in conjunction with trade unions, a workers' education movement that will remove the cultural backwardness of the working class. It demands from the government and the employers the provision of facilities to the workers for technical training. This movement is sure to provide a healthy cultural basis to the labour movement and to contribute to the technical and social efficiency of the workers. It will broaden their vision, fit them for discharging civic responsibilities and enable them to shoulder responsibilities of nationalized industries. It must also be remembered that workers need special institutions because they are busy in their work during normal school hours.

So the constitution must, as a directive of state policy, provide:

"The workers' education movement shall be encouraged by the state and special facilities shall be provided to the trade unions for the establishment and organisation of workers' educational institutions."

Schools of special character are also needed for the education of the children of aboriginal tribes. Both enthusiasts and imperialists often ignore

the folk culture of the aborigines and in their zeal for their cultural advancement or cultural assimilation try to impose upon them the education imparted in common schools through the medium of the official language. But experience has all over the world discredited such a practice. It is now generally recognized that their cultural advancement requires due consideration for their social and mental requirements.

The constitution must, therefore, guarantee to aboriginal tribes educational facilities through their mother tongue at least at a primary stage through educational institutions adjusted to their social and mental requirements. The official language may, however, be taught to them at the primary stage.

Linguistic minorities should, no doubt, be guaranteed right to establish, manage and control educational institutions and cultural associations for the promotion of the knowledge and study of their language and literature. At primary and pre-primary stages, children can learn best through the medium of their mother tongue. Linguistic minorities should, therefore, be allowed to establish, manage and control educational institutions of primary and pre-primary stages with a view to imparting general education to their children through the medium of their language. Indeed, in districts and towns where there is a considerable proportion of the citizens of the Indian Republic belonging to a linguistic minority, provision should be made by the state for their education through their mother tongue on par with the provisions made for the education of the linguistic majority through their mother tongue. But this cultural autonomy to linguistic minorities should be guaranteed on the clear understanding that in all educational institutions of primary stage, established by the state or community concerned for imparting education through a medium other than the recognized official language of the unit concerned, provisions shall be made for imparting education in the official language of the unit concerned. It must also be made clear that the private schools, organized by members of a linguistic group as a substitute for public schools, shall be subject to state regulation, supervision and control and shall have to satisfy academic and educational standards and follow the general curriculum prescribed by the state. Subject to these conditions, private schools organized as a substitute of state educational institutions may be granted state aid. It has, therefore, rightly been laid down in the constitution that "the state shall not, while providing state aid to schools, discriminate against schools organized to impart education through the medium of the language of linguistic minorities".

At the secondary stage children of linguistic minorities should be afforded full facilities to learn their language and literature along with the language and literature of the unit concerned. But social assimilation between linguistic groups will be considerably retarded in case linguistic minorities are allowed to organize separate secondary schools to impart education through the

medium of their language. At the primary stage, it is not possible for children to have education worth the name except through the medium of mother tongue. The children belonging to linguistic minorities will have, therefore, to be educated through the medium of their language, even though such a process may to an extent retard social assimilation among children of different linguistic groups. But at the secondary stage children of linguistic minorities educated in the official language of their units at the primary stage may be educated through the medium of the official language of the unit. It cannot be doubted that they can learn through their language even at the secondary stage much more easily than through the official language. But it cannot also be doubted that a person of a linguistic minority who has acquired knowledge through the medium of the official Indian language, may prove more useful than one who has acquired knowledge through any other language. But in certain provinces a linguistic minority may be in a majority in certain regions. In such cases the state can without difficulty and detriment to social harmony, provide for secondary education through the medium of the language of that minority. Indeed, often social harmony may require the recognition of the right of linguistic minority to impart education through the medium of their language. So no uniform rule should be laid down by the constitution with regard to secondary education, except that provision shall be made for imparting the knowledge of their language to the children of linguistic minorities at secondary stage. The constituent units may be allowed to deal with the rest of the problem according to circumstances. But the linguistic majority has often suffered from linguistic imperialism and even at the cost of social harmony tried to impose its own language on linguistic minorities. So the federal legislature should be empowered to pass legislation in regard to the secondary education of linguistic minorities of a unit, if it deems fit.

### *Special Facilities for Aborigines and Backward Peoples*

It is also necessary to make it clear that constitutional guarantees regarding equality in all forms does not absolve the state of its responsibility to provide special facilities to aboriginal tribes and other backward peoples for their economic and cultural advancement. It is obvious that without such facilities real equality will never be achieved by them, and legal equality assured to them by the constitution will serve only a negative purpose.

### *Social Equality*

Equality to be real must be not only legal and political but also social. It should be the foundation of the whole social structure and the fundamental

principle of all public activities. The Constituent Assembly has to an extent recognized it when it resolved to abolish untouchability in all forms and to regard the imposition of any disability on that account as an offence. It has also promoted the cause of social equality by provisions that "no titles shall be conferred by the Republic", that "no citizen shall accept any title from any foreign state", and that "there shall be no discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex in regard to (1) access to trading establishments including public restaurants and hotels (2) the use of wells, tanks, roads and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of public funds or dedicated to the use of the general public (3) possession of property or exercising or carrying on of any occupation, trade, business or profession within the Republic." These provisions deserve to be endorsed but they are not sufficient by themselves to ensure or promote social equality. For that, proper protection of economic rights of producing masses and directive principles of state policy on socialist lines are absolutely necessary.

#### CHAPTER IV

#### ECONOMIC RIGHTS

##### TRAFFIC IN HUMAN BEINGS AND FORCED LABOUR

The Constituent Assembly has failed to deal properly with the problem of economic rights. The Advisory Committee of the Assembly proposed that traffic in human beings and forced labour in any form including *begar* and involuntary service except as a punishment of crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted are hereby prohibited and any contravention thereof shall be an offence. But this recommendation was referred back to the Advisory Committee and ultimately dropped. The proposition deserves to be incorporated in the constitution with the proviso that it shall be the duty of all citizens to perform, in accordance with law, personal service for the state and local self-governing bodies. The proviso will ensure to the state and local self-governing bodies personal services of the citizens in accordance with law, while the main proposition will ensure citizens immunity from the high handedness of executive officers and petty officials and misbehaviour of members of propertied classes.

##### *Right with Respect to Property*

The Constituent Assembly has decided to provide in the constitution: "No property, movable or immovable, of any person or corporation, including any interest in any commercial or industrial undertaking, shall be taken or

acquired for public use unless the law provides for the payment of compensation for the property taken or acquired and specifies the principles on which and the manner in which the compensation is to be determined." An attempt is, thus, made to guarantee to their owners private property subject to acquisition for public use on the payment of compensation to be determined by the manner and principles specified by a law passed for the purpose.

The clause is unhappily worded. It is likely to lead to a lot of litigation. It is doubtful if the acquisition of property for public use includes socialization or compulsory transference of property from one set of persons to another set of persons. It may easily be argued that the phrase implies acquisition of property for the general use of the government, local self-governing bodies and other public and charitable institutions but cannot be stretched to authorize socialization of land and industries. It may at best be said to include socialization or municipalization of works of public utilities, such as electric power houses. If this contention is accepted, the question will arise what industries and economic undertakings may reasonably be declared to form part of public utilities. Some may maintain that it is for the government to determine what constitutes 'public use', and work of public utility. But judges may consider this contention to be improper as it grants too wide a latitude to the government and may claim the right to determine whether the 'use' for which property is expropriated is 'public use'. One need not be surprised if the word 'public use' is given a strict interpretation on the plea that it is the duty of law courts to protect individual rights from encroachment. On the other hand, it may be argued that the state is sovereign and has full legislative powers to regulate property within its jurisdiction in any way it deems fit, unless its legislative powers are specifically restricted by the constitution. As the constitution has restricted in some manner the acquisition of private property for public use only, the state retains full legislative power to socialize property or transfer it from one section to the other with or without compensation, except such property as may fall within the purview of public utilities. Thus, while one class of persons may maintain that under the provision only public utilities may be socialized and even that with compensation according to law, the other class of persons may maintain that the provision only debars socialization of public utilities without compensation but is no hindrance to liquidation of landlordism and grant to peasants of full proprietary rights in the land as well as to socialization without compensation of all economic undertakings, except works of public utility.

It is obvious that the proposition as it stands is either too restricted or too wide and does not deal adequately with the problem of the regulation of property or its acquisition by the state. To deal with the problem we will

have to discard the theory of natural right in property as well as Kantian conceptions that property is a projection of personality and invasion of property is interference with personality itself. We cannot confuse personality with personalty, nor can we forget the social and functional character of property. Man has no natural right in property. Right in property is a claim acquired by law recognized by the community and the claim has never been recognized as absolute or irrevocable. The community has always reserved to itself the right to modify laws with respect to property in the social interest and to acquire it from its owners for public purposes. In all countries laws of property have changed from time to time. Many proprietary rights recognized in the middle ages were gradually abolished in modern times without any compensation. For example, when slavery was abolished, no compensation was given to slave owners for loss sustained by them, even though many of them had to pay hard cash for acquiring claims over slaves. Property is a social institution and like all other social institutions is subject to social regulation and claims of common good and liable to abolition when it outlives its utility and hinders social progress or welfare. The property of the entire people, it must be understood, is the mainstay of the state in the development of national economy and the right of private property cannot be allowed to stand or be used to the detriment of the community. The state must have full right to regulate, limit and expropriate private property by means of law, if common interests of the people require it.

The doctrine of compensation as a condition on expropriation cannot be accepted as a gospel truth. If the form of death duties partial expropriation without compensation is an essential feature of the financial system of many countries of the world. It is also almost universally recognized that full compensation would make impossible large scale projects of social or economic welfare which impinge upon vested interests. It is impossible for the state to pay to owners in all cases market value of the property which is to be acquired or requisitioned in cases of grave emergency or for the purposes of socialization of big industries with a view to eliminating exploitation and promoting common good. Partial compensation is, therefore, suggested as a *via media* by many thinkers. It is maintained that it would make socialization possible without depriving a considerable number of persons of their means of livelihood. Much can be said in favour of partial compensation when socialization is carried on gradually retaining the system of individual economy over a wide field. But even partial compensation will hardly have any justification when general transformation of economic structure on socialist lines is resolved by the community and expropriation of property is made on a wide scale for an early realization of that transformation. In such a case all that persons with vested interests can reasonably demand a share and opportunity in a socialist economy on par with other citizens of the

state. Thus, it is not possible to be dogmatic on the question of compensation and the constitution will have to give to the state full freedom to determine it according to social will and prevalent social conditions.

Public needs often require transference of public property from one public authority to the other. For example, public utility undertakings owned and managed by different municipalities may after some time require to be pooled together and organized on a provincial basis. Public good may, thus, need their transference to the charge of provincial authorities. But their transference must be accompanied with compensation, specially when different public authorities are allowed by law to have separate accounts, finances, assets and liabilities. Transference of public property from one authority to the other without any compensation may undermine financial stability of public bodies of lower grades and even tend to undermine harmony which must exist amongst various constituent units of a federal state. It is, therefore, necessary to provide for compensation in cases of expropriation over against the provinces, the States, local self-governing bodies and associations serving public welfare.

The constitution must, therefore, provide:

The property of the entire people is the mainstay of the state in the development of the national economy.

The administration and disposal of the property of the entire people are determined by law.

Private property and private enterprise are guaranteed to the extent they are consistent with general interest of the people of India.

Private property and private enterprise may be expropriated or socialized with or without compensation, in accordance with the law, the state being the sole judge of the extent of the compensation when offered.

Expropriation over against the States and the provinces as well as the local self-governing bodies and associations serving the public welfare may take place only upon the payment of compensation.

### *Child and Women Workers*

The Constituent Assembly has rightly decided to prohibit the employment of a child below the age of 14 in any factory, mine or other hazardous employment. It is equally necessary to prohibit the employment of women in mines, at night and in industries detrimental to health.

### *Workers' and Peasants' Right of Association*

The right of association, which is proposed to be guaranteed to all citizens, will surely entitle workers to form unions of their own for the protection and



promotion of their economic interests and general welfare. This perhaps led the Constituent Assembly not to make any particular provision with regard to the formation of trade unions. But a more amplified guarantee in regard to trade unions is needed, specially because peasants and workers, who constitute the bulk of the Indian society, cannot protect their economic interests except through unions and because employers all over the world have tried to deprive, through various indirect ways, workers of the benefits of the right of association. The development of their organizational capacity will promote the growth of democratic life in the country and deserves encouragement.

The constitution must, therefore, definitely lay down as a separate proposition:

To ensure protection against economic exploitation and the development of organizational initiative amongst them, peasants and workers are guaranteed the right to unite into public organizations-trade unions, *Kisan Sabhas*, cooperative societies as well as social, cultural and technical associations.

The State shall encourage them in their organizational activities. All agreements between employers and employees which attempt to limit this freedom of association or seek to hinder its exercise shall be illegal.

### *Private Enterprisers*

Private enterprisers may also be ensured the right of association for the promotion of economic interests as well as social and cultural welfare. Private resources will have to be pooled into joint stock concerns for organizing many economic enterprises. But experience has proved that even in capitalist states the right of association for economic purposes cannot be granted to capitalists without some restrictions. In the U.S.A. and other countries the combination of capitalist concerns into trusts and syndicates had to be regulated and prohibited. In the new constitution of Bulgaria such combinations are prohibited by a constitutional provision.

The constitution must, therefore, lay down:

"Private enterprisers shall have freedom of negotiation and organization in business affairs subject to such regulations as the legislature may deem necessary in the social interest. Private monopolies such as trusts, cartels, syndicates and the like, are forbidden."

### *Persons Engaged in Intellectual Pursuits*

The new Bulgarian constitution designates intellectuals as workers by brain and ensures to them the protection of the state on par with workers by hand. It lays down that "workers by hand and brain as also their organizational

and creative abilities enjoy the special protection of the state". Rights of authorship and invention are respected and guaranteed to intellectuals in all democratic countries. Intellectuals' creative abilities are a great asset of the society and can be ignored and slighted by it only at its own peril. The right of authorship and invention cannot, however, claim to override the supreme claim of the social interest. Individual right will have to be harmonized with social good. The former can be recognized to the extent it is consistent with the latter. The right of authorship can, therefore, be guaranteed subject to social regulation in the interests of social good.

The constitution must, therefore, lay down:

Citizens engaged in intellectual pursuits are assured freedom in their organizational and intellectual activities.

The state will endeavour to assist science and art with a view to developing the people's culture and prosperity.

Proprietary rights in works of authorship and invention shall be recognized and protected by law. The right may be limited and regulated by law with a view to protecting social interests and promoting people's culture and prosperity.

### *Abolition of Landlordism*

In 1946 the Congress sought the confidence of the electorates on the issues of the political freedom of India and the economic emancipation of the masses. Special emphasis was laid on the liquidation of landlordism and all intermediaries between the state and cultivators. In all provinces which form part of the Indian Dominion, peasant masses approved the policy and programme of the Congress and returned congressmen to provincial legislatures in overwhelming majorities. The Congress has, thus, a clear mandate of the people of India to end landlordism and eliminate all intermediaries between the state and cultivators. There is no reason to believe that when the franchise will be extended to all adults of both the sexes, the electorates will be less enthusiastic about their economic emancipation and progress. Indeed, adult franchise will only increase mass pressure and the delay in fulfilling pledges given to peasant masses by the Congress Party in the last elections will be highly resented. The people of the States federated to the India Republic are also fully conscious that their economic emancipation requires the liquidation of landlordism. It is certainly obvious that political freedom alone will not satisfy the agrarian masses who constitute the bulk of the Indian nation. They can appreciate liberty only when it is accompanied with their economic freedom. In an agricultural country like India no economic progress is possible unless agriculture is freed from the thralldom of landlordism.

The Constituent Assembly must, therefore, decide to liquidate landlordism and eliminate all intermediaries between the state and cultivators. Both economic and political freedom must be assured to cultivators on the day of the promulgation of the new constitution. Agrarian legislation should be given the first priority by Governments in all provinces and suitable laws should be passed without delay.

The constitution should, therefore, lay down:

"All the intermediaries between the state and the tillers of the soil are abolished. Cultivators shall receive such title to the land as may be determined by the legislatures of the units, which may also determine the compensation, if any, which should be paid to landlords and other intermediaries."

## CHAPTER V

### DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF STATE POLICY

#### *Labour Welfare*

In the draft constitution of India, prepared for the Constituent Assembly, it is rightly laid down that the state shall direct its policy towards securing to all citizens of both sexes the right to an adequate means of livelihood, equal pay for equal work, and the protection of the strength and energy of workers against exploitation and misuse in vocations unsuited to their age as well as that of their childhood and youth against moral and material abandonment. It is also rightly laid down that the state shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provisions for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness, disablement and other cases of undeserved want. It is also rightly provided in the draft constitution that the state shall make provisions for just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief, endeavour to secure living wage and decent standard of life for workers, provide free and compulsory primary education up to the age of 14 and promote with special care educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, particularly the Scheduled Castes and the tribes. It is also rightly stated to be the primary duty of the state to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and to improve public health. All these propositions deserve endorsement as they are in consonance with the pledges given by the Congress to the electorates and are necessary for the amelioration of workers' economic, social and moral conditions.

*Controlled Capitalism vs Socialism*

The Constituent Assembly is also reported to have laid down that "the state shall direct its policy towards securing: (i) that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to serve the common good; (ii) that the operation of free competition does not result in the concentration of the ownership or control of essential commodities in a few individuals to the common detriment."

These suggestions are obviously intended to provide against the concentration of ownership and control of the material resources and essential commodities in the hands of a few individuals to the detriment of the community and favour their wide distribution to subserve the common good. The framers of these suggestions seem to believe in the control of the operation of free competition and to favour controlled capitalism, which they would perhaps like to describe as private enterprise subject to state regulation.

For more than a century theorists of the capitalist class, the economists of the classical school, upheld free competition as just and scientifically sound. Indeed, some of them required the state to pursue the policy of *Laissez Faire* scrupulously and treat the principle of free trade as a natural economic law which could be ignored, in their opinion, at the peril of the community. But today even the theorists of the capitalist class have ceased to have their old faith in free competition and have begun to favour the state regulation and control over the operation of free competition. Capitalism suffers from many contradictions and needs for its existence state regulation and support. But for these capitalism would have collapsed long ago. State regulation and control have, no doubt, saved the community from many evil consequences of free competition and contradictions of capitalism, and have secured to workers better economic conditions. But they have not been able to check the concentration of material resources of the country in the hands of a few capitalists. In spite of state control society is being increasingly polarised in all countries, the economy of which is based on private ownership of the means of production. Large scale industries ceased to be controlled even by the bulk of the capitalists. They are being increasingly controlled by a few financiers and directors of industries. In capitalist countries like the U.S.A., where the state has prohibited and checked the organization of private monopolies such as cartels and trusts, the directorates of industries are being increasingly monopolized by a few capitalists and financiers.

All this clearly indicates that the state control of free competition and large scale industries will fail to save India from the evil consequences of the concentration of material resources and essential commodities in a few individuals. As in the U.S.A. so in India capitalism in spite of state regulation is bound to develop into finance capitalism, which will, instead of being

controlled by the state, control it. Industries of monopolistic tendencies must be owned by the state, unless the community wishes the state to be owned by them.

Small scale industries should also be organized on cooperative basis as far as possible. Cooperatives will eliminate middleman's acquisitiveness and exploitation and enable the people to organize production for the satisfaction of new needs. Thus, to save the community from the evils of exploitation and concentration of economic resources and power the sector of private enterprise and ownership of means of production should be limited to such small scale industries as cannot be organized on cooperative basis.

The Constituent Assembly must, therefore, provide for ending exploitation and domination in all forms and lay the foundation of socialist economy along with that of political democracy. Freedom and democracy to be real must also be social and economic. Political democracy must develop into socialist democracy.

The Constituent Assembly must, therefore, lay down:

The state shall direct its policy towards securing:

- (a) the transfer to public ownership of important means of communications and credit and exchange, mineral resources and sources of natural power as well as other important economic enterprises suitable for socialisation;
- (b) the municipalisation of public utilities;
- (c) the control of industries and enterprises privately owned with a view to securing justice to workers and consumers and preserving vital interests of the community;
- (d) the provision of cheap credit on cooperative basis;
- (e) the organisation of agriculture and small scale industries on cooperative basis;
- (f) the control of private enterprises and of the operation of free competition with a view to securing to the people maximum satisfaction of their needs along with decent service conditions to workers and preventing the waste and misuse of material resources as well as the concentration of their ownership and control in a few individuals.

### *Planning Commissions and Economic Councils*

Production is meant to satisfy the needs of society and must, therefore, be adjusted to those needs. Material resources of the society must also be made to yield the maximum satisfaction of social needs, present and future. The production of commodities and the utilization of material resources must, therefore, follow a plan drawn up in accordance with social needs, and should not be left to the wasteful and planless competitive process. Planning must be both central and regional. Central planning is imperative in certain spheres, such as key industries, exports and imports, currency, finance,

prices of basic industries, reinvestment, etc. But regional planning will be advisable with respect to commodities locally consumed. To avoid the danger of bureaucracy and dictatorship the central planning authority should be so constituted as to be a representative body. It should consist not only of the representatives of the Central Government but also of the Provincial Governments, trade unions and cooperatives.

Economic councils should also be organized on functional basis with a view to advising the legislatures on politico-social and politico-economic matters. These councils should be empowered as well to initiate and plan economic schemes as to tender advice on measures referred to them by the governments and the legislatures. These councils should provide representation among others to scientists, engineers, physicians and surgeons, educationists, lawyers, political and administrative experts; business, economic and agricultural experts and to trade unions, cooperatives, peasants' organizations and other similar bodies. They should be authorized to divide themselves into sections and work section-wise as well as hold general sessions.

The planning commissions and economic councils so constituted will enable the legislatures and governments to have the full advantage of the advice of experts and plan economic and social life of the country properly and scientifically. These commissions and councils will neither impose any restrictions on supreme authority of the legislatures, territorially elected on the basis of adult franchise, nor prove a hindrance to social legislation of progressive character which the second chambers have invariably proved to be.

The constitution must, therefore, provide for the establishment of economic councils and planning commissions as statutory bodies. The economic councils should be authorized to initiate and plan measures of politico-social and politico-economic importance and place them before the legislature concerned for its consideration. The government should also be required to submit to the economic council for its consideration and advice all drafts of politico-economic and politico-social legislative measures which it wishes to introduce into the legislature for enactment.

The Constitution must then lay down:

"The state shall direct its policy, towards securing the economic development of the country in accordance with a general economic plan, relying on state and cooperative sectors, while achieving a general control over the private economic sectors."

### *Self-Government in Industry*

State socialism suffers from the dangers of bureaucracy. State management may turn out to be bureaucratic and dictatorial. The periodical elections to

the legislatures may not enable workers to correct the bureaucratic character of state machinery in charge of various industries. Workers have to spend the best part of their lives in factories and workshops and they can hardly claim to be free when they are required to submit to dictates of others in these factories and workshops. The bureaucratism of state socialism must, therefore, be corrected by the principle of self-government in industry. Economic democracy implies democratic management of economic undertakings. Workers must, therefore, have a share in the management of socialized industries. They must, then, be enabled to influence decisions and orders, which they are required to observe.

The need of workers' cooperation in the management of large-scale private undertakings is also keenly felt. Workers resent to be dictated in all matters and demand an effective voice in the management, specially with regard to matters which concern their service conditions and welfare. Even impartial observers have begun to feel that if workers are afforded opportunities of constructive cooperation with the management, industrial peace will thereby be promoted. France has recently provided for the establishment of works committees in all industrial and commercial undertakings employing at least 50 wage earners. These committees are to cooperate with the management in the improvement of the collective working and living conditions of the personnel as well as the regulations which govern them. They are authorized to supervise all welfare activities and are granted right of consultation in many economic matters.

The constitution must, therefore, lay down as follows:

It shall be the primary duty of the state to promote self-government in industry and encourage workers' creative and constructive abilities. For these purposes the state shall, in particular provide for the establishment of workers' councils composed of delegates of workers of all types engaged in the undertaking concerned with powers to cooperate with the management in:

- (a) the improvement of the collective working and living conditions of the personnel as well as the regulations which govern them;
- (b) the organisation, administration and the general running of the undertaking;
- (c) the organisation and supervision of welfare activities for the benefits of workers in undertakings concerned.

### *International Policy*

With regard to the policy to be followed by the federation in the international sphere, the Constituent Assembly is reported to have laid down: "the state shall promote international peace and security by the prescription of open, just and honourable relations between nations, by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among t

governments and by the maintenance of justice and the scrupulous respect for treaty obligations in the dealings of organized people with one another”.

All these propositions deserve to be endorsed. India's international policy must be further elaborated. Present international law is weak, incomplete and iniquitous. It gives full recognition to imperialism and ensures no protection to dependent peoples against the imperialist power. International law requires to be developed on democratic lines and we should try to promote such development in cooperation with other states.

India must also work for:

- (a) the peaceful settlement of international disputes and democratic organisation of peace;
- (b) the promotion of political and economic emancipation and cultural advancement of the oppressed and backward peoples;
- (c) the international regulation of the legal status of workers with a view to ensuring a universal minimum of social rights to the entire working class of the world;
- (d) the promotion of social, cultural and economic progress of humanity through constructive cooperation amongst the nations of the world.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNCTIONS

The Union Constitution Committee proposed that (1) the constitution should be a federal structure with a strong centre; (2) there should be three exhaustive legislative lists; viz., federal, provincial and concurrent with residuary powers in the centre; (3) the States should be on par with the provinces as regards the federal legislative list subject to the consideration of any special matter which may be raised when the lists have been fully prepared. The Union Powers Committee drew up three exhaustive lists on the lines followed in the Government of India Act of 1935 and suggested that residuary powers should remain with the centre. It further observed that as the States had joined the Constituent Assembly on the basis of the 16th May Settlement, the application to States in general of the federal list of subjects, in so far as it goes beyond the 16th May Settlement, should be with their consent and in their case residuary powers would vest with them unless they consent to their vesting in the centre.

#### *Strong Federal Centre*

When the partition of India is a settled fact and the Constituent Assembly is free to frame the constitution of the Indian Republic the way it deems best in the interest of the people, the Union Powers Committee was perfectly



justified in ignoring the severe limitation on the scope of the central authority imposed by the Cabinet Mission plan. It will surely be injurious to the interests of the country to provide for a weak central authority which will be incapable of ensuring peace, of coordinating vital matters of common concern and of speaking effectively for the whole country in the international sphere. The Constituent Assembly is, therefore, perfectly justified in providing for a strong central authority. The Union Constitution Committee has also rightly recommended that the States should be on par with the provinces as regard the federal legislative list. The Cabinet Mission's plan was a clumsy compromise with, if not an actual surrender to, the separatism of the Muslim League. It did not deserve to be accepted by the Congress and cannot be allowed to be used by the princes to weaken the central authority with a view to preserving their own autocracy. The people of Indian States are as much interested in strong central authority as those of the provinces. The federal authority will never be able to promote the economic welfare and even satisfy certain vital economic needs of the people of the States, if its authority and powers with respect to the States is confined within the framework of the Cabinet Mission's plan. The people of the States will enjoy equal political rights and participate in public affairs of India on par with the people of the provinces only when the powers and responsibilities of the federal authority with respect to the States are on par with the provinces. This means that the authority of the federal legislature should extend over the States just as with the provinces in all matters of federal and concurrent legislative lists.

### *The Decentralization of Functions*

In modern times a federal state cannot afford to have a weak centre. But it will be equally unwise to emaciate units of power and strength. Over-centralization leads to bureaucratism and regimentation of life, saps vitality and makes difficult adaptation to needs and environments. It not only over-burdens the central authority with power and functions, authority and responsibility, but also results in the concentration of centrifugal forces. Decentralization is an essence of democracy. It enables adaptation to environments, ensures greater association of the people with public affairs, and enriches the political life in many other ways. It is but obvious that service which is performed at the base has greater chance of representing the views of, and of being controlled by, the people than one performed at the apex. The tendency towards centralization of authority and functions, which an important section of the Constituent Assembly seems to favour, must, therefore, be resisted. The lists of federal, provincial and concurrent subjects should be revised, and the constituent units should be assigned as many functions and powers as is possible consistent

with political and economic unity and the defence of the country.

In this connection it must be remembered that from the administrative points of view those services, which are scattered throughout the country and require the active cooperation of the people, should be entrusted to the charge of the authorities of the constituent units. It should also be remembered that the legislative and executive aspects of a problem are closely related and the cooperation between the executive and the legislative authorities contributes to the social good. Hence, the executive and legislative jurisdiction over a subject should as far as possible be entrusted to the same organization, central or provincial. Experience has, however, proved that certain problems, which by their nature deserve to be in charge of constituent units, require uniform regulation in some of their aspects. This is secured through the system of concurrent powers. It, however, deserves to be remembered that the list of concurrent powers should not be very large lest the authorities of the units may be left with no option but to function mostly as executors of federal laws. Under the Indian Councils Act of 1861 the central and provincial legislative authorities had concurrent legislative jurisdiction over matters of provincial and local importance. With the result that in course of time central laws covered a wide field and the provincial legislative authorities found increasingly difficult to function. And so in 1892 the British Parliament had to empower the provincial legislative authorities to amend, modify and repeal central laws with the previous consent of the central authority. As the Constituent Assembly does not seem inclined to confer similar power on the legislative authority of the constituent unit with respect to federal laws concerning questions of concurrent jurisdiction, it may be feared that in course of time the entire field of concurrent jurisdiction will be covered by federal laws and the legislative authority of the constituent units over that field will be considerably restricted and become almost negligible.

#### *Adequate Financial Resources to the Units*

Various constituent units shall be in charge of many departments of national reconstruction which shall need vast financial resources. They must obviously be provided with independent sources of revenue, sufficient to yield funds necessary to discharge their responsibilities. The Constituent Assembly has failed to do so. Most of the items of taxation assigned to the provinces are of municipal character and will have to be allocated to local bodies. Such items of taxation as will be available for provincial purposes will not yield revenues sufficient to meet the growing needs of the provincial government. The framers of the constitution also seem to be conscious of

it. But instead of allocating some more items of taxation to provinces, they wish to empower the federal authority to extend financial assistance to provincial authorities. Thus, the financial requirements of the provinces are to be met by grants-in-aid from the federation. The system of grants-in-aid is not altogether tabooed in federations. In the U.S.A., Canada and certain other federal states federal authorities are allowed to help constituent units with grants for specific purposes. But in none of these federations the constituent units have to depend upon the financial help of federal authorities for their normal work. But in India under the proposed constitution, federal grants will form a substantial part of provincial finances. Without these grants provincial authorities may not be able to run their administration. This is sure to cripple their autonomy, specially when federal authorities are allowed by the constitution full freedom to determine conditions of their grants. The federal authority may starve the provincial organizations, veto their projects through refusal of supplies necessary for their execution, compel them to yield to their will and thus determine in nature of the activities of the provincial authorities.

The centralization of financial resources is not sound even financially. It will be difficult for the federal authority to make an equitable distribution of funds among various constituent units. The attempt will not result in economy. It will only lead to manipulated financial programmes, clumsy compromises and financial irresponsibility. The federal authority will be required to meet all sorts of demands and accused of parsimony and unfair treatment. It will be difficult for the federal authority to resist even unreasonable demands of important provinces and assess equitably needs of different units. The attempt of the British Government in India to administer Indian finances through the central authority miserably failed in the nineteenth century. "The distribution of income degenerated into something like a scramble in which the most violent of the provincial governments had advantage with very little attention to reason." While in certain provinces important services were starved, in others public money was spent on less urgent items. The centralization of finances will lead to bitter controversy among various constituent units and the federal authority will not be able to resolve it satisfactorily. Who knows even the federal government may be tempted to use the power of distribution of funds to win over the support of certain key provinces. Even in the U.S.A. the system of federal subsidies to States has been used to provide a "sop" to some special interests.

All this clearly indicates that the financial arrangements, suggested by the Union Powers Committee, are wholly unsatisfactory. The provinces should be assigned some more independent sources of revenue so that they may discharge duties assigned to them satisfactorily. Provincial authorities

should be enabled to have a share in growing commercial and industrial prosperity which they can legitimately claim, responsible as they will be for the maintenance of law and order in commercial and industrial centres and for the development of industries in their respective provinces. Agriculturists are sure to grudge expenditure on industrial development if its costs will have to be borne by them and the provincial authorities are not allowed to tax industries, whose development they promoted, with a view to recouping the cost of development.

### *Residuary Powers*

The Constituent Assembly has decided to assign residuary powers to the federation. This is, no doubt, in conformity with the general public opinion of nationalist India. But a careful examination of the question will reveal that the exclusive jurisdiction of the federation over residuary powers is unscientific. Residuary functions are those as could not be enumerated simply because they could not be foreseen by the framers of the constitution. But such functions may as well be of local as of national importance. Such matters of local importance as could not even be foreseen by the framers of the constitution can hardly be such as may attract the attention of, and be dealt with properly by, federal authorities. Even in Canada where federal authorities are granted jurisdiction over residuary powers, provincial authorities are also allowed to deal with residuary functions of local importance, with the result that in Canada the law courts are often required to adjudicate whether the residuary matter is of local importance and hence under the exclusive jurisdiction of the provincial authority or vice versa. In Canada confusion is caused by the system of exclusive jurisdictions of the federal and provincial authorities over residuary matters of national and local importance respectively. Law courts had often to reverse their earlier decisions on the plea that a residuary matter which was previously of local importance had assumed national importance and had, thus, ceased to be under the jurisdiction of provincial authorities and that, therefore, the provincial law, which was previously declared valid, had ceased to be operative and must yield to the national law. Such decisions have lowered the prestige of law courts for independence and have tended to drag them in the politics of the country. To avoid this the best way is to place residuary matters under the concurrent jurisdiction of the federation and constituent units. This will enable the authorities of the constituent units to deal with residuary matters to the extent and so long as the federal authority does not regard such matters as of national importance and deal with them as such.

## CHAPTER VII

### COORDINATION AMONG AUTHORITIES

The federal polity is based on dual principles of autonomy and coordination. The constituent units are autonomous within their own spheres but their autonomy is not absolute. They are integral parts of a single body politic and their autonomy is, therefore, naturally equated to the organic unity of the state and hence coordinate in character.

It is to be regretted that the Constituent Assembly has not yet paid sufficient attention to the question of coordination of various units amongst themselves and with the federal authority. It is hoped that it will pay due attention to the problem when the draft constitution is considered in detail in the form of a Bill.

On the recommendations of the Fundamental Rights Sub-Committee the Constituent Assembly has decided to incorporate the following propositions:

Full faith and credit shall be given throughout the territories of the Union to the public acts, records and judicial proceedings of the Union and every unit thereof, and the manner in which and the conditions under which such acts, records and proceedings shall be proved and the effect thereof determined shall be prescribed by the law of the Union.

Final civil judgment delivered in any unit shall be extended throughout the Union subject to such conditions as may be imposed by the law of the Union.

These decisions of the Constituent Assembly deserve endorsement but are not sufficient by themselves to secure necessary coordination among various authorities.

It is necessary to lay down the following provisions also:

1. All disputes between different constitutional authorities shall be settled peacefully without resort to violence.  
If and in so far as a dispute between the federation, provinces and States involves any question (whether of law or fact) on which the existence or extent of a legal right depends, it shall be referred to and decided by the Supreme Court of India in its original jurisdiction.  
Disputes of non-justiciable character shall be settled by a Board, composed of the Chief Justice of India, the President of the Indian Public Service Commission and the Auditor-General of India and two other experts co-opted by them.
2. A person charged in a unit with a crime, who shall flee from justice and be found in another unit, shall, on demand of the executive authority of the unit from which he fled, be delivered up to be removed to the unit having jurisdiction of the crime.
3. Every province and federated State shall make provision for the enforcement of

the orders of the federation as well as for the detention in its prison of persons accused or convicted of offences against the laws of the federation, and for the punishment of persons convicted of such offence.

4. The executive authority of every province and federated State shall be so exercised as to secure respect for the laws of the Federal Legislature which apply in that province or State, and not to impede or prejudice the exercise of the executive authority of the federation.
5. The units, whether provinces or federated States, shall have no power to enter into separate alliances and treaties of political character amongst themselves, provided that with the consent of the federal authority
  - (a) a number of federated States may combine together to form a sub-federation in accordance with the provisions of this constitution, or
  - (b) a federated State may attack itself with a province for certain specified purposes in accordance with the provisions of this constitution.
6. The units may form legislative and administrative conventions amongst themselves. Such conventions shall be communicated to the executive authority of the federation, which shall have the power to prevent their execution if they contain anything contrary to the federation or to the rights and interests of the other provinces and federated States.  
Such conventions may be adhered to by other provinces and federated States.
7. The federal authority, in consultation with the governments of the units concerned, may appoint an Inter-State Commission for the purposes of-
  - (a) investigating and discussing subjects in which some or all of the units, or the federation and one or more of the units, have a common interest, or
  - (b) making recommendations upon any such subject, and, in particular, recommendations for the better coordination of the policy and action with respect to that subject.
8. It shall be lawful for two or more units, with the consent of the federal authority,
  - (a) to set up permanent or *ad hoc* committees for the purposes of investigating and discussing and making recommendations upon a subject or subjects of common interest.
  - (b) to set up joint administration for, or to determine common policy and action with respect to, matters of common interest.
9. (1) The units shall be obliged to take whatever measures are necessary within their autonomous sphere of action for the execution of treaties; if a unit does not comply with this obligation in due time, the federation shall be vested with the power to take such measures and specially to enact necessary laws.  
(2) Likewise, the federation, when carrying out treaties with foreign states, shall have the right of supervision even in regard to such matters as come within the autonomous sphere of action of the units. In this case the federation shall have the same rights over against the units as in matters of indirect federal administration.

These provisions are obviously necessary and need no explanation. It may, however, be pointed out that in the U.S.A. all legislative and administrative conventions require the consent of the Congress, its federal

legislative authority. In our opinion the federal authority must not be forced to pronounce upon the merits of, or to be a party to, a particular agreement or compact made on matters with which it is not directly connected. It must confine its interference in the affair to the extent it is essential for the maintenance of social unity. This can be and has been well secured by the provision of the Swiss Constitution, which has been adopted in our suggestion. Even in the U.S.A. it has been held by the courts that there is a variety of subjects of ordinary commercial nature about which several States may enter into agreement with one another without the necessity of obtaining the consent of the Congress. The consent of the federal authority must, however, be necessary for the establishment of joint administrative boards by units.

The Constituent Assembly has rightly decided that the executive authority of the Ruler of a federated State shall continue to be exercised in that State with respect to federal subjects, unless otherwise provided by the appropriate federal authority. It is, however, necessary to add that "the appropriate federal authority shall have power to satisfy himself, by inspection or otherwise, that the federal subjects are properly administered by the Government of the federated State and to issue necessary directions to secure proper administration".

With a view to securing amity among various units it is also necessary to enact the following provisions, which form part of other federal constitutions:

No preference shall be given by any regulation of commerce or revenue by a unit to one unit over another.

Nor shall the federation, by any law of trade or commerce, give preference to one unit or any part thereof over another unit or part thereof.

Subject to regulations by the law of federation, trade, commerce and intercourse among the units and between the citizens shall be free.

Provided that in case of disparity in taxation a unit will be free to impose on goods imported from other units such taxes as might result in imposing on them the same burden of taxation as is imposed on the goods produced in the unit.

### *Immunity of Instrumentality*

In the United States of America the courts have held that the salaries of a public servant belonging to one organization cannot be taxed by the other, as the tax on the salary will interfere in the instrumentality of the organization concerned.<sup>1</sup> Similar opinion was for some time held by the law courts in Australia. But in 1920 the High Court of Australia withdrew the immunity from taxation from the salaries of the officials of one organization by the

<sup>1</sup> *McCulloch v. State of Maryland*, 4 Wheat 316.

other.<sup>2</sup> In Canada even provincial authorities are allowed to tax the salaries of the Dominion<sup>3</sup>. The question may lead to unnecessary litigation in India. It is, therefore, necessary to lay down provisions with respect to it in the constitution.

It may be prescribed that

- (1) A unit shall not, without the consent of the federal Legislature, impose any tax on the property of the federation used for administrative purposes, nor shall the federation impose any tax on the property of the unit used for administrative purposes.
- (2) Both the federation and the units shall have the power to tax public servants of the units and the federation respectively as citizens through general laws of taxation.

Any discrimination by one organization against the salary of a public servant of another organization shall be void.

<sup>2</sup> *Amalgamated Society of Engineers v. Adelaide Steamship Co. Ltd.* 28 C.L.R. 129.

<sup>3</sup> *Abbott v. City of St. John* (1908) 40 S.C.R. 597; *Webb v. Outram* (1917) A.C. 81; *Toronto v. Morson* (1917) C.S.R. 227.

## CHAPTER VIII

### DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM

The Constituent Assembly has tried to provide a democratic system of government both to the federation and to the provinces. But it has so far been silent on the question of the nature of political authority of federated States. The rulers of States claim autonomy in internal affairs and it seems leaders of the Constituent Assembly are inclined to allow princes full freedom to determine the constitutional structure of their States.

In a federal state units are no doubt largely autonomous within their assigned sphere of activity. A federal polity never grants absolute internal autonomy to the units. They are required to function within the framework of the federal constitution and are bound both constitutionally and legally to observe principles of government determined by the federal constitution. In all democratic federal states the units are required by the federal constitution to have republican or democratic governments and to respect the fundamental rights of the people as determined by the constitution. In some federal states, such as Canada, Australia, the U.S.S.R., the structure of the government of the units is also determined by, and forms an integral part of, the federal constitution.

The Constituent Assembly has, therefore, rightly decided to determine the structure of the government of the provinces and incorporate it in the federal constitution. But there is no valid constitutional reason to treat



federated States differently. As units of the Indian federal republic they are on par with the provinces. The fundamental principles of their governmental system must also be determined by the Constituent Assembly and form an integral part of the constitution of the Indian Republic. This is specially necessary because most of the States are at present autocratically governed and their rulers are hardly inclined to establish a democratic system of government.

It is obvious that Indian democracy cannot put up with princely autocracy. The two are incompatible and cannot be welded together in a single body politic even of a federal character. Princely autocracy will be an anachronism in democratic India. It will be impossible for the people of the States to be governed autocratically by the princes and to discharge duties of democratic citizenship with respect to federal matters.

Unless autocracy kills their manhood completely, their democratic spirit will revolt and overthrow autocracy. The conflict between autocracy and democratic forces are to continue unless the former is liquidated and democratic authority is established in different States. The democratically organized federal authority will not be justified in lending its support to autocratic authorities of the federated States on the plea of assistance to constituent units in maintaining law and order. Nor will it be possible for responsible provincial governments to outlaw all revolutionary activities for democratic freedom in Indian States. Provincial territories are bound to be used by the leaders of the freedom movement as base of operation; and many residents of different provinces are sure to sympathize with, and participate in, the struggle. All this is sure to cause serious constitutional complications and administrative difficulties unprecedented in the history of federal states of the world. The authorities of federated States are bound to accuse rebels of crimes and press provincial authorities that these rebel-criminals be arrested and handed over. Revolutionary activities against an established authority of a constituent unit within the territories of another constituent unit, unchecked by the authorities of the latter, will be considered by the princes of federated States to be unfriendly, nay positively hostile, and subversive of amity between different constituent units. It must also be remembered that the continuance of the autocratic regime of the princes will retard the progress of a large section of the citizens of the Indian Republic.

It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to lay down in the constitution of the Indian Republic that

- (1) The constitution of federated States shall be of democratic character.
- (2) The resources and the legislative and executive authority of the federal government shall under no circumstances be used against the freedom movement of the federated States.

It is also necessary to settle the fundamentals of the constitution of Indian States in the main body of the federal constitution.

## CHAPTER IX

### REPRESENTATION

The Constituent Assembly has rightly decided to extend franchise to all adults of both the sexes who do not suffer from certain physical and mental disabilities. The right of franchise could not be equated to property or sex. None of them can claim any validity to abrogate or qualify it. Neither wisdom nor social responsibility can be measured by property or sex. Nor is the interest in the activities of the state confined to the propertied classes. Producing masses are vitally interested in the state and its activities. They have, as a matter of fact, a greater stake in the state than the propertied classes and must have full right to influence and determine the policy and decision of the state.

The Constituent Assembly proposes to grant franchise to citizens who have attained the age of at least twenty-one years. In Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and the U.S.S.R. the franchise is extended to citizens of eighteen years in age. It will surely be desirable to allow the citizens of the Indian Republic to exercise the right of franchise at the completion of eighteen years. If for certain reasons it may not be possible to do so at the commencement of the new constitution, it may be laid down in the constitution that "on the first January 1955 citizens who have completed the age of eighteen years shall have right of franchise".

The Constituent Assembly has also rightly decided against communal representation through separate electorates. The communal representation proved a curse to Indian society. It narrowed the vision of the people, eclipsed the real political and economic problems, fed communal prejudices and accentuated communal differences. It confused religion with politics, fomented religious bitterness and ultimately disrupted the political unity of India. Separate communal representation is no protection to minority. Indeed, the minority community loses a chance of protection in the degree in which communal feelings substitute civic consciousness and the majority of the representatives become wholly independent of the votes of the minority community.

The Constituent Assembly has decided in favour of joint electorates with reservation of seats for minorities on population basis for a period of ten years. The reservation of seats for a period of ten years can be accepted only as a step towards complete separation between religion and politics. The confusion between the two has caused untold miseries and hardships

on the people of India; and the only way to save India from chaos is to divorce politics from religion and develop civic consciousness and spirit through vigorous activities of fully democratic state on secular basis. To ensure the divorce between the two it is necessary to prohibit the formation of political parties on religious and communal basis and to outlaw the use of religious institutions for political purposes. As the enjoyment of civil and political rights must be independent of religious belief, the reservation of seats must not be extended beyond ten years and all possible efforts must be made to secularize politics within that period completely.

The Constituent Assembly seems inclined to favour the single member constituency system to the system of proportional representation. The single member constituency system has a merit of simplicity. It provides the smallest possible constituencies and largely simplifies the work both of the voter as well as that of the candidate. It favours two party system and tends to integrate interests and views before differences are dramatised in elections. This process of integration contributes to the efficiency of the legislature.

But the system of single member constituencies fails to provide adequate representation of the people on the legislature. A substantial section of citizens is always without any direct representation. As elections are mainly confined to contested constituencies, quite a large number of citizens do not have even any opportunity to express their opinions on public questions through ordinary constitutional process. They do not come in direct contact with public affairs even during the elections. This tends to inhibit their interest in the activities of the state, and is bound to stand in the way of the political education of the masses in India. The constituencies do not represent any civic homogeneity. They are highly artificial and play no part in the daily civic life of the people. Their artificial character combined with the importance of the change of the party loyalty of a small percentage of voters has constantly led the party in power to manipulate the formation of constituencies in their own interests. This manipulation has naturally been the source of great irritation, and has tended to inhibit the interest of honest citizens from civic life. The system also exaggerates regional differences in public opinion. Only one aspect of the public opinion of many regions is represented in the legislature. The views of the members of a party living in different regions cannot exactly be the same. The agreement on broad principles of policy does not necessarily imply identity of views on particular problems before the legislature. In India because of the marked differences in social conditions of its different parts variations in the views of a party on regional basis is highly probable. The impact of views and interests alters their character. Hence, the policy and programme of a party in the legislature will be imperfect in the degree in which it will fail to integrate the views and interests of certain regions because of the absence of any member in the

party from such regions. Nor does the system ensure that the results of elections will conform with general public opinion. Majority of ten thousands does not count more than that of ten. Hence, even when elections are fought only by two parties, the strength of the parties in the legislature does not in general bear proportion to votes actually cast. In fact, the party that has polled the minority of votes may secure the majority of seats or may remain altogether unrepresented in the legislature. In case there are more than two parties, the results of elections can by chance alone correspond with general public opinion. Not only small minorities are in constant danger of being swept away, but the chances of minority rule are very great. The fate of a party does not depend merely upon the comparative strength of its programme and policies, but might adversely be affected by such weakness or policy of another minority party as is specially favourable to the third party. Under the single member constituency system slight change in votes may have disproportionate effect on the composition of the legislature. The change may not necessarily be the result of the real drift of public opinion. The former might be the result of certain minor issues or that of ordinary manipulation of certain group of voters. The system, thus, not only puts premium on such spectacular issues as Zinovieff letter, but also increases the political importance of organized cliques with enough votes to hold the balance of power in crucial districts. In India political parties might be tempted to manipulate the influence of small communal groups or of some influential persons in well contested constituencies. In constituencies where two communities are prominent, communal feelings might be aroused and the votes of smaller communities might be manipulated by the candidate belonging to major communities. The constant return of a candidate of one community alone against the wishes of certain other prominent communities might cause irritation and sense of injustice. Thus, under the single member constituency system there is a danger of limited political education of the masses as well as that of the manipulation of communal groups and territorial limits of constituencies. Such manipulation, combined with disproportionate strength of the parties and the absence of representatives of certain regions in the party in power, might cause great irritation and sense of injustice. The system, which has its own marked advantages, might work but does not ensure success.

As an alternative to the single constituency system, proportional representation with single transferable vote is most favoured by political thinkers. This system obviates largely the defects of the single constituency system. But the former can hardly be termed proportional in its strict sense, as no scientific method has yet been devised for selecting the particular votes which are to be transferred proportionately to the candidates. The process of the elimination of the candidate at the bottom is to an extent

arbitrary. It favours the candidate, who has the largest preferential support of the voters, who have given their first vote to the candidate in the bottom of the list. The system of proportional transference of such votes of the successful candidates, as have not been counted before their quota is completed, has a merit of simplicity but no scientific justification. It is also reasonable to hope that a candidate does not secure a seat in the legislature mainly on the basis of the permutation and combination of the preferential votes. Such persons can scarcely command the confidence of the constituents in spite of their remote preferential votes. He is sure to be mediocre with negative rather than positive merits. Proportional representation is also too complicated for India. No combination of colours or signs can ever secure intelligent voting of illiterate voters. It is also very doubtful if the bulk of the illiterate Indian voters are capable of making a number of choices on preferential basis with some intelligence. It will also not be very easy task to count proportional votes of big multiple seat constituencies of India.

The system of multiple constituencies with cumulative votes will suit India most. Under this system the strength of parties in the legislature will in general correspond with votes cast. The legislature will not distort but represent real public opinion. Big constituencies with multiple seats will tend to discourage disproportionate influence of small cliques. Slight change in public opinion will not cause disproportionate influence on the composition of the legislature. As influence will in general correspond with the change in opinion, such minor issues as appeal only to a certain group will not have very disproportionate influence on public policy. Nor will the regional differences in public opinion be over-exaggerated in the legislature. The presence of members of every region in a party will secure wider experience and better integration of programme and policy. Size of constituencies will surely tend to diminish the chance of personal touch between the candidates and the voters. But in India this personal touch is impossible even in the case of single member constituencies. Under the multiple constituency system the overwhelming majority of voters will have the satisfaction of having returned such persons to the legislature for whom they voted. This is very essential not only for the proper political education of the masses in India, but also for the maintenance of their interest in the activities of the state. There is bound to be more lively interest throughout the country in elections. The system increases the chances of the representation of every constituency by members of more than one party. This ensures better political education of the people even between elections. Political parties will have chance of nominating persons of different communities from every constituency. This will tend to diminish the chances of friction between different communities during the elections. The political parties will, then, be able to press more vigorously the real political and economic issues before

the people. As the selection of candidates and members will not be in the hands of the central organization of the party, the latter will not be overwhelmed with pressure for favours as is the case in the general list system. But the influence of parties will not tend to diminish. It always increases with the size of the constituency. Nor will this be a great evil to India. Indian masses need to be politically organized. Without it they can neither have sense of civic responsibility nor rise above petty communal feelings. The multiple constituencies might also correspond with some local civic unit. This will not only avoid manipulation but also secure better civic homogeneity in election, and will surely be of immense value in building civic life.

## CHAPTER X

### BICAMERALISM

The Constituent Assembly has decided in favour of bicameralism. The federal legislature is to consist of the Federal Assembly and the Council of State. While the Federal Assembly is to be elected directly by the people on population basis through adult franchise, the Council of State is to be elected indirectly by elected members of the legislatures of constituent units not exactly on population basis. With the consent of the representatives of the province, concerned, an upper house, known as the Legislative Council, can also be established in certain provinces. It is recommended by the Provincial Constitution Committee that half of the Legislative Council should consist of persons elected on functional basis, one-third of its members should be elected by the Provincial Legislative Assembly and one-sixth nominated by the executive.

There was a time when constitutionalists regarded the bicameral legislature as an essential feature of federal polity. It was maintained that while the lower house should represent the people as citizens of the federal state, the upper house should represent various constituent units as collective entities. Equality of representation for different units in the upper house was also regarded as necessary. A federal polity was considered by these constitutionalists to be a compromise between separation and unity. They held that when people wanted union and not unity the federation came into being.

These ideas are no more accepted as true by constitutional thinkers. They maintain that a federal polity may be the result of a compromise between centripetal and centrifugal tendencies, a compromise between unity and separation, but a federal constitution may also be determined as an administrative necessity by a big democratic state. In their opinion equal representation of different constituent units of widely different dimensions

is neither just nor possible. In the words of Charles Beard, it "results in gross violation of the democratic theory that human beings, not geographical units, should be the basis of representation".<sup>1</sup> It is a legacy of confederation in some federations and a recognition of a multinational character of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Indeed, in many federations the rule of equality of representation for constituent units is not adhered to. As pointed out by Prof. Laski, "no safeguard necessary to the units of a federation requires the protective armour of a second chamber".<sup>2</sup> All the requisite protection is secured (a) by the terms of the original distribution of powers embodied in the constitution, and (b) by the right to judicial review possessed by the courts. In all federal states the party system operates alike in both the chambers of the legislature. Members of the second chamber are elected on party tickets, as well as work and vote under party discipline in much the same way as members of their respective parties in the lower chamber. The relative strength of national parties in the two chambers no doubt often differs, but this difference only promotes confusion and deadlock. Neither it is wise to entrust the protection of national and regional interests to two different chambers of the federal legislature, nor have second chambers justified their special claims to custodianship of regional interests. Members of both the chambers have reacted to national and regional issues in much the same way.

The principle of representation of constituent units as political entities through nomination by the local executive or election by the legislature of the units is also not accepted by modern thinkers as valid. The system of nomination is undemocratic while that of indirect election pernicious. In the words of Prof. Laski, "of all methods of maximising corruption, indirect election is the worst".<sup>3</sup> In the United States of America the system of indirect election tended to mix up federal politics with state politics at the time of the election of the members of the State Legislatures. Sometimes when a vacancy in a senatorship approached, the aspirants put themselves before the people of the State, and at the election for the members of State Legislatures candidates for seats in that legislature were required to declare for which aspirant to senatorship they would, if elected, give their votes. Sometimes, the aspirant, who was of course a leading state politician, went on the stump in the interest of those candidates for the legislature who were prepared to support him and urged his own claim while urging theirs.<sup>4</sup> Under this system "the State Legislatures were sometimes bought outright by senatorial aspirants".<sup>5</sup> All this compelled a majority of State Legislatures to

<sup>1</sup> Beard, *American Government and Politics*, 9th edn., p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> H.J. Laski, *Grammar of Politics*, London, 1938, p. 334.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 330.

<sup>4</sup> Bryce, *American Commonwealth*, Vol. I. p. 101.

<sup>5</sup> Beard, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

demand that senators be chosen by direct popular vote, and the change was duly introduced after considerable opposition by senators.

Both in Australia and the United States of America members of the upper chamber are elected by popular vote, each State forming a single constituency for election purposes. This system has also not worked well. In both the countries seats are captured by the majority parties, and the minority party of each State even if it commands the support of the majority of voters in certain areas remains unrepresented.

All this clearly indicates that the system of representation of constituent units as collective entities is not democratic, nor an essential feature of federal polity, nor a sound method of representation. There is, then, no reason why India should adopt it for organizing a second chamber. Indian provinces are obviously too big to form a single constituency for the purpose of electing members of a second chamber. The system of indirect election, as suggested by the Constituent Assembly, is not likely to yield better results in India than it did in the U.S.A.

The advocates of bi-cameralism may nevertheless insist on the second chamber on the grounds that it will serve as a revising chamber and act as a check to hasty legislation and legislative despotism. A careful study of the problem will, however, reveal that no second chamber has so far satisfactorily discharged the function of a revising chamber. As pointed out by Prof. Laski, "most criticism in second chamber will merely repeat arguments already advanced in the first. What it has to say will not, except by accident, possess any special quality of expertise. It will tap no sources of knowledge or opinion not already in contact with the first."<sup>6</sup>

The kind of check provided by a second chamber is not the most desirable form available. Necessary delay is always secured by the slowness with which a great organization like a political party is persuaded to accept a novelty. The process of legislation is sufficiently dilatory and no further delay is needed to prevent hasty legislation. In India what is needed is speed and not check in the reconstruction of economic, social and cultural life of the people. The danger lies more in delay and checks than in speed.

As pointed out by Sieyes, "the law is the will of the people; the people cannot at the same time have two different wills on the same subjects; therefore, the legislative body which represents the people ought to be essentially one. Where there are two chambers, discord and division will be inevitable and the will of the people will be paralysed by inaction."

All this clearly proves that the legislatures should be unicameral. A small committee of technical experts may, however, be appointed, to which legislative measures may be referred for opinion on drafting after discussions

<sup>6</sup> Laski, *op. cit.*, p. 332.



at the report stage and the opinion of which may be taken into consideration by the legislature before a Bill is finally passed. This may enable the legislature to correct mistakes in drafting. An Economic Council should of course be organized on functional basis with a view to advising the legislature on socio-political and socio-economic legislative projects. The Economic Council can surely render better expert advice to the legislature than the Council of State proposed by the Constituent Assembly.

There is less justification for the second chamber in provinces and States than in the federation. The process of nomination is pernicious and undemocratic. Half of the seats reserved for functional representation are likely to be assigned to associations of the moneyed classes such as industrialists and commercial magnates and proprietors of landed property. The Legislative Council, thus, likely to be less democratic than the Legislative Assembly. An Economic Council composed of experts and representatives of functional groups will be able to tender expert advice without in any way affecting adversely the supreme authority of popularly elected legislature. It must be remembered that even Montague, the ex-secretary of state for India and liberal Indian statesmen, such as Sir C.Y. Chintamani, were opposed to the idea of a second chamber in a province.

Attempt is being made by the rulers of Indian States to establish a second chamber composed of nominated persons and representatives of the propertied classes with a view to check-mating the growth of democracy in the States. Such an attempt must be resisted and unicameral legislature must be insisted upon.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY

The Constituent Assembly has rightly decided to organize the executive authority on the system of parliamentary responsible government. "It makes parliament the focus of government so that the ultimate sovereign, by direct control of parliament, can without an elaborate constitutional machinery control the whole conduct of the state."<sup>1</sup> It also ensures co-ordination between the executive and the legislature, the relation of which must be intimate and continuous. Under the presidential system, which has rightly been rejected by the Constituent Assembly, "the machinery of the state is not unified within itself,"<sup>2</sup> "the executive acts in awkward independence,"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Maelver, *The Modern State*, p. 374.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 375.

"the onus of coordination is thrown back on a constitutional device which responds far less freely to the changing conditions of government and the movements of the popular will."<sup>4</sup>

It is, however, to be regretted that the Constituent Assembly wishes to vitiate the system of responsible government by the grant of discretionary powers to Governors of the provinces with respect to many matters, the most important of which is with regard to the grave menace to the peace and tranquillity of the province or any part thereof.

The Provincial Constitution Committee suggests as follows:

- (i) In the exercise of his responsibilities, the Governor shall have the following special responsibility, namely, the prevention of any grave menace to peace and tranquillity of the province or any part thereof.
- (ii) In the discharge of his special responsibility, the Governor shall act in his discretion:  
provided that if any time in the discharge of his special responsibility he considers it essential that provision should be made by legislation, he shall make a report to the President of the federation who may thereupon take such action as he considers appropriate under his emergency powers.

Thus, discretionary authority is obviously modelled on special powers conferred on provincial Governors under the Government of India Act of 1935. With this difference that while under the Act of 1935 the question of "grave menace to the peace and tranquillity of the province or part thereof" was placed under his individual judgement, the Provincial Constitution Committee proposed to place it under his discretionary authority. Under the Act of 1935 the two special authorities differed in this respect that while the Governor had independent charge of matters placed under his discretionary authority and could deal with them at his will with or without consultation with his ministers; matters with regard to which he could exercise his individual judgement were under dual responsibility of the Governor and his ministers, were expected to be dealt with in normal course by ministers, and the power of individual judgement could not be exercised by the Governor except after consultations and discussions with ministers. So it comes to this that while under the Act of 1935 the problem of "grave menace to peace and tranquillity" was under the charge of ministers whose advice could be ignored, if necessary, and steps could be taken with respect to it by the Governor according to his judgement; under the proposed constitution the Governor will have independent charge of the problem and may do what he likes even without consulting his ministers. It is but obvious that the problem of "grave menace to peace and tranquillity" is an integral part of the problem of "the maintenance of peace and order", and the two must

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

be dealt with by the same authority. The separation of the two is sure to cause confusion and no responsible government is possible if the Governor is allowed to deal with the problem of "grave menace to peace" independent of responsible ministers and encroach upon their authority, whenever he deems proper, on the plea of grave menace to peace and tranquillity.

It must also be remembered in this connection that the connotation of "grave menace to peace and tranquillity" is not as restricted as seems to be assumed by members of the Constituent Assembly. Its scope is limited neither to occasions of violent disturbances nor to the menace which may arise from subversive movements or activities tending to crimes or violence. Nor is its scope confined to the department of law and order. "Terrorism, subversive movements, and crimes of violence, are no doubt among the graver menaces to the peace or tranquillity of a province; but they do not by any means exhaust the cases in which such a menace may occur."<sup>5</sup> Besides the department of law and order, "there are many other branches of administration in which ill-advised measures may give rise to a menace to the peace and tranquillity of the province, and we can readily conceive circumstances in connection with land revenue or public health, to mention no others, which might well have this effect".<sup>6</sup> If this interpretation of the Joint Parliamentary Committees is accepted as valid by the judiciary, the Governor can obviously interfere in affairs of many departments on the plea of grave menace to peace or tranquillity of the province. If by chance it is also decided by the Constituent Assembly that the scope of his discretionary authority will be determined by the Governor and his interpretation with respect to his power cannot be questioned in a law court, the Governor will be in a position to establish his virtual dictatorship in all matters of vital importance. A grave constitutional tussle between the Governor and the responsible ministers will anyhow be inevitable in either case.

The Joint Parliamentary Committee emphasized "the vital importance in India of a strong executive"<sup>7</sup> and held that "the only way of strengthening the provincial executive in India is to confer adequate discretionary powers on the Governor."<sup>8</sup> The statement is obviously as extraordinary as the Governor's special powers. Indian provinces no doubt need a strong executive authority. But under the system of responsible government the strength of the executive consists in its internal unity and its harmony with the legislature and the electorate. The Governor's discretionary authority, on the other hand, is sure to undermine both unity and harmony and hence the strength of the executive.

<sup>5</sup> *Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms*, Vol. I. (Part I) Report, p. 44.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

The Constituent Assembly was not satisfied with the provision suggested by the Provincial Constitution Committee and much against the decision of the joint meetings of the Provincial Constitution and the Union Constitution Committees passed Mr. Munshi's amendment which runs as follows:

Whenever the Governor of a province is satisfied in his discretion that a grave situation has arisen which threatens the peace and tranquillity of the province and that it is not possible to carry on the government of the province with the advice of the ministers in accordance with provisions of section 9, he may by proclamation assume to himself all or any of the powers vested in or exercisable by any provincial body or authority and any such proclamation will contain such incidental and consequential provision as may appear to him to be necessary or desirable for giving effect to the objects of proclamation including the provisions for suspending in whole or in part the operation of this act relating to any provincial body or authority; provided that nothing in this subsection shall authorize the Governor to assume to himself any of the powers vested in or exercisable by a High Court or to suspend either in whole or in part the operation of any provision of this Act relating to High Courts.

The proclamation shall be forthwith communicated by the Governor to the President of the Union who may thereupon take such action as he considers appropriate under his emergency powers. The proclamation shall cease to operate at the expiration of two weeks unless revoked earlier by the Governor himself or by the President.

Dr. H.N. Kunzru and Pt. Govind Ballabh Pant rightly opposed the grant of such dictatorial powers to Governors. Pt. Kunzru rightly said, "Mr. Munshi's amendment would practically reintroduce section 93 of the Government of India Act of 1935 in the future provincial constitution. The British Government had to provide for these special powers for Governors because they were afraid that Indian Ministers would use their power as to bring about deadlock and make the maintenance of law and order impossible. But surely the future provincial constitution of free India could not proceed on the assumption that the Governor would continue to be the central figure." Pt. Pant pointed out that under the scheme already approved by the Assembly, the Governor would be kept aloof from the entire sphere of administration. And he rightly maintained that to ask the Governor "to but in at the most delicate moment when those in charge of the administration found themselves unequal to it would be to create confusion worse confounded". The dictatorial discretionary authority, instead of strengthening the executive, will cripple it at a critical moment. It will lead to a conflict of authority between the Governor and the ministry and there is no reason to believe that he will be able to face ministerial resistance and rally to his support the loyalty of the Services and necessary cooperation of the public. It is hardly correct to presume that under the system of responsible government the Governor will be of a higher calibre and command greater confidence and support of

the people and the Services than the Prime Minister and will be able to deal with the crisis more competently than the ministry. Pt. Kunzru rightly questioned the wisdom in allowing "one man to sit in judgement over the collective views of the ministry", and rightly maintained that "if the will of a provincial ministry is to be overruled, it should be overruled not by a single man, the Governor, but by the Union President and the Federal Government who would enjoy a more important position in the eyes of the public than a provincial ministry".

In a free democratic state all problems of the government should be tackled in a way consistent with democracy. In all federal states the maintenance of internal peace is primarily a responsibility of the authorities of the constituent units. But the federal authority has nowhere been absolved of all responsibility with respect to the maintenance of peace. It is its duty to help the authorities of the constituent units and even to take over temporarily the entire responsibility of maintaining peace in an area, when the authorities of the constituent unit failed to do so. But in a democratic federal state, the federal authority is not allowed to supercede completely the duly constituted authority of a constituent unit. Nor has a federal constitution ever authorized a Governor, even though he is elected by the people directly, to supercede the constitution, to assume all legislative, executive and financial powers of the Government and rule over a constituent unit dictatorially through ordinances promulgated by him with or without the consent of the federal authority.

The constitution must, therefore, lay down as follows:

The units shall be autonomous in their administration.

The executive authority of the federation may help with armed forces the Government of a unit at its request in the restoration of public order.

If public safety and order be seriously disturbed in any part of the federation and the Government of the unit concerned fails to restore public order, the President of the federation may take necessary measures to restore public safety and order if necessary with the help of armed forces. Under such circumstances all authorities of the unit concerned shall assist and obey the instructions of the executive authority of the federation and its duly authorized agents. Under such circumstances the federal authority may also suspend the provision of the constitution concerning freedom of speech, association and assembly and inviolability of person, home and correspondence in the manner and to the extent determined by the Federal Law and enforce such of these provisions as are determined by the Federal Law for such occasions.

The President of the federation must immediately communicate to the Federal Legislature all measures taken under this section of the constitution.

The executive authority of the federation shall not lend its support to the rulers of the federated States for the purpose of suppressing the freedom movement of the people of the States.

## CHAPTER XII

## THE JUDICIARY

The judiciary is "the cement of society" and a balance-wheel of the whole social system. It is a pivot of constitutional government and protector of citizens' rights and liberties. It can function as such only when it is separated from and made independent of the executive and the legislature, neither of which can function as a law court efficiently and impartially. However fit the legislature may be to express public opinion and pass general laws, it is incapable of dealing with individual cases. It is too much under the influence of fluctuating public opinion, momentary emotions and party machines to dispense justice impartially. Its organization as well as its temper is out of accord with the judicial spirit. Its members are essentially rather advocates than judges. Nor can the executive be trusted to impart justice impartially. Every authority, however exalted, has a tendency to increase its powers. It cannot, therefore, be expected to be an impartial judge of its own activities. No authority can perform the function of a judge as well as that of a party. Nor can it be expected to refuse to utilize its influence over the judiciary in its own favour or for a particular cause in which it is greatly interested. The executive throughout the world has yielded to temptations and utilized its influence for its own ends even at the cost of justice. The complete control of the executive over the judiciary has endangered the individual liberty and often proved a step towards dictatorship. In India the union of the judicial and executive powers in the same office, specially in criminal cases, has undoubtedly resulted in "miscarriages of justice",<sup>1</sup> which has tended "to shake the confidence of the people in the administration of justice itself".<sup>2</sup> Even judges of High Courts, recruited from the Indian Civil Service, often failed to maintain impartial judicial attitude in cases pertaining to offences of political character.

All this led the Indian National Congress to demand the separation of the judiciary from the executive. The demand was not conceded by the British Government for obvious reasons of imperialistic character. But there is no reason why in democratic India we should not establish an independent judiciary free from the control and influence of the executive.

It is, therefore, to be regretted that the Constituent Assembly has failed to secure the separation of judicial and executive functions to which the Congress is pledged since its inception. The Provincial Constitution Committee has recommended that the present constitution of the High Courts shall be

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Macby, cf. Decentralisation Commission Report, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

adopted *mutatis mutandis*. It means that at least one third of the judges of the High Courts will continue to be recruited from amongst members of the Civil Service and that the High Courts will have no jurisdiction over revenue cases. There is no reason why civil servants, members of administrative bureaucracy, be judges of High Courts and the revenue cases be continued to be adjudicated by revenue officers. It is necessary to guarantee through the constitution the separation of the executive and the judicial authorities.

For the purpose the following provisions may be laid down in the constitution:

Judicial power shall be separated from the administrative in all instances.

Judges shall not be required to exercise any executive function or power. They may, however, be entrusted with investigations of quasi-judicial character.

Judges shall be independent in the exercise of the functions of their office and shall be bound only by the law.

The question of the appointment of judges is an important and at the same time a difficult one. They may be chosen by the legislature, by popular election, or by the appointment of the executive. The legislative choice presents "too many occasions and too many temptations for intrigue, party prejudice, and local interest to secure a judiciary best calculated to promote the ends of justice".<sup>3</sup> Popularly elected judiciary has always been the worst of all. Popular elections lower the character of the judiciary, tend to make a politician of the judge, and subject the judicial mind to a strain which it is not always able to resist. The fittest men are likely to have "too much reservedness of manners and severity of morals to secure an election resting on universal suffrage".<sup>4</sup> Nor are the masses of voters fitted to choose a judge wisely and impartially. Even the executive has failed to choose judges impartially. Appointments have in many cases been made on party considerations and personal favours. It is, therefore, generally recognised that while people's courts may be established at the lowest ladder, judges of lower courts should be appointed by the executive authorities on the recommendation of the Public Service Commission and judges of the Supreme and High Courts should be appointed by the executive authorities on the advice of jurists with or without concurrence of the legislature.

For the independence of the Indian judiciary it is necessary that both the executive and the legislature should have the least influence over its internal administration. The future prospects of the judges must be independent of them. Both the efficiency and dignity of the office require that the bench must be intellectually and socially at least at par with the bar. To attract

<sup>3</sup> Kent, *Commentaries*, Vol. I, p. 292.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

capable persons to the judiciary it is also necessary that the judges must have a status and position at least equal to other public officials. They must also be sure that in case they work honestly and efficiently they shall not have to seek other careers. This will also eliminate natural temptation to use their judicial positions for their future non-judicial careers.

The constitution must, therefore, lay down as follows:

- (1) The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the President of the Indian Republic with the concurrence of two-third majority of the Federal Legislature and the other judges of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the President in consultation with its Chief Justice.

The Chief Justice of a High Court shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the constitutional head of the unit and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

Other judges of a High Court shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the constitutional head of the unit, the Chief Justice of the High Court and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

- (2) Judges and Chief Justices of the Supreme Court and High Courts shall hold office until sixty-five years of age, provided that
  - (a) A judge may by resignation under his hand addressed to the President of the Indian Republic resign his office, and
  - (b) A judge may be removed from his office by the President on the ground of infirmity of mind or body or wilful neglect of duty, or improper exercise of judicial functions or conviction for any infamous offence, if the removal is recommended by the Supreme Court, on reference being made to them by the President.
- (3) The judges of the Supreme Court and of the several High Courts shall be entitled to such salaries and allowances and to such rights in respect of leave and pensions as may be determined by law provided that
  - (a) the salaries of the judges of High Courts shall not be less than those of the ministers of units concerned and the salaries of the judges of the Supreme Court shall not be less than those of the ministers of the federation,
  - (b) neither the salary of a judge nor his rights in respect of leave or absence or pension shall be varied to his disadvantage after his appointment.
- (4) Each of the High Courts shall have superintendence over all courts for the time being subject to its appellate jurisdiction.
- (5) Judges of the lower courts except those of the people's courts shall be appointed by the executive authority of the unit concerned on the recommendation of Public Service Commission, while their promotion and transfers shall be determined by the executive authority of the unit concerned on the recommendation of the Chief Justice of the High Court concerned.



## CHAPTER XIII

## PUBLIC SERVICES

Administration must be amenable to public opinion and subject to public scrutiny and control. It must function in harmony with the general sense of the community and should function in close cooperation with accredited representatives of the people who are to embody the needs of the community in policies and programmes, bring out constant fresh mind to the problem of administration, to break the rigidity of outlook to which the professional mind is too prone, and prevent administration from corruption and stagnation. But the task of elected representatives "is one of supervision, adjustment, control, rather than of actual operation"<sup>1</sup> and "the whole difference between efficient and inefficient administration lies in the creative use of officials by elected persons",<sup>2</sup> who are collectively supreme in the control of administration. But elected representatives should never be allowed to interfere individually in the operation of administration. Individual interference tends to blur responsibility, affect adversely the morale of public servants, introduce undesirable influence in administration, and lowers in many ways the standards of public life.

The constitution must, therefore, definitely lay down:

"Members of the Legislature shall not address to public authorities requests in the personal interests of individuals."

Administration must be not only amenable to public opinion, but also honest, impartial, efficient and economical. While the first quality is ensured through the collective direction and control of elected persons, the second requires proper departmental organization as well as the efficiency and good morale in public servants. "Morale is a spirit which expresses itself in enthusiasm loyalty, cooperation to duty, pride in the service".<sup>3</sup> Its growth is promoted by the sentiment of justice, fairplay, and 'square deal'. The sense of justice is sustained and promoted by the recruitment on merit basis, the security of tenure, equal pay for equal work, recognition of meritorious services, and absence of advancement of favourites on grounds other than merit. All this can be secured to public services only through a permanent Public Service Commission, free from the influence and pressure of politicians and political parties.

The Constituent Assembly has, therefore, rightly decided to provide for the establishment of Public Service Commissions both for the federation and units. It is hoped that the constitution will allow two or more units to

<sup>1</sup> White, *Public Administration*, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> H.J. Laski, *Grammar of Politics*, London, 1938, p. 425.

<sup>3</sup> White, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

establish one common Public Service Commission and authorize the Public Service Commission of one unit to serve the needs of other units with necessary permission of executive authorities concerned.

The constitution must also definitely lay down that "to ensure full justice to citizens and efficient service to the state, unauthorized intervention and any kind of pressure, through letters of recommendation or otherwise, of ministers, members of the legislature and other officials and citizens over chairman and members of the Public Service Commission individually or collectively in the matter of appointment of public servants is forbidden.

#### CHAPTER XIV

#### ABORIGINALS AND TRIBAL PEOPLES

The tribal peoples are backward both economically and politically. Their contacts with the rest of India are very limited. The tribal areas were excluded from the normal jurisdiction of the provincial administration and continued to be governed in the old imperialistic fashion by political officers. The growth of social contacts was hindered in so many ways. While Indian welfare workers were discouraged, foreign missions were afforded facilities for work amongst them. Foreign missions systematically tried to denationalize them with the result that today in certain provinces a number of educated persons amongst the tribal peoples are engaged in disruptive activities. While in Bihar they wish to have a separate Jharkhund, in Assam they wish to keep tribal areas independent of the Indian Republic. This spirit of separatism is, however, disapproved by many amongst the tribal peoples. They are conscious of their economic and political interdependence with the rest of India and wish closer relations. They regard tribal peoples as an integral part of India and hope that the people of India will not only help them in their amelioration, cultural, economic and political, but also treat with consideration their culture and traditions.

It is obvious that Indian democracy cannot, consistent with its own principles, deny to the tribal peoples the benefit of democratic administration. The tribal areas cannot be allowed to be administered autocratically by political officers as excluded or partially excluded areas. Nor can the tribal peoples be refused rights of citizenship as nationals of India. Tribal peoples should be regarded as an integral part of the Indian nation and they should be entitled to all the rights of Indian citizenship equally with other citizens of India. The tribal areas should for administrative purposes form part of the units, the provinces or federated States, to which they geographically belong. The authorities of the governments of both the units and federation should

extend to those areas and they should be responsible to the tribal peoples concerned on par with other citizens of India. The tribal peoples should have equal right of representation on the legislatures of the unit and the federation and equal right of participation in the political life of the country.

Tribal peoples are culturally, economically and politically too backward to stand free competition on terms of equality with other citizens of India. Equality of rights and status will not, therefore, ensure these tribal peoples protection from exploitation or equal progress in all spheres—social, cultural, political and economic. The state will have to provide them special protection against exploitation and special facilities for development. Tribal peoples are to be assimilated and developed culturally. But cultural assimilation and development will have to be carefully planned. Enthusiasts often tried to secure cultural assimilation through the imposition of a cultural pattern which they considered to be national in character. But these efforts not only failed to achieve the objectives but also in most cases retarded cultural progress of tribal peoples. Imposition generates inhibition and hatred against the cultural patterns and tend to uproot the people culturally. Enthusiasts must remember that cultural progress and assimilation are possible only through cultural fusion and adaptation. Difference will have to be made between adoption and adaptation. While the wholesale adoption of a cultural pattern is unnatural, cultural adaptation is the law of life and progress. Adaptation to environments, physical and social, is a constant process and cultural adaptation through contacts of persons to different cultural patterns goes on both consciously and unconsciously. It cannot be stopped though it may be retarded through social inhibitions. Fusion and not destruction is the law of cultural progress. Culture progresses through fusion of cultures and adaptation to environments. Cultural progress requires a creative synthesis of vital elements of indigenous cultural forces of the world in consonance with vital social and economic needs. The tribal peoples can, thus, be neither left alone to lead a stagnant life nor allowed to be hustled and coerced to new ways of life. Their economic and social life will have to be protected from exploitation and encroachments, their cultural autonomy will have to be respected, and they will have to be helped and encouraged to adapt their ways of life to their vital social, cultural and economic needs and forge a greater national unity with the people of India. Progress is, thus, not to be imposed upon tribal peoples but to be realized and achieved by them through their own constructive cooperative efforts with necessary encouragement and assistance of the state and advanced sections of the Indian nation.

The constitution of the Indian Republic must, therefore, provide as follows:

1. The tribal areas shall politically form part of the units, the provinces or federated States, to which they geographically belong and shall be democratically administered as integral parts of the Indian Republic and the units concerned.

2. The tribal peoples shall enjoy all the rights of citizenship of the Indian Republic and shall enjoy equal right of representation on legislatures of the federation and units concerned and equal opportunities of participation in the political life of the country.
  3. Special laws shall be passed by the Federal Legislature to restrict and limit immigration to tribal areas with a view to protecting tribal peoples from the evil consequences of unchecked migration.
  4. Special laws shall be passed by the legislatures of the units with regard to transfer of land and transaction of business in tribal areas with a view to protecting tribal peoples from economic exploitation and evil consequences of unequal free competition and contracts.
  5. Tribal areas shall be treated as autonomous territories within constituent units and shall be granted wide administrative, economic and cultural autonomy to be enjoyed through autonomous district and regional councils.
  6. Autonomous district and regional councils shall have, besides usual municipal functions, powers of legislation and administration over
    - (i) social matters, such as marriage and domestic relations, inheritance of property, primary and secondary education, public relief and charities, betting and gambling, intoxicating liquors and drugs, tribal institutions,
    - (ii) economic matters, such as agriculture and the settlement of land, preservation, and development of forests, fisheries, cottage industries, wholesale or retail business, money lending, production and supply of foodstuffs, poisons and dangerous drugs, irrigation and canal, weights and measures.
  7. Autonomous councils shall recognize and establish people's courts to adjudicate non-cognisable criminal offences and civil suits concerning laws of autonomous councils.
  8. Tribal peoples shall be encouraged and preferred in local services.
  9. Wherever possible tribal peoples shall be imparted education at the primary stage through the medium of their mother tongue. They shall, however, be taught the official language of the unit and the script of that language shall be adopted as the script of the tribal language.
  10. The federal authority shall appoint a tribal commission consisting of (a) the representatives of district councils, one for each council, (b) five persons elected by the Federal Legislature, and (c) a non-official chairman and a permanent secretary appointed by the President of the federation. The commission shall have power to advise the federal government with regard to (a) the disbursement of money granted by the Federal Legislature for the advancement of the tribal peoples, (b) the adaptation of federal and provincial laws for tribal areas with a view to protecting the communal life and autonomy of the tribal peoples, (c) such other measures as may be determined for the advancement of the welfare of the tribal peoples.
- The tribal commission may also be entrusted with the direction, control and supervision of the work and departments organized for the advancement of the welfare of the tribal peoples.

PART II

DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA

*Preamble*

We, the people of India, having solemnly resolved to form a Sovereign Democratic Republic and to establish Democratic Socialist Order, wherein social justice will prevail and all citizens will lead comfortable, free and cultured life, and enjoy equality of status and opportunity and liberty of thought, expression, faith and worship, do hereby, through our chosen representatives assembled in the Constituent Assembly, adopt, enact, and give to ourselves this Constitution.

CHAPTER I

THE STATE

1. The state known as India shall be a Sovereign Democratic Federal Republic.

The authority emanates from and belongs to the people and shall be exercised by and through different institutions and officials as provided by or under this Constitution.

2. Save as otherwise provided by or under this Constitution the territories included for the time being in Schedule I shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the Republic.

3. New territories, States and Provinces may be incorporated in the Republic by a Federal Law.

4. The territory of the Republic forms a uniform currency, economic and customs zone.

5. Territories, which do not form part of the Republic, may by treaty or agreement be included within its currency, economic and customs zone or its administrative jurisdiction.

6. The Federal Legislature may by an Act, with the consent of the Legislature of the Province or Provinces concerned and the Legislature or any other duly constituted authority of the Federated State affected thereby,

- (a) create a new Administrative or Federating Unit;
- (b) increase the area of any Unit;
- (c) diminish the area of any Unit;
- (d) alter the boundaries of any Unit;
- (e) create a Sub-Federation or Union for specific purposes;

(f) attach a Unit or Sub-Unit to another Unit or Sub-Unit for specific purposes;

(g) amalgamate a number of small Units or Sub-Units into an administrative zone or district;

and may with the like consent make such incidental and consequential provisions as it may deem necessary or proper.

7. Governor's Provinces, Sub-Federations, and such Federated States as do not form part of any Sub-Federation shall constitute the Federating Units of the Republic and will hereafter be mentioned in this Constitution as Units.

The Federating Units of the Sub-Federation will be recognized and mentioned in this Constitution as Sub-Units.

8. The Sub-Federations and Federated States as do not form part of any Sub-Federation shall be on par with the Governor's Provinces in all constitutional matters except to the extent otherwise provided in this Constitution.

9. Notwithstanding anything in the Constitution such States as are too small to constitute separate administrative authority shall have, until they are amalgamated singly or jointly with an adjoining province, district or Federated State or welded together to form a Federating Unit of a Sub-Federation, such administrative system as may be approved by the President of the Federation in consultation with the duly constituted authorities of the State concerned.

10. Territories which do not form part of any Federating Unit of the Republic shall form Administrative Units to be directly administered by the Federal Authority. With respect to these Administrative Units the Federal Authorities shall exercise all powers of Government in the manner laid down in this Constitution and prescribed by the Federal Laws.

## CHAPTER II

### CITIZENSHIP

11. The Republic shall have a single uniform citizenship with common and equal rights, privileges and responsibilities.

12. At the date of the commencement of the Constitution:

(A) Every person domiciled in the territories subject to the jurisdiction of the Republic

(a) who has been ordinarily resident in those territories for not less than five years immediately preceding that date; or

(b) who, or whose parents, or either of whose parents, was or were born in India;

shall be a citizen of the Republic, unless he

(i) is a citizen of another state; or (ii) has migrated to a territory outside the jurisdiction of the Republic.

(B) Every person

(a) who is excluded from citizenship under subsection A (i), or A (ii); or

(b) who, or whose parents, or either of whose parents, was or were born in the Peninsula of India, and who was domiciled in a territory outside the jurisdiction of the Republic but migrated to a territory within the jurisdiction of the Republic for permanent residence before the commencement of the Constitution

shall acquire the citizenship of the Republic, provided that he, or in case he is a minor his guardian on his behalf, intimates to the Federal Government, in the manner prescribed by law, that he wishes to be a citizen of the Republic and to reside permanently in a territory within the jurisdiction of the Republic.

(C) Every person who or whose ancestors was or were born in India and who is domiciled outside the Peninsula of India and has not acquired the citizenship of another state shall be a citizen of the Republic.

13. Subject to a Federal Law, which may be passed to avoid double citizenship, every person born, after the commencement of this Constitution,

(a) of parents, at least one of whom was at the time of that person's birth a citizen of the Republic; or

(b) in the territories of the Republic or on board a ship of the Republic, unless that person is a child of an alien who because of diplomatic immunity or otherwise was not subject to the jurisdiction of the Republic at the time of that person's birth

shall be a citizen of the Republic.

14. Citizenship may also be acquired in accordance with a law of naturalization which may be passed for the purpose by the Federal Legislature.

15. Citizenship acquired by or under this Constitution may be lost on such conditions as may be determined by a Federal Law. Such conditions shall not discriminate against a citizen on ground of his religion or community.

16. Allegiance to the Republic shall be the supreme duty of a citizen.

17. Every citizen shall obey the law, serve the interest of national unity, defend the country and carry the national burden in proportion to his means according to the provisions of law.

Any advocacy of communal, racial, or national exclusiveness, or hatred, or contempt shall be an offence.

## CHAPTER III

## JUSTICIABLE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

*General*

18. All citizens are equal before the law and enjoy equal rights regardless of nationality, race, community, creed, or sex.

19. There shall be no discrimination against a citizen on any ground of religion, race, caste or sex in regard to

(a) access to trading establishments, including public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainments;

(b) the use of wells, tanks, roads and places of public resorts, maintained wholly or partly out of public funds or dedicated to the use of the general public;

(c) possession of property, exercising or carrying on any occupation, trade, business or profession within the Republic;

provided that nothing in this clause shall prevent the state from making any special provision for women and children.

20. (a) There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters of employment under the state.

(b) No citizen shall on grounds only of religion, race or caste, sex, descent, place of birth or any of them, be ineligible for any office under the state.

(c) Nothing in this clause shall affect the operation of a law which prescribes that the incumbent of an office to manage, administer or superintend the affairs of a religious or denominational institution or a member of the governing body thereof shall be a member of that particular religion or denomination.

21. "Untouchability" is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of "untouchability" shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law.

22. (a) Privileges or discriminations based on birth, caste, or property are abolished and shall not be recognized by any public authority.

(b) No titles shall be conferred by the Republic except what may be necessary to designate an office or profession or to indicate academic distinctions or attainments.

(c) No citizen of the Republic shall accept any title from any foreign state.

23. Notwithstanding anything contained in the foregoing sections, special facilities may be provided for aboriginal tribes and other backward communities for their economic and cultural advancement and with regard to their share in public services.



### *Rights of Freedom*

24 (a) All citizens of the Republic shall enjoy freedom of movement throughout the whole of the Republic. Every citizen shall have the right to sojourn and settle in any place he pleases. Restrictions may, however, be imposed by or under a Federal Law for the protection of aboriginal tribes and backward classes and the preservation of public safety and peace.

(b) Every citizen shall have in every Unit of the Republic equal civil rights and duties with the citizens of that Unit.

25. The citizens are guaranteed, consistent with other provisions of the Constitution and public order and morality,

(a) freedom of speech and expression;

(b) freedom of the press;

(c) freedom to assemble peacefully without arms;

(d) freedom to form associations and unions;

(e) secrecy of postal, telegraphic and telephonic communications.

26. No person shall be deprived of his life or liberty, nor shall his dwellings be entered, save with due process of law.

27. Traffic in human beings and forced labour in any form, including *begar* and involuntary service, except as a punishment of crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, are hereby prohibited and any contravention of this prohibition shall be an offence, provided that the state may impose, in accordance with law, compulsory service for public purposes without any distinction on grounds of race, religion, caste, or class.

### *Rights Regarding Autonomy*

28. The state is secular and all religious confessions are equal before the law.

29. The enjoyment of civil and political rights as well as eligibility for public offices shall be independent of religious belief.

No citizen shall be deprived of his public right by the change of his religion.

30. Subject to public order, morality or health, and to other provisions of this Chapter, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion.

### EXPLANATION

(1) The wearing and carrying of *Kirpans* shall be deemed to be included in the profession of the Sikh religion.

(2) Nothing in this article shall affect the operation of any existing law or preclude the state from making any law

(a) regulating any economic, financial, political or other secular activities that may be associated with religious practice;

(b) for the purpose of social welfare and reform and for throwing Hindu religious institutions of public character to any class or section of Hindus.

31. Every religious denomination or section thereof shall have the right.

(a) to manage its own affairs in matters of religion;

(b) to own, acquire and maintain property, moveable and immoveable, in accordance with law; and

(c) to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes.

The state shall, however, have power to enact laws in regard to charitable endowments and to supervise and control their administration in accordance with law.

32. No person may be compelled to pay taxes the proceeds of which are specifically appropriated to further or maintain any particular religion or denomination.

33. No citizen may be compelled to be present at any religious act or ceremony or take part in religious exercise, or to use any form of religious oath, or to disclose his religious conviction unless his rights and duties are dependent thereon. Nor shall any religious instruction be imparted in state educational institution.

34. The use of religious institutions for political purposes and the existence of political organization on religious basis is forbidden.

### *Cultural and Educational Rights*

35. In all educational and cultural institutions efforts shall be made to develop moral integrity, civic sentiments and sense of public responsibility.

36. (i) Minorities in every Unit shall be protected in respect of their language, script and culture, and no laws or regulations shall be enacted that may operate oppressively in this respect.

(ii) No minority whether based on religion, community or language shall be discriminated against in regard to the admission of any person belonging to such minority into any educational institution maintained by the state.

37. (i) Linguistic minorities shall have the right to establish, manage and control educational institutions and cultural associations for the promotion of the study and knowledge of their language and literature, as well as for imparting general education to their children at primary and pre-primary stages through the medium of their own languages.

(ii) In districts and towns in which a linguistic minority forms a considerable proportion of the population the state shall establish primary educational

institutions for imparting general education to the children of the linguistic minority concerned through their language.

(iii) At the secondary stage students belonging to linguistic minorities shall be afforded facilities for learning their language and literature as a secondary subject.

(iv) Facilities may be provided to the children of linguistic minorities, if the authorities of the Unit concerned or of the Federation may deem proper, for acquiring general or professional education at the secondary stage through the medium of their own language.

(v) Provisions shall, however, be made for teaching the official language of the province as a compulsory secondary subject to all such students belonging to linguistic minorities as are being educated at primary and secondary stages through the medium of their own language.

38. (i) The state shall not, while providing state aid to schools, discriminate against schools under the management of minorities.

(ii) In state aided schools religious instruction and attendance in religious worship shall not be compulsorily imposed on students, and persons of all denominations and communities shall be admitted.

39. Private schools organized as a substitute for public schools shall be subject to state regulations, supervision and control and shall have to satisfy educational and academic standards and follow general curricula prescribed by the state.

40. Denominational and communal educational institutions are forbidden except for the purposes of the study of religion and oriental learning.

41. The state shall endeavour to encourage educational movement amongst workers and provide special facilities to the workers' organizations for the establishment of workers' educational institutions.

### *Economic Rights*

42. (a) The property of the entire people is the mainstay of the state in the development of the national economy.

(b) The administration and disposal of the property of the entire people are determined by law.

(c) Private property and private enterprises are guaranteed to the extent they are consistent with the general interests of the Republic and its toiling masses.

(d) Private property and economic enterprises as well as their inheritance may be taxed, regulated, limited, acquired and requisitioned, expropriated or socialized but only in accordance with the law. It will be determined by law in which cases and to what extent the owner shall be compensated.

(e) Expropriation over against the Federated States, Provinces, Sub-

Federations, municipalities and associations serving the public welfare may take place only upon the payment of compensation.

43. All the intermediaries between the state and the tillers of the soil are abolished. Cultivators shall receive such title to the land as may be determined by the Legislature of the Unit concerned, which may also determine the compensation, if any, which should be paid to the landlords and other intermediaries.

44. (a) To ensure protection against economic exploitation and the development of organizational initiative amongst them, peasants and workers are guaranteed the right to unite into public organizations, trade unions, *kisan sabhas*, co-operative societies as well as social, cultural and technical associations.

(b) The state shall encourage them in their organizational activities.

(c) All agreements between employers and employees which attempt to limit this freedom or seek to hinder its exercise shall be illegal.

45. (a) Private enterprisers shall have freedom of negotiation and organization in business affairs subject to such regulations as the Legislature may deem necessary in social interests.

(b) Private monopolies such as trusts, cartels, syndicates and the like are forbidden.

46. (a) Citizens engaged in intellectual pursuits are assured freedom in their organizational and intellectual activities.

(b) The state shall endeavour to assist science and arts with a view to developing the people's culture and prosperity.

(c) Proprietary rights in works of authorship and inventions shall be recognized and protected by law. The right may, however, be limited and regulated by law, whenever and to the extent the Legislature may deem fit, with a view to protecting social interests and promoting people's culture and prosperity.

47. No child below the age of 14 years shall be engaged to work in any factory, mine or any other hazardous employment. Nor shall women be employed at night, in mines or in industries detrimental to health.

### *Miscellaneous*

48. (i) No person shall be convicted of the crime except for violation of a law in force at the time of the commission of the act charged as an offence; nor be subjected to a penalty greater than that which might have been inflicted at the time of the commission of the offence; nor be tried except by a competent court and in accordance with the prescribed law.

(ii) No person shall be punished for the same offence more than once, nor be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself.

(iii) No person, if within the reach of the state authorities, may be tried without being given a lawful hearing and duly invited to defend himself.

(iv) No citizen shall be deprived by any Statute or order of access to the court for the purpose of demanding reparation of injury or damages.

49. Every citizen has the right directly or without anyone's approval to bring complaint to the law court against official persons and the Governmental or self-governing bodies for illegal acts which they may commit against him in their official capacity. Special provisions may be prescribed by law for Heads of Governments, Ministers, Judges and soldiers under colours.

50. The establishment of the extraordinary tribunals shall not be permitted save only such Military Tribunals as may be authorized by law for dealing with military offences against military law.

The jurisdiction of Military Tribunals shall not be extended to, or exercised over, the civil population save in time of war or armed rebellion, and for acts committed in times of war or armed rebellion, and in accordance with regulations to be prescribed by law. Such jurisdiction shall not be exercised in any area in which all ordinary law courts are open or capable of being held, and no person shall be removed from one area to another for the purpose of creating such jurisdiction.

51. A member of the armed forces of India not on active service shall not be tried by any Court-Martial or other Military Tribunal for an offence cognisable by ordinary law courts, unless such offence shall have been brought expressly within the jurisdiction of Courts-Martial or other Military Tribunals by any code of Federal Law for the enforcement of military discipline.

52. The Federal Legislature may by law determine to what extent any right guaranteed in this Chapter shall in their application to the members of the armed forces charged with the maintenance of public order be restricted or abrogated so as to ensure the proper discharge of their duties and maintenance of discipline among them.

53. (a) The right to move the Supreme Court and other law courts by appropriate proceedings for the enforcement of the rights provided in this Chapter of the Constitution is guaranteed.

(b) The Supreme Court and High Courts shall have power to issue directions or orders in the nature of the writs of habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, qua warrant and certiorari, whichever may be appropriate, for the enforcement of any of the rights conferred by this Chapter.

(c) The rights guaranteed by this clause shall not be suspended except as otherwise provided by this Constitution.

54. The Federal Legislature shall, as soon as may be after the commencement of this Constitution, make laws to give effect to those provisions of this Chapter which require some legislation and to prescribe

punishment for those acts which are declared to be offence in this Chapter and are not already punishable.

55 (a) All laws in force immediately before the commencement of this Constitution in the territory of India, in so far as they are inconsistent with the provisions of this Chapter, shall, to the extent of such inconsistency, be void.

(b) The state shall not make any law which takes away or abridges the rights conferred by this Chapter and any law made in contravention of this clause shall, to the extent of the contravention, be void:

Provided that nothing in this clause shall prevent the state from making any law for the removal of any inequality, disparity, disadvantage or discrimination arising out of an existing law.

(c) In this clause, the expression "law" includes any ordinance, order, bye-law, rule, regulation, notification custom or usage having the force of law in the territory of India or any part thereof.

#### CHAPTER IV

##### DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF THE STATE POLICY

56. The state shall endeavour to promote the welfare, prosperity and progress of the people by establishing and maintaining democratic socialist order wherein social justice will prevail and all will lead decent, free and cultured life. For the aforesaid objective the state, in particular, shall direct its policy towards securing

(i) the economic development of the country in accordance with a general economic plan, relying on the state and co-operative sector while achieving a general control over the private economic sector;

(ii) the transfer to public ownership important means of communication and credit and exchange, mineral resources and the resources of natural power and such other large scale economic enterprises as are matured for socialization;

(iii) the municipalization of public utilities;

(iv) the encouragement of the organization of agriculture and small scale industries on co-operative basis;

(v) the organization of the facilities of cheap credit on co-operative basis;

(vi) the control of private enterprise and of the free operation of competition with a view to securing to the people maximum satisfaction of the needs along with decent service conditions to workers and preventing the waste and misuse of material resources as well as the concentration of their ownership and control in a few individuals;

(vii) the abolition of unemployment and the provision of adequate means of livelihood to all the citizens;

(viii) the protection of the strength and health of the workers against exploitation and of their childhood and youth against moral and material abandonment;

(ix) the provision for just and humane conditions of work, maternity relief and old age sickness, disablement and other undeserved want;

(x) the improvement of public health and standard of living of its people;

(xi) the promotion of cultural and economic advancement of the people through universal free and compulsory primary education for all children up to the age of 14 and free vocational and technical training for industrial workers in factories and farms.

These directive principles of the state policy shall form the basis for the direction and the limit of legislation and administration of the Federation and the Units.

57. Statutory Planning Commissions and Economic Councils shall be established by the Legislatures of the Federation and Units.

The Economic Councils shall be so organized on functional basis as to provide representation to experts and all important groups of economic importance and shall be authorized to divide themselves into sections and work section-wise, as well as to hold general sessions.

The Economic Councils shall have the power to advise the Governments and Legislatures on socio-economic and socio-political matters and may investigate, examine, and plan legislative measures and administrative schemes on socio-economic and socio-political matters for the consideration of the Legislature and the Government.

All legislative measures on socio-economic and socio-political matters, which are introduced into the Legislature by the Government or any member, shall be referred to the Economic Council for its consideration and report which shall be duly taken into consideration by the Legislature along with the measures concerned.

58. It shall be a primary duty of the state to promote self-government in industry and encourage workers' creative and constructive participation in the management and development of industries. For these purposes the state shall, in particular, provide for the establishment of workers' councils composed of delegates of workers of all types engaged in the undertaking concerned with powers to co-operate with the management in

- (a) the improvement of the collective working and living conditions of the personnel as well as the regulations which govern them;
- (b) the organization, administration and general running of the undertaking;
- (c) the organization and supervision of welfare activities for the benefit of workers in undertakings concerned.

59. The Federation shall endeavour to promote the political unity of India through peaceful, democratic and diplomatic processes.
60. The Federation, in co-operation with other states, shall endeavour to promote international peace, security and progress and for the purpose shall in particular work for
  - (a) the prescription of open, just and honourable relations among nations;
  - (b) the development of international law on democratic lines and the firm establishment of its understandings as the actual rule of conduct amongst Governments;
  - (c) the peaceful settlement of international disputes and democratic organization of peace;
  - (d) the promotion of political and economic emancipation and cultural advancement of the oppressed and backward peoples;
  - (e) the international regulation of the legal status of workers with a view to ensuring a universal minimum of social rights to the entire working class of the world;
  - (f) the promotion of social, cultural and economic progress of humanity through constructive co-operation amongst the nations of the world.

## CHAPTER V

### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

61. At the commencement of this Constitution, India's membership of the British Commonwealth shall terminate.

62. The President of the Federation shall represent the Republic in international relations. In the name of the Republic he will make alliances and other treaties with foreign powers. He will accredit and receive diplomatic representatives. He will be guided in his activities in foreign matters by the advice of the Foreign Minister and the Federal Council of Ministers.

63. Declaration of war and conclusion of peace shall be made by Federal Law.

64. Alliances and treaties with foreign states which relate to subjects of legislation shall require the consent of the Federal Legislature.

65. (i) The Units shall be obliged to take whatever measures are necessary within their autonomous sphere of action for the execution of treaties; if a Unit does not comply with this obligation in due time, the Federation shall be vested with the powers to take such measures, and specially to enact necessary laws.

(ii) Likewise, the Federation, when carrying out treaties with foreign



states, shall have the right of supervision even in regard to such matters as come within the autonomous sphere of action of the Units. In this case the Federation shall have the same rights even against the Units as in matters of indirect Federal Administration.

66. It shall be the duty of the Federation to protect its citizens against foreign countries.

67. The Federal Authorities may afford asylum to foreign citizens for their struggle for national liberation or for defending the interest of the working people.

68. No person holding any office of profit or trust under the state shall, without the consent of the Federal Government, accept any presents, emoluments, officers or title of any kind from any foreign state.

69. The Federal Government may by an agreement with any Indian State, not specified for the time being in the First Schedule, undertake any executive, legislative or judicial functions vested in that state; but every such agreement shall be subject to, and governed by, Law relating to the exercise for foreign jurisdiction for the time being in force.

Explanation—In this clause, the expression "Indian State" means any territory, not being part of the territory of India, which the President recognized as being such a State.

## CHAPTER VI

### DISTRIBUTION OF FUNCTIONS

70. The Federation shall have power of exclusive legislation with respect to subjects enumerated in the "Federal List" in Schedule II.

71. The Federation and the Units shall have concurrent powers of legislation with respect to subjects enumerated in the "Concurrent List" in Schedule II.

72. The Units shall have exclusive power of legislation in respect to subjects so enumerated in "Units List" in Schedule II.

73. The Federation and the Units shall have powers of concurrent legislation over residuary functions.

74. The Federation shall have full executive authority over all functions and subjects which are placed under its exclusive legislative jurisdiction.

75. The Units shall have full executive authority over all subjects and functions which are not placed under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Federation, provided that the Federation shall have power (a) to place any residuary subject under its executive authority, and (b) to determine fundamental administrative principles with respect to subjects over which the Federation has power of concurrent legislation.

76. The Federated States and other Sub-Units which form part of a Sub-Federation shall have police powers, shall be responsible for the maintenance of law and order and shall have full legislative, executive and financial jurisdiction over subjects placed by this Constitution under the exclusive legislative jurisdiction of the Units, except the Public Service Commission, the Audit Department, and the High Court, provided that by an agreement amongst Sub-Units, endorsed by a Federal Law, some other subjects placed under the exclusive charge of the Units under this Constitution may be assigned to the exclusive or concurrent jurisdiction of the Sub-Federation.

77. (a) The Sub-Federation shall be in charge of the Public Service Commission, the Audit Department and the High Court and matters placed under its jurisdiction by agreement, and along with the Federation, but to the exclusion of the Units, shall have powers of concurrent legislation over all subjects placed by this Constitution under the concurrent legislative jurisdiction of the Federation and the Units, provided that Sub-Units shall also have power of concurrent legislation over residuary subjects.

(b) The Executive Authority over the subjects of concurrent jurisdiction shall be shared by the Sub-Federation and Sub-Units as may be determined by an agreement amongst them endorsed by a Federal Law.

78. (a) With respect to Federated States attached to a Provincial Unit, the powers of the Provincial Units shall be such as may be determined by an agreement amongst them endorsed by a Federal Law.

(b) The people of the Federated State attached to a Provincial Unit shall have right to send its representatives to the Provincial Legislature concerned in proportion to its population. Such representatives shall be entitled to take part in the deliberations of the Provincial Legislature in respect to such matters as are assigned to the Provincial Unit by the Federated State.

79. Within the sphere of concurrent legislation the Units or Sub-Federations shall have the power of legislation, as long as and in so far as the Federation does not make use of its power of legislation.

## CHAPTER VII

### RELATION BETWEEN THE FEDERATION AND UNITS

80. When a valid law or order of a Unit or Sub-Federation is inconsistent with a valid law or order of the Federation, the latter shall prevail and the former shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, be invalid.

81. In case of doubt as to the incompatibility or validity of a law or order, the competent authority of the Federation, the Unit or the Sub-Unit may

request a decision from the Supreme Court of India in accordance with the more specific requirements of a Federal Law.

82. (a) All disputes between the Federation, the Units and Sub-Units shall be settled peacefully without resort to violence.

(b) If and in so far as a dispute between the Federation, Units and Sub-Units involves any question (whether of law or fact) on which the existence or extent of a legal right depends, it shall be referred to and decided by the Supreme Court of India in its original jurisdiction.

(c) Disputes of non-justiciable character between the Federation, Units or Sub-Units shall be settled by a Board, composed of the Chief Justice of India, the President of the Indian Public Service Commission and the Auditor-General of India and two other experts coopted by them.

83. Full faith and credit shall be given, throughout the Republic, to the laws, the public acts and records and the judicial proceedings of various Units and Sub-Units and orders of one of them shall be enforced by the other. The manner in which and the conditions under which such acts, records and proceedings shall be proved and the effect thereof determined shall be as provided by a Federal Law.

84. A person charged in a Unit or Sub-Unit with a crime, who shall fly from justice and be found in another Unit or Sub-Unit shall on demand of the Executive Authority of the Unit or Sub-Unit from which he fled, be delivered up to be removed to the Unit or Sub-Unit having jurisdiction of the crime.

85. Every Unit and Sub-Unit shall make provision for the enforcement of the orders of the Federation as well as for the detention in its prison of persons accused or convicted of offences against the laws of the Federation, and for the punishment of persons convicted of such offence.

86. The Executive Authority of every Unit and Sub-Unit shall be so exercised as to secure respect for the laws of the Federal Legislature which apply in that Unit or Sub-Unit and not to impede or prejudice the exercise of the Executive Authority of the Federation.

87. The Executive Authority of the Federation may give directions to the Governments of the Units and the Sub-Units as to the manner in which latter's executive power and authority should be exercised in relation to any matter which affects the administration of a federal subject.

88. (a) The Federal Legislature in legislating for an exclusively federal subject may devolve upon the Government of a Unit or a Sub-Unit or upon any officer of that Government the exercise on behalf of the Federal Government of any function in relation to that subject.

(b) The Executive Authority of the Government of a Federated State shall continue to be exercisable in that State with respect to federal subjects, unless otherwise provided by the appropriate Federal Authority.

(c) The appropriate Federal Authority shall have power to satisfy himself, by inspection or otherwise, that the exclusively federal subjects are properly administered by the Government of the Unit, Sub-Unit or State and to issue necessary directions to secure proper administration.

89. The Federation may, if it deems it necessary to acquire any land situated in any Unit or a Sub-Unit for any purpose connected with a matter with respect to which the Federal Legislature has power to make laws, require the Unit or the Sub-Unit to acquire the land on behalf, and at the expense, of the Federation or, if the land belongs to the Unit or the Sub-Unit, to transfer it to the Federation on such terms as may be agreed, or in default of agreement, as may be determined by an arbitrator appointed by the Chief Justice of India.

90. Where powers and duties have been conferred or imposed upon a Unit or Sub-Unit or officers or authorities thereof within the sphere of exclusive jurisdiction of the Federation, these shall be paid by the Federation to the Unit or Sub-Unit such sum as may be agreed or in default of agreement as may be determined by an arbitrator appointed by the Chief Justice of India in respect of any extra costs of administration incurred by the Unit or Sub-Unit in connection with the exercise of those powers and duties.

91. The Units, whether Provinces or Federated States, shall have no power to enter into separate alliances and treaties of political character amongst themselves, provided that with the consent of the Federal Legislature

- (a) a number of Federated States may combine together to form a Sub-Federation in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution;
- (b) a Federated State may attach itself with a Province for certain specified purposes in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.
- (c) a Federated State may hand over to the jurisdiction of Federal or provincial authorities functions vested in the State.

92 (a) The Federal Government or the Provincial Government may by an agreement with a Federated State and with the consent of the Federal Legislature undertake any executive, legislative or judicial functions vested in that State.

(b) In case of such an agreement the jurisdiction of the authorities of the Federation or the Provinces, as the case may be, shall extend to any matter specified in that behalf in such an agreement.

93 (a) The Units may form the legislative and administrative conventions amongst themselves, such conventions shall be communicated to the Executive Authority of the Federation, which shall have the power to prevent their execution if they contain anything contrary to the laws of the Federation or to the rights and interests of other Provinces and Federated States.

(b) Such conventions may be adhered to by other Provinces, Sub-Federations and Federated States.

94. (a) No preference shall be given by any regulation of commerce or revenue by a Unit or Sub-Unit to one Unit or Sub-Unit or part thereof over another.

(b) Nor shall the Federation or Sub-Federation, by any law of trade or commerce, give preference to one Unit, Sub-Unit or any part thereof over another Unit, Sub-Unit or part thereof.

95. Subject to regulation by the law of the Federation, trade, commerce and intercourse among the Units and Sub-Units and between the citizens shall be free;

Provided that in case of disparity in taxation a Unit or Sub-Unit will be free to impose on goods imported from other Units and Sub-Units such taxes as might result in imposing on them the same burden of taxation as is imposed on the goods produced in the Unit or Sub-Unit concerned.

96. A Unit or Sub-Unit shall not, without the consent of the Federal Legislature, impose any tax on the property of the Federation used for administrative purposes, nor shall the Federation impose any tax on the property of the Unit used for administrative purposes.

97. (a) Both the Federation and the Units shall have the power to tax public servants of the Units and the Federation respectively as citizens through general laws of taxation.

(b) Any discrimination by one organization (the Federation, Unit or Sub-Unit) against the salary of a public servant of another organization shall be void.

98. The Federal Legislature, with the consent of the two-thirds of its members present and voting, may grant financial assistance to a Unit or Units in general as a bloc grant or on such terms and conditions as the Federal Legislature thinks fit.

99. (a) The Federal Government may, subject to such conditions, if any, as it may think fit to impose, make loans to Units or Sub-Units, or give guarantees for loans raised by any such Unit or Sub-Unit, and any sum required for the purpose of making such loans shall be charged on the revenues of India.

(b) The Unit or the Sub-Unit may not without the consent of the Federal Government raise any loan if there is still outstanding any part of a loan advanced or guaranteed by the Federal Government under sub-clause (a), or the Unit or Sub-Unit proposes to raise any loan outside the Republic.

(c) A consent under this clause may be granted subject to such conditions, if any, as the Federal Government may think fit to impose.

100. The Federal Government, in consultation with the Governments of the Units concerned, may appoint an Inter-State Commission for the purposes of

- (a) investigating and discussing subjects in which some or all of the Units, or the Federation and one or more of the Units, have a common interest; or
- (b) making recommendations upon any such subject, and, in particular, recommendations for the better co-ordination of the policy and action with respect to that subject.

101. It shall be lawful for two or more Units with the consent of the Federal Authority

- (a) to set up permanent or *ad hoc* committees for the purposes of investigating and discussing and making recommendations upon a subject or subjects of common interests;
- (b) to set up joint administration for, or determine common policy and action with respect to, matters of common interest.

102. (a) The Units shall be autonomous in their administration.

(b) The Units shall assist Sub-Units, whenever necessary, in the maintenance of public safety and order.

(c) The Executive Authority of the Federation may help with armed forces the Government of a Unit or Sub-Unit at the request of the Government of the Unit in the restoration of public order.

(d) If public safety and order be seriously disturbed in any part of the Republic and the Government of the Unit concerned fails to restore public order, the President of the Federation may take necessary measures to restore public safety and order if necessary with the armed forces. Under such circumstances all authorities of the Unit concerned shall assist and obey the instructions of the Executive Authority of the Federation and its duly authorized agents.

(e) If public safety and order be seriously disturbed the Executive Authority of the Federation may also suspend the provision of the Constitution concerning freedom of speech, association and assembly and inviolability of person, home and correspondence in the manner and to the extent determined by the Federal Law and enforce such of the provisions as are determined by the Federal Law for such occasions.

(f) The Executive Authority must immediately communicate to the Federal Legislature all measures taken under this clause of the Constitution.

(g) The Executive Authority of the Federation shall not lend its support to the Rulers of the Federated States for the purpose of suppressing the freedom movement of the people of States.

103 (a) The Federal Government shall be responsible for the protection of every Unit against external invasion and violence.

(b) It shall be the duty of the Governments of Units and Sub-Units to assist the Federal Government in the mobilization of manpower and resources of the country for the purposes of defence and to maintain communications needed for the purposes of defence.

(c) Whenever a grave emergency exists, whereby the security of India is threatened by war, the Federal Legislature shall have the power to make laws for the Unit so affected or a part thereof even with respect to matters assigned to the exclusive charge of the Unit.

Under such circumstances it shall be the duty of all authorities and officials of Units and Sub-Units concerned to co-operate with, and obey instructions of, the Federal Authority, issued for the purposes of the defence of the Republic or a part thereof.

The President of the Federation may also take over the charge of the administration of such parts of the Units or Sub-Units as are required for the purposes of the defence of the Republic.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

#### *General*

104. The Federation as well as Units and Sub-Units including Federated States shall have a democratic constitution.

105. All legislative powers assigned by or under this Constitution to the Federation, Units, or Sub-Units shall be vested in the Legislatures of the Federation, Units, or Sub-Units respectively.

106. All Legislatures shall be uni-cameral and be elected on the basis of adult, equal, direct and secret suffrage.

107 (a) Every citizen who is not less than twenty-one years of age, has been a resident in the constituency for at least six months and is not otherwise disqualified under this Constitution shall be entitled to be registered as a voter at elections of Legislatures.

(b) On the 1st January, 1955 franchise shall be extended to citizens who are not less than eighteen years of age and are not otherwise disqualified under this Constitution.

108. A person shall be disqualified for being a voter

(a) if he is of unsound mind and stands so declared by a competent court;

(b) if he is serving a sentence of transportation or of imprisonment for a criminal offence involving moral turpitude;

(c) if he has been convicted of an offence, or found to have been guilty, of corrupt or illegal practice, relating to elections of a Legislature within five years of the election concerned.

109. Every qualified voter who is more than twenty-five years of age before the first of January of the year of the election, shall be eligible for election, provided that he does not suffer from any disqualification specified in the Constitution.

110. (1) A voter shall be disqualified from being elected or from being a Member of the Legislature

- (a) if he holds any office of profit under any Government in India, other than an office declared by the Constitution or law not to disqualify its holder;
- (b) if he is an undischarged insolvent;
- (c) if he has committed any offence or resorted to an illegal or corrupt practice with respect to elections within eight years of the election concerned;
- (d) if he is convicted of treason to the state.
- (e) if he is under an acknowledgement of allegiance or adherence to a foreign power or is a citizen or a subject of a foreign power.

(2) A person holding the office of a Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary responsible to a Legislature shall not be disqualified under this Clause from being elected to any Legislature, provided that a Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary can be a Member of that Legislature alone to which he is responsible.

111. A citizen who is registered as a voter on the electoral roll of a constituency in a Unit shall be entitled to be a candidate for the membership of the Legislature of the Federation and the Unit from any constituency of the Unit concerned.

112. The Legislatures shall have power to frame Electoral Laws which may determine all such matters with regard to elections as are not determined by the Constitution.

113. (a) The Federal Legislature shall consist of not more than five hundred Members.

(b) The Legislatures of the Units shall consist of not less than fifty and not more than three hundred Members.

(c) The Legislatures of the Sub-Units shall consist of not less than thirty and not more than one hundred Members.

(d) The number of Members shall be fixed from time to time by Electoral Laws which shall be passed for the purpose by various Legislatures with respect to their elections.

(e) The Electoral Laws shall also provide for the delimitation of territorial constituencies and for the purpose Units, Sub-Units and Centrally Administered Areas may be divided and grouped. The ratio of population



per each member shall, so far as practicable, be the same throughout India in case of the Federal Legislature and throughout a Unit or a Sub-Unit in case of the Legislature of the Unit or the Sub-Unit concerned.

114. The superintendence, direction and control of elections to the Legislatures held under this Constitution including the appointment of Election Tribunals for decision of doubts and disputes arising out of, or in connection with, such elections shall be vested in a Commission, which shall be appointed by the President of the Federation in case of the elections of the Federal Legislature, and the Heads of the Units in case of the elections of the Legislatures of the Units and Sub-Units.

115. The Legislatures will be elected for a term of four years under the system of cumulative votes in multi-member constituencies and unless sooner dissolved shall continue for four years from the date appointed for its first meeting and shall automatically be dissolved after the expiration of the said period.

116. The Legislatures may, before the expiration of its terms, decree its own dissolution. It may also be dissolved by the Head of the Government (the President of the Federation in case of the Federal Legislature, the Governor of a Province in case of a Provincial Legislature, the Ruler of the State in case of a State Legislature, Rajpramukh in case of the Legislature of a Sub-Federation and Administrator in case of the Legislature of a Sub-Unit) on the advice of the Council of Ministers, supported by a requisition signed by at least one-third of the Members of the Legislature concerned.

117. (a) A new election must be held not later than the sixtieth day after the expiration of the term, or the dissolution, of the Legislature.

118. The Legislature shall assemble for its first meeting not later than the thirtieth day after the election.

119. No person shall at the same time be a Member of more than one Legislature.

120. A Member of the Legislature can resign his membership at any time.

121. At their first sitting, Members of the Legislature shall take the prescribed oath. Refusal to take this oath or the making of any reservation thereto shall disqualify a person from membership of the Legislature.

### *Powers of the Legislature*

122. Each Legislature shall have the power of legislation within the limits prescribed by the Constitution. It shall also have authority to sanction the budget of revenues and expenditure and control public finances; to enquire into administration and discuss matters of public importance; as well as to adopt proclamations and resolutions and determine principles according to

which state affairs shall be administered. It may censure the Government or one of its members for mal-administration and impeach before the Supreme Court of India by two-thirds majority of votes cast the President of the Federation or the Head of the Unit or Sub-Unit concerned for acts of treason, breach of the Constitution, bribery or other high crimes or misdemeanours.

123. Members of the Legislature shall not address to public authorities requests in the personal interest of individuals.

### *Privileges and Immunities of Members*

124. Subject to the rules and standing orders regulating the procedure of the Legislature concerned, there shall be freedom of speech in the Legislature.

125. A Member of the Legislature shall not be subject to any civil or criminal liability for the exercise of their functions as Members. For the statements made in the Legislature, Members shall be responsible only to the disciplinary rules of the Legislature.

126. Members of the Legislature shall have the right to refuse to give testimony in regard to matter confided to them as Members of the Legislature, even after they cease to be Members. In the trial of cases of attempting to corrupt a Member, testimony cannot be refused.

127 (a) No Member of the Legislature may, without the consent of the Legislature of which he is a Member, be subjected to arrest during the session for a penal offence unless he is apprehended in the commission of the act.

(b) Consent of the Legislature is required for every other restriction of personal liberty which obstructs a member in the exercise of his duty during the session.

(c) Every criminal proceeding against a Member of the Legislature and every arrest or other restriction on his personal liberty shall, on demand of the Legislature to which the Member belongs, be deferred for the duration of the Session.

128. Members of the Legislatures shall have a right to remuneration as specified by law.

### *Officers of the Legislatures*

129. (a) Each Legislature shall elect from amongst its own members its own Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

(b) They shall be paid such salaries and allowances as may be fixed by the Legislature concerned by law.

130. (a) A Member elected as the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker may at any time resign his office and shall vacate his office in case a vote of no-

confidence against him is passed by the Legislature concerned after at least fourteen days notice.

(b) He shall also vacate his office if he ceases to be a Member of the Legislature concerned, provided that in case of the dissolution of the Legislature he shall hold his office until immediately before the first meeting of the Legislature after the dissolution.

131. The Speaker and in his absence the Deputy Speaker shall

- (a) preside over and conduct the deliberations of the Legislature;
- (b) exercise powers of administration, discipline and police within the building of the Legislature;
- (c) discharge such other duties and exercise such other powers as are assigned to him by or under this Constitution, or the Rules of Procedure of the Legislature concerned.

132. In the absence of both the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker the powers and duties of the Speaker shall be exercised by such Member of the Legislature and in such manner as are determined by or under the Rules of Procedure.

133. No officer or other Member of the Legislature in whom powers are vested by or under this Constitution for regulating procedure of the conduct of business, or for maintaining order in the Legislature, shall be subject to the jurisdiction of any courts in respect of the exercise by him of those powers.

### *General Procedure*

134. (a) The President of the Federation in case of the Federal Legislature and the Head of the Unit or the Sub-Unit concerned in case of the Legislature of the Unit or the Sub-Unit shall summon the Legislature at least twice in a year, once in January and thereafter in July.

(b) He may summon the Legislature for extraordinary sessions whenever he may deem it necessary. If at least forty per cent of the Members of a Legislature apply to the Prime Minister stating the object for summoning it, the President of the Federation in case of the Federal Legislature and the Head of the Unit or the Sub-Unit in case of the Legislature of the Unit or the Sub-Unit concerned shall summon the Legislature within a fortnight from the date of such application. Should he fail to do so, the Speaker of the Legislature concerned shall summon the Legislature within the following fortnight.

135. The Legislature may be adjourned or prorogued by the Speaker of the Legislature whenever he deems fit.

136. (a) The sittings of the Legislature shall be public.

(b) On demand of the Presiding Officer or of one-fifth of the Members present the public shall be excluded, if the Legislature so resolves by a two-thirds majority of votes cast.

137. True and accurate reports of the proceedings at the public sittings of the Legislatures are privileged matters.

138. The Legislature shall have power to act notwithstanding any vacancy in the membership thereof, and any proceedings in the Legislature shall be valid notwithstanding that it is discovered subsequently that some person, who was not entitled so to do, sat or voted or otherwise took part in the proceedings.

139. The quorum shall be ten members or one-sixth of the total number of Members, whichever is greater.

140. If at any time during a meeting of the Legislature there is no quorum, it shall be the duty of the Presiding Officer to adjourn the Legislature or to suspend the meeting until there is a quorum.

141. (a) Save as provided in this Constitution, all questions in the Legislature shall be determined by a majority of votes of the Members present and voting.

(b) The Presiding Officer shall not vote in the first instance but shall have and exercise a casting vote in case of equality of votes.

142. No discussion shall take place in the Legislature with respect to the conduct of any Judge of the Supreme Court or of a High Court in the discharge of his duties.

143. The validity of any proceeding in the Legislature shall not be called in question on the ground of any alleged irregularity of procedure.

144. (a) The Head of the Government may address the Legislature and for that purpose require the attendance of Members.

(b) The Head of the Government may send messages to the Legislature with respect to a Bill pending in the Legislature or otherwise, and the Legislature to which any message is so sent shall with all convenient despatch consider any matters required by the message to be taken into consideration.

145. Each Legislature shall determine its own Rules of Procedure, consistent with the Constitution, for conducting its business.

### *Legislative Procedure*

146. Bills of legislation shall be introduced by the Ministry or by Members of the Legislature.

147. (1) A Bill making provision

(a) for imposing, abolishing, remitting, altering or regulating any tax; or

(b) for regulating the borrowing of money, or giving any guarantee by the

Government, or for amending the law with respect to any financial obligations undertaken or to be undertaken by the Government; or

(c) for declaring any expenditure to be expenditure charged on the public revenues, or for increasing the amount of any such expenditure

shall be deemed as a money Bill and shall not be introduced or moved except on the recommendation of the Government.

(2) A Bill or amendment shall not be deemed to make provision for any of the purposes aforesaid by reason only that it provides for the imposition of fines or other pecuniary penalties, or for the demand and payment of fees for licenses or fees for services rendered, or by reason that it provides for the imposition, abolition, remission, alteration, or regulation of tax by any local authority or body for local purposes.

(3) In case of dispute whether a Bill is a money Bill or not, the decision of the Speaker, or in his absence of the Deputy Speaker, shall be final.

148. All politico-social and politico-economic Bills of fundamental importance shall be referred to the Economic Council concerned for its consideration and report, before they are discussed in detail and passed by the Legislature. The Economic Council shall also have the right to initiate drafts of such Bills and refer them to the Legislature through the Ministry. The Economic Council shall report on Bills referred to it within a period of three months.

149. Before a Bill is finally passed by a Legislature it shall be referred to a technical expert who shall have the power to invite the attention of the Legislature to anomalies and technical difficulties which shall be taken into consideration by the Legislature before the Bill is finally passed.

150. (a) All Bills passed by the Federal Legislature shall be presented to the President of the Federation and those passed by the Legislature of a Unit or a Sub-Unit to the Head of the Unit or the Sub-Unit concerned for his assent. He shall have the right to return it with his comments or recommendations within a month of its presentation. The right can be exercised according to his individual judgement after consultations with the Prime Minister and the Minister concerned.

(b) When a Bill is so returned, the Legislature shall reconsider it accordingly and if the Bill is passed again by the Legislature with or without amendment and presented to the President of the Federation or the Head of the Unit or the Sub-Unit, as the case may be, he shall not withhold his assent thereon.

151. The President of the Federation in case of Federal Bills and the Head of the Unit or the Sub-Unit concerned in case of Bills passed by the Legislature of a Unit or a Sub-Unit shall proclaim laws constitutionally enacted and shall publish them within a month in the official Gazette.

152. All laws, unless otherwise provided, shall be effective on the fourteenth day after the day of publication in the official Gazette.

153. Except as otherwise provided by law, the Ministry shall have the power to issue such general administrative regulations as are necessary for the execution of laws.

154. A Statutory Committee of 24 persons shall be elected annually on the principle of proportional representation through single transferable vote by every Legislature except that of a Sub-Unit. A member of the Government shall not be a member of the Standing Committee, but shall have power to attend its meetings and take part in its deliberations.

155. The Statutory Committee shall have the power

- (a) to scrutinize and sanction Ordinances framed by the Government under the authority of a law passed by the Legislature;
- (b) to consider and pass, on the recommendation of the Government, emergency laws in the form of Ordinances on all matters of the immediate urgency in the intervals between Sessions of the Legislature;
- (c) to discharge such other functions as may be assigned to it by the Legislature.

156. The Statutory Committee shall be accountable to the Legislature for its activities. Emergency laws shall be laid before the Legislature concerned and shall cease to operate at the expiration of six weeks from the reassembly of the Legislature unless earlier disapproved by the Legislature, or withdrawn by the Government.

157. The Rules of Procedure of the Legislature shall determine the procedure of the Statutory Committee.

### *Financial Matters*

158. The financial management of revenue-producing enterprises of the Government shall be regulated by law.

159. Government taxes and general government income shall be regulated by law.

160. The procurement of funds upon credit as well as the assumption of any liability by the Republic may be undertaken only by the authority of law.

161. Public money shall be disbursed according to the provisions of the Constitution or the grants sanctioned by the Legislature.

162. (1) No demand for a grant shall be made except on the recommendation of the Government.

(2) A Bill which, if enacted and brought into operation, would involve expenditure from the revenue of the Federation, Unit or Sub-Unit shall not be passed by the Legislature unless the consideration of the Bill is recommended by the Government concerned.

163. The President of the Federation and the Heads of the Units and the

Sub-Units shall in respect of every financial year cause to be laid before the Legislature a budget of the estimated receipts and expenditure of the Government.

164. The Legislature shall have the power to discuss the budget, to assent, or to refuse to assent, to a demand, or to assent to a demand subject to a reduction of the amount specified therein. The budget must be passed before the beginning of the fiscal year.

165. The grants shall as a rule be voted for one year; in special cases they may be voted for a longer period.

166. So much of the estimates as relates to expenditure declared by or under the Constitution as expenditure charged upon the revenues of the Federation, the Unit or the Sub-Unit shall not be submitted to the vote of the Legislature. But nothing in this Clause shall be construed as preventing the discussion in the Legislature of those estimates.

167. The following expenditure shall be expenditure charged on the revenues of the Federation, the Unit or the Sub-Unit:

- (a) Debt charges for which the Federation, the Unit or the Sub-Unit is liable including interest, sinking fund charges and other expenditure relating to the raising of loans and the service and reduction of debt.
- (b) Any sum required to satisfy a judgement, decree or award of any court or arbitral tribunal.
- (c) The emoluments and allowances of the Heads of the Federation, the Units and the Sub-Units, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the Legislature, and Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts.
- (d) Any other expenditure declared by this Constitution or by the Legislature to be so charged.

168. Within a fiscal year the Head of the Government may cause to be laid before the Legislature a supplementary demand of expenditure, which shall be considered by the Legislature and may be granted, refused, or assented to, subject to a reduction of the amount specified therein.

169. The annual accounts, examined and approved by the audit, shall along with the audit report, be submitted to, and considered by, the Legislature.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY

#### *Heads of Governments*

170. (a) The executive authority of the Federation, Provinces, Sub-Federations and Federated States shall be vested in the President

(Rashtrapati) of the Republic, Governors of the Provinces, Rajpramukhs of Sub-Federation and Rulers of the States respectively.

(b) The executive authority of a Sub-Unit which is not a Federated State shall be vested in the Administrator of the Sub-Unit.

(c) The President of the Republic will be known as and is referred to in the Constitution as the Head of the Federation or the Republic.

(d) Governors of Provinces, Rajpramukhs of Sub-Federations and Rulers of such Federated States as do not form part of any Sub-Federation shall be known and is referred to in this Constitution as Heads of Units.

(e) Administrators of the Sub-Units, and Rulers of such Federated States as form part of the Sub-Federation shall be known as and is referred to in this constitution as Heads of the Sub-Units.

(f) All these officers are also referred to in this Constitution as Heads or Constitutional Heads of Government.

171. The President of the Republic shall be elected by means of a single transferable vote by an electoral college composed of the Members of the Federal Legislature and an equal number of persons elected by the Legislatures of the Units on population basis under the system of single transferable vote.

172. The Governor of a Province and a Rajpramukh of a Sub-Federation shall be elected by means of a single transferable vote by an electoral college composed of the members of the Legislature of the Unit concerned and representatives of the Province or Sub-Federation concerned on the Federal Legislature.

173. The Administrator of a Sub-Unit shall be elected by means of a single transferable vote by an electoral college composed of the members of the Legislature of the Sub-Unit and representatives of the Sub-Unit concerned on the Legislature of the Sub-Federation.

174. The President, Governors, Rajpramukhs and Administrators shall be elected for a term of five years.

175. In case of vacancy by death, or resignation or for any other reason, a new President, Governor, Rajpramukh and Administrator, as the case may be, shall be elected within a month for the full term of five years.

176. Every citizen who has completed the age of thirty-five years and is qualified for election as a member of the Legislature shall be entitled to be the President of the Republic, or the Governor of a Province, the Rajpramukh of a Sub-Federation or the Administrator of a Sub-Unit.

177. The Heads of the Federation, the Units and the Sub-Units shall not at the same time be members of a Legislature and shall not hold any other office or position of emoluments or participate in the governing or controlling bodies of societies and associations which work for profit.

178. (a) In the event of the absence of the President or Governor or



Rajpramukh or Administrator or of his death, resignation, removal from office, or incapacity or failure to exercise and perform the powers and functions of his office or at any time at which the office of the President, the Governor, the Rajpramukh or the Administrator may become vacant, his functions shall be discharged by the Speaker of the Legislature of the Federation or the Unit or the Sub-Unit, as the case may be, pending the resumption of duties or the election of a new President or Governor or Rajpramukh or Administrator.

(b) On such occasions and during such periods the Speaker of the Legislature shall not attend sessions of the Legislature and the Deputy Speaker concerned shall discharge the duties of the Speaker of the Legislature.

(c) On such occasions and during such periods the Speaker will have all the powers and immunities of the Head of the Federation or the Unit or the Sub-Unit concerned, as the case may be.

179. The constitutional powers of the Rulers of States are hereditary in direct descendants, natural and legitimate, and the order of succession shall be determined by the customary law of the State concerned; unless a Federal Law passed at the request of two-thirds majority of Members of the Legislature of the State concerned determines otherwise either with respect to succession or continuance of the Monarchy.

180. The Ruler attains majority upon the completion of his twenty-first year.

181. (a) During the Ruler's minority or his physical incapacity to discharge his duties, the heir presumptive to the throne, if he be 21 years of age or more shall be regent of full right. In default the regent shall be elected by the Legislature of the State, convened within a month by the Ministers.

(b) Unless a Regent is appointed under this Clause, the Speaker of the Legislature of the State concerned shall act as the Regent.

182. No one shall be elected more than twice as the President of the Federation or the Governor of the Province or the Rajpramukh of the Sub-Federation or the Administrator of the Sub-Unit.

All doubts and disputes arising out of or in connection with the election of the President of the Federation, the Governor of the Province or the Rajpramukh of the Sub-Federation shall be enquired into and decided by the Supreme Court whose decision shall be final.

183. The President of the Federation and Heads of the various Units and Sub-Units shall have official residence and shall receive such emoluments and allowances as may be determined by law passed by the Legislatures of the Federation and the Units and Sub-Units concerned respectively.

184. The Heads of the Federation, Units and Sub-Units on assumption of office shall make an affirmation before the Legislature to the effect that

they shall abide by the Constitution and laws, shall fulfill their duties conscientiously and impartially and shall advance the people's interests.

### *Powers*

185. The President of the Republic shall represent the Republic in its relations with other states and as such

- (a) negotiate and ratify international treaties;
  - (b) receive and appoint diplomatic representatives;
  - (c) declare the existence of a state of war, or declare war with the consent of the Federal Legislature and lay before the Federal Legislature for approval peace treaties which have been concluded.
- He shall also have the supreme command of the armed forces of the Republic.

186. The Heads of the Federation, Units and Sub-Units shall have the power

- (a) to grant pardon as well as donations and pensions in special cases on the recommendations of the Government;
- (b) to return with comment in his individual Judgement any law enacted by the Legislature after consultation with his Ministers;
- (c) to sign all laws enacted by the Legislatures and all Ordinances passed by the Statutory Committee of 24;
- (d) to summon and dissolve the Legislature;
- (e) to report verbally or in writing to the Legislature on the state of public affairs and to recommend for consideration measures which he deems necessary and useful;
- (f) to appoint and dismiss Cabinet Ministers and other state officials;
- (g) to represent the Government as its Constitutional Head on all ceremonial occasions;
- (h) to demand from the Government or its individual members reports or information or to call them to conference and hold discussions with them on any matter in their jurisdiction;
- (i) to discharge all such other duties as are entrusted to him by the Constitution or law or devolves on him by virtue of his position as the Constitutional Head of the Government.

187. The Heads of the Federation, Units and Sub-Units shall exercise their functions in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and laws on the advice of their Ministers unless otherwise specifically authorized

by the Constitution. The question whether any, and if so what, advice was tendered by Ministers shall not be inquired into any court.

188. All orders and decrees of the Heads of the Government, including those concerning the armed forces, except those to be issued on the advice of some other authority require for their validity the countersignature of a Minister. Responsibility is accepted by the act of countersignature.

189. The Heads of the Federation, Units and Sub-Units may be prosecuted for high treason and breach of the Constitution but shall not otherwise be answerable at law in the exercise of his functions. The Government shall be responsible for all his official utterances and acts, other than what he is required to do on the advice of some other authority.

190. (1) All governmental and executive powers, in so far as it does not explicitly appertain to the Head of the Federation or the Unit or the Sub-Unit according to the Constitution or the laws shall be exercised by the Council of Ministers unless assigned to some specific authority.

(2) Nothing in this Clause shall be deemed to

- (a) transfer to the charge of the Council of Ministers directly any functions conferred by any existing law on any authority subordinate to the Council of Ministers.
- (b) prevent the Legislature concerned from conferring by law functions on any authority subordinate to the Council of Ministers.

### *The Council of Ministers*

191. The Prime Minister, and on his recommendation other Ministers, shall be appointed by the Constitutional Head of the Government.

192. No person shall be appointed as a Minister unless he is a citizen of the Indian Republic by birth or naturalization, is at least 25 years of age and is eligible for being a Member of the Legislature.

193. A Minister who for any period of six consecutive months is not a Member of the Legislature shall cease to be a Minister.

194. In a Federated State a citizen of Indian Republic may be appointed and continue to function as a Minister, even though he is neither born in the State nor a resident of the State nor a Member of the State Legislature, provided that the State Legislature approves such an appointment by a majority of votes cast.

195. The salaries of the Ministers shall be such, as the Legislature concerned may from time to time by a law determine, provided that the salaries shall not vary during his term of office.

196. The Ministers, on assumption of office, shall take an oath of secrecy and to perform their duties impartially for the public welfare and in accordance with the Constitution and law.

197. The Ministers shall not hold any other office or position of emoluments or participate in the governing or controlling bodies of societies and associations which work for profit.

198. Ministers shall collectively constitute the Government and form a Council of Ministers, which shall be presided over by the Prime Minister.

199. The Council of Ministers shall make rules for the transaction of the business of the Government and for the allocation of the said business.

200. The Council of Ministers may contain one or more Ministers without portfolio.

201. The meetings of the Council of Ministers shall be secret.

202. (a) Ministers who are not members of the Legislature shall have no deliberative vote in the Legislature, but they shall have admission to the Legislature and are entitled to be heard when they are so requested.

(b) The Legislature shall also have the right to demand their presence.

203. (a) The Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the Legislature for the general policy of the Government and individually for affairs under their personal charge.

(b) They shall hold office so long as they command the confidence of the Legislature. Within a month of the formation of a new Council of Ministers it must seek the confidence of the Legislature.

204. (a) Ministers must resign if and when the Legislature withdraws its confidence by an express resolution.

(b) The Prime Minister may, however, choose to appeal to the electorate and seek their confidence and for the purpose request the Head of the Federation, the Unit or the Sub-Unit, as the case may be, for the dissolution of the Legislature as provided in the Constitution.

205. When the Prime Minister decides to resign his office, all other Ministers will tender their resignations along with him.

206. (a) The Ministry or an individual Minister will be relieved of office by the Head of the Government in cases prescribed by law or upon their request.

(b) A Minister shall resign if and when required to do so by the Prime Minister.

207. In the event of a resignation of the entire Ministry, the resigning Ministers shall carry on current business until it is taken over by the new Ministers. This rule may also apply to individual Ministers.

208. (a) Parliamentary Secretaries, chosen from amongst Members of the Legislatures, may be assigned to the Ministers to assist them in their departmental and parliamentary duties.

(b) They shall transact such business as may be allocated to them under rules framed for the purpose by the Council of Ministers.

209 (a) The Parliamentary Secretary shall be subordinate to the Minister and shall be bound by his instructions.

(b) The Parliamentary Secretary shall be relieved of his duties and office upon his request or the resignation of the Ministry or on an express resolution of the withdrawal of confidence by the Legislature. He shall resign if and when required to do so by the Prime Minister.

## CHAPTER X

### THE JUDICIAL AUTHORITY

#### *General*

210. The judicial power shall be exercised and justice administered in accordance with law in the public law courts duly established under the Constitution or by any other law.

211. (a) The judicial power shall be separated from the administration in all instances.

(b) Judges shall not be required to exercise any executive function or power. They may, however, be entrusted with investigations of quasi-judicial character.

212. (a) Judges shall be independent in the exercise of the functions of the office and shall be bound only by the law.

(b) On the assumption of office Judges shall be required to pledge themselves to abide by law and administer justice impartially and according to their conscience.

213. Except Judges of Panchayat Courts, no Judge can be a member of any representative body or a political party or a communal organization or hold, except in cases foreseen in the law, any other paid engagement.

214. The organization, jurisdiction and procedure of the law courts shall be prescribed by law in full conformity with the Constitution.

215. (a) The Law declared by the Supreme Court of India shall, so far as applicable, be recognized as binding on, and shall be followed by, all Courts.

(b) The law declared by the Privy Council of the British Commonwealth prior to the promulgation of this Constitution shall be binding on and followed by all courts other than the Supreme Court to the extent it is not inconsistent with the law declared by the Supreme Court.

#### *Jurisdiction*

216. The Judicial power shall extend to the question of the validity of any law, Regulation, Ordinance, order, or decree.

217. The enforcement of fundamental rights and other provisions of the Constitution shall be the sacred duty of the law courts, specially that of the Supreme Court, and it shall be discharged regardless of all considerations when proceedings are instituted by any interested party.

218. (a) The Supreme Court of India shall, with such exceptions and subject to such regulations as may be prescribed by law, have appellate jurisdiction from all decisions of the High Courts of the Provinces, Sub-Federations and the Federated States and any other court exercising Federal Jurisdiction independent of the High Court.

(b) The exceptions and regulations shall not prevent the Supreme Court from hearing appeals (i) in cases which involve substantial questions of law as to the interpretation of the Constitution or the Federal Law, (ii) against judgements, decrees, orders and sentences of any Justice or Justices exercising the original jurisdiction of the High Court; (iii) in any other matter in which at the enactment of the Indian Independence Act of 1947 an appeal lay to the Privy Council.

(c) The decision of the Supreme Court shall be final and conclusive and shall not be capable of being reviewed by any authority—executive, legislative, or judicial.

219. The Supreme Court of India, shall, to the exclusion of any other court, have the original and final jurisdiction in any dispute between the Federation and a Unit or between one Unit and another, if and in so far as the dispute involves any question (whether of law or fact) on which the existence or extent of a legal right depends.

220. The Supreme Court of India shall have the jurisdiction to decide finally upon all matters arising out of international law or treaties including extradition between the Republic and a foreign state. If the Federal Law so prescribes or the President of the Federation so desires, the matter may be taken into cognisance by the Supreme Court in the first instance.

221. (a) If at any time it appears to the President of the Federation that a question of law has arisen or is likely to arise, which is of such a nature and of such public importance that it is expedient to obtain the opinion of the Supreme Court upon it, he may refer the question to that Court for consideration, and the Court may, after such hearing as it thinks fit, report to the President thereon.

(b) No report shall be made save in accordance with an opinion delivered in open court with concurrence of a majority of the Judges present at the hearing of the case, but nothing in the Clause shall be deemed to prevent a judge, who does not concur, from delivering a dissenting opinion.

222. The Supreme Court and the High Court shall be courts of records and shall also have all such powers and authority (including power to appoint clerks and other ministerial officers and power to make rules and orders for regulating the practice, production of any document, the investigation or punishment of any contempt of court or the enforcement of its decrees), as may be deemed necessary for the administration of justice placed under their jurisdiction.

223. The High Courts of Units shall have such jurisdiction, original and

appellate including admiralty jurisdiction in respect of offence committed on the high seas, and all such powers and authority over or in relation to the administration of justice as are or may hereafter be vested in those courts by law.

224. The Supreme Court and High Courts shall have the power to issue directions or orders in the nature of the writ of habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, quo warranto and certiorari, or any of them for any purposes including and enforcement of fundamental rights conferred by this Constitution.

225. The Federal Legislature may by law make provision for conferring upon the Supreme Court such supplemented powers not inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Constitution as may appear to be necessary or desirable for the purpose of enabling the Court more effectively to exercise the jurisdiction conferred upon it by or under this Constitution.

226. The Supreme Court in the exercise of its jurisdiction may pass such decree or make such order as is necessary for doing complete justice in any case or matter pending before it. And any decree so passed or order so made shall be enforceable throughout the territory of India in such manner as may be prescribed by or under any law made by the Federal Legislature.

227. Subject to the provisions of any law made in this behalf by the Federal Legislature the Supreme Court shall, as respects the whole of the territory of India, have all and every power to make any order for the purpose or securing the attendance of any person, the discovery or production of any documents, or the investigation or punishment of any contempt to itself.

228. If the High court is satisfied that the case pending in a court subordinate to it involves a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of this Constitution it may withdraw the case to itself and dispose of the same.

229. Subject to the provisions of law a High Court may direct the transfer of any suit or appeal from any subordinate Court to any other Court of similar or superior jurisdiction or withdraw such suit or appeal from any such Court to itself.

230. (a) Each of the High Courts shall have superintendence over all courts for the time being subject to its appellate jurisdiction. Subject to the provisions of law the High Court may make and issue general rules and prescribe forms for regulating the practice, proceedings and other business of such courts.

(b) Nothing in this clause shall be construed as giving to a High Court any jurisdiction to question any judgement of any inferior court which is not otherwise subject to appeal or revision.

231. All authorities, civil and judicial, in the territory of India shall act in aid of the Supreme Court and the High Court.

*Judges of Supreme and High Courts*

232. The Supreme Court as well as a High Court shall consist of Chief Justice and such other Judges as the President may from time to time deem necessary to appoint, provided that the Judges so appointed shall at no time exceed in number such maximum as is fixed by the Federal Legislature.

233. (a) The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the President of the Federation subject to confirmation by two-thirds majority of the Federal Legislature and the other Judges of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the President in consultation with its Chief Justice.

(b) The Chief Justice of a High Court shall be appointed by the President on the advice of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in consultation with the Head of the Unit.

(c) Other Judges of a High Court shall be appointed by the President on the advice of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in consultation with the Head of the Unit and the Chief Justice of the High Court concerned.

234. A person shall not be qualified for appointment as a Judge of the Supreme Court or any High Court unless he possesses a high legal qualification and has either

- (a) been for at least ten years an advocate of a High Court or the Supreme Court or two or more such Courts in succession; or
- (b) held for at least seven years a judicial office (in the post of a Judge of a High Court for the appointment of a Judge of the Supreme Court and that of a District or Sessions Judge for the appointment of the Judge of a High Court.)

*Explanation*

For the purpose of this Clause

- (a) in computing the period during which a person has been an advocate of a High Court or the Supreme Court there shall be included any period during which a person held judicial office after he became an advocate.
- (b) in computing the period during which a person has held judicial office there shall be included any period during which he has been an advocate of any High Court, the Federal Court or the Supreme Court.

235. Judges and Chief Justices of the Supreme Court and High Courts shall hold office until sixty-five years of age, provided that



- (a) a Judge may by resignation under his hand addressed to the President of the Federation resign his office;
- (b) a Judge may be removed from his office by the President on the ground of infirmity of mind or body or wilful neglect of duty, or improper exercise of judicial functions or conviction for any infamous offence, if the removal is recommended by the Supreme Court, on reference being made to them by the President.

236. When the office of Chief Justice of India or of a High Court is vacant or when the Chief Justice is, by reason of absence or otherwise, unable to perform the duties of his office, the duties of the office shall be performed by such one of the other Judges of the Court as the President may appoint for the purpose.

237. (i) If at any time there may not be a quorum of the Judges of the Supreme Court available to hold or continue any session of the Court, the Chief Justice may, after consultation with the Chief Justice of the High Court concerned, request in writing the attendance at the sitting of the Court as an ad hoc Judge of a High Court, to be nominated by the Chief Justice of India.

(ii) It shall be the duty of the Judge, who has been so nominated, in priority to other duties of his office, to attend the sittings of the Supreme Court at the time and for the period for which his attendance is required, and while so attending he shall have all the jurisdiction, powers and privileges and shall discharge the duties of a Judge of the Supreme Court.

238. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Chapter, the Chief Justice of India may at any time, subject to the provisions of this Clause, request any person who had held the office of a Judge of the Supreme Court or of the Federal Court to sit and act as a Judge of the Supreme Court and every such person so requested shall, while so sitting and acting, have all the jurisdiction, powers, privileges of, but shall not otherwise be deemed to be, a Judge of that Court:

Provided that nothing in this Clause shall be deemed to require any such person as aforesaid to sit and act as a Judge of that Court unless he consents to do.

239. If and when necessary, temporary and Additional Judges may be appointed to High Courts by the President on the advice of the Chief Justice of India in consultation with the Head of the Unit and the Chief Justice of the High Court concerned. Temporary Judges may be appointed from amongst retired Judges of High Courts, if possible. The appointment of additional Judges shall require the confirmation by the two-thirds majority of the Federal Legislature.

240. The Judges of the Supreme Court and of the several High Courts shall be entitled to such salaries and allowances and to such rights in respect of leave and pensions as may be determined by law:

Provided that

- (a) the salaries of the Judges of High Courts shall not be less than those of the Ministers of Units concerned and the salaries of the Judges of the Supreme Court shall not be less than those of the Ministers of the Federation;
- (b) neither the salary of a Judge nor his rights in respect of leave of absence or pension shall be varied to his disadvantage after his appointment.

241. No person who has held office as a Judge of a High Court or a Supreme Court shall plead or act in any court or before any authority within the territory of India.

### *High Courts*

242. The Legislature of a Unit may by law constitute a High Court for the Unit or any part thereof or reconstitute in like manner any High Court for that Unit or any part thereof or where there are two High Courts in the Unit amalgamate those Courts.

243. The Federal Legislature may by law, if satisfied that an agreement in that behalf has been made between the Governments of Units concerned, extend the jurisdiction of a High Court in any Province to any area not forming part of that Province or to the whole of any other Province or a Federated State.

(b) In such case the High Court's jurisdiction in relation to any area or areas outside the Province in which it has its principal seat shall be determined by the Legislature that has power to make laws with respect to that area or areas.

244. (a) With the consent of the President of the Federation and agreement among Governments concerned a common High Court with jurisdiction commonly agreed upon amongst Legislatures of Units concerned may be established for a number of Units.

(b) A law for the purpose may be passed by the Federal Legislature, if so requested by the Legislatures of the Units concerned.

245. (a) The administrative expenses of the Supreme Court shall be a charge on the revenues of the Federation, those of High Courts upon the revenues of the Unit concerned.

(b) When a High Court serves a number of Units, its expenses shall be

shared by all of them in proportion to be determined by mutual agreement or in default by an arbitrator to be appointed by the Chief Justice of India.

## CHAPTER XI

### DIRECTLY ADMINISTERED AREAS

246. (a) Such Indian Territories of the Republic as do not form part of the Territories of a Unit, shall be directly administered by the Federal Government through Chief Commissioners.

(b) The Chief Commissioner will be the head of the administration of the territory concerned and will be bound by order and directions, and work under the control and supervision, of the Federal Government.

247. A General Council elected on the basis of the adult franchise shall be established for each such territory by a Federal Law.

248. The General Council shall have power—

(a) to discuss and pass the budget of revenue and expenditure and to examine the audited report of accounts;

(b) to make representations to the Federal Government and tender advice to the Chief Commissioner on all matters concerning the local administration of the territory;

(c) to exercise along with the Federal Legislature the power of concurrent legislation with respect to subjects placed under the exclusive or concurrent jurisdiction of the Units under this Constitution.

249. Bills or Budgets passed by the General Council shall not be operative unless assented to or approved by the President of the Republic. He shall have the power to refer them back to the General Council for its reconsideration, to assent or withhold his assent from a Bill, or to approve the Budget in its entirety or with such modifications as he may deem fit.

250. An Executive Council of four to seven, as determined by a Federal Law, shall be elected by the General Council every year.

251. (a) The administration shall be carried on by the Chief Commissioner in association with the Executive Council in a manner determined by or under a Federal Law.

(b) The Executive Council will transact such other business as is delegated to it by the General Council with the approval of the President of the Republic or assigned to it by a Federal Law or Federal Executive Order.

252. Any Federated State whose Ruler has ceded full and exclusive authority, jurisdiction and powers for and in relations to the governance of the State to the Federal Government shall be administered in all respects as if the State were for the time being Centrally Administered Area, and accordingly all the provisions of this Constitution relating to such an Area shall apply to such State.

## CHAPTER XII

## ABORIGINAL TRIBES AND TRIBAL AREAS

253. The Tribal areas shall politically form part of the Units to which they geographically belong and shall be democratically administered as integral parts of the Indian Republic and the Units concerned.

254. The Tribal Peoples shall enjoy fully all the rights of citizenship of the Indian Republic and shall enjoy equal right of representation on Legislatures of the Federation and Units concerned and equal opportunities of participation in the political life of the country.

255. Special laws shall be passed by the Federal Legislature to restrict and limit immigration to Tribal Areas with a view to protecting Tribal Peoples from the evil consequences of unchecked migration.

256. Special laws shall be passed by the Legislatures of the Units with regard to transfer of land and transaction of business in Tribal Areas with a view to protecting Tribal Peoples from economic exploitation and evil consequences of unequal free competition and contracts.

257. Tribal Areas shall be treated as autonomous territories within Units and shall be granted wide administrative, economic and cultural autonomy to be enjoyed through Autonomous District and Regional Councils.

258. Autonomous District and Regional Councils shall have, besides usual municipal functions, powers of legislation and administration over—

(i) social matters of Tribal Peoples such as marriage and domestic relations, inheritance of property, primary and secondary education, public relief and charities, betting and gambling, intoxicating liquors and drugs, tribal institutions;

(ii) economic matters such as agriculture and settlement of land, preservation and development of forests, fisheries, cottage industries, wholesale or retail business, money lending, production and supply of foodstuffs, poisons and dangerous drugs, irrigation and canals, weights and measures.

259. Autonomous Councils shall recognize and establish people's courts to adjudicate non-cognisable criminal offences and civil suits concerning laws of the tribes and regulations of Autonomous Councils.

260. Tribal Peoples shall be encouraged and preferred in local services.

261. The President of the Federation shall appoint a Tribal Commission which shall consist of

(a) representative of Autonomous Regional Councils one for each Council;

(b) five persons elected by the Federal Legislature;

(c) a non-official Chairman and a permanent Secretary appointed by the President of the Federation.

The Chairman and the Secretary as well as the members shall be paid

such remuneration and allowances as may be determined by Federal Law.

262. (1) The Tribal Commission shall have power to advise the Federal Government with regard to—

(a) the disbursement of money granted by the Federal Legislature for the advancement of the Tribal Peoples;

(b) The adaptation of Federal and Provincial Laws for the Tribal Areas with a view to protecting the communal life and economy of the Tribal Peoples.

(c) such other measures as may be determined for the advancement of the welfare of the Tribal Peoples.

(2) The Tribal Commission may also tender advice to the Governments of Units on any matter intended for the protection of the interests of Tribal Peoples.

(3) The Federal Government, if it so chooses, may also entrust to the Commission the direction, control and supervision of the department and activities organized for the advancement or the welfare of the Tribal Peoples.

263. As soon as may be after the commencement of this Constitution, Tribes Advisory Councils shall be established in such Units and Sub-Units, the population of which contains a substantial number of Tribal Peoples.

264. The Tribes Advisory Councils shall have the power to advise the Government of the Units on all matters pertaining to the administration of Tribal Areas, if any, and the welfare of the Tribal People in the Unit or Sub-Unit.

265. The Constitution of the Regional and District Autonomous Councils as well as that of the Tribes Advisory Councils shall be determined by Law by the Legislature of the Unit or the Sub-Unit concerned; provided that at least three-fourths of the members of these Councils shall be from amongst Tribal Peoples.

266. The Legislatures shall have power to provide for the adaptation of laws to the Tribal Peoples and Areas. Such laws may empower the Head of the Government to make necessary exceptions, modifications and adaptations in laws, if so advised by the Tribal Commission or the Tribes Advisory Council.

267. Out of the revenues of the Federation such Capital and recurring sums shall be paid to a Unit or a Sub-Unit as grants-in-aid as may be necessary to enable that Unit or Sub-Unit to meet the costs of such schemes of development as may be undertaken by the Unit or Sub-Unit with the approval of the Federal Government for the purpose of promoting the welfare of the tribes in that Unit or Sub-Unit or raising the level of administration of the Tribal Area in that Unit or Sub-Unit to that of the administration of the rest of the areas of that Unit or Sub-Unit.

## CHAPTER XIII

## PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

268. (1) Subject to the provisions of this Clause there shall be a Public Service Commission for the Federation and a Public Service Commission for each Unit.

(2) Two or more Units may agree—

(a) that there shall be one Public Service Commission for that group of Units; or

(b) that the Public Service Commission of one Unit shall serve the needs of all other Units of the group; and any such agreement may contain such incidental and consequential provisions as may appear necessary or desirable for giving effect to the purposes of the agreement and shall, in the case of an agreement that there shall be one Commission for a group of Units, specify by what authorities the functions of the Governor concerning the Public Service Commission shall be discharged.

(3) The Public Service Commission for the Federation if requested so to do by the Head of a Unit may, with the approval of the President of the Federation agree to serve all or any needs of the Unit.

269. The Chairman and other Members of a Public Service Commission shall be appointed, in the case of the Federal Commission by the President of the Federation, and in the case of a Commission of a Unit by the Head of the Unit concerned, subject to confirmation by two-thirds majority of the Legislature concerned.

270. (a) The Chairman and other Members of the Public Service Commission shall not be members of any general representative body and shall not have been Members of the Federal Ministry or any Ministry of any Unit or Sub-Unit within the last five years of the date of appointment.

(b) The Chairman or other Members of the Public Service Commission shall not hold any other office or participate in governing or controlling bodies of societies and associations which work for profit. Nor shall they be a member of any political party or a communal organization or any such organization the membership of which may in any way affect adversely their reputation for impartiality or integrity.

271. The service conditions of the Chairman and other Members of the Public Service Commission including those of the staff shall be determined by the Legislatures concerned from time to time provided that neither the salary nor the rights in respect of absence, pension, or age of retirement shall be varied in disadvantage to person after his appointment.

272. The Chairman and other Members of Public Service Commission shall only be removed from office in a like manner and on the like grounds as the Judge of a High Court.

273. The staff of the Public Service Commission shall constitute an independent service and be entitled to rights and privileges with respect to pay, leave, allowances, etc., guaranteed and prescribed by law to service of the same grade, status and character.

274. The Chairman and other Members of the Public Service Commission shall make an affirmation of justice and impartiality.

275. To ensure full justice to citizens and efficient service to the state, intervention and any kind of pressure, through letters of recommendations or otherwise, of Ministers, Members of the Legislature and other officials and citizens over Chairman and Members of the Public Service Commission, individually or collectively, in the matter of appointment of public servants, is forbidden.

276. Subject to the provisions of the Constitution the Public Service Commission of the Federation or a Unit shall—

(a) Conduct examinations for appointments to Civil Services of the Federation and those of the Units and Sub-Units respectively;

(b) advise the Government on any matter referred to them under Clause (277) or any other matter which the President of the Federation or the Head of the Unit or Sub-Unit, as the case may be, may refer to them;

(c) discharge such other functions as may be provided for by a Law by the appropriate Legislature.

277. Subject to the Laws of the appropriate Legislature a Public Service Commission shall be consulted by the Government concerned—

(a) on all matters relating to the methods and principles to be followed in the recruitment, promotions and transfers of Civil Servants;

(b) on all disciplinary matters affecting a person serving under the Government concerned including memorials or petitions to such matters,

(c) on any monetary claim by or in respect of a person who is serving or has served the Government concerned in a civil capacity.

278. Subject to the provisions of this Constitution Acts of the appropriate Legislature may regulate the recruitment and conditions of service of persons appointed to public services, and to posts in connection with the affairs, of the Federation, any Unit or Sub-Unit.

279. No person who is a member of any Civil Service or holds any Civil post in connection with the affairs of the Government of the Federation, the Unit or Sub-Unit shall be dismissed, removed or reduced in rank until he has been given a reasonable opportunity of showing cause against the action proposed to be taken in regard to him:

Provided that this Clause shall not apply—

(a) Where a person is dismissed, removed, reduced in rank on the ground of conduct which has led to his conviction on a criminal charge; or

(b) Where an authority empowered to dismiss a person or remove him or reduce him in rank is satisfied that for some reason to be recorded by that

authority in writing it is not reasonably practicable to give that person an opportunity of showing cause.

280. The expenses of the Public Service Commission of the Federation or of a Unit including any salaries, allowances and pensions payable to, or in respect of, the members or staff of the Commission shall be charged on the Revenues of the Federation or a Unit as the case may be.

(a) When the Public Service Commission of one Government serves the needs of the other Government there shall be charged on and paid out of the Revenues of the other Government in respect of the expenses or pensions as may be agreed, or as may in default of agreement be determined by an arbitrator to be appointed by the Chief Justice of India.

(b) When the Public Service Commission serves the needs of another Unit, its expenses shall be charged on the Revenue of all Units in such proportion as may be agreed or as may in default of agreement be determined by an arbitrator to be appointed by Chief Justice of India.

#### CHAPTER XIV

#### FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

281. All revenues or money raised or received by the Executive Authority of the Federation and various Units and Sub-units for general administrative purposes shall form consolidated Revenue Funds of the Federation and various Units and Sub-Units respectively and shall be appropriated for the purposes of the Federation and various Units and Sub-Units in the manner and under conditions prescribed by the Constitution or Law or determined by the Budget passed by the Legislature concerned.

282. The income, accounts of expenditure and balances of economic enterprise shall be kept separate from Consolidated Revenue Funds as well as from general revenue accounts and balances.

283. Independent audits shall be organized, under the control and supervision of the Auditors-General of the Federation and various Units, to examine the accounts of income and expenditure of each and every agency of the Government concerned including those of economic enterprises with which the Government of the Federation or the Unit is connected. The audit shall include the examination of the expenditure of the endowments, foundations and other institutions administered by an agency of the Government.

284. The Auditors-General of the Federation and the various Units shall be appointed by the President of the Federation and the Heads of the Units respectively subject to confirmation by a two-thirds majority of the Legislature concerned.

285. The Auditors-General shall have the same status as the Presidents



of the Public Service Commissions and shall only be removed from office in a like manner and on the like grounds as a member of the Public Service Commission or the Judge of a High Court.

286. The conditions of service of the Auditors-General shall be prescribed by law, provided that neither the salary nor his right in respect of leave of absence, pension or age of retirement shall be varied in his disadvantage after his appointment.

287. The Auditors-General shall not be members of any general representative body and shall not have been a Member of the Federal Ministry or any Ministry of any Unit or Sub-Unit within the last five years at the date of the appointment.

288. No member of the Audit Department may take part in the direction or administration of enterprises which must render an account to the Government, except enterprises, the exclusive objects of which is the advancement of humanitarian endeavours.

289. The personnel of the Audit Department shall constitute an independent service. They shall be recruited through the Public Service Commissions and entitled to rights and privileges, with respect to pay, leave, allowance, etc., guaranteed and prescribed by law to services of the same grade, status and character.

290. Two or more Units may agree—

(a) that there shall be one Audit Department for that group of Units;

(b) that the Audit Department for a particular Unit shall serve the needs of the other Units party to the agreement, and any such agreement may contain such incidental consequential provisions as may appear necessary or desirable for giving effect to the purpose of the agreement and shall, in the case of an agreement that there shall be one common Audit Department, specify what Heads of the Units and the Legislature are to discharge the functions of the Head of the Unit with respect to the Audit Department.

291. The accounts of the Federation and the Units shall be kept in such forms as the Auditors-General of the Federation and various Units respectively, with the approval of the Heads of the Federation and the Units concerned, prescribe. The Auditor-General of the Federation may advise the Governments of the Units with regard to the methods and principles in accordance with which any account of the Units ought to be kept, and the Heads of the Unit concerned may prefer to follow the advice of the Auditor-General of India.

292. The Auditor-General shall draft the balance sheet of the budget and forward the same with the Audit Report to the Legislature through the Government, which may prepare and submit to the Legislature its note of explanation along with the audited balance sheet and the Audit Report.

293. The expenses of the Audit Department of the Federation or a Unit including any salaries, allowances and pensions payable to or in respect of

the members or staff of the Department shall be charged on the Revenues of the Federation or appropriate Unit as the case may be.

(a) When the Audit Department of one Government serves the needs of the other Government there shall be charged on and paid out of the Revenues of the other Government in respect of the expenses or pensions as may be agreed, or as may in default of agreement be determined by an arbitrator to be appointed by the Chief Justice of India.

(b) When an Audit Department serves the needs of another Unit, its expenses shall be charged on the Revenues of all Units in such proportion as may be agreed or as may in default of agreement be determined by an arbitrator to be appointed by Chief Justice of India.

## CHAPTER XV

### PROPERTY, CONTRACTS, LIABILITIES AND SUITS

294. As from the commencement of the Constitution, the Federal Government of India and the Government of each Province shall respectively be successors of the Government of the Dominion of India and of the corresponding Governor's Province as regards all property, assets and liabilities subject to any adjustment made or to be made by reason of the creation before the commencement of the constitution of the Dominion of Pakistan or of the Provinces of West Bengal, East Bengal, West Punjab and East Punjab, or by reason of the merger of States, the creation of Sub-Federations and the federating of the States.

295. As from the commencement of this Constitution the Governments of Sub-Federations, the Federated States and Sub-Units shall respectively be the successors of the Governments of the corresponding Sub-Federations, Federated States and other Sub-Units as regards all assets, liabilities and property subject to any adjustment made or to be made by reason of terms of agreements which merged and amalgamated various States and created and established Sub-Federations and Administrators' Sub-Units and federated them and Federated States with the Dominion of India.

296. Any property in India accrued to the Republic by escheat or lapse or as bona vacantia for want of a rightful owner, shall, if it is property situate in a Unit or Sub-Unit, vest in the Republic for the purposes of the Government of that Unit or Sub-Unit and shall in any other case vest in the Republic for the purposes of the Government of the Federation.

297. The Executive Authority of the Federation, Units and Sub-Units shall extend, subject to any Act of the appropriate Legislature, to raise, receive and keep in its custody "Revenues" and accounts of the Federation, the Unit and the Sub-Unit respectively and to defray out of these Revenues

expenditure incurred for the purposes of the Government concerned, to take loans upon the security of such Revenues as well as to hold grant, sell, dispose or mortgage any property vested in the Republic for the purposes of the Government of the Federation, Unit or Sub-Unit. It also extends to the purchase or acquisition of property on behalf of the Republic for those purposes respectively and to the making of contracts.

298. All contracts made in the exercise of the Executive Authority of the Federation, a Unit or Sub-Unit shall be expressed to be made by the Head of the Government concerned and all such contracts and assurances of property made in the exercise of that Authority shall be executed on behalf of the Head of the Government concerned by such persons and in such manners as he may direct or authorise. Neither the Head of the Government concerned nor any person acting on behalf of them shall be personally liable in respect of any contract or assurance made or executed for the purposes of this Constitution.

299. The Federation, a Unit or Sub-Unit may sue or be sued by the name of the Federation, the Unit or the Sub-Unit concerned.

#### CHAPTER XVI

#### AMENDMENTS

300. This Constitution of the Republic of India may be amended by a law of the Federal Legislature adopted by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the votes cast in two different sessions at the interval of at least three months. Provided that the provisions of this Constitution to the extent they relate to the Constitution of the Units or Sub-Units may be amended by a Federal Law passed by a majority of the total membership of the Federal Legislature in case the amendment concerned is desired by the Legislature on the Unit or Sub-Unit concerned with two-thirds majority of votes cast.

301. This Constitution of the Republic is its fundamental law and commands the supreme allegiance of public authorities and the people of India. A law or order which in any way contravenes any provision of this Constitution shall be invalid and stand abrogated to the extent of such inconsistency and contravention.

#### CHAPTER XVII

#### TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

302. Until the Federal Legislature has been duly constituted and summoned under this Constitution, the Constituent Assembly shall itself exercise all powers and discharge all the duties of the Federal Legislature.

303. Until the Provincial Legislatures have been duly constituted and removed under this constitution, the Provincial Legislative Assemblies as they would exist at the commencement of the Constitution shall exercise all the powers of the Provincial Legislatures.

304. Such persons as the Constituent Assembly shall have elected in this behalf shall be the provisional President of the Federation until a President has been duly elected under this Constitution.

305. Such persons as the Provincial Legislative Assembly shall have elected in this behalf shall be the provisional Governor of the Province until a Governor has been duly elected under this Constitution.

306. Such persons as shall have been appointed in this behalf by the provisional President shall be deemed to form the first Council of Ministers of the Federation under this Constitution and retain offices as long as they command the confidence of the Constituent Assembly.

307. Such persons as shall have been appointed in this behalf by the provisional Governor shall be deemed to form the first Council of Ministers of the Province under this Constitution and retain office so long as they command the confidence of the Provincial Legislature concerned.

308. Until the system of Government is reorganized in Sub-Federations and Federated States in accordance with this Constitution the Governments as they would exist in them at the commencement of this Constitution shall continue to administer the public affairs.

309. Until the Supreme Court is itself constituted under this Constitution, the Federal Court shall be deemed to be the Supreme Court and shall exercise all the functions of the Supreme Court. Provided that all cases and suits pending before the Federal Court and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council at the date of the commencement of this Constitution shall stand removed to and be disposed of by the Supreme Court.

310. Except holders of office specified in Schedule every person who, immediately before the date of the commencement of the Constitution, was in the service of the Crown in India, including any Judge of the Federal Court or of any High Court, shall on that date be transferred to the appropriate service of the Federation or the Unit concerned and shall hold office by a tenure corresponding to his tenure.

311. Existing taxes and duties shall continue to be levied until altered or repealed by a competent authority. The Budgets of expenditure in operation at the commencement of the Constitution shall be enforced until a new budget is passed or the period of operation of the old budget expires.

312. Subject to this Constitution, all laws, decrees, orders, instructions and rules validly in force in the territories of the Republic immediately before the commencement of the Constitution shall continue in force until altered or repealed or amended by a competent Legislature or other competent authorities.

313. (a) All laws, decrees and rules concerning matters in which the Federation or the Unit, according to this Constitution has the exclusive power of legislation shall be deemed to be those of the Federation and the Units respectively within the meaning of this Constitution.

(b) Indian Laws and laws of the Units concerning matters in which the Federation and the Units, according to this Constitution, have concurrent power of legislation shall continue to be the Federal Laws and laws of various Units respectively within the meaning of this Constitution.

314. The President of the Federation may by order extend to Sub-Federations and Federated States such laws in force in British India before the commencement of this Constitution as deal with matters and subjects placed under the exclusive legislative jurisdiction of the Federation under this Constitution. Such laws may be extended with such adaptations and modifications as may be necessary to bring these laws in conformity with the provisions of this Constitution and shall be operative until altered or repealed or amended by the Federal Legislature or other competent authority.

315. With the concurrence of the Legislature concerned the President of the Federation in case of Federal and Indian laws and the Heads of various Units in cases of laws of their Units may by order provide that until repealed or amended by competent authority these laws in force before the commencement of the Constitution shall have effect as from a specified date subject to such adaptations and modifications as appear to him to be necessary or expedient for bringing the provisions of that law into accord with the provisions of this Constitution.

316. The transition to this Constitution shall be regulated by a special Constitutional Law, which shall become effective at the same time as this Constitution.

The special Constitutional Law shall be passed by the Constituent Assembly and can be modified and repealed by the Constituent Assembly and the Federal Assembly by a simple majority vote.

The special Constitutional Law may notwithstanding anything contained in this Constitution.

(a) make provision for such salaries, allowances to various officials as are to be determined by law under this Constitution, so long as they are not so determined by the competent authority.

(b) make provision of rules, oaths, forms of affirmation, etc., which are to be determined by law, the Legislature, or any executive authority so long they are not so determined by a competent authority.

(c) make such other provisions for the purpose of removing any unforeseen difficulties in bringing into operation this Constitution.

The special Constitutional Law shall cease to be operative after the expiration of three years from the commencement of this Constitution.

provided that the special Constitutional Law or certain parts thereof may be repealed or become obsolete earlier.

317. This Constitution, unless otherwise provided by a declaration of the President of the Constituent Assembly, shall be effective on the 14th day of its publication in the official gazette.

318. On the day of the commencement of this Constitution the Indian Independence Act, 1947, and the Government of India Act 1935, including the India (Central Government and Legislature) Act 1946, and all other enactments amending or supplementing the Government of India Act, 1935 shall cease to have effect.

## APPENDIX

### *General*

The first part of this book, which reviewed the decisions of the Constituent Assembly, was printed much before the Draft Constitution of India prepared by the Drafting Committee was made available to the public. The Review could, therefore, not take note of important changes and additions introduced by the Committee. They are reviewed in this Appendix.

The Committee has agreed with our criticism that because independence is usually implied in the word "Sovereign" so there is hardly any thing to be gained by adding the word "Independent". The Committee has, therefore, recommended that in the preamble India be declared a Sovereign Democratic Republic.

### *Citizenship*

The Committee has kept in view the requirements of the large number of displaced persons who have had to migrate to India within recent months and has provided for them a specially easy mode of acquiring domicile and thereby citizenship. Our criticism in the Review with regard to the citizenship provisions contemplated by the Constituent Assembly are to that extent redundant. We, however, feel that the clauses with respect to citizenship deserve to be redrafted on lines suggested by us in our Draft.

### *Fundamental Rights*

No fundamental change is made in Chapters pertaining to "Fundamental Rights" and "Directive Principles of the State Policy". Our criticism with respect to them therefore stands.

### *High Courts*

The Provincial Constitution Committee recommended that the present constitution of High Courts should be adopted *mutatis mutandis*. This recommendation was accepted by the Constituent Assembly. It led us to infer that the Assembly wished to provide in the new constitution for the appointment of civilians as judges of High Courts and for the exclusion of revenue cases from their original jurisdiction. We are, therefore, glad to note that both these provisions are omitted by the Drafting Committee in its Draft Constitution. It will now be possible for the provincial legislatures to confer on High Courts original or appellate jurisdiction over revenue cases. Nor will it be necessary to appoint civilians as judges of High Courts. But even under this Draft Constitution it will be possible for the Government to appoint civilian session judges as judges of High Courts as judges of the Supreme Court. It would have been better if the appointment of such civilian session judges as have not attained high legal qualifications to the post of the judges of the High Courts had been made impossible. The appointment of civilian judges of High Courts as judges of Supreme Court will also not be desirable. It will, therefore, be proper to modify the Draft Constitution to make such exclusion. It does not guarantee the separation of the judicial and executive functions. Under the Draft Constitution revenue officers and district officers may continue to have jurisdiction over revenue and criminal cases respectively.

### *Communal Representation*

The Draft Constitution of the Drafting Committee provides of the reservation of seats under the system of joint electorates for Muslims, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in all legislatures and for Christians of Bombay and Madras Presidencies in the lower chambers of the Federal, Bombay and Madras Legislatures. This is in accordance with recommendations of the Minorities Committee of the Constituent Assembly. Unless the system of proportional representation is introduced, the reservation of seats for minorities is unavoidable. But the system of reservation of seats can hardly claim to be so good as the system of proportional representation, while the former is a concession to our weakness, the latter is a well recognized democratic method of representation. Muslims constitute about one-eighth of the entire population of the Republic. So under the system of joint electorates with reservation of seats either Muslim candidates will have to seek the confidence of much larger number of voters than other candidates or seats will have to be reserved for Muslims in selected constituencies alone. Neither of the two is fair to Muslims or other minorities similarly

situated. It is but obvious that minorities can exercise much greater influence over the election of a member under the system of proportional representation with cumulative votes than under the single vote system. Under the former members of a minority community may, if it finds it necessary, exert a cumulative influence over the election of a candidate. We, therefore, propose that the system of proportional representation with cumulative votes be adopted instead of the system of the reservation of seats.

### *Bicameralism*

The Drafting Committee has incorporated in its Draft Constitution the principle of bicameralism approved by the Constituent Assembly. It was suggested by the Constituent Assembly that one-half of the members of the Legislative Councils, the upper houses of the provinces, will be elected on functional basis. The Drafting Committee suggests that these members be chosen from five panels of candidates one of which shall be formed of the names of the representatives of universities in the province concerned and the remaining four shall respectively contain the names of persons having special knowledge or practical experience in respect of (a) literature, art and science, (b) agriculture, fisheries and allied subjects, (c) engineering and architecture, (d) public administration and social services. It is further suggested that each panel of candidates so constituted shall contain at least twice the members to be elected from such panels. The Committee talks of representatives of universities and it may therefore be presumed that this panel of representatives of universities shall consist of persons elected or appointed by university authorities. But the Committee does not suggest or indicate in what manner the names of persons on other four panels shall be included, whether the choice will be left to the Government or certain autonomous bodies organized by persons having special knowledge or practical experience in respect of specified subjects. If the panel is to be constituted by the government, persons elected by these panels are likely to be nominees or under the influence of the government. Even if they are to be constituted by autonomous bodies, persons elected by them can claim to represent only a section of middle class intelligentsia. Elections so organized cannot claim to secure representation to the peoples on functional basis. Representation on functional basis to be real must provide for representation of organized bodies of toiling masses such as trade unions, *Kisan Sabhas*, on the legislature.

The upper chamber is also proposed to be a permanent body. It is suggested that as nearly as may be one-third of its members should be elected every third year. In the United States of America the Senate is a permanent body and one-third of its members are elected every second



year. Conservatives approve this procedure on the plea that it avoids the possibility of a sudden change in the composition of legislature. But democrats in general feel that the legislature so constituted fails to reflect the public opinion correctly. It is but obvious that the members of the Council of State chosen by a provincial legislature eight years ago is likely to represent the public opinion of the previous decade.

The Committee suggests that if a Bill passed by the lower house of the legislature is not passed by the upper chamber within six months, a joint sitting of both the houses may be summoned by the Governor, and the disputed questions may be determined in joint sitting by a majority of total number of members of both houses present and voting. This procedure would enable the legislature concerned to delay the enactment of a necessary law for six months and enable persons nominated by the government and chosen from a few persons to participate in the determination of disputed questions on par with representatives of the peoples elected on the basis of adult franchise. This is not democratic.

### *Election of the President*

The Committee has accepted the idea of the Constituent Assembly that elected members of the legislatures of the units be associated with the members of the federal legislature for electing the President of the Republic. It has suggested that as far as practicable there should be uniformity in the scale of representation of the different units at the election of the President and for the purpose of securing such uniformity has suggested a complex procedure of counting votes of members of different provincial legislatures. In our opinion the simplest procedure would be to require the legislature of each unit to elect delegates equal in number to seats assigned to the unit concerned in the federal assembly, as representation on federal legislative assembly is fixed on population basis. The required uniformity in the scale of representation of different units at the election of the President will be secured; and the members of the federal assembly will have as much voice as members of the provincial legislative assemblies in the election of the President.

### *Election of the Governor*

Some members of the Committee have felt that the co-existence of a Governor elected by the people and a Chief Minister responsible to the legislature might lead to a friction. The Committee has, therefore, suggested an alternative mode of appointing Governors. It is suggested that the Governor should be appointed by the President of the Republic from a panel

of four candidates to be elected by the members of the provincial legislature in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote. The general popular election is not necessary for electing a constitutional head of the government, which a Governor will be under the system of responsible government. But the method of selection suggested in the alternative mode is decidedly defective. The President will act on the advice of the Chief Minister of the Federal Government and in his choice the Chief Minister is likely to be influenced by party considerations. It is just possible that his party may be in a minority in the provincial legislature and he may be tempted to choose out of the panel a man of his party even though he may not be commanding the confidence of the majority of the legislature. Such a situation is not likely to promote harmony in the provincial government and may disturb the harmony which must exist between the federal and provincial authorities. The selection may be condemned by the majority party of the legislature as a partisan and may not be approved by the bulk of the people of the province. The Governor should in our opinion be elected by an electoral college composed of members of the provincial legislature and representatives of the province concerned on the federal legislature.

### *Powers of Executive Authority*

The executive is given wide powers to determine by regulations and order matters which deserve to be determined by law to be passed by the Legislature or deserve to be kept independent of the control of the executive. For example, the Heads of Governments are empowered to make regulations specifying the matters in which either generally or in any particular class of cases or in any particular circumstances it shall not be necessary for a Public Service Commission to be consulted. The Federal Government is empowered to create or continue by its orders a local legislature or a Council of advisors for a centrally administered areas. All these matters deserve to be considered and determined by the legislature. The constitution of the popular bodies such as local legislature of centrally administered areas cannot be allowed to be determined by an executive order in democracy. Nor can the executive be allowed to narrow down the scope of consultation with the Public Service Commission.

### *Appointment of Ministers*

With respect to Federal Ministry the Draft Constitution of the Drafting Committee lays down that the Prime Minister shall be appointed by the President and the other ministers shall be appointed by the President on the

advice of the Prime Minister. But with regard to Provincial Ministry it is provided in the Constitution that "the Governors' ministers shall be appointed by him", and that "the functions of the Governor with respect to the appointment and dismissal of ministers shall be exercised by him in his discretion". This Draft Constitution no doubt requires the Governor to be guided by the "Instrument of Instructions", which instructs the Governor to select his other ministers in "consultation with" the Chief Minister. But the Draft Constitution also makes it clear that "the validity of anything done by the Governor shall not be called in question on the ground that it was done otherwise than in accordance with such instructions. In plain words, while Federal ministers are proposed to be appointed by the President on the advice of the Federal Prime Minister; the provincial ministers are proposed to be appointed by the Governor in his discretion though in consultation with the Provincial Chief Minister. Obviously, the form chosen for the appointment of federal ministry is the correct constitutional form under the system of parliamentary responsible government and there is no valid reason to confer upon the Governor discretionary authority with regard to the appointment and dismissal of ministers. Governors' discretionary powers under the Government of India Act 1935, enabled him once in April 1937 to appoint ministers who did not command the confidence of the majority of the provincial legislature. It may be said that this was possible because budgets had been passed by Governors for six months before the Act of 1935 was brought into operation. But in reply it may be pointed out that even under the Draft Constitution it will be possible for the Governor, once the annual budget is passed, to dismiss popular ministers in his discretion, appoint his own proteges as ministers in his discretion and allow those proteges to rule over the province for six months with the help of ordinances, which may be passed by him on the advice of his protege minister during the recess of the legislature. After six months when the legislature must meet under the Draft Constitution, these ministers will be faced with some difficulty. They may be censured and ordinances passed, during the recess, may be rejected by the legislature. An attempt may also be made to impeach the Governor but if the Governor is able to rally the support of a minority of 35% of members against impeachment, or if he manages to prorogue the legislature in his discretion prior to the consideration of the impeachment motion; his proteges may continue in office for another six months because the Draft Constitution of the Drafting Committee does not require Ministers to resign in case they lose the confidence of the Legislature and definitely provides that they will hold office during Governor's pleasure. Of course at the end of the year such Ministers will have to resign because the Government can no more be carried on under the Constitution without securing the approval of the budget by the majority of the Members of the Legislature. It may be maintained

that no Governor or members of the legislature will manipulate the provisions of the Constitution against the spirit of the Constitution with a view to establishing their dictatorship. But it must not be forgotten that between the two last Great Wars dictatorships, actual or virtual, were established in a number of countries in Europe through constitutional means, taking full advantage of certain loop holes in the constitution. It will not be wise to suppose that no Indian politician will ever care to manipulate provisions of the constitution in such a way as to establish his virtual dictatorship for a period of six months or more. To avoid the possibility of manipulation in favour of dictatorship it is necessary to discard the phraseology of the Government of India Act 1935 which was intended to retain the imperialistic hold over India. It must be definitely laid down in the Constitution that the ministers shall be appointed on the recommendation of the Chief Minister and that the Council of Ministers shall have the confidence of the legislature to seek within one month of their appointment and shall have to resign if and when they lose the confidence of the majority of the members of the legislature.

### *Suspension of the Constitution*

The Committee has not only retained emergency powers of the Governor to suspend for two weeks the provincial constitution and to exercise executive authority in his discretion. It has also empowered the President of the Republic to assume to himself all or any of the functions of the provincial government and to declare that the powers of the provincial legislature shall exclusively be exercised by the federal legislature. With the approval of the federal legislature such a proclamation may remain in force for three years. The Committee also wishes that the President of the Republic be authorized to issue a proclamation of emergency if he is satisfied that grave emergency exists whereby the security of India is threatened whether by war or domestic violence. Such a proclamation may be made before the actual occurrence of war or of any such violence if the President is satisfied that there is imminent danger thereof. Such a proclamation will cease to operate at the expiration of six months unless before the expiration of that period it has been approved by the Federal Legislature. During the period of the operation of emergency the executive power of the Federal Authority shall extend to the giving of directions to any province as to the manner in which the executive power thereof is to be exercised, and the power of federal legislature to make laws with respect to any matter shall include power to make laws with respect to any matter and conferring powers upon any authority or agency of the Federal Government with respect to any matter. While a proclamation of emergency is in operation the term of the Federal Legislature

may also be extended by the President for a period not exceeding one year at a time and not extending in any case beyond a period of six months after the proclamation has ceased to operate.

There is no federal democratic constitution in the world which permits the Governor of a province to suspend the executive authority of responsible ministers or the legislative authority of the provincial legislature with a view to facing a grave menace to peace and tranquillity of the province. As pointed out in the Review, the emergency powers of the Governor will only lead to a conflict of authority between the Governor and the ministry and this conflict would create confusion worse confounded, specially: if the Governor is elected by the President out of a panel as suggested by the Drafting Committee and happens to belong to a party which is in minority in the provincial legislature and the province concerned. In that case the Governor is sure to be suspected and accused by the majority party of being actuated by party motives. There is no reason to believe that his judgement would be better than the collective views of the ministry, that he will be of a higher calibre and command greater confidence and support of the peoples and the services than the Prime Minister, the leader of the majority party in the provincial legislature.

There is no federal democratic constitution in the world which allows the federal authorities to suspend the executive and legislative authorities of the Unit for three years and to assume to themselves those powers assigned under the constitution to the units. To suppress domestic violence, the federal authority, may help the government of a unit with armed forces and may require all authorities of the unit concerned to cooperate, assist and obey the instructions of the federal executive authority and its duly authorized agents but I will hardly be justified to cause a constitutional crisis or to deprive the unit of its autonomy for three years. The power is too dictatorial in character to form part of a democratic constitution.

The President's powers with regard to proclamation of emergency are also very wide, not free from dangers to the very existence of democracy. The federal authority no doubt shall be responsible for the protection of every unit against external invasion and violence and may be invested with special powers to face them.

The federal legislature may, therefore, be empowered to make laws for units threatened by external invasion or violence or a part thereof even with respect to matters assigned to the exclusive charge of the units. Authorities and officials of units concerned may also be required to cooperate with and obey instructions of the federal authority issued for the security of India. The federal government may also be empowered to take over the charge of administration of such parts of the units as are required for the purpose of the defence of the Republic. But the federal executive authority should

never be empowered with such wide powers as are proposed by the Drafting Committee. If its proposals are accepted it will be possible for the federal executive to reduce to subservience the executive authorities of the units and to establish its dictatorship on the plea of threat of war or domestic violence. For the continuance of such dictatorship beyond six months the cooperation of the federal legislature would no doubt be needed. But if the federal legislature is prepared to approve the proclamation of emergency the period of the operation of proclamation might be extended to as much period as the federal authorities may choose and during this period the election of the new federal legislature may also be suspended by the President of the Republic. Hitler acquired dictatorship through constitutional means and with the consent of the legislature. It cannot, therefore, be said that the federal legislature of India will never permit the federal executive authority to establish dictatorship through the proclamation of emergency. Indeed, the federal legislature might be tempted to have a deal with the federal executive authority and allow the President to issue a proclamation of emergency so that the tenure of the federal legislature may be prolonged and its jurisdiction may extend even to matters and over officers of the unit. It is not difficult for aspirants of dictatorship to create a panic and to so manipulate the situation that it may be possible for them to raise the plea of threat of war or domestic violence, specially when a proclamation of emergency is allowed before the actual occurrence of war or domestic violence.

### *Unit Subjects*

The Draft Constitution empowers the federal legislature to legislate with respect to a matter in the unit list in case the Council of State declares by a resolution supported by not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting that it is necessary or expedient in the national interest for the federal legislature to do so. The Draft Constitution further provides that if an amendment of the Constitution seeks to make any change in any of the lists of federal, concurrent and unit powers, the amendment should not only be passed by two-thirds majorities of both houses of the legislature but should also be ratified by not less than one-half of the provincial legislatures and not less than one-third of the legislatures of the federated States. The two suggestions are hardly compatible. In our opinion, the procedure suggested for amending other provisions of the constitution should be sufficient for making any change or amendment in the lists of federal, unit and concurrent powers. The conversion of what is a provincial power into a federal or concurrent power without an amendment in the constitution would offer a

premium for interference by the centre. Such a procedure may strike ultimately at the federal structure of the constitution itself.

### *Centrally Administered Areas*

The Drafting Committee has almost skipped over the question of the government of centrally administered areas. It provides for their administration by the President through a Chief Commissioner or a Lieutenant Governor or through the Governor of a province or the ruler of a neighbouring State. It also provides that the President may by order create or continue for such area a local legislature or a Council of advisers or both with such constitution, powers and functions in each case as may be specified in the order. In our opinion confusion will be caused if the Governor of a province or the Ruler of a neighbouring State are entrusted with the administration of centrally administered areas. It will not be possible for ministers of units on whose advice the Governors and Rulers will function to be responsible to two different masters, the provincial legislatures for the administration of the unit and the federal government for the administration of the centrally administered unit. Even if the federal government is not satisfied with the administration, it will not be possible for him to choose new sets of advisers to the Governor for the administration of centrally administered areas. The people of these areas must have the benefit of local legislature and council of advisers and their establishment should not be left to the sweet will of the federal government. We suggest that provisions with respect to them should be made in the Constitution on the lines recommended by us in our Draft.

### *Tribal Areas*

The Draft Constitution of the Drafting Committee has incorporated the report of the Sub-Committee, appointed for the purpose, in two of its schedules and proposed that the administration of Scheduled Areas and tribes should be carried on in accordance with the principles laid down therein. Some of these principles are no doubt good. But one misses badly in one of the schedules the provision of Autonomous Regional and District Councils, provided for Scheduled Areas of Assam. These Councils are necessary in tribal areas in Bihar, Orissa, Central Provinces, as a matter of fact in all regions in all Units inhabited by aboriginal tribes. Their establishment will enable aboriginal tribes to grow in a democratic fashion and will assure them their cultural and social autonomy, the desire for which has led them to demand a separate province of Jharkhand. It will also be good to incorporate the essential principles in the Act itself, as is done in our Draft.

*Indian States*

The Draft Constitution of the Drafting Committee continues to be defective with regard to provisions concerning Indian States. It has not assured democratic system of Government in Federated States. In many parts provisions with regard to Indian States are confusing and undemocratic. For example, unnecessarily a different procedure is prescribed for appeals from High Courts of Indian States to the Supreme Court. Now has it been indicated whether democratic institutions will be established in such States, the administration of which is handed over to the charge of the Federal Government. The constitution must empower the peoples of Federated States to establish with the consent of the Federal Legislature a republican regime in their respective states.



## APPENDIX 19

### **Congress Working Committee's Resolution on Labour, Delhi, 26 January 1948<sup>1</sup>**

Having regard to the supreme urgency of stepping up over all production with a view to relieve the hardship caused by the acute shortage of essential commodities in the country, the Working Committee welcomes the timely lead given by the industries conference convened by the Government of India in December last to bring about management-labour collaboration in the maintenance of industrial peace calculated to ensure maximum production through avoidance of all causes of friction between employers and labour and resolving of all disputes by resort to negotiation, conciliation and arbitration.

*Shock and Threat*—It is however distressing that while the country was looking forward to a period of industrial peace and vigorous production drive as envisaged by the industries conference, there have been, during the last few weeks, some ugly manifestations of labour trouble in certain areas by way of strikes, stoppage of work, and lockouts which have given a rude shock to the country, and clearly constitute a threat to any programme of economic reconstruction of self-sufficiency.

The Working Committee, therefore, condemns these developments as acts of great disservice to the country at this critical juncture in her history, which is bound to hinder progress and prolong the hardship of the community in general and the poor classes in particular. Any interruption of production, whatever its causes and justifications, cannot, in the context of prevailing conditions, be viewed except as a challenge and a menace to the country.

The Working Committee appeals to the employers and labour and implement the decisions of the industries conference to employers to redress without loss of time all legitimate grievances of their workers, pay them a fair wage and create healthy conditions of work; and, to labour, to understand its rights as well as obligations and to maximize the production of goods and services to the best advantage of the country.

The Indian National Congress has under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi pledged itself irrevocably to the cause of the toiling masses whether they be workers in the field or factories—and will do everything in its power to mitigate their hardships and improve their standard of living.

*Interested Parties*—The Committee, however, notes with regret that

<sup>1</sup> *National Herald*, 27 January 1948.

certain elements are anxious to exploit the ignorance of the workers to advance their own ends regardless of the real interests of the Working Class and impervious to their suffering and financial loss. The Committee cannot but view this development as a grave danger to peaceful progress and economic development of the country.

The Committee, therefore, appeals to labour to beware of this danger to keep the interest of the country above any group and party to rise equal to the grave crisis that faces the nation, to do everything in their power to increase production by avoiding strikes and to make full use of the machinery set up by law for the redress of their legitimate grievances.

Congress and Indian National Trade Union Congress as a concrete evidence of its desire to help the healthy growth of trade-unionism in the country, the Congress decided to encourage the Indian National Trade Union Congress which is devoted to the cause of Labour. It was hoped that Congressmen interested in labour welfare would cooperate with it and make it a useful instrument of service. Instances have, however, come to the light in which Congressmen have identified themselves with other parallel organizations and have thus come into direct conflict with the Indian National Trade Union Congress in contravention of the Congress policy. This is likely to hamper the healthy growth of labour movement on right lines and may create confusion within the Congress.

The Working Committee considers it necessary to make it clear that Congressmen should not join any other Labour Organization and should actively support the Indian National Trade Union Congress. This Committee calls upon subordinate Committees to take up organization of labour as an important and indispensable item in their programme.

**All India Congress Committee's Resolution on  
Communalism, New Delhi, 21 February 1948<sup>1</sup>**

The All India Congress Committee calls upon all the Congressmen in particular and the public in general to exert themselves to the utmost to fight the demon of communalism which unless immediately checked may destroy our freedom and defeat our objective.

The All India Congress Committee can never forget the fact that shortly before the foul assassination, Mahatma Gandhi risked his life by undertaking an unlimited fast to fight communalism and to restore peace and harmony between different communities and that the fast was terminated on the sixth day when pledges were given to ensure that Muslims could live with honour and security in India.

The foul deed was, therefore, all the more reprehensive and condemnable as it was perpetrated at a time when efforts were being seriously made to eradicate this communal poison to restore sanity, peace and harmony and to end communal strife.

Though the Father of the Nation is no more practically with us to remind us of our duty and to inspire us with his faith in our mission, the All India Congress Committee takes this opportunity of solemnly re-affirming its determination to continue to follow the path he has lighted for us and to do everything possible to fulfil the great task he has left only partially accomplished.

The All India Congress Committee further approves of the resolution recently passed by the Working Committee at the meeting on February 6 calling upon the people and the government to take note of the forces of hatred and violence acting in the open or in the dark to disrupt the roots of social life and to take effective action to counteract them.

The All India Congress Committee congratulates the Central and provincial governments for having taken speedy steps to ban such communal organizations as were deliberately trying to spread this poison and whose propaganda of hatred was responsible for vitiating the minds of some of our misguided countrymen resulting in the commission of foul deeds.

The All India Congress Committee further assures the Government of its active support in getting rid of such elements which are responsible for encouraging communal strife and disruptive tendencies.

<sup>1</sup> *National Herald*, 22 February 1948.

To become an effective instrument for carrying out the heavy and responsible duty which devolves upon the Congress it should set the own house in order and the Committee calls upon Congressmen to purify the organization even at the risk of shrinkage of the extent of its membership.

It should be remembered that during his last days Gandhiji was distressed by the fall in standard of conduct of Congressmen which he expressed in unambiguous language at the time of his last fast. It is upto every worker of the Congress to exercise introspection and help the great organization which has been built up during the course of years at tremendous sacrifice and to recover and to reestablish the standards which Gandhiji has set before it.

Possession of power should make Congressmen sober and humble, they should realize their responsibility and turn themselves into fit servants of the people.

The All India Congress Committee reiterates its faith in the ideal of secular and democratic state based upon social economic and political justice wherein every citizen irrespective of his or her religion, profession will be assured equal rights of citizenship and reaffirms its determination to strengthen the foundations of such a secular state.

**Resolution on political situation adopted by the  
Sixth Annual Conference of the Socialist Party held at  
Nasik on 19th, 20th and 21st March 1948<sup>1</sup>**

*Resolution on Political Situation*

The political situation in India has changed materially since the last Conference of the Party at Kanpur.

The accent that the Congress put on negotiations as against resistance as the method of achieving freedom in the final lap of the struggle has inevitably exacted a heavy price. The Mountbatten Plan, while it has clothed India with freedom, has partitioned the country and has involved her in all the tragic consequences of partition including the uprooting and mass murder and migration of millions of people.

One of the major consequences of the Mountbatten Plan has been a serious realignment of class forces in the country. The partition with its emphasis on communities has accentuated the climate of communalism and has brought to the fore factors and forces favouring communalism and other centrifugal tendencies.

Another fundamental assumption of the Mountbatten Plan was a distinction between British and Indian India and the equating of sovereignty with the Princes to the exclusion of the people in the States. The unfolding of this assumption has confronted free India with serious difficulties in many States, crucially in Kashmir, Hyderabad and Junagadh.

Thus, the infant State finds itself at the mercy of forces of conflict and disruption from within and without, and its survival and strength become the governing criteria of all policies.

The realignment of political and class forces brought about by the enforcement of the Mountbatten Plan has developed four main political currents. The first, and the most dangerous represents the communal forces backed by the wealth and influence of vested rights. Its contribution to the freedom struggle was negative and obstructive, yet it has gained immensely through the achievements of freedom through partition. The communal reflexes are being shamelessly exploited by these political forces and the culmination of their efforts was the cruel assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. These reactionary forces seek to blast the democratic and secular basis of

<sup>1</sup> *Socialist Party Sixth Annual Conference, Nasik, 19-21 March 1948, pp. 35-8.*

the Indian State, they strive to sap rational thinking and foster mass irrationalism. They constitute, with their medieval outlook, subterranean and irrational methods, indifference to all human values save the crudest and rawest instincts, the most serious menace to the foundations of the new State.

The second current, equally adventurist, though at the other end of the political gamut, gains strength from this rampant reaction. This current is embodied in the Communist Party. The diehard upholders of the status quo create precisely those conditions in which the Communists can thrive by appealing crudely to the baulked class forces and sentiments. The Communists are a grave source of danger because they pursue their ends with little regard to the stability and integrity of the State. As in 1942, so again in 1948, the lodestar of Communist thought and action is not the welfare and greatness of the people of India.

Both these extreme fringes of India's political line-up are alike in their intolerance of democracy, in their unconcern about the stability and survival of the State. It is the prime task of the Socialist Party to isolate these fringes from the main stream of India's political life.

This leaves the two main political currents, the Congress and the Socialist Party. The Congress is incapable of further changing its class character and become an instrument of socialism because of its total identification with governments and its refusal to support the social struggles of the masses. The revolutionary tradition of the Congress was built up during struggles, when it was always opposing the government of the day. The Congress will have to free itself from its present identification with Government if it is to become the instrument of social change. It cannot obviously do that.

It is in this context of a Congress that is unable to sustain its revolutionary tradition that the need for another party arises. For stability can never be attained under the existing conditions of grave economic inequalities and privations without fundamentally redefining the pattern of our economic institutions. Only a Socialist State can ensure a solid foundation to political stability. There is, therefore, no other way open to the forces of democratic socialism except to march ahead with the triumphant banner of a Socialist State.

The Congress is in danger, because of its authoritarian bias, of being overwhelmed by anti-secular, anti-democratic forces of the right. Hence for the maintenance of democratic climate, an opposition becomes necessary. The Socialist Party alone can provide this opposition which continues the tradition of identification with the struggles of the dispossessed. We must not however overlook the possibility that the atmosphere conducive to democracy may not evolve in the country, in which case the Socialist Party will have to mobilize the people for the capture of power.

The pervasive sway to finance capitalist interests over State policy must be fought and broken with firmness. Through a sustained support of all partial struggles against an unjust status quo as well as by an ever-active effort to revitalize the mass democratic organs of the working classes that the Socialist Party must lay the foundations of its real strength.

It must be remembered that the Socialist Party can grow to maturity if it avoids the mistakes of the Congress. It must avoid being purely negative and critical. It must never take the easy "way out" of relying on administrative action as the sole motive force of social change. Only the democratic organizations and the sharpening of the consciousness in fields and factories can bring real strength to the Socialist Party.

The Socialist Party while carrying out this task must nevertheless give its fullest support to those common efforts which strengthen the democratic fabric of our political life. It must join hands with the progressive and democratic elements in the Congress to disrupt and defeat the grip of communal reaction as well as provincial and caste rivalries so as to strengthen the forces of democracy. The secular democratic basis of the State is a heritage of the Congress and the Socialist Party alike.

## APPENDIX 22

### **Resolution on Congress and Socialist Party adopted by the Sixth Annual Conference of the Socialist Party held at Nasik on 19th, 20th and 21st March 1948<sup>1</sup>**

#### *Resolution on Congress and the Socialist Party*

The Socialist Party began its career in 1934 as a party organically linked with the Congress. The Socialist recognized the primacy of national struggle and acknowledged the pivotal position of the Congress in that struggle. They desired, in the interest of the national movement itself, a clarification of the aims and objectives of the Congress and strove to put socialistic content in the national policies of the Congress. They also desired to strengthen the national movement by linking the Congress with class organizations of workers and peasants. While the Congress response to the efforts varied from time to time, it throughout functioned as a national front embracing diverse parties and groups professing different ideologies and social philosophies. With the achievement of freedom, the role of the Congress as a joint front of the Indian people has come to an end. The Congress leaders themselves desire to convert the great organization into a compact party. The new constitution of the Congress specifically outlaws, for the first time in its historic career, organized groups and parties from functioning in the Congress. Once the decision to become a party asserts itself, the national or multi-class character of the organization disappears. It then inevitably becomes a party of one class or the other. The Congress efforts at becoming a multi-class party in fact results in refusing to become a party of the working people. The constitutional changes, as well as the inner logic of development sketched above, therefore, end the long period of organic association of the Socialists with the Congress.

This Conference of the Socialist Party, while it calls upon its members to withdraw from the Congress, hopes that the Congress will remain a progressive organization sharing common political ideals, loyalties and memories with the Socialist Party.

<sup>1</sup> *Socialist Party Sixth Annual Conference, Nasik, 19-21 March 1948*, pp. 39-40.



## APPENDIX 23

### Annual Report of the General Secretary, Socialist Party Conference (Organizational), Nasik, 19-21 March 1948<sup>1</sup>

#### Annual Report of the General Secretary (Organizational)

#### *(1) Membership*

As you know, the Party constitution admits as members only those who are prepared to give at least two hours for Party work every day, under the direction of a provincial branch. The total membership of the Party, admitted under this rule, now stands at 5,139 confirmed members and 3,671 probationers. In addition to these, 553 membership-applications are pending with the provincial branches. The distribution of membership province-wise is as under:

<i>Province</i>	<i>Confirmed</i>	<i>Probationers</i>
Andhra	52	94
Assam	239	195
Bengal	908	214
Bihar	1,150	1,923
Bombay	322	167
Central India	85	—
C.P. & Berar	352	—
Delhi	56	70
East Punjab	498	—
Gujarat	39	30
Hyderabad	45	—
Karnatak	97	94
Kerala	151	150
Maharashtra	343	85
Orissa	40	34
Rajputana	41	65
Tamilnad	100	150
U.P.	621	400
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,139</b>	<b>3,671</b>

I should mention here that the standard of enrolment of members in each province is not uniform. In many provinces, admission to member-

<sup>1</sup> *Socialist Party Sixth Annual Conference, Nasik, 19-21 March 1948*, pp. 104-14.

ship is very strictly viewed. There are a few others however in which admission is not so strict. You will have to consider the question of enforcement of a common uniform criterion for eligibility to membership all over the country when we come to the question of revision of our Party constitution.

## *(2) Party Organization*

The Party organisation comprises of twenty provinces, demarcated by the National Executive, as under:

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Andhra.        | 11. Hyderabad.    |
| 2. Assam,         | 12. Karnatak,     |
| 3. Bengal.        | 13. Kerala,       |
| 4. Bihar,         | 14. Maharashtra,  |
| 5. Bombay,        | 15. Madras City,  |
| 6. Central India, | 16. Orissa,       |
| 7. C.P. & Berar,  | 17. Pakistan,     |
| 8. Delhi.         | 18. Rajputana,    |
| 9. East Punjab,   | 19. Tamilnad, and |
| 10. Gujarat,      | 20. U.P.          |

Under the provincial branch offices, there are the district and unit offices. Assam has got ten district offices and an office in the Manipur State. In Andhra, work is being organized in eight districts. In Bengal, there are fifteen district branches, while Bihar, one of the provinces where Party activity has been intensely organized, has got seventeen district offices with 341 unit offices. Bombay City has got an efficient ward office for each of its seven wards. In Central India and Rajputana provinces, Party work is being organized from twelve offices functioning in different States. C.P. and Berar has got district offices in all its districts while Maharashtra has nine district offices and eight sub-offices. Kerala has three district branches for Cochin, Travancore and Malabar and 13 Taluk and 109 unit branches. Orissa has got four district offices. U.P. has got Party offices functioning in thirty-two districts with their elected secretaries, and in nine districts with secretaries appointed by the provincial office. Similarly, other provinces have also their district and unit offices. Hyderabad, Rajputana, Central India and Gujarat provincial branches have been established during the year. In Gujarat, party work is now being organized in five districts and in Baroda and Saurashtra. The organization work in Saurashtra has already progressed much. It seems the Socialist movement will come to Gujarat from Saurashtra. In East Punjab, party offices have been functioning in eight out of thirteen districts. Organization of Party work depends on many factors such as political and economic development of the area concerned, etc. It must, however, be admitted that Party organization has not uniformly grown all over the country.

While in some provinces the Party has strongly established itself and is developing every day, there are others lagging behind. The goal of Party organization must be to cover every village or at least a group of villages of this vast country and we have yet to make up a long leeway. Part of this lack of organization can be attributed to the fact that we have been functioning within the Indian National Congress so far. But the sooner we realize the task facing us now the better.

### (3) *National Executive*

The National Executive of the Party met seven times during the year. The General Council met once at Nagpur. The sub-committees of the Party—Labour, Kisan, States, Volunteer, Students, etc.—have not been able to meet as frequently as they were expected to do and it has mainly been the National Executive and the Central Secretariat at Bombay that had to consider all policy and organizational matters as they developed from time to time.

### (4) *Labour*

The working class and the peasantry form the main sphere of Party activity. The number of trade unions under the influence of the Party in various provinces with their total membership is as under:

<i>Province</i>	<i>Number of Unions</i>	<i>Total Membership</i>
Andhra	25	2,600
Assam	55	19,500
Bengal	48	60,000
Bihar	112	1,06,038
Bombay	62	60,000
Central India	—	—
C.P. & Berar	—	—
Delhi	10	6,440
East Punjab	—	—
Gujarat	36	20,000
Hyderabad	26	39,053
Karnatak (Mysore incl.)	52	20,065
Kerala	62	21,596
Maharashtra	113	30,000
Orissa	11	4,615
Rajputana	22	7,347
Tamilnad	8	31,914
U.P.	150	55,000
Railways	5	49,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>797</b>	<b>5,33,168</b>

These unions cover an important cross section of industries and services such as coal, sugar, textile, electricity, supply, etc., in Bihar; jute, engineering, tramways, etc., in Bengal; Government employees, dock workers, textile, engineering, chemicals, etc., in Bombay; tea gardens in Assam; transport, ordnance, sugar, etc., in Maharashtra and various cottage and home industries in the South. These are the industries which are wholly organized all over the country by the Party. Two national federations in the mining and sugar industries have been formed by the Party during the year. Two more similar national federations in the textile and motor transport industries are being organized and will, it is expected, be formed during this year. The total membership of the federation of the mining industry, the All-India Khan Mazdoor Federation, is over 60,000. There has been a split unfortunately in the federation of the sugar industry which had a membership of over 50,000. The two new federations of the textile and transport workers will have a membership of over 40,000 each. The Party's position in the All-India Railwaymen's Federation has also been strengthened during the year.

As you know, the National Executive decided in last June to withdraw all unions under the Party's influence from the All-India Trade Union Congress which is dominated by the Communist Party. It was also decided that these unions should not also join the new organization, the I.N.T.U.C., sponsored by right wing Congressmen. The need for a central labour organization of the Party has therefore been very keenly felt. Some of the provincial branches like Bombay, Bihar and C.P. had decided to start their provincial *Mazdoor panchayats*, as was done by the Punjab branch before the partition. The question of a central labour organization of the Party will, however, be decided at this Conference. Many organizational advantages accrue from such a central body. For instance, it will secure proper representation for our workers at the various conferences and meetings convened by the Government of India and the Provincial Governments to discuss matters relating to labour. But, primarily, such an organization is necessary in order to provide our workers with the conception of a united force advancing towards a common goal.

One of the important events in the field of labour activities of the Party was the token general strike organized by the Bombay branch on the 29th December 1947. It was a complete success and about a million workers peacefully observed the strike notwithstanding vigorous attempts by the authorities—Government and others—to break their unity. The singular success of this strike in the most important industrial city of the country has attracted notice, not only in this country but also abroad, to the growing strength of the Party. The Bombay branch deserves our congratulations for their success.

(5) *Kisan*

Kisan work has not been organized as systematically in all provinces as trade union activity. Though the conditions and problems of the peasantry differ from province to province, there is no reason why an organizational uniformity should not be developed in this sphere of activity. In some of the provinces however, Kisan movement has been very efficiently organized. In Bihar, the Provincial Kisan Sabha which is under the influence of the Party has 16 district branches, 20 sub-divisional branches, 128 thana branches and 96 gram sabhas and has a membership of over 1,10,000. In Bihar, the *Bakast* struggle has assumed the form of mass movement and every district is agitated over this issue. Gaya, Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur, Bhagalpur and Monghyr are the storm centres of this vast struggle. Twenty-one peasants have been killed in the struggle in the Gaya district alone. The other issues over which Kisan movement is organized in Bihar are commutation of rent and opposition to conversion of peasants' land into big farms by the landlords and capitalists. The *Batai* struggle is also gaining ground. In U.P., the Kisan Sangh in 46 districts is under the influence of the Party. Three have been big Kisan rallies in several districts. Two hundred and seventy workers of the Party in the province are engaged wholly in Kisan work. In Maharashtra, the Kisan activity is being organized by the Party in nine districts and in the Kolhapur State a manifesto of the Kisan Sabha has been published with a constitution and within a year a Kisan Sabha will be functioning under the influence of the Party. The Thana District Branch issues a monthly Kisan bulletin, while the Ratnagiri District Office issues a *Shetkari Patrika*. In Assam, the Assam Kisan Sabha is under the influence of the Party. It has established tahsil units in ten districts. In Orissa, the Party has started the provincial Kisan Sangh. Abolition of Zamindari without compensation has been one of the demands of the Kisan movement in the province. The Kisan organization also demands that the Bhagchasis should not be evicted from their lands and that they should secure two-thirds of the produce. *Gram panchayats* and co-operative farming also form items of the charter adopted by the Provincial Kisan Sabha. In Andhra, Kisan activity is organized in the Kistna and West Godavari districts particularly in the Narsapur Taluk. They have to face the rivalry of Ranga's Kisan Sabha and the Communist Kisan organization. In Kerala, the Party has started a new Kisan organization. A Provincial Ryot Panchayat has been formed in Karnatak by the provincial branch of the Party. In Bengal, Kisan activity is being organized in eleven districts. Kisan work is now being organized in Gujarat. A Khedut conference was held in Mahna under Party auspices in January last. The Khedut Mandal in Mahna Mahal has been started by the Party. Before the partition of the Punjab, the Punjab branch conducted a number of Kisan morchas in East Punjab, the most important of which were at Chautala in District Hissar and

at Urmur in District Hoshiarpur. Hundreds of Party workers were arrested in these struggles. Sixty Kisan Panchayats have been recently formed in District Hissar by the East Punjab branch. The Rajputana branch has done much work among Kisans of Mewar, Jodhpur and Kotah.

Taking the country as a whole, however, a stupendous effort will have to be made if the Party is to act as the spearhead of a mass countrywide Kisan movement. India is essentially an agricultural country and unless Party activities pervade the daily life of millions of Kisans on the countryside, the socialist movement will not grow. It is of the utmost importance that provincial branches should immediately set themselves to the task of building up provincial Kisan organizations with district and unit branches covering groups of villages and enrolling a mass membership.

The Kisan Sub-Committee of the Party has held several meetings and arrived at important conclusions. It has laid emphasis on nationalization of production, trade and distributive services and co-operative trading as also on an immediate demand for a minimum wage, guarantee of home sheds, freedom of labour and cancellation of debts. The sub-committee has recommended a united organization of peasants and agricultural labour. The Kisan Sub-Committee has printed a separate report which, I hope, has been distributed to you.

#### *(6) States*

The relationship of Party workers and various State Congress organizations has not been uniform in all the States. The Party's relationship with the Indian National Congress is beginning to have its reactions in various States. If the Indian National Congress forms its own branches in the various States, as is proposed, the question will be easily straightened out.

It is a matter of pride that Party comrades in many States have been in the vanguard of the States people's fight against autocracy. In Hyderabad, Mysore, Junagadh, Manipur, Tehri Garhwal and several other States, Party members have contributed a glorious chapter to the people's struggles. The Hyderabad branch of the Party is at present wholly engaged in the States people's fight against the Nizam. In Warangal, Karimnagar, Adilabad, Nalgonda, Aurangabad, Parbhani, Osmanabad, Bidar, Gulbarga and Raichur districts, Party units have concentrated their activities and toured remote villages bringing a new consciousness among the people. In the Itgi Island—thirteen villages of the Nizam's Dominion surrounded by Indian territory—the people, under the Party unit's guidance, have thrown away the Nizam's authority and seized the reins of power. Fifteen thousand villagers led by the Party workers declared themselves independent of the Nizam on the 1st of January, 1948. It is not yet time when we can fully describe the courage and

steadfastness shown by our Party workers in the Hyderabad struggle.

The East Punjab branch sent a batch of members to Kashmir, who toured Jammu from village to village and helped in combating Hindu-Sikh communalism. They organized branches of the National Conference at several places, raised Home Guards and recovered abducted Muslim women. The East Punjab branch also worked in Patiala, Faridkot and Nabha for the States people's movement.

### *(7) Volunteers*

The National Executive decided some time back that the Party should have its own volunteer organization, but in those provinces, where there are organizations, autonomous or semi-autonomous but directed by the Party, they should be allowed to continue to work with the Party. Accordingly, two types of volunteer organizations have been functioning—one sponsored by the Party and the other working in full sympathy with Party objectives. U.P. has a volunteer organization of the first type while C.P., Maharashtra and Bombay have organizations of the latter type. The Hindustan Lal Sena organization of C.P. has recently decided to discontinue its activities. Congress Seva Dal in Saurashtra is under our Party influence. The Bengal branch has also organized the "Gana Fauj".

### *(8) Students*

The Party has considerable influence over students in almost all the provinces. The Students' Sub-Committee has now prepared a comprehensive programme of work among students.

### *(9) Party Members Under Detention*

In several provinces, Bihar, East Punjab, Maharashtra, a number of Party comrades have been kept under detention by the Provincial Governments. There has often been a misuse of the Public Safety Acts, and the conditions in which these members are kept during the detention are often very unsatisfactory.

### *(10) Publicity and Propaganda*

The following journals are published by various provincial branches:

1. *Janavani* (Hindustani Monthly), Benares.
2. *Janavani* (Marathi Weekly), Poona.
3. *Sangharsha* (Hindustani Weekly), Lucknow.

4. *Janamat* (Hindustani Weekly), Nagpur.
5. *Janata* (Hindustani Weekly), Patna.
6. *Janata* (Tamil Weekly), Madras.
7. *Janata* (Assamese Weekly), Gauhati.
8. *Socialist* (Bengali Weekly), Calcutta.
9. *Socialist* (Urdu Weekly), Pakistan.
10. *Jagrati* (Kannada Weekly), Dharwar.
11. *Swatantra Bharat* (Malayalam Weekly), Kerala.
12. *Mazdoor* (Marathi Weekly), Bombay.
13. *Krishak* (Oriya Weekly), Cuttack.
14. *Kranti* (Gujarati Weekly), Saurashtra.
15. *Janata* (Gujarati) which stopped publication is expected to start next week.
16. *Jai Hind* (Hindi Weekly), Kotah which was suppressed by the State is resuming its publication.

Most of the daily papers in English and Indian languages are, for reasons which can well be guessed, hostile to the Party. It is necessary that the Party should now organize a chain of daily papers and weeklies to cover Party activities and views.

### *(11) Training of Workers*

Several provinces are running periodical schools and institutions for training trade union workers. The Bombay branch has organized the Labour College primarily for training trade union workers. Our workers have very enthusiastically taken it. The Bengal branch organized a Summer School at Dhamua—15 days for labour workers and 15 days for Kisan workers. The Bihar branch recently organized the Autumn School of Politics for a month. Ninety-seven Party workers took advantage of the school. The Bihar branch is also running: (1) Women's Training Camp, (2) Instructors' Training Camp and (3) Winter School of Politics. A Social Service Brigade has also been organized by Party members of the Gaya College. The Bengal branch has an Institute for Social Studies. Several schools and study circles have also been opened in U.P. It must be stated however that much more effort in this direction is needed if the Party is to have a corps of workers with ideals of service capable of holding positions of responsibility and trust at a short notice.

### *(12) Bombay Municipal Elections*

The Municipal elections in Bombay contested by the Party has become a landmark in the history of the Party. The Bombay branch put up 49 candidates



against the Congress and other parties and 26 out of them were returned by the people. This result was achieved notwithstanding all the propaganda against the Party by some sections of the press and the efforts made by the Congress candidates to wean away public sympathy from the Party in the name of Mahatma Gandhi. It clearly brings out two things, firstly, that there is a deep-rooted sympathy among the public with Socialist ideals, and secondly, that by effort and organization this sympathy can be canalized in support of the Party.

### *(13) Relief and Rehabilitation*

I must mention here the splendid effort made by our Party members for refugee relief and rehabilitation work in East Punjab, Delhi and Bengal. During the Punjab and Delhi riots a number of our Party members have at great personal risk saved the lives of hundreds of Muslims and Hindus. From Rawalpindi, 50,000 persons were evacuated through the help of Party members. Party members have ceaselessly toured the districts of Amritsar, Jullundur, Ludhiana, Ferozepur, Jagadhari, Hoshiarpur, Bhatinda, Ambala, Shahadra, and helped in the work of evacuation, relief and rescue of abducted women, often taking great risks. The National Executive sometime back decided to set up a Refugee Organization of the Party at New Delhi under the direction of Dr. Lohia and Shrimati Kamaladevi. This organization with the help of Punjab and Delhi members have done much work in the Kurukshetra, Karnal and Panipat camps and other areas. Some industrial co-operatives are also being set up for the refugees. Relief work is being done by Party comrades also in U.P., Bihar, C.P. and Bombay. The Rajputana branch has done much relief work in Jodhpur, Jaipur and Kotah. Particular emphasis is laid in speeches and programmes on Hindu-Muslim unity and creation of a secular democratic State.

### *(14) International Conferences*

The International Socialist Conference was held at Antwerp in the last week of November 1947. On an invitation from the Organizing Committee of the Conference the Party sent Com. Madhu Limaye as an observer delegate to the Conference. Com. Limaye's report is being published in a booklet form and will soon be made available to all provincial branches.

The National Executive has also entrusted to Dr. Lohia and Shrimati Kamaladevi the task of making the preliminary arrangements for a World Socialist Conference. On the invitation of the conveners, the Executive has also decided to send representatives of the Party to the Milan Conference in May next on the proposals for a United Socialist State of Europe.

**Debate on the report of the General Secretary presented  
at the Sixth Annual Conference of Socialist Party,  
Nasik, 19-21 March 1948<sup>1</sup>**

Shri Nargolkar (Bombay): "It appears to me that the Report is mainly addressed to Gandhian coterie. Is it an appeal to the Gandhian constructive workers? Does the General Secretary hope to win over this element? When we talk of morality and democratic opposition to the party in power, we presuppose a democratic atmosphere. We expect the Congress to play cricket. In my opinion, this presupposition is wrong. The Congress is heading towards totalitarianism.

Shri Naren Das (Bengal) sought clarification from the General Secretary on two points. He argued that the idea of constitutional opposition to a totalitarian Congress was creating a lot of confusion. "I feel that the General Secretary has over-emphasized spiritual regeneration. If by spiritual regeneration, the General Secretary meant moral regeneration, then it could be understood."

Shri Mehrchand Ahuja (East Punjab): "In his report Jayaprakashji has emphasized moral values and purity of means has been the backbone of Gandhism. Gandhiji taught it for thirty years. And yet after the 15th of August, all his teachings, his precepts, his emphasis on moral values and fair means were forgotten by the Congressmen. The communal storm swept them away. They lost their heads. Where Gandhiji failed, do we hope to succeed? Let us not give up our materialist conception. When the Punjab was having a blood bath, our comrades were the only people who did not lose their heads.

"There are bound to be some evil persons in society. We cannot keep an eye on everyone. I feel that too much emphasis is being put on spiritual regeneration."

Shri Ramapati Singh (Bihar): "We will have to face the organized opposition of Congress ministries. The General Secretary has made no mention of the difficulties we may have to face in this direction. I don't think we need raise the moral standard of the people. If we pursue spiritual regeneration, we will get lost."

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Sixth Annual Conference of the Socialist Party, Nasik, 19-21 March 1948*, pp. 7-11.

For J.P.'s reply to the debate see item no. 161 in the text.

Shri Shyamnarayan Kashmiri (C.P.): "I feel that we are abandoning the classical path of revolutionary ethics. Basically, it is a new approach which the General Secretary is suggesting. He has suggested the necessity of moral values and emphasized the urgency of adopting fair means to achieve fair ends. It is a new orientation to socialist thought. And, therefore, I feel that there is a great necessity of a scientific theory to explain this new orientation. What will be the standards of moral values? It is essential that these points be further explained. I can tell you my conception of moral values. Last year the sweepers of Nagpur were on strike. Our Party requested them to resume work once or twice a week to keep the city clean and thus avoid the possible outbreak of epidemic. Our suggestion was opposed by the Communists."

Shri Surajnath Pande (U.P.): "Mahatma Gandhi spent his life preaching the purity of means. He insisted on the acceptance of moral values in politics. And yet, did all that have any effect? All talk of spiritual regeneration is ineffective and impracticable. I feel that the portion on means and ends and spiritual regeneration should not be incorporated in the Report."

Shri Sohni (Bombay) felt that the Report was incomplete. He said: "Our Party had adopted an attitude of neutrality at the A.I.C.C. meeting which accepted the Mountbatten Plan. Jayaprakashji has explained our policies, both negative and positive. Why not clarify our neutral policies as well?"

Shri Fazlul Karim (Calcutta): "I believe that the talk of spiritual regeneration, if carried to its logical conclusion, will lead us to the conception of trusteeship. Our faith in class struggle as a weapon of revolution will be shaken. Then there is the question of left unity. Co-operation with Communists is of course out of question. But then, should we not absorb such other leftists who are themselves opposed to the Communists? There do exist small groups of leftists. They may be splinter groups but they do wield some influence. In my opinion, our Party doors should be thrown open to these elements."

Shri Riyasat Karim (Bihar): "There is nothing wrong about constructive activity. The General Secretary has said in his Report that by relying on parliamentary activity alone we will not be able to establish a socialist society. But then, control of the State machinery is extremely essential to put through our programme. It should become an important aspect of our struggle to establish a socialist society."

Shri Hariprasad (Bombay): "Why is not the Central Party publishing literature? In the absence of this literature it sometimes becomes difficult to understand the statements of our leaders. Our literature should be published in a language which the kisans and mazdoors understand."

Shri Rajaram Shastri (U.P.): "The General Secretary has in his Report condemned Stalinism as a real danger to world peace. But then, what is

true of communist totalitarianism is equally true of the capitalist democracies. If Russia is a menace to world peace, then, America is equally so. Why has the Secretary condemned one and not the other?

The Socialist Party is a big party today. Why is it that we have no dailies of our own? In their absence the views of our leaders and the correct Party line do not reach our Party members. There is yet another thing. Why is it that there is a seeming contradiction in the statements and utterances of our Party leaders? This creates confusion.

Shri Haren Chatterji (Bengal) wanted to know more about the Pakistan Party. He said: "We in India have been supporting Sheikh Abdullah while press reports indicate that the Pakistan Socialist Party had condemned Sheikh Abdullah at its recent convention."

Shri Gitaprasad Singh (Bihar): "I do not understand this talk about spiritual regeneration. Our General Secretary has invited Swamis and Sadhus to lead the country. Jayaprakashji seems to be very much affected by the recent bloodshed. Murder and arson were let loose and blood flowed freely not because of any spiritual degeneration but because the capitalists and vested interests were behind all that. What harm is there if violence is used to combat violence?"

"The General Secretary has invited Shri Aurobindo and Ramana Maharshi to come out and lead the people. We do not want to don the saffron. Repeated references to spiritual regeneration and moral values have created a lot of confusion. Must we say things to please some people? Social reformers have come and gone. But where does society stand today? Are we to become social reformers and abandon the path of revolution?"

"We have to fight the vested interests and not moral degeneration. I am not satisfied with certain things the General Secretary has mentioned in his Report."

Shri Munshi Ahmed Din (Pakistan) supported the General Secretary's Report and commended it to the Conference. He said: "It is a fine team with whom I have had the good fortune to work."

"Religious antagonism which leads to the slaughter of human beings in the name of religion has been a great tragedy. The greatest tragedy in the history of humanity is the inhuman murder of Gandhiji. Jayaprakashji had all these things before him and hence his insistence on the purity of means. We have to build our country afresh. While doing so we should be sure of the means we adopt and the methods we follow."

"I do not feel that we are abandoning Marxism. Marx never thought of religious antagonisms leading to mass conflagrations as they have in India. We are faced today with problems which Marxism never thought of. And, if it is necessary to re-interpret Marx in the light of present happenings, we should and we must."

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