

Thus spoke -
Ambedkar.

vol: II

by,

Das. Bhagwan

Acem

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DEDICATED

To

Rev. A.A. Andrews and Mrs. Edith
Andrews in token of gratitude for
the paternal love and guidance
they gave me when I needed it most
after the death of my beloved
father Shri Ram Datta in 1943.

THEN HE SAID

My friends and my road-fellows, pity the nation
that is full of beliefs and empty of religion.

Pity the nation that wears a cloth it does not weave;
eats a bread it does not harvest and drinks a wine that
flows not from its wine-press.

Pity the nation that acclaims the bully as hero and that
deems the glittering conquerer beautiful.

Pity the nation that despises a passion in its dream, yet
submits in its awakening.

Pity the nation that raises not its voice save when it
walk in funeral, boasts not except among its ruins, and will
rebel not save when its neck is laid between the sword and
the block.

Pity the nation whose statesman is a fox, whose philos-
opher is a juggler and whose art is the art of patching and
mimicking.

Pity the nation that welcomes its new ruler with trump-
etings and farewells him with hooting, only to welcome
another with trumpeting again.

Pity the nation whose sages are dumb with years and
whose strong men are yet in the cradle.

Pity the nation divided into fragments each fragment
deeming itself a nation.

Kahelil Gibran

THEN HE SAID

My friends and my road-followers, give the nation
that is full of beliefs and empty of religion.
Give the nation that wears a cloth it does not weave,
that eats a bread it does not harvest and drinks a wine that
flows not from its wine-press.
Give the nation that holds the bull by the horn and that
beams the glittering conqueror beautiful.
Give the nation that desires a position in its dream, yet
submits in its awakening.
Give the nation that raises not its voice when it
walks in funeral processions, except among its ruler and will
hold not even when its neck is laid between the sword and
the block.
Give the nation whose statesman is a fakir, whose philoso-
pher is a juggler and whose art is the art of patching and
mimicry.
Give the nation that welcomes its new ruler with trumpets
and fanfares, that with footings only to welcome
another with drumbeats again.
Give the nation whose asses are dumb with years and
whose strong men are yet in the cradles.
Give the nation divided into fragments, each fragment
claiming itself a nation.

Kaheili Gikren

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THUS SPOKE AMBEDKAR Vol. II

Introductory Note

The first volume of the 'Thus Spoke Ambedkar' was published in 1964. It got a mixed reception both from the public as well as the press. Followers and admirers of Baba Saheb Ambedkar hailed it as a valuable addition to the literature on the social problems and politics of India. Students of politics in India and abroad made liberal use of the little book in their researches as is evident from the footnotes of books on Baba Saheb Ambedkar and the problems of the Untouchables of India. Baba Saheb was not very popular with the press. He was treated, to use his own words, 'as a snake in the grass'. In their enthusiasm to malign the great national leader some of the newspapers, for no other reason except the prejudice based on caste, instead of reviewing the book set about criticising his life, work and ideology. We expected it and infact welcome this criticism because we believe nobody kicks a dead dog. All great ideas have to pass through three stages namely ridicule, discussion and finally, acceptance. Like a realist and a scientist he was far ahead of his time and like most prophets he was misunderstood. It is impossible to write about Baba Saheb Ambedkar without offending many people in india. He was a giant among mental, moral, intellectual and spiritual dwarfs who were hectically engaged in erecting pedestals to pass as tall men. He was gifted with what George

Bernard Shaw called 'normal eye sight' capable of seeing clearly and in the distant future. Beverly Nicholas the famous British writer called him 'one of the six best brains of India'. Gunther admired his erudition and scholarship. Lord Casey, the Australian Governor of Bengal during the most controversial period in Indian History described him as the "fountainhead of wisdom and knowledge." He was truly a great leader of men fighting against the oldest and the greatest curse of humanity, perpetrated and perpetuated by his own countrymen in the name of religion. He had enormous love for his country and her people coupled with enormous love for truth, justice and freedom of man. He had an immaculately clean character and was incorruptable to a fault. Among his contemporaries he was perhaps the most highly educated man in public life in any part of the world. It was for these sterling qualities of head & heart that Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru introduced Baba Saheb Ambedkar as the 'Jewel of his cabinet'. Yet it was these qualities that provoked jealousy and prejudice in the minds of his contemporaries.

In spite of all these qualities, virtues and encyclopaedic knowledge that he possessed, Baba Saheb Ambedkar did not deliver many speeches. Garrulousness was not his vice. He spoke only if it was absolutely necessary. But whenever he spoke in public or in Parliament, he stirred people and kept them praising, commenting, discussing, criticising, vilifying and fulminating for months. Appreciating the qualities of Baba Saheb Ambedkar, Gandhi told Hindus 'you cannot ignore Ambedkar'.

Whenever he spoke, the style of his oratory was obsoles-

cent in this era of propaganda and advertisement. There was the height of fire and fury combined with vastness of knowledge, depth of wisdom, brilliance of his intellect and amazing intelligence. His was the voice of will and strength incarnate. It was the voice of hope and revolt against tyranny, untruth and injustice.

Weak-eyed people fail to measure the true proportions of the greatman and they derive sadistic pleasure in maligning him.

Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar played many and varied roles in the Indian public life. Starting as a leader of the Untouchables, he rose to be a nation-builder and national leader of the first rank. From a practising lawyer he elevated himself to the enviable position of the 'principal architect of India's Democratic Constitution'—a position which offers itself only once in the lifetime of a nation. Born in a community on which doors of education had been closed for centuries, he studied in the best universities of the world and later on struggled for the spread of education and founded Institutions and Societies so that poor man's sons and daughters may also learn and progress and lead wholesome life. Himself a victim of prejudice he rose to emancipate the victims and educate the oppressor with malice against none and love for all. He authored many books and schemes which adorn the libraries of the world and enlighten the minds of the men and women in despair as well as men in power and authority. A thinker, political philosopher, a genius of rare originality and versatility which stretched over many subjects, including, Anthropology, Sociology, Economics, Philosophy, Religion, Politics, History, Military Science and Law. An iconoclast and a revolutionary who

turned into a religious leader and a revivalist having no parallel in any part of the world in any age. He dug up Buddhism, the greatest religion of man from the grave where it had been lying buried for well over 1000 years and gave it new life and strength. He brought the message of the Buddha to the down-trodden masses—the real proletariat of India—a country which under the influence of renascent Brahminism had banished it from its soil only to replace it by superstition, pornographic idolisation glorified idiosyncracies, and ruinous horizontal and vertical division of integrated society into multitudinous castes and sub-castes.

Prominent among his services to the country and the humanity in general are the Emancipation of the Untouchables, Drafting of the Constitution of India, and the Revival of Buddhism in the land of its origin.

Little is known about the Untouchability and the Untouchables of India outside India. Indians have not written about the Untouchables for they lack the courage and honesty; and foreigners have avoided the subject for fear of offending the orthodox Indian masses. Barring the few books written by the English scholars, administrators and missionaries in the nineteenth century, no Englishman or woman has written any book on the Untouchables of India. Russian Communist scholars have evinced little interest in this problem which affects 100 million people. So obsessed are they with the economic interpretation of historical problems that they refuse to believe that in India it was essentially social problem and later on economic measures were adopted only to prolong and perpetuate the evil. They refuse to believe that in India it is caste-system which has given birth to class-system and maintains it today.

Basically the problem of untouchables remains, as it was in the past, a social problem having its origin in the religious beliefs of India. Economic emancipation alone can lead to social emancipation in India is a fallacy and a fundamental delusion which have befooled many people. Russian Communists have been studying Indian problem through the eyes of Communist Leaders and writers of India who are predominantly Brahmins in their belief and conduct. Lately Americans inspite of the fact that they have many a skeleton in their own cupboard backhome in America have begun to take keen interest in the problems of the backward sections of the Indian Society, Lynch in Agra, Marc Gallanter of Chicago, Mother Adele Fisk of New York, Miss Eleanor Zelliott in Maharashtra, Barbara Joshi in Delhi have been working on projects assigned by the American Universities with a long term motive of studying the developments in the developing countries with a view to determining their relations and foreign policies in the future.

The Untouchables have not written about themselves so far. Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah once a famous leader in Madras wrote a book entitled as the Depressed Classes of India. Many books in regional languages have been written by youngmen mainly on their respective caste problems but nothing of importance has appeared in Hindi and English. Baba Saheb Ambedkar was the only person born among the Untouchables who wrote authoritatively for and about the Untouchables. He wrote about the origin and development of Caste system and untouchability. 'The Untouchables'—who are they and how they started living outside the village is perhaps the only book in English which furnishes a plausible

explanation in respect of the origin of the Untouchability. There is no mention about the origin of Indian Untouchability in the great monumental work of Frazer, namely the Golden Bough, which deals with almost every thing under the sun. No author worth the name has cared to find out the origin of the Untouchability before or after Baba Saheb Ambedkar. Even the definition of Untouchability has been systemically avoided by the legislators. At the time of the enactment of the Untouchability (offences) Act the question of defining Untouchability came before the Indian Constituent Assembly. Carefully the Members avoided it by saying that every body knows what Untouchability is. One wonders what would have been the situation if the authors of penal code had adopted the same attitude in regard to the offences like murder, theft, rape and treason.

Gandhiji will go in the history as the greatest benefactor of Hinduism. His politics was so inextricably mixed up with the popular Hinduism that one fails to distinguish where the one ended and the other began. In his teachings the orthodox Hinduism got a fillip and even superstitious beliefs, idio-syncracies and revolting practices were not only revived but began to be glorified.

Hinduism is one of the divisive forces of the world. In many ways it is a great deal more dangerous than the Fascism of Mussolini and the Nazism of Adolf Hitler. Both believed in racial superiority and so does Hinduism. To a serious student of Hindu Society the horrible picture drawn in the '1984' of George Orwell or in Hunley's Brave new World, looks like a childish imitate of Hindu Society based on Manu's Law.

With the advent of Gandhiji in Indian public life the integrating and unifying forces began to weaken and orthodoxy gained strength. The work of social reconstruction and building nationalism was thrown into the dark cellar of oblivion and forgotten. It became fashionable to talk about non-existent unity and nationhood from pulpit and platform. The acolytes took childish pride in suppressing and stifling the voice of the weaker sections of the society in the name of patriotism. Instead of boldly facing the realities people found solace in self-deception and hypnotising slogan-mongering. Masses under the leadership of Gandhiji chose the wider and easier path of political agitation, non-cooperation and civil-disobedience instead of the difficult path of education, social reform and reconstruction of society on healthy lines.

The Untouchables who were not considered to be Hindus until the Indian politics had been reduced to numbers after the Govt. of India Act, 1935 began to be included among the Hindus and they in turn under the influence of Mahatma's teachings began to imitate Hindu manners and customs so as to raise their social status in the eyes of the Hindus and pass as fourth grade Hindus. Gandhiji's teachings and method of working divided them and changed the trend much to the advantage of the Hindu majority but to a great disadvantage to the Untouchables. The educated among the Untouchables, especially those who came under the influence of Gandhiji, became either the sycophants and cheap imitators or ended up as selfish, mean job-hunters. They developed strange kind of mischievous schizophrenia. While addressing the Untouchable masses they criticised the Hindus and Hinduism but while facing the Hindus they sang

the praises of Hindu leaders, Hindu heroes and Hindu gods more loudly than their Hindu masters. Undoubtedly this helped the Hindus but has done enormous harm to the untouchables.

Truely speaking the Untouchables have not spoken as yet. Writing about the work of the great services rendered by the Christian Missionaries in his book entitled as "They Have Not Spoken Yet" Rev. Father E. De Meulder S. J. quoted the following lines from G. K. Chesterton which apply most appropriately to the Untouchables in India.

There is no folk in the whole world
So hopeless and so wise
There is hunger in our bellies
and laughter in our eyes.
You laugh at us and love us ;
both mugs and eyes are wet
Only you do not know us ;
for we have not spoken yet.

The voice of the Untouchables was heard for the first time in the world when Baba Saheb Ambedkar spoke in the Round Table Conferences in 1930 and 1932. But the Untouchable masses, fast awakening and arising, have not spoken yet.

Untouchability is not mere touch me-not-ism as Gandhi and his tribe made it out to be nor is it the "excrecence of Great Hinduism." It is an integral part of Hinduism. In fact this is the only custom which is uniformly accepted and universally practised throughout the length and breadth of India. Whenever and wherever the Hindus have gone in search of employment or wealth they have taken it with

them. This is sanctioned by religion, supported by tradition and perpetuated by custom. Yet it is not so innocent as mere touch-me-not-ism. In practice it is a hundred times more dangerous than the myth of racial superiority which has attracted the attention of renowned anthropologists like Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict and Margarete Meade.

According to Hindus all those persons who do not belong to the higher castes of the Hindus are Untouchables of varying degrees. The Moslems are treated as Untouchables and no orthodox Hindu would serve a Moslem in his personal utensils at his home for fear of pollution. Prior to the partitioning of India and creation of Pakistan, the Hindu shopkeepers in the Western Punjab did not so much as allow the Moslems to touch the uncooked eatables with a finger. A wooden stick was kept for the purpose in all rural shops. The poor illiterate Moslems pocketed these insults and humiliations because they depended on the Hindu traders for money and employment. In some parts Moslems did retaliate.

Even the Christians in the eyes of the orthodox Hindus are Untouchables. This is partly because of their origin and partly because most of the Christians are beef eaters. The Hindus make no secret about their belief in the matter of observance of this sacred custom.

Lord Louis Mountbatten of Burma, last Viceroy and Governor General of India visited a Hindu temple in South India. Pundit Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India accompanied him. Immediately after they had left the 'holy' precincts of the Hindu temple, the Brahmin priests declared it polluted by the touch of infidel whiteman. For

seven days the floor of the temple was washed clean with 108 goblets of Pachgavayas, a strange Hindu concoction prepared with the Cow-dung, urine, milk, butter and curd of the cow. Incidentally it may be mentioned here that same method was adopted for cleansing the Mahad tank where Baba Sahib had launched the agitation for the right to take water from the tank in the process "polluted" the tank by his touch.

Pundit Madan Mohan Malviya famous Hindu leader always took goblets full of 'sacred Ganges water' whenever he went to England. The room was sprinkled with Ganges-water every time an English man left his room.

The Hindus have been following this custom very rigidly throughout the recorded history. The doors of education were closed on the Untouchables. They were not allowed to bear arms. They could not earn enough money or acquire wealth in any manner. Even in the matter of words, they were not allowed free choice. They should not use decent cultured language but instead were required to use crude language order to help identification. They had to live outside the villages and far away from the towns in caves, on the trees or huts or tents made of tattered clothes. They could not own animals other than pigs, dogs and donkeys. They were not allowed to eat decent wholesome food, nor allowed to wear decent clothes. In certain regions they were not allowed to put on lion-cloth which went below the knee-cap. They could enter the villages only during the day and had to return to their huts before sunset when the shadow grows longest. They were branded as untouchables, unseeables and un-approachables. Even shadow contaminated

the pious. Chirrol writes that in Madras courts the Pariahs were not allowed to speak directly to the Magistrate standing in the court. An Untouchable prisoner had to stand outside the court and give his statement to a Sudra, who in turn passed it on to the Brahmin Official and he relayed it to the Honourable Magistrate.

Baba Saheb Ambedkar spoke for these people and made their voice audible to the world. He struggled valiantly for achieving human rights for these unfortunate people and then for political rights with reservation in legislature together with share in the administration. What he did and what he achieved for the Untouchable has no parallel in the history of the World. Nobody in the whole history of mankind has achieved so much for so many with so little resources inspite of stubborn and vehement opposition from millions of his own countrymen. Not even Moses who claimed to have spoken to God and liberated the Jews.

Gandhiji the greatest leader of the Hindus after Shankaracharya is given the credit for the removal of untouchability in India. This is nothing short of travesty of truth for neither the untouchability has been removed through the Mahatamic efforts of the great Mahatma nor have his prodromontade and much advertised eccentricities led to their emancipation. With the advent of freedom the classes and the castes who came in power very much believed in the sanctity of the Shastras and had unflinching faith in the authenticity and correctness of the rules and principles embedded in their religious books. The legislators were indifferent and apathetic towards the cause of the untouchables for fear of losing the caste Hindus votes. The Untouch-

ables because of their general backwardness, ignorance and poverty could very easily be exploited. Politically the Untouchables like most of their poor ignorant compatriots are backward and uneducated.

Those who give credit to Gandhiji for the removal of untouchability do so partly out of reverence and devotion for Gandhiji and partly because they cannot suffer to give credit to an Untouchable. They say so because they believe so blindly, without caring to analyse and to judge. Their patriotism appears to be stronger than their judgement. Untouchability has not only been not abolished inspite of Gandhiji and the law enacted by Indian Parliament but very much thrives even after 21 years of freedom. Even today an Untouchable can be publicly hanged by Hindu mobs for trivial offences. Woman can be raped and paraded naked through the streets. Men can be murdered in Cities like Allahabad for touching the water bucket of a Hindu and women's faces can be mutilated in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh for the offence of wearing rings on the toes. To a great extent Gandhi and Gandhism are responsible for the present plight of the Untouchables. Evils cannot be abolished by trimming the branches and leaving the trunk and roots intact. Untouchables have been hoodwinked and bamboozled by Gandhi and his followers. Gandhiji was a great protagonist of Chaturvarna and Varnasharma Dharma. Whatever he did it was not done for the emancipation of the Untouchables but for saving the Hinduism. His motive was political. If he said that 'I regard untouchability as the greatest blot on Hinduism' he also said 'But even then I believe that Untouchability was no part of Hinduism; and

that if it was, such Hinduism was not for me.' The utterances like "Two of the strongest desires that keep me in flesh and bone are the emancipation of the Untouchables and the protection of the cow" and "But if I have to be reborn, I should be born an untouchable," were mere pious platitudes meant for deluding the poor innocent untouchables. "Hindus", according to the Mahatma "are not sinful by nature"; Praising the most vicious and satanic social system of Hinduism popularly known as Varnasharma which has disunited and ruined India Gandhiji said "I believe in Varnasharma Dharma both according to birth and Karma" Further he added, "I do not want them (untouchables) to wrest their rights by violence as is done in the West. I do not regard interdining and intermarriage as essential to the removal of Untouchability."

"...I believe in Maryada Dharma."

"...But the reform contemplated in the Untouchability movement does not obliterate the restriction as the interdining and intermarrying. I cannot recommended wholesale abolition of these restrictions to the public, even at the risk of being charged with hypocrisy and inconsistency."

"I can help you (Untouchables) in this (right to worship, education etc.,) only by following the way indicated by my religion and not by following Western methods."

"If the inhuman treatment of the Panchamss were a part of Hinduism, its rejection would be paramount duty both for them and those like me who would not make a fetish even of religion and condone every evil in its sacred name. But I believe that untouchability is no part of Hinduism."¹

Exhorting the Hindu reformers to carry on propaganda

1. Young India 27. 10. 1920'

against Untouchability he said, "It is the duty of every worker everywhere to befriend the Untouchable brothers, and to plead with the Un-Hindu Hindus that Hinduism of the Vedas, the Upanishadas, Hinduism of the Bhagavad Gita and of Shanker and Ramanuja contains no warrant for treating a single human being, no matter how fallen, as an untouchable."

Showering praises on the Brahamans, Gandhiji wrote, "The Brahaman is the finest flower of Hinduism and humanity. I will do nothing to wither it. It has weathered many a storm before now. Only let it not be said of Non-Brahmans that they attempted to rob the flower of its fragrance and lustre.

"...Brahamans are born not So Brahminism."

While the Hindus have been shouting from the housetops that Gandhiji was the greatest friend of the Untouchables in India, Baba Saheb Ambedkar repeatedly said with all the vehemence at his command that Gandhi was the greatest enemy of the Untouchables ever born. His criticism of Gandhism and Gandhiji's politics—not the criticism of his person—contained in the famous books entitled as 'What Congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables' and 'Ranade, Gandhi and Jinnah' have left scars on the image of Gandhi which cannot easily be effaced nor ignored by honest researchers and scholar in India and abroad.

While Gandhi's movements have made some of the untouchables impudent sycophants and mental and political slaves seeking charities from the benevolent caste-Hindu masters, Ambedkar's movement, to use Sanjana's word's

"brought determination to assert their common

humanity, to refuse to be treated any longer as lower than animals or even to be patronised by sanctimonious political bosses, climbers and bounders; the resolve to assert their rights as Indians to enter all walks of life, to advance in every possible direction, to carve out their own destiny to fight for social, educational and economic equality with higher castes "

The second in importance was the service rendered by him in drafting Indian Constitution.

India became a free and independent Republic on the 26th January, 1950 and adopted her own Constitution. This charter of Government was drafted by Baba Saheb Ambedkar.

American Constitution was perhaps the first Constitution reduced to writing. It was drafted in 1789 by a drafting committee which included giants like Jefferson, Washington and Benjamin Franklin. Yet it was James Madison who had to exert more than anybody else and played the most important part in drafting the Constitution, the charter of Government which has been guiding the destinies of Americans for the last 180 years. In recognition of the glorious services rendered by Madison, he was called 'The Father of American Constitution. This great document was not created entirely by Mr. Madison. For that matter no really important document can be attributable entirely to one man. While the same may be true of Indian Constitution, yet it is a fact that owing to illness or absence of majority of the members of the Drafting Committee it cannot be denied that to a great measure Indian Constitution was

the brain child of Dr. Ambedkar. He was the father and the nurse of this child. His contribution was the greatest. Majority of the members of the Constituent Assembly did not know much about the Constitution or Constitutional Law. This fact was very frankly admitted by Mr Khandu Bhai K. Desai, a Member from Bombay Province. Speaking on the eve of the third reading of the Draft Constitution he said, "I must very frankly state before the house that quite a large number of us who have been returned to this Constituent Assembly to frame the Constitution had only got a few hazy notions about the Constitution and we have got certain theoretical conceptions of what a Constitution should be for a free Republic."

Dr. Ambedkar stood like a tower of strength, guiding, explaining, clarifying various provisions of the Constitution. It was a gigantic task which he had to perform almost single handed. Although there were many members of the Drafting Committee headed by the Chairmen, Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar, it was Baba Saheb alone who assisted by his able Secretary Mr. Mukherji, had to carry most of the burden on his shoulders. Appreciating the great service rendered by Baba Saheb Ambedkar, Mr. T. T. Krishnamechari, one of the members of the Constituent Assembly said,

"the House is, perhaps, aware that of the seven members nominated by you, one had resigned from the House and was replaced. One died and was not replaced. One was away in America and his place was not filled up and another person was engaged in state affairs and there was void to that extent. One or two people were far away from Delhi and

perhaps, for reasons of health did not attend. So it happened ultimately that the burden of drafting the Constitution fell on Dr. Ambedkar and I have no doubt that we are grateful to him for having achieved this task in a manner which is undoubtedly commendable."

It was for the first time that many of his erstwhile enemies and political adversaries had the opportunity to sit beside Dr. Ambedkar and see him work. Leaders of all parties Hindus, Moslems, Christians and Sikhs alike paid glorious tributes to the great service Dr. Ambedkar had rendered in drafting the Constitution of Free India. Dr. Rajinder Prasad, President of the Constituent Assembly appreciating the services of Baba Saheb Ambedkar, said, "Sitting in the chair and watching the proceedings from day to day I have realized as nobody else could have with what zeal and devotion the members of the Drafting Committee and especially its Chairman, Dr. Ambedkar, inspite of his indifferent health, have worked. We could never make a decision which was or could be ever so right as when we put him on Drafting Committee and made him its Chairman. He has not only justified his selection but has added lustre to the work which he has done."

Many of the members of the Constituent Assembly showered praises on Dr. Ambedkar. Mr. Jaspat Rai Kapur, a Hindu Member from (United Provinces)-Uttar Pradesh had started with a prejudice against Dr. Ambedkar. Like many of his compatriots he had condemned Dr. Ambedkar because of his irreverence and ostentatious opposition to Gandhi and Gandhism. However, over-coming his deep-rooted prejudices, he was bold enough to admit his weakness and

said, "I had started with a prejudice against Dr. Ambedkar for I had felt very sore many years ago when Mahatma Gandhi was undergoing fast against grant of separate electorates to the Scheduled Castes and I had read in the newspapers the news that when he had been invited to see Mahatma Gandhi to discuss the question, he once said that for a day or two he was not free because he had to attend to some professional engagements. I felt very sorry then. I do not know how far it is correct. But even if it was so the great work that he has done during these years has washed away that particular sin or any other sins which he may have committed. I have developed an admiration and also affection for Dr. Ambedkar for the very useful work and the very patriotic work which he has done. His very first speech in this Assembly had dispelled all my doubts and fears in relation to him and today I may say that I consider him to be one of the best patriots of this country. I have always found him to bring to bear upon the subject a very constructive approach."

Congratulating Dr. Ambedkar, for the outstanding ability with which he piloted the Draft Constitution, Mr. Mehboob Ali Beg Saheb, a Member from Madras said, "Dr. Ambedkar was unique in his clarity of expression and thought and his mastery over the constitutional problems including those of finance has been marvellous, unique, singular and complete. But, Sir, unlike you he was not a free agent. So the evils or the defects in the Constitution, as it is placed before us today are inherent in the situation in which he was placed and he cannot therefore be personally responsible for them."

Surprisingly true the "Harijan" Members of the Consti-

tuent Assembly numbering an many as 27 did not cooperate with Dr. Ambedkar in this great national task. On the contrary be it said to their shame, they took pride in vilifying Dr. Ambedkar and gloried in criticising him in private and in public. By their silence and the inglorious role in the Constituent Assembly they, perhaps, wanted to prove themselves to be more faithful than their masters.

Dr Ambedkar's work in the Constituent Assembly was acclaimed the greatest patriotic service in the service of his nation but not so in the eyes of Baba Saheb Ambedkar the greatest Saviour of the Untouchables, and friend of the down trodden of the world. His greatest was yet to come.

The third greatest service that Dr. Ambedkar rendered was the revival of Buddhism in the land of its origin. It is said about the Great Emperor Ashoka that he brought Buddhism out of the monasteries and made it a world religion. Baba Saheb rendered still greater service. He brought it out of the grave and infused life into it afresh. Dr. Ambedkar will go in the history as the greatest revivalist of Buddhism In India, He had decided somewhen in the thirties that he would renounce Hinduism. With the passage of time he became increasingly convinced that there was no hope for the Untouchables in Hinduism. For some time he became attracted toward Sikhism and in one or two speeches he threw some hints that he would consider this religion for his people. The more he studied through books and by discussing with and observing people professing this religion the more he was disillusioned for there was no difference between the Hindus and the Sikhs. Sikhs believe in Caste-System and untouchability just as much as the

Hindus do. The spiritual equality preached by the founder ended in the Gurudwaras. Outside the Gurudwaras they are just as bad as any Orthodox Hindu. Christianity and Islam did not appeal to him very much because beside other things not acceptable to rational men they too had caught the infection of caste-ism and untouchability from Hinduism. Beside this Dr. Ambedkar was a keen student of Marxism and a great admirer of philosophers like Dewey, Russell, Darwin, Voltaire, and free thinkers and scholars like Shaw and Webbs. These thiestic religions were crumbling like houses of cards before the onslaught of science and Communism. Most of the religions which had influenced human civilization are dogmatic and sectrarian in their outlook. They depended on miracles, wizardery and witchcraft for their existence. They are afraid of reason and abhor scientific analysis and independent interpretation. The history of religion is replete with barbarism and inhumanity of man against man. Religion during the early years of its formation might have been a revolutionary institution but with the passage of time it turned out to be a reactionary force which enslaved man and dwarfed the intellect. In the words of Winwood Reade, the famous author of *Martyrdom of Man*, 'Religion was a good nurse but a bad mistress.'

So far as Hinduism was concerned Baba Saheb Ambedkar believed that a religion which glorified ignorance and impudently preached inequality and hatred, divided human beings into multitudinous castes and sub-castes, sanctioned poverty and adopted economic measure to keep majority of its followers poor, illiterate, ignorant, disunited

and divided was nothing short of infamy. Dr. Ambedkar was not the only person who held these views in respect of Hinduism. Pundit Jawahar Lal Nehru, himself a Brahmin by birth, had held identical views. He wrote,

"Our religion is one of the butchers ; of what to touch and what not to touch, of baths and top-knots, of all manners of works and fasts and ceremonies that have lost all meaning."

(*"The New Era"* Oct. 1928. P. 22)

Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan famous Brahmin philosopher and former President of Indian Republic presenting the weakness of Hinduism as its strength, wrote,

"The thiest and the atheist, the sceptic and the agnostic may all be Hindus if they accept the Hindu system of culture and life. What counts is conduct and not belief."

(*The Hindu View of Life*)

Eliot the author of the famous book entitled as *Hinduism and Buddhism* wrote in his book, "Hinduism has not been made, but has grown. It is a jungle, not a building."

Hinduism is a senile old body which suffered in all its joints from old age and disease and holds no hope for the suffering humanity much less for the downtrodden masses of India for whose appalling poverty and miserable condition it is directly responsible. Almost all the weakness in Indian character, general backwardness, poverty, ignorance, indiscipline, disunity and slavery stretching over many hundreds of years can be attributed to the teachings and philosophy

of Hinduism. According to Baba Saheb Ambedkar such a diabolical creed deserved to be destroyed.

Baba Saheb Ambedkar made a distinction between 'Religion' and 'Dhamma'. According to him, "The purpose of the Religion is to explain the origin of the world. The purpose of Dhamma is to reconstruct the world. In Dhamma there is no place for prayers, pilgrimage, rituals, ceremonies or sacrifices.

Morality is not the root of the religion. It is a wagon which can be attached and detached as the occasion demands. Morality is the essence of Dhamma. In his religion morality takes the place of God. Poverty¹ is the greatest sin. It gives rise to sorrow. But removal of poverty does not give rise to happiness. Not high standard of living but high standard of culture is what gives happiness. There is one religion which can satisfy all needs of man in this scientific age and soothe his tired nerves. It is Buddhism, the religion of reason and religion of morality. Whatever faults one may find in the practices of Buddhists in the Buddhist countries, one thing is certain that Buddhism has not soiled its history with the blood of innocent people for the propagation of the creed. It has not endeavoured to raise its mansions and palaces on the ruins of others. It has advanced with the help of persuasion, reason, renunciation, self-sacrifice and service. In the words of the great historian Toynbee, "Buddhism is tolerant. Buddhism has not set itself to extirpate all the other religions that it has found in occupation of its mission field. It has been ready to come to terms with them to enter not into a mere co-existence

1. Buddha and his Dhamma P. 323.

with them but into a symbiosis. In view of this eirenic ethos, Buddhism has spread without arousing violent opposition."

The great Pali scholar Dr. Rhys Davids testified, "I have examined every one of the great religions of the world and in none of them have I found anything to surpass the beauty and comprehensiveness of the Four Noble Truths of the Buddha. I am content to shape my life according to the path."

The great British Scientist Thomas Huxley said, "Buddhism is a system which knows no God in the Western sense, which denies a soul to man and counts the belief in immortality a blunder, which refuses any efficacy to prayer and sacrifice, which bids men to look to nothing but their own efforts for salvation, which in its original purity knew nothing of vows of obedience and never sought the aid of the secular arm, yet spread over a considerable portion of the world with marvellous rapidity and is still the dominant creed of a large fraction of mankind."

The late H. G. Wells, famous author of some of the prophetic books in English literature, in his characteristic manner prophesied, "It is possible that in contact with Western science, and inspired by the spirit of history, the original teachings of Gotama revived and purified, may yet play a large part in human destiny." The prediction has come true for Baba Saheb Ambedkar has tried to revive the original orthodox Buddhism after purifying it by removing all the dirt and filth and garbage which had accumulated during the centuries which preceded its revival in 1956. The Buddhism of Baba Saheb may not appeal to the orthodox tradition ridden, scriptural slaves for whom "old

is gold" but it appeals to the rational and reasonable persons throughout the world.

This is the background which was kept in view in making selection of speeches for this volume. Speeches have been divided into three parts, namely Constitution, Untouchables and Untouchability and Buddhism.

Baba Saheb Ambedkar spoke in English while addressing the Constituent Assembly or in private conversation with the News Correspondents, foreign dignitaries or other interviewers. While addressing the public meetings he spoke either in Urdu, as it is spoken among the common people in Bombay, or in Marathi which was his mother tongue. The historical speech delivered on the eve of the 'Great Conversion' in Nagpur was delivered in Marathi because most of the members of the audience were Marathi-speaking people. During the course of his election tour in the Punjab, he spoke in Urdu (Hindustani).

All these speeches delivered in languages other than English had to be translated in English and efforts have been made to use words and phrases which Baba Saheb Ambedkar was in the habit of using while discussing these subjects during the private conversation or in his books.

As regards the authenticity of the text it may be said that every possible care was taken to check and verify the facts by referring to daily news papers and the faithful record kept by the devoted followers of Baba Saheb Ambedkar who accompanied him during the election tour of the Punjab or wherever he went. The writer attended the meetings at Patiala. A friend took down the speech delivered at Jullundur. I had kept the cuttings of the news-papers

containing these speeches. From my own collection of news-paper clippings I re constructed some portions of the speeches. Speeches on Buddhism have been taken from the news papers, journals etc.

It would not be amiss to write a few words about the language and the manner of his speech.

Verily it has been commented that Baba Saheb had 'an acid tongue'. Speaking immediately after the death of Baba Saheb Ambedkar Mr. Jawahar Lal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India hinted at the harshness of his tongue by saying, 'He was a symbol of revolt...he felt passionately about the suffering of people but at times he overdid it.' Vincent Shean, the biographer of Jawahar Lal Nehru likened it to 'bristling barbed wire inside out'. There is an element of exaggeration in these remarks. Ordinarily Baba Saheb spoke softly and in low tones, picking and using words very carefully. At times he was very humourous. I have had the opportunity to sit at his feet and learn. He was all politeness and kindness. But he refused to suffer fools and got irritated when people talked in a provocative manner or behaved like stupid persons. Personally I had never seen him losing his temper excepting whenever a book had been misplaced and was not readily to be found. But here Baba Saheb was no exception. This is the trouble with all those who love books. He was not curt like Mr. Jinnah nor rude like most of the scions of aristocratic families who thought it was below their dignity to speak politely to those considered socially inferior. Doctor Ambedkar was a rebel and he rebelled passionately against complacency, against indignity, against indecency, against tyranny and injustice. He spoke in the language of

a rebel. He showed no mercy because no mercy had been shown to him and his people. Yet he never spoke in indecent or filthy language. I believe he was incapable of using indecent language. His anger sprang not from sense of personal grievance but from a desire to see something done to ameliorate the condition of his people ; to see justice done and done quickly. Unfortunately he suffered from a potentially fatal handicap that he was an Untouchable and that made all the difference. In India the Untouchables, no matter what their intellectual or social status is, are judged very severally and their faults are seen through magnifying glass.

If there is heat noticeable in his speeches, there is more light radiating therefrom. Baba Saheb Ambedkar was endowed with prophetic vision and he spoke like a prophet without fear or favour.

World and particularly India is passing through a critical period. The great nations of the world are behaving like delinquents. Man is very much troubled in mind throughout the world. It is in the life and teachings of Lord Buddha and great men like Baba Saheb Ambedkar that we find rays of hope and light to save the world which is fast heading towards sure and certain self-annihilation. Man is no longer free and master of the forces he has released. He is the slave of the forces like money, power, speed, machines etcetra. It is Buddha's message which can save us all from destruction and ruination of our civilisation. Baba Saheb is the interpreter of that message for he has not only raised that message from the graves but lived it in his life.

India has had many false prophets, hypocrites and

impostors. There have been hundered of leaders along side thousand of misleaders Ambedkar was a true leader, master and in a way prophet. His prophetic statements and utterances of wisdom are attracting friends and foes alike from all parts of the world. While the greatmen of yesterday are being dwarfed into insignificant nonentities, the stature of Baba Saheb Ambedkar is gaining in height and strength. Physically Baba Saheb Ambedkar departed from this world on the 6th December, Nineteen hundered and fifty six, but spiritually he still stands guiding and enlightening the exploited and oppressed masses of the world.

The despised slaves of yesterday can be the masters of tomorrow if they follow his teachings and model their lives on his life which had been full of struggle and achievements. In their hands lies the destinies of India and the world,

New Delhi.
India.

BHAGWAN DAS

14th Novamber, 1968.

PART ONE

ON THE UNTOUCHABLES

&

UNTOUCHABILITY

WIN POLITICAL POWER

Brothers and sisters,

To start with I must tender my apology for not having been amidst you earlier than this, inspite of the often announced programmes, mainly because of the heavy pressure of work on me as a Minister of the Central Government, and my failing health. I was told that many times before, also, you had assembled here to hear me and you had to go back disappointed. Let me therefore, first of all apologise to you, Sisters and Brothers, for the inconvenience caused to you and the disappointment you felt.

You know that for the last four years I have been a Minister in the Central Government and I had to bear a heavy burden of work which no Law Member had ever borne in the past or will ever bear in the future. This was one reason why I could not tour. Secondly, I was not keeping good health ; my health even now is not perfectly alright, That has also, naturally prevented me from touring. Thirdly and lastly, in every part of this country you will find untouchables. If I decide to tour every 'Tehsil', district and province, it will not be possible for me to finish my tour in less than four or five years. I can appreciate your feelings of love towards me when you insist on my visiting you now and then and having a heart to heart talk with you. But that is simply not possible. I would expect of each and every one of you to

be self-reliant, to stand on your own legs and thus lead an independent social life.

I have completed 55 years of my life. Had I been in Government service I would have been compelled to retire. But this rule is not applicable to politicians. I wish it were so. Today we find that people over 55 years of age, who have no means of livelihood and no intellect, become politicians and maintain themselves.

The reason why I am in politics is that it was more than 30 years ago that I entered the arena of politics. There is not a single person in India who has been constantly in politics for such a long period. Politics at leisure is the general rule. Out of these 30 years, I have spent eight years as a member of the Central Government. In this sphere also none has surpassed me. If I had the wish, I could have continued to be in the Government still longer.

But since my childhood, ever since I began to understand the meaning of life, I have always followed one principle in life and that is to serve my 'Untouchable' brethren. Wherever I may be and in whatsoever position I may be, I have always been thinking and working for the betterment of my brethren. I have never given so much attention to any other problem. I must guard the interests of the Untouchables that has been my aim of life in the past and will continue to be in the future too. I have been offered numerous lucrative jobs with huge amounts as salary but I spurned all these offers because of this one aim in my life, namely to serve my people.

I was the first man not only among the Scheduled Castes people but in the whole of India to return with a

foreign degree in Economics. Immediately on my landing in Bombay, Bombay Government offered me the Professorship of Political Economics. Had I accepted the offer I would have been drawing a huge salary today. But I rejected the offer as I knew that being a Government servant naturally puts restrictions on your desire to work for the uplift of your people. After a year or two, I again sailed for England as I wanted not only to be free but also to maintain myself. One is really free when one does not have to depend upon others for maintenance.

On my return from England after qualifying for the Bar, I was again offered a post of a District Judge with a promise for appointment as a High Court Judge within three years, I was not earning even one hundred rupees per month at that time. I was living in a single room in a 'Chawal' in Bombay specially built for very poor people. Still I refused this offer only because acceptance of that Job, though very highly paid and which would have ensured my financial well-being during my life-time, would have naturally obstructed me in the fulfilment of my life's aim namely the work for the well-being and uplift of my people.

In 1942 I was again faced with an alternative. I was offered a High Court Judgeship which would have enriched me financially and I could have lived in comfort after ten years of service, I was also offered a seat in the Viceroy's Executive Council. Keeping the only aim of my life in view, I accepted the latter post. One must live for and die in the service of his people.

I joined the Central Government in 1947. Some of my critics levelled this charge against me that I had joined the

Congress. In a speech delivered at Lucknow I had replied to the aspersion cast on me by my critics. I told my countrymen in that speech that I was not like a clod of clay which could be washed away with the flow of water. I am like a rock which does not melt, but turns the course of rivers. Wherever I may be, in whatever company I may find myself, I would never lose my separate identity. If anybody asks for my cooperation I would gladly give it for a worthy cause. I cooperated with the Congress Government for four years with all my might, and with all the sincerity in the service of my mother land. But during all these years I did not allow myself to merge into the Congress organisation. I would gladly help and cooperate with those who are sincere in their words and deeds and support the cause of the Scheduled Caste people. I would never help those who are mealy-mouthed or sweet-tongued but whose intentions and actions go against the interest of our people.

Now coming to the ensuing general elections, I appeal to the Scheduled Castes people to treat the elections as a struggle for life and death for the Scheduled Castes people and to work in that spirit during the coming months. We must use all our strength to get our candidates elected. Man derives strength from the number of people behind him and from the wealth he possesses. We are a minority; we are not wealthy. Our population in an average village does not exceed 5 percent of the total population. We are helpless against the combined wealth and strength of the 95 percent of the population. The police, who invariably belong to high-caste Hindus, never even pay heed to our genuine complaints; on the contrary, we are persecuted for lodging

complaints. Owing to poverty we are unable to have the authorities on our side.

BUT WE CAN HAVE ONE POWER AND THAT IS THE POLITICAL POWER. THIS POWER WE MUST WIN. ARMED WITH THIS POWER, WE CAN PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE.

Are you assured of this power in the freedom, this country has gained? We were never against our country getting independence. But we wanted a straight answer to one question. What will be our fate in free India? I posed that question before Gandhiji and other Congress leaders. We wanted to know, what would be our position in their 'Swarajya'. Will our persecution end? Will our children get the facilities for education? Will our people be able to live as free citizens in free India? Will exploitation or oppression end? Will the honour of our women be safe? Neither Gandhiji nor any other leader answered these questions in a satisfactory or straight forward manner.

In the Round Table Conference, I posed this question for the first time and asked for separate electorate for the Untouchables of India as was granted to the Moslems, the Sikhs, Christians and other minorities. I could not secure support from my countrymen in the Round Table Conference in favour of the legitimate demand for separate electorates for the Depressed Classes of India but I won the political rights for my people. What happened afterwards is known to every body in this country. Suffice it to say, that Gandhiji started his fast unto death in order to deprive us of the political rights which we had won for the first time in the history of modern India. Gandhiji was not in favour of the

Untouchables having political rights for fear of ambitions growing in their mind. He wanted them to depend on the mercy of the benevolent master—the Caste Hindus. Trusting the words of Gandhi Ji and the assurances given by other Hindu Leaders, we sacrificed our rights to save his life. The result is before you all to see. It is a sorry tale of deception and betrayal. Congress deprived the Untouchables of their legitimate rights by employing all means fair and foul. People having no social standing in the Scheduled Castes are elected to the Legislatures only because of the support of the Caste Hindus. These 'Harijans' so called, are nothing but the stooges of the Congress. I fail to understand as to what test the Congress adopts while giving tickets to the Harijan candidates. Generally, while granting tickets to the candidates for general seats, Congress asks of every candidate whether he had suffered imprisonment for the independence of the country. But surprisingly true, Congress does not put this criterion in respect of the Harijan candidates. By setting up Harijans for the reserved seats, the Congress is simply destroying the privileges gained by the Untouchables.

Many Untouchables have been elected to the Legislature on Congress ticket. I would like to ask these "Harijan" legislators as to what have they done for their people during the last four years. There were thirty Congress Harijans in the Constituent Assembly and the Parliament. Has anybody out of these thirty Congress appointed representatives of the Scheduled Castes ever taken part in the discussion about the Constitution of India? Has any of these Harijan members asked any question, submitted any resolution or proposed

any bill? A foreigner reviewing the work of the Parliament might very well draw the conclusion from the silence of these Harijans that the Untouchables are subjected to no sort of persecution, that they have no grievance of any sort. Honestly speaking the contrary is the truth. We must have such representatives in the legislature who will voice our grievances fearlessly. But these Congress-appointed representatives of the Untouchable have faithfully sung the praises of their masters or kept their mouths shut in spite of the harrowing tales of denials of rights and even the basic amenities, of insults and humiliations, oppression and exploitation, persecution and numerous atrocities being committed daily in different parts of India.

Pundit Nehru has never shown any interest in the Scheduled Castes people. During the last twenty years he has been in the forefront of politics. He must have addressed not less than two thousand meetings. Has he ever referred to the wrongs done to the Scheduled Castes people? Never, so far as my memory goes. He suffers from Moslem-mania. He is afflicted with this malady. He becomes quickly perturbed over any real or imaginary wrong done to the Moslems. He will strive his utmost to protect the Moslems in India. I am not against the protection being given to the Moslems. I am of the opinion that the Moslems should go over to Pakistan. If no suitable way can be found to effect the exchange of population, it is our duty to protect the Moslems in India. But the Moslems, in spite of being in a minority when compared with the Hindus, are in a better position to protect themselves. Has Pundit Nehru ever given any thought to safe-guarding the rights of other minorities

like the Scheduled Castes people, the Scheduled Tribes, the Criminal Tribes—an abominable title, the Backward Classes people, or the Christians and done any thing concrete for their betterment? If Congressmen have no love or sympathy for the Untouchables what confidence can the Untouchables have in the Congressmen.

Pundit Nehru never grows weary of telling the world that Congress had done much for the Scheduled Castes people. I will give just one example to disprove what he says.

Immediately after partition, Pakistan Government issued orders prohibiting the Scheduled Castes people from leaving Pakistan for India. Pakistan did not bother so much if the Hindus left; but who would do the dirty work of the scavengers, sweepers, the Bhangis and other despised castes, if the Untouchables left Pakistan? I requested Pundit Nehru to take immediate action and strive for the removal of this ban on their migration. He did not do any thing at all. He slept over this issue and did not even casually mention it during the course of various discussions with the Pakistanis. None of our Congress 'Harijans' raised a finger about this persecution of their brethren in Pakistan. Single-handed, I tried to do whatever I could do. The brave soldiers of the Mahar Battalions at grave risks helped me and brought many Scheduled Castes people from Pakistan. How can we in such circumstances believe in the promises of Congress leaders? If Congress is sincere in their intentions about the Scheduled Castes people why does it not set up Scheduled Castes candidates for general seats and thereby prove their sincerity.

We are told that it will be very difficult for the Scheduled Castes Federation to fight against the Congress. This is simply a bug-bear. I have no doubt that we will come out successfully in these elections. Times have changed. During the last elections, everybody was against us and almost everybody was with the Congress, which it was believed because of Congress propaganda, had won freedom and made India Independent. What is the position today? Just have a look at the Punjab Congress! Does Congress really exist in the Punjab? The Congress in the Punjab appears to be already dead. Its two stalwarts Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava and Shri Bhim Sen Sachar are fighting against each other for supremacy. The Congress has not agreed upon a list of candidates for the coming election although the last date for the selection of candidates is quite near at hand. Those who were proclaiming from house-tops that they were the children of one mother are now fighting against each other like the bitterest enemies. There is absolutely no possibility of real union of hearts between the Bhargava group and the Sachar Group.

The only question before these two leaders of the Punjab Congress 'who is to be the Premier of the Punjab.' Grievances of the masses do not mean anything to these gentlemen. The fight in the Punjab is not for any principle; it is the fight for power. Same is the case with Bihar and many other states. Scores of complaints of bribery, corruption, nepotism, etcetra against the Congress candidates are reaching the Congress Headquarters every day. In 1947, Congress was at the zenith of its glory. Today, in the course of only four years, it has degraded itself to the lowest level.

This is a unique example in the history of any political party in the world. 'Congressmen' and 'Gentlemen' are two diametrically opposite words; distinct and different but never co-related.

In such circumstances, we should have no fear of losing this battle. Congress, our erstwhile enemy is now without its old power. With self-respect and solidarity the Federation is bound to come out successful. There is absolutely no doubt about it. Only we must work earnestly and single-mindedly. I appeal to you all, Brothers and Sisters, to leave everything aside on the polling day and exercise your right of franchise.

The Scheduled Castes people should guard against being split by Congress. They should not be taken in by glib talk of the Congress leaders and Congress propaganda. At the same time you should not become complacent. You should ever remain vigilant. We must bear in mind that we have reservation of seats for a period of ten years only. I wanted this reservation to continue till Untouchability is completely abolished. Sardar Patel opposed this proposal vehemently within and without the Parliament. Leave aside Sardar Patel, even the representatives of the Scheduled Castes, the 30 'Harijan' members of the Constituent Assembly did not have the courage to support my proposal. What else can these stooges of the Congress do save toeing the line of Sardar Patel. The ticket for the election was at stake and one cannot expect anything else from opportunists and seekers after power. This reservation will last only for ten years. What are we going to do after this period of ten years? We cannot have any position in the politics

of the country if we do not have a strong organisation. The 'Achuts' can achieve it if they unite themselves into a compact community. We should not wait for ten years to have a strong united organisation. That organization must be built from now; this organization must be built today. Yes! not tomorrow nor day after but today.

We shall be doomed to accept a 'Manusmrit Raj' after ten years if by that time we do not make our organisation strong and firm-footed and effective. The organisation in fact is already there. Our Federation is our organisation. We have only to strengthen it. The tree has already been planted; we have only to water and nurture it. Our Federation has been accepted as an all India organisation by the Election Commission. We have not to build a new house; the house is there already. All that we have to do now is to maintain it in tip-top condition. If we do not strive to do so from now on and became complacent the time may come when we may have to wander homeless here and there and be subjected to all sorts of humiliations, persecution and disabilities of which we have been victims since the Vedic times.

Now, as you all know, the symbol of the Scheduled Castes Federation in the coming elections is an Elephant. The reason why I chose this symbol is because it is known to every body in India. Even illiterate people can recognise it very easily. Moreover the Elephant is known for its wisdom, strength and courage. Our people are like an elephant which takes a long time to stand up on his legs but once up on its feet you cannot make him kneel down easily.

Now coming to the question of Election alliances. Scheduled Castes people are a minority. We have also not

got separate electorate. Hence it will be necessary for us to enter into alliance for election purposes with other political parties. In the constituencies where there are reserved seats for the Scheduled Castes we have two votes each. We can give one vote to the political party with whom we will have alliance. One will go to the candidate belonging to the Scheduled Castes Federation. It has not been decided as yet as to with which party we may have the alliance for the purpose of elections. It will be decided shortly. Once it is decided it will be the duty of every Scheduled Castes voter to cast his vote in favour of the party with which we will have alliance.

Now before I close, I appeal to every voter in the Punjab to vote for the Federation Candidate and thus pave the way for his own betterment.

(Speech delivered at Mohalla Ramdaspora (Booran Mandi) Jalandhar City on the 27th October, 1951 on the eve of first General Elections held in 1952).

BRITISH HAVE BETRAYED THE UNTOUCHABLES

Dear brothers and sisters, this is the first time that I have visited Ludhiana to speak to my people. Many times before I proposed to visit this place but due to certain unavoidable circumstances, I could not do so. What an auspicious occasion it is really that you all have gathered here.

You know in two or three months elections are going to be held in which many parties are taking part. The Scheduled Castes Federation is also putting up its candidates for the election. We will contest all the seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes in the State Assemblies and the Union Parliament and, also, some general seats where we have sufficient number of voters. I hope that our candidates will be successful. Our candidates' success depends mostly upon our own people. If all our people voted for our candidates, I am sure of our success. I would, therefore, urge that all the Scheduled Caste people should vote for the candidates put up by the Scheduled Castes Federation, which is the only organisation of the Scheduled Castes and other Backward Classes.

I want to tell you how the British people have deceived us during the period of their Rule over India. They were successful in establishing their Raj in Hindustan although they lived hundreds of miles away. First of all when the

East India Company came to India, Its purpose was only to do business ; by and by the Britishers became anxious to establish their Raj here. How were they able to achieve that objective ? They had no army of their own in India. Nobody has so far been able to tell how the Britishers were able to subjugate all the Rajas and Maharajas of India without any army of their own. I am now going to answer this question. The British people became the rulers of India with the help of the Scheduled Caste people, who were called the untouchables by their own countrymen. They were illiterate and the treatment of the High Caste Hindus towards them was very degrading. They had no means of livelihood and were always at the mercy of these High Caste people. Thus, they had no alternative but to join the British army and earn their livelihood. I do not want to impress upon you that what had happened was good; but I want to emphasize something else. I want to point out that even the people whom we helped to establish their power in India have treated our people in such a shabby manner. Our people died in the army for the sake of these Britishers. But what did they get in return ? Who were benefitted ? In spite of the fact that the Scheduled Caste people helped the Britishers, Brahmins and other high caste people derived full benefit out of it. The Britishers educated their children and gave all financial assistance to them whereas our people were not paid any attention. This resulted in the well-being of these high castes at the expense of the poor Scheduled Castes who remained as they were before. This is the reason why uptill now there are no well-to-do Scheduled Caste families ; why their children are not educated and why they

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are generally backward. Consequently the important posts in the Army, Police and other departments of administration are in the hands of these High Caste people at present. The British people should have done something for the betterment of our people but they did not do anything for us. In 1857, when there was mutiny, what were the causes of that turmoil ? Because the Britishers failed to do anything for our people, our people in the army had to revolt against them. When the mutiny was suppressed and it was found that our people in the army had revolted against the Britishers, they stopped recruiting our people in the army any further. Instead, Hindus and Rajputs were recruited in the army. Thus the main source of income of our people was lost. In 1947 when the British people left India, the Untouchables were in the same deplorable condition as they were in before the British came to India. At the time of transfer of power to Indians, Britishers handed over all the powers to the High Caste people, we did not get anything at all. We were left at the mercy of the Hindus—our own countrymen who have little love for justice. From this you can well understand the way in which other people treated the poor Scheduled Castes. This is the reason why we have remained so backward uptill now. Now I want to put one question to you, whether you still want to remain backward and work as slaves in the hands of these high caste people ? When the Aryans came over to India, Varna system came into force. People were given the ranks in the society according to their birth. Some were called Brahmins, some Kshatries, some Vaishyas, some Shudras and the others

'Untouchables'. According to this categorisation, the Untouchables were the lowest of all and were totally disconnected from the society. The relation between a Caste Hindu and an Untouchable is that of a foot and shoes. When we enter our house we leave our shoes outside. In the same way, "Achhuts" (Untouchables) are kept out of the society and are not given any rights whatsoever. We have borne this humiliating treatment at the hands of caste Hindus for centuries and are still suffering socially, economically and politically.

After struggling for many years, we have achieved certain political rights which have been incorporated in the Indian Constitution itself. For twenty long years, I fought against Mahatma Gandhi. He was against the idea of giving us any separate rights. His argument was that if the untouchables are given separate rights, then they will never be able to come to Hindu fold. They will also remain cut off from the Hindus for ever. At the Round Table Conferences, also, Mahatma Gandhi opposed our demand for separate electorates. After so many years of struggle we have secured some political power. Now we can send our own representatives to the State Assemblies and the Union Parliament against the seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes.

There are many parties which are anxious to snatch away these rights. They are anxious to get our votes and to send their own henchmen to the seats reserved for our people. You can very well understand their motives. They want that the Scheduled Castes should remain as they are and where they are and should not come into power so that the menial jobs which our people are performing should not

suffer. So you will have to be careful about your votes in the coming elections. You should see that only our true representatives are elected with our votes and none else. Only then your rights which have been incorporated in the Constitution can be safeguarded.

If our true representatives are not elected to the State Assemblies and the Union Parliament, then we cannot enjoy freedom. Independence will be a farce for our people. This will be Independence of high caste people and not for ours. But if our true representatives are in the Parliament and the State Assemblies, they can fight for our cause and get our grievances redressed. Only then our children can get proper education; only then our poverty can be removed and only then we will be given equal share in all spheres of life. Although special privileges have been provided for the Scheduled Castes people in the Indian Constitution, the other parties especially the Congress are unnecessarily interfering with them. They are putting up their own henchmen for election to the seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes. How can the people elected on Congress tickets safeguard our interests when they will have to go according to the wishes of their masters? What can they do for us?

I want to tell you about the people who were elected to the Parliament on Congress tickets to the seats reserved for Scheduled Castes. They were about 30 in number and have been in the Parliament for the last four years. Not a single member out of these thirty members raised any question in the Parliament about the grievances of the Scheduled Castes. Even if a question was put in the Parliament, the Speaker did not allow it and the matter

ended there. If the Speaker was generous and had allowed the question and it was included in the business, then the Chief Whip of the Congress would go to the Member concerned and ask him to withdraw the question before it is printed. Per chance, if the question had been printed, then the Chief Whip would ask the Member concerned to leave the station for the day when the answer is required and thus there would be no discussion at all in the Parliament on the matter raised as the Member himself would not be there. For one month there is discussion on the Budget in the Parliament. At that time any person can speak on the Budget and point out that such and such privileges should be provided for his community or his party. He can point out that so much money is being spent on unnecessary projects whereas the important proposals have been neglected. During these four years, I have not seen a single Member from among the 'Harijan members' moving any 'Cut Motion'. This is all due to Congress Party's discipline (DANDA). If the Members wanted to move a Resolution, they had to obtain the permission of the Chief Whip long before it was actually moved. Never have these Members put up any Bill during these four years. How can the Untouchables, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians, etc. avail of the privileges provided for them in the Constitution, if the seats reserved for them are occupied by their enemies through the Congress tickets?

I want to make the point clear that if you voted for the Congress, you will have to suffer for ever. Our representatives on Congress tickets will keep silent in the State Assemblies and the Parliament. Our interest can be safe-

guarded only if our true representatives are elected on Federation's ticket which is the only organisation of the Scheduled Castes. Had there been any possibility of getting our grievances redressed in the Congress, I would not have left that organisation. I know that Congress has sufficient money and will try to buy the votes with that. But you should be careful about it. If I wanted I could remain in the Congress Govt. for ever and would definitely have got a good place there. But I would have done so only if I had selfish motives and not any regard for my community. I would have remained there, if I were in need of any licence or permit for myself. The man seeking licences and permits can do so at the expense of his community. This is the experience I have gained during the period I remained in the Congress Government.

The English people could do some work for the welfare of our community during their stay in India, If they so desired; but they also deceived us. That time has passed now and another phase has come into being. English have left us. Other people have come into power. If at this time, also, we are not careful and keep our eyes closed, then we will be ruined. If you want that your coming generations should not suffer as you have been suffering upto now, then you should do something for that now. When you plant a tree, you get the fruit after some time. I want to impress upon you that the reservation of seats in the Assemblies and the Parliament is only for 10 years. Although I wanted it till untouchability was prevalent in India, our own people who became members of the Parliament on Congress tickets opposed me not to speak of members belonging to High

Castes. So, thinking that something is better than nothing, I agreed that reservation may be provided for ten years and secured something for our people. The reservation is only for two elections and only up to that time the interested parties like the Congress will come to you and request you for votes. And this way, this period of 10 years will pass away and there will be nobody to ask for extension of this period. I want to ask you, what will you do then? Will these Congress people come to you then and request you to stand for election on their tickets? Certainly not. They are not such fools. They want to befool you people. These Congressmen will not even spit on the face of these people who are seeking Congress tickets today. So you should all ponder over this problem and then decide to which candidate you have to vote.

Every party must have either power or money. Our community has neither money nor any power. We are living in the villages in small numbers at the mercy of these High Caste people. 'Baniyas' and Marwaries, etcetra are also not powerful but they have got money. With money they can buy anything. So this is the opportunity for you to do something for yourselves. If you are united, you can send your representatives to the Assemblies and Parliament for safeguarding your interests otherwise you will be ruined. So you must unite under the banner of the Scheduled Castes Federation to pull your community out of chaos. Every 'Achhut' (Untouchable) should help the Federation in electing their true representatives. Many parties will come to you and ask for votes but do not be misled by them.

A few days back, Pandit Nehru came here. It was

reported that two or three lakhs of people gathered to hear him. I do not know how many people were there. Yesterday when I visited Jalandhar, over two lakhs of people had gathered there but the Hindu and Congress papers wrote that only about thirty thousand people had gathered there. What I want to tell you is that if there is any conference of the Congress, then even if the audience is very thin, they will publish that a large gathering witnessed the Conference. For five they will say fifty, for fifty they will say five hundred, for five hundred they will say five thousand and for five thousand they will report five lakhs. I do not mind this kind of misrepresentation of facts by these papers or criticism by the pressmen. They all have been criticising me for so many years but inspite of that I have progressed physically as well as mentally. I am not very fond of witnessing large gatherings. What I want is that our people should organise themselves to fight against the atrocities of these Caste Hindus. All I want is that our people should hear me. Whether they gather in small numbers or large numbers is immaterial for me.

Every political party has put forward its Manifesto. Every party promises that if they come into power they will do this and that. Scheduled Castes Federation has also published its manifesto. First of all, the Congress published a very voluminous manifesto but when they came to understand that ordinary people would not follow it, they amended it and compressed it into a small one. I hope by and by their manifesto will become smaller and smaller and a day will come when there will be no manifesto of the Congress. I want to tell you what should be in the manifesto and what

should not be. I challenge all the political parties to constitute a committee to find out which manifesto is the best and I have no doubt in mind that our manifesto will be the best of all. All the parties have promised many things in their manifestos to the people. It is easy to make promises but it is very difficult to put them into practice. If you promise one thing you can promise one hundred. Manifesto should not be a list of promises only. It should deal with the problems facing the country and also how to solve these problems. Is there anything of that sort in the manifesto of the Congress? The only thing stressed in the Congress manifesto is the Muslim problem. According to it, there is no other problem facing the country. Can anybody agree on this point? Of course, Muslim problem was there when India was united and when there was no Pakistan. But then too, this was not the only problem facing the country. A large number of Muslims have migrated to Pakistan, and only Hindus, Sikhs and other minorities are in India. Do you think that India is now facing any Muslim problem? Do you agree that nothing should be done for the Depressed Classes who are ten times poorer and backward than the Muslims? There are Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Criminal Tribes, which need the best attention of the Government. But the Congressmen say that people should not be communal-minded and should not demand some special privileges for these Backward Classes. The other problem is that of poverty in India. People in India are very poor so that 90 per cent of the people do not get proper meals. They do not get any clothes. They do not have any shelter. Food-stuffs worth crores of

rupees are being imported every year. If we have to import even food stuffs from outside and spend so much on procuring food and transport how will we be able to pull on? But all these things have no place in the minds of Congressmen. They have only one problem to solve and that is the Muslim problem.

I want to inform you that we are putting up candidates for the coming elections through the Scheduled Castes Federation. The Scheduled Castes Federation represents all the Backward Classes. Every Backward Class will be given representation. Nobody should be afraid of it. Chamars and Bhangies are all equal. We are one caste, one people. We should be united and nobody should think himself separate from the other. We should not fight among ourselves. I want to request all men and women that they should leave aside everything on the day of polling and go to the polling booths and cast their votes. Already our votes are not sufficient and if the voters do not cast their votes on that day, it would not be good for us. We will go unrepresented. The day of polling is the day of life and death for the Scheduled Castes.

Every political party which is taking part in the coming elections has been allotted a party symbol. Our Federation's symbol is 'ELEPHANT'. I have selected this so that there may not be any confusion in the minds of our people. Some parties have selected oxen, horses and donkeys as their symbols. For distinction I have selected 'ELEPHANT'.

This time we will not have the cumulative system of voting so that we may cast all our votes to a single candi-

date of our choice. But we have distributive system and will have to distribute our votes among different candidates. In a constituency where a seat has been reserved for the Scheduled Castes, people will have two votes, one for general seat and the other for the reserved seat. We cannot cast both of our votes in favour of our candidate who is contesting for the reserved seat. We can cast in his favour only one vote and the other vote must be given to the other candidate standing on general seat. So we shall have to join some party which will give their second vote to our candidate and get our second vote in return. We have not yet decided as yet which party we will join hands with. Many parties have approached us for alliance but nothing has yet been finalised. Negotiations are going on. We have to think many times before we join hands with any party. But we must join with some party or the other.

In the end I want to tell you that thousands of people come to Delhi from Punjab and U. P. and other distant places to put their grievances before me. Some complain that they have been beaten by the Zamindars and when they approached the authorities concerned, decisions were taken against them as the people in power also belong to the high castes. So there are so many complaints that it is not possible for me to cope with these single-handed. Many people return to their homes disappointed. So I have decided to construct a building in Delhi and to keep a pleader there who will scrutinise our people's complaints and advise them in the matter. We have already purchased a piece of land in New Delhi for the purpose and on that site we want to construct a building which shall be the Head Office of the

Federation. People from outside will be entertained there and their grievances will be heard. We do not have sufficient funds for the construction of this building, although it is absolutely essential. So I request that you all should contribute something according to your means. In this way we shall be able to achieve our purpose. Bawa Tula Dass of Delhi will tour the whole Punjab for the collection of Building Fund. I once again request you to contribute liberally for this noble cause.

[Delivered at Ludhiana on 28th Oct., 1951]

CONGRESS IS A BURNING HOUSE

Brothers and Sisters, you have been told by Shri Raja Bhoj that my health is not good. I have been ailing for some time past. I will, therefore, say a few words to you and I hope you will excuse me for not delivering a lengthy speech. I will speak to you only about some very important problems facing us today which will throw light on the political situation prevailing in the Country and will also show a way out.

This is the election time. All political parties and political workers are busy with the work connected with the ensuing elections. This is no doubt an important thing. To us at least the ensuing election is a matter of life and death and therefore, it is essential for us to consider this question in detail.

Congress is the largest political party in India. That organisation has been in existence for more than sixty years. It has got enough of funds. Moreover, it has been ruling over the country for the last four years. It is being told on behalf of the Congress that none else can deliver the goods to the people except the Congress and therefore the people should vote for the Congress. Congress wants that it should be put in power again. Congress wants that people of all classes, rich and poor, exploited and the exploiters should come under one canopy, vote for Congress and give a fresh lease of life to it. Congress has [got a number of propa-

gandists because it can maintain them with the help of innumerable funds at its disposal. Congress can, therefore, influence the people easily

One must, therefore, find out the truth about the Congress. One should not be misled by one-sided propaganda. We must find out ourselves whether during the last four years the Congress had been in power, it did work in the interest of the people. We find that the Congress has failed to solve the problem of food and clothing of the people. The problem has, on the contrary, become worse. Congress has also proved itself to be incapable of solving the problems of the displaced persons. How can then one be assured that it will, if again put in power, solve these burning problems of the day? Congress might try to excuse itself on the ground that it was utterly impossible to solve these problems satisfactorily during this short period. But one cannot excuse the Congress High Command which rules supreme over the destinies of the Ministries at the Centre as well as at the provinces for its utter incapability to get rid of this country of one evil which is rampant in nearly every province, I mean the evil of corruption, bribery and nepotism. Had Congress desired, it could have eradicated this evil in no time. But this has permeated the Congress politics from top to bottom and the Congress has been found to be wanting in the will to eradicate this evil.

It is a well-known fact that if one wants his application regarding anything to be considered favourably by the Congress Ministers, some sort of bribe is necessary. Otherwise, his application will find a place in the waste-paper basket. It is not I alone who is making these charges of

bribery, corruption, or of getting a part of the black market money, against Congress ministers. Congressmen themselves have openly made these charges. Shri T. Prakasam who was the Premier of Madras had to resign because of the internal cliques in Madras Congress. Soon after his resignation, he submitted a charge sheet against the ministers of Madras to the Congress High Command. It was stated in that charge-sheet that some ministers profited themselves through various controls, some allotted the Government contracts to their near relatives and so on. In Uttar Pradesh also, the same thing happened. Shri Triloki Singh, one time a member of the Provincial Congress executive and now the leader of the Opposition in the U. P. Assembly has also charged the Congress Ministers of U. P. of the same things. In Punjab, two ex-Premiers, both belonging to Congress are continuously charging each other with bribery, corruption and nepotism.

It was the duty of the Congress High Command to appoint a commission to investigate these charges against the Ministers and if the charges were proved, to punish the offenders. A country cannot have a good government without such open enquiry of the charges made against such high personalities as Ministers. In this connection, it is interesting to refer to a similar case that happened in Britain. A certain British Cabinet minister was charged with bribery. British Prime Minister, Mr. Atlee, immediately appointed a commission to investigate the charges. The commission made enquiries and came to the conclusion that a certain merchant had given the said minister a bottle of whisky and a piece of cloth as a Christmas present; but, the

commission opined, neither the merchant nor the Minister, had any intention of giving or taking bribe. This was a comparatively minor thing; yet Mr. Atlee asked the minister concerned to resign.

But what is the position in our country? Congressmen themselves have charged more than 25 ministers from different provinces of heinous crimes against the society. The Congress High Command did not take any action. No enquiry has ever been held regarding these serious charges and the persons so charged are still continuing to act as ministers and to rule over the destinies of people. How can one have confidence in such Ministers and in the organisation (Congress) to which they belong? How can anybody with any self-respect, integrity of character associate himself with a band of robbers who are openly robbing the people? I can say with all the emphasis that the Congress Government is a corrupt government; it is a government of robbers.

People had high hopes in Pandit Nehru putting a check to these nefarious activities of Congress Ministers. But he has totally disappointed his followers. In his speech at the congress session at Delhi, he said that bribery and corruption is much more rampant in other countries than in India. Therefore he said that it was not necessary to take any action against it. These words of a man of the status of Pandit Nehru are nothing else but encouragement to those who are already afflicted with this evil and incitement to those who are still wavering in that regard. People well versed in bribery and corruption including the Congress ministers must be thanking themselves for having Pt. Nehru as their leader who can condone their crimes and allow them to carry on with their activities. Can we expect that these people who

do not feel ashamed to resort to corruption and other heinous crimes against the society will be able to do any good to the country? Those who will vote for the Congress will vote for the continuance of these evils. I am sure people of India are prudent enough to know what is in their interest and what is not.

Congress leaders ask the people to leave other parties and join the Congress as that is the only organisation which will do something for their good, they say. I ask you, can a cat and a rat live together? One will be destroyed by the other. Can a snake and mongoose live together? One will be destroyed by the other. We find innumerable examples of opposites amongst animals and birds. The same is the case with human beings also. There are persons and classes whose interests are contrary to each other. They clash. Can a 'Bania' and a 'Kisan' live peacefully together? A 'Bania' will try his utmost to grab the land of the 'Kisan'. Same is the case with the Brahmins and the Untouchables. Brahmin will always try to keep the Untouchable at the lowest level possible. He will see that an Untouchable will never acquire the rights of a human being even. How can then there be a political party consisting of the exploiters and the exploited, the oppressor and the oppressed? How can the exploited, the oppressed and the downtrodden, expect their interests to be protected in a political party where the exploiters and the oppressors also find a place and that too, an influential place?

It is therefore necessary to have a separate organisation of all the downtrodden and exploited classes. Without it these people will be doomed to utter ruin. We must there-

fore be very careful in being not caught in the snare spread by the Congress. If we merge ourselves into an organisation of the exploiters and the oppressors, we will be doomed to the worse condition prevalent in old times. The freedom that this country has attained will be exploited by the caste Hindus for their own ends. If we wish that we get the benefits of this freedom, we must strengthen our own organisation, namely the Scheduled Castes Federation.

Propaganda was being carried on amongst the people by the Congress Harijan Ministers asking them not to attend today's meeting. What would have been the position of these Ministers if our Federation had not fought continuously for the rights of the Scheduled Castes people? Who made these people ministers? I made them ministers; the Federation made them ministers. Without the Federation, these ministers would have been leading the life of mere dogs, secluded in their localities engaged in flaying the animals or scavenging the streets. Have these ministers done anything to wipe away the tears from the eyes of their brothers and sisters? Have they tried to mitigate their grievances? Have they fought so that their brethren might be allowed to lead the life of respectable human being? These Congress Harijan Ministers have simply failed to do their duty towards their brethren. They have turned out to be leeches. They proved to be blood suckers.

We therefore want our own people, people who will fight tooth and nail for our interest and secure the privileges for the under-privileged; people who will undo the wrongs done to our people; people who will voice our grievances fearlessly; people who can think, lead and act; people with

principles and character. Such people should be sent to the Legislatures. We must send such representatives to the Legislatures who will be slaves to none but remain free to their own conscience and get our grievances redressed. What is the position of the scheduled caste members and Ministers in Pepsu? They are nothing else but slaves of the Congress, dogs licking the feet of their masters. What good can these people do for their own brethren?

There was great pressure put on me in order that I should join the Congress. But why should I join such an organisation which cannot do any good to my own people? I therefore resigned from the Government. I was not asked to resign as many others had been asked to do. There was nothing against me. I challenge anybody to say anything that will put a blot against the integrity of my character. No body dare raise an accusing finger toward me. I never indulged in bribery, corruption, blackmarketing, or in nepotism. But I found that I would not be true to myself if I remained in the Government controlled by a party which is incapable of doing any good to my people.

We still wish that our Hindu brethren will use the power that they have got to uplift our people. We will wait for 10 years and if after that period we find that our hopes are in vain, we will not hesitate to use such drastic means as will be necessary to attain our rights. We will not spare anybody who opposes us in our endeavour to attain our legitimate rights.

At the time of crisis, we will be in the forefront. It is really we who suffer for our country, not the caste Hindus. They enrich themselves at the expense of the country and

the people. Experience has proved it. When the call for recruitment in the army is issued, it is the untouchables who volunteer themselves first. The caste Hindus simply, to enrich themselves, open shops near the recruitment camps. They get the contracts and exploit the poor people or indulge in blackmarket.

For the last twenty years I have been fighting this battle for the Scheduled caste people. I have no self interest in it. I put a simple question before Gandhi. I told him that we were not against our country getting freedom; but I wanted to know from him as to what will be the position of scheduled caste people in this Swarajya. Neither Gandhi nor anybody else has answered me satisfactorily. I am posing the same question before the caste Hindus today.

The present Swarajya is their Swarajya. We are still slaves. That is due to their making; it is not our fault. If we want to live as human beings; we must stand on our own legs.

We ask the Caste Hindus to allow us to use the political rights that we have gained. But the congress is setting up traitors to our community and trying to divide our ranks. These people are mere ticket-seekers avaricious, mean job-hunters. They first go to the Congress; when they are kicked out from there they come to the Federation begging for a ticket. By gathering such selfseekers Congress wants to spoil the gains that we have fought for and won. This is the occasion for us to fight for, to send our own representatives if we fail, we are doomed.

You must also understand that this reservation of seats

we have secured is for a period of ten years. If we do not strengthen our own organisation, in the meantime we will be completely helpless. Today Hindus belonging to different parties are very eager to give you tickets to strengthen their own parties as there is reservation of seats for you. But after the expiry of this period, no Hindu will ever care to come to your doors. We must therefore, be very cautious these days. There is only one way in which we can assure ourselves of our continued bright future and that is to strengthen your own organisation and vote for the candidates set up by your organisation. Your own candidates will fight for you in the Legislatures. They will not give up their fight even if persecuted.

You must also fully understand that we are a minority. Naturally the voters strength at our command is also very little. Our success in these elections will therefore depend upon every voter amongst ourselves—man and woman—casting his or her vote without fail. Leave your work, howsoever important it may be, on the polling day and exercise your right of franchise.

Our chances of success will be doubly ensured if we align ourselves for the election purpose with some other political party. We will be assured of their vote and they also will be assured of our vote. It is not yet decided with whom we would co-operate. But when it will be decided it will be our duty to give your other vote to the candidates of that party.

This time chances of our success are very bright. Our erstwhile enemy, the Congress, has been disintegrated to a great extent. In Punjab, the two Congress groups are deadly

against each other. There is no chance of any compromise amongst these two leaders of Punjab Congress. We should not be afraid of Congress at all. I, therefore, appeal to you, one and all, to vote for the Federation candidates and assure yourself to your around "improvement. If we succeed in these elections we will find a way out to remove all our disabilities and attain all our rights.

(Speech delivered at Patiala. On 29th Oct., 1951.)

ON THE PROBLEMS OF SCHEDULED CASTES

Mr. Deputy Chairman, this is the third Report which the Commissioner for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes has submitted to the President. At the outset, going through the Report, one notices that the Commissioner makes a complaint against the Members of Parliament blaming him for not taking action on the various matters discussed by him in his Report. He says that the Members of Parliament have forgotten that he is not an executive authority, that his duty is merely to report. The executive departments are supposed to give effect to whatever recommendations or suggestions that he makes. I think his observations are very sound. He is not an executive authority and for the purpose of criticising what action has been taken, the criticism must be levelled either against the Home Minister or against the other departments of the Government of India. But, sir, while one must admit the legitimacy of the criticism made by the Commissioner, I think there is one criticism that one can legitimately make against the Commissioner himself in the matter of drafting and presenting his Report. I was referring to his chapter dealing with complaints, because I thought that would be one of the most interesting and instructive chapters in that book. We are all aware of the fact that scheduled castes in particular, are subjected to all sorts of tyrannies, oppres-

sions and maltreatment at the hands of the villagers in the midst of whom they live, And it would undoubtedly be a matter of great interest to know what are the tyrannies, maltreatments and oppressions to which they are being subjected almost every day, I have no doubt that the Commissioner's Report would be the proper place where such complaints would be recorded, but I find the Commissioner absolutely silent over this matter of the greatest importance for the Scheduled Castes. I find, for instance, that from the complaints which have come to me—and I am sure that many more complaints must have gone to the Commissioner—they could not be less than a thousand or certainly five hundred. but I mention one or two which have come to my notice, and are of very recent occurrence—I am told on very reliable authority that in Rajasthan thirty Scheduled Caste people have been shot down by the so-called dacoits. The real fact is that the Rajputs and the high caste Hindus do not like the scheduled castes in Rajasthan to enjoy what are called the Fundamental Rights which give them equality of status with the other Hindus.

In order to terrorise them and to make them nervous, in the matter of exercising these fundamental rights the high caste Hindus have organised themselves into a band of dacoits and they go on shooting the Chamars, who are trying to exercise and derive the benefit of the fundamental rights. Police parties have been sent there in order to give protection to them, but my information is that the police are in league with the dacoits and the report is made that the guns have been snatched away from them by the dacoits. Half the number of bullets again handed over to

these dacoits by the police, Only half are fired, probably in the air without causing any effect. The result is that the dacoits are getting on merrily, The dacoits are really nothing else but what existed in the southern States of America known as the Ku-Klux Klan, a band of Whites who were bent upon shooting down the negroes if they tried to exercise the right of equality which was given to them after the Civil War, I do not find any mention of this incident in the Report of the Commissioner.

I mention another incident, and that has occurred in Bombay, One Bhangi who was living in a village was supposed by the Hindus to have brought about a certain disease in the village. They thought the malignant influence which he possessed was the cause of a certain disease which was prevalent in the village. They caught hold of him and asked him to take a burning fire on his head and walk round the village, so that the evil forces which brought about the disease may pass away. Unfortunately, they forgot that he had a turban on the head, and he too forgot to remove the turban. And the burning fire and the pot in which the fire was placed were so hot that practically half his cranium was burnt. I find no mention of this in the Report to the Commissioner. I know of a case in the Hyderabad State, in the Aurangabad district, where a certain Scheduled Caste woman was declared by the villagers as a witch who was responsible for some kind of an epidemic that was prevalent in that village. They questioned her, She could hardly prove her innocence; there was no method of proving. The result was that not only she was belaboured, but her house was burnt, and members of her family were subjected

to ignominies of the worst sort. I do not find any mention of that in the Report of the Commissioner.

My honourable friend, the Home Minister, I think, will admit that the Scheduled Caste people, for good reason or for bad reason, are in the habit of sending their complaints to me as well as to the Government officers, and I too possess a long list of these tyrannies and oppressions. I thought that it would be right to expect some references to these complaints in this public document. But there is none whatever. And I have been wondering whether this report of the Commissioner, so far as the record of complaints is concerned, is a doctored and tutored document, The Commissioner seems to have completely forgotten one of the most important objectives that underlie the creation of his office. The object was that public conscience should be organised by the presentation of the ugly treatment which the caste Hindus meted to the Scheduled Caste so that those who are enlightened enough may go among the public and tell them whether this is a behaviour worthy of a civilised people. But when you do not present these facts, when you suppress them, for one reason or another, this important motive and object in the creation is nullified. I do hope that in the next report which the Commissioner will prepare, he will bear this thing in mind, and not be ashamed to present facts as they are presented to him by the suffering masses, the untouchables. That is the first comment that I have to make over the nature of the Report submitted to us by Commissioner

It is quite clear that in such cases as have been referred to by the Commissioner there have been many violation of

the law, and there have been an endless series of tyrannies and oppressions practised upon the Scheduled Castes. This is a matter which, I suppose, is a matter which is within the portfolio of the Home Minister. To what extent are the laws made especially for the Scheduled Castes or the general laws made for all people respected, and to what extent are the breaches committed punished? Sir, on the first day, when the Hon. Home Minister presented the Report to the House, I happened unfortunately to come a little late. But I did catch him towards the end of the speech. And the impression that was left upon me, of the speech that he had made, was that what he had said was said in a spirit not merely of light-heartedness, but he will forgive me if I say this with a certain amount of levity, He asked. What is the use of prosecuting people? People will begin to do Satyagrah, people will begin to do all sorts of things. Therefore, let us not rely upon what might be called the vindication of the law. Well, if that is the attitude of the Home Ministry, then of course nothing which is being practised continuously for thousands of years against the Scheduled Castes. has been lawful, and will continue to be lawful, because it is impossible for the Scheduled Castes people themselves to come forward to prosecute the breaker of the law. As the Commissioner has said, the Scheduled Castes people who are economically, so subservient to, so dominated by, the Caste Hindus, that it is quite impossible for them to come forward to challenge the very people on whom they depend for their economic livelihood.

That is an admission which the Commissioner has been making from the very beginning. It occurs in this first report

it occurs in his second report and he repeats in his third report that it is useless to depend upon the Scheduled Caste themselves to vindicate their rights. They have neither the economic independence against their oppressors nor have they got the means to prosecute their oppressors.

The second thing which the Commissioner does not seem to emphasise very much and which I know very well myself from my experience of twenty years is that in a large number of cases the police force is in league with the caste Hindus. Ninety per cent of the police force is drawn from the Caste Hindus. Only a few per cent and a very small one is now being recruited from the Scheduled Castes but this only to the posts of police sepoy. There are no officers amongst them. The result is that the upper grade policemen are in league with the Caste Hindus. More often they refuse to record the complaints of the scheduled castes, when they go to the Thana, in their station diary even though the offence may be cognisable. They throw them out, they turn them and tell them to go away. They do not record the complaint and secondly if they do, they probably would, conduct the investigation in such a slipshod manner that ultimately the case fails. In this situation I ask the honourable Home Minister whether he thinks that there is any duty upon him or not. I ask him whether the breaches of the law which are being reported and witnessed by scheduled castes or other people are not breaches of the fundamental law and the fundamental rights? Are not fundamental rights part of the Constitution? If you are allowing a large mass of bullies and hooligans to trample upon the fundamental rights, are you not bringing the Constitution to contempt? Is it not your

duty to create a special Department either within the Home Ministry itself or separately for this purpose? The United States has got a Judicial Department, the duty and the function of which is to see that the Constitution and the federal laws are respected. I think it is high time that the Home Minister realises that if the Constitution is to function, if it is to be the law of the land, if all people are to recognise it, his duty is to see that it is enforced, and the only way in which he can enforce it is to take upon himself the duty of enforcing it and not leave it even to the State Governments who can never do it, not even to the Police who has no desire to do it, and not even to the scheduled castes who have no means to do it. Therefore I hope that he will take the matter more seriously and attend to it in the manner in which a statesman ought to,

Now, I come to the subject matter of education, It is quite satisfactory I must admit, that the Government has been spending annually more and more on the education of the Scheduled Castes, If my Hon. friend will forgive my mentioning it myself, he will realise that it was for the first time in the year 1942 that the Government of India, at my instance, when I was a Member of the Executive Council, accepted that they too had the responsibility for the education of the Scheduled Castes. Therefore, education was purely a provincial subject. It was only so far as the Muslims and Hindus were concerned, that the Government of India had taken upon themselves the responsibility of supporting the Aligarh University and the Benares University by an annual grant of Rs. 3 lakhs. I raised the question whether the Government which had recognised its duty for the

Muslims and the Hindus, had not also a duty for the scheduled castes, and the Government of India agreed that it was a legitimate question and that the answer to that question could not be except in the affirmative. They granted Rs. 3 lakhs as a grant for the education of the Scheduled castes from the Central funds. While I am satisfied with the progress that it is being made year by year by the enlargement of the educational grant for the scheduled castes, there are two points with which I am greatly dis-satisfied, One is this : At the time in 1942 when this question was raised by me for the first time in the Government of India, it was agreed that the responsibility for the education of the Scheduled castes upto the university standard in India was to be borne by the Provincial Governments and that whatever contribution the Government of India made towards the education of scheduled castes would be devoted for their education in foreign countries. According to that understanding the first batch of scheduled castes students was sent to England, although there was great difficulty in the matter of getting admission to English and American Universities because they were over flooded. Yet we here in the Government of India pressed upon the foreign universities, that as it was for the first time that the lowest of the low people were being sent for higher education, the foreign universities should show them some consideration. The result was that we were able to get admission for about 30 scheduled caste students. There after, in 1945 the old regime ended, and the Congress regime came in 1946. I had hoped that a system which had been inaugurated in 1943 or so and which had been given effect to and in which the Government's responsibility for the education of the scheduled castes in India and

their education outside was accepted. would be continued, but to my great surprise, nay great chargin, I must say, I found that Mr. Rajagopalachari, who became the Education Minister in the Congress regime and who has a great knack for giving a pious look to an impious act abolished the system of sending scheduled caste students to foreign countries and since that time there has hardly been any student belonging to the scheduled castes who has gone abroad for further studies. I think that this is—what shall I say?—a most dangerous thing from one point of view. No doubt the Hindus do not like my criticism but I am firmly convinced that my criticism is right, and I must repeat it notwithstanding the opposition with which it may be met.

Shri B. K. P. Sinha : (Bihar) But the sheduled Castes are also Hindus.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes, if you call them so. I am statutorily a Hindu.

Sir, the point is this. In this country, for reason into which I need not go now, the fact is quite clear that the higher classes receive the highest education. Their children go to Cambridge, their children go to Oxford, their children go to the Columbia university and to all other foreign universities.

You should look into the history of your Department. You cannot simply say, 'I don't know.' What I was saying was this. Notwithstanding what my Hon. friend said, I think the criticism that I am making is very valid and very fundamental. Here in this country you find really two nations—a ruling nation and a nation which is a subject nation.

The Backward Classes are all subject people. They have no authority in any place. None whatever. They have no place in Administration—they have no place in the Executive and the Administration is entirely monopolised by the higher classes. They are monopolising it by reason of the fact that they have been able to get the highest education. why not examine all the Secretaries of your Departments in the Government of India ? The son and daughter of every Secretary in the Government is to be found in Cambridge or Oxford. Twice and thrice they have made journeys in order to lodge their children there because they have the amplest means. The Backward Class man's son cannot get even the primary education. This sort of revolution in the two different classes is going on for centuries—It is an intolerable business because we cannot allow one class to rule for ever. For some time they may but they must see that the other classes also become educationally qualified in order that they too may hold the reins of government. We are not going to be subject people all the time.

Therefore what I am saying is this, that if you really want to unify the people, to bring all the people on a level, then it is not enough that you should get the highest education and others should get the lowest and not even the lowest. It is from that point of view that you must introduce the system of foreign education. It was with that aim that I struggled to get some quota from the Government of India and asked them to put the responsibility for university education upon the provinces. The States have been jolly glad to throw the responsibility upon you. What do they do ? They are having prohibition, making people sober, man who is an ignormous is not to be preferred to a man who is educated

and who drinks a bit. I prefer the latter. I am glad to hear that my Hon. friend is now reviving the system of sending Scheduled castes boy to foreign countries. I congratulate him.

Now Sir, the other thing which has recently come to my notice is this, that the education Department has issued a circular—I think a month or two ago—to the effect that those scheduled caste boys only who have secured 50 per cent marks in the examination shall get scholarships. Others will not get. I am wondering whether a generous Government with a sympathetic heart desiring to elevate the scheduled castes would ever think of prescribing so hard a test as securing 50 per cent. You must consider the condition in which the scheduled caste boy lives. Probably his father or mother has not got even a room set apart for his study. He probably has not got a lamp to sit by at night and study. He is living in the midst of a crowd. How do you expect him to secure 50 per cent. marks in the examination? It is an absurdity—utter absurdity. You must, for some time, allow ordinary standard viz, of 33 per cent, which has been recognised by all the universities and which is being recognised by you also for the purposes of employment in the Government of India. If a boy who merely passes is fit to be employed by the Government of India, why is he not fit for the grant of scholarship for further education unless you want deliberately to put some kind of an impediment in the growth of their education. The difficulty is this. The admissions take place some time in the last week of June. Various colleges admitted scheduled castes students without asking for fees because they knew

that the Government of India would give them the scholarship. After three months of the joining of the College, the Ministry comes out with a circular saying that only those who have secured 50 per cent. marks will get scholarships. What are the colleges to do, with the boys whom they have admitted on the assurance that the previous system will continue to be in operation? What are the boys going to do who have got themselves admitted into the college? I hope my Hon. friend the Home Minister will look into this matter and take it up with Education Minister and ask them to square up this difficulty, at any rate for as this year is concerned, You may do what you like next year provided you give enough notice both to the students and to the colleges as to what you propose to do.

Then I come to the question of services, The Commissioner has divided his figures in regard to the services under three groups—the army, the All India Services of the Government of India. With regard to Army, I find that in certain categories the position has deteriorated. In 1952 there was two Second Lieutenants belonging to the scheduled castes. In 1953, the position is "nil". Of Junior Commissioned Officers, in 1952, there were 601, In 1953 the number is 35, Non-Commissioned officers in 1952 there were 3253. In 1953 the figure has gone down to 2533, Other ranks, in 1952, the number was 22,288. In 1953 it has gone down to 18,656. I am quite unable to understand this deterioration in the position of the scheduled castes in the Army. I thought, it is the one place where not much intellectual calibre is necessary, I mean in the other ranks. may be that in the higher staff it is required much intellectual eminence.

But we are not talking about them. But taking the other ranks, we find that the figure has gone down from 22000 to some 18,000. Why? The Army, I understand, has been expanding, and with the expansion of the Army one would naturally expect an increase in the number of scheduled caste men in the army. In all other places, you say they are unsuitable. And that is a very ambiguous phrase. All public service commissions and appointing authorities have learnt that phrase by heart. You simply say the man is unsuitable, and there is an end of the matter. But in the Army what is there to be unsuitable? What is the unsuitability about? There you have certain measurement of the chest. There are very few people among the scheduled castes who would not fulfil the test. Then you have certain tests of height—some 5 ft, 4 inches or so. Well, I think all scheduled caste candidates would fill up that height. (Interruption). Very few, there may be, I admit, who may fail. But given these physical standards of health chest measurements and height, I should have thought that almost every scheduled caste man was fit to be in the military service. And when you are denying them service in other departments of the Government of India, surely you ought to make some concession to them in departments like the Army and the Police where education is not a matter of any considerable moment. But there again you have been behaving in a stepmotherly fashion. I do not know whether the Home Department ever takes interest in these figures, or knows them and pursues the matter. Surely, the Commander-in-chief ought to be asked by them as to why this deterioration has taken place.

Then, Sir, I come to the All India Services. These are

what they call the Administrative Services and the Indian Police Service. Recruitment to these, I think, started through the Public Service Commission, in the year 1952. My Hon : friend Shri Datar will correct me, if I am wrong. But I think that is the year.

The deputy minister for home affairs (Shri B. N. DATAR) : about 1946.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : No, I am not counting those whom they recruited from the provinces. No scheduled caste man was recruited except one or two, the rest they found to be utterly unfit, although the Provincial Governments thought them quite fit. The Central Public Service Commission found them utterly unfit. That is all past history and I am dealing with the present, Has there been any recruitment to the Indian Administrative Service since 1952 when the new Constitution came into force? I have not seen a single scheduled caste candidate being chosen by the Public Service Commission for the Indian Administrative Service—not one. I have not seen a single candidate being chosen by the Public Service Commission for the Indian Police Service either. It is only last year that I struggled with the Public Service Commission and induced them to accept one for the Indian Police Service. I wonder whether the Home Department which is in charge of services looks upon this matter as of no moment or looks upon this matter as a matter of high moment. These are executive services. My Hon : friend knows very well the difference between executive service and an administrative service. An administrative service is more or less clerical thing. The executive service possesses the power of direction. It has directive authority. Now, I want to say and I want to say

it quite fearlessly that 2,000 clerks are of the value as compared to one officer holding an executive post. In Hindi we call it "Marne ki Jagah". What are these poor clerks? You will see in fortresses in Maharashtra but you have none in U.P. In my part of the country the place is full of Maratha fortresses.

SHRI B.N. DATAR : "Mar Qualla" we call it.

Dr. B.R. AMBEKAR :

आदमी वहाँ बैठकर फायर कर सकता है।

Now, these executive posts are posts from where direction can be given. The clerks need all kinds of protection. Any officer may spoil their character-roll by writing a bad remark or saying that the man is no good. The only way can be protected is by having somebody in the executive service who might look into this matter and see no injustice is being done. Similarly with regard to the policy laid down by the Government, whether that policy will fructify and yield result depends upon who are the people who are charged with the duties of executing that policy. If the executive authority is unsympathetic, is antagonistic, that policy; however good it may be, can never, fructify. And let me add, that so far as my experience goes, the whole of the administration which is now composed of caste Hindus, is the most unsympathetic administration that the scheduled castes have to suffer under. This is because of the unsympathetic character of the administration. And when we have been shouting for the representation in services, that claim is being maligned by calling it communalism. What we are trying to do is to reduce the communalism of the other people, We are not asking for communalism. I hope my hon. Friend will remember this. Until and unless your administration and your executive be-

comes more sympathetic to the scheduled castes, none of your laws and none of your administrative policies will bear any fruit.

Then let us come to what are called, the Central Services. Here I am taking only the figures of permanent posts, not the temporary ones, as they stood on 1st December, 1952. The commissioner says that the Ministry of Railways, the Ministry of Communications and the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Information and other organisations under its control have not supplied information on this point. Therefore, these figures relate to those departments which have supplied the information.

The figures are very telling. In class I the actual strength is 752 and the Scheduled castes number 10; according to the proportion fixed by the Home Ministry that ought to have been 175, Class II Gazetted posts total number is 642 while the scheduled castes number only seven that ought to have been 107 according to the proportion, Class II (non-gazetted) total number is 1123 and the scheduled castes number 44; that ought to have been 185. In class II total number is 10,372 and the scheduled castes number 535 and this ought to have been 728. In class IV, the total number is 8807.

Dr. P.C. MITRA (Bihar) : How many of them applied ?

Dr. B.R. AMBEDKAR : The scheduled castes numbered 1251 but ought to have been 1478. Class IV servants, I think, are chaprasis and there you find the number of scheduled castes people fairly large, these are the figures which must be within the ken of the Home Ministry. They have laid down a proportion and surely, it is their duty to see that

proportion if carried out by the different Ministries. Why has there been this default on the part of the various Ministries and why has the Home Ministry not taken any action? If he had taken any action, what is the action that he took in order that the scheduled castes receive their quota which is fixed by him? Sir, it is a black picture. If I may say so, very black. It reminds me of a cartoon which was drawn by the Germans during the last War. The Cartoon depicted an old negro gentleman in Washington. When war was declared, the negroes, everybody knows, negroes are not well disposed towards the whites in America; they are always very angry, quarreling with them for not giving them equality of opportunity suddenly felt very patriotic and he said that he must transfer some of the patriotism to the young boy who was his son. He went to the market and purchased an American National Flag—small one which the boy could hold—and gave it to the boy. He said, "My son, I want to show you today our capital". The boy did not realise what it meant. Holding the boy by right hand and the boy holding the flag in his left hand—the old man took him round and round the Washington City, showing him the Supreme Court, the Congress House, the Senate and so on and so on and ultimately, after lunch, came down to the White house, stood there for a minute or two, and said to the young boy, "My dear boy this is the House of our President". But the boy said, "Father, what are you talking? He is a white man and how do you praise him? The old man said, "Oh, shut up, that is only outward. That is to say, inside he is quite black". I think that might well be applied to the Home Minister; notwithstanding the white dress, he is

very black inside and the evidence is that Home Ministry's own orders are not carried out. Nothing has been done.

I have dealt with services and I will deal now with the question of propaganda. I see that the Government of India has sanctioned about Rs. 50 lakhs for the year 1953-54 for the purposes of carrying on propaganda against untouchability. The scheme, I understand, is that a part of the money is given to private agencies chosen by the State Government and part of the money is given to all India organisations directly by the Government of India. That is the sheme. I have no idea what my hon. friend means by the abolition of untouchability. What is untouchability? Let us understand it very carefully. Untouchability, so far as I understand it is a kind of a disease of the Hindus. It is not a mental disease from which I am suffering, not any tumour which I have got, not a rheumatic pain or any of the physical disabilities which can be removed but it is a mental twist; every Hindu believes that to observe untouchability is the right thing. I do not understand how my friend is going to untwist the twist which the Hindus have got for thousands of years; unless they are all sent to some kind of a mental hospital, it is very difficult to cure them and I do not want them to be sent there. Therefore let us understand what we talk and what we are doing. Besides, all must realise that untouchability is founded on religion. There is no doubt about it and let us not be ashamed of realising it. Manu, in his law books, very definitely prescribes untouchability. He said that the Untouchables should live outside the village. They shall have only earthen pots, that

their food and so on and I cannot see how you blame the Hindus. For thousands of years, by the teaching of this dirty law they have got inculcated in their mind the doctrine that untouchability is a most sacred thing. The Hindu has been taught that the most pious and best of life is that of a rat who lives in a hole, unconnected with anyone. He must not touch this, he must not touch that, he must not eat this, he must not eat that, etc. and this is a kind of life which a rat observes by living in a hole. A rat would not allow another rat to come into its own house. That is the position and all that we can do is to see that untouchability which, as I said, is a mental twist of the Hindus do not protrude so much into public life as to involve the civil liberties of the people.

Therefore, Sir, this propaganda business is quite impossible for me to understand. I agree with my hon. friend Mr. Kunzru that it may result in nothing else but a waste of public money.

Secondly, I do not understand why this matter should be left to these what are called organisations of social workers. A social worker in this country is a professional; he has no such thing as inner sympathy. He is a professional. If the Muslim League wants him, he will probably serve the Muslim League; if the Hindu Mahasabha wants him, he will serve the Hindu Mahasabha; if the Congress wants him he will serve the Congress. He is a professional and there is no such thing as, for instance, an inner love. As Tolstoy has said—rightly, said—before you serve, you must learn to love. No man can serve anybody unless he loves him. These

professionals have no love; they are simply trying to make their livelihood and therefore, perhaps, I would not be surprised if they are getting remuneration from all the three. I do not wish to comment on it. The proper thing, if my hon. Friend wants to do, seems to me to be taken hold of these unemployed graduates. There are plenty of them, intelligent educated boys, who can be said to have some kind of a modern outlook in life or who might be said to have developed some public conscience in the matter. you employ them on some reasonable salary, give them a motor-bike or a cycle and give each man seven, ten or fifteen villages, and ask him to go round village by village, hold public meetings, address the people on the question of untouchability and tell them that this is something which is going to bring disgrace upon this country in the modern world. That way it would be far more fruitful and far more effective than the kind of thing that my hon. friend is doing. Why these social organisations have a fascination for the Congress Government, I do not know. In olden times, during the British regime, the Centre acted administratively through the Collector. Money was given to him and he was asked to discharge certain function in certain fields. He could be held accountable to the Government. Money was safe in his hands. If you do not like the Collector then employ the kind of agency that I have submitted, namely, a group of intelligent boys who would be longing to do this service. This kind of a thing, a motely crowd calling itself by some kind of a name to attract people is of no consequence at all, Then Sir,.....

Sh. K. B. Lall (Bihar) Will they not be professional ?

Dr. B. R. AMBEDKAR :

The Government servant is not a professional. Why ? You want to use them later for canvassing votes for you in the elections. That is the whole trouble about it.

Now, Sir, regarding the other point, namely, selection of certain agencies by the Government of India and giving them funds to do this propaganda work, the Commissioner has made some observations on some communication that passed between me and the Home Department. As has said that other agencies have accepted the offer of the Government to receive money and to do propaganda. I was one naughty boy who refused and he thought that it might be well in bringing this default on my part to public notice. I wish he had given him the full letter which I had written to the Home Department. I think Mr. Datar dealt with the matter, if I mistake not, and he will recall that what I said was this that the bodies that were chosen by the Government of India, were political parties like the Harijan league and some other League. Some doing like that, were all political bodies. The Federation was also, a political body. So I think it was wrong for Government to hand over public funds to political bodies who may use the funds for the political propaganda and not for the elevation of the Scheduled Castes, and I told him that I was the Chairman of another body which will build up a Hall in Bombay, It was a purely social welfare body. It had large funds, somewhere between two and three lakhs of Rupees. They were going to build a hall and carry on activity. Of course, he forgot to mention

therein that body, although it was formed in Bombay, it was not confined in the matter of its social work either to the Bombay city or to the Bombay state. It was open to them to do any kind of social work in any other part of India. The only thing was that its centre and head office would be in Bombay. Mr. Datar rejected my suggestion and put this matter in the report. All that I want to say is this. If Mr. Datar had communicated to me that he did not accept my suggestion, I am sure within myself that I would have changed my mind and accepted the offer in the name of the Federation because beggars cannot be choosers if no other reason, and I even now say that if he insists that the Federation is the only body which the Government of India would entrust the money with, well, I have no hesitation, but I still maintain my view that this work ought not to be entrusted to political bodies.

Now, Sir, I come to the question of the economic emancipation of the Scheduled Castes. This, I think, along with education and services is the most important thing for the raising of the status of the Scheduled Castes. Now what are the means of raising the economic status of the Scheduled Castes ? Obviously the economic emancipation of the Scheduled Castes will depend upon the opportunity that they get for what might be called entry into gainfull occupation. Unless and untill doors are open to them where they can find gainfull occupation, their economic emancipation is not going to take place. They are going to remain slaves, if not slaves, serfs of the land-owning classes in the viilages. There can be no doubt on that point at

all. Now Sir, out of these gainful occupations I personally feel no doubt that the most important thing on which Government ought to concentrate is the giving of land to Scheduled Castes.

They must be settled on land so that they might obtain independent means of livelihood, cease to be afraid of anybody, walk with their heads erect and live fearlessly and courageously. I think this is a thing which all the Ministers are agreed upon, I take it that the one thing that Government ought to do is to provide land for the Scheduled Castes? Let us take up that question. Firstly, is there land available to be given to the Scheduled Castes? Has Government any power to sequester land from those who are owning land now, take it away and give it to the Scheduled Castes? Is it possible for the Scheduled Castes to be financed by the Government in the matter of purchasing lands if land was to be sought? These are the three ways by which land could be given to the Scheduled Castes. Government should by law limit the holding of those who hold land and take away the excess and hand it over to the Scheduled Castes. Secondly the Government may finance the purchase of land if any is to be sold.

Sir, it is clear to everybody that land-holding in India is not merely a matter of economic livelihood. It is a matter of social status. A person holding land has a higher status than a person not holding land. Now it is quite clear that in the villages this matter of economic status is of the utmost importance to everybody. And no Hindu wishes that an untouchable should possess a piece of land so that

he may reach higher status than his community is entitled to under the social system. Sir, the question of a Scheduled Caste man getting a bit of land in the village seems to me to be utterly impossible. I do not know to what extent the Government will be able to make a law limiting the holdings. There might easily be a revolution. If the Government had, in passing land legislation, instead of giving the title of the property to the peasant, kept the title to themselves as paramount owners of land, they might have been able to pass a law that as the land belonged to the Government nobody would be allowed to hold more than a certain number of acres. But the Government has committed one of the greatest acts of folly in creating these peasant proprietors. Sir once Talleyrand told Napoleon: "Why do you want all this bother with Europe? Why do you want to create all this enmity? Why should you not be content with becoming the King of France with me as your Prime Minister?" There were a certain number of soldiers standing outside the palace of Napoleon holding their guns with bayonets joining in the light of the sun; Napoleon was a very abusive person. He told Talleyrand: "You were so much done in a silk stocking. Do you see my battalions?" He said, "Yes, I see them." Then Napoleon asked, "Why should I not be an Emperor?" To that Talleyrand replied and my friends will remember that reply: "You can do anything with these bayonets except sit on them." Now you have created these peasant proprietors. You can't sit on them; they will sit on you. You have bungled and bungled most wrongly notwithstanding the advice of many people not to do it. But just to win political elections you did it

and you are bearing the fruits of it now. However, this limitation of holdings therefore is now an impossible thing.

I happened to study the Report of the United Provinces Tenancy Committee appointed by my friend. Mr. Govind Ballabh Pant. I know every line of it and I wonder whether the people who raised the cry that holdings ought to be limited know anything about the facts of it. What is the average holding in Uttar Pradesh? The lowest is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres and the highest is about four or five acres. That is and the further fact is that every inch of land in the U.P. has been under cultivation and in occupation. You can do nothing there and that. I am sure, this is the case in most of the other States. Therefore my submission to the hon. the Home Minister is this that unless you want to go on fooling the Scheduled Castes by telling them, "Oh, keep quiet; we are going to give you a piece of land." Either we will have a ceiling or we will finance your purchase. We will not do this or do that; unless you want to go on fooling them like this, you ought to think of some other method of doing that. This is a problem which you must solve and if you do not solve it; You know what consequences there might be-most evil consequences. The fire is burning outside; it may easily come in and the Scheduled Castes may carry the banner and you and your Constitution will go under. Nothing will remain.

Now, Sir, I am going to make one suggestion to my hon. friend and it is this. I find from the planning Commission Report that a very large amount of what might be called cultivatable waste is to be found in this country.

According to the Planning Commission it is 98 million acres. Now, my suggestion to my friend is this. The Government is going, I understand to amend the Constitution. They are fond of amending the Constitution. Why have Constitution at all, I do not understand, if you are amending it every Saturday?

However, as you are amending it, I suggest that you amend it and put cultivation of wasteland in List No. 1 so that it will come within the purview of the Central Government. The State Government have not got the means of developing that land. They are living like dog in the manger, neither developing it themselves nor allowing anybody else to do it. Therefore there can be nothing wrong in taking over the waste land by amending the Constitution in List No. 1.

The second thing which I am going to suggest is one which many people may not find pleasant but I think there is no harm in suggesting. It is this you again levy the salt tax. The salt tax was the lightest tax that we had in our country. At the time it was abolished, the revenue was about Rs 10 crores and it might easily go up to Rs. 20 crores now. No doubt, the abolition of salt tax was done in the memory of Mr. Gandhi. I respect him and I suggest to you that you levy the tax and create a Trust Fund in the name of Mr. Gandhi Trust Fund for the development or settlement of the untouchables. After all the untouchables, according to all of us, were the nearest and dearest to him and there is no reason why Mr. Gandhi may not bless this project from Heaven, namely, levying

the tax and using it for the development of waste land and settling the Scheduled Castes on this waste land. There is promise in it : not only promise but a scope for performance. You know in the game of poker there is a difference between promise and performance. I give you a game where there is not only promise but there is also performance. I do not understand why the people of this country should not contribute through the means of the salt tax for the elevation of the Scheduled Castes. You may keep it quite outside the Budget just as a sort of a Gandhi Welfare Scheme which will perpetuate the name of Mr. Gandhi and which will give relief to the people whom he wanted to protect and whom he wanted to elevate. This is my suggestion to the Hon. Home Minister and I hope he will give this matter his most serious consideration.

Sir, I have done and I do not want to say anything more. The only thing that I would like to say is this that in all this effort which is being made by the Govt. by the various social workers and the social agencies, there is one thing which gives me a very sad thought and it is this that our Prime Minister has taken no interest in this matter at all. In fact, he seems to be not only apathetic but anti-untouchables. I happen to have read his biography and I find that he castigated Mr. Gandhi because Mr. Gandhi was prepared to die for the purpose of doing away with separate electorate which was given to the Scheduled Castes. He has said in his biography, "Why on earth Mr. Gandhi is bothering with this trifling problem." Sir, I was shocked and surprised to hear the Prime Minister rather Mr.

Nehru then in 1934—uttering these words. I thought that since the responsibility of Government had fallen on his shoulder he may have changed his view and thought that he must now take the responsibility which Mr. Gandhi was prepared to take on his shoulder. But I do not find any kind of change in his mind. Sir, In the year 1952 a conference was held at Nagpur under the presidentship of my Hon. friend, Babu Jagjivan Ram.

I understood that there was a very big 'shamiana.' Two silver chairs were placed on the dais. One for Mr. Jagjivan Ram and the other for Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. There was an audience of two hundred to three hundred and one thousand police. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was supposed to inaugurate that conference. I have got his speech, here, but I do not wish to trouble the House by reading it, but this is the gist of it. He was, I am told in great anger against Babu Jagjivan Ram for having organised the conference. He said loudly, "I do not recognise that there is such a problem as that of the untouchables. There is general problem of the economically poor and the problem of the untouchables is a part of that problem. It will take its place and receive its attention along with the other problems. There is no occasion, no purpose in bestowing any special thought upon it." if the Prime Minister is prepared to throw such cold water—not cold, water from the refrigerator, so to say—what enthusiasm can we expect from the rest of the workers who have taken upon themselves the duty or the responsibility or the interest in carrying on with this particular problem ; I do not think that untouchability will

vanish. They believe "Yes". I think "No", as I said, because it has mental twist. It will take years and years. At some time, there is no reason way we should not strongly agitate for seeing, whether untouchability goes or not, that the social, economic, political and constitutional rights of the scheduled castes are fully protected, To that extent efforts must necessarily be directed.

Sir, there is one other word I should like to say. People might say that I have taken most of time with the Scheduled Castes, I have not said anything with regard to the Tribes and I am not going to say anything, because there are many friends who are more qualified to speak about them than I am. I shall, therefore, not venture to enter that field, but there is one thing which, I think, one can say and should say because I find there is a good deal of confusion in the minds of the people as regards the relative position of the Scheduled Castes, the tribal castes and the criminal tribes. Now, Sir, with regards to the Scheduled Castes, the position is this : they are prepared—in fact, not prepared—but are already within the pale of civilization. They are not outside. Their struggle is to achieve equality of opportunity and equality of status. That is their problem. With regard to the tribal people, their problem is totally different. They are outside the Hindu civilization. And the question that has to be considered with regard to these tribal people is this ; do they want to come within the Hindu civilization and be assimilated and then acquire equality of status and equality of opportunity ? I was talking to many leaders of the tribal communities, many men

and women of the tribal community—they seem to be most reluctant to come within the pale of Hindu civilization.

They prefer to live outside; they do not want to come in. With regard to the criminal tribes, there is a purely economic problem ; how well can you give them the opportunity to earn a decent living ? If they can get the opportunity to earn a decent living, they will cease to be criminals.

It seems to me a matter of great regret that this Hindu civilization which is so many years old some say six thousand years old—many people will not be satisfied with that period, probably they want to take it back—never mind about it let it be six thousand years old—has produced five crores of untouchables, some two crores of tribal people ; and some fifty thousand criminal tribes people. What can one say of this civilization ? With a civilization which has produced these results, there must be something very fundamentally wrong, and I think it is time the Hindus looked at it from this point of view—whether they can be proud of the civilization which has produced these communities like the untouchables, the criminal tribes and the tribal people. I think they ought to think twice—not twice, a hundred times—they are conventionally called civilized—whether they could be called civilized with this kind of results produced by their civilization.

ON THE UNTOUCHABILITY OFFENCES BILL, 1954

Mr. Deputy Chairman, before I actually deal with the provisions of this Bill, I think it is desirable that I should draw the attention of the House to the responsibility created by certain articles in the Constitution and the responsibility placed upon the Government to give effect to those provisions. I would first like to refer to article 13 of the Constitution. Article 13 says that all laws inconsistent with the Fundamental Rights, are void from the date on which the Constitution comes into existence. That is a general provision which is laid down in article 13. It is, as a matter of fact, a general notice given to the public as well as to the judges of the Court that if any question was raised before them which involved the adjudication of the Fundamental Rights, the court shall not give effect to any existing law that was in conflict with the Fundamental Rights. But the makers of the Constitution were not satisfied with the general declaration because they felt that it was too much to expect a common citizen to go to a court of law in order to get relief from the court for the invasion of his Fundamental Rights. That was too much of a burden on the common citizen. And, therefore, the Constitution enacted another article, which is article 372, sub-clause (2) which gives power to the Government to make modification and adaptation in existing laws in order that the laws may be brought in conformity with the Fundamental Rights.

If my honourable friend will allow me to make a personal reference, I would say that when I was in charge of law, I immediately took up this question about adaptation and modification of the existing law in order to bring it in conformity with the Fundamental Rights. And I did succeed in getting repealed one of the most important pieces of legislation in the Punjab, called the Punjab Land Alienation Act, under which certain communities, or as the law speaks of them, certain tribes, were declared to be the only tribes which could hold property or acquire property in the Punjab. The law, in my judgement, was so iniquitous that a man who was actually an agriculturist, but whose community or tribe was not declared by the Government to be an agricultural tribe, was not entitled to get any land. But a person who was a barrister all his life, and never hoped to grow even two blades of grass in a field, became entitled to acquire property, because the Government had chosen to declare the tribe to be an agricultural tribe. I succeeded in having the whole Act cancelled under the provisions of article 372, clause (2). There remained another law or a custom which went along with the Punjab Land Alienation Act and which referred to what is called the 'Shamilat' land, that is to say, the land held in common by the villagers. Under the customary Punjab law, the 'Shamilat' land could be shared only by those communities which were called zamindars, hereditary land-owning communities. The others were non-zamindars. They were called 'kamins', that is to say, they belonged to a low class, and they were not entitled to share in the land. Consequently, they could not build their houses in a 'pucca' form on the land on which

they stayed. They are always afraid lest the zamindars of Punjab may, at any time, turn them out. And the people did not venture to build permanently. I left a note in the Law Ministry, when I left, that this matter should be taken up and dealt with by the Government under the provisions of article 372, sub-clause (2). I have no idea what the Law Ministry has done or what the Home Minister has done. I believe, no action has been taken on that account so far, I had, for my own guidance, made a list of certain laws, which I felt it was absolutely essential to modify in order to bring them in conformity with the Constitution. The first that I would like to mention is Madras Regulation XI of 1816. This is a criminal law enacted by the East India Company. In that, there is a provision, I think, section 10, which says that if the offender belongs to the lower classes, then the punishment to be inflicted on him is to put him in the stocks. This punishment is not to be inflicted if the offender belongs to the higher classes. There can be no question, Sir, that this Regulation is a discriminatory Regulation, and should be repealed. Then the next item that I would refer to is the Bombay Municipal Servants Act. V of 1890. Under that Act, it is provided—I think it is section 3, that if a municipal servant, whose duties fall within the Schedule attached to the Act, absents himself from work without permission, or resigns his office without giving at least three months notice in writing, he shall be sentenced to imprisonment. It is a well-established principle now that a contract of employment is only a civil contract for which, if there is to be any punishment that punishment must be only damages and not imprisonment.

But this Municipal law still remains on the Statute Book. The result has been that under this Act—if my Hon : friend will refer to the Schedule, he will find that the Schedule practically mentions, although in terms of duty, people who are doing scavenging work or street cleaning work, and things of that sort, and who are mostly Scheduled Castes or the untouchables—it has become quite impossible for them even to go on strike, because the term of resignation must be three months notice. Nothing has been done so far as that Act is concerned. I will take now another item, the U. P. Municipalities Act, II of 1916. I think it is section 85. There again, the provisions of that section are more or less similar to the provisions of the Bombay Municipal Servants Act. There again it is said that a sweeper employed by a Board who, except in accordance with the terms of a written contract of service, or without a reasonable cause, of which notice has been given, resigns or abandons his employment, shall be liable, upon conviction, or imprisonment which may extend to two months. I think these laws, if I may say so, are absolutely uncivilized laws. No country in the world today regards breach of contract of service as an offence punishable with imprisonment or with fine. It is just plumaging, but nothing has been done here. Then, I will refer to three other Acts, one is the Bombay Hereditary Village Officers Act of 1874. Those who work or officiate under this Act are divided into two classes. My friend, Mr. Dhage, must be quite familiar with it, although the Home Minister himself may not be. I do not know what the system is in his province, but there are the servants divided into two classes, one class is

called officers and the other is called village servants, although both are paid in the ancient form of payment, viz, land assigned for service out of which they have to make out their income. The land that has been assigned to them was assigned in ancient times, probably during the time of the Shiva Ji or during the time of the Peshwas. No addition has been made to the land then assigned. They have been cutting up and sharing their land into bits and bits, and probably no one individual owns more than one-hundredth of an acre of land. Yet these poor people are sticking to that land. Now, when the British came in, they started a scheme of what is called commutation: that is to say, releasing a person from the obligation of hereditary service and allowing him to retain the land provided he was prepared to pay what is called 'Judi' or land revenues, as the Government thought fit. That process has been going on for ever and many hereditary officers have been liquidated so far. Recently the Bombay Government took upon itself the responsibility of further commuting these village hereditary officers but notwithstanding the incessant demand of the scheduled castes in the Bombay State that their workers and their hereditary officers should also be commuted so that they may be free from the obligation of service and be allowed to retain the land on payment of land revenue. They were very liberal and wanted to pay the full land revenue and did not want any concession. The Bombay Government refused their requests. They confined their law to the commutation of officers other than the scheduled castes. This—I speak from experience—is one of the most cruelest pieces of legislation, because it is quite possible for

the village 'patel' who is an officer under this Act to require the whole body of the Scheduled Caste people to go and serve under him not merely for government purposes but also for his private purposes. Any village 'patel', for instance, if there is a death in the family, would not send a postcard to his relatives informing them of the death in the family, because it is a derogatory method. He must insist upon one of his village servants as they are called, to walk miles and miles to convey the message that a death has occurred in the house of the 'patel'. If a married girl comes to the house of the 'patel' and wishes to go back she must insist upon one or two of the village servants to go along with her, chaperon her and to see that she has safely arrived at her father-in-law's house. If a marriage takes place, he must insist on the whole body or people to go and break wood and do all services without paying them anything. If they refuse, he is competent to report to the Collector that his village servants are not doing their duty, and the Collector under the Act is able to fine them or to take away their land and dispossess them. I wonder whether this is not a piece of legislation which is fundamentally opposed to the Fundamental Rights in the Constitution, and whether such a piece of legislation does not require modification at the hands of the Law Department or the Home Department.

There are two other Acts which are, so to say, correlative to this Bombay Hereditary Village Officers Act. One is the Bombay Revenue Jurisdiction Act and the other is the Pension Act. (seeing the Home Minister rising from his seat) My honourable friend finds it too hot, perhaps.

DR. K.N. KATJU : I find it cool on the other hand.
 DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR : It will be hotter as I go on.

Both these Acts prevent access to the Judiciary for any wrong that may have been done by the officers, to the Collector, or the commissioner or the Minister. No relief can be had from the courts, because the Revenue Jurisdiction Act says that the courts shall not have any jurisdiction either to alter or to modify or to revise decision of the Collector who is an executive officer. The Pension Act says that no one who has any kind of "Inam" shall be entitled to go to court and the court shall not exercise any Jurisdiction unless it obtains a certificate from the Collector that the case may be tried by the court. It is quite impossible therefore, for these poor people to have any kind of remedy against the many injustices which are being practised under the name of this particular Act. If I had remained as Law Minister, it was my intention to carry out these reforms, but I think it is the duty of any Law Minister and particularly of the Home Minister to look into our laws and to find out what extent the laws are in conflict with the Fundamental Rights. I am sorry to say, Sir, both these Departments are the laziest Departments that I have ever seen. They have neither the zeal nor the urge nor the conscience to move in this matter. They have no idealism either. I hope that, after what I have said, they will be spurred to some kind of action in this matter and to see that relief is given where relief seems necessary. Well, Sir, this is what I wanted to say by way of preliminary observations. I will now turn to the Bill itself

I would like to say a word about the title of the Bill.

It is not a very important point, but I think the name does matter. Shakespeare has said that rose smells as sweet whether it is called rose or by some other name. I disagree with that statement of Shakespeare. I think that name is a very important matter and I think that a good law ought to have a good and succinct name. What is the name of this Bill. A bill to provide punishment for the practice of untouchability or the enforcement of any disability arising therefrom. I personally think that it is a very clumsy name and very mouthful. What really should be the name of the Bill may be a matter of dispute but I personally think that it ought to have been called, "The Civil Rights (Untouchables) Protection Act" After all, what you are doing is nothing more than protecting their civil rights. The emphasis ought to have been therefore on civil rights. I venture to tell my friend incharge of the bill that if he had referred to the case of the Negroes in the United States or to the Civil war he would have found that the Bill that he is now proposing to be passed by Parliament has had its predecessor in the United States and that Bill, if he will refer to it he will find a simply styled Civil Rights Protection Bill. Even the word 'negro' is not mentioned in it, I don't know why he should keep on repeating untouchables all the time. In the body of the Bill he is often speaking of The Scheduled Castes. The Constitution speaks of the Scheduled castes and I don't know why he should feel shy of using the word "Scheduled Castes in the title of the Bill itself. Personally for myself, I would be quite happy with the name Untouchables Civil Rights Protection Bill or Scheduled Castes Civil Rights Protection Bill.

I hope my friend will take this into consideration.

Now, Sir, I find there are certain very grave omissions in the Bill and it is to these omissions that I propose to draw the attention of the House. There is really, as a matter of fact, no provision for the removal of any bar against the exercise of civil and constitutional rights. No doubt the ultimate result of the Bill would be freedom to exercise civil and constitutional rights but I personally think that it would have been much better if my friend had expressly stated that the Bill was intended to remove any kind of a bar against the exercise of any civil and constitutional right. I would just like to read to him a provision from the Civil Rights Bill as they call it in the United States. That is how the provision reads. Don't read the title page of the book-it will hurt you. It is the United States Constitution Amendment XIV taken from Government of Ireland Act 1920 and also Professor Keith's Command Paper. This is how that provision reads. I have of course converted it to make it applicable to the untouchables but the original is taken from the text of the Civil Rights Bill.

"All subjects of the State are equal before the law and possess equal civil rights. Any existing enactment, regulation, order, custom or interpretation of law by which any penalty, disadvantage, disability is imposed upon or any discrimination is made against any subject or the State on account of untouchability, shall, as from the day on which this Consitution comes into operation, cease to have any effect".

I think such a positive statement was necessary. It is no doubt contained in article 13 but there can be no harm

in repeating the whole of that article 13 with such amendments as are necessary in this Bill. I don't know why the Bill is silent. The Bill seems to give the appearance that it is a Bill of a very minor character, just a 'dhoby' not washing the cloth, just a barber not shaving or just a 'mithaiwala' not selling "laddus" of that sort. People would think that these are trifles and trifles and why has Parliament bothered and wasted its time in dealing with 'dhobies' and 'barbers' and 'ladduwalas'. It is not a Bill of that sort : It is a Bill which is intended to give protection with regard to civil and Fundamental Rights and therefore, a positive clause, I submit, ought to have been introduced in this Bill, which the Bill does not have now in its present form. That is one omission which I think requires to be made good. The other omission, which, I find, is of a very grave character, is that there is no provision against social boycott. Now I feel from my experience that one of the greatest and the heinous means which the village community applies in order to prevent the Scheduled Castes from exercising these rights is social boycott. They boycott them completely. It is a kind of non co-operation. This is not merely my opinion but it is the opinion of a Committee that was appointed by the Bombay Government in order to investigate into the condition of the Scheduled Castes and also of the Depressed classes and of original tribes. I might mention to the House that the late Thakkar Bapa was member of this Committee and he had signed this report. I will just read only one para from the report. of that Committee which relates question of social boycott. It is paragraph 102. This is what the Committee said :

"Although we have recommended various remedies to the depressed classes their rights to all public utilities we fear that there will be difficulties in the way of their exercising them for a longtime to come. The first difficulty is the fear of the open violence against them by the orthodox classes. It must be noted that the Scheduled Castes form a small minority in every village opposed to which is a great majority of the orthodox who are bent upon protecting their interests and dignity from any supposed invasion of the depressed classes at any cost. The danger of prosecution by the police has put a limitation upon the use of violence by the orthodox classes and consequently such cases are rare. The second difficulty arises from the economic position in which the depressed classes are found today. The Depressed Classes have no economic independence in most parts of the presidency. Some cultivate the land of the orthodox classes as their tenants as will, Others live on their earnings as farm labourers employed by the orthodox classes, and the rest subsist on the food or grain given to them by the orthodox classes, in lieu of service rendered to them as village servants. We have heard of numerous instances where the orthodox classes have used their economic power as a weapon against those depressed classes in the village when the latter have dared to exercise these rights and have evicted them from their land and stopped their employment and discontinued their remuneration as village servants. This boycott is often planned on such an extensive scale as to include the prevention of the depressed classes from using the commonly used paths and the stoppage of the sale of the necessaries of the life by the village

'bania'. According to the evidence, sometimes small causes suffice for the proclamation of a social boycott against the depressed classes. Frequently it follows on the exercise by the depressed classes of their rights to the use of the common well. but cases have been by no means rare where stringent boycott has been proclaimed simply because a depressed class man has put on the sacred thread, has bought a piece of land, has put on good clothes or ornaments, or has carried a marriage procession with the bridegroom on the horse through the public street. We do not know of any weapon more effective than this social boycott which could have been invented for suppression of the depressed classes. The method of open violence pales away before it, for it has the most far reaching and deadening effect, It is more dangerous because it passes as a lawful method consistent with the theory of freedom of contract. We agree that this tyranny of the majority must be put down with a firm hand if we are to guarantee the depressed classes the freedom of speech and action necessary for their uplift."

This is the conclusion of a committee which was especially appointed to consider the condition of the Scheduled castes. I do not find any provision to deal with this point of social boycott.

I may draw the attention of the Hon. Member to the Burma Anti-boycott Act of 1922, if he thinks that it is difficult to put the matter in express words which can be legally of use to the court I say he can copy the provisions contained in this Burma Anti-boycott Act of 1922, It gives us the most valuable definition of a difficult matter, namely,

social boycott, That will be found in section 2 of that Act. This Burma Act not only creates the social boycott an offence but it also creates the instigating of social boycott an offence, it also creates the threatening of social boycott an offence, in phraseology as precise as any meticulous lawyer would want to have. My Hon friend has tried, I think, in sub-section (2) of section 8, to have some kind of a garbled version of it for defending a Hindu who does not wish to practise untouchability but whose caste-fellows compel him to do so. I believe they can only do that in two ways, either by committing violence against him or by organising social boycott. As the committee has said, the village communities most often prefer the social boycott because it is an act behind the curtain and appears to be perfectly in consonance with the term of the law of contracts, to violence which as I have said, becomes all offence under the Indian Penal Code, therefore, instead of going round about and bringing about a haphazard result, why not proceed directly and recognise social boycott as an unlawful means of compelling the scheduled castes not to exercise their rights? After all, what can be the objection to social boycott? I say, in legal terms, social boycott is nothing else than a conspiracy, which is an offence recognised by the Indian Penal Code. If two people engage themselves in doing a wrong to a third person, well, that is conspiracy. This social boycott is brought about by the concurrence of the majority of the people and is also a conspiracy and could be recognised as an offence. I do not know why my Hon: friend forgot that very important fact in this matter,

The third omission, I do not know whether, it is an

omission or not, I speak subject to corrections, I wish the Law Minister was here because it is pure a legal matter. But there is no doubt about it that our Home Minister was a Law Minister in the beginning and certainly has been a practising lawyer and he would not be unfamiliar with what I am saying. Now the question that I ask myself is, are these offences mentioned in this Bill compoundable or non-compoundable? The Bill say nothing about it, it is completely silent. The other day when we were discussing the Report of the Commissioner for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Honourable Members will recall that the Commissioner drew pointed attention to the fact that the Untouchables were not able to prosecute their persecutors because of want of economic and financial means and consequently they were ever ready to compromise with the offenders whenever the offenders wanted that the offence should be compromised. The fact the law remained a dead letter and those in whose favour it was enacted are unable to put it in action and against whom it is to be put in action those are able to silence the victim. That has been the conclusion of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Such a situation is not to be tolerated. The offences must not be made compoundable if the offence is to be brought home to the guilty party. If the guilty parties by compounding the offence either by payment of a small sum or something like that are able to get away they can continue their career of harassment of the untouchable untill the moon and the sun are there and untouchability would never end.

Therefore, compounding of the offence is a grave mat-

ter and a grave issue and it must have been expressly dealt with. I do not know what the intention of my Hon. friend is but in order that we may be able to judge by reference to other provisions in other laws, I shall refer to section 345 of the Criminal Procedure Code which defines what offences are compoundable and what offences are non-compoundable. My Hon. friend will remember that there are altogether 511 sections in the Indian Penal Code. Of them, 106 are taken up with purely declaratory matters, punishment, where the law would apply, general exceptions to the law, costs and so on and so forth. So we shall cancel or deduct 106 out of 511. The sections which actually define offences are grossly about 400. Four hundred offences, acts and omissions are made offences by the Indian Penal Code. Out of this 400, how many are compoundable? That is a matter which we must consider because under that lies the principle which is of importance. As I said, the only provision which defines what offences are compoundable or not is section 345 of the Criminal Procedure Code. I have made a little calculation, I am rather weak in mathematics but I believe I cannot be very far wrong in saying, that only 44 offences are compoundable out of the 400. The rest are non-compoundable. From this position, I deduce the conclusion that the principle of the criminal law is that an offence shall ordinarily not be compoundable and that these 44 are merely exceptions to the general rule. Out of the 44, 24 are compoundable without the permission of the magistrate and 20 are Compoundable with the permission of the magistrate. So, really speaking, only 24 are compoundable offences. Now, are these offences indicated in this

Bill compoundable or not? The Bill itself does not say so. I think there ought to be an express provision to this effect that any offence under this Bill, shall be non-compoundable, if my Hon. friend does not propose to accept this suggestion, what would be the result? The result would be this, that most of these offences will be offences in which hurt or grievous hurt would be caused. They could not be mere offences of show of force or anything less than that; they would be offences involving hurt, grievous hurt, violence and things of that sort. Now, if a magistrate were to apply sub-section (1) or (2) of section 345.—1 do not want to weary my Hon. friend by reading the two sub-sections of section 345 which define offences of this sort—he will find that the offences involve hurt. He will also see that a large majority of them which are made compoundable either with permission of the magistrate or without the permission of the magistrate are offences which involve hurt, grievous hurt, confinement of a person of kidnapping his relation or something like that. All of them are compoundable, absolutely, every one of them. Therefore, it follows that unless you make a specific and express provision in this Bill all the offences if they involve social boycott—this is not mentioned in the Penal Code at all and it is not an offence except conspiracy—and such other acts which involve hurt or violence, so far as section 345 is concerned, will become compoundable and the Bill will be reduced to a complete nullity. It would be a farce. Therefore, my Hon. friend will look into this matter and see—he would be entitled, of course to take the advice of the Law Ministry—whether within the terms of section 345 of the Criminal Procedure Code, these

offences would be compoundable, and if so, whether it is not necessary to make an express provisions in this to say that offences involving untouchability shall not be regarded as compoundable.

Now, Sir, I come to the question of certain defective provisions. I have said about omissions and I want to say something about the defective provisions. The first such provision to which I shall refer is the clause relating to punishment which is clause 8. The punishment prescribed in the bill is six months imprisonment or fine which may extend to Rs. 500 or both. My Hon'ble friend was very eloquent on the question of punishment.

He said that the punishment ought to be very light and I was wondering whether he was pleading for a lighter punishment because he himself wanted to commit these offences. He said, "Let the punishment be very light so that no grievances shall be left in the heart of the offender," I suppose his primary premise is that the offenders who offend the untouchables are really very kindly people, overwhelming with love and kindness and that this is merely an errant act which really ought to be forgiven. It is a matter of great solace to me that he has not prescribed the punishment of being warned and then discharged. That I think would be the best under section 561 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Yes, that would be the best; if our subject is to make the offender a loving person well let him be warned and discharged. He will continue to love and no soreness will remain in his heart. Why should he have that? Unfortunately, my Hon'ble friend has thought that that could not be and therefore, he suggested this punishment.

Now, Sir, having had a little practice in criminal law, I think the rules on which punishment is based are two, mainly. One is to deter the offender from repeating his offence. That, I think, is the primary rule of criminal jurisprudence. Punishment is necessary; otherwise the offender may go on repeating his offence. It is to prevent him that there must be a punishment. The second object of punishment is to prevent a man from adopting a criminal career. If a man once begins a criminal career then he may continue to do so unless there is some deterrent punishment to prevent him from adopting that career.

Now, Sir, if you accept these two principles, is the punishment proposed by my Hon'ble friend adequate for the purpose of the Bill? In the first place the six months imprisonment is really the maximum and a magistrate may only inflict one day's imprisonment and let the man be off. There is no minimum fixed that the imprisonment shall not be less than six months or three months or whatever it is. The whole matter is left in the hands of the magistrate. What sort of a magistrate he may be; it may be quite possible and I can quite imagine that he may be a Pandit from Kashi sitting in judgement in the magistrate's chair. What conscience would he have in the matter of administering this law?

Shri Basappa Shetty : Kashi or Kashmir.

Dr. B. R. AMBEDKAR :

Oh, Kashmir Brahmins are not true Brahmins, I understand, they are "meat Khao, machhli khao", as they say. Therefore they are not Brahmins.

Now, as I said, in this case you want to see that the law is observed, there ought to have been a minimum punishment below which the magistrate could not go. Secondly the punishment is alternative, imprisonment or fine. The magistrate may very well inflict the alternative punishment of fine and there might be an offender who might be prepared even to pay the five hundred rupees in order to escape from the clutches of the law. What good can such punishment do? The Indian Penal Code prescribes a variety of punishments, a variety of them in section 53: death, transportation, imprisonment, forfeiture of property, fine, whipping, detention in reformatory. There are seven offences for which the Penal Code fixes death penalty, for 50 offences the punishment is transportation, for 21 offences simple imprisonment, for 12 offences fine. In all other cases the imprisonment is rigorous. Why my friend has thought so little of this Bill as not to prescribe adequate punishment, it is very difficult for me to understand, I mean, least that one can expect from him is to prescribe a minimum, may be three months; it does not matter, a minimum of three months imprisonment and fine if he wants to fix fine—I am not for inflicting a fine because that only benefits the treasury, but if you say that the fine will go to the victim, I am for fine also. Otherwise I do not want fine.

SHRI B. B. SHARMA (Uttar Pradesh): Why not the maximum penalty of death?

DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR. Well, if you like to have it. I am not so cruel as that and I do not think you are sincere in suggesting it. As I said, there are no cases in the Indian Penal Code where minimum punishment has not been

prescribed or rigorous imprisonment has not been prescribed. There are three sections here which prescribe rigorous imprisonment—Sections 194, 226 and 449. Then the penal code has prescribed the minimum period of imprisonment in sections 397—398. I do not see, why when there is the precedent, the precedent should not be.....

DR. K. N. KATJU: What is 397?

DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR: Dacoity. This is worse than dacoity. I think, to starve a man and not to allow him to take water, is almost causing death. That is, I think, one drawback in the Bill. Then sir, the second drawback in the Bill is that there is no provision for taking security for good behaviour. The Criminal Procedure Code has got four sections, 107, 108, 109 and 110, and they all enable the magistrate to demand security for good behaviour. I don't understand why this Bill should not contain a provision to the effect. When for instance we find in Rajputana and other States the caste Hindus are agitating to harass the untouchables because they exercise civil and constitutional rights, why should you not take security for good behaviour?

SHRI J. S. BISHT (Uttar Pradesh):

There are all the provisions in the Criminal Procedure Code.

DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR: That is what exactly I am saying that there is a precedent in the Criminal Procedure Code for taking security from persons who do not keep peace, good behaviour, from persons disseminating seditious matter from vegetarians and from habitual offenders, for good behaviour. I am not certain that these provisions could be in-

voked for the purpose of taking security from persons offending against this law. It may be that specific provision dealing with the cases dealt with in this Bill has to be made, and that can only be made by a specific provision in this Bill.

Then, Sir, there is another provision which finds a place in the Indian police Act, section 15 of the Act, under which when some people in the village or the villagers as a whole disturb the peace, the Government can quarter upon them additional police and recover the cost of the additional police from the inhabitants of that village. That is a general provision. I am not sure again whether that provision could be invoked by the Government for the purpose of enforcing this Act. That Act is a general Act, disturbances of peace and so on and so forth. This is quite a different case and I should have thought that a specific clause on the lines of section 15 of the Police Act should have found a place in this Bill if outlawing of untouchability is intended to be an effective thing. But that again is not there.

Now, Sir, I come to another question about which I certainly feel a certain amount of doubt. Who is to administer this law, the Centre or the State? And if the Centre is to administer the law, is it not better that this Bill should contain a clause to the effect that it shall be administered by the Central Government? I make this suggestion because I feel that the States might raise an objection that this is a concurrent piece of legislation and being a concurrent piece of legislation the States have the right ordinarily to administer these Acts. I do not think that this is a concurrent piece of legislation in which the States can claim to have a right to administer.

I claim that this is a Central law although it does not fall in the List of the Seventh Schedule. The provisions contained in article 35 are quite clear. It has been stated in article 35 that any law to be made for inflicting punishment for any infringement of a law made in pursuance of article 17 shall be by Parliament and not by the State. These are the very express words. Therefore there can be no doubt in my mind that this law will have to be by virtue of the Constitution administered by the Centre and not by the States. I say this because my Hon. friend might be saying that since we have made the offences under this Act cognisable it does not matter if the law is administered by the States but that argument cannot stand at all in virtue of article 35 and I would suggest to him that he should introduce an express provision in the Bill that the Law shall be administered by the Centre, if my friend's contention or the contention of the State is that this is also a concurrent piece of legislation, I would like to draw his attention to the provision to article 73 which is a very important one and which relates to the administration of laws in the concurrent field. My Hon. friend will remember that in the schemes of things in the Government of India Act of 1935 we had the same kind of classification of subject-List I-Central, List II State subject and list III Concurrent subject but the Government of India Act contained an express provision that the powers of the Centre to make law in the concurrent field was confined merely to law-making. It could not encroach upon the field of administration. The reasons why such a provision was made in the Government of India Act 1935, are quite irrelevant to the time in which

we find ourselves now, but when we made the Constitution we refused to accept such a provision. We said that although generally the Centre may leave a law in this concurrent field for administration to the States the choice must be given to the Centre to determine whether any particular law in the concurrent field made by it shall be administered by it and not by the States. That intention has been carried out in the provision to article 73. We said that if the Centre so determines that the law made in the concurrent field shall be administered by the Centre than the States cannot interfere in the matter at all. Therefore, I am strongly of the opinion that this contention is invalid in view of article 35 of the Constitution. This law is a Central law by Constitution. It is really part of List I; although it does not occur as an entry in List I, all the same it is part of List I and therefore the administration must be by the Centre, Whatever expenses are necessary would be matter of discussion. The burden of expenditure, and the burden of administration must be taken by the Centre upon itself which I think is only right in this matter. This is all that I wanted to submit.

[Speech delivered in the Rajya Sabha on the 16th September, 1954].

PART SECOND

ON BUDDHISM

ON THE RISE AND FALL OF BUDDHISM IN INDIA

This is a general belief that Buddhism has disappeared in India. It is stated that Buddhism in its material form has disappeared. I agree. But as a spiritual force Buddhism still exists.

Most people who have studied Buddhism in India would admit that this subject had not been adequately and fully dealt with as it should have been. I have not been able to find any authentic material explaining why Buddhism rose to the height it achieved and why it disappeared in India.

One question which is persistently asked by those who thought of reviving Buddhism in India was, "If Buddhism has any virtue, why did it disappear?"

As a student of Buddhism I have been collecting pieces of information as to the causes leading to the birth and fall of Buddhism in India. My study is not complete nor can I say as a result of my researches that I can express my views authoritatively. But my studies have helped me to arrive at certain general conclusion and I think they are very nearly correct.

I am of the opinion that the significance of Buddhism would not be understood unless the exact circumstances

which gave birth to it were understood. I disagree with most people who were under the impression that the religion of India had all along been Hinduism. Hinduism is the latest development of social thought in India.

The religion of India has experienced three changes. Vedic religion which was practised first gave way, in course of time, to Brahminism and this in turn to Hinduism. It was during Brahminic period that Buddhism was born. This was because Buddhism opposed inequality, authority and division of society into various classes which Brahminism introduced for the first time in India.

The rise of Buddhism was as significant as the French revolution. I do not agree with the suggestion made by many people in India that Buddhism was destroyed by the dialectics of Sankracharya. This is contrary to the facts as Buddhism existed for many centuries after his death. In my opinion Sankracharya was himself a Buddhist. His, guru too, was a Buddhist. Buddhism faded away in India because of the rise of Vaishnavism and Saivism. Another cause was the Muslim invasion of India. When Alla-ud-din marched into Bihar, he killed five to six thousand Bhikkus. The remaining Buddhist monks fled to the neighbouring countries like China, Nepal and Tibet. Efforts were, subsequently, made by Buddhists of India to raise another priest-hood in order to revive Buddhism. But these failed as by then ninety percent people had embraced Hinduism.

Now the question why Hinduism survived in India and Buddhism had died? The answer is that Buddhism as a

religion is difficult to practise while Hinduism is not. Besides, the political climate in India had also been inhospitable to its advancements.

[Delivered at Colombo (Ceylon) on the 5th June, 1950).]

BUDDHISM AND COMMUNISM.

President, Your Reverences and Gentlemen :

I am sorry that having come to Nepal to attend the Conference, I have not been able to participate in its proceeding in the way in which a delegate ought to participate. But I am sure, most of the delegates are aware that although I am here, I am physically a very ill man and I am quite unable to bear the stress and strain of the Conference proceedings. It is therefore, not out of any disrespect for the Conference that I have been usually absent, it is because of my personal condition that I could not do justice to the task of the Conference. It is perhaps because of my absence from the Conference that I was asked by way of compensation to address you this afternoon. I consented to do that, but even here there have been surprises flung on me. I had not enough notice that I was to speak here. And when I was asked what subject I would speak on, I mentioned the subject of Ahimsa in Buddhism. But I find that a large majority of the people attending this Conference are desirous that I should speak on Buddhism and Communism, a subject to which I, in a very passing sentence, referred at the first general meeting.

I am quite prepared to agree to the suggestion of the change of subject, although, I must say that I am not quite,

on the spur of the moment, prepared to deal with such a large, enormous, and if I may say so, a very massive subject. It is a subject which has had half the world in grips, and I find that it has held also in its grip a large number of the student population, even of the Buddhist countries. I look upon the later aspect of the matter with grave concern. If the younger generation of the Buddhist countries are not able to appreciate that Buddhism supplies a way of life which is better than what is supplied by the Communist way of life, Buddhism is doomed. It cannot last beyond a generation or two. It is, therefore, quite necessary for those who believe in Buddhism to tackle the younger generation, and to tell them whether Buddhism can be a substitute for Communism. It is only then that Buddhism can hope to survive. We must all remember that today a large majority of the people in Europe and a large majority of the youngsters in Asia look upon Karl Marx as the only prophet who could be worshipped. And they regard, the largest part of the Buddhist Sangha as nothing but the yellow peril. That is an induction which the Bhikkhus must take up, must understand. to reform themselves in order that they could be compared with Karl Marx. And Buddhism could compete with it.

Now with this introduction, I propose to give you a few salient points in Buddhism and in Marxism or Communism in order to show you where the similarity of ideals lies and where the differences arise between Buddhism and Marxism. And thirdly, whether the Buddhist way of the life of reaching the goal which Communism has is a lasting one, or whether the Communist way of bringing about the goal

is the lasting one. Because there is no use in pursuing a certain path, if that path is not going to be a lasting path, if it is going to lead you to jungle, if it is going to lead you to anarchy, there is no use pursuing it. But, if you are assured that the path that you are asked to follow is slow, may be devious, may be with long detours, yet if it ultimately makes you reach a safe, sound ground, so that the ideals you are pursuing are there to help you, to mould your life permanently, it is much better, in my judgement to follow the slower path, and the devious path rather than to rush up and to take what we call short cut. Short cuts in life are always dangerous, very dangerous.

Now let me go to the subject. What is the theory of Communism? What does it start with? Communism starts with the theory that there is exploitation in the world, that the poor are exploited by the rich because of the property that they hold, and they enslave the masses, that enslavement results in suffering, sorrow, and poverty. That is the starting point of Karl Marx. He uses the word 'exploitation'. What is the remedy that Karl Marx provides? The remedy that Karl Marx provides is that in order to prevent poverty and the suffering of one class it is necessary to remove private property. Nobody should possess private property because it is the private owner who appropriates or misappropriates, to use the technical language of Karl Marx, the surplus value which the workers produce. The worker does not get the surplus value which he produces. It is appropriated by the owner. Karl Marx asked the question why should the owner misappropriate the surplus value which is produced by the efforts of the working man? His answer is that the only owner is the State.

And it is because of this that Marx propounded the theory that there must be the dictatorship of the proletariat. That is the third proposition that Marx enunciated, that Government must be by the exploited classes and not by the exploiting classes. That is what is meant by the dictatorship of the proletariat. These are fundamental propositions in Karl Marx, which are the basis of Communism in Russia. They have undoubtedly been expanded. But these are the fundamental propositions.

Now let me, for a moment, go to Buddhism and see what the Buddha had to say about the points made out by Karl Marx. As I told you, Karl Marx begins with what is called exploitation of the poor. What does the Buddha say? How does he begin? What is the foundation on which he has raised the structure of his religion? The Buddha, too, 2000 or at any rate 2400 years ago, said exactly the same thing. He said, "There is 'Dukkha' in the world." He did not use the word 'exploitation', but he did lay the foundation of his religion on what he called 'Dukkha'. There is 'Dukkha' in the world. The world 'Dukkha' no doubt has been interpreted in various ways. It has been interpreted to mean rebirth, the round of life, that is 'Dukkha'. I do not agree with that. I think there are lots of places in the Buddhist literature where the Buddha has used the word 'Dukkha' in the sense of poverty. Therefore, so far as the foundation is concerned, there is really no difference at all.

It is unnecessary for the Buddhist people to go to Karl Marx to get the foundation. That foundation is already there, well laid. It is here that the Buddha begins his first

sermon—the Dharma Chakara Pravartana Sutta. Therefore, to those who are attracted by Karl Marx. I say, study the Dharmachakra Pravartana Sutta and find out what the Buddha says. And you will find sufficient satisfaction on this question. The Buddha did not lay the foundation of his religion either on God, or on soul or anything supernatural like these. He laid His finger on the fact of life—people are living in suffering. Therefore so far as Marxim or Communism is concerned, Buddhism has enough of it. And the Buddha said that 2400 years before, Marx was born.

With regard to the question of property, you will again find some very close affinity to the doctrine of the Buddha and the doctrine preached by Karl Marx. Karl Marx said that in order to prevent exploitation, the State must own the instrument of production, that is property. Land must belong to the state, industry must belong to the state, so that no private owner might intervene and rob the worker of the profits of his labour. That is what Marx said.

Now let us go to the Sangha, The Buddhist Sangha and examine the rules of life that the Buddha laid down for the monks. What are the rules that the Buddha laid-down? Well the Buddha said that no monk shall have private property. And although there might be a few lapses here and there and I have noticed that in some countries the monks own some property, yet in the large majority of the cases the monks have no property at all. In fact the Buddhist rules for the Sangha are far more severe than any rules that the Communists have made in Russia. I

take it, as a mute subject, nobody has yet discussed it and come to any conclusion.

What object did the Buddha have in forming the Sangha? Why did he do it? Going back a little into the history, when the Buddha was engaged in propagating His religion, those whom we today call the 'Paribarajikas' were existing there long before the Buddha was born. The word "Paribarajika" means a displaced person a person who has lost his home. Probably during the Aryan period the different tribes of the Aryans were warring against one another as all tribal people do, Some broken tribes left, lost their moorings and were wandering about. And it is those wanderers that were called Paribarajikas. The great service that the Buddha did to these 'Paribarajikas' was to organise them into a body, to give them rules of life—those that are contained in the 'Vinayapitaka'. In the rule, the Bhikkhu is not allowed to have property. The Bhikkhu is allowed to have only seven things, a razor, a lota for getting water, a Bhikshapatra; three Cheevaras' and the needle for sewing things. Well, I want to know if the essence of Communism is to deny the private property, can there be any greater and more severe rules as regards private property than is to be found in the 'Vinayapitaka'? I do not find one, therefore, if any people or any youngsters are attracted by the rule contained in the Communist system of rules that there shall be no private property, They can find it here. The only question is, to what extent can this rule of denial of private property be applied to society as a whole? That is a matter of expediency,

so far as theory is concerned whether there is anything wrong in abolishing private property, Buddhism will not stand in the way of anybody who wants, to do it, because it has already made this concession in the organisation of the Buddhist Sangha.

Now we come to another aspect of the matter, and that aspect is what are the ways and means which Karl Marx or the Communists wish to adopt in order to bring about Communism? That is the important question. The means that the Communists wish to adopt in order to bring about Communism (by which I mean the recognition of DuKkha the abolition of property) is violence and killing of the opposed. There lies the fundamental difference between the Buddha and Karl Marx. The Buddha's means of persuading people to adopt the principles are by persuasion, by moral teaching and by love. He wants to conquer the opponent by inculcating in him the doctrine that love and not power can conquer anything. That is where the fundamental difference lies that the Buddha would not allow violence, and the Communists do. No doubt the Communists get quick results because when you adopt the means of annihilating men, they do not remain to oppose you.

You go on with your ideology, you go on with your way of doing things. The Buddha's way, as I said, is a long way, perhaps some people may say, a tedious way, but I have no doubt about it that it is the surest way.

There are two or three question which I have always asked my Communist friends to answer and which I must frankly say they have not been able to answer. They

establish by means of violence what they call the dictatorship of the proletariat. They deprive all people who have property of political rights. They cannot have representation in the legislation, they cannot have right to vote, they must remain what they call second grade subjects of the state, the ruled, not sharing authority or power. When I asked them, "Do you agree that dictatorship is a good method of governing people?" they say, "No, we don't like dictatorship." Then we say, "How do you do allow it?" But they say, "This is an interim period in which dictatorship must be there." You proceed further and ask them, "What is the duration of this interim period? How long? Twenty years? Forty years? Fifty years?" No answer. They only repeat that the proletarian dictatorship will vanish, some how automatically.

Very well, let us take the thing as it is that dictatorship will vanish. Well I ask a question, "What will happen when dictatorship disappears? What will take its place? Will man not need Government of some sort?" They have no answer.

Then we go back to the Buddha and ask this question in relation to the Dhamma. What does he say? The greatest thing that the Buddha has done is to tell the world that the world cannot be reformed except by the reformation of the mind of the man, and the mind of the world. If the mind is changed, if the mind accepts the Communist system and loves it loyally and carries it out it is a permanent thing; it does not require a soldier or a police officer to keep a man in order. Why? The answer is: The Buddha has energized you and your conscience

itself is acting as a sentinel in order to keep you on your path. There is no trouble when the mind is converted and the thing is permanent.

The Communist system is based on force. Supposing tomorrow the dictatorship in Russia fails, and we see signs of its failure, what would happen? I really like to know what would happen? I would really like to know what would happen to the Communist system. As I see it there would be bloody warfare among the Russian people for appropriating the property of the state. That would be the consequence of it. Why? Because they have not accepted the Communist system voluntarily. They are obeying it because they are afraid of being hanged. Such a system can take no roots, and therefore in my judgement unless the Communist are able to answer these questions, what would happen to their system? When force disappears there is no use pursuing it. Because, if the mind is not converted, force will always be necessary, and this is what I want to say in conclusion, that one of the greatest things I find in Buddhism is that its system is a democratic system, The Buddha told the Vajjis when the Prime Minister of Ajatta Sattu went to tell the Buddha that Ajatta Sattu wants to conquer the Vajjis. He said, "the king won't be able to do it as long as the Vajjis follow their ways of their age-old system" The Buddha for unknown reason did not explain in plain terms what He meant, But there is no doubt about it that what He was referring to was the democratic and the republican form of government, which the Vajjis had. He said: So long as the Vajjis were following their system, they

would be unconquered. The Buddha, of course, was a great democrat.

Therefore, I say, and may I say so if the President will allow me, I have been a student of politics; I was a Professor of Economics, and I have spent a great deal of time in studying Karl Marx, Communism and all that, and I have also spent good deal of time in studying the Buddha's Dhamma.

After comparing the two I came to the conclusion that Buddha's advice with regard to great problem of the world, namely, that there is Dukkha and that Dukkha must be removed, and the Buddha's method was the safest and the soundest.

Thus do I advise the younger generation of the Buddhist countries to pay more attention to the actual teachings of the Buddha. If I may say so in conclusion, if any peril arises to the Dhamma in a Buddhist country, the blame shall have to be cast upon the Bhikkus, because I personally think that they are not wholly discharging the duty which devolves on them. Where is preaching? The Bhikku is living in his cloister taking his meal, one meal no doubt, and sitting quietly; probably he is reading, and most probably I find them sleeping, and in the evening having a little music. That is not the way of propagating religion.

My friends, I want to tell you, I do not want to criticise anybody, but religion, if it is to be a moral force for the regeneration of society, you must constantly din it into the ears of the people. How many years has a child to spend

and then withdraw the child home and expect the child to grow a into learned man. To get education the child has to go to school every day, is there for five hours and study constantly. It is then, and then alone, that the child gets somewhat saturated with what is called knowledge and what is called learning. Here the monastery is not a school. The Bhikkhus do not call the people to the monasteries on any single day and deliver sermon to them on some subjects of moral education. I have never seen it being done.

I went to Ceylon and I told some people that I was particularly anxious to see how the Bhikkhus preach. They told me that they had got 'Bana' some word they use, which I subsequently learnt, meant 'vanka'. They took me at 11 o'clock to one place, to a small little square thing as big as this table and I sat on the ground. A Bhikkhu was brought in. Several men and women brought water and washed his feet and he came up and sat there. He had a 'fan' with him. Goodness only knows what he said. Of course he must have preached in Sinhalese. It was not more than two minutes, and after two minutes he departed.

You go to Christian Church. What happens? Every week people assemble there. They worship, and some priest delivers a sermon on some subject from the Bible in order to remind the people what Jesus told them that they should do. You will be probably surprised, most of us are not aware that 90 percent of Christianity is copied from Buddhism both in substance and in form. You go to Rome, see the main Church and you will be reminded of the big temple which is known as 'Viswa Karma' at Beruit.

a missionary in China, had expressed his great surprise as to how this similarity occurs between Buddhism and Christianity. So far as the outlook, he dared not say that the Buddhist copied Christianity but he would not admit that Christians copied Buddhism. There is so much of it, I think time has turned and we must now copy some of the ways of the Christians in order to propagate our religion among the Buddhist people. They must be made aware, every day and all the time that the Buddha's Dhamma is there, standing by them like a policeman to guard lest they should go the wrong way. Without that this religion will remain probably in a very decadent state. Even now I find that even in the Buddhist countries, its condition is very decadent. But its influence is existing. There is no doubt about it.

I wanted to tell you one very interesting epilogue which I saw in Burma. I went to Burma; I was called for the Conference and they took me to show how they were going to reconstruct the villages. I was very happy. I went with the Committee which has planned to reform the village. Their streets as usual were crooked, bent here, and bent there nothing systematic. So the Committee put down iron pillars and lined ropes that this street must go this way. In good many cases I found that the lines drawn by the committee went across a piece of land which was owned by a private individual. When I went and saw and I asked them. "How are they going to manage? Have you got money to pay for the property that you are going to take?" They said, "Nobody wants money." Every-body said, "If you want it, take it." Why

is this? Why in my country there would have been bloodshed if you took a little piece of land from somebody without giving him compensation. But there it is, why? Why were the Burmese so free with their property? Why did they not care for it? It is because the Buddha has taught "Sarvam Anityam". Everything, you see, is impermanent. Why fight for impermanent things? It is all right if you want the land, take it.

Now, ladies and gentlemen. I do not think I can continue any further. nor is it necessary for me to do that.

I just wanted to give you a point of view from which to look at. Do not be allured by Communist success. I am quite confident that if we all become one tenth as enlightened as the Buddha was, we can bring about the same result by the methods of love, of justice and good will. Thank you very much.

[Speech delivered at the International Buddhist conference held at Kathmandu (Nepal) to celebrate the 2500th anniversary of Buddha]

ON BUDDHISM AND JAINISM

Any religion that cannot provide an answer to Communism will not survive. The only religion in my view, that can serve as an antidote to Communism is Buddhism.

I do not agree with those who believe in every faith and pick up something from every where. Such an attitude is in evidence in India. One should make one's choice and stick to it,

One faith can be different from another. There is a great difference between the Ahimsa preached by Buddhism and the Ahimsa preached by Jainism, The latter has taken Ahimsa to the highest degree.

I have full faith in the rebirth. I can prove it to scientists that rebirth was logical. In my view, it is the elements that changed and not the man.

(Extracts from the speech delivered at a meeting held at Buddha Vihar under the auspices of the Mahabodhi Society of India, New Delhi on the 5th February 1956.)

ON THE EVE OF THE GREAT CONVERSION

Members of Buddhist Brotherhood, Brothers and Sisters, I want to express my thoughts on this important question as to why I have taken the stupendous responsibility of the great task of reviving and propagating the gospel of Lord Buddha, The 'Initiation' (Deeksha) ceremony as you all know, took place yesterday. It has been a difficult task for the thoughtful to evaluate the significance of the Initiation ceremony carried on a gigantic scale yesterday at this place. Some of our friends have suggested that this speech should have preceded the conversion, rather than followed it. In grappling with certain Knotty and important things, the logical order cannot, always be maintained. The forces of history, as much as the rules of logic are responsible for this sequence which some find reversed,

Now, the first question that occupies the mind of many is, why should the choice of venue fall on Nagpur? Some people believe that I have purposely chosen this place because this city is the centre of R.S.S. activities and that I wanted to do something spectacular right in front of their eyes, Well, that is not true. I have no such motive. I have no desire to irritate or to provoke anybody by 'scratching his nose' nor do I have any time for this kind of childish pranks.

Some people are under the impression that another reason why I chose this place and this time for the initiation ceremony was because on the same day and at the same time Rashtrya Swayam Sangh was holding a rally in Nagpur. This ceremony, was intended to juxtapose a striking contrast. That of course, is not true. Why should we go out of our way to quarrel with the R.S.S. ? We have no time to do so, nor does it deserve that honour.

The great task that I have taken on my shoulders is so important that every minute that passes has become valuable for me. While selecting the place for this historical ceremony, I had not the remotest idea of the R.S.S. in my mind. This city of Nagpur was chosen for a very different reason.

Those who have studied the Buddhist history of India know that the people who worked in the beginning for the propagation of the religion of Buddha were the 'Nagas. Nagas were non-Aryans and there existed fierce enmity between the Aryans and the Nagas,

Many a battle was fought between the Aryans and the non-Aryans. Aryans wanted to completely annihilate the Nagas. There are many legends to be found in the Puranas in this connection. Aryans had burnt Nagas. The Sage 'Agastya' saved one Naga and we are supposed to be the descendants of that Naga.

The Nagas were suppressed and oppressed by the Aryans. They needed a great man to liberate them and they found that greatmen in the person of Lord Buddha. Bhagwan Buddha saved them from decay and extinction. It was the Nagas who spread the religion of the

Buddha throughout the world. These people were predominantly the inhabitants of Nagpur. Through the soil of the city there flowed a river named the 'Nag'. It appears that the Nagas lived on the banks of this river. This is mainly the reason for selecting Nagpur for this great occasion. There is no other reason. The choice of this city for conducting the 'Deeksha'—initiation ceremony need not cause any misunderstanding.

In choosing this path I have been a target of number of unkind comments. Some very pungent; some crude. Some people have accused me of misleading my down-trodden, poverty-stricken followers since according to them the path that I have chosen will deprive them of the concessions and privileges which they enjoy now. Some assert that the Untouchables will remain untouchables no matter what I do in order to emancipate them. Many have suggested that it would not be wise on our part to leave the path that we have been following hither to for ameliorating our condition. This kind of mischievous talk is likely to cause doubts and fears in the minds of the young as well as the older people belonging to the Scheduled Castes. Therefore, I must answer this question. Removal of the doubts and fears will surely strengthen our movement. I would like to say many things on this question. Those who say we shall be left economically weak and backward are worried about the despicable occupations like scavenging and flaying and tanning.

There objection pertains to the removal of the dead bodies of animals. Mahars and Chamars stop removing the dead bodies of buffaloes and cows. Mahars and

Chamars don't eat carrion was a slogan which was raised by me. Some thirty years ago I launched this movement. This somehow immensely offended our Hindu friends. I asked them, "You take the milk from the cows and buffaloes and when they are dead you expect us to remove the dead bodies. Why? If you carry the dead bodies of your mothers to cremate why do not carry the dead bodies of your 'mother-cows' yourself?"

When I put this question to the Hindus they felt irritated. I told them, If you let us remove the dead bodies of your mothers we shall very gladly remove the dead bodies of your cows and buffaloes as well. Many letters written by the Brahmins and other Hindu correspondents appeared in the "Kesari". A 'Chitpavan Brahmin' through, one of such letters tried to prove that if the untouchables stopped removing the dead bodies of animals they would be put to a great financial loss. He augmented his point by furnishing statistical data in support of his argument. According to him every chamar who removed the dead bodies of the animals earned between Rs. 500 and Rs. 600 per annum from the sale proceeds of the skin, horns, teeth, hoofs and bones of the dead cows. He accused me that I was trying to deprive them of their livelihood by preaching against this practice. My people were in a dilemma not knowing where I was leading them to. Once I happened to visit Sangmaner—a Tehsil in the District of Belgaum. The author of those letters which had appeared in the Kesari met me and repeated the same question. I told him that I would answer this question some time latter. Then I answered this question in a public meeting in this manner :

"My people do not have sufficient food to eat.

Women have no clothes to cover their bodies. No roof over their heads to give them shelter. No land to grow food-grains. So they are down-trodden and poverty-stricken. They are oppressed and exploited. Do you know the reason why?

None replied from among the congregation. Not even the man who had written those letters to the 'Kesari'. Then I told them, "You had better leave us alone. Good men, we are quite capable of thinking for ourselves. If you are so much anxious about our losses why not send your friends and relatives to live in the villages and do this dirty job of dragging the dead bodies of animals so that they may earn Rs. 500/- per annum. In addition to that amount I will pay Rs. 500/- from my pocket, They will gain doubly-Why miss this opportunity? True, we will suffer a loss but you stand to gain."

Unfortunately nobody has come forward to claim the prize so far. Why on earth do they feel perturbed on seeing us making progress. I can take care of my people for the food, clothing, house and other things they need, You (Hindus) need not worry about these things. If we do this dirty work, it is said to be profitable and if you do it, it becomes non-profitable. Strange logic it is, isn't it?

Similarly some people say that now that some seats have been reserved for us in the legislature why should we lose them. I say to them that we are glad to vacate them for you, Let the Brahmins, Rajputs and other caste Hindus come forward and fill these up by becoming Chamars, Sweepers and Mahars and take advantage of the opportunity. Why should they moan over our loss?

Self-respect is more important than the material gains. Our struggle is for honour, for self-respect, not only for the economic progress alone.

There is a locality in Bombay where prostitutes and whores live. These women who trade in flesh wake up at about 8 O'clock in the morning and call for the Moslem boys who work in the cheap restaurants located in the Mohallah, "O Suleman, O Suleman." they shout out, "Get some 'Kheema' (minced meat curry) and 'Roti' (Bread)."

They take 'Kheema Rotee' and tea every day. Well, our women do not get 'Kheema Roti' to eat. Many of the women present here do not get even a square meal every day. They have to content themselves with ordinary 'Roti' and 'Chatni'. They too can get rich and lead the life of infamy and sin if they so desire but they care more for their honour, for dignity and self-respect. This is what we are struggling for ; honour and self-respect.

For a man it is his birthright to lead an honourable life. To achieve this aim we must do our utmost. We are prepared to make the greatest sacrifice for achieving this. We are struggling for human dignity which the Hindus had hitherto denied to us. We want to make our life as full and wholesome as possible.

I do not know what sort of publicity will be given to my speech by the news-papers of our country. I do not care for publicity very much but these newspaper-men have been after me for the past forty years. They have maligned me. They have misrepresented my views. They have mutilated my speeches. I wish these newspaper-men could learn to behave like mature people, and to think and write in a

responsible and truthful manner so that the world may know the truth and form a better impression about them.

There are many things we may have to sacrifice on our embracing Buddhism. So far as the concessions, such as reservations etcetra are concerned, let me assure you they shall not be lost. After the ceremony, the first problem that I shall devote my attention to would be the problem of these concessions.

Continuance of these concessions would require a line of action which may take us to court. I am prepared for such an eventuality though I need not reveal at this stage, what line of action I may have to adopt. Those who are capable of achieving the rights have the strength and capacity to retain them too. We shall have to do a great deal for the progress of this movement. Many problems will crop up after the acceptance of Buddhism. How shall we face the situation ? How shall we brave the many difficulties that may arise ? I have sufficient strength and material in hand to grapple with the problems. I fought for these rights and secured them for you. I assure you, I will get them again for you. Of course, what may happen after my death, I cannot say.

Have confidence in me and the words I am uttering. There is absolutely no truth in the words of our opponents. I say unto you, pay no heed to their words.

The question of our conversion is being discussed every where but I am surprised to see that nobody has asked me the reason why of all the religions I have chosen the religion of Buddha. In any movement of conversion this is a

significant question to be asked. At the time of embracing a religion one should ask oneself these questions, namely

- (1) Which religion should be adopted
- (2) and how it should be adopted ?

I started the movement of renouncing the Hindu religion in 1935 at Nasik and since then I have been continuing the struggle. A mammoth meeting was held at Yevala, in 1935 in which through a resolution a decision was taken to the effect that we should renounce the Hindu religion. In that meeting I had said that though born a Hindu because I could not help it, I would not die as a Hindu. This conversion has given me enormous satisfaction and pleasure unimaginable. I feel as I have been liberated from hell. I want each one of you all who got initiated yesterday, to realise this by his own experience. But I do not want any blind followers. I do not like sheep mentality. Those who wish to come under the refuge of Buddha should do so after counting the cost, for it is a religion very difficult to practise.

For the progress of mankind religion—or to be more precise 'Dhamma' is absolutely necessary. Some followers of Karl Marx believe that Religion is an opiate. But this statement of Karl Marx must be taken with a pinch of salt. Those who say so for them religion has no significance—no meaning. Even among us there are many who follow the maxim "eat, drink and be merry". All that they want is—bread and butter for breakfast, delicious meals in the afternoon, nice comfortable bed to sleep on and cinema to while away their time. In their life there is no place for religion. I do not somehow agree with them. Owing to the poverty of my

father I did not have the opportunity to enjoy any of these luxuries. Till very late in life I suffered excessively and laboured very hard. But this has not made me irreligious.

I know myself what sort of hardships the poor have to bear. We must launch our struggle keeping in view the economic aspects and I am not against this idea. We should progress economically too and endeavour to become independent. I have been struggling myself throughout my life to that end. Not only this, I very much desire mankind to become economically strong. But I have my independent views in this regard.

There is a difference between man and animal. Whilst the beast needs nothing save his daily food for existence, the human being who is endowed with the physique and the sentient mind has to develop both. Mind must be developed side by side with the body. Mind should also be filled with pure thoughts. Personally, I believe that it would not be in the least advantageous to have anything to do with the countries where people believe that 'eat, drink and be merry' should be the motto of life. Keeping in view the masses one should bear in mind that just as we must have a healthy body in order to be free from disease, so in order to keep the body healthy we must also, develop the sentient mind, or else it would be futile to say that man is developing and making progress.

Why does the human mind become diseased? The reason is that so long as the human body is not free from suffering, mind cannot be happy. There is a saying by Ram das, Maharashtrian Saint, that if a man lacks enthusiasm, either his mind or body is in a diseased condition. Now,

what saps the enthusiasm in man ? If there is no enthusiasm, life becomes a drudgery—a mere burden to be dragged. Nothing can be achieved if there is no enthusiasm. Why does one lose enthusiasm ? Main reason for this lack of enthusiasm on the part of a man is that an individual loses hope to get an opportunity to elevate oneself. Hopelessness leads to lack of enthusiasm. The mind in such cases becomes diseased.

One who sees no ray of hope of escaping from the present misery lacks the enthusiasm and is always cheerless. When is enthusiasm created ? When one breathes in an atmosphere where one is sore of getting the legitimate reward for one's labours, only then one feels enriched by enthusiasm and inspiration

If the teachers in school start commenting, "Oh ! This here, is a Mahar boy. How did he secure the first position in his class ? What business has he to stand first in the class ? Only the Brahmins are entitled to secure the first position." Now what enthusiasm, what inspiration, what hope can the Mahar boy have in these circumstances ? How will he advance in life and make progress ?

For inspiration and enthusiasm one must have a healthy and sound mind. Such a man is capable of surmounting all kinds of difficulties. He has confidence, courage and will to rise and that gives him the inspiration and enthusiasm.

Unfortunately, Hinduism which is founded on the ideologies of inequality and injustice leaves no room for the development of enthusiasm. So long as the Untouchables continue to slave under the yoke of Hinduism, a diabolical

creed—they can have no hope, no inspiration, no enthusiasm for better life. They might produce no more than a few hundred clerks—poor clerks who will do nothing excepting filling their bellies. What else can they do ? Then we shall need superclerks to protect them from injustices and various kinds of atrocities. Common masses of the untouchables will not gain anything. The scheduled castes can never feel enthusiastic about and derive inspiration from Hinduism.

Man derives inspiration if his mind is free to develop. You know the proprietors of mills. They appoint managers in the mills who extract work from the labour, The proprietors remain so much engrossed in their work that they have little time to develop their minds. While they accumulate wealth and become economic giants they remain mental dwarfs. We have started this movement to develop and educate our minds.

If you excuse me for citing my own experience, I may tell you how I got my education. Owing to the poverty I used to attend school with nothing more than a loin cloth on my body. I could not get water to drink in the school. I had to go without water for many days. My mother instructed me to address the strangers with respect. There was in our family discipline or 'vinaya'. Accordingly, I used to address the post-man as post man mama'. There was a lady peon, Maratha by caste, in our school. Even my satchel was untouchable for her. When thirsty, I was not allowed to touch the tap myself. Untouchability was observed even in Elphinstone College, Bombay. What can be expected in this kind of circumstances ?

Untouchability cannot be removed by education alone. During the British regime I was a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. Lord Linlithgow was the viceroy. A certain amount of money was allocated for expenditure on general education. Out of this a sum of three lacs of rupees was sanctioned for Moslem University Aligarh and an equal amount for the Benares Hindu University. While talking to the Viceroy one day I raised this issue. I told the viceroy that a sum of Rs. 300,000 had been given to Aligarh Moslem University and an equal amount had been made available to Benares Hindu university. The untouchables are neither Hindus nor Moslems. But they are really more backward than either of these communities. An amount proportionate to their population should also be allotted to the Scheduled Castes people for their education." Lord Linlithgow asked me to give in writing whatever I wanted to say in this regard. I submitted a Memorandum. Europeans were generally sympathetic in their outlook. He agreed to my proposal and granted a sum of Rs. 300,000 for the Scheduled Castes. Now the question arose as to how to spend that money. Viceroy wanted this amount to be spent on the education of the girls belonging to the Scheduled Castes, and suggested, Boarding Houses be built for them.

If this money is spent in this manner to build Boarding Houses in order to make the illiterate girls belonging to the Scheduled Castes educated, I thought, soon we shall require money for providing them with good food, too. Poor as our people are, how shall they get these things for their daughters ?

From where will our people get money to bear the expenses on food in the Boarding Houses ? Our girls do not need any training in the art of cooking. What will be the result of this education and then the question of their marriages ?

Meanwhile government spent on other items but withheld the amount earmarked for the education of the Scheduled Castes. I went to Lord Linlithgow once again and had a straight forward talk on this topic. I put this question to the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, "Am I not better than 500 graduates ?" "Yes, of course, you are", replied Lord Linlithgow. Then I asked him, "Do you know the reason why I say so ?" He did not know. I had to convince the viceroy that a person who received education in a foreign university was as good as 500 graduates of the Indian Universities put together. I am personally equivalent to 500 graduates. My education is so thorough that I am capable of holding any office of the Govt. with confidence. I need such learned men who should be capable of holding the key position whence they should work in the most effective manner for the betterment of the community. If you really want to do something for the uplift of the untouchables you will have to produce such people as would be able to ameliorate their condition. Merely producing clerks will not do.

Lord Linlithgow agreed to my suggestion and the result was that 16 boys belonging to the Scheduled castes were sent abroad for higher education. Out of these sixteen, some took full advantage of this opportunity and others did not. They got only 'half-baked' and returned home. The

reason is that there exists no enthusiasm for the Scheduled Castes in Hinduism, though such an atmosphere exists for the Brahmins and other castes. Besides the lack of cheerful atmosphere, congenial for human development there is no equality in Hindu religion. Brahmin is considered to be superior to the Kshatriya and Kshatriya superior to Vaishya and Vaishya superior to Sudra. It is not based on equality of human beings. We do not know when we shall get rid of the degraded position in Hinduism.

I once went to see Gandhiji. Gandhiji told me that he believed in 'CHATURVARNA'. What kind of 'Chaturvana' I enquired, pointing towards my hand with the little finger in the bottom and thumb on top or this way—with the palm lying flat on the surface of the table and fingers lying side by side. What do you mean by the 'Chaturvarna'? Where does it begin and where does it end? I asked Gandhiji. Gandhiji could not reply in a satisfactory manner.

Besides the lack of congenial atmosphere there is also lack of equality among Hindus.

This religion and this social order has ruined us. But this is not going to stop here. This would ruin the Hindus themselves and ultimately India.

I do not accuse the Hindu religion in vain. This religion cannot save anybody. It has no life left in it.

Why has our country lost her freedom time and again? Why have we been subjected to foreign domination so often? It is because this country as a whole never stood against the enemy. It was always a small section of the

society and whoever overpowered it became the victor. This is mainly due to the pernicious caste system of the Hindus.

Second World War was fought in Europe during the period from 1939—45. The soldiers who were killed in the battles were immediately replaced by the fresh recruits. Nobody ever paused to say that the credit for winning the war should go to a particular community or section of the society. Whereas in our country in the past if all the Kshatriyas were done away with in the battle, there could be no mobilisation or recruitment according to the 'Chaturvana' since according to the abominable law, Kshatriyas and Kshatriyas alone were entitled to fight. This is what has been happening in the past. This is why country has been enslaved many times. Had the right to bear arms not been denied to us, this country would never have lost her freedom nor could any invader had succeeded in conquering her.

Hinduism cannot save anybody. There is no salvation for anybody in Hinduism. According to the tenets of Hinduism only the so-called higher castes have been benefited. There is no exaggeration in my statement. What have the Shudras or the Untouchables gained?

As soon as the wife of a Brahmin woman conceives, she thinks of the High Court whether any post of a Judge has fallen vacant but when our woman becomes pregnant she cannot think of anything better than a sweeper's post under the Municipal Committee.

This deplorable situation exists only because Hinduism has inculcated this kind of ambitions in the former and

degradation in the latter. No change in our status can be expected if we continue to be slaves of Hinduism. If we have any hope it is by renouncing the Hinduism and following the path of the Buddha. Let us now consider the principles of Buddhism.

The fundamental principle of Buddhism is equality. Of all the Bhikkhus who joined the Order in the time of Lord Buddha about 75% of the Bhikkhus belonged to the Brahmin caste and the remaining 25% were the Shudras. Even then Buddhism was called the religion of the Shudras.

“O’ Bhikkhus, you belong to different castes and have come from various lands. Just as the great rivers when they have fallen into the great ocean lose their identity just so ‘O’ brethren, do these four castes, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras when they begin to follow the doctrine and discipline as propounded by the Tathagatta, they renounce different names of castes and rank and become members of one and the same society.” These are the words of Buddha.

There was only one man who raised his voice against the separatism and untouchability and that was Lord Buddha.

In the beginning Lord Buddha got only ten or twelve Bhikkhus. Out of these nine or ten were Shudras. This is evident from the auto-biographical ‘gathas’ of the Bhikkhus entitled as ‘Thera Gatha and Therigatha’. Their writings bear testimony to the fact that Buddhism is the only religion which does not recognise caste and affords full scope for progress.

My political opponents who observe my political activities very keenly say that I am a cunning fox. They say that I want to extract as many concessions for the Scheduled Castes as it is possible to get. On the other hand there are some who wonder as to why I have taken so long to take a decision in regard to the change of religion. “What have you been doing all these years?” They ask. The only reply I can give is this that the question of religion is the most difficult and a very serious question. It is a matter of enormous responsibility, really, to educate the people in regard to the merits of this religion and to inculcate in the people the habit of behaving according to the principles of the ‘Dhamma’. There is no other person who had to shoulder so grave a responsibility, nor do I think will anybody be called upon to shoulder such a heavy responsibility in future. If I am allowed some more years to live, I shall bring the task that I have undertaken today to a successful end.

Some people will naturally ask the question. “What will the untouchables gain by embracing Buddhism?” Suffice this to say that it is a worthless question.

Is religion necessary for the well to do? No perhaps, not.

Those who are holding high positions in life, have nice bungalows to live in, money to buy all comforts of life and servants to attend on them, perhaps, have little use for religion.

This reminds me of my German Professor Winternilz.

“The Watergang Rabelan Depth” was the book which

he recommended and by which I was much inspired. "It is only the poor" he said, "who need religion." Hope is the spring of action in life. Religion affords this hope. Therefore, mankind finds solace in the religion, and that is why the poor cling to religion.

When Christianity made its way into Europe, the situation in and around Rome was appalling. People did not get enough food to fill their bellies. They lived in abject poverty. But do you know who were the people who extended a sympathetic response to call of Christianity when it penetrated into Rome. Not those who were convinced of its spirituality but those miserable poor and oppressed people for whom porridge, distributed free of cost, served as a meal. People who worked as slaves and serfs for their Roman masters; the poor and the oppressed became converts to Christianity. Mr. Gibbon, the renowned historian and author of the 'Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire' scornfully branded Christianity as a religion of the poor and the beggars. Mr. Gibbon is not alive today. He would have been shocked to see the whole of Europe engulfed by Christianity.

Some people, here in India, will no doubt say that this Buddhism is the religion of the Untouchables. They will malign and pass disparaging remarks. Brahmins in his time, did not spare even Lord Buddha irreverently they addressed him as "O Gautama" or 'Bho-Gautama'. They wanted to show disrespect towards him. They wanted to insult him.

In spite of all the vilifications and the abuses showered on this religion Buddhism has cultivated better acquaintance

in Europe and America than Hinduism. You will be surprised to know that if the images of Rama, Krishna, Shankra or any other Hindu diety are kept for sale or export, nobody would care to buy them. But, instead if the images of Buddha are kept in the morning for sale none will be found in the evening.

Inside India much has been done to publicise the Hinduism. It is time they went outside and told the world of what they have. IF THERE IS ANY NAME WHICH IS KNOWN OUTSIDE INDIA, WHICH IS POPULAR AND REVERRED, IT IS NOT THE NAME OF RAMA OR KRISHNA, BUT IT IS THE NAME OF THE BUDDHA. NO BODY KNOWS RAMA OR KRISHNA OUTSIDE INDIA. There is no reason why this religion of ours should not spread throughout the world. Much will depend on how we live it.

We shall go ahead undauntedly on the path we have chosen. We have found a new way to life and we shall follow it. This path leads to progress.

In fact this is not something new nor have we imported it from outside. Buddhism is the religion of this country. It is more than two thousand years old. I feel sorry for the fact that I did not embrace this religion earlier.

The teachings of the Buddha are eternal but even than Buddha did not proclaim them to be infalliable. The religion of Buddha has the capacity to change according to times a quality which no other religion can claim to have.

Main reason for the abolition of Buddhism in India was the invasion of India by the Moslems. Thousands of images

were mutilated and destroyed, Viharas were desecrated and millions of Bhikkhus were massacred. Terrified by these ghastly events, the Bhikkhus fled to the adjoining countries. Some went to Tibet; some went to China: they spread throughout the world. The result was that the Bhikkhus disappeared from this country. The followers of Dhamma are required to protect the Dhamma in the times of crisis. When the Greek King Minander came to the North Western Province, he had established his reputation as an expert on the religious affairs. He had defeated the Brahmins many a time during the religious discussions and they could not satisfy the learned king. Attracted by the teachings of the Buddha, he invited the Bhikkhus and the scholars to his court, but nobody was prepared to cross swords with the King Minander. He instructed his courtier to bring any Bhikkhu who preached the Dhamma. The Bhikkhus approached Nagasen, a learned and versatile Bhikkhu to discuss the religion of Buddha. He was a Bhikkhu of outstanding learning and ability. The catechistic discussions between the King Minander and Bhikkhu Nagasen were collected and have been preserved in the form of a book, known by the name of 'Milind Panha'. In this book a question is asked.

"What brings about the ruination of a religion?" Explaining the reason for the downfall of religion, Nagsena replied, "There are three reasons for the downfall of the religion; A religion is foredoomed to ruin, if

- (i) its basic principles are not cogent, that is if its foundation is weak;
- (ii) if its preachers and missionaries are not learned

enough to surpass the rival preachers and missionaries; and

- (iii) if the religion and its principles do not get translated into the temples and other modes of worship popular among the common people."

True religion never dies. The religion which is not based on truth, on justice and on strong principles, does not last long. It has only a temporary existence. With the passage of time it goes on deteriorating and ultimately it withers away. Secondly if there is nobody to preach the Dhamma, it does not make any progress and ultimately becomes extinct. The intellectuals and the learned people must discuss religion in their everyday life. If there are no scholars well read in the scriptures of the Dhamma to answer the critics or the opponents of Dhamma, even in that case the religion dies away. Dhamma and its principles are for the learned to expound while the laymen or the 'Upasakas' can go to the temples and Viharas where they can learn the teaching of the Dhamma and worship.

You must bear in mind the following four facts in respect of Buddhism. You must never think that the teachings of Buddhism are of temporary value and are not likely to last longer. Even after a lapse of 2500 years the world respects the teachings of the Buddha. There are as many as 2000 institutions of the followers of Buddhism in the United States of America. In England a Buddha temple has been built at a cost of Rs. 300,000. There are some 3000 or 4000 institutions founded in the name of Buddha in Germany.

The principles and teachings of Gautam Buddha are

eternal but inspite of this fact Buddha did not claim any status for himself, nor did he claim his principles to be infalliable. He never claimed divinty for his self or for his religion. Buddha did not say that he was the son of God or the last prophet-messenger of God. On the contrary he said, "My father and my mother are ordinary mortals".

Now what is the basis of Buddhism? If you study carefully, you will see that Buddhism is based on reason. There is an element of flexibility inherent in it which is not to be found in any other religion.

Only those people should embrace the religion who earnestly believe in it. If they do not believe in it or it does not appeal to them, they should not embrace it. For such high principles are not to be found in any other religion. There is a world of difference between this religion and other religions of the world. Main principles of Buddhism form no part of thiestic religions. According to other religions God created the world, this earth and thereafter he created heaven, air, moon and other planets. That means he has created, also the stone in the bladder. God has done all that was required to be done and now there remains nothing for us to do. All that we are required to do is, just to sing the praises of Almighty God. This does not appeal to rational man today.

According to Christianity, there will be a Day of Judgement and everything will depend on the judgement that day. One can be sent to heaven or hell on that day.

Buddhism denies the existence of God and soul. The real basis of Buddhism is rational way to eradicate suffering. "There is," Buddhism said, "suffering in the world-suffering

wide-spread". 90 percent people are afflicted with suffering or misery of some kind or the other. The main object of Buddhism is to emancipate the suffering humanity. The question arises, then what is the use of Das Kapital? I believe that Karl Marx was far behind Buddha, for he did not say anything that had not been brought to light by the Buddha himself, some two thousand and four hundred year before Marx was born.

I see so many Communists friends here. I see one amongst the reporters. I ask them, in what way was Buddha's aim different from that of Marx, Whatever Buddha said was simple and the path he showed was straight. Buddhism is an all-comprehensive religion.

Brothers and Sisters, I have said whatever there was to be said. This is the best religion in the world and there can be absolutely no doubt about it. There are certain things which are inimical to enthusiasm so necessary for human progress. Thousands of years have gone past and not a single intellectual has been born among us. I would like to tell you some of the reminiscence of my childhood. There was a Maratha women employed in my school, She was herself quite illiterate but observed untouchability and avoided touching me. One day, I remember, I was very thirsty. I was not allowed to touch the water-tap. I told my master that I wanted to drink water, He called the peon and asked him to turn the tap for me. So the peon turned on the tap and I drank water. Whenever the peon was absent I had to go without water, Thirsty, I had to return home and then only I could quench my thirst.

When I returned home after completion of my

education in America and Europe, I was offered the post of a District Judge. I was promised to be elevated to the High Court within three subsequent years. I declined the offer saying that I did not want those alluring ties. I feared that after getting into Govt. Service I would not be able to serve my people. Keeping this in view I kept myself away from Govt. Service.

With the education, intelligence, knowledge and experience that I have, it is not difficult for me to oppose or fight against any evil. But there is a mountain-colossal mountain of caste heirarchy : Vaishyas, Brahamins, Kshatryas sitting on our heads. The question before us is, how to topple it down and blast it. It is for this reason that I wanted to acquaint you fully with the religion of Buddha, I owe it as a duty, too

Some people say that Buddhism is on its death-bed or practically dead. If it is so, it is our duty to raise it to better status. We should act in a manner so as to enthuse, inspire respect, among other people. We may have a garden or a temple and arrange for discourses there.

I will do my best by writing books or by removing your doubts. All I wish today is that you should have faith in me and follow me. The trust you repose in me will not be used for personal gain and I shall endeavour to satisfy all your doubts.

A great responsibility has fallen on your shoulders too. Mahars should do nothing that will bring bad name. You must lead such a life that you may command respect. Don't think that this religion is like the dog-collar tied round your neck.

So far as Buddhism is concerned this country of ours has become a desert. Now it has fallen on you that you should endeavour to follow this religion sincerely and always keep in view the position it had once attained. If you do not do so, people will laugh at this conversion.

This religion can serve not only this country but the whole world. At this juncture in the world affairs, Buddhism is indispensable for world peace. You must pledge today that you, the followers of Buddha, will not only work to liberate yourself, but will try to elevate your country and the world in general.

I am reported to be against peace. This is not correct. I am for peace, But the peace which is based on justice not the peace of a grave-yard. So long as justice is not respected in the world there cannot be any peace. Buddhism and Buddhism alone can save the world.

This task which you have taken in hand is of immense responsibility. You have to labour hard. This thing you will have to bear in mind. Hitherto most of us have been interested only in our bread and butter. Don't be self-centred. Don't be selfish in your outlook.

We need money for the propagation of this great religion. I have no mind to ask for any monetary help from any foreign country,

You must resolve to contribute at least 1/20th of your income for the propagation of the Dhamma. I am to carry you all with me. Gautam Buddha used to carry on initiation ceremony himself. When it becomes unmanageable for one person he allows that work to be shared by other

competent person among his followers. You might have heard the name of one 'Yasha'. He was the son of a rich family. Yasha became his disciple and there were forty more men who followed him, Buddha told him, "My religion is for the good of many : for in the good of many lies the happiness for many. This is good in the beginning : this is good in the middle and this is good at the end." So, Brothers and Sisters this is my religion.

Buddha adopted the method which was most suitable in the circumstances obtaining then, for the propagation of his religion. Accordingly we, too, should adopt the method which is most suitable in the existing circumstances. There are no Bhikkus in this country to do this work. So every one of you has to take 'Diksha'. A Buddhist has the right to convert others to his faith, If a disruption comes at a later stage, we must have a provision in our sleeves to meet the situation. We must organise a huge machinery for the propagation of Dhamma. Every Buddhist has the right to initiate others. I make this announcement today. Go forth with the message of the Buddha. Go forth to liberate people.

[Speech delivered at Nagpur on 15th October, 1956]

PART THIRD

ON THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

Third Reading and Adoption of Constitution

Looking back on the work of the Constituent Assembly it will now be two years, eleven months and seven days since it first met on the 9th of December, 1946. During this period the Constituent Assembly has done a great deal of work. Out of these eleven sessions, six were spent in the Constituent Assembly and the

consideration of the Constitution of India. The Constituent Assembly has also done a great deal of work in the field of the Constitution of India. The Constituent Assembly has also done a great deal of work in the field of the Constitution of India.

Since August 1947, it has held 116 days for the consideration of the Draft Constitution. Coming to the Draft Constitution, the Constituent Assembly has done a great deal of work in the field of the Constitution of India. The Constituent Assembly has also done a great deal of work in the field of the Constitution of India.

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ON THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

Third Reading and adoption of Constitution

Looking back on the work of the Constituent Assembly it will now be two years, eleven months and seventeen days since it first met on the 9th of December, 1946. During this period the Constituent Assembly has altogether held eleven sessions. Out of these eleven sessions, the first six were spent in passing the Objectives, Resolution and the consideration of the Reports of Committees on Fundamental Rights, on Union Constitution, on Union Powers, on Provincial Constitution, on Minorities and on the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes. The seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth and the eleventh sessions were devoted to the consideration of the Draft Constitution. These eleven sessions of the Constituent Assembly have consumed 165 days. Out of these, the Assembly spent 114 days for the consideration of the Draft Constitution. Coming to the Drafting Committee, it was elected by the Constituent Assembly on 29th August 1947. It held its first meeting on 30th August. Since August 30th it sat for 141 days during which it was engaged in the preparation of the Draft Constitution. The Draft Constitution, as prepared by the Constitutional Adviser as a text for the Drafting Committee to work upon, consisted of 243 Articles and 13 Schedules. The first Draft Constitution as presented by the Drafting Committee to the Constituent Assembly contained 315 Articles and 8 Schedules.

At the end of the consideration stage, the number of Articles in the Draft Constitution increased to 386. In its final form, the Draft Constitution contains 395 Articles and 8 Schedules. The total number of amendments to the Draft Constitution tabled was approximately 7,635. Of them, the total number of amendments actually moved in the house were 2,473.

I mention these facts because at one stage it was being said that the Assembly had taken too long a time to finish its work, that it was going on leisurely and wasting public money. It was said to be a case of Nero fiddling while Rome was burning. Is there any justification for this complaint? Let us note the time consumed by Constituent Assemblies in other countries appointed for framing their Constitutions. To take a few illustrations. The American Convention met on May 25th, 1787 and completed its work on September 17, 1787 i.e. within four months. The Constitutional convention of Canada met on the 10th October 1864 and the Constitution was passed into law in March 1867 involving a period of two years and five months. The Australian Constitutional Convention assembled in March 1891 and the Constitution became law on the 9th July 1900, consuming a period of nine years. The South African Convention met in October 1908 and the Constitution became law on the 20th September 1909 involving one year's labour. It is true that we have taken more time than what the American or South African Conventions did. But we have not taken more time than the Canadian Convention and much less than the Australian Convention. In making comparisons on the basis of time consumed two things must:

be remembered. One is that Constitutions of America, Canada, South Africa and Australia are much smaller than ours. Our Constitution as I said contains 395 Articles while American has just seven Articles, the first four of which are divided into sections which total up to 21, the Canadian has 147, Australian 128 and South African 153 sections. The second thing to be remembered is that the makers of the Constitutions of America, Canada, Australia and South Africa did not have to face the problem of amendments. They were passed as moved. On the other hand, this Constituent Assembly had to deal with as many as 2,473 amendments. Having regard to these facts the charge of dilatoriness seems to me quite unfounded and this Assembly may well congratulate itself for having accomplished so formidable a task in so short a time.

Turning to the quality of the work done by the Drafting Committee, Mr. Naziruddin Ahmed felt it his duty to condemn it outright. In his opinion, the work done by the Drafting Committee is not only not worthy of commendation, but is positively below par. Everybody has a right to have his opinion about the work done by the Drafting Committee and Mr. Naziruddin is welcome to have his own. Mr. Naziruddin Ahmed thinks of himself as a man of greater talents than any member of the Drafting Committee. The Drafting Committee does not wish to challenge his claim. On the other hand, the Drafting Committee would have welcomed him in their midst if the Assembly had thought him worthy of being appointed to it.

If he had no place in the making of the Constitution it is certainly not the fault of the Drafting Committee.

Mr. Naziruddin Ahmed has coined a new name for the Drafting Committee evidently to show his contempt for it. He calls it a Drifting Committee. Mr. Naziruddin must no doubt be pleased with his hit. But he evidently does not know that there is a difference between drift without mastery and drift with mastery. If the Drafting Committee was drifting, it was never without mastery over the situation. It was not merely angling with the off chance of catching a fish. It was searching in known waters to find the fish it was after. To be in search of something better is not the same as drifting. Although Mr. Naziruddin Ahmed did not mean it as a compliment to the Drafting Committee, I take it as a compliment to the Drafting Committee. The Drafting Committee would have been guilty of gross dereliction of duty and of a false sense of dignity if it had not shown the honesty and the courage to withdraw the amendments which it thought faulty and substitute what it thought was better. If it is a mistake, I am glad the Drafting Committee did not fight shy of admitting such mistakes and coming forward to correct them.

I am glad to find that with the exception of a solitary member, there is a general consensus of appreciation from members of the Constituent Assembly of the work done by the Drafting Committee. I am sure the Drafting Committee feels happy to find this spontaneous recognition of its labours expressed in such generous terms. As to the compliments that have been showered upon me both by the members of Assembly as well as by my colleagues of the Drafting Committee, I feel so overwhelmed that I cannot find adequate words to express fully my gratitude to them.

I came into the Constituent Assembly with no greater aspiration than to safeguard the interests of the Scheduled Castes. I had not the remotest idea that I would be called upon to undertake more responsible functions. I was therefore greatly surprised when the Assembly elected me to the Drafting Committee. I was more than surprised when the Drafting Committee elected me to be its Chairman. There were in the Drafting Committee men bigger, better and more competent than myself, such as my friend Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer. I am grateful to the Constituent Assembly and the Drafting Committee for reposing in me so much trust and confidence and to have chosen me as their instrument and given me this opportunity of serving the country.

The credit that is given to me does not really belong to me. It belongs partly to Sir B. N. Rau, the Constitutional Adviser to the Constituent Assembly who prepared a rough draft of the Constitution for the consideration of the Drafting Committee. A part of the credit must go to the members of the Drafting Committee who, as I have said, have sat for 141 days and without whose ingenuity to devise new formulae and capacity to tolerate and to accommodate different points of view. The task of framing the Constitution could not have come to so successful a conclusion. Much greater share of the credit must go to Mr. S. N. Mukerjee, the Chief Draftsman of the Constitution. His ability to put the most intricate proposals in the simplest and clearest legal form can rarely be equalled, nor his capacity for hard work. He has been an acquisition to the Assembly. Without his help, this Assembly would have taken many

more years to finalise the Constitution. I must not omit to mention the members of the staff working under Mr. Mukerjee. For, I know how hard they have worked and how long they have toiled sometimes even beyond midnight. I want to thank them all for their effort and their co-operation.

The task of the Drafting Committee would have been a very difficult one if this Constituent Assembly had been merely a motley crowd, a tassellated pavement without cement, a black stone here and a white stone there-in which each member or each group was a law unto itself. There would have been nothing but chaos. This possibility of chaos was reduced to nil by the existence of the Congress party inside the Assembly which brought into its proceedings a sense of order and discipline. It is because of the discipline of the Congress Party that the Drafting Committee was able to pilot the Constitution in the Assembly with the sure knowledge as to the fate of each Article and each amendment. The Congress Party is, therefore, entitled to all the credit for the smooth sailing of the Draft Constitution in the Assembly.

The proceedings of this Constituent Assembly would have been very dull if all members had yielded to the rule of party discipline. Party discipline, in all its rigidity would have converted this Assembly into a gathering of yesmen. Fortunately, there were rebels. They were Mr. Kamath, Dr. P. S. Deshmukh, Mr. Sidwa, Prof. Saxena and Pandit Thakurdas Bhargava. Along with them were Prof. K. T. Shah and Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru. The

points they raised were mostly ideological, That I was not prepared to accept their suggestions, does not diminish the value of their suggestions nor lessen the service they have rendered to the Assembly in enlivening its proceedings. I am grateful to them. But for them, I would not have had the opportunity which I got for expounding the principles underlying the Constitution which was more important than the mere mechanical work of passing the Constitution.

Finally I must thank you Mr. President for the way in which you have conducted the proceedings of this Assembly. The courtesy and the consideration which you have shown to the members of the Assembly can never be forgotten by those who have taken part in the proceedings of this Assembly. There were occasions when the amendments of the Drafting Committee were sought to be barred on grounds purely technical in their nature. There were very anxious moments for me. I am, therefore, specially grateful to you for not permitting legalism to defeat the work of constitution-making.

As much defence as could be offered to the Constitution has been offered by my friends like Sir AlladiKrishanaswamy Ayyar and Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari.

I shall not therefore enter into the merits of the Constitution. However good a Constitution may be, it is sure to turn out to be bad because those who are called to work it, happen to be a bad lot. However bad a Constitution may be, it may turn out to be good if those who are called to work it, happen to be a good lot. The working of a Constitution

does not depend wholly upon the nature of the Constitution. The Constitution can provide only the organs of State such as the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary. The factors on which the working of those organs of the State depend are the people and the political parties they will set up as their instruments to carry out their wishes and their politics. Who can say how the people of India and their parties will behave? Will they uphold constitutional methods of achieving their purposes or will they prefer revolutionary methods of achieving them? If they adopt the revolutionary methods, however good the Constitution is, it requires no prophet to say that it will fail. It is, therefore, futile to pass any judgement upon the Constitution without reference to the part which the people of India and their parties are likely to play.

The condemnation of the Constitution largely comes from two quarters, the Communist Party and the Socialist Party. Why do they condemn Constitution? Is it because it is really a bad Constitution? Not, at all. The Communist Party wants a Constitution based upon the principle of the Dictatorship of Proletariate. They condemn the Constitution because it is based upon Parliamentary democracy. The Socialists want two things. The first thing they want is that if they come in power, the Constitution must give them the freedom to nationalize or socialize all private property without payment of compensation. The second thing that the Socialists want is that the Fundamental Rights mentioned in the Constitution must be absolute and without any limitations so that if their Party fails to come into power, they would have the unfettered freedom not merely to

criticize but also to overthrow the state.

These are the main grounds on which the Constitution is being condemned, I do not say that the principle of Parliamentary democracy is the only ideal form of political democracy. I do not say that the principle of no acquisition of private property without compensation is so sacrosanct that there can be no departure from it. I do not say that Fundamental Rights can never be absolute and limitations set upon them can never be lifted. What I do say is that the principles embodied in the Constitution are the views of the present generation or if you think this to be an over-statement, I say they are the views of the members of the Constituent Assembly. Why blame the Drafting Committee for embodying them in the Constitution? I say why blame even the members of the Constituent Assembly? Jefferson, the great American statesman who played so great a part in the making of the American Constitution, has expressed some very weighty views which makers of Constitution can never afford to ignore. In one place, he has said :—

“We may consider each generation as a distinct nation, with a right, by the will of the majority to bind themselves, but non to bind the succeeding generation, more than the inhabitants of another country.”

In another place, he has said :—

“The idea that institutions established for the use of the nation cannot be touched or modified, even to make them answer their end, because of

rights gratuitously supposed in those employed to manage them in the trust for the public, may perhaps be a salutary provision against the abuses of a monarch, but is most absurd against the nation itself. Yet our lawyers and priests generally inculcate this doctrine, and suppose that preceding generations held the earth more freely than we do : had a right to impose laws on us unalterable by ourselves, and that we in the like manner, can make laws and impose burdens on future generations, which they will have no right to alter ; in fine, that the earth belongs to the dead and not the living.”

I admit that what Jefferson has said is not merely true, but is absolutely true. There can be no question about it. Had the Constituent Assembly departed from this principle laid down by Jefferson It would certainly be liable to blame even to condemnation. But I ask, has it? Quite the contrary. One has only to examine the provision relating to the amendment to the Constitution, The Assembly has not only refrained from putting a seal of finality and infallibility upon this Constitution by denying to the people the right to amend the Constitution as in Canada or by making the amendment of the Constitution subject to the fulfilment of extraordinary terms and conditions as in America or Australia, but has provided a most facile procedure for amending the Constitution. I challenge any of the critics of the Constitution to prove that any Constituent Assembly anywhere in the world has in the circumstances in which this country finds itself, provided

such a facile procedure for the amendment of the Constitution. If those who are dissatisfied with the Constitution cannot obtain even a two thirds majority in the Parliament elected on adult franchise in their favour, their dissatisfaction with the Constitution cannot be deemed to be shared by the general public.

There is only one point of constitutional importance to which I propose to make a reference. A serious complaint is made on the ground that there is too much of centralizations and that the States have been reduced to Municipalities. It is clear that this view is not only an exaggeration, but is also founded on a misunderstanding of what exactly the Constitution contrives to do. As to the relation between the Centre and the States, it is necessary to bear in mind the fundamental principle on which it rests. The basic principle of Federalism is that the Legislative and Executive authority is partitioned between the Centre and the States not by any law to be made by the Centre but by the Constitution itself. This is what Constitution does. The States under our Constitution are in no way dependent upon the Centre for their legislative or executive authority. The Centre and the States are co-equal in this matter. It is difficult to say how such a Constitution can be called centralism. It may be that the Constitution assigns to the Centre too large a field for the operation of its legislative and executive authority than is to be found in any other federal Constitution. It may be that the residuary powers are given to the Centre and not to the States. But these features do not form the essence of federalism. The chief mark of federalism as

I said lies in the partition of the legislative and executive authority between the Centre and the Units by the Constitution. This is the principle embodied in our Constitution. There can be no mistake about it. It is, therefore, wrong to say that the States have been placed under the Centre. Centre cannot by its own will alter the boundary of that partition, nor can the Judiciary. For as has been well said :—

“Courts may modify, they cannot replace, They can revise earlier interpretations as new arguments, new points of view are presented; They can shift the dividing line in marginal cases, but there are barriers, they cannot pass; definite assignments of power they cannot reallocate. They can give a broadening construction of existing powers, but they cannot assign to one authority powers explicitly granted to another.

The first charge of centralisation defeating federalism must therefore fall.

The second charge is that the Centre has been given the power to override the States. This charge must be admitted. But before condemning the Constitution for containing such overriding powers, certain considerations must be borne in mind. The first is that these overriding powers do not form the normal features of the Constitution, Their use and operation are expressly confined to emergencies only. The second consideration is, could we avoid giving overriding powers to the Centre when an emergency has arisen? Those who do not admit the justification for such overriding powers to the Centre even in an emer-

gency do not seem to have a clear idea of the problem which lies at the root of the matter. The problem is clearly set out by a writer in that well-known magazine, 'The Round Table', in its issue of December 1935 that I offer no apology for quoting the following extract from it. Says the writer :—

"Political systems are a complex of rights and duties resting ultimately on the question, to whom, or to what authority, does the citizen owe allegiance. In normal affairs the question is not present, for the law works smoothly, and a man goes about his business obeying one authority in this set of matters and another authority in that. But in a moment of crisis, a conflict of claims may arise, and it is then apparent that ultimate allegiance cannot be divided. The issue of allegiance cannot be determined in the last resort by a juristic interpretation of statutes. The law must conform to the facts of so much the worse for the law. When all formalism is stripped away, the bare question is, what authority commands the residual loyalty of the citizen. Is it the Centre or the Constituent States?"

The solution of this problem depends upon one's answer to this question which is the crux of the problem. There can be no doubts that in the opinion of the vast majority of the people, the residual loyalty of the citizen in any emergency must be to the Centre and not to the Constituent States. For it is only the Centre which can work for a common end and for the general interests of

the country as a whole. Herein lies the justification for giving to the Centre certain overriding powers to be used in an emergency. And after all what is the obligation imposed upon the Constituent States by these emergency powers? No more than this that in an emergency, they should take into consideration along side their own local interest, the opinion and interests of the nation as a whole. Only those who have not understood the problem, can complain against it.

Here I could have ended. But my mind is so full of the future of our country that I feel I ought to take this occasion to give expression to some of my reflections thereon. **On 26th January 1950, India will be an Independent country. What would happen to her Independence? Will she maintain her independence or will she lose it again? This is the first thought that comes to my mind. It is not that India was never an independent country. The point is that she once lost the independence she had. Will she lose it a second time? It is this thought which makes me most anxious for the future. What perturbs me greatly is the fact that not only India has once before lost her independence, but she lost it by the treachery of some of her own people. In the invasion of Sind by Mohammed-Bin-Kasim, the military commanders of King Dahar accepted bribes from the agents of Mohammed-Bin-Kasim and refused to fight on the side of their King. It was Jaichand who invited Moham-**

med Ghoris to invade India and fight against Prithvi Raj and promised him the help of himself and the Solanki Kings. When Shivaji was fighting for the liberation of Hindus, the other Maratha noblemen and the Rajput Kings were fighting the battle on the side of Moghul Emperors. When the British were trying to destroy the Sikh Rulers, Gulab Singh their principal commander sat silent and did not help to save the Sikh kingdom. In 1857, when a large part of India had declared a war of independence against the British, the Sikhs stood and watched the event as silent spectators.

Will history repeat itself? It is this thought which fills me with anxiety. This anxiety is deepened by the realization of the fact that in addition to our old enemies in the form of castes and creeds we are going to have many political parties with diverse and opposing political creeds. Will Indians place the country above creed or will they place creed above country? I do not know. But this much is certain that if the parties place creed above country, our independence will be put in jeopardy a second time and probably be lost for ever. This eventuality we must all resolutely guard against. We must be determined to defend our independence with the last drop of our blood.

On the 26th of January 1950, India would

from that day would have a government of the people, by the people and for the people. The same thought comes to my mind. What would happen to her democratic Constitution? Will she be able to maintain it or will she lose it again. This is the second thought that comes to my mind and makes me as anxious as the first.

It is not that India did not know what is Democracy. There was a time when India was studded with Republics and where there were monarchies, they were either elected or limited. They were never absolute. It is not that India did not know Parliaments or Parliamentary Procedure. A study of the Buddhist Bhikshu Sanghas discloses that not only there were Parliaments—for the Sanghas were nothing but Parliaments—but the Sanghas knew and observed all the rules of Parliamentary procedure known to modern times. They had rules regarding seating arrangements, rules regarding Motions, Resolutions, Quorum, Whip, Counting of Votes, Voting by Ballot, Censure Motion, Regularization, **Res Judicata**, etc. Although these rules of Parliamentary Procedure were applied by the Buddha to the meetings of the Bhikshu Sangha, he must have borrowed them from the rules of the political Assemblies functioning in the country in his time.

This democratic system India lost. Will she lose it a second time? I do not know. But it is quite possible in a country like India—where democracy from its long disuse must be regarded as something quite new—there is danger of democracy giving place to dictator-

ship. It is quite possible for this new born democracy to retain its form but give place to dictatorship in fact. If there is a landslide, the danger of the second possibility becoming actuality is much greater.

If we wish to maintain democracy not merely in form but also in fact, what must we do? The first thing in my judgement we must do is to hold fast to constitutional methods of achieving our social and economic objectives. It means we must abandon the bloody methods of revolution. It means that we must abandon the method of civil disobedience, non-co-operation and satyagraha. When there was no way left for constitutional methods for achieving economic and social objectives, there was some justification for unconstitutional methods for achieving economic and social objectives. But where constitutional methods are open, there can be no justification for these unconstitutional methods. These methods are nothing but the Grammar of Anarchy and the sooner they are abandoned the better for us.

// The second thing we must do is to observe the caution which John Stuart Mill has given to all who are interested in the maintenance of democracy, namely, not "to lay their liberties at the feet of even a great man, or to trust him with powers which enable him to subvert their institutions".

There is nothing wrong in being grateful to great men who have rendered life-long services to the country. But there are limits to gratefulness. As has been well said by

the Irish Patriot Daniel O'Connell, "no man can be grateful at the cost of his honour, no woman can be grateful at the cost of her chastity and no nation can be grateful at the cost of its liberty." This caution is far more necessary in the case of India than in the case of any other country. For in India, 'Bhakti' or what may be called the path of devotion or hero-worship, plays a part in its politics unequalled in magnitude by the part it plays in the politics of any other part of the world. 'Bhakti' in religion may be a road to the salvation of the soul. But in politics, 'Bhakti' or hero-worship is a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship.

// The third thing we must do is not to be content with mere political democracy. We must make our political democracy a social democracy as well. Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy. What does social democracy mean? It means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life. These principles of liberty, equality and fraternity are not to be treated as separate items in a trinity. They form a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy. Liberty cannot be divorced from equality, equality cannot be divorced from liberty. Nor can liberty and equality be divorced from fraternity. Without equality liberty, would produce the supermacy of the few over the many. Equality without liberty would kill individual initiative. Without fraternity, liberty and equality could not become a natural course of things. It would require a const-

able to enforce them. We must begin by acknowledging the fact that there is complete absence of two things in Indian Society. (One of these is equality. On the social plane we have in India a society based on the principle of graded inequality which means elevation for some and degradation for others. On the economic plane, we have a society in which there are some who have immense wealth as against many who live in abject poverty.) On the 26th January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognising the principle of one man one vote and one vote one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value. How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this Assembly has so laboriously built up.

The second thing we are wanting in is recognition of the principle of fraternity. What does fraternity mean? Fraternity means a sense of common brotherhood of all Indians, all Indians being one people. It is the principle which gives unity and solidarity to social life. It is a difficult thing to achieve. How difficult it is, can be realized from the story related by James Bryce in his volume on

American Commonwealth about the United States of America. The story is—I propose to recount it in the words of Bryce himself that :—

“Some years ago the American Protestant Episcopal Church was occupied at its triennial Convention in revising its liturgy. It was thought desirable to introduce among the short sentence Papers of prayers, a prayer for the whole people, and an eminent New England divine proposed the words “O Lord, bless our Nation.” Accepted one afternoon, on the spur of the moment, the sentence was brought up next day for reconsideration, when so many objections were raised by the laity to the word “nation”, as importing too definite a recognition of national unity, that it was dropped, and instead there were adopted the words “O Lord, bless these United States”.

There was so little solidarity in the U.S.A. at the time when this incident occurred that the people of America did not think that they were a nation. If the people of the United States could not feel that they were a nation, how difficult it is for Indians to think that they are a nation. I remember the days when politically-minded Indians resented the expression the people of India”. They preferred the expression “The Indian nation”. **I am of opinion that in believing that we are a nation, we are cherishing a great delusion. How can people divided into several thousands of castes be a nation? The sooner we realize that we are not as yet a nation in the social and psychological sense of**

the word, the better for us. For then only we shall realize the necessity of becoming a nation and seriously think of ways and means of realizing the goal. The realization of this goal is going to be very difficult, far more difficult than it has been in the United States. The United States has no caste problem. In India there are castes. These castes are anti-national; In the first place because they bring about separation in social life. They are anti-national also because they generate jealousy and antipathy between caste and caste. But we must overcome all these difficulties if we wish to become a nation in reality. For fraternity can be a fact only when there is a nation. Without fraternity, equality and liberty will be no deeper than coats of paint.

These are my reflections about the tasks that lie ahead of us. They may not be very pleasant to some. But there can be no gainsaying that political power in this country has too long been the monopoly of a few and the many are not only beasts of burden, but also beasts of prey. This monopoly has not merely deprived them of their chance of betterment, it has sapped them of what may be called the significance of life. Those down-trodden classes are tired of being governed. They are impatient to govern themselves. This urge for self-realization in the down-trodden classes must not be allowed to devolve into a class struggle or class war. It would lead to a division of the House. That would indeed be a day of disaster. For, as has been well said by Abraham Lincoln. "a House divided against itself cannot stand very long." Therefore, the sooner room is made for the realization of their aspiration, the better for the few, the better for the country, the better for the main-

tenance of its independence and the better for the continuance its democratic structure. This can only be done by the establishment of equality and fraternity in all spheres of life. That is why I have laid so much stress on them.

I do not wish to weary the House any further. Independence is no doubt a matter of joy. But let us not forget that this independence has thrown on us great responsibilities. **By independence, we have lost the excuse of blaming the British for anything going wrong. If here after things go wrong we will have nobody to blame except ourselves. There is great danger of things going wrong. Times are fast changing. People including our own are being moved by new ideologies. They are getting tired of Government by the people. They are prepared to have Government for the people and are indifferent whether it is Government of the people and by the people. If we wish to preserve the Constitution in which we have sought to enshrine the principle of Government of the people and by the people, let us resolve not to be tardy in the recognition of the evils that lie across our path and which induce people to prefer Government for the people to Government by the people, nor to be weak in our initiative to remove them. That is the only way to serve the country. I know of no better.**

[Speech delivered in the Constituent Assembly on 25th November, 1949].

ON THE FREQUENT AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. Deputy Chairman, the Bill which is placed before this House raises two issues and it is desirable that the two issues should be considered separately. The first issue relates to the merits of the Bill, whether this Bill should be regarded as a good Bill on its own merits : and the second issue is, the manner in which this Bill is being carried through Parliament. I shall say a few words on the merits of the Bill.

It is quite obvious that there is nothing new in this Bill. What the Bill seeks to do is to drop entry No. 33, in the Concurrent List and to substitute in place of that entry, the provisions contained in article 369 as they stand now, with a small addition that is export of Jute ; otherwise, there is really no fundamental change at all and it is a mere substitution. Looking at it from this point of view, I cannot see how there can be any objection to the Bill as proposed by the Honourable Minister-in-charge of it. The only kind of dispute that could arise would be whether the provisions of article 369 should be in the state List—List II—so that the states will have exclusive power or whether they should be placed in List I so that the Centre would have an exclusive power in dealing with these goods. The present position is this : According to the article 369 these

matters or these goods are treated as though they are entered in the Concurrent List. That is the present position. In the Concurrent List, both the Centre as well as the States have the power to legislate. Therefore, looking at the present position as defined in Article 369 and entry 33, we find that both of them place these matters in the Concurrent List. It cannot be that the States can complain that any jurisdiction which was vested in them by the Constitution is being taken away by this amending Bill. The position, as I say, remains exactly the same ; the only question is whether the legislative control vested in the Centre by article 369 which was vested only for five years and no more—should now be continued for an indefinite period. Speaking for myself, I feel that is a matter for the Administration to judge, whether the circumstances in which they are living now are so altered that the period of five years which was given to Parliament to legislate over these items should now be abrogated. On that point, speaking again for myself, I am quite prepared to submit to the decision of the Administration because they know far better than a Member of Parliament can hope to do. Therefore, Sir, so far as the merits of the Bill are concerned, I give my support to it.

The Hon. Minister in-charge while speaking on the Bill, made some reference to consultations with the States. I heard him say that he consulted the opposite departments in the various States and that the consultations, so far as I was able to judge from the observation that he made, was, if I may say so, somewhat perfunctory. I think that this is a very grave matter for the simple reason that this

Bill is not going to become law merely by the vote of the two Houses. The Bill will have to go through a further ceremony before it becomes law. In this connection, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon: Minister in charge to article 368, particularly to clause (c) of the Proviso which says: *Provided that if such amendment seeks to make any change in———(c) any of the Lists in the Seventh Schedule, * * * the amendment shall also require to be ratified by the Legislatures of not less than one half of the States specified in Parts A and B of the first schedule by resolutions to that effect passed by those Legislatures before the Bill making provision for such amendment is presented to the president for assent." Therefore, this is one of those amendments.....

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI : on a point of information. The first letter dated the 12th September, 1953 was addressed to all the State Governments and the second letter dated the 20th August, 1954 enclosing a copy of this letter was addressed to the chief Secretaries of all the States personally not to the opposite departments of the Commerce Ministry.

DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR : Well I am sorry, I perhaps made a wrong statement and I stand corrected, but] all the same I want to urge that my argument is very sound, for whatever may be the preliminaries that might have been negotiated between the Minister—incharge and the State Governments, the fact remains that the consent of the State by resolution will be necessary in order

friend has by courtesy and by discussion and by consultation already obtained the goodwill of the State Governments, the subsequent action by the State Governments, namely passing of resolutions, would have been a mere matter of form. But if they have not been satisfied with such consultations as the Minister has had, he may find that there is a hurdle which he may not be able to overcome. That is all I want to say.

Now I come to the manner in which the Government has been proceeding with the amendment of the Constitution. The Constitution is only about, I believe, four years old.

SHRI B. K. P. SINHA (Bihar) : Four years and seven months.

DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR : Well, not an adult yet—may not be a child, and in the four years and seven months of its life it has been amended three times : I believe this is the third amendment of the Constitution. I do not know of any Constitution in the world which has been amended so rapidly and, if I may say so, so rashly, by the Government in office.

Now, Sir, I would like, in order to illustrate my point, to place before the House the provisions in the Constitution of the United States of America and the provisions in the Constitution of Australia for the purpose of amending the Constitution. Later on I will show what difference there is between our Constitution and these two Constitutions in the matter of the amendment of the Constitution. In the Australian Constitution article

128 lays down this provision that the amending law shall be passed by both Houses by an absolute majority in each house. That is the first condition. Secondly it shall be submitted to the electors to obtain their decision upon the amending law passed by the two Houses by absolute majority. If the Houses are not unanimous in the proposed amendment then the Governor General is empowered to put the last proposed law for amendment to the electors for their decision. And then these are the conditions. If in a majority of the States a majority of the electors voting in favour to the proposed law and if a majority of all electors voting also approve of the proposed law, then and then only the proposed law shall become part of the Constitution on receiving the assent of the King. The conditions are that in the first place both Houses must pass the proposed law by absolute majority and if they do not agree, or are not unanimous then the power is given to the Governor-General to refer the matter to the electors. Even in the first case the matter must be referred to the electors and even then it is not merely by the majority of the electors voting in favour of the Bill but majority of the States, a majority of electors and a majority of all the electors voting must approve the Bill before the Constitution could be amended.

Now let us take the Constitution of the United States. In the Constitution of the United States, article 5 which deals with the amendment of the Constitution provides thus; "When two-thirds of both Houses propose an amendment then and then alone further actions could be taken." The first condition is that two-thirds of both

Houses must pass the amending Bill or two-thirds of the States may call their conventions, that is to say, meeting of the electors who may propose constitutional amendments as suggested by the State Government. Such amendment then will become law provided it is ratified by three fourths of the States or by the conventions in three-fourths of the States. I have taken these two Constitutions merely for the purpose of illustration. Many other provisions would be found in other Constitutions.

Now what is the basic principle underlying this provision relating to the amendment of the Constitution? It seems to me that a student who scrutinises these two articles relating to the amendment of the Constitution in Australia and America will find that there are two principles which underline any action relating to the amendment of the Constitution. The first is this that there must be notice to the people. The people must know that the Government is going to undertake the amendment of the Constitution. The second principle is that there must be consent of the voters either directly as in America or indirectly by the States by ratifying resolutions.

Now, Sir, is our Government observing these fundamental rules? It is quite true that our Constitution is a very fluid one. It is not as rigid, not half as rigid as the American Constitution or the Australian Constitution, and those who were in charge of framing the Constitution were fully conscious of the fact that the situation must be left fluid because it may be that circumstances would arise which would require amendment of the Constitution, and you cannot allow the Constitution to be rigid.

of social problems which are emergent, It was because of that it was proposed that the provisions contained in article 368 should suffice. We do not require, except in certain cases reference back to the States or reference back to the voters, **but I have not the least doubt in my mind that no one who had anything to do with the drafting of the Constitution ever thought that the Government would rush in on the spur of the moment to amend the Constitution without giving notice to the voters.** Notice to the voters, if I may submit, is a general principle of political life and party life. Even in England no party would undertake any piece of legislation which did not form part of its political programme for the election. Every party must have a mandate to do a certain thing. Without a mandate a party cannot do anything. You cannot take the voters by surprise and you cannot assume absolute authority to amend even the Constitution simply because you are elected. This is exactly what our Government has been doing. Simply because they have obtained a majority they assume that they have not only the power to make any law whatsoever relating to any of the entries which give them the power to make laws but they have also got the power, merely by being elected, even without notifying their intention to the people as such, to even amend the Constitution. Is the Constitution not different in any sense from an ordinary law? Is it merely a scrap of paper to be amended at the whim of anybody? There is a saying in Marathi—I do not know whether I can translate it into English properly—and that saying is a very good one and very appropriate. We say if the old woman dies it really

does not matter very much but what we are afraid of is that 'Yama' gets habituated to coming often and what we want to prevent is the Yama's invasion. It does not matter if the old woman is dead or snatched away. This is exactly what has been happening and I have been noticing the great contempt or the low regard or respect which the Government has for the Constitution. **You may amend the Constitution; nobody has any objection to amending it but certainly you ought to treat the Constitution on a somewhat different footing, a better footing, a special footing. Tell the people what you are intending to do and then you may do it. Otherwise it might become necessary even to amend article 368 in a manner so as to prevent the facile invasion of the Constitutional provisions. This is all that I wanted to say.**

(Delivered in Rajya Sabha on 15-9-1954)

INDIAN CONSTITUTION

On Directive Principles

Mr. Vice President, I see that there is a great deal of misunderstanding as to the real provisions in the Constitution in the minds of those members of the House who are interested in this kind of directive principles. It is quite possible that the misunderstanding or rather inadequate understanding is due to the fact that I myself in my opening speech in support of the motion that I made, did not refer to this aspect of the question. That was because not that I did not wish to place this matter before the House in a clear-cut fashion, but my speech had already become so large that I did not venture to make it more tiresome than I had already done; but I think it is desirable that I should take a few minutes of the House in order to explain what I regard as the fundamental position taken in the Constitution. As I stated, our Constitution as a piece of mechanism lays down what is called parliamentary democracy. By parliamentary democracy we mean "one man, one vote". We also mean that every Government shall be on the anvil, both in its daily affairs and also at the end of a certain period when the voters and the electorate will be given an opportunity to assess the work done by the Government. The reason why we have established political democracy in this Constitution is because we do not want to instal by

any means whatsoever a perpetual dictatorship of any particular body of people. While we have established political democracy it is also the desire that we should lay down as our ideal economic democracy.

We do not want merely to lay down a mechanism to enable people to come and capture power.

The Constitution also wishes to lay down an ideal before those who would be forming the Government. That ideal is economic democracy, whereby, so far as I am concerned I understand to mean, 'one man, one vote'. The question is; Have we got any fixed idea as to how we should bring about economic democracy? There are various ways in which people believe that economic democracy can be brought about; there are those who believe in individualism as the best form of economic democracy; there are those who believe in having a socialistic State as the best form of economic democracy; there are those who believe in the communistic idea as the most perfect form of economic democracy.

Now having regard to the fact that there are various ways by which economic democracy may be brought about, we have deliberately introduced in the language that we have used, in the directive principles, something which is not fixed or rigid. We have left enough room for people of different ways of thinking, with regard to the reaching of the ideal of economic democracy, to strive in their own way, to persuade the electorate that it is the best way of reaching economic democracy, the fullest opportunity to act in the way in which they want to act.

Sir, that is the reason why the language of the articles in Part IV is left in the manner in which this Drafting Committee thought it best to leave it. It is no use giving a fixed rigid form to something which is not rigid, which is fundamentally changing and must, having regard to the circumstances and the times, keep on changing. It is, therefore, no use saying that the directive principles have no value. In my judgement, the directive principles have a great value, for they lay down that our ideal is economic democracy. Because we did not want merely a parliamentary form of Government to be instituted through the various mechanisms provided in the Constitution, without any direction as to what our economic ideal, as to what our social order ought to be, we deliberately included the Directive Principles in our Constitution. I think, if the friends who are agitated over this question bear in mind what I have said just now that our object in framing this Constitution is really two fold :

- (i) to lay down the form of political democracy, and
- (ii) to lay down that our ideal is economic democracy and also to prescribe that every Government whatever it is in power, shall strive to bring about economic democracy, much of the misunderstanding under which most members are labouring will disappear.

My friend Mr. Tyagi made an appeal to me to remove the word 'strive' and phrases like that. I think he has mis-

judgement, is very important. We have used it because our intention is that even when there are circumstances which prevent the Government or which stand in the way of the Government giving effect to these Directive Principles, they shall, even under hard and unpropitious circumstances, always strive in the fulfilment of these directives. That is why we have used the word strive. Otherwise, it would be open for any Government to say that the circumstances are so bad, that the finances are so inadequate that we cannot even make an effort in the direction in which the Constitution asks us to go. I think that my friend Mr. Tyagi will see that the word 'strive' in this context is of great importance and it would be very wrong to delete it.

As to the rest of the amendments, I am afraid I have to oppose them.

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[Delivered in the Constituent Assembly on 19th Nov., 1948]