



Ambedkar Times

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DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

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Democracy and social justice are interrelated social processes. The one is incomplete in the absence of the other. Democracy offers freedom space to realize equality and experience fraternity. Equality and fraternity are the two essential ingredients of social justice, which achieves its true form with the addition of liberty. Thus the trinity of liberty, equality and fraternity constitutes the essence of social justice and the institution of democracy provides the requisite realm for its realization. Though many scholars' boasts of ancient origins of democracy in India but it would be prudent to argue that democracy achieves its roots in the real sense of the term with the adoption of the constitution in independent India. Bodhisattva Baba Saheb Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, Chairman of Constitutional Drafting Committee, worked very hard to incorporate various provisions for the realization of social justice in the Indian society. He was of the firm views that if social and economic parity remains an elusive to the multitude of poor and historically socially excluded people in the country, then the very purpose of having parliamentary democracy would not be served efficiently. He reiterated the seminal point during his engaging discussions at various important forums within and outside the Indian parliament that for social justice to prevail in the country, India needs effective participation of the downtrodden in all the different spheres of the society.

The demand for social justice was also raised at various platforms during the freedom struggle movement in colonial India. Ad-Movements in North and South India, Justice Party in South India, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia from Punjab, Swami Achhuta Nand Ji from Uttar Pradesh, Baba Ghasi Das Ji from Madhya Pradesh, Sri Narayana Guru from Kerala raised a consistent campaign for the prevalence of social justice in the Indian society. Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia presented a number of resolutions to the British Government for the removal of untouchability and special provisions for the inclusion of socially excluded sections of the society in the public realm of power and social domain. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia joined hands with Bodhisattva Baba Saheb Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar in his struggle for equal rights for the socially excluded people of India. When Baba Saheb Dr. Ambedkar spreaded its movement into the political agile lands of Punjab with the formation of Punjab chapter of Scheduled Castes Federation, there was a tremendous response from the grassroots. That was precisely the contributions of Ad Dharm movement which laid the foundation stone of social justice campaign in the state in the mid-1920s. But the irony of the matter is that even after more than six decades of India's independence, Dalits in the country are still subjected to various types of atrocities and social discriminations. Though the Indian state, while making the optimum use of various anti untouchability clauses of the constitution, is doing its best to bridle the monster of caste, but still is more needed to be done at the social level where the people should come forward to internalize the values of liberty, equality and fraternity in order to realize the true sense of democracy and social justice.

AWARENESS SEMINAR HELD AT AMBEDKAR BHAWAN

Caste Discrimination in Higher Educational Institutions Alarming Phenomenon - Advocate Pracha

We will not commit suicide; we will fight against injustice - Dr. Ritu Singh

Jalandhar (ATB): At Ambedkar Bhawan, Dr. Ambedkar Marg, Jalandhar, a discussion was held by Punjab Unit of 'Mission Save Constitution' on the topic of 'Caste Discrimination in Higher Educational Institutions' under the awareness programme, in which National Convener and Senior Advocate, Supreme Court, Mahmood Pracha, Dr. Ritu Singh, Assistant Professor, Delhi University and Convener Punjab Unit, Bhim Army Student Federation President Ashutosh Singh Boudh, Law Student, Delhi University participated.

Addressing the audience of intellectuals from across Punjab in the packed Ramabai Ambedkar Yadgar Hall of Ambedkar Bhawan, Ashutosh Singh said that By bowing to this historical place related to Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar ji, one realizes the truth that on 27 October 1951, the great thinker of the world, Dr. Ambedkar, while speaking on the subject of 'Future of Democracy in India', warned about the dangers to Indian democracy and expressed some doubts, they are clearly appearing today. Today, hero worship, direct interference of capitalists in educational and government institutions, excessive use of money and force in elections, corruption, oppression of Dalits, women, minorities and backward classes, lack of consciousness about the use of vote have turned Indian democracy into an authoritarian state.

Convener of the Punjab Unit, a loud voice against the caste discrimination and injustice being done to the backward, oppressed and poor students and teachers and a continuous struggle for many years, combative, intellectual scholar Dr. Ritu Singh in her address, alerted the audience and discussed in detail about the arbitrariness and scams done by the principal of Daulat Ram College, Delhi University and other administrative officials regarding the appointments of professors. It should be remembered that due to raising the voice in favor of the victimized teachers, the assistant professor of Delhi University Dr. Ritu Singh was removed from the post of assistant professor. Under the leadership of Senior Advocate of the Supreme Court, Dr. Mahmood Paracha. Ritu Singh fought a long struggle and won. But now it has become a symbol of struggle for the entire Dalits, backward and minorities.

Dr. Ritu became a 'role model' for the victims and oppressed. Rather than being victimized and frustrated by the unconstitutional diplomatic tactics of the humanitarians and fighting against them, rather than dying, Dr. Ritu inspired them to fight for their rights by drawing strength from the slogan of 'Swa Lakh Se EkLadaun'. She said that if speaking for the rights of the oppressed people and fighting for their rights is a crime, then I will commit this crime again and again. Dr. Ritu Singh said in a loud voice that I will not die, I will not commit suicide, I have to fight against injustices. At the last stage of the seminar Dr. G. C. Kaul conducting the stage, when requested Mahmood Pracha, the leading advocate of this consciousness movement, to face the

audience eagerly awaiting his speech, a calm settled over the curious silence in the hall. Pracha, an internationally renowned advocate, analyzed democracy and the Indian constitution with precision and subtlety, and said that Dr. Ambedkar, the creator of the constitution, was a very serious person. He made his mark in the whole world by creating the best constitution. He said that caste discrimination in higher educational institutions in India is an alarming phenomenon.

The constitutional provisions made by Dr. Ambedkar for Dalits, Backward, Oppressed and minority communities have been hanged. The 10 percent of people who call themselves superior have hijacked the country by occupying all the resources and public institutions of the country. Advocate Pracha said that the young generation and students, being courageous, brave and combative like Dr. Ritu Singh, Dr. Ambedkar's ideology, which is enshrined in the constitution, needs to be saved. Our only demand is that the constitution should be implemented in its true sense. Our movement is to save the Constitution. Only if the constitution survives will our life be safe. On this occasion, Advocate Pracha appealed to strongly support the three major movements going on in India, save the constitution, protest against the elections through EVM and farmers' struggle.

Madam Karamjit Kaur Retd. DPI (Colleges) in her address said that Dalit students are being discriminated against in higher educational institutions on a large scale today. The government or administrative officials are keeping silent. Ambedkar Bhawan Trust Chairman Mr. Sohan Lal Retd. DPI (Colleges) thanked the audience from all over Punjab including intellectual thinkers and revolutionary comrades from Delhi and emphasized that the students and the younger generation should be aware of the tireless struggle of Babasaheb, maintaining their enthusiasm and consciousness, must move forward in the face of injustice with courage and boldness. He said that only education can bring social and economic change.

In this discussion, members of Ambedkar Bhawan Trust and Ambedkar Mission Society Sarb Shri Charan Das Sandhu, Harmesh Jasal, Dr. Charanjit Singh, Tilak Raj, Professor Balbir, Dr. Mahendra Sandhu, Harbhajan Nimta, Baldev Raj Bhardwaj, Dr. Rahul, Dr. Subhash, Dr. Thind, Dr. SP Singh, Dr. Surinder, Tarsem Lal Kaul UK, Hari Ram OSD, Prabh Dayal Rampur, Pradeep Raja (Chetna Channel), President of NRI Sabha Punjab Madam Parvinder Kaur Banga, Gautam, Madam Kavita, Anil Bagha, Meher Malik, Advocate Rajinder Boparai, Manjit Singh, Dr. Sandeep Mehmi, Prof. Arinder Singh, Pishori Lal Sandhu, Manohar Mahey, Ram Lal Das, Prof. Ashwini Jasal, Narendra Lekh, MR Sallan, LalitKanganiwal and a large number of colleagues were present. This information was given by Baldev Raj Bharadwaj, Finance Secretary of Ambedkar Bhawan Trust through a press statement.



The Way to make India 'One Nation One People'

Annihilation of Caste

Presenting the final Draft Constitution to the Constituent Assembly for adoption on 25 November 1949, Dr. Ambedkar said that the politically-minded Indians had resented the expression "the people of India". They preferred the expression "the Indian Nation". In his opinion it was cherishing a great delusion in believing that they were a nation. Castes being antinational, how could people divided into several thousands of Castes be a nation? The sooner they realized that they were not yet a nation in the social and psychological sense of the world, the better for them. For then only they would realize the necessity of becoming a nation and seriously think of ways and means of realizing the goal¹. After years of deep and extensive study of the subject he came out with thesis 'Philosophy of Hinduism', Hindu Social Order', Riddles of Hinduism, and 'Annihilation of Caste', et al suggesting the ways to achieve the goal.

Nowhere is human society one single whole. The groups or classes exist in all societies. But the groups in other societies are fundamentally different from the social groups based on Caste in Hindu society. The unique institution of Caste marks off the Hindus from other people. Dr. Ambedkar says in a class system individuals when qualified could change their class. But a Caste is an enclosed class². The peculiarity of Caste is that no Hindu can escape it and being bounded by it from birth to death he becomes subject to social regulations and traditions of the caste over which he has no control. The Hindu society is a house of castes³. In the first issue of his fortnightly Paper 'Mook Nayak' in 1920, Dr. Ambedkar says India is a home of inequality. Hindu society is just like a tower of several storeys (Castes) without a ladder or an entrance. One is to die in the storey in which one is born. In Hindu society each caste group lives for itself, and although the Hindus have similarity of customs, beliefs and thoughts, they are neither a society nor a nation in the true sense of the term. Caste is the bane of the Hindus. It is the cause of their downfall. Owing to Caste the Hindus' life has been a life of continuous defeats. Caste has made the Hindus the sick men of India. It has ruined the Hindu race and has destroyed, demoralized and devitalized the Hindu society⁴.

Tracing the genesis of Caste, Dr. Ambedkar says as per well-known ethnologists the population of India is a mixture of Aryans, Dravidians, Mongolians and Scythians. All these stocks of people came into India centuries ago from various directions and with various cultures when they were in a tribal state. They all in turn elbowed their

entry into the country by fighting with their predecessors, and after a stomachful of it settled down as peaceful neighbors. Through constant contact and mutual intercourse they evolved a common culture that superseded their distinctive cultures. Caste is a parceling of an already homogeneous unit, and the explanation of the genesis of Caste is the explanation of this process of parcelings⁵.

The scholars and students of caste have defined Caste in various ways. Mr. Nesfield defines a caste as "a class of the community which disowns any connection with any other class and can neither intermarry nor eat nor drink with any but persons of their own community". Dr. Ketkar defines caste as a social group the membership of which is confined to those who are born of its members, and they are forbidden by an inexorable social law to marry outside the group". According to Dr. Ambedkar, the critical evaluation of the various characteristics of Caste brought out in multiple definitions leaves no doubt that prohibition or rather the absence of intermarriage - endogamy, is the only essence of Caste when rightly understood. Caste in India means an artificial chopping off of the population into fixed and definite units, each one prevented from fusing into another through the custom of endogamy. He further says that the prevalence of exogamy in the primitive worlds is a fact too well known. But regarding the peoples of India the law of exogamy is a positive injunction even today, for it is not that *Sapin das* (blood-kins) cannot marry, but a marriage even between Sagotras (of the same class) is regarded as a sacrilege. In the final analysis creation of Castes in India means the superposition of endogamy on exogamy⁶.

There is a common belief among the scholars that the caste system has either been imposed upon the docile population of India by a law giver as a divine dispensation, or that it has grown according to some law of social growth peculiar to the Indian people. As to the law giver, Dr. Ambedkar says the law of Caste was already in existence long before Manu. He was an upholder of it and therefore he philosophized about it. His work ended with the codification of existing caste rules and preaching of the sanctity of the Varna which is the parent of Caste. He preached Caste Dharma. It is incorrect in thought and malicious in intent. There is strong belief in the mind of orthodox Hindus that the Hindu society was somehow molded into the framework of the Caste system and that it is an organization consciously created by their Shastras, therefore, it cannot

but be good⁷.

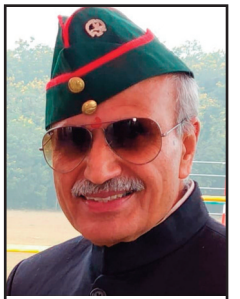
The Hindu society was composed of its earliest known classes of Brahmins or priestly class; the Kshatriyas, or the military class; the Vaishya, or the merchant class and the Shudras or the artisan and menial class. This was essentially a class system in which individuals when qualified could change their class. At some time in the history of the Hindus, the priestly class - Brahmins socially detached itself from rest of the body of the people and through a closed door policy became a caste by itself. The Kshatriya class differentiated into soldiers and administrators. The Vaishya and Shudra classes were the original inchoate plasm, which formed the sources of the numerous castes of today. The sub-division of a society is quite natural. But the unnatural thing about these sub-divisions in the Hindu society is that they have lost the open-door character of the class system and have become selfenclosed units called Castes. Some closed the door: others found it closed against them. Because the Brahmins—semi-gods or very nearly demi-gods became self-enclosed or endogamous, they were wholeheartedly imitated by all the non-Brahmin sub-divisions, who in turn became endogamous castes. By virtue of this the Brahmins created non-Brahmin caste or while closing themselves in they closed others out⁸.

The Caste system of the Hindus is a social system which embodies the arrogance and selfishness of a perverse section called priests or Brahmins of the Hindus who were superior enough in social status to set it in fashion and who had authority to force it on their inferiors for their hegemonic designs. Dr. Ambedkar says the first and foremost thing that must be recognized is that Hindu Society is a myth. The name Hindu is itself a foreign name. It was given by the Mohammedans to the natives for the purpose of distinguishing themselves. It does not occur in any Sanskrit work prior to the Mohammedan invasion. The Hindus did not feel the necessity of a common name because they had no conception of their having constituted a community. Hindu society as such does not exist. It is only a collection of Castes. A Caste has no feeling that it is affiliated to other Castes except when there is a Hindu-Muslim riot. Indeed the ideal Hindu must be like a rat living in his own hole refusing to have any contact with others. There is an utter lack among the Hindus of what the sociologists call "consciousness of kind". In every Hindu the consciousness that exists is the consciousness of his Caste. The Caste System prevents common activity.

That is the reason why the Hindus cannot be said to form a society or a nation. The Hindus are not merely an assortment of castes but they are so many warring groups each living for itself and for its selfish ideal⁹.

Based primarily on class or *Varna* or Caste and not on individuals, the Hindu social order does not recognize the individual as a centre of social purpose. Originally and formally the Hindu social order recognized four classes or Varnas. Today it has the fifth class also being called the Panchamas or Untouchables or Avarnas. The number of castes as of now runs into thousands and that of the sub castes runs into legion. The Hindu social order is based on the doctrine contained in the Vedas and other scriptures that the four Varnas are created from the different parts i.e. mouth, arms, thighs and feet of the divinity. Therefore, they are not brothers to each other. This doctrine has generated the belief that it must be divine will that they should remain separate and distinct. It is this belief which has created in the Hindu an instinct to be different, to be separate and to be distinct from the rest of his fellow Hindus. The rules of Manu Smriti amply testify it. The most extensive and wild manifestation of this spirit of isolation and separation is of course the caste-system. The status and function of the castes are determined and rigidly fixed in the Hindu social order. The first shall never become last, and the last shall never become first in it. It is a ladder of castes placed one above the other together representing an ascending scale of hatred and a descending scale of contempt. The caste system is not merely division of labor but also a division of laborers into water-tight compartments in hierarchical order. It devitalizes a man. It is a process of sterilization. Destiny of defeat which has been the lot of this land throughout history is due to caste¹⁰. The ideal society of Dr. Ambedkar is a society based on liberty, equality and fraternity. Liberty is essential for the growth of an individual and development of his personality in a free social order. Equality is the pre-requisite of liberty. Fraternity is the name for the disposition of an individual to treat men as the object of reverence and love and the desire to be in unity with his fellow beings. But the *Hindu social order is inimical to equality, antagonistic to liberty and direct denial of fraternity. Indeed inequality is the soul*

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Goodie Takhar, PhD

The Way to make India 'One Nation One People'

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of Hinduism. The morality of Hinduism is only social. It is unmoral and unhuman to say the least. To Dr. Ambedkar, there cannot be a more degrading system of Hindu social organization than the wretched Chaturvarnya, progenitor of the pernicious caste system. It is a system which deadens, paralyses and cripples the people from helpful activity. It satisfies neither the test of social utility nor the test of individual justice. It has produced appalling inequality of wealth, immense wealth side by side extreme poverty. It deprives vast multitude of the basic human rights. It pushes them into the state of perpetual servitude to be governed by the inhuman laws of Manu. There is no code of laws more infamous regarding social rights than the laws of Manu. Any instance of social injustice from anywhere must pale before it. In the matter of spread of knowledge there must be a formal education and literacy. Never has society been guilty of prohibiting the mass of its people from acquiring knowledge and closing to the generality of its people the study of the books of its religion as the Hindu society. Hinduism far from encouraging spread of knowledge is a gospel of darkness¹¹. The life of the Hindu at every moment from his birth to death is regulated by religion contained in the Shastras such as Vedas and Smritis. Religion to Dr. Ambedkar means the propounding of an ideal scheme of divine governance the aim and object of which is to make the social order in which the men live a moral order. Man is the centre of divine called religion. He says religion must mainly be a matter of principles, and not a matter of rules.

The moment it degenerates into rules it ceases to be religion. The Hindu religion as contained in the Vedas and Smritis is nothing but a mass of sacrificial, social and sanitary rules and regulations all mixed up. It has not the impulse to serve and that is because by its very nature it is unhuman and unmoral. It is a misnomer to call it religion. The theory of Chaturvarnya propounded in the Vedas recognizes the division of society into four sections as an ideal and the ideal relationship among them is inequality. Krishna declares in the Gita that he is the creator of *Chaturvarnya* and everybody should follow it. The philosophy of Hinduism is the same whether one takes the Vedas, the Gita or the Smritis as the gospel of Hinduism¹².

The Hindu sage Brahaspati terms the authors of the Vedas as buffoons, knaves and demons. To him the Vedas are means of livelihood for those who have neither manliness nor sense. There is no ethical or spiritual value in them. They contain invocation to tribal Gods seeking health, wealth, long life, cattle, offspring and forgiveness of their sins, destruction of enemies, looting their property and giving it to their followers et al. There are good many obscene passages to be found in them. There are more vices and few virtues in them. Atharva Veda is nothing but collection of sorcery, black magic and medicine. Rig Veda is also not free from it. Hindu sage Charvaka says the Veda is tainted by three faults of untruth, self-contradiction and tautology¹³. Dr. Ambedkar says *the sacred books of the Hindus contain fabrications which are political in their mo-*

tive, partisan in composition and fraudulent in their purpose. It is the doctrine contained in these sacred books which are responsible for the decline and fall of their country and their society, and miserable life of a vast mass of the people¹⁴.

Lala Hardayal, a Hindu scholar, observes: *"Caste is the curse of India. It has made us a nation of slaves. Not Islam or England; our enemy is Caste. Priest craft and caste have slain us. India can never establish and maintain a Free State so long as caste rules in our society."* Caste system is the bane of Hindus is the verdict given by India's great and true historians, scholars, sociologists, leaders of thought and social reformers. To the Caste is antagonistic to national union. According to great historian Sarkar, the solution lies in complete freedom of marriage¹⁵.

In his address delivered at the Satyagraha Conference at Mahad (District Kolaba) on 25 December 1927, Dr. Ambedkar said that the caste-system must be abolished if the Hindu Society was to be reconstructed on the basis of equality. Not only Untouchability and restrictions regarding inter-caste dining must be removed, but inter-caste marriages must be made common. All Hindus should be considered as of one Varna and law should be enacted prohibiting the use of caste names such as Brahmins, Kshatriyas etc. The Manu Smriti and such other books composed in the dark ages which most flagrantly violate the human rights should be burnt being symbol of injustice. This alone would lead to the establishment of true equality. He along with his followers set Manu Smriti ablaze on 27 December 1927 at Mahad. To him the aim of abolishing Untouchability alone without trying to abolish the inequalities inherent in the caste-system is a very low aim. Not failure but he considers low aim as sin¹⁶.

In his most popular thesis "Annihilation of Caste" Dr. Ambedkar says no nation and no morality can be built on the foundation of Caste. Anything built on it would crack and would never be whole. Caste has killed public spirit and destroyed the sense of public charity. It has made public opinion impossible. A Hindu's public is his caste. Virtue has become caste-ridden and morality has become caste-bound. According to him, *"Have not Hindus committed treason against their country in the interest of their Caste?"* He says so long as Caste remains, the Hindu will remain weak and meek. Hindu society is in need of moral regeneration which is dangerous to postpone. It is the Caste that has to be uprooted to bring about social, political and economic reforms. To him, the real remedy to kill the monster of Caste is inter-marriage. Fusion of blood can alone create the feeling of being kith and kin and unless this feeling of kinship, of being kindred, becomes paramount the separatist feeling of being aliens created by Caste will not vanish. Among the Hindus inter-caste marriage must necessarily be a factor of greater force in social life. Where society is cut asunder, marriage as a binding force becomes a matter of urgent necessity. He asserts: *"The real remedy for breaking Caste is inter-marriage. Nothing else will serve as the solvent of Caste."* The Hindus do not

inter-dine and inter-marry because it is repugnant to their beliefs and dogmas which they regard as sacred. Caste is a notion; it is a state of the mind. The destruction of Caste, therefore, means a notional change. The Hindus observe Caste because their religion has inculcated this notion of caste in them. Therefore, obviously the enemy to be grappled with is Shastras. The real remedy is to destroy the belief in the sanctity of the Shastras which teach them this religion of Caste. The Hindu social reformers – Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal must take the stand that Buddha and Guru Nanak took. They must not only discard the Shastras, they must deny and destroy its authority, as did Buddha and Nanak. *"Make every Hindu man and woman free from the thralldom of the Shastras, cleanse their minds of the pernicious notions founded on them, and he or she will inter-dine and inter-marry, without telling him or her to do so"*, said Dr. Ambedkar¹⁷.

There have been many ascetics and social reformers such as Kabir, Ramana and others who have worked for the cause of the abolition of Caste and Untouchability. But their teachings have been ineffective because the Smritis have commanded the Hindus in unmistakable terms not to follow even Gods in their good deeds if they are contrary to the injunctions contained in the Shastras and ancient custom good or bad (*Sadachar*). When people are not free to consider whether the Caste system accords with reason and morality, how can they break up Caste? The wall built around Caste is impregnable and the material, of which it is built, contains none of the combustible stuff of reason and morality. Add to this the fact that inside this wall stands the army of Brahmins, who form the intellectual class; who are the natural leaders of the Hindus; who are there as an army fighting for its homeland. If the reformers wish to bring about a breach in the caste system then they have got to apply the dynamite to the Vedas and the Shastras, which deny any part to reason and morality. Nothing else will prevail.

It means that the authority of the Shastras must be discarded and religion contained in them must be destroyed because it is nothing but a mass of sacrificial, social, political and sanitary rules and regulations, all mixed up. It means a complete change in the fundamental notions of life. It means new religion based on principles with only one standard book acceptable to and recognized by all Hindus. All Hindus should be considered as one people and law should be enacted prohibiting the use of caste names. The books being treated as sacred and authoritative must by law cease to be so and preaching of their doctrines should be penalized. The Hindu priesthood must cease to be hereditary if its abolition is not possible. A priest is a clog on the wheel of our civilization. Mentally a priest may be an idiot, physically suffering from a foul disease, and morally he may be a wreck, but he is fit to be a priest because he is born in a priestly caste. Be it an occasion of joy like wedding or sorrow like death, it is equally availed off by the priests, many of whom pray in order to be able to prey on their victims. He practices the shame of being a middleman between the unseen powers and the helpless man and makes a

living by it. It is a pest which divinity seems to have let loose on the masses for their mental and moral degradation. The priestly class must be brought under control by legislation. Every Hindu must be eligible for being a priest by passing an examination prescribed by the State for the declared limited number of seats, and holding a sanad (deed) from the State permitting him to practice. He should be subject to the conduct rules and disciplinary action like other Government servants. Dr. Ambedkar says it will certainly help to kill the Brahmanism and will also help to kill Caste, which is nothing but Brahmanism incarnate. Brahmanism is the poison which has spoiled Hinduism. The Hindu religion must be given a new doctrinal basis that will be in consonance with liberty, equality and fraternity, in short with democracy¹⁸.

In his historic speech delivered on presenting the final draft Constitution to the Constituent Assembly on 25 November 1949, Dr. Ambedkar said "The 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...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 sapped them of what may be called the significance of life. These 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 develop into a class struggle or class war. It would lead to a division of the House. That would indeed be a day of disaster...19."

It goes without saying that the only and sure way of India becoming 'One Nation One People' is none other than annihilation of Caste, inter-marriages, principles based religion and the social order in consonance with democratic principles of liberty, equality and fraternity as suggested by renowned historians, scholars, sociologists, social reformers, leaders, saints and Dr. Ambedkar.

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(Original in English)

LETTER OF SUKHDEV TO MAHATMA GANDHI ON 20TH MARCH 1931**LETTER FROM SUKHDEV 1
MOST GRACIOUS MAHATMAJI,**

Recent reports show that since the successful termination of your peace negotiations you have made several public appeals to the revolutionary workers to call off their movement at least for the present and to give you a last chance to try your non-violent cult. As a matter of fact, the calling off of any movement is neither an ideological nor a sentimental act. It is the consideration of the peculiar needs of different times that force the leaders to change their tactics. Let us presume that at the time of peace parley, you did not overlook the fact even for a single moment, and did not make a secret of it, that this was not going to be the final settlement. I think all intelligent people would have understood quite easily that after the introduction of all the reforms you acquire it would not be thought that the final stage was reached. The Congress is bound by its Lahore Resolution to carry on the Struggle relentlessly till the complete independence is achieved. In face of that Resolution, the peace and compromise is but a temporary truce which only means a little rest to organize better forces on a larger scale for the next struggle. The 1 possibility of compromise and a truce can be imagined and justified in the light of the above consideration alone. As regards the proper opportunity and the conditions on which any truce can be effected, it rests with the leaders of the movement to decide. In face of the Lahore Resolution you have thought it expedient to call off the active movement for the present, but nevertheless that Resolution stands. Similarly, as is evident from the very name—the Hindustan Socialist Republican Party the revolutionaries stand for the establishment of the Socialist Republic which is not a half-way house. They are bound to carry on the struggle till their goal is achieved and their ideal is consummated. But they would be quite apt to change

their tactics according to the changing circumstances and environments. Revolutionary struggle assumes different shapes at different times. It becomes sometimes open, sometimes hidden, sometimes purely agitational and sometimes a fierce life-and-death struggle. In the circumstances, there must be special factors, the consideration of which may prepare the revolutionaries to call off their movement. But no such definite idea has been advanced by you. Mere sentimental appeals do not and cannot count much in the revolutionary struggles.

Since your compromise you have called off your movement and consequently all of your prisoners have been released. But what about the revolutionary prisoners? Dozens of Ghadar party prisoners imprisoned since 1915 are still rotting in jails, in spite of having undergone the full terms of their imprisonments. Scores of martial law prisoners are still buried in these living tombs. And so are dozens of Babar Akali prisoners. Deogharh, Kakori, Machhua Bazaar and Lahore Conspiracy case prisoners are amongst those numerous still locked behind bars. More than half a dozen conspiracy trials are going on at Lahore, Delhi, Chittagong, Bombay, Calcutta and elsewhere. Dozens of revolutionaries are absconding and amongst them are many females. More than half a dozen prisoners are actually waiting for their executions. What about all of these people? The three Lahore conspiracy case condemned prisoners, who have luckily come into prominence and who have acquired enormous public sympathy, do not form the bulk of the revolutionary party. Their fate is not the only consideration before the party. As a matter of fact their executions are expected to do greater good than the commutation of their sentences.

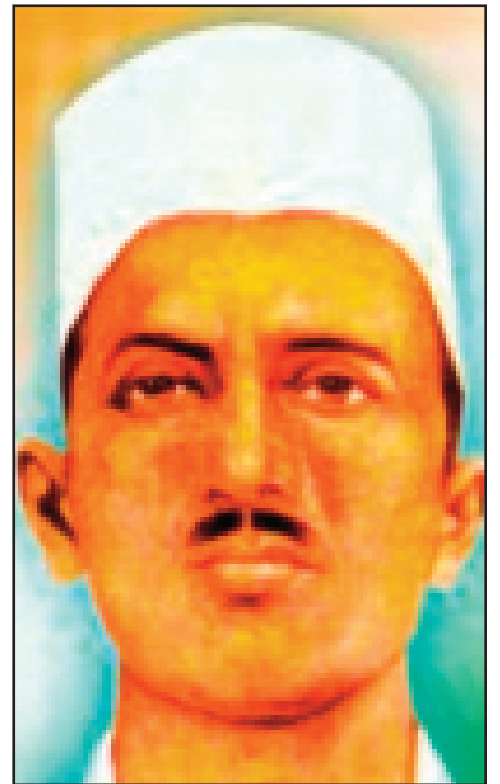
But in spite of all this, you are making public appeals asking them to call off their movement. Why should they do so? You have

not mentioned any very definite thing. In these circumstances your appeals mean you are joining hands with the bureaucracy to crush that movement, and your appeals amount to preaching treachery, desertion and betrayal amongst them. If that were not the case, then the best thing for you would have been to approach some of the prominent revolutionaries and to talk over the whole thing with them. You ought to have tried to convince them to call off their movement. I do not think you also share the general conservative notion that the revolutionaries are devoid of reason, rejoicing in destruction and devastation. Let us inform you that in reality the case is quite the contrary. They always consider the pros and cons of every step they take and they fully realize the responsibility which they thus incur and they attach greater importance to the constructive phase of the revolutionary programme than to any other, though in the present circumstances they cannot but occupy themselves with the destructive part of their programme.

The present policy of the Government towards them is to deprive them of the sympathy and support of the masses which they have won in their movement, and then crush them. In isolation they can be easily hunted down. In face of that fact any sentimental appeal to cause demoralization amongst their ranks would be utterly unwise and counter-revolutionary. It would be rendering direct assistance to the Government to crush them.

Therefore we request you either to talk to some revolutionary leaders—they are so many in jails—and come to terms with them or to stop these appeals. Please for goodness sake pursue one of these two alternative courses and pursue it whole-heartedly. If you cannot help them, then please have mercy on them. Let them alone.

They can better take care of them-



selves. They know that the hegemony of the revolutionary party in the future political struggle is assured. Masses are rallying round them and the day is not far off when they will be leading the masses under their banner towards their noble and lofty ideal—the Socialist Republic. Or if you seriously mean to help them, then have a talk with them to understand their point of view, and discuss the problem in detail.

Hope you will kindly consider the above request and let your view be known publicly.

Yours,

ONE OF THE MANY

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