

DALIT VOICE

[The Voice of the Persecuted Minorities]

Adviser : Dr. Mulk Raj Anand

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THE AGONY OF BEING A MUSLIM

The anti-Muslim riots which began in Baroda city on Sept. 13, 1981 are continuing for over one year now & each phase is excelling its previous one even as the country is yet to recover from the shocks of the Meerut riots (Oct. 82) in which at least 100 including 90 Muslims were killed, according to an impartial report by the noted scholar, Asghar Ali Engineer. The latest phase of the Baroda bout in which the Army had to be called to control the veritable war between the Hindus and the Muslims was on a very strange issue. The Gujarat Govt. after good deal of pressure from Muslims, the worst sufferers, transferred the communal-minded local City Police Commissioner (a Hindu) for being anti-Muslim and this pretext was good enough for the Hindus to unleash violence on innocent Muslims. Over 20 killed. If the Baroda example is followed by Hindus in other parts, no Govt. can function as majority rule in India has already become the majority community (Hindu) rule to the disadvantage of dalits and other persecuted Muslims, Christians, Sikhs etc. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had predicted this long back. It is becoming more and more true. As we have previously dealt on the unending anti-Muslim riots in India, we don't want to go into its specifics except certain new aspects which are complicating the Hindu-Muslim Great Di-

vide. Asghar Ali Engineer, who is held in high esteem by the secular-minded Hindus, visited both Meerut & Baroda cities and his reports have received surprisingly good publicity. He draws pointed attention to one very important thing to which we had also referred (Meerut Riots—A Revenge Against Meenakshipuram? Nov. 1-15). What he says in his heart-rending reports is that both Meerut & Baroda riots were not between Hindus and Muslims but between Untouchables & the Muslims, both poor and persecuted. At Meerut, the Valmiks (sweepers) were let loose against the equally poor Muslims. Sufferers fighting co-sufferers! What a beautiful game! At Baroda, it was between Untouchable Bhios and Muslims. The rivalry between the two in illicit liquor trade was the cause of the clash. The RSS and other Hindu communal elements have been lately subjecting the Untouchables and tribals to severe Sanskritization which helps dalits to go up the ladder of life. Such a process of Hinduising is done very methodically and the RSS and its front organisations are spending millions of rupees on Hindu-

ising the dalits—for centuries kept outside the Hindu religion. It has paid high dividends to the Hindu rulers of India. The obvious outcome of such a Hinduisation is anti-Muslim, anti-Christian riots in which the whole Hindus are ranged against the minorities. When the poor & the persecuted are busy fighting between themselves the rulers can quietly continue their game of exploitation. This is the conspiracy behind the communal riots. Political division does not divide Hindus when it comes to anti-Muslim, anti-Christian or anti-Sikh, or anti-tribe hatred. Both Meerut and Baroda riots have conclusively proved this. And the Hindus claim that they are the most non-violent people on the earth. Be that as it may. The latest Baroda bout of anti-Muslim riots has brought to the fore the agony of being a Muslim in India. It also brings to sharp focus the futility of political ideologies including the red hot Marxist brand. It is also becoming increasingly clear that RSS is actively helping the ruling Congress Party to remain in power until its political arm, BJP, comes of age and is ready to take over. India thus goes from one Brahmin rule to the other, as China has rightly told Dr. Subramanian Swamy (*Times of India*, Dec. 16-82) Nobody has given vent to the agony of being a Muslim in India better than Nirad Chaudhury, India's most celebrated writer. He tells fellow Hindus "to accept the Muslim demand to retain their group identity in a parallel society which though rejected from 1920 onwards, remains the only practical course". (*Times of India*, Dec. 12-82). But who is prepared to listen to the voice of sanity in Hindu India? If the very newspaper that published Nirad Babu's article, comes out with an opposite view in its editorial column

on the same day, what can we expect from lesser people? If important editors like Girilal Jain of the *Times of India* hold such blatantly prejudiced views on Muslims, what can we expect from smaller editors? The *Times* editorial of Dec. 16, takes strong objection to the agony expressed by 45 Muslim MPs over the unending anti-Muslim riots in India. The editorial says "it was wrong in principle for 45 Muslim MPs belonging to different parties to have got together". What logic! But Girilal Jain, who showed his RSS sympathy by writing an unusual front-page signed article in his daily on the Moradabad anti-Muslim riots accusing Muslims for this bloody carnage, has nothing to say about the Hindus belonging to different parties including the Baroda Mayor threatening the Govt. over the transfer of the anti-Muslim Police Commissioner of Baroda. In such a situation where political parties, press, govt., human rights organisation and even the police and the society as a whole get divided neatly into Hindus Vs Muslims, what else Muslim MPs can do except plead for unity for self-protection? Seven Muslim MPs had to issue another statement (*Deccan Herald* Dec. 15) to point out that the Prime Minister ignored the appeals earlier made by 45 MPs. The latest SOS of seven Muslim MPs speaks of the agony and the anguish of the Muslim community and calls upon ruling party Muslim MPs to either assert themselves or resign from their office. As days pass it is becoming increasingly clear that the Ruling Class is getting more and more violent to crush those dalits and religious minorities who protest its unbridled fascist rule. It knows that of all those protestors the Untouchables are

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PERSECUTION OF DALITS & MINORITIES IN INDIA IS AN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM

(Dr. Laxmi Berwa, President, VISION, Maryland, USA)

This is the heart-rending story of the destitutes of India called the Untouchables, the dalits, along with converted Buddhists or ex-Untouchables. The problem of untouchability goes back to more than 2000 years under Hinduism. It is the society which authorizes the sanctions against a particular section of its own people, i.e., Hindu against the Hindu (dalits). No other religion in the world has such sanctions against the people of the same religion. What are these sanctions: these people can't put on decent clothings, can't have civil rights of drinking water from the same well lest it pollutes, can't ask minimum wages otherwise there are harsh repercussions such as merciless burning, killing of the Untouchables, raping their women, burning their houses, social boycott and many other innumerable ways of violating their civic & human rights. Even those who are financially okay will face constant humiliation, harassment in private and public places. Verbal & physical insults are a day-to-day occurrence. Many of the Untouchables and ex-Untouchables are roasted on pyre by the Hindus. For details, I have brought some material left with the Secretary-General, Dr. Homer Jack. Many of the brutalities are of such gross nature that even I am ashamed to tell here. I am sure many of you who are up-to-date on India probably already know of all these ghastly crimes against we Untouchables. The problems of the Untouchable are both social and economical interlinked to each other, i.e. those who are socially deprived in a majority sense and vice versa. My organization, VISION, (Volunteers In Service to India's Oppressed and Neglected), of which I am president wants to highlight

this problem to this civilized world in every possible way. Even talking to many of American friends who are aware that there are various castes but totally uneducated about the seriousness of this silent volcano which has erupted in the past on many occasions and will continue to do so unless the Indian Government & Indian society as a whole do something to correct this tragedy of the Indian subcontinent. God only knows how many more lives are to be sacrificed, how many more colonies of the Untouchables are to be destroyed in this current caste and class war in India. VISION was founded in 1977, it has members from all walk of life from all parts of America, voluntarily funded by members to champion the cause of their Untouchable brethren in India. VISION has no political affiliation, it is a nonpartisan organization. One of the major functions is to carry out the mission of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.—the emancipator of the Untouchables from the mud of Hinduism, great revivalist of Buddhism in India (brought Budha back to his homeland).—Father of the Indian Constitution (called the Modern Manu). —Also called Moses without a Holy Land. Thus, VISION has been celebrating Ambedkar birth anniversary each year since its inception. VISION also is in close touch with American academicians who are students of SouthEast Asia studies particularly Indology to get their guidance and suggestion

with the idea as to how to improve the lot of 105-120 million Untouchables, "the world's single largest minority", according to Benjamin Whitacker of Minority Right Group, London. In 1978, VISION requested Prime Minister Morarji Desai to see him about the atrocities on the Untouchables when he came to address the U. N. Assembly. VISION sent its Treasurer, P. N. Arya in April 1982 to investigate Deoli and Shadhupur massacres of the Untouchables and to rehabilitate by distributing the necessary items worth \$1000 donated by VISION members and sympathizers. In May 1982 as soon as VISION found out that Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was visiting USA in July 1982, we wrote a letter to host a dinner and a meeting to express our grave concern about the recent massacres of the dalits. However, she sent a terse reply saying: "It does not help for those who live in affluence abroad to comment on situations about which they have little knowledge". The question of our meeting with her did not arise at all. Thus we resorted to demonstration in front of the White House on July 29, 1982, when she was meeting with President Reagan. The result was that our demonstration and its reasons were covered in the *New York Post*, *The Washington Post*, *The Washington Times* and many other newspapers here and in India. The point is that she can't tell us to shut up our movement in America. It may be possible in India where she runs the country with a ironfist which is known by every student of Indian History. The current democratic systems suits quite well to the politician rich industrialist and the landlords. This was the second time that the Hindus turned down a Dalit Hu-

man Right Organization. Another factor has been the prejudice shown by the Hindus abroad against the dalits. This was amply illustrated by a recent incident when a proposed dinner party during a New York visit of writers, Laxman Mane and Daya Pawar, was suddenly cancelled after the Brahmin Consulate-official found out that they were dalits. Even today, there is little social mixing between Hindus and dalits in the US. Surprise! Hindus always had and even today have contempt for the Untouchable no matter where we go. But recent conversion of the Untouchables to Islam has thrown the whole Hindu society into a turmoil and it is planned that there will be 2,00,000 Hindu religious preachers to go to each tehsil to prevent this conversion. Why? I will let the Hindus answer that. I am glad that I am no longer a Hindu. Thus, frustrated and angered after this rebuke from the Prime Minister in July 1982, we decided to look some other answers to highlight the atrocities and constant harassment and discrimination by the "free and democratic India". Finally with the help of Minority Right Group, Ltd., a London-based human right organization, I on the behalf of many organizations and individuals from American, Canada, U.K. and India testified to U.N. sub-commission on Human Rights on their 35th annual session in Geneva, Switzerland, on August 31, 1982. In that testimony I did as best I could to bring the Human Rights violation of the Untouchables which is not an internal issue of India but an International problem. However, there the Rumanian delegate called "Time out" & the Indian delegate charged that my statement was politically motivated & the Russian delegate supported the

Indian delegate that this is not a political platform. Surprise ! Not the least. The Russians and Eastern European Block countries have denied human rights to many ethnic and religious minorities in their own countries. Another tyranny is that the Indian delegate who opposed us happened to be a Muslim whose community itself is a persecuted minority in India. This was not a surprise because the Congress Party has in the past pitted Muslims where ever there is an interest of the Untouchable community. Syed Masud, the Indian expert on Human Rights, and Lakshmi Puri, the First Secretary, Permanent Mission of India in Geneva, didn't want me to raise this issue outside India. Most recently Dr. Gopal Singh, the chairman, High Power Panel on Minorities, a Government of India appointee begged me not to discuss this issue outside India. In my interview on Nov. 2, 1982, he remarked, "I beg of you that whenever you write to us or write to the Prime Minister you should wait for the decision to be taken in the country itself before you bring them to the world forum". I was quick to give Dr. Singh the letter of Mrs. Gandhi who chided us for expressing our concern. The Indian Government owes an explanation to the world as to why there are so many massacres and human right violations of minorities in "democratic India?" What plan do the Government has to curb them? If the Indian Govt. is embarrassed about them then do something to protect the weaker sections of society, i.e. the dalits, Buddhists (ex-Untouchables), Muslims & Christians. VISION will continue to educate the civilized world regarding the plight of dalits with all its might at every forum it can get its hand on, inside India

or outside in the world forum. VISION will continue to voice its concern on the atrocities on the Untouchables discrimination suffered by them at the hand of Hindu majority in their day-to-day life. VISION will continue to monitor the police brutalities, Indian Govt's failure to protect the Untouchables, failure to implement the protective rights granted in the Indian Constitution. Promises ! Promises ! These promises have betrayed the cause of the uplift of the Untouchables. VISION needs hard and concrete steps taken by the Indian Govt. to convince about the sincerity of the Indian govt. when it comes to the welfare of the Untouchable. '(Speech to the World Conference on Religion & Peace at New York on Nov. 16, 1982). □

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By Dr. Y. B. Abbasayulu, Director,
Centre for Dalit Studies, Osmania
University, Hyderabad.

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THE BURAKUS : THE OUTCASTES OF JAPAN

(Dr. Aruna Arasuko, Madurai, TN)

A special feature on Japan published in the Hindu (July 19, 1982) says that Indians feel happy about the progress of Japan. We South Indians think that before two decades the Japanese were short-statured people & the nation was a war-mongering one. Intellectuals in India often refer to the social integration achieved in Japan during the "Meiji take-over" and the present industrial progress. They advocate that we should emulate Japan's social, economic and industrial developments. The hierarchical and feudal social order of Tokugawa era consisting Daimyos (landlords), Samurais (warriors), farmers, traders, artisans & outcastes was demolished & social integration was achieved by dis-establishing the social parasites, 'Samurais'. The traditional rights of Samurais to be the warriors by birth was given up thereby others were able to join the army. Hence the Meiji take-over was considered to be the dawn of Japan which could be an eye-opener for India also. We thought Japanese society was an integrated civilized society. Unfortunately, Japanese society is also suffering from traditional moorings with reference to the treatments to Buraku people of Japan. In spite of its all-round progress Japan failed to make social progress. There is a lack of human values. The Japanese discriminate Buraku people in all walks of life. Burakus are by & large workers on lands. As an Indian delegate to the "Asian minorities conference" at Colombo in Dec. 1981, I was able to hear the untold miseries of Buraku people from the Buraku liberation organizations. The Burakumins presently numbering 2-3 million out of a total population of 113 million, is the largest single minority group in Japan today, though not ethnically different from the rest of the Japanese. The

Burakumins have been treated as an outcaste community segregated and discriminated socially, economically since hundreds of years. Burakumins were the victims of slavery and untouchability. At present Burakumins are the descendants of the outcaste communities 'Eta & Hinin'. Though legal provisions envisage, "the titles of 'Eta and Hinin' shall be abolished and the people belonging to these classes shall be treated in the same manner both in occupation and social standing as the common people", the deep seated prejudices of the Japanese people and government officials & discrimination continued unabated. Many incidents were reported that Burakumin young men and women who fell in love with other Japanese have committed suicide when their identity was known to others. It is also learnt that private detectives, who are numerous in Japan, are used by big business to consult the lists of Burakumins when they select their staff. According to dependable reports Buraku people live in segregated areas throughout Japan. Isolated in specially designated areas, they are battling every day against the discrimination which denies them their right to live with freedom and dignity whenever they should choose to make their home. It is evident that Japan is suffering from a worst social illness. It is also a sorry state of affair that the land of Buddhism is also practising some sort of 'casteism and untouchability'. We Untouchables of India support the Buraku liberation struggle. □

*Ultimatum on Mandal Report***BACKWARD CLASSES DECLARE WAR ON BRAHMINISM**

(Our correspondent)

Madras : Leaders participating in the two-day All-India Conference for the Protection of Scheduled Castes & Backward Classes here on Dec. 11 & 12, attended by over 10,000 people, declared an all-out war on Brahminism & urged the Govt. to announce the implementation of the Mandal Commission Report on Backward Classes before the forthcoming session of Parliament. The Report of the Mandal Commission submitted to the Government over 2 years ago is almost thrown to the wastepaper basket. The Commission has recommended 27% reservation to OBCs forming 52% of the population. The conference resolution, moved by K. Veeramani, general secretary of the powerful Dravida Kazhagam which hosted the conference, said there was no need for further discussion on the criteria adopted by the Mandal Commission to measure backwardness on the basis of caste. Karpuri Thakur, former Chief Minister of Bihar, was very clear when he said as long as a Brahmin was the Prime Minister, the *shudras*, Untouchables and tribals had no future. He wanted all the low castes to join hands with minorities and declare a war on Brahminism. Dhanik Lal Mandal, Chandrajit Yadav, both former Union Ministers, said the angry OBCs would gherao Parliament if no action was taken on the Mandal Report. Yadav said he had organised even AICC sessions but the Madras conference held at the historic Periyar Thidal was the biggest that he had seen. Over 500 delegates from different parts of the country attended the first-ever conference on the Mandal Report. On Dec. 11, the State Govt. declared holiday for the conference. The D.K. organised a mile-long procession through the streets of Madras, on Dec-12. The Conference was addressed by Karunanidhi, former Chief Minister of TN, Ram Vilas Paswan, Dalit MP, Abdul Samad, MP, president, TN Muslim League, V. T. Rajshekar, Editor, *Dalit Voice*, M. Kamalakannan of the Ambedkar Peoples Welfare Movement, representatives of Christians, dalits, tribes, women and different caste leaders. K. Rajaram, Speaker of the TN Assembly, inaugurated the afternoon session on Dec. 11 and this was addressed by D. P. Yadav, MP, N. D. Sundaravadivelu, ex-Vice-Chancellor, Madras University, T. N. Ananthanayaki, Rama Aranganal, R. L. Gupta, M.P., secretary, National Union of Backward Classes Federation, G. R. Edmund, Christian fishermen leader. Brahm Prakash, former Chief Minister of Delhi and the president of the National Union of Backward Classes, Delhi, who delivered the presidential address, denounced the Hindu scriptures, and the caste system which reduced 80% of India's population to the status of servants. Democracy was in danger because the 10% of the high castes who ruled India considered their interests above that of the country. He made it clear that though the backward classes movement was based on caste, it stood for destruction of caste. A new journal, *Buniyadi Sangharsh*, the organ of the National Union of the Backward Classes, was released on the occasion carrying Periyar's photo on the cover page. □

Lid off Hindu hypocrisy
**LONDON DOCUMENT ON PERSECUTION OF INDIAN
 UNTOUCHABLES**

(Our correspondent)

Bangalore: *The Minority Rights Group, London, which did a great service to the Untouchables of India by sponsoring Dr. Laxmi Berwa to give his historic evidence before the Human Rights Committee, Geneva, has now come out with a valuable document* on the problem of the world's largest persecuted minority. Titled, *The Untouchables of India*, the document will serve as a useful guide to all those interested in this gravest form of Apartheid. We have gone through the 20-page document and call upon all dalits, other minorities, their sympathisers and academics to secure the copy from the London office. We have also requested the MRG to keep some books with us for sale in India. The document is yet another conclusive proof of India's grave violations of human rights. The persecution of Untouchables, therefore, automatically becomes an international problem calling for the immediate intervention of the United Nations. We call upon our dalit comrades and their sympathisers to move the UNO on this and call for sanctions against this serious violation of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which came into force on March 23, 1976 & which the Indian Govt. refused to sign. By this the Indian Govt. automatically loses any right to speak about human rights violations in other parts of the world and specially on the Apartheid in South Africa and elsewhere. A press note of the MRG, London, adds: One in 40 of the total number of people in the world today faces a lifetime fighting against the stigma of being treated as Untouchable. The Untouchables of India, today often called the 'Scheduled Castes',

are the world's largest minority group with over 100 million members. They are also the group facing the longest history of continuous discrimination. This discrimination has its roots in ancient Indian society and has been perpetuated through the caste system, which has ensured that, despite the very substantial changes which have occurred in Indian society, Untouchables have always been at the bottom of the social and economic scale. The Report *The Untouchables of India*, originally published by MRG in 1975, has now been re-issued in a new edition. Originally written by Dilip Hiro, well-known British journalist of Indian origin, it has now been revised and updated by the MRG Working Group on Untouchables, whose aim is to influence public opinion on all issues concerning Untouchables and work for the abolition of Untouchability in all its forms. This report is one of the few non-academic or non-governmental publications in English which discusses the conditions of the Untouchables today and contains valuable information on a whole range of issues which can be hard to obtain without specialist knowledge. Untouchables still face massive discrimination in Indian society today, despite the fact that under the Indian Constitution untouchability is abolished. For the 90% who still live in the villages struggling to make

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RAMA-RAVANA WAR : A CONFLICT BETWEEN HINDUS AND DALITS

(By Our Correspondent)

Bombay : "There is no doubt that the battle between Rama and Ravana is a struggle between two cultures although there is no proof of it being a Hindu-Dalit fight", said N. G. Goray, a veteran socialist leader, at a meeting here to release the book, "Cultural Struggles in Ramayan", written by Arun Kamble, an eminent dalit author. Goray said the story of Rama-Ravana war was a symbolic fight between the "haves & have-nots". Victors always crushed the vanquished. This is Hindu tradition since ancient times". Laxman Shastri Joshi, noted rationalist thinker, said that since the period of the Mauryas, there had been no reference in Indian history to the Rama-Ravana period. Kamble has come to the conclusion in his book that Rama-Ravana war was a struggle between Hindus and Buddhists. Dinkar Sakrikar, Editor of *Poorva*, also spoke at the meeting. Dr. Mai Ambedkar presided. Both of them congratulated Arun Kamble on writing a thought-provoking book on a subject which has captured the imagination of all sections of the people in India. Arun Kamble's Marathi book (prices 20) may be had from : Trikal, 308-6833 Pant Nagar, Ghatkopar-E Bombay-400 075. □

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Document on Dalits

a minimal living as agricultural labourers or marginal cultivators the outlook is extremely grim. They are still subject to the dictates of landlords, low or non-existent wages, debt and bonded labour. Even in the cities Untouchables still suffer discrimination in the fields of employment, education and housing. Since independence the Indian Govt. has made attempts to combat discrimination by several attempts at affirmative action. The Protec-

tion of Civil Rights Act punishes those who carry out acts of discrimination against Untouchables, while the quota system guarantees an equitable proportion of place in the Parliamentary system, educational institutions and Govt. employment. But poverty and corruption within the system mean that such laws only ensure a small proportion of Untouchables benefit. And the government has been ineffectual in preventing a rising tide of upper-caste violence against Untouchable communities, especially against those who have been assertive and stood up for their rights. The report concludes by making a strong plea for extending affirmative action, an increase in the extent of the govt. quota system and strong action, both within India and internationally, to protect and extend Untouchable rights & advancement. Copies of this report are available from MRG, 36 Craven St, London, WC2N 5NG, UK., price £ 1.20 plus P & P £ 0.30 (US \$ 3.00 plus \$ 0.60 surface mail) air mail extra. The press note adds: If you see this report as either the basis of an article or a review, please could you i) quote MRG's name and address so that interested readers may obtain copies. ii) Send us a copy for our files. Further information from: MRG, London, Ben Whitaker/Jackie Wray-930-6659, Barbara Joshi, 3 Mohawk Ave, Genesco, New York State, 14454, USA. We thank the MRG on behalf of the dalits & persecuted minorities of India. □

Letters to Editor :

Miss Vibhuti Patel, Bombay : We find the DV very useful to our work. It is doing an excellent job for the persecuted minorities. We circulate it among our friends.

Anwar Barkat, Director, Programme to Combat Racism, World Council of Churches, Geneva : DV is highlighting the plight of the racially oppressed in India. We are also happy to note that your efforts are bearing fruits within India itself. Keep us informed of your efforts.

Z. I. Khan, Editor, Muslim Media, London : We very much like to cooperate with you. Wish you all success.

C. H. Koteswar Rao, Vizag, AP : I am a regular reader of DV which is doing a great service to dalits and uniting all the persecuted minorities to revolt against the cannibals of the society. Publish the addresses of those "letters to editor" published so that we may link up our struggle. Our salvation lies in getting a separate Dalitistan. Be careful about the RSS wolves. They may attack you any time.

Murlidhar Bansode, Bombay : We want to conduct a Dalit-Bauddh Sahitya Sammelan in April. You will be a special invitee. DV is being circulated among many dalits here. Laxmi Berwa's rep. came to us. We have congratulated the VISION on behalf of the Marathi dalits. We are sure DV will be soon one of the leading journals of India.

Dr. (Mrs.) Savita Ambedkar, Bombay : We have successfully conducted a huge rally to rename Marathwada University at Aurangabad on Dec. 6 and another at Nagpur on Dec. 13 on the day Maharashtra Assembly opened its winter session. I want to come to Bangalore after that for talks with our dalit comrades there.

T. H. P. Chentharasserry, Trivandrum : Dalit writers here are gradually realising the need to study and analyse things. We thank Abraham for reviewing my book and thus bringing the great son of India, Ayyankali, on the pages the DV.

Vinu Bhairavia, Advocate, Ahmedabad : I fully agree with DV and appreciate your difficulties including financial.

Abdul Rahman, Faizabad, UP : DV should be widely introduced in the North. We are at your service.

Zafarulla Rahman, Madurai, TN : I saw a DV article, 'Untouchables fully liberated after becoming Muslims', reproduced in a Malaysian journal, *Islami Herald*. The editor in a footnote has fully sympathised with the plight of the Untouchables of India. The 'Voice of the Persecuted Minorities' is reaching throughout the world. Miss Themozhi deserves our congratulations for forming a DV Readers Forum at Coimbatore. Every city must have such a forum.

K. V. Sukumaran, Bombay : *The Hindu*, India's blatantly Brahmin paper, has written an editorial (Nov. 27) supporting the Brahmin scientist Raja Ramanna's criticism of the reservations to dalits. The *Hindu* like all Brahmins pleads for the "poverty yardstick" to measure backwardness because it helps Brahmins and their chelas. Can a govt. servant like Ramanna question reservations which are provided in the Constitution? Does it not amount to anti-Constitutional activity. Can we not sue him for becoming a traitor? If the Govt. fails, can we not directly deal with such anti-national people? Will the dalits and other persecuted minorities in his Dept. look into this?

M. Ilas Ansar, Bhadoli, UP : The frankness and boldness of DV is highly commendable. □

easiest to be tackled. Being the poorest & the most culturally deprived, they can be purchased outright. Besides, the latest trick of mesmerising the Untouchables through the process of Hinduising them has paid high dividends. Millions of rupees are spent on this. RSS has also started worshipping Ambedkar. Christians form less than 3% of the population and being mostly connected with running educational bodies & hospitals, they can ill-afford to antagonise the Govt. Since they are also the most literate & articulated people, they seldom get into agitational path. Apart from that, numerically they are no force. Western countries though Christian seldom take interest in their Christian counterparts because they are all capitalist-roaders and hence they get on very well with the Indian Ruling Class. Tribes are posing some problems. Particularly in North Eastern India they have woken up, become aggressive - thanks to Christians. But these Mangloid hill tribes are being crushed by using military. The plains tribes are being subdued through the process of Hinduisation and also banning conversion. The Other Backward Classes (OBCs) are a house divided, torn into hundreds of castes and subcastes. Since OBCs love Hinduism more than they hate the high caste Hindu oppressors, the Ruling Class knows too well that the OBCs can never get united. The Mandal Commission, the OBCs' only hope, is already thrown to wastepaper basket. Besides, the OBCs could be used to fight dalits by aggravating the traditional caste rivalry between the two. That leaves only the Muslims in the field. Even among them already a considerable section has joined

different political parties and thus turned into bonded labourers of these parties all led by high caste Hindus. But a considerable Muslim population is under the influence of its religious leaders who are posing a headache. Since it is only the Muslims who are offering the toughest fight to the Ruling Class, it has decided to teach them a lesson by triggering a series of anti-Muslim riots. The pity is the Muslims do not know this. They are not only poor but too innocent to understand this game. Hence outright snubbing of the 45 MPs of all political parties who for the first time in the history of India cut across differences & decided to speak out for their worst persecuted community. But what happened? The appeal to PM was submitted on Nov. 5, 82 but for some mysterious reasons not made public until Dec 9. The time gap has led to all sorts of speculation. Instead of congratulating the Muslim MPs for unitedly airing their genuine problems, the jaundiced Hindu society is imputing motives. How can we expect justice, truth in a society that is led by its prejudice? How can such a society make any progress? India has the second largest Muslim population in the world but are Muslims treated as equal citizens of India? This will be clear for anybody reading the heart-rending account of India's topmost hockey player, Aslam Sher Khan *To Hell With Hockey* who is eliminated by the Hindus just because he is a Muslim. The Hindus do not mind losing the hockey and the national honour at the Asiad but derive more satisfaction in mocking Muslims. What else to conclude when Hindus shouted *Bharat Mata Ki Jai* as the Asiad hockey finals was going on between India and Pakistan in Delhi? We

THE CRIME OF BEING A MUSLIM IN INDIA

heard this provocative slogan on the TV. What a shame? What *Bharat Mata* got to do with hockey? In their blind prejudice against Muslims, Christians, dalits, OBCs, tribes and now Sikhs, the Ruling Class does not know that it is only pushing the country downhill. Anti-Muslim riots are no longer a clash between the people of two religions. It has turned into a virtual police action. No less a person than Fatsinhrao Gaekwad, ex-Maharaja of Baroda, has said this while referring to the latest Baroda anti-Muslim riots. He said the Muslims have lost confidence in the police which itself was leading the attack on Muslims. Has anybody heard of this in the world outside India? Police killing poor people? How could there be sanity in a society where its most important segment of the population—Muslims—which has contributed so much to enrich the country, is pictured as a Pakistani agent, foreign invader, aggressor, traitor, anti-national? What can we say when a noted Muslim MP, Dr. Rafiq Zakaria, who for all these days is being described by the Hindus as a respected secular-minded leader, is suddenly dubbed communal just because he signed the appeal of the 45 MPs? Is it not the limit to our lunacy? Formerly, only Muslim religious organisa-

tions were being described anti-national but now even "nationalist" Muslims are dubbed traitors. Hindus are never known for their straight thinking. Hindu mind can never be an honest mind. Exceptions apart. If anybody wants to contest this, they must explain how Hindu leaders in Congress, Janata, Lok Dal, BJP found fault with the 45 Muslim MPs for sending this SOS to the PM. We can understand if the critics of SOS had found fault with the facts mentioned in the SOS. But these critics true to their Hindu mind have not gone into the facts of the case. They have twisted the whole thing by questioning the very right of the MPs to protest. Muslims, Christians, dalits, tribes, OBCs, Sikhs are not only persecuted but they have no right to protest also. Victims of communalism are themselves branded communal! Is it not a clear sign of the country heading towards fascism? The problem of India is that the best brains are trapped in Govt. services & the worst brains have become bonded labourers of political parties—all headed by high caste Hindus. Hence party politics holds no hope for dalits, Muslims, OBCs or any other persecuted minorities. But will the slaves of India enjoying their slavery ever learn a lesson? □

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