

DALIT VOICE

The Voice of the Persecuted Nationalities
Denied Human Rights

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Bengal partition annulled under Hindu pressure: Thus Spake Ambedkar

Thus Spake Ambedkar

British annulled partition of Bengal in 1911 under pressure from Hindus

What does this Resolution contemplate? A reference to para 3 of the Resolution will show that the Resolution contemplates that the areas in which Muslims predominate shall be incorporated into independent States. In concrete terms, it means that the Punjab, the North-Western Frontier Province, Baluchistan and Sind in the North-West and Bengal in the East instead of remaining as the provinces of British India shall be incorporated as independent States outside of British India. Is the sum and substance of the Resolution of the Muslim League. The Resolution is so worded as to give the idea that the scheme adumbrated in it is a new one. But, there can be no doubt that the Resolution merely resuscitates a scheme which was put forth by Sir Mahomed Iqbal in his Presidential address to the Muslim League at its Annual Session held at Lucknow in December 1930. The scheme was not then adopted by the League. It was, however, taken up by one Mr. Rehmat Ali who gave it the name Pakistan. Mr. Rehmat Ali, M.A., LL.B., founded the Pakistan Movement in 1933. He divided India into two, namely, Pakistan and Hindustan. His Pakistan included the Punjab, N.W.F. Province, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan. The rest to him was Hindustan. His idea was to have an "independent and separate Pakistan" composed of five Muslim provinces in the North as an independent State. The proposal was circulated to the members of the Round Table Conference but never officially put forth. It seems an attempt was made privately to obtain the assent of the British Government, who, however, declined to consider it because they thought that this was a "revival of the old Muslim Empire." The League has only enlarged the original scheme of Pakistan. It has sought to create one more Muslim State in the East to include the Muslims in Bengal and Assam. Barring this, it expresses in its essence and general outline the scheme put forth by Sir Mahomed Iqbal and propagated by Mr. Rehmat Ali. The schedule not only called Hindu India to attention but it shocked Hindu India. Now it is natural to ask, what is there that is new or shocking in this scheme? (p.23). This division of one province into two, which is known in Indian history as the Partition of Bengal, was an attempt to create a Muslim State in Eastern Bengal, in as much as the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam was, barring parts of Assam, a predominantly Muslim area. But, the partition was abrogated in 1911 by the British who yielded to the Hindus, who were opposed to it and did not care for the wishes of the Muslims, as they were too weak to make themselves felt. If the partition of Bengal had not been annulled, the Muslim State in Eastern Bengal, instead of being a new project, would now have been 39 years old. (p.25). Be that as it may, the fact remains that separation on linguistic basis is now an accepted principle with the Congress. It is no use saying that the separation of Karnatak and Andhra is based on a linguistic difference and that the claim to separation of Pakistan is based on a cultural difference. This is a distinction without difference. Linguistic difference is simply another name for cultural difference. If there is nothing shocking in the separation of Karnatak and Andhra, what is there to shock in the demand for the separation of Pakistan? If it is disruptive in its effect, it is no more disruptive than the separation of Hindu provinces such as Karnatak from Maharashtra or Andhra from Madras. Pakistan is merely another manifestation of a cultural unit demanding freedom for the growth of its own distinctive culture.

(Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings & Speeches, Volume VIII 1990 Rs.40, Govt. of Maharashtra, Bombay). The book may be had from Director, Government Printing, Stationery and Publications, Netaji Subhash Road, Bombay - 400 004.

DALIT VOICEThe Voice of the Persecuted Nationalities
Denied Human Rights**SC/ST/BCs & Muslims must bring back VP with a vengeance**

India's ruling class or the brahminical social order has already made its choice for the coming mini-general elections. And by the time the masses of Indians go to the polls (May 20-26, 1991) to elect the next parliament every effort will be made to manipulate the voters to vote for the Congress, the country's original brahminical party which is the cause for all the country's ills. One and half year's back Rajiv Gandhi was painted as the dirtiest and the most corrupt person steeped in Bofors scandals. And V.P. Singh was then the cleanest, prettiest and the fittest person to become the Prime Minister. The mind-manipulators then succeeded in defeating Rajiv's Congress and electing VP's Janata Dal. But the moment VP implemented the Mandal Com. report he became dirty, corrupt and the country's most hated person. So if we read the country's "national" toilet papers today we can see Rajiv all roses and painted with the brightest colours. Rajiv has again become the darling of the ruling class and every effort will be made to see the SC/ST/BCs and Muslims fall in line. The brahminical social order or the Aryan races know which leadership is advantageous to its caste/class interests. Rajiv was hated then. Today, he is the darling of the upper castes. VP was the darling 18 months ago. Today he is the villain. How could this happen? Is the ruling class mad? No. There is a method in their madness.

Secret Nazi directive: In fact, never before the country's ruling class has been so desperate. It is convinced that VP's return to power must be averted at any cost.

RSS, the country's topmost Hindu Nazi organisation, has sent secret directives to all its cadets and also ordered the BJP, its political arm, to work for the victory of the Congress. An *Economic Times* report reproduced in the *Mainstream* (April 13) says that RSS top bosses conclave to be held on May 8 will take this decision. Hindus feel that VP's come-back will be disastrous and hence they have no other go but to see that the anti-reservation Congress Party is put back to power. India's ruling class has no permanent party. It has only permanent interests — to safeguard its property, position and power. The reservations demand of SC/ST/BC and Muslims — in other words the human rights war of the original inhabitants of India — will get a shot in the arm if VP gets back. So this has to be averted at any cost, not sparing even violence. That is why we have hinted that the coming elections will be the most violent one. How to ensure the defeat of VP? The best way to do is to split the votes of SC/ST/BCs and Muslims who form 85% of the voters. Highest attention will be given to UP, the country's largest state from where VP is contesting, and it is here the anti-reservation Samajwadi Janata Dal (SJP) of Chandra Shekar

and his nominee, Mulayam Singh Yadav, will help the Nazis to split the pro-VP vote. We hope Kanshi Ram's Bahujan Samaj Party will also not work against the interest of the Bahujan Samaj. If all the splitters fail to succeed the march of VP, the Adi Seshans will step in to set aside elections in select booths, engineering violence and publicising it through their toilet papers. If both the Nazi trick before the election and "Marxist" mischief after the poll fail, President Vankaraman may be called upon to deny PM post to VP on the pretext that Punjab and Assam results have not come. No effort will be spared to check the march of VP.

Reject Aryans: The rulers will do whatever they want, what is advantageous to them. But the ruled have also become wise this time, because the 1990-end anti-Mandal war and violence launched by the upper caste rulers is still fresh in their minds. The wounds of the anti-Mandal caste war are still raw. This war neatly divided the country into Mandals and Bandals. And the Mandals have been waiting for an opportunity to wreak vengeance. The rulers also know this and that is why they did not want the mid-term poll so soon. But when the hotch-potch rickety alliance they created collapsed out of its own weight, they were forced to face the elections for which they were not prepared. And we are now in the midst of that long-awaited election. The Mandals have to assert and effectively, peacefully and constitutionally reply the Bandals by rejecting all Aryan forces and re-electing VP back as Prime Minister. For the first time in the history of India we have a clear-cut choice: Bandals vs Mandals.

Those who oppose our human rights must be rejected outright. Even if they are our own people opposing the reservations they too should be rejected. No mercy. Pro-Mandal votes should not be split. We expect the elections to help us consolidate the Indian races against the Aryan races who are opposing our human rights.

Never believe press reports: The Bandals also know this and that is why they are disillusioned if not desperate. It is this desperation that makes them predict a "hung parliament". They convert their desire into opinion and make all of us believe it. Never believe these toilet papers. Newspapers and magazines will soon come out with all sorts of scandalous stories about VP Singh. They will paint him as a demon. They will sing the praise of Rajiv Gandhi. They will make many of our own people to sing and dance for Rajiv Gandhi. We should not believe any of these stories. We should have no confusion. Our goal is clear. We want VP back as PM and then we will force him to implement the Mandal —

not only in employment but also in admission to educational institutions. Because reservations are our human rights and VP is the only leader who has clear-cut ideas on our human rights. That he kicked out notorious Nazis like Arun Nehru and Arif Mohamed Khan proves it. There is yet another danger. The brahminical press will give such a tremendous publicity buildup to BJP that we will be made to feel that this Nazi party would certainly form the next govt. in Delhi. Having created such a fear in our hearts, the press would then say that "since BJP posed the greatest threat to minorities and Dalits, to defeat it they should not mind voting for a lesser evil like the Congress which, alone could check the march of BJP." All sorts of mind-manipulations would be done to bring the voters to such a fix and elect the Congress, the original brahminical party of India. Because this is the last chance for the Aryans to check the march of Indian races. If they fail this time also, they will resort to an extra-constitutional weapon. We must get ready.

"Marxists" may ditch VP: Our "Sacred Thread Marxists", CPM and CPI, are likely to play a dangerous game. No doubt they are with VP via the National Front. But these "Marxists" being upper castes are opposed to reservation (our human rights) and certainly they will not forget their jati interests. We have received reports that if the National Front gets a majority and the Congress comes next, they may ditch VP, switch side and support the Congress to form the govt. If the "sacred thread marxists" do it we will not be surprised. The CPM opposition to the Janata Dal talks with Shahi Imam gave ample clue to

the shape of the things to come. "Socialist brahmins" are more dangerous than "sacred brahmins". We have repeatedly said that these "sacred thread marxists" are a danger. They have joined the National Front only to sabotage VP from inside. And we know it. They have to be tackled after the elections.

There are also reports that since BJP will be receiving the upper caste/Hindu votes which should have otherwise gone to the Congress, the party may have a secret understanding with the Congress and BJP. As the elections near the BJP may even work for the Congress openly to save the Aryan varna interests. In the 1984 elections, BJP-RSS worked for the Congress and defeated its own leader, Blue-eyed boy, Vajpayee, in Delhi. All political parties are Aryan/upper caste parties with the common objective of denying our human rights. So if they all come together to save their Aryan varna we need not be surprised. The truth is that the bulk of our "leadership" – organisational, ideological, legislative, policy-making, at all levels – district, state central – is upper caste Aryan. The knowledge industry is much more upper caste. This Aryan monopoly can be broken only with reservations. Never before the SC/ST/BCs and religious minorities were given a such clear-cut choice. The war and violence on Mandal Com. helped us to see our enemies in naked. Every party other than the VP's is our enemy today. And they should be rejected lock, stock and barrel. The 1991 mini-general elections will be India's first land mark elections paving the way for a peaceful revolution that will consolidate the Indian races.

DEBATE ON KNOWLEDGE INDUSTRY

Casteists parading as social scientists

(*"Teepe", Bangalore*)

This is with reference to your DV edit (March 16) "Searching a backcat." Social science is a profession. The appraisal of social reality is one of the prime concerns of social scientists. Large bodies like the University Grants Commission, Indian Council for Social Science Research and many of their allied concerns sponsor the 'social science enterprise'. But ultimately the 'enterprise' is responsible to the taxpayers. He has a right to know how his money is being spent. It is no exaggeration to say if one were to suggest that social science is an 'elitist profession'. It must become imperative on the part of the establishment to disclose the class and caste affiliations of the social scientists. That would help know the real motives of this brand of knowledge industry. Knowledge is not created in a vacuum. The caste of the social scientists are reflected in their thought patterns. In fact, even the labelling of a popular concept put forward by "an eminent sociologist" bears this stigma. Scholars of the "Marxist" variety are engaged for years in finding a cogent fit between the theoretical scheme and the existential reality. They have remained indifferent to the question of 'Praxis'. Mind you, they owe no allegiance to the ideology perse. They are only applying a particular mode of enquiry in a detached, impersonal and scientific manner. Some heat has been generated regarding the 'perceptual bias' of the researchers. Proponents of the 'Sub altern school of history' have denounced the existing tradition as 'elitist perspective'. Abortive attempts have been made by scholars to examine reality from the *bottom* of the social space. Can a Dominique Lapierre (City of Joy) capture the reality of Calcutta by dwelling in one of the ghettos? Such are the efforts of our social scientists. The former is an 'imperialist elite' and the latter a 'populist elite'. A serious discipline like 'psychology' has been stagnating for a number of decades. Indian psychologists have remained relatively indifferent to the country's problems. Their research priorities have no reference to the existing socio-economic-political realities. It has been reduced to a *status-quoist discipline*. It cannot even boast of a veneer of social and public accountability. This decadence can be partly attributed to the *class/caste character* of our psychologists. Sociologists are more sensitive to this issue. But sadly, their existential concerns are incompatible with their intellectual demands. The 'State' has a stake in the knowledge industry. Most of the research institutions are run by the 'State' viz UGC, ICSSR etc. Often, there is a happy collusion between the sponsors and the researchers. Consequently, our social science academia has developed this wonderful capacity of elevating 'basic human issues' to the status of value neutrality. They have become desensitized, kind of emotional morons.

ALL ARAB RULERS MUST BE OVERTHROWN

As wars go, the US-led high-tech assault on Iraq was a total mismatch. President Saddam Hussain of Iraq and his military machine were projected larger than life to provide justification for the deployment of hundreds of thousands of western troops and thousands of tanks and planes to destroy Iraq. Despite public gloating in the US about a great 'victory', there was no war in the sense of real confrontation between the two sides. Saddam's military machine created by the west was ultimately destroyed by it.

It is important to delineate the different strands in this war. It had little to do with the liberation of Kuwait although in a convoluted way, that has been achieved, if a US-occupied Kuwait could be called 'free'. The UN too has been exposed as a mere tool of the US. President George Bush used the UN security council resolutions as a cover to assemble one of the largest armies since the Second World War in the Arabian Peninsula to teach a dictator from the 'third world' a

lesson as to who was boss. With or without UN resolutions Bush would have attacked Iraq. One need hardly look beyond Panama for proof. *This war was really about washing away the shame of US defeats in Vietnam, Iran and Lebanon.* In a speech on February 28, Bush admitted as much: "Thank God, the Vietnam syndrome has been buried." *It was also about glorifying US-manufactured weapons of mass destruction and, finally, to reestablish US hegemony in a region that was rapidly coming under the influence of the Islamic movement.*

Once cornered, Saddam, in the tradition of all secular rulers in the Muslim world, wrapped himself up in the Islamic grab. The ruling elites are aware of the Muslim masses' deep attachment to Islam. The elites exploit this sentiment to further their personal and parochial ambitions. Though Muslims categorically reject Bush's pretensions to be their spokesman, when he asserts that this was not a war between Islam and the west, there is some truth in it: Saddam's objectives and the nature of his regime were not Islamic. *It was a war between a 'third world' nationalist/secular country and the west. In a sense, it was really the defeat of an ideology created by the west to banish Islam.*

The pro-Saddam euphoria that swept through the world of Islam in recent weeks was in fact a public expression of the anti-western sentiment that has become part of Muslim political culture throughout the world. Future governments in all Muslim countries will have to take this mood of their peoples into account. The conduct of the war too has reinforced the Muslims'

view of the west and what it stands for. The air bombardment that went on for six weeks has been brutal in the extreme. Air superiority over Iraq had been achieved within days, if not hours, of launching the war on January 16. Yet, it continued unrelentlessly until February 27, destroying not only Iraq's infrastructure but, more significantly, killing hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians. *This war has once again shown that the west does not care how many people they kill so long as the dead are not Jews or white.* Reports from our sources in Iraq suggest that the air bombardment may have killed as many as 500,000 innocent civilians in Iraq.

This war has also established the incontrovertible fact that all of today's Arab rulers are clients of the west. None of them is capable of solving any of the problems of their countries, peoples or the region. They were placed in power for quite a different purpose: to serve the interests of their masters in Washington, London or Paris. The invasion and occupation of the heartland of Islam by the forces of kufr shows that these client rulers have completely failed to fulfil even the task assigned to them. *All of them must now be overthrown, including Saddam Husain, the amir of Kuwait, the Saudi dynasty, the Hashemite family in Jordan and presidents Mubarak and Asad. They have brought nothing but shame and destruction upon their people.*

(We found the following editorial in a Muslim journal of international repute published from Canada fully endorsing our report, "Muslim masses in India must throw out corrupt leadership," DV April 16, 1991 p.15. We are happy that our ideas are catching up — EDITOR.)

The overthrow of any one of them, specially the Saudi dynasty, would open up vast possibilities for the Islamic movement to restructure the entire region for the benefit of the oppressed Muslim masses. (Editorial in *the Crescent International*, March 16, 1991)

FAISAL AWARD TO NASSEEF

Mecca: Dr. Abdullah Omar Nasseef, Secretary-General of the Muslim World League, has won this year's King Faisal International Prize for Service to Islam. The prize in Arabic literature was shared by Ahmad Mahmood Najeeb, Abd Attawab Yousuf Ahmad (both Egyptians) and Ali Abdul Qader al-Siqilli of Morocco. The prizes amounting to \$ 2.36 million will be distributed in May at a colourful ceremony in Riyadh. The committee "unanimously resolved" to award the prize to Dr. Nasseef in appreciation of his services to Islam and Muslims. "Long before he assumed his present functions... Dr. Nasseef had a distinguished record as a youth leader and an Islamic conference convener," the committee said. At the head of the League, Dr. Nasseef supervised the implementation of projects for the alleviation of poverty, ignorance and disease among the Muslims worldwide. (*Muslim World News* April 8).

New Muslim leadership

New Delhi: The existing Muslim leadership may well become irrelevant and a new "joint leadership" — of Sunnis and Shias — capable of swaying the community is emerging. If this comes about — as quite a sizable section of the Muslim community apparently unhappy with the present set of leaders is hopeful — this may upset the calculations of the major political parties — the Congress (1) and the Janata Dal in particular — which have been pinning their hopes on Muslim leaders of various sects and groups. Thinking on these lines has emerged in the community and several informal meetings have been held by various Muslim religious leaders. A significant feature of these efforts is that they have apparently brought to the negotiating table leaders of even such Muslim sects which are supposed to be traditional antagonists. The fact that the Muslim leaders are interested in continuing the talks shows that they find the idea of a "joint leadership" worthy enough to pursue particularly at a time when they are themselves under pressure from the disgruntled elements within their own ranks.

Vacuum felt: But why then this feeling of "a vacuum in Muslim leadership"? The reason is not difficult to find. The Muslim community feels that for the first time since Independence it is powerful enough to influence the course of the elections in a significant way. For have not many political parties been courting them of late? According to Maulana Syed Mohammed Musavi, leader of the Shia sect and president of the Supreme Council of Ulema and Khutaba, the country has more than 20 crore Muslims. Though most of them are Sunnis, Shias are "certainly not less than four crores, if not more." (*The Hindu* April 22). ■

Hindus desecrate church

New Delhi: Scores of priests, bishops and Christian leaders on April 10 staged a dharna at the Boat Club to protest against the alleged desecration of the Cross at the Methodist Church premises in north Delhi by the Civil Lines police and a builder on April 8 night. Bishop S.K. Parmar, the resident bishop, sat on fast till death there. Bishop S.K. Parmar told reporters that the builder Rajesh Ahuja and the staff of Civil Lines police had come to 4, Battery Lane premises of the Methodist Church of India on April 8 night and had desecrated the cross. When the members of the church present there objected to it, the policemen threatened them with dire consequences. The Bishop said the builder wanted to take possession of the premises which the church authorities had refused to do. (*Hindustan Times*, April 11). ■

Veeramani in US

Bangalore: Dravida Khazgham Chief K. Veeramani underwent a heart surgery in Milwaukee on April 18 and will be taking rest in US for sometime. Dv wishes speedy recovery. ■

Jesuits realise their mistake

Bombay: The Jesuit Fathers who run St. Xavier's College here and 34 other institutions in Maharashtra, are among 29 colleges and 92 high schools in the country that celebrated the 500th anniversary of their founder, St. Ignatius Loyola, and the 450th anniversary of the founding of the Society, on April 20.

The Society of Jesus existed in India and in Bombay for over 400 years. The first Jesuit to come to India, Fr. Francis Xavier, SJ., left Lisbon on April 7, 1541 (450 years ago). The Society of Jesus was founded Sept. 27, 1540. The group grew to over 36,000 at its peak in 1966. After that, because of the turmoil in the world of values in religion, there has been a sharp decrease in its numbers. By the end of 1972, Jesuits were a little over 30,000. Today the total number of Jesuits in the world is 24,421. India is the country with the second largest number of Jesuits (2,997), after the United States with 4,724. Spain comes third with 2,229. In India, the Jesuits run 29 colleges, 9 technical institutions and 92 high schools. Some of the better known ones among these are St. Xavier's College, Bombay; Xavier Labour Relations Institute (XLRI), Jamshedpur, St. Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli; Loyola College, Madras; St. Aloysius College, Mangalore, St. Xavier's College, Ahmedabad, and St. Xavier's College, Calcutta.

Today, the Jesuits feel that the problem of poverty and injustice is more important than running established educational institutions. There is a strong move to shift from established institutional work to working with the poor and the marginalised. Concretely, this has meant giving up prestigious education institutions and other such works and moving Jesuit personnel to areas of work with the poor.

Thus, for instance, in Bombay, the Jesuits gave up the prestigious Campion High School in South Bombay which catered to the relatively richer section of society. At the same time, they opened 11 new middle and high schools in the rural areas around Talasari. (*Times of India*, April 17). ■

Racist Bush opposing Blacks

Washington: US President George Bush has been accused here of "fanning flames of racial intolerance" and of failing to fulfil his civil rights pledge to protect minorities against all forms of discrimination. The Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights said that not only had President Bush failed to live up to his pledge to combat segregation, but had undermined civil rights protections on many fronts. The Commission accused Bush of fanning the flames of racial intolerance by threatening to veto the Democratic-sponsored Civil Rights Bill and insisting that the legislation would trigger workplace quotas. The Commission, made up of 14 former federal civil rights officials, said Bush "fell back on the callous strategies of his campaign" by insisting that the Civil Rights Bill that had the backing of all civil rights and minority groups, would force employers to hire and promote fixed numbers of minorities and women." (*Indian Express*, April 22). ■

TN Dalit Christians assert their human rights inside church

Tirunelveli: The present struggle of Dalit Christians in Tamil Nadu for their "rightful place" in the Church and its institutions has not been free from violence in Palayamkottai diocese. A 2,000-strong mob of Dalit Christians made the 63-year-old Bishop, Rt. Rev. S. Iruthayaraj, sign under duress an agreement on Oct. 26, 1990. In another incident, there was vandalism on the premises of a Church-run school at Chidambarapuram on March 8 this year. Police were obliged to intervene in the school incidents and they arrested a few persons, including Francis, father of Chidambarapuram parish priest, Rev. Fr. Gnanaprakasam. Fr. Gnanaprakasam figures as the first accused in the police FIR. The police have identified 34 persons and over 100 other identifiable persons as accused.

Palayamkottai diocese, carved out of the erstwhile Madurai archdiocese in 1973, comprises the western parts of Tirunelveli-Kattabomman district and north-western parts of Chidambaranar district. Rev. Iruthayaraj has been its Bishop since its formation. The diocese has 27 parishes and 40 ordained priests.

Fr. Gnanaprakasam and Fr. M. Arul are the only Dalit members of the Diocesan clergy. Fr. Arul is now in the Philippines, pursuing higher studies. Fr. Gnanaprakasam was holding charge of Chidambarapuram parish and the schools under it until March this year. He was divested of the correspondentship of the schools in the first week of March on the ground that he had committed some gross violations of the rules of appointment.

The first incident which attracted the public eye took place at Bharathi Nagar on the Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur road, about 12 km from here, and it indicated that the Dalits would not take the action against the priest lying down.

The Diocese owns a well-irrigated 40-acre agricultural model farm at Bharathi Nagar. The big elegant building, situated in the middle of coconut palms, is used for training social workers and it is managed by one of the organisations of the diocese called the Tirunelveli Social Service Society.

The Bishop and about 30 priests were there on a five-day retreat. About 2,000 Dalits, led by Prof. M.S. Arockiaswamy of St. Xavier's College, president of the Palayamkottai unit of the Dalit Christian Movement of Tamil Nadu, took them by surprise on Oct. 26, the concluding day of the retreat.

The Dalit Catholics, who had arrived from all over the diocese, converged at the adjoining Arockianathapuram and marched to the farm shortly after noon, shouting slogans. They compelled their Bishop to sign an agreement that a commission

comprising Dalit leaders and diocesan representatives would be set up to make a survey of the socio-economic conditions of the Dalits, etc.

The Diocesan procurator, Rev. Fr. M. Susai Marian, said that the Bishop had been reluctant to sign such a unilateral agreement.

But Prof. Arockiaswamy had a different version. Explaining the encounter, he said that it was the Bishop who had called them there. He said that the Bishop had been a good one until he had allowed himself to be guided by a group of young priests who wanted to perpetuate the present discriminatory treatment to the Dalits.

He also refuted the charge that the Dalits in Palayamkottai had been acting on the advice of a Madurai-based Jesuit organisation called Institute for Development, Education, Action and Service (IDEAS). He agreed that he had collected data on the Dalits in the State and chalked out programmes for their upliftment.

Prof. Arockiaswamy said that the first ray of hope for better days dawned on them when the 14 Catholic Bishops of Tamil Nadu, who held a three-day meeting at Vellore in January 1990, declared the nineties the decade of Dalit Christians. A ten-point scheme to improve their lot was also chalked out. But nothing was done.

In the light of this promise, the Dalits of Palayamkottai diocese submitted a memorandum to their Bishop on May 30, 1990, to urge him to carry out the promises. The Bishop had agreed to do so, but apparently changed his mind at the instance of a group of young priests.

However, the meeting was held between Prof. Arockiaswamy and the Bishop's representative, Thamburaj, on Oct. 29. But it ended in failure and mutual recriminations. The non-Dalit Catholics became aggressive and called upon the clergy not to take any unilateral decisions regarding Diocesan matters without consulting them. Dalit leaders charged the non-Dalit members with trying to manhandle Fr. Gnanaprakasam right under the Bishop's nose. (*Indian Express*, Madurai, April 10).

Biography of Babasaheb released

New Delhi: Prime Minister Chandra Shekar on April 23 released a biography on Babasaheb Ambedkar brought out by the National Book Trust (NBT). The biography is both in Hindi and Marathi and has been authored by Vasant Moon, a research scholar from Nagpur. Shekar lauded the efforts of NBT in publishing books on national leaders and said more could be written on different facets of Dr. Ambedkar's personality. (*Indian Express*, April 24).

The International Dalit Support Group

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Advisor — Runoko Rashidi

Dear Sister/Brother,

We have recently started an organization, "The International Dalit Support Group (IDSG)", to support our suffering Dalit (The Black Untouchables of India) brothers and sisters. By helping the Dalits, we are in fact helping India as a whole, and promoting its unity and integrity. Your support is very important to us and we are counting on you. The Dalits of India will appreciate your help and support. Probably the most substantial percentage of Asia's Blacks can be identified among India's approximately 160 million Untouchables or Dalits. They are probably the most oppressed and exploited people on earth. India's Untouchables number more than the combined populations of England, France, Belgium and Spain. Frequently they are called Outcastes. Dalit, meaning crushed and broken, is a name that has come into prominence only within the last three decades. **Objectives** : 1. To educate the American public in general, and the United States elected officials in particular, about the status and the pathetic living conditions of the Dalits, the Black Untouchables of India. The Dalits have been segregated, discriminated against, oppressed, victimized and denied all basic human rights for centuries strictly on the basis of the teachings and practices of the Hindu religious Caste System. The primary purpose of the International Dalit Support Group is to massively publicize the Dalit issue, which has been largely hidden by the Hindus for all these years. 2. To provide all possible assistance to the Dalits in their difficult struggle for advancement in education, in gaining self-respect, in protecting their human rights, and to channel the energies of all those interested in creating positive change. **Membership**: Membership is open to all persons genuinely interested in understanding the horrible condition of the Dalit people and willing to do their part, no matter how small or how big it may be, to pull them out of the hell they are living in. General Member — US \$ 25.00 per year, Life Member — 250, patron — 500. The IDSG is not a non-profit organization as per the Internal Revenue Code, and therefore your membership and other contributions to it are not tax deductible. One of the prime aims of the IDSG is to develop and maintain contact with as many elected officials as possible in order to educate them of the plight of the Dalits. Such activities are not permitted if an organization is to have a non-profit status. **Officers**: The following three persons will coordinate the IDSG:- Velu Annamalai — President — Houston, Texas, Victor Jackson — Vice President — San Antonio, Texas, Runoko Rashidi — Advisor — Los Angeles, California. Velu Annamalai is also acting as Secretary cum Treasurer.

Mailing Address: The International Dalit Support Group, P.O. Box 842066, Houston, Texas 77284-2066, USA.

Violation of human rights in India

Washington: A human rights organisation has charged that torture in India was more pervasive than in many authoritarian countries in Asia. Asia Watch, part of the larger American Human Rights Watch, in a report released here entitled "Prison conditions in India", asserted that even if India was the world's largest democracy with free elections and a multi-party election system etc., "something has gone wrong in India", because checks and balances of democracy were not working. The slim report, which Asia Watch declares was written without the cooperation of the Indian Government, concludes that in areas outside those where emergency regulations prevail, criminal suspects from India's underclasses, arrested for relatively minor offences, are more likely to be the victims of police brutality than prisoners who have committed violent crimes against the State. The report is based on a two-week visit to India in October last year by Aryeh Neier, Executive Director of Human Rights Watch, and David Rothman, professor of society and medicine at Columbia University, who were separately detained briefly by officers of the Bombay police special branch and interrogated about their purposes, itinerary and identity of those they had met in India. —(Indian Express, April 9).

Aryans frustrating human rights movement in India

Washington: The Asia Watch, a Washington-based human rights organisation, has blamed India's educated middle class for the failure of the civil liberties movements in the country where, it says, the lower class gets a raw deal from the law enforcement machinery. Its report, on the prison conditions in India, says the fact that the educated middle class has not felt the need to support a strong civil liberties movement is only one of the factors that seems to be responsible for its inability to develop strong institutions. Another factor, it cites, is the lack of adequate financial support from other sources. The report, prepared by Aryeh Neier, Executive Director of Human Rights Watch, and Prof. David Rothman of Columbia University, who made a two-week tour of India last October, notes that the religions which are most influential within the country have not identified themselves with the human rights cause. Though India's human rights groups are devoted to the protection of such persons and do excellent work on their behalf, they have not succeeded in making civil liberties a reality for India's have-nots. Whenever middle class and upper class dissenters were imprisoned, they were generally spared the abuses in police lock-ups as Class A or Class C prisoners — (Deccan Herald, April 11).

Editor: Since India has no "classes" but only "castes", the reference to "middle class" in the above American report should to be taken as upper castes/Aryans/savarnas.

Self-determination for Kashmir: Human rights leaders' demand

New Delhi: Noted civil liberties and human rights activists, among them Inder Mohan, Justice V.M. Tarkunde, Minoo Masani, Gauri Bajaj Malik and N.D. Pancholi, feel it is time the Kashmiris were given the right to self-determination. They are against India's holding on to the strife-torn state at gunpoint, and want a more sympathetic approach towards the Kashmiris' demand for independence.

While some would even go as far as to say that Kashmir was never an integral part of India and will never be, a majority also advocate a federal structure, granting maximum autonomy to the state. However, they are all unanimous on at least two counts: that Article 370 should be restored to its original form and the security forces should be immediately withdrawn from the valley.

These views were expressed last month at a seminar organised by the Coordination Committee on Kashmir (set up in October last year by civil liberties activists, with Tarkunde as the chairman).

Persons like the committee chairman Tarkunde, besides Minoo Masani and Inder Mohan, have been advocating independence for Kashmir for quite some time now.

Why are we so allergic to independence (of Kashmir)? asks Mohan. Instead of vociferously opposing the demand, the Centre should negotiate with the people of Kashmir, he says. It could be towards maximum autonomy, it could be towards an independent Kashmir. Article 370 is nothing, we have to concede much more, he warns.

State terrorism: If the people of Kashmir want independence, says the PUCL activist, it does not necessarily mean that they are not patriotic or secular.

But in view of the state repression they have suffered for four decades, their demand for independence is not unjustified and needs to be considered sympathetically and objectively. He then becomes more categorical: we should not try to possess Kashmir. It is already lost.

Inder Mohan, who has been associated with the Valley since his student days in Lahore in the 40's, maintains that since 1953 Kashmir has suffered rigged elections, government installed by the Centre, unparalleled corruption, and lately, brutal repression by the security forces. And whenever the people protested, they have been labelled as pro-Pakistan, he points out.

Nehru's mistake: Tarkunde says a people who have a distinct language, culture and religion and who constitute an overwhelming majority in the Kashmir valley cannot be retained in India by force and against their will for an indefinite period.

Had a plebiscite been held in Kashmir after its accession to India, as per the recommendation of the United Nations, it would certainly have been in favour of India. One of the biggest mistakes committed by Jawaharlal Nehru, maintains Tarkunde, was to back out of the plebiscite proposal on the wholly irrelevant ground that Pakistan in the meantime had accepted arms and entered into a military pact with the United States.

Minoo Masani, editor of *Freedom First* and a well-known human rights activist, in an article reproduced in the *Radical Humanist* around the same time, writes: the state of Jammu Kashmir was never a part of India. Let me repeat that at the time of the transfer of power by the British, Kashmir was not a part of India. Lord Mountbatten gave the Maharaja of Kashmir the option, if he so desired, to join either India or Pakistan....India later forgot all about the plebiscite

and to this day the people of Kashmir Valley have been denied the right of self-determination.

The advice of holding a plebiscite in Kashmir may not be palpable to many, but reiterates that sooner or later, it would have to be carried out. And at least one advantage of holding it early is that we could stop spending the large amounts on Kashmir that we do, without getting any gratitude.

J.P.'s verdict: Advocate N.D. Pancholi, another veteran member of the *Radical Humanist Association*, and a founder-member of *Citizens for Democracy*, (CFD) started by Jayaprakash Narayan, also

upholds the Kashmiris right to self-determination. They should be allowed to have their own government, India could keep foreign affairs, defence and communication.

The bedrock for most of these humanists today, however, are the words and verdict of Jayaprakash Narayan, who had gone to the Pakistani President, Gen. Ayub Khan, as the emissary of Prime Minister, Mr Lal Bahadur Shastri to find a solution to the Kashmir issue. He came back with Gen. Ayub Khan's suggestion that Ladakh and Jammu should join India and the Kashmir valley be given independence, which was shot down by the Prime Minister.

In an article in an English daily in 1964, JP wrote: I

Self-determination front

New Delhi: The Tamil National Front, Shiromani Akali Dal (Mann) and Sanjokta Lok Parishad, Assam, have come together to form a "Nationalities Front of India", representatives of the three groups announced on April 19. Demanding the right of self-determination, the groups claimed that they did not believe in secession. Nibarani Bora has been appointed Chairman, K. Nagaimugan, co-ordinator, and S.S. Mann the convenor of the organisation. The decision to form the Front was taken at a meeting in Chandigarh by the three persons. The Front has promised to "end the monopoly of Uttar Pradesh and Hindi rule in India and exploitation of non-Hindi States and people by Delhi and will fight for a fool-proof system of language-wise or state-wise rotation for the Prime Minister of India. Bora was at one time a leader in the All-Assam Gana Sangram Parishad. Nagaimugan claimed that "nationalism did not mean having a Prime Minister from Uttar Pradesh." He said the DMK and Telugu Desam had lost their regional character as they were part of the National Front. (*Hindu* April 20).

may be lacking in patriotism or other virtues, but it has always seemed to me to be a lie to say that the people of Kashmir had already decided to integrate

themselves with India. They might do so, but have not done so yet. (*Times of India*, April 21). ■

MORE THOUGHTS ON CONFEDERATION

India is multi-national: Force can't promote unity

(Our correspondent)

Bangalore: S.B. Kolpe, a noted journalist and editor of the *Clarity Weekly*, Bombay, said here on April 17 that India is a multinational country and unless we admit and appreciate this fact we will land in serious crisis. "The Soviet Union, which is now cracking, has taught us that nobody can keep a set of people together by use of force". Georgia has declared independence from Moscow. Other nationalities are defying Moscow. "India should seriously study the Soviet developments and appreciate the peoples' movement inside India for self-determination", he said addressing a group of people at the Friends World College (DV edit: "Self-determination for each nation.")

E.P. Menon, Director of the College, presided. The group had organised the Jan. 3 seminar here on Confederation (DV March 1 p.17, "Confederation of Indian sub-continent with full autonomy for each nationality").

Kolpe, who was with the undivided Communist Party, later became the president of the Indian Federation of Working Journalists. He was the Asst. Editor of the *Free Press Journal*, Bombay. Lately he was getting disillusioned with the left movement and coming closer to the Ambedkar movement.

Those present included Babu Bhasker who just retired as the Associate Editor of the *Deccan Herald* and Dr. Vasu, retired professor of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, and activists of the self-determination conference scheduled for June 15/16 in Bangalore (DV, May 1, p.15).

Self-determination: The Jan 3 seminar was inspired by the one organised by Kolpe in Bombay in which the West Bengal Forward Bloc Minister, Nirmal Bose, participated. Forward Bloc (FB) founded by Neetaji Subhaschandra Bose had opposed the partition of India and continued to fight for the confederation of the sub-continent. FB has already arranged four meetings on this subject in different parts and is planning an all-India conference. The June 15/16 conference here is a step in this direction. Nirmal Bose and Biju Patnaik, Chief Minister of Orissa, who has lately become a protagonist of regional autonomy, are expected to participate in the Bangalore conference.

Kolpe said he was not surprised by the behaviour of Kashmiris "after what we did for them during the past 40 years." Not only Kashmiris, many other sections of

society also do not feel that they are part of India, he said warning the people to make a serious study of what is happening in USSR. Even leaders like Mahanta (Assam), Biju Patnaik (Orissa), who are no Marxists have started talking of self-determination. All this proves that a debate has begun in India on the nationality question. "The autonomy movement will gain ground and it is going to erupt in a big way", he said, pointing out that the two issues — regional autonomy and confederation of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh — are not contradictory but closely interlocked. "It is true that the authorities in Pakistan and Bangladesh may feel suspicious of the Confederation move. But if we contact the leaders spearheading the nationality movements in both the countries and also Sri Lanka, we will certainly get the support.

Myth of Indian nation: Babu Bhasker said the State in India is imperialist and oppressive and that is why the ruling class is creating the myth of Indian nation so that the oppressed nationalities do not rebel and revolt. "The most important prerequisite of a nation is the will to live together. If the will is not there, the country will break. The will to live together is the ultimate test. If the economy had been sound, the differences would have remained submerged. The breakup of the USSR is owing to the fact that Soviet economy is cracking. The Indian economy is rotting. Instead of collectively saving the Indian economy from collapse, we are busy breaking it", he said.

Divide the oppressors: V.T. Rajshekar, editor, *Dalit Voice*, said that scholars in India are not giving thought to the "nationality question" which today has become the most important question before the country. The Marxists once upon a time were advocates of nationality question. But lately as the Left leadership passed into the hands of upper castes they are also singing the song of Hindu Nazis. As Dalits are a separate sub-nation within each nation, they will have to take keen interest in the nationality question. *Unless we divide our oppressors and weaken them it will be very difficult to fight them.* Hence in DV we give special importance to the nationality question and the confederation of the sub-continent. We are interested in uniting the sub-continent as the Dalits are scattered in all the four countries. Confederation will unite Dalits and other persecuted nationalities scattered in the sub-continent. It will also reduce the percentage of Aryans, he said. ■

London Centenary awards to eminent Ambedkarites

(C. Gautam, London)

The grand function of the Ambedkar Birth Centenary Celebration in the UK was held on the April 14 at the Commonwealth Hall, the Royal Commonwealth Society in London, to coincide with the actual birth-date of Babasaheb Ambedkar and represented the culmination of two years of functions, exhibitions, seminars and lectures in UK in honour of the life and work of this greatest Indian after the Buddha.

Among the guests were the High Commissioner for India, Dr. L.M. Singhvi; Nirmal Roy, the Mayor of Camden; Lord Bottomley; Baroness Shreela Flather; Dr William Stones, Chair of the Karuna Trust (Aid for India). The special guest of the day was Countess Mountbatten of Burma.

The Hall was packed and the attention of the audience was held throughout. People had travelled from far and wide: representatives from Ambedkarite organisations in India, USA, Canada, Germany and Denmark attended.

C. Gautam, General Secretary of the Ambedkar Centenary Celebration Committee, in his welcome speech said: "The long-awaited time for the fulfilment of the mission to which Dr. Ambedkar dedicated his life has truly arrived. Dr Ambedkar was India's greatest crusader for human rights."

Midha Jakhu, a reasearch student, said Dr. Ambedkar's philosophy has continued to gain respect and influence.

H.L. Virdee, President, and D.R. Rattu, General Secretary of the Federation of Ambedkarite and Buddhist Organisations, followed Gautam.

Buddha brought back to India: Dr William Stones (Dhammachari Virabhadra), appreciated the efforts the Committee had made in bringing together Ambedkarite organisations. As a British Buddhist who has done social work in India, he related how he felt a link, almost a personal link, with the work of Dr Ambedkar: he had seen the legacy of Babasaheb's work in India.

The Ven. Dr Sirisumana from Buddhist vihara, Birmingham, stated that the day's gathering was a fitting way to honour Dr Ambedkar's memory as the true revivalist of Buddhism in modern India. Babasaheb brought the Buddha back to the land of his birth.

Baroness Shreela Flather, first person of Indian origin in the House of Lords, called for applause for the Committee for organising such a splendid celebration day for the Ambedkar Birth Centenary.

Lord Bottomley referred to the Round Table Conference of 1931, when he first came into contact with Dr. Ambedkar, thus providing a fascinating living testimony to those historical events which occurred 60 years ago. Later, in 1946, Prime Minister Clement

Attlee sent, a group of MPs, including Lord Bottomley, to India as a commission deciding several important issues relating to the coming Independence. It was Lord Bottomley's particular mission, as an MP with a trade union background, to meet Dr Ambedkar in order to discuss labour conditions and rights in India. Dr. Ambedkar had been instrumental in establishing many trade unions and preparing laws recognising these rights.

Centenary Awards presented: Dr. L.M. Singhvi paid a glowing tribute which revealed new aspects of Dr. Ambedkar's work relating to the drafting of the Constitution and at the same time his crusade for human rights. The High Commissioner also launched the publication of Volume III of the Ambedkar Centenary Commemoration souvenir on the day. This third volume is the completion of a series which has won acclaim from academics and Ambedkarites alike worldwide.

Chanan Chahal, Chairman ACCC, UK, gave a speech summarising the lasting value and message of Ambedkar's life's work and emphasising the importance of the Centenary Celebration. Dr. Ambedkar indicated the direction for a path leading to a just society, he said.

Countess Mountbatten of Burma made the presentation of Ambedkar Centenary Awards on behalf of the Committee. The presentation was made to the following, among whom some were present to receive their awards in person. The other will be given at later ceremonies. Lord Bottomley; posthumously, Ven Dr. H. Saddhatissa; Ven Bhante Sangharakshita; Kenneth Griffith; Cllr Sinna Mani; posthumously, Richard Hauser; Reverend Jesse Jackson; Nelson Mandela; Ram Vilas Paswan; Bhagwan Das; L.R. Balley; I. Shivalingaiah; Vasant Moon; N.C. Rattu; Anand Teltumbde; V.T. Rajshekar; Ramesh Chandra Parmar; People's Education Society; Dr Ambedkar Memorial Committee GB, Wolverhampton.

M.S. Bahal, Publicity Secretary of the ACCC, thanked the guests.

Nazis divided on Hindutva

New Delhi: The Hindu Mahasabha has "spurned" the offer of the Bharatiya Janata Party to merge the Mahasabha into BJP. Addressing a Press conference, Balarao Savarkar, president of the Mahasabha, said his party on the advice of Mahant Avaidyanath, former MP, had agreed to contest elections on the BJP symbol, but the BJP leadership wanted to "swallow us". Criticizing the BJP, Mr Savarkar said the BJP was "fooling" the people. "In order to appease the Muslims, the BJP will not help construct the Ram Temple at Ayodhya", he said. ■

Letters to Editor

Timothy Frazier, Jr., Dover, USA: I am an African-American. I have just finished reading the *African Presence in Early Asia* in which you have contributed a chapter on India's Black Untouchables. Although the problems facing my people here in US are many and seem to be multiplying daily, I cannot help being moved by the plight and persecution of my Black brothers. I want to read all your books and also *Dalit Voice* to study India so that I can know what I can do for you people.

Dennis Walker, Melbourne, Australia: A scholarly collection on world nationality movements is soon coming out from Delhi and London. I am finalising my contribution on the Black Muslims and your relations with Louis Farrakhan in a two-page section.

John Trimble, Atlanta, USA: Today (Jan. 19), 91 years ago, Henry Sylvester Williams and W.E.B. DuBis helped organise the First-Pan-African Conference. It is with the same spirit of Pan-Africanism that I commend the *Dalit Voice* for its constant work of bringing to the attention of Africans around the world the gallant struggle Dalits are waging against brahminism. I talked to Ken Carr in California. He is working on developing a video tape on the Dalit struggle that we can distribute throughout the All-African People's Revolutionary Party, and other African and progressive organisations to increase the awareness of Dalit struggle in India.

P.P. Lakshman, New York: Dr. Velu Annamalai sent me photo-copies of *Dalit Voice* which I had never seen before. I come from Cannanore in Kerala and hail from the Thiyya nationality. I read DV with great interest from cover to cover which one seldom does with other magazines. This shows that DV echoes the voice of many Indians like myself outside India. Being a writer myself, I can imagine the effort and the painstaking studies that lie behind many of the articles in DV, particularly its very fine editorials. I have developed a great admiration for DV. I am taking copies of your Jan. 1 DV edit, "Hindu unity" for distribution among my friends and also at the Columbia University forthcoming function on Dr. Ambedkar centenary.

Dr. Y.N. Kly, International Human Rights Association of American Minorities, Albert, Regina, Canada: I became aware of a few significant errors caused by two important technical misunderstandings made by the Editors of the IHRAAM Newsletter. First, it is important to note that a human rights treaty has to be ratified by a state before it becomes binding on that state. As we know, the US is reluctant to ratify human rights treaties. Secondly and most important, a

Declaration such as the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Minorities is not a treaty, but a Declaration (*a priori* statement) and not bidding). This is true although, in many respects, the Declaration on the Rights of Minorities may reflect standards that are already binding on states, whether by virtue of other treaties that they have ratified, or as a part of customary international law. In any case, the formal legal position is often less important than the fact that Declaration, when completed, will probably represent a universal benchmark against which the performance of all countries with respect to their minorities can be measured. While Covenants and Conventions are treaties, Resolutions and Declarations are not.

Purnachandra Rao, Hyderabad: In the last few consecutive issues you have been asking us to work for V.P. Singh. But every English and language daily as well as magazine has been predicting that Rajiv Gandhi would be the next PM. Betting has started and businessmen are backing the Congress horse. Whom to believe?

(The newspaper reading population is not even 30% of India's 850-million population. The ruling class comprising just 15% of the population is preparing the minds of the voters to vote for the Congress. The ruling class knows its interest and it also knows that the Congress will serve its interest. But the 85% of the non-Aryan indigenous population comprising its SC/ST/BCs and religious minorities also know their interest and are sure that only V.P. Singh can help serve their interest. The ruling class has its national toilet papers to publicise their desire and convert their desire into public opinion. But we have none except *Dalit Voice*. Please read the editorial to further correctly understand the mind-manipulators game — EDITOR).

Kamal Jit, Chandigarh: I wish to bring to your notice a case of malpractice in military recruitment in Punjab. Employment exchanges are playing this fraud and military officers select candidates of their choice. In the recent interviews of firemen held on Oct. 22/23, 1990 in FOD/CO 56 APO Ammunition Depot, Bathinda, many irregularities have taken place. False certificates were used. Two Army Majors were responsible for this. Five candidates secured jobs because of this. It is a clear case of forgery and the selection of these candidates must be set aside. The Deputy Commissioner, Bathinda, is fully aware of this fraud.

Munshi Ram, Kanpur: Kanshi Ram's Bahujan Samaj Party, according to the *Times of India* editorial of April 23, is supporting the Hindu Nazi party of BJP to form the govt. And "his support to the demand for demolition of all mosques constructed after destroying the existing temples only if this can be proved beyond doubt shows his claims to be a champion of Muslims are hollow," the editorial says. BSP joining hands with the anti-reservation party of Chandra Shekhar coupled with reports like this in the press has put BSP supporters like me in great dilemma. As a good old friend of Kanshi Ram you are also not guiding us.

(Like you, we are also confused. However, the editorial in this issue makes our stand clear — EDITOR).

Nani Gopal Das, Calcutta: I endorse the view of Mrs. Surinder Kaur (DV Dec. 16, 90 p.14) pleading for *Khadga Dhari* Buddhists. Since the Untouchables want something strong and militant, only *Khadga Dhari* Buddhism will appeal to them.

T.H.P. Chentharaserry, Trivandrum: The words "Untouchables", "Dalits," etc., which are used to denote the Depressed Classes, have by now become degraded like the word *Harijan*. We cannot remain downtrodden or Untouchable. We are the original Indians. So I suggest that you may call us "Adi-Indian" (original Indians). Will you readers react?

Prof. Mihir Sethi, Govt. College Sundergarh, Orissa: Dr. Upendra Baxi article (DV April 1 p.15): "Collective Conspiracy to Hush Up Babasaheb's burning Thoughts," is excellent. He has rightly exposed our corrupt intellectuals who describe themselves as meritorious, talented, efficient etc. These corrupt intellectuals are afraid of disseminating the thoughts of Babasaheb because the powerful message therein may force the masses to pull down the existing brahminical social order to which these so-called intellectuals belong. Baxi's assessment of this intellectual class is cent per cent correct. It is perfectly in tune with your opinion on this class. That is why Dr. Ambedkar's thoughts are not included in our syllabus.

G.R. Swamy, Vizag, AP: Congratulations to the Delhi V.C., Upendra Baxi, who has raised ten questions which you alone are capable of answering.

Vallabhai Makwana, Ahmedabad: I was shocked to read Dr. Upendra Baxi article in DV coining an apt new phrase, "knowledge industry" to describe the Indian academic world. You must continue to use only this word because to these upper caste corrupt "intellectuals" knowledge is an industry. I am more surprised how a Gujarati Brahmin like Baxi had that much of courage to denounce his own *jatwals* who are involved in this industry.

Bhikku Lokopal, International Friends of Buddhists, "Subodhi", 1017-First Main, IV Block, Rajajinagar, Bangalore - 560 010: We have strated this organisation with myself as president and Dr. H.R. Surendra, MBBS, an eye specialist, as gen.secretary to take up mass conversion as part of this centenary celebrations of Babasaheb. Our camp at Bidar (Karnataka) on March 31 was a great success. Thousands of Dalits from Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh were converted. At Devarabisanahalli, near Bangalore, we conducted another mass conversion camp on Oct. 10 last year and another in Madras on April 14. We are also arranging construction of Buddha viharas after the conversion. We are ready to tour Kerala, Tamil Nadu and any other part of India to complete the unfinished task of Babasaheb.

(We just met Bhikku Lokopalo and Dr. Surendra, who is also a Buddhist and the guiding star of the IFB, and had long discussions with both. Earlier, we had also heard a powerful English speech of the Bhikku at a Buddhist function conducted by B. Basavalingappa. We were impressed by their sincerity,

commitment to the cause and their dedication to Ambedkarism. They have assured to go to any part of India to undertake mass conversion of Untouchables which is the only way to constitute them into a separate distinct community. Bhikku has expressed his great desire to undertake a tour of Kerala. Our readers there and elsewhere may write to him directly at the above address — EDITOR).

Dr. Chaitanya Shekar, MBBS, Korukonda, AP: In this centenary year, a lot of noise is being heard. But to our sorrow, for the most part of it, it is only idol worship without imbibing the spirit of Ambedkarism. Another sad fact is that our very oppressors are leading this fanfare and our innocent people are following the wolves. What is more surprising and agonising is that the very "educated" people of India are blindly following these wolves. The urgent need of the hour is to educate our "educated" people about the thoughts of Babasaheb.

M. Punithapandiyan, Madras: I have traslated your great editorial, "Hindu unity will break Indian unity" into Tamil. I am in touch with a some youths who are BCs and Marxists but not in any party. They have read some your books particularly *How Marx Failed in Hindu India, Class-Caste Struggle* and are eager to meet you. They have published ten booklets and have agreed to publish the Tamil translation of "Hindu unity". I would like to know what I can do for you in Madras.

Prof. Taresh Kumar Shende, College of Agriculture, Nagpur: I was shocked to read the immatured article of Gopal Guru (in a prestigious journal like yours) indulging in the character assassination of Maharashtra's famous Dalit writer, Dr. Gangadhar Pantawane (DV April 1 p.11): "Brahminical bid to swallow Babasaheb thoguhts"). As the editor of the famous journal, *Asmita Darsha*, Dr. Patwane has devoted his whole life to propagate Ambedkarism. How can you think that such a person is joining Hindu Nazis? Gopal Guru intention is to discredit Ambedkarites by indulging in such cheap character assassination.

(Gopal Guru article published in the *Economic and Political Weekly* was reproduced in DV with the sincere desire to alert innocent Untouchables about Nazi designs. If there is no truth in the author's allegations it is for the author and the EPW to make corrections. We have also received a longuish rejoinder from the British Buddhist organisation reference to which is also made in the same article. Hindu Nazis are infiltrating our movements to subvert it from inside. In the coming elections, these Nazis have employed some of our own political leaders to divide our votes and seee that the Congress Party gets elected — EDITOR).

Sankavdey N.R., Vasai Rd., Bombay: Very often I hear speeches made by leaders that we SC/ST people must come together What we should do to come together? We can join for few hours but after that we have to go back to our houses. According to me this is not unity. Real unity will come only with inter-caste marriage among SC/STs. Mahars must marry Chamaras. DV must stress this *roti-beti* unity.

Binod Biplabi, Baragarh, Orissa: Dr. Ambedkar Amar

Jyoti carried Dr. Ambedkar Torch covering three districts of Western Orissa (Bolangir, Sambalpur and Sundergarh). The torch first lit by our chairman-engineer, Mahendra Deep, on April 14 travelled 350 KMs by cycles and conducted 21 meetings. Jyoti was received by Anil Kalayat, the Dt. Coordinator, and handed over to Bhuban Sagar, chief of the Centenary Com., Rourkela. This is the first such historic procession of Dr. Ambedkar Jyoti in Orissa. B.K. Nag, coordinator, would like to thank all those who supported this parade of burning thoughts of Babasaheb through DV.

Konada Suryaprakash Rao, President, Republican party of India, AP, Vijayawada: With a cudgel in your hand you are awakening the sleeping Dalits and making them ready for the coming battle. DV is the only paper of its kind in the country. You call it *Dalit Voice* but I say with no exaggeration it is *Divya Vani* of the original Indians.

Jogesh Sarkar, Calcutta: I was so thrilled to see a picture of our saviour on the front page of DV (April 1) for the first time since its publication. "Thus Spake" on page two of DV should permanently be decorated with a pen picture of the Father of India. DV is the only mouthpiece of the children of this soil.

K. Munirathnam, Chittoor, AP: Never before Babasaheb birth anniversary was celebrated in such a grand scale as this year. In fact Babasaheb portrait was carried on a chariot which was strictly reserved for our gods in our village.

C. Rangaswamy, Ganeshgudi, N.K. dt., Karnataka: At a ceremony at Guntur, AP, Dalit Open University on April 6 presented the "Dr. Ambedkar Centenary National and International Awards" to the following persons: International award went to the World Council of Churches, division of Programme to Combat Racism, which was received by its top official, Bob Scott, who specially came down from Geneva. WCC/PCR has received international recognition for its fight against racism in South Africa and also India. National awards were given to Dr. Boyi Bhimanna, Dalit writer from Hyderabad, S.N. Suryawanshi, Dalit writer, Dr. Siddalingiah, Dalit writer from Bangalore, the Rev. M. Azariah, the Black Bishop of Madras and India's most famous Dalit theologian, Fr. Anthony Raju, exponent of Dalit theology, Simon John, Dalit social activist, N. Manohar Prasad, Dalit official in Delhi and former private secretary to Union Minister Paswan, Dr. M.S. Devi, and Bishop Nirmal Minz, a tribal leader from Ranchi.

Bikash Kumar Roy, Calcutta: On March 31, a mammoth rally was held by the Bahujan Samaj party at the Calcutta Maidan to celebrate Babasaheb's birth centenary. The gathering was 20,000 strong which was addressed by Ex-MP Mayawati.

S.K. Biswas, Jt. Secretary, All-India ESIC SC/ST Emp. Fed., C/o. Pulin Behari Baul, 15-Purbasha Pally, Dr. A.K. Paul Road., Calcutta-34. The Central

Administrative Tribunal is denying justice to our employees. Five such lower dvn. clerks in ESIC, 5/1 Grant Lane, Calcutta-12, filed a petition in Dec. 88 for promotion due to them in the SC quota. Their petitions were dismissed denying their claim for promotion as upper dv. clerks. We have decided to go in appeal to the Supreme Court. Will our Dalit friends in Delhi help us in getting us a good lawyer?

Dhammachanri Lokamitra, Trilokya Buddha Mahasangha Sahayakagnana (TBMSG), Raja Harischandra Road., Dapodi, Pune-12: In the April 1 issue of DV you have reproduced the article of Gopal Guru from the EPW. He has used as the basis of his criticism against us only a very badly researched series of articles by someone else. He has not referred to any of our publications. Please publish my reply to EPW.

S.M. Doula, Godavari Khani, AP-505 209: All sorts of praises were showered on Babasaheb Ambedkar during his recent centenary celebrations. This ruling class praise worried me and that made me to recollect the past history of cunning Aryans. When it is admitted by them that Babasaheb was really so great, why they have not allowed his thoughts to come out as books in local languages? They also praised Buddha but never allowed his revolutionary religion to flourish in India. They literally slaughtered Buddhists and destroyed Buddhist literature. That is why I want to warn our Dalit brothers not to be duped by the Aryan praise for Babasaheb. Beware of the cunning brahminism.

Noorul Islam, Regional Engineering College, Srinagar, Kashmir: Dalit Sahitya Akademy is doing a tremendous job and *Dalit Voice* is a splendid journal educating the persecuted masses of India.

Sohan Sejhal, Phagwara, Punjab: On 10th March, 1991 over 3,000 people embraced Buddhism at a function organised by the Punjab Bodh Mahasabha at Hoshiarpur. The function was presided over by Krishna Kumar Bodhi. Buddhists from Maharashtra, Delhi and from other places, Ambedkarites and Bhikhus from different parts of the country attended the function. This conversion ceremony was organised to commemorate Dr. Ambedkar centenary celebrations. L.R. Bali, Dr. Dharmannand Shastri, Prof. HC Joshi, Baldev Bambihabai addressed the celebrations.

Saran Singh, Editor, "Sikh Review," Calcutta: We receive the *World Sikh News* weekly from USA, which often quotes you. We doubtless have so much in common. I have seen the xerox of Irfan Habib's article and BD Chaudhury's observations about contemporary Sikhism being riddled with divisions based on caste. Undeniably, the pristine glory of Gurus' teachings have been contaminated; and pseudo-scholars view with one another to argue that Jatts have highjacked the equalitarian faith. But the truth is that millions of practising Sikhs believe in the basic values and precepts and are willing to make any sacrifice to uphold them. No wonder, the state repression of Sikhs in India grows in proportion. We have a common cause with Dalits. ■

Untouchables are Mool Bharatis, not Hindus

(B. Sham Sunder, President, Bharatiya Bhim Sena, 236, Nampally, Red Hills, Hyderabad, AP)

My young comrades,

You know the pitiable conditions in which we live today. You also know that Caste Hindus are solely responsible for our plight.

But please do not believe that we have always been in this condition. We were the rulers of this country before the advent of the uncultured Aryans. We had our own language, culture and history. The newcomers so framed history as to create an impression that those, who are now known as Scheduled Castes and Tribes had always been ignorant, uncultured, unclean, superstitious and are destined to remain so unless the Caste Hindus come to their rescue and uplift them.

Friends, let me tell you frankly that the Caste Hindu historians and leaders have given us a totally false impression and are making false claims. It is they who suppressed our history, ruined our culture, denied to us the light of knowledge, drove us into jungles, usurped our lands, deprived us of our wealth, dislocated our economy, killed our wise and holymen, slaughtered our valiant youths, corrupted our rising generation and eventually, with the force of arms, succeeded in creating terror, despondency and frustration among our youngmen. This, in a nut-shell, is a brief synopsis of our history during the last three thousand years. Things have not improved much, though we are supposed to be free.

Verses were interpolated in Hindu religious discourses which had the effect of inciting the listeners to ill-treat our forefathers and deprive them of bare human rights. We were called the "Rakshasas," the "Mlechhas" and the "Panchamas" and were not allowed to own land or accumulate wealth. We had to live outside the village and away from society. Caste Hindu leaders started a theory that our people are "walking burial grounds" and, therefore, their touch would pollute them. A belief was spread among the Caste Hindus that the Untouchables are the products of Sin (Papayoniah) and born sinners.

At this stage was born the Buddha who raised a banner of revolt against all these inhuman beliefs and practices. He lived for eighty years and his humanistic movement thrived for more than thousand years until Kumarila Bhat and Adi Shankaracharya contrived to kill the movement by the usual Brahmanic Strategy of creating differences among Buddha's followers, and later, persecuted and banished them.

From this time onwards, Hindu movement re-established itself and, began to gain a momentum. Those who were untouchables so far became unseeable and more sub-human than before. Greater

restrictions were placed on their daily lives reducing them to abject poverty. Their labour continued to be exploited in agriculture, housebuilding and petty industrial concerns. Payment of wages to them was never thought of. They were, however, allowed to beg for alms at night and feed themselves. After the harvest, they were allowed to pick up what was left scattered in the fields. They were not allowed to take part in festivities of any kind. They were not allowed to put on new clothes or chappals or carry lathis. Their marriages could take place only during the months when agricultural labour was not required. They could not visit other villages without the permission of the local village officers. Thus inter-village communication was also prohibited. Neither could they approach temples or schools. If they fell ill, death was the only remedy, because no Vaid would treat them. The main thoroughfares were out of bound for them; so were the wells. They could take water only from running brooks even if they were miles away from the villages. On occasions when human sacrifice was considered essential, the Scheduled Caste people came in handy. *People outside India wonder why we did not revolt. They do not know that the Caste Hindus had instilled a belief into our minds that we were now suffering because of our past sins committed in the previous birth. Our simple and unsophisticated ancestors believed them. (Vide the creed of Poonarjanma).*

Centuries rolled by in this way. The coming in of Muslims from across the North-Western frontiers made no differences, as the pundits promised support to the new rulers on the condition that they would not interfere with hindu religion, or their customs and traditions. Muslim rule later gave place to British rule. This period opened up a few chances for the economic betterment of the Scheduled Castes. The most outstanding event of this period was the realisation by the Caste Hindus of the importance of number in a democratic regime. It was at this stage that the so-called movements for the removal of untouchability and temple entry were started to beguile and hoodwink us into further submission. Tilak, Ranade, Gokhale, Dr. Moonje and Gandhiji came out in the open as saviours of the Untouchables.

During this period, fortunately for these unhappy people, Dr. Ambedkar, their own man, took up the cudgels on their behalf and worked ceaselessly until he secured recognition from the British Government for Scheduled Castes as an entity deserving special care. This recognition came as a bolt from the blue to the entire Hindu community and their leader Gandhi threatened to fast unto death unless this recognition

was withdrawn. All Caste Hindu leaders and their press begged, cajoled and later threatened Dr. Ambedkar to agree to Gandhiji's formula known as Poona Pact. *Dr. Ambedkar yielded under duress but later repented for having done so, as the Hindus themselves repudiated the Poona Pact.* Dr. Ambedkar's efforts were thus nullified. But he succeeded in creating self-respect and self-reliance among our educated young men.

After Independence, all sorts of promises and pledges were incorporated in the Constitution but *the right of the Caste Hindus to select candidates to represent the Scheduled Castes and other minorities was introduced. This has sounded our death-knell.* We cannot hope to make any progress at all unless and until we get back our right

- to elect our own representatives
- to run our own educational institutions
- to have our *separate settlements* where we will be free to live our own lives.

Our educational institutions will follow the common syllabus framed by the State educational authorities, provided distortions and misrepresentations contained in the History of India are removed and replaced by correct facts. This can be done only if scholars representing Mool Bharatis and other minorities are represented on the Board of Historical Studies.

To achieve all this, we have to declare the fundamental and historical truth that we MOOL BHARATIS are not Hindus and are not prepared to help them to establish Hindu Raj in India in the name of Secular Socialist Democracy. We have suffered and sacrificed enough. Let us now rehabilitate ourselves. This is my humble message to the educated youths of the Mool Bharatis. Friends! *Know your own history. Only then will you be able to make History.* In doing so, please remember two essential factors:-

1. We are all Mool Bharatis. Do not think and act in terms of Chora, Chamar Balmiki, Mala, Madiga, Mahar, Mang, Holiya, Madir, Mochi, Mehra, Matang, Samgar, Jatav, Satnami, Namasudra, Goud, Bhil, Santal, Mizo, Khasi, Bhumia, Mazhabi, Kabirpanthi, Sansi, Banjara, Male, masti, Mether, Dusadh, Pardi, Pagi, Arunhathi, Ajila, Kanakkan, Pallan, Bausodi, Yesawa, Dhanuk, Bedajungam, Venkar, Dhor, Newars, Megh, Dhed, Dom, Kanjar, Halalkhor, Ramdasi, Ravidasi, Chenchu, Konda, Dora, Koya, Dhammi, Kuki, Miri, Bhumij, Champa, Mannan, lambani, Medar, Naga, Bhatia, Mru, Malumi, Milacheri, Munda, Adi Andhra, Adi Karnataka, Adi Dravida, Adi Dharmi, Adi Vasi etc.

We cannot feel and become one unless we erase from our minds this *divisive nomenclature* which has been created by the Caste Hindus to keep us divided and weak. Once a month, we should publicly demonstrate our unity and strength by convening a

joint mass meeting of all constituent elements of our community, whose leaders should be made to sit on the platform and declare with one voice that they are all Mool Bharatis. We must throw this nomenclature in the faces of Caste Hindus and close our ranks.

2) Do not be disheartened if you find our leaders in different camps. They have not forgotten that they themselves are Mool Bhartis; nor have they forgotten us from whom they derive their strength. Whether X works with the Congress, 'Y' with the Republican Party or 'Z' joins hands with the minorities, they are all one with us and cannot afford to let our cause down. *Bhim Sena workers should not condemn them or speak ill of them because they have infiltrated into the camp of our oppressors. They will all come back to us and work with us when they realise that we have developed strong consciousness and have become a solid rock of suppressed humanity which is now going to break its bonds of slavery for good and march ahead towards triumphs and success.*

Persons not belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, provided they agree with our aims and objects, and do not believe in turning one cheek if the other is slapped, can join the BHIM SENA, whatever non-Hindu religion they may profess. (Foreword to the booklet, *MOOL BHARTIS*, 1968).

Historic document on partition of Punjab

New Delhi: During 24th session of the Punjab History Conference last month, a voluminous book entitled *Select Documents on Partition of Punjab-1947* by a veteran research scholar, Dr. Kirpal Singh, was released by Dr. H.K. Manmohan Singh, Vice-Chancellor Punjab University, Patiala.

Dr. Manmohan Singh threw light on the brilliant career of Dr. Kirpal Singh and complimented him by saying that his book was a serious attempt to tap all resources both public and private, mostly unpublished, scattered at various places in India, Pakistan and England. Commenting on the contents of the book he said that it deals with the following:-

1. Documents leading to the formulation of the Partition Plan by Lord Mountbatten.
2. Documents relating to implementation of the Plan viz. Partition Council, Steering Committee, Punjab Partition Committee and its proceedings etc.
3. Punjab Boundary Commission — the non-Muslim case, Redcliffs Awards, Punjab Boundary Force etc.
4. Documents relating to aftermath of partition of Punjab viz. Working of Military Evacuee organisation. Important correspondence between high officials of India and Pakistan, East Punjab Division Agency and recovery of abducted women etc. The Supplementary Documents deal with the controversy relating to the Punjab Boundary Award and the proposed arrest of the Sikh Leaders.

The book was completed on the pattern of *India - Transfer of Power* volumes published by the British Government in England. The preface, introduction, chronology, important personages and summary of every document have been given in the beginning.

The book will go down in history as a monumental work on partition of Punjab which is a unique event in the annals of mankind as it was followed by unprecedented mass migrations having far-reaching consequences — social, political and economic. (*The Spokesman*, April 15).

Bali & Vamana avatar: Aryans spreading falsehood

The following Aryan cock and bull story is reproduced from the *Dasha Avatar*, the ten incarnations, published by the Amara Chitra Katha, Sp. issue no. 1 (India Book House) which has been specialising in spreading myths in the name of history. The story is about a historic fight between the original inhabitants of India and the invading Aryans. While reading the text, we have to keep in mind that Bali Chkaravarti, who is remembered even to this day by the people all over India, was the greatest and most noble King of the pre-Aryan Dravidas and Adi-Dravidas (SC/ST/BCs of today) but described by the Aryans as Asura. These simple people, but truth-loving, were defeated by the cunning and crafty Aryans through treachery. Not in a straight battle. This is the lesson of this story. The children may read this story and may admire the dwarf Brahmin, Vamana, and take pity on Bali. That is the purpose of this story. But we must know that the fact is exactly the opposite. The Aryans through their literature are making us hate our own ancestors, our own mothers and fathers. Creating self-hatred is the Aryan game. All these Vamana avatars and the story weaved round it are bullshit just to confuse us about the true nature of the fight, between the two forces, which is going on even to this day. We are publishing this Aryan story so that our people (Asuras) may understand how the Aryans have been distorting our history and thereby deceiving us. It is time that we re-write our history and thereby reconstruct our past. Without knowing our past, we cannot build our future — EDITOR.

Bent on conquering the Devas, Bali, grandson of Prahlad, and the king of the Asuras, guided by Shukracharya, his preceptor, performed the Vishwajit sacrifice, and received from the sacrificial fire a golden chariot, celestial weapons and a coat of mail, for the conquest of heaven. Donning the armour, Bali mounted the chariot and with his asura hordes advanced on Amaravati, the capital of the Devas. In the palace of Indra, king of the Devas "What a terrible uproar". The sound fills the skies and shakes the worlds. It is Bali. He surrounded the city as he laid siege to the city, Indra went to Brihaspati, his preceptor. "What should we do, venerable one ? Bali is now riding some strange power. We may fail in beating him back." Brihaspati nodded wisely. "You are right. Bali at the moment is invincible. I would advise you to retreat from heaven till the tide turns in your favour. "And when will that be?". "When his guru curses him for ignoring his counsel." So, Indra and the Devas abandoned heaven, and Bali promptly occupied it with his Asura hordes saying: "I am now the Lord of all the three worlds." Meanwhile, Aditi, the mother of the Devas, sat brooding about their sorry plight. Sage Kashyap, her husband, was away in the forest, meditating. Just then Kashyap entered the hermitage. The hermitage looked desolate and Aditi distressed. "What is the matter ? Is all well with you and your sons?" No, my lord. The Asuras have usurped our kingdom and with it, our splendour and our glory. You must help my sons to retrieve their lost status, "she said.". "It is not me that you should appeal to, but the All-pervading Lord Vishnu. He and he alone can help you propitiate him, "he said." Tell me the quickest means of doing it, my Lord. I cannot bear the misery of my sons any longer, " she said. "During the bright half of the month of phalgun, with your mind fixed on the Lord, observe the payovrata vow, the vow that gratifies him the most. Pleased, he will grant your desires", he said.

Tricks of Dwarf Brahmin: Focussing her mind on Vishnu, Aditi observed the vow of the 12 long days. On the 13th day, Vishnu came and said: "Invincible though the Asuras are, your worship shall not prove fruitless, I shall assume the role of a son to you and protect your progeny."

Months later, on the 12th day of the bright half of

Bhadrapada, Vishnu took his descent from Aditi. Then, even while the couple stood gazing, Vishnu changed his form to that of a short statured Brahman. A few days later, a blinding light filled the sacrificial grounds where Bali was performing a series of horse sacrifices. "Could it be lord Surya himself come down to witness our sacrifice." As their eyes got used to the brilliance, they saw that a Brahman midget had entered the sacrificial enclosure. Bali rose from his seat to receive him. "Welcome, O holy Brahman, this land of mine has been consecrated by your tiny feet." Then he gave the divine, midget, Vamana, a special seat and washed his feet. "O holy one, what can I do for you? Pray take from me whatever you desire."

Vamana was quiet. "Do not hesitate, O Brahmachari* what will you have — a cow, gold, elephants, horses, chariots, a bride, a palatial house, prosperous villages ?" Vamana shook his head. "All I seek is a strip of land, three paces long as measured by my stride."

Devas are enemies of Asuras: Seeking to win acclaim for his generosity, Bali was disappointed with Vamana's humble demand. "You are too young to be alive to your own interest. When I am ready to grant you a whole continent, you want but three paces of land. He who cannot be satisfied with three paces of land will not be satisfied even with a whole continent." Vamana said: "Three paces of land are all I need and three paces of land are all that I will have." Bali laughed and gave in. "Then you shall have as much." At that moment Shukracharya realised the truth. "He is none other than Lord Vishnu." As Bali took the consecrating water in his palm, Shukracharya warned him — "Wait, this midget is Lord Vishnu. He is here to help our enemies, the Devas." Bali said no. "Nothing can be done now, O Venerable one. I have given my word". "Retract it. It is not so when one's life and the lives of one's dependent are at stake". Bali was quiet for a moment. Then — "Having promised once that I shall give, how can I, Bali, the grandson of virtuous Prahlad, refuse like a common cheat? I will give this Brahman the land he seeks, O holy sage, come what may." Furious that his disciple had dared to disregard his advice, Shukracharya cursed him. "Have you grown so arrogant as to ignore my command? Conceited fool that you are you will soon fall from your high position". Bali's wife then came with a golden pitcher

full of water to wash Vamana's feet. And lo, Vamana began to grow.... and grow. Bali and all the sages present were astounded to see the whole of creation in Vamana's body...

Vishnu deceives Bali: As he began to measure the three paces, with his first stride, he covered the earth... And with his second, the heavens. The enraged Asuras took up arms and ran towards him. "He is no Brahman, it is Vishnu himself, out to delude us." But Bali stopped them. "I have been cursed by my guru. My fall is inevitable. Pray do not make war. Retreat." As the Asuras retreated to the nether world, Garuda bound Bali with ropes.... And took him to Vishnu. "though cursed by his preceptor, this great soul did not go back on his word. I must test him further and enhance his reputation for being steadfast." With that intention Vishnu spoke harsh words to him. "You promised me three paces of land and I have covered all that was yours in two. You have failed to keep your word. You will have to suffer for it." Bali was unperturbed. "O illustrious one, I am not afraid of punishment at your

hands as I am of being called ignoble. I had no intention of deceiving you." To prove his statement he bent his head low before Vishnu. "Pray, place your third step on my head, which is more valuable to me than all my possessions put together."

At that moment, Prahlad appeared on the scene and bowed low to Vishnu — "Salutations to you, O Lord, you have conferred a great favour on my grandson by depriving him of his wealth, for wealth corrupts even great souls." "But not your grandson's soul. He stood firm by his promise even at the cost of disobeying his guru and inviting his curse. He remains serene, even in the face of the calamity which has befallen him."

He has all but earned entry into my own realms which even the Devas find difficult of access. But first he will enjoy for a whole Manvantara the position of Indra as he desired it.

Thus did Vishnu in his Vamana Avatar beg the earth and the Heavens for the Devas from their enemy, the righteous but vain king of the Asuras. ■

Onam not festival of Dalits, it is a trap to destroy Dalits

(K. Mukundan, Peruvattoor, Quilandy, Kerala)

This is with reference to P.S. Rai's article on Bali (DV, Aug. 1-15, 90). He says that "The Onam festival which the Keralites celebrate every year is also in honour of the great and good King Bali." It is not correct. The festival is related to his death. His another name is Maveli.

It is said that Maha Bali (Maha Bali means "great sacrifice") was the emperor of Kerala. During his reign there was no caste discrimination, no evil deeds and no economic inequality. The Kerala people used to sing a song about his reign. It is like this: "When Maveli was ruling the country the whole people were one". It shows that there was no discrimination during his rule. The Aryans became jealous and decided to kill him. Thus they made a trap to cheat him. The Aryan god, Vishnu, came as Vaman (dwarf Brahmin) and begged Emperor Maveli for "three steps of land". When Vaman was allowed to take, he is said to have covered the whole earth and skies with his two strides and asked Maveli where to place his third step. At last Maveli offered him his own head and the wily Vaman stepped on his head, pushed him to the *Patal* (hell). For all that Vaman was allowed to come back to his region for one single day in a year. This is the story. Actually, it was the day of 'Bali' (sacrifice) of our great emperor.

Whatever it be, it shows that there was a clash between Aryans and Adi-Dravidas. Upto this incident, the Aryans enslaved the original inhabitants of India and manipulated their mind through brahminism. Thus the Dalits were forced to have a feast to remember this Maha-Bali. In fact, it was the victory of Aryans over the Adi-Dravidas. Thus they lost all properties and became the slaves of Aryans. So, Onam is the

festival of Aryans to remember their victory over Dalits. Dalits are just imitating their ruling class, because these Aryans manipulated their mind. So that Dalits also celebrate Onam. Why should Dalits celebrate Onam to remember the death of their good emperor? The Dalits must shed tears on that day because after this incident Dalits became the slaves of Aryans. Moreover, the Brahmins say that "We must sell our land to celebrate Onam". It is a trap. If we sell our land to celebrate Onam, certainly we will fall down further and they can have the rests of our lands. This is the cunning point of Onam. In Kerala, Dalit workers do not celebrate Onam. Because they deeply mourn their long lost good emperor.

According to brahminical literature Vamana is fifth incarnation of Vishnu and Parasurama is sixth. But they say that Parasurama made Kerala. If Vamana came before Parasurama, how can we believe that Parasurama made Kerala? Because before Parasurama came, Vamana was there. Then they say Parasurama made Kerala. Then there must be two Keralas. Where is one Kerala? It is one of the Riddles in Hinduism. This story is actually the clash between Aryan invaders and Adi-Dravidas. But Aryans coloured it. ■

RACE AND EMPIRE IN BRITISH POLITICS

Paul B. Rich, Department of Politics, University of Bristol

II Ed. 1990 pp.30 15

Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
CB2 1RP, UK

Must for those students of history of racial thought and politics of race in UK.

Reconvert Diwali as festival of Bali Chakravarti

(Miss Nootan Malvi, Nagpur)

This is with reference to Sq.-Ldr. P.S. Rai's article (DV Aug. 1, 1990) on Maha Bali Chakravarti.

We of the Bahujan Sangharsh Samitee (Mass Struggle for Equality) every year publish The King Bali special issue on the eve of Diwali in our Marathi fortnightly, Bahujan Sangharsh. We never celebrate the Hindu festival, Diwali, but celebrate it as "Bali festival" and bring out the Bali special issue. Also we arrange meetings on this greatest of the pre-Aryan king in different parts of Maharashtra.

This has been going on from 1985. Nagesh Choudhari, the Editor of Bahujan, is the founder of this Bali festival. When he read about the references to Bali in Mahatma Phule's collected works, he started this festival but the "Hindu Press" always ignored it.

In his book, Slavery, Mahatma Phule writes:- According to the brahminical legend Vaman defeated King Bali and looted the gold of his kingdom. But now we use its corrupted word "gold of shilangana". This incident is celebrated as Dasahara in Maharashtra. On this occasion non-brahmin women make idols of King Bali by using flour. It signifies that women are ridiculing the cruel Vaman by saying that the great pre-Aryan King Bali is coming to fight with Vaman. Also women remember the King Bali on the occasion of Diwali festival by making idol of the same king. They also pray saying in Marathi (Let the Brahmin rule end and King Bali's rule come).

Valmiki on Bali: In the Ramayana, its author, Valmiki has praised King Bali by writing several slokas on him: "This king Bali is just, truthful, noble and honest. He has an illustrious personality. He is like yama - (the king of death). Fearing the enemy, Bali never runs away from warfield. He distributes land to all equally. He always waits for suitable time to do anything". Valmiki Ramayan - Uttarkand - Sarg.1.

In the Rigveda also in verse 1/17, 2/18 the Bali-

Vaman fight is mentioned. This proves that Bali is a great pre-Aryan king standing for equality.

In the Bhagavat Purana, the fight between King Bali and the Indra (Brahmin) is vividly described. Here the Brahmins conceded that it was the King Bali that established his kingdom through justice and equality by defeating the Aryans.

Mahatma Phule said that King Bali's kingdom was spread over nine regions and Bhagavat Purana also accepted that Bali ruled over the swarga (where the Gods live), on mrutu (where mortals live), on Patal (below the earth).

Brahmins also praised Bali: D.D. Satwalekar, a Brahmin writer, says in his book, Vaidic Dharma khanda_1, about what the Aryans thought about the King Bali: they praised, "King Bali's kingdom of two castes (Brahmins and non-brahmins) is good. In his kingdom no one troubled us. He never put any obstacles in our yagna. He is trying for our progress slowly".

This proves Brahmins by and large were happy with Bali's rule but only some selfish Brahmins opposed Bali because he put into practice justice and equality. So, they conspired and destroyed Bali's kingdom.

The lesson to be learnt is even an egalitarian king practising justice will not be tolerated by Brahmins. They do not want the rule of non-Aryans. Even today we can see that all "Left" and "Right" Brahmins are against the non-Brahmin rulers. That is why they are always against Bali. That is why all non-Aryans should celebrate Bali's festival as it is done in Kerala, named Onam.

Editor: We need a lot more literature on Bali Chakravarti as it will enable us to reconstruct our history and trace our roots. The pre-Aryan Untouchables had a glorious history and the Indus Valley Civilization is its best proof. But the Aryans have destroyed our history when they destroyed all Buddhist monuments, libraries and temples. Mahabali should be used by our people to conduct such a research into our roots so that we could put pride into our broken hearts. ■

DEBATE

Tirupati god ; Bali or Balaji?

(Jaru, Bangalore)

With reference to "Tirupati Temple was Buddhist" (DV Mar. 16, 91) this is correct but not 100%.

The original god of Tirumala was Bali. Even today the North Indians call the Tirupati god as Balaji. Bali Chakravarti is respectfully called Bali, which later became Balaji: Bali-Baliji-Balaji.

Muttu (touch) has a double meaning in my Tulu language. The other meaning is step. The wily (brahman) Vaman asked for *Mooji Muttu* (three steps)

bhoodhaa. When Bali accepted it, Vaman changed his word and he used *muttu* as touch. He touched the throne and got it. He touched the court and got it. He touched the earth (his land) and asked Bali to go out of his kingdom.

Pathala is South India for the northerners. *Pathala* means underneath. Bali came down to *Pathala* which originally was Tulunadu. Paishachi, the Adi-language, was spoken by the people of *Pathala* and also whole of India. Paishachi was the origin of Dravidian language and also Sanskrit.

Bali Chakravarti the Great (Ref. Sq. Ldr. P.S. Rai's article in DV Jan. 16, 1989) came South and married a Biruva (Beda) girl. The same story is told by

Brahmins in their Srinivasakalyana but the names are different and fake.

Indias' most famous king: Kanara districts, the northern part of Karnataka and Andhra comprised the Tulunadu. During Ashoka's period, it was called Satiya Putra meaning believers of truth. Chinese traveller Huen Tsang's *Potalka* is another version of *Pathala*. Among the Dravidian languages, Telugu is nearer to Tulu than Kannada and Tamil.

Tuluvas' main god is Govinda or Thimmappa. Originally Bhootha (past) meant dead ancestor. Thirumala-Appa was originally called Siri-Guddeda-Devar. Thirumalappa Siriguddedadevar became Brahmin version of Srinivasa.

Bali Chakravarti was India's most famous pre-Aryan Dravidian emperor known throughout Asia upto Bali island. South India has so many Bali-ghats. The famous Chamundihill of Mysore upto the mid of 17th century was called Mabala betta.

Tirumala was captured by the Brahmins during the Vijayanagar empire period. Narasa, the Tuluva warrior, became ruler under the Vijayanagar Vaishnavas at

Hampi. The previous rulers of Hampi were Shaivas. Tuluvas were the devotees of Tirupati Bali. Brahmins misled Krishnadevaraya and converted Thimmappa into Venkateshwara. But the same people murdered Krishnadevaraya's son. Next king Acchutadeva loved a Brahmin woman and wrote a book on his lover's Vamshavali. Brahmins manufactured false stories on Bali.

During the 1st and 2nd century the whole of East Asia was Buddhist. Whole India was Buddhist. Headshaving was a Buddhist true custom. But Tuluvas also shave their head to remember their dead ancestors. Even today, Udupi Krishna or Manujnatha are of no importance to Tuluvas whose only god is Bali, the Govinda, Thimmappa. For Tuluvas Dharmasthala is Annappa's (another Bhootha - Annappa Bhootha place was converted by Brahmins into Manjunath temple.

(We have called for a deeper research into the history of bali. Those having materials may send it to us —

EDITOR).

POONA PACT

Times of India Exposes mischief of Mahatma

The Poona Agreement: From the Times archives, September 26, 1932. After a week of anxious negotiations, agreement has been reached by the caste Hindu and depressed classes' leaders at Poona on the electorates problem. Mr Gandhi on Saturday signified his approval; all that now remains is for the British Government's consent to be obtained, and Mr. Gandhi's many friends throughout the country will hail the end of his fast with deep thankfulness. In order to be acceptable to the British Government the agreement must fulfil two conditions. It must be a solution carrying the full consent of the parties involved, and it must not disturb the communal balance of power which is the genesis of the communal award. In its main principles the Poona agreement conforms to these conditions. Dr. Ambedkar was the leading spokesman of the depressed classes at the Round Table Conference; he is a vigorous and fearless champion of their rights, and not even Mr. Gandhi's threat to starve himself to death was likely to interfere with Dr. Ambedkar's determination to secure justice for his community. We may assume, therefore, that any arrangement accepted by Dr. Ambedkar fully protects the interests of the depressed classes and should carry the consent of the general body of untouchables. As a matter of fact, the agreement has been approved by representatives of the depressed classes in Madras, where their state is much worse than that in any other part of India. On their part, the caste Hindus, through the Mahasabha, are expected to signify approval. Secondly, the Poona agreement will not vitiate the other sections of the communal award, since the reserved seats in every case will be contained within the Hindu quota. Instead of separate electorates and the right to vote in the general constituencies, the depressed classes are to have double the number of seats in the general constituencies allotted to them separately by the communal award. Separate electorates are to be replaced by primary elections to select depressed classes candidates for the reserved seats, so as to enable the untouchables to get the type of representatives they want. As Dr Ambedkar recently said, they demand quality as well as quantity. Reserved seats will continue until their abandonment is mutually acceptable, and instead of separate electorates disappearing after 20 years under the communal award, primary elections are to cease after 10 years. The Hindu community is to be congratulated on reaching so speedily a settlement satisfactory to both sides. Yet it would be a grave error to regard Mr Gandhi's fast as the sovereign remedy for knotty problems which many people seem to think it is. Mr. Gandhi has merely, by a subtle form of coercion, forced the settlement of an issue which he himself created. The representation of the depressed classes has now been brought back to the ground it occupied before Mr. Gandhi went to London. A solution on the lines of joint electorates with reserved seats was almost reached between the Hindu leaders and Dr. Ambedkar at the first Round Table Conference. It was Mr Gandhi who, by his obstinate refusal to agree to any straight-forward system of reserved seats, drove Dr. Ambedkar and his friends to demand separate electorates. Had Mr Gandhi been reasonable in London the necessity for his fast would never have arisen; he now agrees to more than the depressed classes originally thought of demanding. The depressed classes are the gainers by his inconsistency, since under the urge of his fast the caste Hindus have conceded them more than might have been expected in the London negotiations. (*Times of India*, April 4, 1991).

Can force keep warring nationalities united ?

(Baldev Singh, President, Sant Kutiya Gurdwara, Calcutta)

This is with reference to the DV edit of Jan.1, 1991 ("Hindu unity" which is now brought out as a reprint titled "Hindu unity destroying Indian unity", DSA 1991).

Anthropologist P.G. Ganguly has contributed a very important paper, entitled, "Separatism in the Indian polity", to a book, *Anthropology and Archaeology* edited by M.C. Pradhan, and RD Singh. In the concluding remarks, Ganguly writes, (pp. 102-105).

Apart from N. Datta-Majumdar, who did conceptualise the tribal movement as a specific independence movement (The Santhal – A study in Acculturation, 1956), no one else has seen the independence aspect of the tribal movement. I have analysed the tribal movement within a model of 'independence movement' ... My outline of the perspective in which the tribal movement can be a major 'methodological island' usually hidden – on which most attempts to understand the separatist forces operative in the Indian polity are generally wrecked.

Many students have described 'the fundamental unity of India' (R.K. Mukherjee – *The fundamental unity of India, 1914*) (JL Nehru – *the Discovery of India, 1947*). The historian, R.C. Majumdar, reminds us:

"The fundamental unity of India is emphasised by the name Bharat-Varsha, or land of Bharata, given to the whole country in the epics and the Puranas, and the designation Bharati Santati, or descendants of Bharata, applied to its people This sense of unity was ever present before the minds of the theologians, political philosophers and poets who spoke of the 'thousand yojanas (leagues) of land that stretch from the Himalaya to the sea', as the proper domain of a single universal 'emperor' and eulogised monarchs who sought to extend their sway from the snowy mountains in the north to Adam's bridge in the South, and from the valley of the Brahmaputra in the East to the land beyond the seven mouths of Indus in the West" (*An Advanced History of India, 1948*).

Students of Indian history, however, are also familiar with the view – stated so often in so many ways – that India is not one country, but many countries, containing not one people, but many peoples. Sir John Seeley said that "India is a mere geographical expression, like Europe and Africa. (*The Expansion of England, 1883, pg. 92*). The implication is obvious: India is not a nation. J. Strachey pulled no punches when he wrote that there is not and never was a India, no Indian nation, no "people of India (*India : Its Administration and Progress, 1988*). S. Harrison said that the unity of India was based on tenuous foundations, foundations perpetually inclined to disintegrate (*India : The Most Dangerous Decades, 1960*).

Those who propound the unity of India as a reality argue from facts. The practising politicians, too, not only argue from facts but also use them in their competition for power over men and resources.

If facts can simultaneously prove and disprove the unity of India, there is obviously room for thought.

Cultural unity – an elite ideology: The unity in

India, in so far as it exists, is cultural unity. But is it meaningful to talk even in terms of cultural unity of India ? Is it not cultural uniformity – mere uniformity – that we have in mind? The regional variations are too glaring and pressing to be ignored. Is it not likely that the so-called cultural unity – or uniformity – is more an ideology (D.E. Apter – *Ideology and Discontent, 1964, pg. 16-18*) than a set of observable elements of social action ? Majumdar's reference to the fact that the 'fundamental unity of India, as perceived by the theologians, political philosophers and poets, would suggest that this unity was an elite ideology. Sentimentalism apart, was this not an elite ideology even during the anti-British movement ? Does not the decline of this ideology in contemporary India indicate the incontrovertible decline of those who were the elite during the anti-British movement and for a decade and a half after that ? If this is likely, *the whole question of India's unity needs systematic sociological scrutiny*. No one can deny that culturally the people of India display certain similarities. Observably, these similarities are in some of their customs and practices and in some of their beliefs, which the people who know the word 'religious' describe as religious beliefs. But such similarities did not prevent in the past – as they do not today – numerous manifestations of inbuilt separatism. Men do not live by cultural similarities alone.

Crucial question: The American settlers and the British, on the whole, were culturally similar, and yet the settlers fought the war of independence. The fact that many in Hitler's Germany were Christian did not stand in the way of German invasion of Poland, a country which was inhabited by both Jews and Christians. The fact that many Bantus in South Africa are Christian does not dissuade the white Christians from practising apartheid. Similarly, the fact that the Brahmin and the 'warrior caste' landlords (Kshatriyas) and moneylenders (Vaishyas) were Hindu, as presumably some Mundas were, did not deter them from annexing the Mundari land. Decidedly, if our interest is to understand the phenomena of the Second World War, Apartheid or the Munda independence movement, it is pointless to harp on cultural similarities between the victim and victor. Numerous examples of this kind can be given from all periods of world history. All of them suggest, in my view, that practically nothing can be deduced about inter-group relations, particularly, power relations, if we begin analysis via the concept of culture. The crucial questions to be asked in this context are: who can compel whom, when, in which respect and how ?

I am grateful to Mrs. Surinder Kaur for finding out this most important book. ■

Reject brahminical literature & produce revolutionary writings

(Dr. Godwin Shiri, Bangalore)

The auditorium of Institution of Engineers here was buzzing with life on Mar. 9, 1991 with Kannada writers who came for the seminar on "Bhoosa. Sahitya" organised by Janapara Sahitya and Dalita Sahitya Sanghatane, Bangalore. *Bhoosa* in Kannada means cattlefeed. The auditorium was packed with writers from all parts of Karnataka. There were Dalit activists, writers, poets, workers, farmers, intellectuals, young and old, men and women. They sat and listened with rapt attention and actively participated in the animated plenary discussions. Without exaggeration, it can be said that the seminar turned out to be a great success and a significant milestone in the saga of Dalits' struggle for justice in Karnataka.

Tracing the historic background of the seminar, Dr. Hampa Nagarajiah, a well-known name in Kannada literature, said how a scathing attack was made against B. Basavalingappa (BB) for having compared the Kannada literature to *bhoosa* in 1974. The entire upper caste interests in Karnataka had then joined hands in attacking Dalits and they also succeeded in getting BB dismissed as a cabinet minister under Devaraj Urs. Dr. Nagarajiah said that the "*bhoosa* episode eventually became a great blessing in disguise for the entire Dalit cause in Karnataka. BB became a national hero and the *bhoosa* controversy produced large number of revolutionary writers and generated a great flow of Dalit literature." He said it was not his intention to brand all Kannada literature as *bhoosa*. We need a literature in which love, justice and human values flow like a fountain. A constant vigil on literature is inevitable so that it will not turn out to be *bhoosa*."

Basavalingappa, who is back as Minister for Rural Development and emerged as the most powerful Dalit leader of India, delivering the inaugural address expressed joy that the *bhoosa* controversy which he started in 1974 had kindled much thinking and generated so much of writing during the past 17 years. There was so much of uproar against his statement then only because he was a Dalit. The upper castes do not tolerate Dalits becoming socially aware. Clarifying that he was not criticising Kannada literature enmass as *bhoosa*, he appealed that revolutionary literature which would awaken the Dalits and the other oppresse people from their deep slumber was the great need of the hour.

Beware of "Marxists" V.T. Rajshekar, Editor of *Dalit Voice*, delivering the presidential address, was all praise for BB for the *bhoosa* episode which had caused a great upheaval producing hundreds of writers and fighters for Dalit cause and also administering a severe blow to Hindu Nazis. While it was true that BB's *bhoosa* controversy gave birth to the Dalit movement, the Nazi forces infiltrated into the movement and got

it diffused and divided. Further, he warned, that the Dalit movement should be cautious of "Marxists also, as well as Hindu Nazis. Both were two sides of the same coin." Making a passionate appeal for revolutionary literature, Rajshekar said that the dire need of the hour was fire-makers and not fire-fighters. He was uncompromising in stating that a literature which did not touch upon exploitation, racism, untouchability, Devadasi, caste atrocities, female oppression, slums and starvations was no literature at all. Such a literature was just *bhoosa*. He said the objectives of the seminar were two-fold – firstly, to create an awareness among youth so that they would be able to initiate a cultural revolution aimed at political change. Secondly, to help secure the identity and self-respect for Dalits, Backward Castes and all other exploited people.

The first session, after the inauguration, was chaired by Dr. Polanki Ramamurthy of Mysore University and a noted Kannada writer. The other speakers were Dr. M.N. Javaraih, a big name in Dalit literature, Gnananda, Smt. Sukanya Maruti and J.H. Narayanaswamy, advocate. In a forceful and analytical presentation, Dr. Javaraih traced how from the ancient times, Kannada literature had a strong tradition to be *jati-para*(pro-caste) instead of being *jana-para* (pro-people). The only exception to this was Vachana Sahitya including the great Basaveshwara. While Narayanaswamy and Gnananda explained how the vested religious and economic interests were intertwined in Kannada literature, Smt. Sukanya Maruti reminded that women were the worst sufferers and were the Dalits among the Dalits. She was happy that due to Dalit and Bandaya literature, women were waking up. Polanki Ramamurthy said that India had only Dharma Sahitya which was tied down to Dharma and Moksha and therefore there was no real literature at all. There was no "character" in Indian literature and hence there was absence of humanity. Women were the worst victims in such literature which was bereft of any human value.

Brahmin literature is worthless: The third session was chaired by the well-known Kannada writer, Dr. Chandrasekhar Patil of Karnataka University, and addressed by Dr. Syed Jamierulla Sharief, Smt. Mallika Ghanti and P.K. Hiremath. While Dr. Sharief appealed to destroy *bhoosa* not only from literature but also from mental attitude, Smt. Ghanti vociferously criticised the vicious tendency of the upper caste people to assimilate several great writers including Kalidas, Kanakadas and Valmiki with brahminic cloak. While she was clear that much of the Kannada literature was really *bhoosa*, she also pointed out that even Dalit writers were not free from male chauvinism.

Hiremath said even some of the 'eminent' Kannada writers were not completely liberated from the clutches of casteist tendency in their writings. Dr. Chandrasekhar Patil made some very pertinent observations. He said all the brahminical literature was bhoosa though all those written by Brahmins were not necessarily so. Defining the characteristics of *jana-para* literature, he said it was pro-life with a deep concern for community, creativity, equality, change and opposed to all discrimination based on caste, class and religion. *Bhoosa* literature was brahminical, individualistic, anti-people and stagnated. He emphasised the need of reaching Dalits with *jana-para* literature to help them in their struggle for justice. He regretted that the brahminical characteristics which were so contagious had started influencing Dalits and Backward Caste people. We should try to build up a pro-life and pro-people culture as an alternative to *bhoosa* culture in which both brahminism and capitalism were hand-in-glove. Both must be fought.

The seminar was undoubtedly a memorable event to this writer. True, there was inadequacy of content

analysis of *bhoosa* sahitya in the presentations of many speakers. The speakers should have made better analyses of socio-economic, religious and political aspects of *bhoosa* literature and its impact. It was also true that at times anti-brahminical emotions ran high, through for justifiable reasons. One also wished to see more discussion on the follow-up action of using medium of literature for social change. However, in spite of all these, the seminar gave a unique opportunity of meeting, inter-acting and reflecting. One could see a commitment of purpose among the organisers as well as among the participants. There was a sobering note throughout the seminar – that the objective of the seminar was not destructive and divisive and that there was need for accord, commitment, self-criticism, openness, honesty and sacrifice. Therefore, the seminar was certainly a historic event and the organisers fully deserve all praise and gratitude. However, much depends on how the Dalit leaders lead the Dalit movement with effective follow-up actions with clarity of perspective and unity in action.

Cassette on Mandal Report

New Delhi: A collection of 3 audio cassettes on the Mandal Commission Report is brought out to educate the masses on reservations (human rights) for the liberation of Backward Castes. The cassettes are produced by Manoj Yadav, a senior research scholar at JNU and Director Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Institute of African Studies, New Delhi.

1. Cassette - 1 90 minutes.

Side-A: Mandal programme (Hindi) - BC lists of Delhi, Bihar, Assam, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya and Mizoram. Side-B: BC list for Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Punjab Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Orissa.

2. Cassette 2 : 90 minutes

Side-A: Mandal Programme (Hindi) Tamil Programme BC list of Tamil Nadu.

Side-B: BC list of Pondicherry, Kannada programme, Karnataka list of BCs, Telugu programme - Andhra Pradesh BC list. Malayalam programme, Kerala BC list Andaman and Nicobar islands and Dadra, Nagar Haveli BC list.

3. Cassette 3 - 60 minutes

Side A: Mandal Programme (Hindi)

Side B: BC list of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Goa, Daman, Diu and Dadra Nagar Haveli.

The Mandal Programme in cassette 1 and 3 is in Hindi alone while in cassette 2 is in Hindi and 4 major South Indian languages. It dramatically starts with a

series of loud shrieks representing the sacrifice of Ekalavya's thumb under the orders of the Brahmin Dronacharya who could not reconcile himself to the fact of a mere shudra excelling a savarna in the field of archery. Then begins a heated debate between the modern-day Ekalavya and Drona, in which Ekalavya finally declares that he is no longer willing to sacrifice his thumb, or like Shambhuka sacrifice his head, merely to serve the brahminical social order.

The cassette is interspersed with folk revolutionary songs. VP Singh's historic speech of Aug. 7, 1990 and Dr. R.M. Lohia's and Dr. Ambedkar's prophetic statements are also highlighted. The programme also deals with issues like pro-reservation rallies, the backlash by the Hindu students, the reactionary and the cunning role played by the "national" napkin papers, the extent of brahminical domination in the public, private and cultural spheres. It also calls upon the SC/ST/BC/minority masses to unite to fight the divisive forces unleashed by the upper castes in the name of Rama's Rath yatra and the temple-mosque controversy. Being conveniently divided into 3 cassettes, one for each region of India, those who desire to purchase a cassette would need to only order that one particular cassette the BCs of the State in which one is interested. Thus, if one lives in North one need not buy all three cassettes, but only one particular cassette. Price Rs.25 each, postage Rs.10. It can be obtained from Manoj Yadav, No.9, Akbar Road, New Delhi - 110 001.



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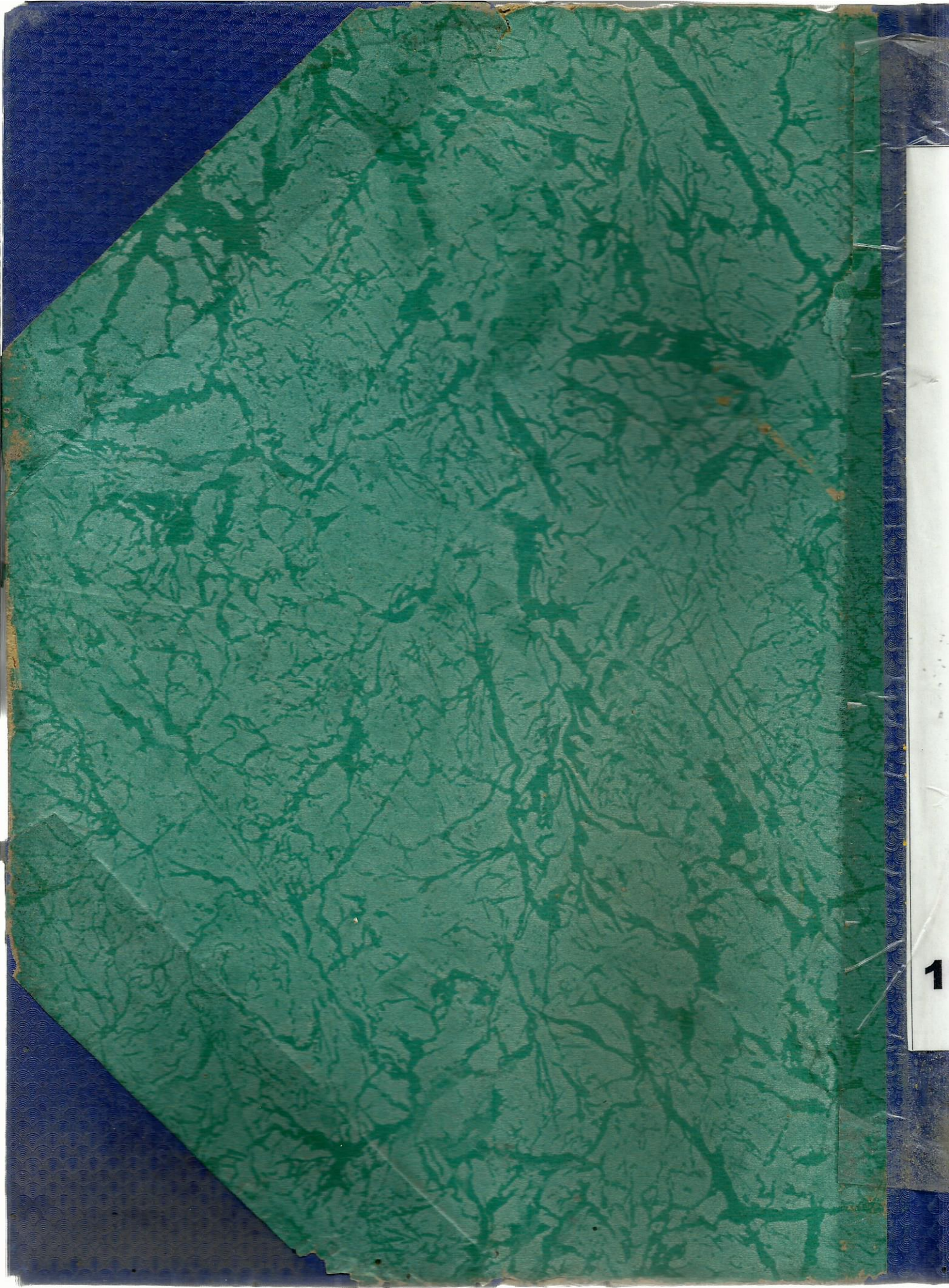
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