

COMMUNISTS EXPLOITED THE LABOURERS

“Early in September 1937, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar presided over a District Conference of the Depressed Classes at Masur.

In the course of his address he told his audience that it was his confirmed opinion that Gandhi was not man to look to the interests of the working classes and the poor. Had the Congress been a revolutionary body, he would have joined it. But he was convinced that it was not a revolutionary body. Congress was not courageous enough to proclaim the ideal of social and economic equality, enabling the common man to get leisure and liberty to develop himself according to his liking. That was not possible, he observed, as long as the means of production were controlled by a few individuals in their own interests. According to Gandhism, he said, the farmer would be the third bullock to be harnessed to the plough along with the two natural ones.

As regards the labour movement carried on by the Communists, he added that there was no possibility of his joining them. He declared that he was a confirmed enemy of the Communists, who exploited the labourers for their political ends.”¹

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¹:Keer, Pp. 295-296.

BE ON THE GUARD AGAINST EXPLOITERS

“On December 30, 1937, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar presided at the Sholapur District Conference of the Depressed Classes. He was enthusiastically received at dawn at Kurduwadi station. On his way Dr. Ambedkar made a brief halt and made a short speech before Matang Samaj at Karkam village.

He advised them to be on their guard against the Congress which, he said, comprised their exploiters, oppressors and bloodsuckers, who professed welfare of the poor under the garb of white dress and cap”¹.

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¹:Keer, P.297.

SELF-RESPECT AND SELF-HELP MOVEMENT HAS NOTHING TO LOSE BUT EVERY THING TO GAIN

While on tour to Sholapur District Dr. B. R. Ambedkar reached Pandharpur on 31st December 1937 at noon. Then he was taken out in procession to the Travellers Bungalow. The President of the Pandharpur Municipality met him at the Bungalow, and then they both left for the conference which was held at the Municipal *Dharmashala*. People from far and near gathered to hear their great leader. More than one thousand women were present.

“Dr. Ambedkar told the Conference that there were then three problems before them. The first was whether they would be ever given an equal status in Hindu society ; the second was whether they would get the proper share of national wealth ; and the third was what would be the fate of the self-respect, self-help movement. With regard to the first, he said that it was not possible as long as the caste system existed. As to the second, he expressed strong resentment at the treatment they got from the Congress which was ruled by the capitalists. He observed that as long as the Congress was in the hands of the capitalists, they could not rely on the present Government to do anything for the betterment of their economic condition. It was, therefore, he proceeded, necessary to form a united front against the capitalists, who were out to exploit them. He told them that the time had come for them to win their economic independence. Respecting the third, he said that they should remember one thing that they had nothing to lose and everything to gain by the step. They had only to shed the fear of death.”

The Conference supported whole-heartedly the Mahar Vatan Bill introduced in the Assembly by their leader.

Dr. Ambedkar was then taken to the Municipal Hall. The members received him cheerfully. The President made a feeling speech on the occasion and garlanded the guest. Dr. Ambedkar reciprocated their feelings and thanked them all.”¹

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¹ :Keer, Pp. 297-298.