

the Aryans came over to India, *Varna* system came into force. People were given the ranks in the society according to their birth. Some were called Brahmins, some Kshatrias, some Vaishyas, some Shudras and others Untouchables. According to this categorisation, the Untouchables were the lowest of all and were totally disconnected from the society. The relation between a Caste Hindu and an Untouchable is that of a foot and shoe. When we enter our house we leave our shoes outside. The same way, *Acchuts* are kept out of the society and are not given any rights whatsoever. We have borne this treatment at the hands of Caste Hindus for centuries and are still suffering socially, economically and politically.

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

There are many parties which are anxious to snatch away these rights. They are anxious to get our votes and send their own henchmen to the seats reserved for our people. You can very well understand their motives. They want that the Scheduled Castes should remain where they are and should not come into power so that the menial jobs which our people are performing should not suffer. So you will have to be careful about your votes in the coming election. You should see that only our true representatives are elected with our votes and none else. Only then your rights which have been incorporated in the Constitution can be safeguarded.

If our true representatives are not elected to the State Assemblies and the Union Parliament, then we cannot enjoy

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

I want to tell you about the people who were elected to the Parliament on Congress tickets to the seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes. They were about 30 in number and in the Parliament for the last four years. Not a single member out of the thirty raised any question in the Parliament about the grievances of the Scheduled Castes. Even if a question was put in Parliament, the Speaker did not allow it and the matter ended there. If the Speaker was generous and had allowed the question and it was included in the business then the Chief Whip of the Congress would go to the member concerned and ask him to withdraw the question before it is printed. Per chance, if the question had been printed, then the Chief Whip would ask the member concerned to leave the Station for the day when the answer is required and thus there would be no discussion at all in the Parliament on the matter raised as the member himself would not be there. For one month there is discussion on the Budget in Parliament. At that time any person can speak on the Budget and point out that such and such privileges should be provided for his community or his party. He can point out that so much money is being spent on unnecessary projects whereas the important proposals have been neglected. During these four years, I have not seen a single member moving any Cut Motion. This is all due to Congress Party's discipline (Dunda). If the members wanted to move a Resolution, they had to obtain the

permission of the Chief Whip long before it was actually moved. Neither these Members put up any Bill during these four years. How can. the Untouchables, Indian Christians, Anglo Indians etc. avail of the privileges provided for them in the Constitution, if the seats reserved for them are occupied by their enemies through the Congress ticket ?

I want to make the point clear that if you voted for the Congress, you will have to suffer for ever. Our representatives on Congress ticket will keep silent in the State Assemblies and the Parliament. Our interests can be safeguarded only if our true representatives are elected on Federation's ticket which is the only organisation of the Scheduled Castes. Had there been any possibility of getting our grievances redressed in the Congress I would not have left the Organisation. I know that Congress has sufficient money and will try to buy the votes with that. But you should be careful about it. If I wanted I could remain in the Congress for ever and definitely have got a good place there. But I would have done only if I had selfish motives and not any regard for my community. I would have remained there, if I was in need of any licence or permit for myself. The man seeking licence and permits can do so at the expense of his community. He will do anything for his own self and nothing for his community. This is the experience I have gained during the period I remained in the Congress Government.

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

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

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

A few days back, Pandit Nehru came here. It was reported that two-three lakhs of people gathered to hear him. I do not know how many people were there. Yesterday when I visited Jullundur over two lakhs of people gathered there but the pressmen published that thirty thousand people had gathered there. What I want to tell you is that if there is any conference of the Congress, then even if the audience is very thin, they will publish that a large gathering witnessed the Conference. For five they will say fifty for fifty they will say five hundred, for five hundred they will say five thousands and for five thousands they

will report five lakhs. I do not mind this criticism of the pressmen. They all have criticised me for so many years but in spite of that I have progressed physically as well as mentally. I do not want to witness large gatherings. What I want is that our people should organise themselves to fight against the atrocities of these Caste Hindus. I want that our people should hear me. Whether they gather in small numbers or large numbers is immaterial.

Every political party has put forward its Manifesto. Every party promises that if it comes into power it will do this and that. Scheduled Castes Federation has also published a very voluminous Manifesto but when they came to understand that ordinary people would not follow it, they amended it and compressed into a small one. I hope by and by their Manifesto will become smaller and smaller and a day will come when there will be no Manifesto of the Congress. I want to tell you what should be in the Manifesto and what should not be. I challenge all the political parties to constitute a committee to find out which Manifesto is the best and I have no doubt in mind that our Manifesto will be the best of all. All the parties have promised many things in their Manifestoes to the people. To promise is easy but difficult to put it into practice. If you promise one thing you can promise one hundred. Manifesto should not be a list of promises only. It should deal with the problems facing the country and also how to solve these problems. Is there anything of that sort in the Manifesto of the Congress? The only thing impressed in the Congress Manifesto is the Muslim problem. According to it, there is no other problem facing the country. Can anybody agree to this? Of course, Muslim problem was there when India was united and when there was no Pakistan. But then too, this was not the only problem. The Muslims have migrated to Pakistan, and only Hindus, Sikhs and other minorities are in India. Do you think that India is now facing Muslim problem? Do you agree that nothing should be done for the Depressed Classes, who are ten times poorer and backward than the Muslims? There are Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Criminal Tribes, which need the best attention of the Government. But the Congressmen say that people should not be communal minded and should not demand some special privileges for these backward classes.

The other problem is that of poverty in India. People in India are very poor so much so that 90 per cent people do not get proper meals. They do not get any clothes. They do not have any shelter. Food-stuffs worth crores of rupees are being imported every year. If we have to import even food-stuffs from outside and spend so much, how will we be able to pull on? But all these things have no place in the minds of Congressmen. They have only one problem to solve and that is Muslim problem.

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

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

This time we will not have the cumulative system of voting so that we may cast all our votes to a single candidate of our choice. But we have distributive system and will have to distribute our votes among different candidates. In a constituency where a seat has been reserved for Scheduled Castes, people will have two votes, one for general seat and the other for the reserved seat. We cannot cast both of our votes to our party candidate who is standing for the reserved seat. We can cast in his favour only one vote and the other vote must be given to the other candidate standing on general seat. So we shall have to join some party which will give their second vote to our

candidate and get our second vote in return. We have not decided as yet which party we will join hands with. Many parties have approached us for alliance but nothing has yet been finalised. Negotiations are going on. We have to think many times before we join hands with any party. But we must join with some party or the other.

In the end I want to tell you that thousands of people come to Delhi from Punjab and U. P. and other distant places to put their grievances before me. Some complain that they have been beaten by the *Zamindars* and when they approached the authorities concerned, decisions were taken against them as the people in power also belong to high castes. So there are so many complaints that it is not possible for me to cope with these single handed. Many people return to their homes disappointed. So I have decided to construct a building in Delhi and to keep a pleader there who will scrutinise our people's complaints and advise them in the matter. We have already purchased a piece of land in New Delhi for the purpose and on that site we want to construct a building which shall be the Head Office of the Federation. People from outside will be entertained there and their grievances heard. We do not have sufficient funds for the construction of this building, although it is absolutely essential. So I request that you all should contribute something according to your means. In this way we shall be able to achieve our purpose. Bawa Tula Dass will tour the whole Punjab for the collection of building Fund. I once again request you to contribute liberally for this noble cause."

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POOR PEOPLE MUST UNITE SEPARATELY TO ACHIEVE THEIR PURPOSE

Dr. Ambedkar's Speech at Patiala, Punjab on 29th October 1951 during election campaign. He said.

Dear brothers !

As my friend Mr. Rajbhoj has told you I am not feeling well today. This is due to the fact that I had to travel a long journey by road. So I will not be able to speak for a long time but I will speak on some important topics.

Everybody in India is busy with elections. There are many politicians and parties who have nothing else but elections with them. I very much appreciate the anxiety of the people about the coming elections and agree that we should think many times before we decide to vote for a party or an individual. The people elected now will continue in office for five long years. So, we must be very careful about it. This is the time of life and death of political parties as well as individuals. Every citizen and political party has got to take proper part in elections but for this, their very existence is in danger.

You know that today the Congress is the party in power in India. It is forty years old and it has got large funds at its disposal. For the last four or five years. Congress Party is governing over India, Congressmen are now canvassing people to vote for the Congress. They argue that no other party is so powerful to run the Government and can achieve what Congress has achieved in the past and will be able to do in the future. They state only under Congress rule India can prosper and as such all people whatever their religion, caste, creed might be, should vote for the Congress candidates and make them successful in the coming election. This is what Congressmen are propagating.

It is right that Congress has got means of propaganda so much so that every candidate standing for Congress ticket will have more than 100 agents at the disposal for his propaganda. Congress has got its headquarters where so many people are working like government servants. They have got offices of each

and every branch. This is all due to money. Congress is the richest party in India. With money, it can do whatever it likes. Without money no party can propagate and without proper propaganda no other party can flourish. Congress has so moulded the public opinion through propaganda in its favour that now it is trying to do all sorts of things under its cover.

Congress has been in power now for four years and you can well understand what it has done for the people. There is no food, no clothes and no shelter. Congress has failed to deliver the goods during these four years and how can one expect that it would help people if it comes into power again ? Corruption, nepotism and black-market are the only industries which have flourished during the Congress rule. Corruption and other evils are even greater now than during the British rule over India. We are dying of starvation and there is a vast disparity between the rich and the poor. If the Congress has not been able to remove this disparity during the five years, how will it be able to do in future ? Rich people are becoming richer and poor are becoming poorer day by day. What Congress has done in this direction ?

Congress Government is corrupt Government. Congress Minister take bribery. They get money through black-market. They are corrupt. If our Ministers are of such bad character, you can well understand how their subordinates will behave and what will be the position of the labour under the capitalists. I had expected that our present Prime Minister will do something in this connection and bribery, corruption, black-marketing will end for ever. But I am sorry to note that in his Presidential Address to the All India Congress General Session in New Delhi, Pandit Nehru stated that corruption is rampant in other countries also and as such we should not worry very much if it is prevalent in India too. He further added that corruption and bribery is in a very small scale in India as compared to other countries. I do not know how Prime Minister is going to remove this evil when he is openly encouraging it by saying that corruption is in a very small scale here. Even it is in small scale it must be removed. What has the Prime Minister done in this direction? Should he keep quiet if the Ministers and other high officials of the Government are corrupt ?

All what I have said is not my criticism, but the Congressmen have criticised the Congress Ministers and none else. In Madras, for instance, Mr. T. Prakasham was the Premier for some time. When he was turned out from office and Mr. Raje occupied his seat, there were certain charges against Mr. Prakasham and when an enquiry was made it was found that he had earned a huge amount through bribery, etc. He had issued thousands of licenses and permits. The same thing is happening in Madhya Pradesh. There are so many Ministers who have taken bribe but still they are Ministers of the worthy Government. Nobody is taking any action against them but they are being encouraged instead. The people who charge these Ministers are being sent to jail. What is happening in Punjab ? Mr. Sachar and Dr. Bhargava are fighting against each other. Both were Premiers in the Punjab. Both have pleaded not guilty. Each has demanded an enquiry against the other. No one can deny the fact that both took bribes and encouraged black-marketing during their rule in the Punjab and still no enquiry is being made. Now they are again trying for the Premierships. During the coming elections, they want to put as many candidates of their own camp on Congress tickets as would be sufficient to support them for the Premiership. The last date for the filing of papers in the Punjab is 5th November but upto this day i.e. 29th October 1951, no list has so far been finalised because of their differences and I think that they will never come to a point.

When any person has charged any Minister or other Government official for bribery, it is the duty of the Government to institute an enquiry and punish the culprit. No Government can exist if it allows its Ministers and other high dignitaries to take bribe in such a way. If every Government Minister will make money what will be the Government then ? In England, one Minister was charged for bribery in the House of Commons. Mr. Atlee, the then Prime Minister in England, at once ordered an enquiry. A Commission was appointed to enquire into the matter. The Commission stated in its report that the Minister concerned had taken some cloth from a friend of his, who happened to be a businessman and that this act of his cannot be

taken as bribe. But even on this ground that he accepted the cloth from a businessman, whether he was friend or enemy, without paying any money, Mr. Atlee turned out that Minister from office. But our Congress Government does not even feel its duty to enquire into the charges against the Ministers, not to speak of their removal from office.

Congressmen ask the people to vote for the Congress and promise that they will work for the welfare of all. They state that they will remove poverty and help the backward classes so that they will achieve a better standard of life. I want to ask you, can the snake and the mongoose (Ichneumon) live together. Can cat co-operate with the rat? Can elephant live with 'Birree'? Certainly, if the snake wants to mix up with the mongoose (Ichneumon) and make any profit out of it, it is mistaken. Mongoose will eat up the snake. Rat will be swallowed by the cat, if it wants to join hands with the cat. Similarly, elephant cannot enjoy the life with 'Birree'. Mongoose is the enemy of the snake, cat is the enemy of rat and 'Birree' is the enemy of the elephant. They cannot form a joint company.

Similarly, in the human world, there are weak as well as strong persons. One is the enemy of the other and certainly weak cannot live peacefully in the company with the strong. Money-lender and borrower cannot live peacefully. Money-lender will try to exploit the borrower to his own advantage. Bania (Money-lender) will always try to extract what it can out of the poor people. Brahmins will never show sympathy for the poor Scheduled Castes and if they did so there will be nobody to serve them. There are so many sections in this world which are enemies. There are poor as well as rich sections, and the rich are always there to exploit the poor. Now I want to question you that if we form a party of the snake, mongoose, cat, rat, elephant and 'Birree', will the snake, rat and elephant be safe there? Certainly not. They will always be at the mercy of their masters. Similarly, if the Depressed Classes join hands with the Brahmins and form a political party, do you think that the Depressed Classes will be safe there? I warn you to be careful and give fullest consideration to this matter. You should not be caught in the net spread by the Congress. If you think that by joining hands with

the high caste people you will be better off, then you are mistaken. The high caste people will always suppress the backward classes. High Caste people will enjoy the freedom whereas our people will remain as they are. Poor people can never flourish under the rich and must unite separately to achieve their purpose.

To safeguard the interests of the Depressed Classes, we have formed our own political party called the Scheduled Castes Federation. Through our efforts we have secured certain privileges which have been incorporated in the Constitution itself. Certain seats have been reserved for the Scheduled Castes in the State Assemblies and the Union Parliament. Only Scheduled Castes people can be elected to those seats. But if our true representatives are not elected to the Assemblies and the Congress nominees are elected to the reserved seats, then our rights cannot be safeguarded. Our people elected on the Congress tickets will be tools in the hands of the Congress and they will serve their own selves. Just take the case of the two Scheduled Castes Deputy Ministers who are in the PEPSU Ministry. They were elected on the Congress tickets. What have they done for you ? Our children are uneducated. We are as poor as before. We have not got any lands. We are not treated like human beings in the villages. Have they done anything in this regard? I have come to know that as soon as they came to know that I am visiting Patiala, they started anti-propaganda. They asked the Scheduled Castes people to boycott the Conference. Now you can judge what the people elected on the Congress tickets can do for us. Those who seek Congress tickets are selfish and selfish people can never think of other. You cannot expect anything from them.

To join Congress is easy. It was more easy for me to do so with my qualifications. Everybody will join Congress if it is beneficial to all. But if by joining Congress, we do not benefit, what is the use of our going over to Congress ? Well ! I was in Congress Government. I have never accepted any bribe, I have never tried to use unfair means to collect money. I challenge that there is not a single charge against me.

Our conditions have even worsened with the coming of the Congress into power. No practical steps have been taken to ameliorate our grievances. Every thing has been said but nothing has been done so far for the good of our people. We want to make it clear that we are very much depressed and if this thing continued further, a revolution is inevitable. We thought that our Hindu brothers will do something for the good of our people, but all our hopes have been duped us. Some seats have been reserved for the Scheduled Castes in the Assemblies but our true representatives are not allowed to be elected to these seats. This reservation is only for ten years and what will happen afterwards, we cannot say. Do you think that after ten years we will be well off to compete with the high caste people in the society? Will our people be so rich as to fight side by side with the Hindus? I want to give a warning to these high caste people that if our conditions remained as they are today, then we will have to use some other means. Either they will live here or we will live. We are fed up with this sort of living and are not going to tolerate it any more.

Brahmin and Baniya have never died for freedom although they are the only fortunate who are deriving benefits now. Let me know how many of them have died in the last war? How many of them are in the army? If there is conscription, our people will be the first to go to the army. They will do their duty as they have done previously. Poor have always protected the rich although rich have never shown any sympathy with them. Therefore I warn these high caste people that a revolution is inevitable unless something is done for the betterment of the backward classes.

For thirty long years, I fought for the cause of my community. I have no selfish motives. I never complained that I am not a Minister and that I should be given some high post. I have never demanded anything for my own self. Gandhi always opposed me. When Gandhi demanded *Swaraj*, I told him that I entirely agree with his demand and will definitely support him but asked him only one question as to what will be the position of the Scheduled Castes in his so-called *Swaraj*. Will our people be given some good standard in life? Will they be educated? Will there be no harassment of our people in *Swaraj*? Now the people of India are free, what benefits have we derived

out of it ? If we are backward today, we are because of these high caste people, who have kept us away from society. They have not allowed us to make any progress simply because there was no other class to do their service. There was no other community to do the menial jobs which we are performing. There is no difference between them and we people. We are just like them. But the only difference is that according to their *Dharma*, we are in this world to serve them and not have equal right. These high caste people are putting mountains before us. We are put to all sorts of difficulties so that we may not make any progress.

We have secured certain rights but these Congressmen are bent upon depriving us from the benefit of these rights. Against the seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes, they are putting their own candidates. When the Congress Party gives tickets to high caste people for the general seats, they ask them so many questions. They want to know first, how many times did the man concerned go to jail ? They want to know what interest he has taken in the Struggle for Independence. I ask these Congressmen, why these questions are not put to a Scheduled Caste candidate who seeks Congress ticket for the reserved seat ? Why his services to the Nation are not taken into account ? Why only illiterate and unpopular people are selected for the reserved seats ? What are the grounds for their selection ? They should ask them, whether they helped Congress in the Civil Disobedience Movement or not ? Why only fools are selected ?

If our true representatives are elected to the Assemblies through the Scheduled Castes Federation, we can have our grievances redressed. If they do not do anything for us, we can put them to task. I have been in politics for 30 years now. Myself and Gandhi entered politics together. For eight years I was a Minister. Had I wished, I would have continued as a Minister in the Government for the whole of my life but I have no selfish motives. So I have left the Congress Government as I think I cannot serve my community while remaining there. If you did not pay any heed to my request and our true representatives are not elected, then we will have to suffer for ever. I may tell you this reservation is only for ten years i.e. for only two elections. After ten years, reservation will go. I wanted that

the reservation should remain so long as the Untouchability is there but our own members who were elected to the Parliament on Congress tickets opposed me leaving aside the other Caste Hindu members. I ask those people who seek Congress tickets, what will they do after the reservation is not there ? Will the Congress ask them to stand on general seats on its ticket ? Nobody will then even spit on them. During the past, these high caste people have treated us in a degrading manner and they will do it after the reservation is gone. I tell you if they are sympathising with us at the moment, it is only because they want to make us fools and put their yesmen at the reserved seats. After the reservation is abolished, they will again call us Chamars, Bhangis. Therefore, I tell you that you should be very cautious now and unite under the banner of the Scheduled Castes Federation. It is your duty to give your votes to the Federation candidates who will die for your cause.

Now I want to tell you a few important things. Firstly, the election symbol of the Scheduled Castes Federation is 'Elephant'. I have come to know that some other party has also selected this symbol with this distinction that our symbol is only 'Elephant' whereas they have a '*Charkha*' (Spinning wheel) over the Elephant. So be careful about it. Do not be misled. Our Party Symbol is simply 'Elephant' without any *Charkha*.

Secondly, we are very few in number. If we put our candidates, they will be pulled down by other parties as they have got majority of votes. Our strength is only 10 per cent in the villages and you will agree that with so little votes, we cannot succeed in the coming elections. So I would request you all that every man and woman should cast his vote on the polling day leaving aside other affairs. The result will be that we will at least get our votes. If even the few voters, did not cast their votes it will be very difficult for our candidates to succeed.

Thirdly, I want to impress upon you that owing to our being minority, we shall have to join hands with some party in the elections. There will be distributive system of voting this time and where we have reserved seats, all the people will have two votes. One for the candidate who is standing on the general seat

and the other for the candidate who is standing on the reserved seat. We will give one vote to our candidate who is standing on the reserved seat and the second vote to the candidate of that party, who will cast their second vote to our candidate. We have not yet decided with which party we are making alliance. Negotiations are going on and in a few days it will be decided. But one thing should be clear in our minds that we are not joining hands with Congress at any cost. You should not fear of Congress now. It has weakened and its members are fighting against one another. Congress will die its natural death.

In the end, I once again want to request you to vote for the candidate who is fighting on the Scheduled Castes Federation ticket. Federation candidates will be your true representatives, who will do everything for the welfare of our community. They will not be selfish. They will serve their community to the last.”

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..... LET US SAVE OUR KITH AND KIN

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar addressed the students of Lucknow University on 7th November 1951. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, leader of the Scheduled Castes Federation, warned the country against “indifference to the Backward Classes” and said that if they were frustrated in their attempt to rise to the status of equality, the Scheduled Castes might prefer the Communist system and the fate of the country would be doomed.”

Dr. Ambedkar said: “If we are to avoid any such revolution, my first submission to politicians is that they should recognise this problem urgently.” Dr. Ambedkar deplored that though the Constitution had introduced the system of adult franchise recognising the principles of one man, one vote in the economic and social life of India that principle had not been adopted. Dr. Ambedkar referred to the Kashmir problem and said that Kashmir was not a unitary State. It was composite State, consisting of Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims. Jammu and Ladak were non-Muslim areas whereas the Kashmir Valley was Muslim. He said: “We do not know how the Kashmiris will vote but India is committed to the United Nations for an overall plebiscite. If the plebiscite goes in favour of Pakistan what will happen to the 20 per cent non-Muslim population? That is a very big question. If we cannot save the whole of Kashmiris at least let us save our Kith and Kin. It is a plain analysis of fact which cannot be denied.”

GLOOMY FUTURE

Replying to a question by a student, Dr. Ambedkar said he was very pessimistic about the future of India, because foreign countries did not consider India an important country and internally the administration had completely deteriorated in comparison with the British regime. Corruption and nepotism were rampant and the Congress High Command did not institute any inquiry against certain Ministers by Congressmen themselves. On the other hand they were protected by them.

Dr. Ambedkar said that during the British regime famines occurred at an interval of 15 to 20 years but these days each year brought a famine. “What has happened to the economy of this country? Are we going to die like flies?” he asked”.¹

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¹: The Times of India, dated 10th November 1951.

WHY I DID NOT RESIGN EARLIER ?

“Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, who will arrive in Bombay on November 20, 1951 will be given a joint reception by the State Socialist Party and the Scheduled Castes Federation.

Dr. Ambedkar is visiting Bombay on a six-day election tour of the State and to launch the Scheduled Castes Federation's election campaign. The campaign will be launched at a public meeting in the city on November 22.”¹

“A large crowd gave a warm and enthusiastic reception to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, President of the Scheduled Castes Federation, on his arrival in Bombay on Sunday, the 18th November 1951.

More than 6,000 people, among whom were many women thronged Victoria Terminus to welcome the former Law Minister on his first visit to the city since his resignation from the Cabinet. He will stay in Bombay for a week and will inaugurate the election campaign on behalf of the Federation.

Dr. Ambedkar, who is contesting the election to the House of the people from the Bombay City North constituency (Reserved seat) will address an election meeting on Thursday.

Shouts of “Ambedkar Zindabad” rent the air as the Punjab Mail, in which he was travelling, steamed into the station. He was given a joint reception on the platform by the Bombay Socialist Party and the Federation. Mr. Ashok Mehta, General Secretary of the Party, greeted Dr. Ambedkar and was closeted with him in his compartment for about 15 minutes.

After the official reception, Dr. Ambedkar motored to the extreme end of the road between platform Nos. 8 and 9 where a separate reception on behalf of the various taluka committees of the Federation in Bombay was held in his honour. Here Dr. Ambedkar was garlanded on behalf of the taluka committees and other institutions.

¹: The Times of India, dated 12th November 1951.

Among those present at the reception was Mr. S. K. Bole, one of Dr. Ambedkar's old associates. A measure of mirth was introduced into the reception when Dr. Ambedkar invited 85 year old Mr. Bole to sit on his lap, no separate chair being provided to the latter at the reception. Mr. Bole sat on Dr. Ambedkar's lap amidst general laughter.”¹

“Under the auspices of the Bombay Branch of the Scheduled Castes Federation, a reception was given to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar on the playground at Bhoiwada, Bombay at about 6.30 p.m. on November 22nd 1951. Shri R. G. Kharat presided. About 5,000 persons attended.

The President said that the meeting had been called by the Bombay-Branch of the Scheduled Castes Federation to give reception to Dr. Ambedkar. Under his leadership they had build up a strong unity under the Blue Flag and now even the other people were gathering round the Blue Flag. He said that Dr. Ambedkar was standing for the election of the Parliament and he would give instructions as regards the next general elections and they should properly carry out his instructions.

Shri J. G. Bhatankar garlanded Dr. Ambedkar and Shrimati Ambedkar. He said that it was decided to present a purse of Rs. 25,000 to Dr. Ambedkar but so far they were not able to collect that much amount. Whatever so far collected were in the two bags and he hoped that the remaining amount would soon be collected and presented to him in due course before the elections.

Dr. Ambedkar while replying to the reception said that many people were asking him two questions *viz.* why he did not resign earlier. If he had resigned earlier, it would have been possible to build up a strong front against the Congress. The second question was that why he failed to join hands with the Congress. He said that for the last 4 years he was one of the Ministers of the Congress Government. He had gone in the Ministry in order to know by close contact with the top leaders in the Congress as to whether they

¹: The Times of India, dated 20th November 1951.

really desired to do good to the Harijans and from his experience he could say that the Congressmen did not really desire to do good to Harijans. He said that they had got reserved seats in the Parliament and in the Assemblies for a period of 10 years. He was sure that though the Government had made rules for the removal of Untouchability, even after ten years Untouchability would remain and their condition would be as before. He said that a provision was made in the Constitution that Harijans should be given 12 $\frac{1}{2}$, per cent services in Government departments but Shri Munshi and other Congressmen wanted to put a time limit to this concession but due to his opposition they were not successful. He once asked Shri Rajagopalachari the per cent of Harijans in the Government services and from the circular he issued to various departments he came to know that in none of the departments Harijans were employed. He further said that during the time of the British he was in the Executive Council and he was in charge of the departments *viz.* Labour and P. B. O. and the British sanctioned a sum of Rs. 3 lacs for the education of the Harijans in foreign countries. He said that the present Government was spending the amount but they had stopped sending Harijans to foreign countries for education. He said that during the time of the British many Harijans were sent to foreign countries to get the knowlegde of fitters etc. He further said that at the time of partition the Pakistan Government allowed Caste Hindus to come to India but that Government prevented Harijans from leaving Pakistan and many were converted as Muslims. The Mahar Batallian managed to bring some Harijans to India but they were not given any help by the India Government. Some offered hunger strike at the Rajghat but no one paid any heed to their strike and he had to tell them that their grievances would not be redressed by the Congress Government. He said that as he could not do any good to the Harijans, he decided to resign and Pandit Nehru did not give any reply, so far to the charge made by him against the Congress Government. He further said that as they were about 8 per cent, they could not contest the elections without the help of any other political party, and therefore they decided to join hands with the Socialists. He said that they would continue to have their Federation for the redress of their special grievances. He asked

the audience to be honest in the elections with the party with which they had joined hands. He expressed satisfaction for the satisfactory working of the *Samata Sainik Dal* and he hoped that they would be of great use in the next general elections. He said that he would leave Bombay after 4 days, and it would not be possible for him to appear before them again. He asked to give their votes to the candidates of the Scheduled Castes Federation and of the Socialist Party and none of them should remain at home on that day.”¹

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¹ : Police Report, Source Material, Vol. I, Pp. 388-389.

FEDERATION WILL NOT GIVE UP ITS SEPARATE POLITICAL ENTITY

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, who was inaugurating the election campaign of the Scheduled Castes Federation, of which he is the President, at a mammoth public meeting at St. Xavier's College ground at Parel, on 22nd November 1951, reiterated the charges he had made in that statement and said that he had left the Government in which he had worked for four years because he was convinced that the Congress and the Government were utterly indifferent to the welfare and progress of the Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, former Law Minister of the Government of India, declared that Mr. Nehru had deliberately evaded answering the charges he had levelled against the Government and the Congress party, because charges were true and unanswerable.

Mr. Nehru had many occasions to contradict the statement he had issued when he resigned from the Government last month, but the Prime Minister preferred to remain silent knowing fully well that the charges were indisputable.

He had occasions to watch Congress leaders from close quarters and he could now say with confidence that the Congress had no sympathy and love for the Oppressed Backward Classes.

He complained that when he was a Minister in the Congress Government he was not only not given charge of portfolios promised by the Prime Minister, but he was shut out from the policy-making Cabinet Committees.

As a Minister he could not criticise the policy of the Government nor could he ask any question in Parliament about the Scheduled Castes.

Dr. Ambedkar repudiated the charge made against him by some Congressmen that he had played a very insignificant part