



Ambedkar Times *Weekly*

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VOL- 13

ISSUE- 42

December 29, 2021

California (USA)

www.ambedkartimes.com

www.deshdoaba.com

Living with Peace: Equality VS Power

Prem K. Chumber

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The most common dilemma human beings face is peace at home and struggle for power in the world. Search for peace and equality at domestic level and efforts to gain, enhance and maintain power at the world level clash with each other. Another equally common dilemma is about the incompatibility between the goals nations pursue within their domestic sphere and their foreign policies. It is known to all of us that those nations which boast of the inherent culture of their respective democratic societies could be seen acting dictatorially when they bring some other nation(s) under their control be it in a colonial or neo-colonial set-up. British rule in India is a case in point. Now, Neo-Colonialism is another clear instance. This dilemma of democracy at home vs dictatorship abroad has its roots in what called phenomenon of 'nationalism' and aggressive pursuit of power in the domain of political and economic world. Since the treaty of Westphalia (1648), the idea of sovereignty of the territorially demarcated state boundaries divided the humanity into 'we' and 'others'. 'My nation' as distinguished from 'other nations' had come to stay as a dominant narrative. The narrative reduces "others" almost into aliens/enemy, especially in military terminology.

The sharp division between the internal (domestic) and the external (international) often goads nations to seek equality within their sovereign territorial jurisdiction and pursue power related goals in the anarchic domain of the globally contested political sphere. This division between internal and external political realms has its own peculiar logic to function which is linked with the all-pervasive dilemma of ideal of quality vs scramble for power. The desire to bring equality within leads to hunt for resources and markets abroad. When this practice becomes infectious pursuit among the powerful states it leads to serious confrontation between them. The last century's two world wars occurred within its first half were the outcome of the imperialistic scramble for more and more power.

Yet another less articulated but equally important factor related with the blind rush for power is the phenomenon of over-exploitation of the natural resources. It leads not only to the fast depletion of natural resources but turn their consumption poisonous too. Corona-19 is the latest outcome of our such uncaring and often over-exploitative approach towards Mother Nature! Power creates lust for more and more profit. Whereas, equality asks for restraint. It demands for sharing of what we have and a collective living in communitarian set up... Power is individualistic. Equality is collaborative. Power pushes for war. Equality leads us to peace. But for the peace to prevail we need to decouple our ideal of equality from the scramble for power. Let us pray together that in the New Year 2022 ahead equality triumphs over power.

"Ambedkar Times" and "Desh Doaba" forum deeply appreciate the support it received from its sponsors, contributors, readers and well-wishers. A Big Thank You to all of you! With your support continuing and your kind encouragement, we promise you to serve you uninterruptedly with our utmost capacity in near future too.

**WISHING YOU ALL VERY HAPPY,
HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS 2022**

Happy



New Year

2022

"Ambedkar Times" and "Desh Doaba" Weeklies wish our all esteemed supporters, contributors, readers and well-wishers very very happy and healthy New Year Ahead and pray for the welfare of all humanity and comfortable life free from Covid pandemic!

Prem K. Chumber

Editor-In-Chief: www.ambedkartimes.com

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Goodie Takhar, PhD

Indus Valley Chamber of Commerce's Annual Program

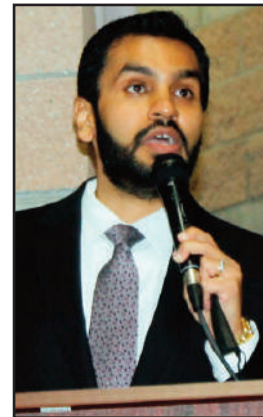
Sacramento (Prem Kumar Chumber) - As an annual practice, the Indus Valley Chamber of Commerce organised its annual function on December 10, 2021, in which around 300 people participated. In the current annual gathering of the Indus Valley Chamber of Commerce, apart from its members and their families, many

other eminent personalities also participated. This annual event was organized on December 10, 2021 in which addition to peoples of Indian origin, Americans of various other nationalities also participated to enjoy Punjabi folk dances, music and other community activities.

During this year's annual

event, apart from the former Indus Commissioner (California), the Mayor of Elk Grove City, Bobbie Singh Allen, Dave Jones Former California Insurance Commissioner, Mikey Singh Hothi, members of Lodi City Council and several other personalities participated. On this occasion, some of the people, who contributed towards the

development of the organization, were felicitated. All the participants were served dinner and the whole programme went very well. Dr. Goodie Takhar & Attorney Paramprit Bindra conducted the stage meticulously. Sh. Sukhchain Singh paid the vote of thanks and wished Happy 2022.to all present.



All pictures by Prem Kumar Chumber (Ambedkar Times)



Indus Valley Chamber of Commerce's Annual Program



Indus Valley Chamber of Commerce's Annual Program



Indus Valley Chamber of Commerce's Annual Program



Season's Greetings and Happy New Year – 2022



Ramesh Chander
Ambassador - I.F.S. (Retired)
91-99885-10940

I completed 71 years of the journey of my life – Yeh Jo Hai Zindgi Thodi Khatti Thodi Meethi – in December, 2021. Life continues, so far so good. We are saying Good-Bye to the Year 2021 and Hi to the New Year, 2022. Before I do the usual stock taking exercise to close the year, I take this opportunity to wish my readers, friends and fellow countrymen all the best and Happy New year. May God bless us with further happiness and pros-

perity and to live with a sense of fraternity and harmony in the society at large?

reminded on track generally, in spite of difficult situations. Against the onslaughts of the pandemic, we could surge ahead in the much needed vaccination of our people. Though late the government responded to the Kisan Andolan and succeeded in pacifying the farmers finally by withdrawing the alleged 'black agricultural laws' resulting in ending the avoidable standoff between the farmers and the government. The internal security situation with regard to Naxals, Khalistanis, separatists in the J&K and other sensitive areas of the country, by and large, remained satisfactory. Developmental agenda, particularly upgrading of national highways, it appeared, was given much needed priority. The economic activity was restored in the aftermath of pandemic. On the other hand, our failures in responding to the chal-

warnings in his last speech in the Constituent Assembly on November 25, 1949:-

'If we wish to maintain democracy not merely in form, but also in fact, what must we do?'

The first thing in my judgment we must do is to hold fast to constitutional methods of achieving our social and economic objectives. It means we must abandon the bloody methods of revolution. It means that we must abandon the method of civil disobedience, non-cooperation and satyagraha. When there was no way left for constitutional methods for achieving economic and social objectives, there was a great deal of justification for unconstitutional methods. But where constitutional methods are open, there can be no justification for these unconstitutional methods. These methods are nothing but the

plays a part in its politics unequalled in magnitude by the part it plays in the politics of any other country in the world. Bhakti in religion may be a road to the salvation of the soul. But in politics, Bhakti or hero-worship is a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship.

The third thing we must do is not to be content with mere political democracy. We must make our political democracy a social democracy as well. Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy.'

On the external front, let me remind my readers that in diplomacy it is said that external policy is an extension of internal situation. First of all, therefore, we need to set our house in order. Our immediate neighbors, China and Pakistan kept us on toes in one way or the other. We can-



LIVE SESSION ON Career in Indian Foreign Service

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
AMBASSADOR RAMESH CHANDER
IFS (Retired)
Sept. 18, 2021 (Sat) 5:00 pm Sharp

SESSION MODERATOR
AHSANUL HAQ
IAS Mentor & India Programme Director, Mastermind Business School, London

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दैनिक भास्कर | **किसान की जीत का प्रकाश पर्व**

17 को पास हुए कानून	18 मिनट का संबोधन	19 को वापसी का फैसला
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17 सितंबर 2020 को कृषि कानून लोक सभा में पास हुए

18 मिनट तक PM मोदी ने आज राष्ट्र को संबोधित किया

19 नवंबर 2021 को कानून वापसी का ऐलान किया गया



نه کوئی رنج کالج کسی کے پاس آئے
خدا کرے کہ نیا سال سب کو اس آئے
ن کوئی رنج کا لمحہ کسی کے پاس آئے
خود کرے کہ نیا سال سب کو اس آئے

rekhta foundation



perity and to live with a sense of fraternity and harmony in the society at large?

The Year 2021, to my mind, remained a difficult year not only for India but for the world at large primarily due to Covid Pandemic and resultant economic slowdown and also tensions pertaining to geo-political developments all around. India being a prominent stakeholder in the world order, it was natural to get affected and live with the situation as best as was possible. PM Narendra Modi's Government and also Governments of the States of India, it was a matter of satisfaction, did their best to meet the challenges before the country in spite of many odds, both obvious and also self created.

On the internal front, with mixed outcome of failures and success as termed it by the Hindustan Times on December 27 "2021: For India, a year of mixed fortunes", we

lenges were also too many to list; price rise, inflation, unemployment, corruption, religious fundamentalism resulting in intolerance and giving rise to fissiparous tendencies, constitutional morality, fears and insecurity among the minorities and the socially undermined segments of the society, remained glaring. Parliament could not function properly due to uncalled for and avoidable disruptions. The Government and the Opposition remained at logger head which was not a good sign for a parliamentary democracy. Yet another gratifying aspect was that our players did well at the Japan Olympics in 2021, in this regard, perhaps we have arrived but we are yet to reach. We are to remain alert and responsive in addressing these issues and have a fresh look on the warnings given by our founding fathers particularly father of the constitution Babasaheb B.R. Ambedkar. Babasaheb gave the following three

Grammar of Anarchy and the sooner they are abandoned, the better for us.

The second thing we must do is to observe the caution which John Stuart Mill has given to all who are interested in the maintenance of democracy, namely, not "to lay their liberties at the feet of even a great man, or to trust him with power which enable him to subvert their institutions". There is nothing wrong in being grateful to great men who have rendered life-long services to the country. But there are limits to gratefulness. As has been well said by the Irish Patriot Daniel O'Connell, no man can be grateful at the cost of his honour, no woman can be grateful at the cost of her chastity and no nation can be grateful at the cost of its liberty. This caution is far more necessary in the case of India than in the case of any other country. For in India, Bhakti or what may be called the path of devotion or hero-worship,

not afford to lower our guard and must prepare ourselves to secure our borders and watch our interests both militarily and diplomatically. The emerging situation in Afghanistan remained yet another big irritation and worry. The security situation in the Indo-Pacific region, primarily on account of China's increasing profile, kept us engaged with the other stake holders. Our security interests and energy supplies from Central Asia and Iran, our extended neighborhood, obviously, kept us alive to further strengthen our relations with these countries. India being a large country, with an independent outlook, cannot afford to be a camp follower. We are to balance our dealings and approaches with the big powers like Russia and the USA. It is a matter of gratification that India's foreign policy remained responsive and effective in watching and promoting our national

(Contd. on next page)

IN MEMORIAM- LATE Mrs.LATCHMI BALLEY



It has been ten years today since we lost you. I wanted to make sure you knew that though you are gone but never forgotten. The family misses you a lot ,remembers you often and wishes you peace and strength in your heavenly abode.

She was a amazing soul with a trail of memories left behind for the whole family to cherish.

Loving husband,
O.P. Balley

December 28, 2021

MESSAGE NEW YEAR -2022



As the New year-2022 is approaching fast, Supreme Council Shri Guru Ravidass Sabhas,USA wishes all our Guru Ghars and the entire Sangat all over the world, a very happy and a prosperous New Year.

Let us get together to say "good bye" to the previous year which presented global challenges of unprecedented nature in the form of

Covid-19 Pandemic and its Variants. Let us embrace the new year-2022 with New hopes,faith and prayers for return to normalcy and pre-pandemic behaviour in our day to day lives.

O.P.Balley
General Secretary,
Shri Guru Ravidass Sabhas,USA

Season's Greetings and Happy New Year – 2022

(Continue from page 6)

and international interests under the dynamic leadership of EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar and our diplomatic machinery. International engagement in the wake of Covid pandemic, kept us alert to deal with the situation in cooperation with the international community. We could deliver, so far so good, to keep India's flag high.

As regards my own, I kept myself busy in reading and writing in my own humble way and wrote 52 blogs in the year 2021 on matters of interest and concern to the community and the society at large. It remained a matter of great satisfaction for me that most of the blogs got critical acclaim from discerning readers. My friend Prem Chumber, Editor-in-Chief of the esteemed Ambedkar Times and Desh Doaba, two weeklies being published from California in the US, was very supportive in carrying my blogs in the Ambedkar Times. I must say a big THANK YOU to Prem Chumber ji and wish all the best for further success in the years to come. With regard to my reading to educate myself, over the year, I read some good books and reviewed them in my blogs. It was a satisfying exercise. With regard to my social and community responsibilities and activities, on April 14, the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar, I was invited by the Vidya Dham to their function to commemorate the greatest son of

India in the contemporary times as Guest of Honour and also as the Chief Guest at the function arranged by the Jalandhar Regional Passport Office. In July, Atmanirbhar Global Chamber of Commerce and Industry, headed by my friends Ambassador Anil Trigunayat as and Anil Mehta, honoured me by appointing as a Senior Adviser to the apex chamber. In August, I visited Pune on the invitation of Social Studies Foundation to deliver a lecture on the theme 'Silent Contributors to the development and progress of modern India' and to release the special issue of the 'Unheard Voices'. The Pune visit provided me an opportunity to visit the esteemed Symbiosis University and pay obeisance to Babasaheb Ambedkar at the Museum and Memorial named after the worthy son of India and rightly called "Perna Bhoomi" thoughtfully hosted by the Symbiosis University. It was an added honour to hoist the Tri-colour, as the Guest of Honour at prestigious Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics on the Independence Day on August 15. In September, I spoke at a Webinar arranged by the Civil Services Mentor and my friend, Ahsanul Haq on the theme – Career Opportunities and the IFS which was attended by more than 150 civil services aspirants from India and abroad. Various online web- TV outfits like Dalit Dastak, Punjab Grand,

Navi Raah, Doordarshan, All India Radio, and The Print among others invited me for interviews and talks on matters of interest and concern to the people. I found this exposure very useful and beneficial. Though the GOI is blissfully silent on the proposal of April 14, birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar as International Day of Equality under the aegis of the UN yet I did not lose hope and kept on reminding the EAM and PM and also other stake holders on the proposal resting with MEA since June, 2015 and resolve to keep pursuing the proposal, keeping in line with the poetic message of Allma Iqbal:

हर दरदमंद दलि को येना मेश युला दे ;
बेहोश जो पड़े है शायद उन्हें जगा दे.

It was disappointing that due to the Covid pandemic difficulties, neither we nor my children in Sweden and Canada could see and see each other for the last two years. Hopefully, the New Year brings in good times and life goes on as usual. But the matter of concern and worry remains with yet another wave of Omicron which is feared to knock us down again.

I am not a pessimistic but we need to on our guards. The governments and concerned bodies like the Election Commission should not be oblivious of the resultant fall out of forthcoming state elections scheduled for early next year in spreading the pandemic by huge public gather-

ings and rallies which tend to throw all norms and protocols to the wind as happened last year during the West Bengal other elections. The second worry which I may share here, which requires serious consideration and thinking, is successively dwindling 'constitutional morality' in governance both on the part of political class and also the so called 'steel frame', the bureaucracy. Babasaheb Ambedkar rightly said in the speech referred to in the preceding paras, "I shall not therefore enter into the merits of the Constitution. Because I feel, however good a Constitution may be, it is sure to turn out bad because those who are called to work it, happen to be a bad lot.

However bad a Constitution may be, it may turn out to be good if those who are called to work it, happen to be a good lot. We would ignore this reality at our own peril.

It is a matter of gratification that in spite of all failures and difficulties, we are on rails. It was possible only because of the Constitution of India so laboriously framed by our forefathers, particularly Babasaheb Ambedkar. Let us take a solemn pledge on the close of the Year 2021 and ushering in the New Year, 2022 that 'We Would Not Fail Our Founding Fathers. With this, I once again greet my fellow countrymen and international fraternity and wish them Happy New Year, 2022.



Ishwar Das Pawar
District and Sessions Judge (Retd.)

My Struggle in Life

The Real Sons of the Motherland

The Poona Pact was the turning point in the history of the untouchables. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had secured for them separate political representation after a hard struggle. The political gain, though it fell much short of the required share, marked the acceptance of the principle of political recognition as a separate entity of the so far ignored people. But this decision of the British government did not find favor with the Hindu leaders and Mahatma Gandhi, and the latter thought of saving the Hindus from disintegration. Therefore, in order to undo the decision of the British government, he undertook a fast unto death or till his demand for scrapping separate representation for the untouchables was conceded. Dr. Ambedkar knew that in case the demand was accepted, it would adversely affect the hard-won rights of the untouchables. He therefore resisted the move so long as it was humanly possible for him, but in the long last, he had to relent, though very regretfully, in order to save the life of the Mahatma.

At that critical time, all the Hindu leaders and organizations made all sorts of promises and took solemn vows pledging to render all possible assistance to the cause of the oppressed and exploited people so that Mahatma Gandhi's life could be saved. After a long and hard bargaining, they succeeded in their efforts. But quite soon, all the tall promises and vows were forgotten. All that could emerge from this episode was the setting up by the Mahatma of an organization named the Harijan Sewak Sangh to redeem the pledge of helping the weaker sections of society. An interesting part of it, however, was that the Mahatma wanted that the Sangh should be manned entirely by non-Harijans, and the reason given was that the work proposed to be done by the Sangh was by way of repentance and atonement for the sins committed by them against the untouchables, and therefore, the task of expiation had to be performed by the Hindus themselves. It was however not realized that, in this way, a major portion of the funds collected for a specific purpose would have gone into the pockets of the persons supposed to be atoning for their sins. Furthermore, the decision how much money should be spent on the real purpose and in what manner would also be the prerogative of the acknowledged sinners. Such a course might have made a mockery of the scheme. Therefore, this program was not liked by those who were really and sincerely interested in the welfare of the downtrodden. Consequently, some Harijans were also associated with the working of the Sangh here and there on small jobs. In spite of all the fanfare, the Sangh was not able to render much help and thus could not substantially achieve the objective it had set before it. Gradually, this organization died its natural death, leaving the gigantic problem to take care of itself.

Mahatma Gandhi was a complex personality. It is not easy to understand him on many a point, for example, his trusteeship theory, his support of the caste system, and his stress on following hereditary and traditional professions. Meaningless philosophizing apart, these propositions are entirely obnoxious

besides being totally impracticable. Why, for example, Valmikis (low caste people, janitors) should be advised to follow the hated and most dirty professions that had been foisted upon them under the caste laws? And similarly, why Chamars (people from a low caste which deals in leather related jobs) be advised to stick to the old trade of shoe mending? But his views on the problem of the Harijans on some other aspects had some positive value. Here is a case in point. Mahatma Gandhi came to Lahore in 1934 to raise funds for the Harijan Sewak Sangh. He was staying in the Lajpat Rai Bhawan. Many a deputation waited on him including ours. While we were waiting for our turn, sitting close by, a deputation of Hindus was presenting its case. One of the points made by the deputationists was that in spite of the fact that the Arya Samaj had done quite a lot for the Harijans, they were turning against Hindus. The reply given by the Mahatma was firm and instructive. He said, "I say, even if these people spit on our face, we should have no cause to complain. We have been meeting out to them most unjust and inhuman treatment." The deputation, to their bewilderment, heard him speak thus.

Then came our turn! We had also to make a complaint. We told him that after participating in a function of untouchable children organized by the Achhutodhar Mandal, run under the patronage of Lajpat Rai, Madan Mohan Malviya, went back to the bungalow of R. B. Ram Saran Das where he was staying, took his bath with all the clothes on he was wearing at the time of attending the function, presumably for the reason that he got polluted by the presence of the untouchable children. That function was attended by my father and me also. On hearing this, Gandhiji laughed heartily and observed, "But Malviya Ji does not accept any eatable from my hands either." It was an open admission of fundamental differences of views between the two eminent leaders on social and religious matters, and also acceptance of a social system where discrimination on the basis of caste is a rule. It is clear that the stand of the Mahatma in such matters was self-contradictory.

No right-thinking person would support and justify such a system notwithstanding all the mystifying reasoning and theorizing. All such arguments are misleading and fallacious. Deceptive presentation cannot lend respectability to a pernicious system which is based solely on birth. Hindus are essentially weak, chiefly for two reasons: firstly, they have an inbuilt destructive social order, and secondly, their overpowering lust for wealth (maya).

Reservation in services for the scheduled castes is a burning question of the day. It is rocking almost the entire country. And on this account, they are being made the target of concerted attacks by the Hindus. It therefore needs to be examined. The various aspects of the reservations have been examined and discussed in some detail in my book, Reservation for Scheduled Castes. At long last it has been admitted by the anti-reservationists that reservation in services both at the initial stage and at the stage of promotions has been enshrined in the constitution itself. But their main thrust against the scheduled castes on this point still continues unabated. In fact, the campaign has now embraced within its compass reservation for ad-

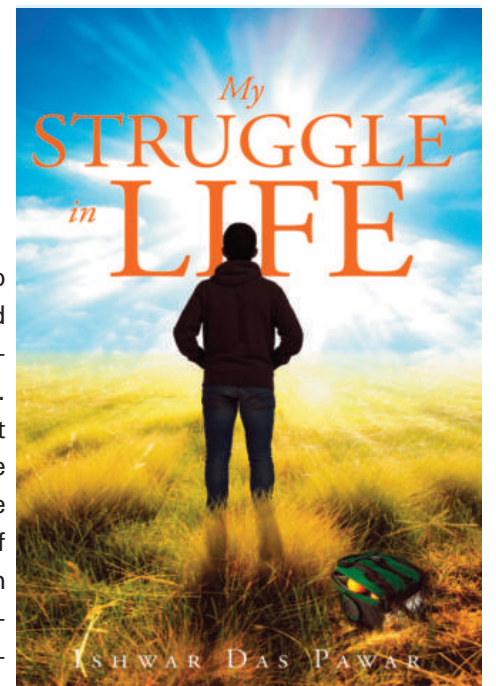
missions to medical and technical colleges as well. Their point that caste should not be the basis of reservation and that instead economic

position should be the criterion is baseless. I will not elaborate on this point except referring to the views of former prime minister Morarji Desai. In answer to a question on this point he, said (on May 30, 1981 at Chandigarh), "Only when untouchability goes can the reservations be ended. During Gandhiji's lifetime, we worked for the removal of untouchability, but after his death, the work has remained neglected." When a worker suggested that the reservations should be for the economically weaker sections, his answer was, "I was born a Brahman though I have given up all thoughts of high social birth. At the age of fifteen, I was a penniless youth, but I made good because a Brahman boy had all the privileges to rise. A Harijan youth could not do so. Who is responsible? Evidently we have to pay the price."

It is futile for the anti-reservationists to go on drumming and trumpeting about that caste should not be the criterion for reservations. Their pretention that they are against caste is even more hypocritical. Jawaharlal Nehru also felt strongly about the caste system. In his famous book The Discovery of India, he says about the system, "In the context of society today, the caste system and much that goes with it are wholly incompatible, reactionary, restrictive, and barriers to progress. There can be no equality in status and opportunity within its framework, nor can there be political democracy and much less economic democracy. Between these two conceptions conflict is inherent and only one of them can survive."

Will the anti-scheduled caste Hindus care to pay heed to what their own great leaders have to say about their social system? It is simply churlish just to declare that they are against caste. In fact, they are neck deep in caste embrangement. Nobody can be fooled and deceived by these phoney and sham declarations. The point that reservation, especially in promotions, causes heartburning and impairs efficiency in the administration that cannot stand the test of scrutiny. Every reserved point under the reservation framework belongs to the scheduled castes both constitutionally, legally, and morally. But in times of the heyday of the anti-reservationists, these points had been grabbed and usurped by them. They have been enjoying the fruits of this ill-gotten advantage for long periods. Now they consider it their right, flowing from the vested interests accumulated through long periods of usurpation. Now what we say is simply this, "Please vacate the illegally held point only for the purpose of promotion, and let the scheduled caste official get back his rightful place at least from this stage and wait for your turn for a bit more; all the same, continue

(Contd. on next page)



The Real Sons of the Motherland

(Continue from page 8)

to enjoy the benefits of the past." This is manifestly not only just but clearly favorable to the non-scheduled caste officials and should therefore cause no heartburning to them. Another point in this connection is worth mentioning. According to the block system, for the purpose of the 14 percent reservation in the case of promotions to or within class I and II of state services, a block of seven is prescribed, and out of this block, only one promotional point goes to a scheduled caste official. This makes it clear that out of seven non-scheduled caste officials to be promoted, at the most, one, the junior most, is affected and that too for a short period till the next promotions. The other six get their promotions in the normal course without any hindrance. This partial and temporary displacement of only one out of seven should not be the cause for any valid objection and heartburning. In all fairness, it should be accepted as a just and fair formula. No harm has been caused to anybody, only delayed and overdue justice has been done. The 2 percent reservation for the backward classes has not been taken into account because the anti-reservationists do not object to reservation for them.

As regards the claim of the non-scheduled castes that they are a superior genus vis-a-vis the scheduled castes, the less said the better. Notwithstanding this tall assertion, facts tell a different tale. It should be noted that the marks obtained by the scheduled caste students and candidates in various examinations, tests, and interviews reflect their true minimum worth. To this may be added the fact that they are deprived of the requisite facilities they ought to have for the pursuit of their studies as also for their physical and mental development. If necessary facilities are made available to them, they are sure to acquit themselves much more creditably even in comparison with others. They have an ample potential of faculty, which remains dormant and undeveloped for want of proper environment and real opportunity. As against this, the parents and guardians of those belonging to the upper strata of society use their background, social status, and official position to make their wards get more marks and higher divisions through manipulation and unfair means. In such a situation, the positions obtained by the non-scheduled caste persons are quite often misleading and deceptive as they are the result of the perversion of the assessment of merit. For this reason alone, the scheduled castes should not be measured and compared with others in the matter of efficiency, which is a relative term.

This statement of facts applies even with greater force to the case of admissions to technical and professional institutions like the engineering and the medical colleges. Besides, the evil of copying in examinations has assumed alarming dimensions. Knives, daggers, and even firearms are freely brandished by the examinees and their tough supporters outside and inside the examination halls; and these dangerous weapons have effectively been used many a time. The supervising staff dare not interfere for fear of danger to their lives. All accepted norms of fair play and decent behavior are thrown to the winds. This state of affairs exposes in sufficient measure the hollowness of the claim of superior merit and efficiency the non-scheduled castes have the temerity to drum about. Every right-thinking person shall hang his head in shame at this lawlessness and deeply fallen stan-

dards of behavior of the youths who are the nation of tomorrow. They render themselves guilty of raptaciously capturing bogus merit and fake degrees by foul means. What about the selections to public services? The selecting bodies have their own role to play. They have ample discretionary powers of awarding marks to the candidates, particularly for intelligence and personality. These powers, if not used judiciously, impartially, and fairly, are sure to tilt the results of selections against the really deserving candidates. Can we believe and say with clear conscience that selections are made purely on merits without any extraneous considerations of caste, creed, sifarish (recommendation), and nepotism?

An impression has also gone round, and with a lot of truth, that even money plays no mean part. "To expect the scheduled castes to stand in line with others in an open competition for public services is very unfair. They lag behind others by at least a century on account of the social and religious taboos and disabilities to which they have been subjected for thousands of years. Therefore, they cannot be tied to the tag of others in open competitions. In such a situation, they cannot gain anything because others are miles ahead of them in every respect.

How can the scheduled castes compete with others? There is no equality of opportunity worth the name for them even in the matter of education, not to speak of other spheres of life. For example, there are two types of schools—one for the poor and the other for the affluent. The latter type of schools is known as the public schools. Voices have been raised for long against the existence of this pernicious dual system. Education is the foundation of the nation's social and political edifice. This discriminatory system of education is based on the power flowing from wealth, which is often ill-gotten, and is therefore diametrically opposed to the concept of equality of opportunity and socialistic pattern of society we are endeavoring to build. Socialism is founded on the cardinal principle of equal opportunity to all to develop their personality and shape their destiny according to their own liking and choice. This golden principle becomes real and meaningful only if the deprived sections of the nation are brought up to a position from where it is possible for them to take advantage of it; otherwise, it is nothing more than an illusion, a mirage. Without the real type of opportunity, the struggle for a place of honor and dignity in society becomes a competition among unequals.

This harmful system of education breeds superiority complex among the public school students and inferiority complex among the children of the families belonging to the oppressed strata of society. Snobbery and humbleness ill go together. The public schools are the diminutives of the chiefs colleges set up during the British rule, meant exclusively for the children of the men of riches. These schools are the lingering vestiges of the foreign domination. It was a part of the technique the alien masters devised to create a class of influential persons who could be used against the nationalists engaged in a grim battle for the freedom of the country. Therefore, to allow such dubious institutions to continue is also derogatory to the honor and dignity of the nation besides being directly inconsistent with the principles of social justice and fair play. In May 1976, the then Chief Minister of Punjab, Giani Zail Singh, publicly declared that the state government would not allow any new public

school to be opened in the state, the object being to remove the inferiority complex created among the poor children. This gave rise to the hope that, as a corollary, the government would also refuse permission and recognition to new admissions to the existing public schools in the state. A year later, in May 1977, the then prime minister Morarji Desai, made the welcome statement at Ludhiana, giving expression to his disapproval of the system of public schools. Similar statements have been made from time to time by various other dignitaries also. But regrettably, precious little has been done in this direction.

The voices raised so far against this system have been only a cry in the wilderness. It cannot be said that it is beyond the ingenuity and competence of the government and the legislature to bring about radical changes in this system so as to remove the disgraceful distinction and disparity inherent in this dual system of education. But it needs the will to do and the courage to brush aside the hurdles being created in the way by the vested interests.

Furthermore, the rich people have the means and resources to get their children educated even in foreign universities, and thus to give them the best education available in the world. Still the scheduled castes, who have neither any means nor any resources, are asked to compete with them for public jobs. This kind of thinking is really funny. In this context, reference needs to be made to a very important matter. The children of wealthy people who cannot get admission in technical, educational, and professional institutions, being too poor in their academic career, can buy admissions by paying huge sums of money to the managements of these institutions termed as capitation fee. According to one estimate, 35 percent of the seats in the educational and professional institutions in Karnataka, which has twelve medical and forty engineering colleges, are sold by the managements. The capitation fee per student being fifty thousand rupees for Indians and one lakh and fifty thousand rupees for foreigners. About three hundred students pay capitation fee every year. In medical colleges in Bangalore, 90 percent of the seats are sold for one lakh and fifty thousand rupees each. According to the latest information, however, the rate of capitation fee per student ranges from two lakhs rupees to five lakhs rupees. A staggering figure! Obviously, this device of extracting and extorting money through highly questionable means is outrageously scandalous. Just see how the sacred temples of learning are being desecrated for unholy purposes.

And these big sellers and purchasers of education and degrees, and even jobs, are the very persons who proclaim themselves from the housetops to be the storehouses of knowledge and administrative ability. It is simply ridiculous. As a matter of fact, their own efficiency is very much in question. Then the question of roster regarding reservations. The roster is meant to keep a running account of appointments and promotions made against the reserved points in order to watch the implementation of the government policy in this regard. If all the reserved points be not filled for one reason or the other, which is generally the case, the remaining posts are offered to the non-scheduled caste candidates, and credit for this shortage is given to the scheduled castes in the next appointments and promotions, and that too to a limited extent. If this arrangement be not acceptable, let

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the posts remain vacant till scheduled caste persons are available. Why should the non-scheduled castes be so greedy as to try to devour these points as well? Instead of leaving these posts unfilled, non-scheduled caste persons are appointed or promoted against them. But they want to take double advantage, which would inevitably cause unjustifiable damage to the scheduled castes. The anti-Harijan element seems to be obsessed with the false notion that everything belongs to them, and that that being so, nothing belongs to the scheduled castes. It is evidently a stupid obsession. The anti-reservationists feign to show great concern for the poor among the Hindus, and they propose to help them by giving them a chunk out of the reserved quota. This is palpably unfair. If the poor among the Hindus are tagged with the scheduled castes, they will surely mop up all the reserved jobs. This is precisely what is intended to be achieved through the cleverly devised economic criterion. It must be remembered that the poor among the caste Hindus are poor only by chance as a result of ups and downs of normal life while the scheduled castes are poor by design and trickery on the part of the caste Hindus. Whereas the poverty of a Hindu is only a passing phase, that of Harijans has been perpetuated by the Manu laws. To put it succinctly, the problem of the scheduled castes is socioeconomic while that of the Hindus is merely economic. This is the important point of distinction. In this context, it is conveniently forgotten that in any case, so far as Punjab is concerned, in direct recruitment, 75 percent of the jobs (more in the case of all-India services) fall to the share of non-scheduled castes even if it be assumed for the sake of argument that all the 25 percent reserved quota actually goes to the scheduled castes. If the non-scheduled castes have so tender a heart for their poor kith and kin, let them give, by all means, whatever they like out of their own lion's share, which in practice is much more than 75 per cent of the services. But this does not suit them. Their real aim is to snatch away as much as possible from the share of the scheduled castes. It will bear repetition that reservation in services is a fundamental right of the scheduled castes under the Constitution. There is no question of any concession, gift, or bounty. It is a right, pure and simple.

The anti-reservationists have also started talking against the caste system. It is a good system if it is honest and real; caste system is the most dangerous social order both for the Hindu society and the nation as a whole. The question of reservation is a very small matter as compared to this standing menace. If the anti-reservationists are really sincere in their denunciation of caste, let them launch a campaign against this diabolical system instead of wasting their time and energy on opposing the measures the government is taking to ameliorate the sad plight of the oppressed people. It can be said without any fear of exaggeration or contradiction that, as a matter of fact, social justice and fair play have never existed in the Hindu society. Let the Hindus prove their bona fides by agitating against the social evils and supporting the well-meaning reservations made for the upliftment of the downtrodden. They are only serving the cause of caste by harming the noble cause of the Harijans. As a matter of fact, they do not want the Harijans to come up to the level of others. This idea is the moving force behind the agitation against the weaker sections

of the nation. These anti-scheduled caste people also argue that as the reservation policy has not yielded the desired results even after forty-three years, rather it has proved to be a vain affair, it should be scrapped. True, the results of the reservation policy have not been to our expectations, but that is chiefly due to the fact that its implementation has been in the hands of the non-scheduled castes who are actually interested in the failure of the policy. While they talk of the period of forty-three years, they completely ignore, obviously purposely, the staggering long period of four to five thousand years of subjugation, oppression, and exploitation of the scheduled castes by the Hindus. Is it possible to undo the injustice and its lasting effects spread over thousands of years in the comparatively microscopic period of forty-three years? This indicates the deep-rooted morbidity of the minds of the agitators. When we say that the problem of the scheduled castes has not made much headway even after forty-five years of independence, they say it is an age-old problem and will naturally take a long time to solve. In the context of reservation, when we say the problem being centuries-old is too big to be solved in a short period such as forty-three years, they say this period for its solution is more than enough. How to understand this intriguing logic of the anti-reservationists? Their plea that they are not responsible for the wrongs done by their ancestors against the Harijans is a clumsy attempt at sidetracking the issue. Truly speaking, it is the responsibility of not only the Hindu community but of the entire nation to raise these fallen people so that the nation becomes strong. It does not behoove the Hindus to try to wriggle out of their liability. They must not forget that the caste aggression against the scheduled castes has not ceased even now. Even today they are being hounded and subjected to all sorts of hair-raising atrocities and indignities. The present generation of Hindus has inherited from their forefathers a discriminatory social system under which they have grabbed everything—land, business, industry, education, administration, and all that—thus depriving the weaker sections of all the basic human rights. If they want to disown the inheritance of wrongdoings, they should also divest themselves of the inheritance of all the properties, privileges, culture, civilization, and oppression and exploitation of the scheduled castes. They cannot pick and choose and then turn round and say heads we win, tails you lose. The gradual building up of their determined onslaught on the Harijans by all sorts of invented arguments is another proof of the saying that "Hindu mind is fabulous for fables."

It should also be noted that the target of the anti-reservationists are the scheduled castes only though reservation has been provided for other groups also, for example, the backward classes, ex-servicemen, handicapped persons, and others. But the Hindus do not agitate against reservation for these categories. For the backward classes also, the criterion for reservation is caste; and for the others, the basis for reservation is not economic position either. Why this duplicity to single out the scheduled castes? The probable reason for this can be that these categories, generally speaking, are their kith and kin while the scheduled castes do not belong to them. Therefore, they are being harassed and humiliated by the Hindu anti-reservationists on the strength of their brute majority and strength acquired by grabbing and usurpation, oppression, suppression, and exploitation.

The anti-Harijan campaigners do not believe in distributive justice; they believe in grabbing and spoliation. As recently as 18 March 1981, the entire Lok Sabha stood up in a rare gesture and unanimously adopted a resolution by acclamation, proclaiming its firm commitment to the national policy on reservation for the scheduled castes as enshrined in the Constitution. This event was reminiscent of the day in 1962 when the House proclaimed national determination to face the Chinese aggression. The House regarded the happenings in Gujarat, Rajasthan, and elsewhere in the country as an aggression against the Harijans and the Adivasis (tribals or aboriginals). It also condemned the incidents of violence, destruction of property, and atrocities against them. The resolution adopted is in the following words: "To uphold our tradition it is the primary duty of every citizen to strive for restoration of peace and normalcy and make united efforts at the national level."

There was not a single voice of dissent. All were one on the point irrespective of party affiliation, community, caste, or creed. It was something very impressive and laudable. But the hard core of Hindu orthodoxy, like the R. S. S. (Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh) and Jana Sangh who are dreaming of the savage past, have not been able to reconcile to the historic resolution adopted by the country's elected representatives in the highest national forum. They openly voice their opposition to this resolution. There are still others who play the double game of running with the hare and hunting with the hound. Their attitude is more dangerous as they are backing the anti-scheduled caste forces in a veiled and subtle manner. As a result, the agitation is continuing. The agitators have no respect either for the Constitution, the supreme law of the land, or the highest national forum, the Parliament. It is a case where greed and selfishness know no ends.

The attitude of the administration, especially the police, toward the agitators is also in question. Why are they unduly soft and kindly toward them when they transgress all norms of civilized behavior and flout the law and the provisions of the Constitution? In addition, they use most filthy, insulting, provocative, and threatening language against their target, the scheduled castes. For these activities, they can be hauled up under the Prevention of Insult to the National Honour Act 1971, and sections 504 and 506 of the Indian Penal Code. And to crown all this, these offences are being committed mainly by government employees in public view and under the very nose of the administration. They are also liable to disciplinary action under the Government Servants Conduct Rules. They are not as big lions as they are showing off. They are only wearing lion's masks. These masks will disappear the moment they are shown the authority of the law. If this is done, you will see them on the run helter-skelter in no time with their tails between their legs.

It is common knowledge that the police avoid as far as possible the use of force against agitators who quite often indulge in violence, arson, loot, rape, and even murder. In quite a number of cases, in clashes between them, the police suffer more than the hooligans. But in dealing with weaker sections, their performance is exactly the other way round. As an illustration, in a single clash with the Adivasis in the village of Indervaili, Andhra Pradesh, the police

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gunned down as many as fifteen Adivasis at a time on 20 April 1981. Why not show the same patience and restraint while dealing with these people? Conversely, why not to use the same force against the anti-scheduled caste agitators as is being used against the Adivasis? Can the administration and the police justifiably claim to be impartial particularly in caste-war incidents? That is the bane of our administration: they are not above caste considerations. Rather, they are dominated by caste bias like the unscrupulous politicians.

We have had a bird's-eye view of just a few of the countless cases of atrocities committed on the scheduled caste people and their symbolic conversion to other faiths. The account given only serves the purpose of illustrating the strange phenomenon of attitude and behavior of the so-called high-caste Hindus. Conversion to other faiths may not, in the ultimate analysis, provide a really helpful, viable, and acceptable remedy for this tangled problem. Therefore, establishing a separate social and political identity can appropriately be examined as one of the alternatives that might be available. There can be no ready-made solution of the problem of enormous dimensions. It needs a cool and deep thinking in order to find a correct and effective answer.

In this context, the question of designation assumes considerable importance. Scheduled castes have a name history. Originally, we were called untouchables and then depressed classes. Interestingly enough, the Arya Samaj, besides calling us Dalits (oppressed people), gave different names to various castes. Meghs were designated as Bhagats, Doms as Mahashas, Chamars as Aryas, and sweepers as Valmikis (low caste people, janitors). Then followed the name Harijans. But none of these nomenclatures is indicative of its purpose. All these names mean and denote one and the same thing without imparting to the name a sense of dignity and reasonableness. They sound obnoxious and are rootless. Then finally came the name scheduled castes. Actually, it is no name. It simply denotes a group of castes specified and notified by the order of president of India as required under Article 34 of the Constitution for the purposes specified in the Constitution itself. The schedule or the list of castes does not constitute the term name. It is merely a provisional terminology.

Accordingly, a meaningful and acceptable name expressive of dignity and honor and having its roots in history has to be found. This should not pose an insurmountable difficulty. There are two names which can serve as a model and guide. These are Adidharmi and Adivasi. A consensus for a name can be worked out. All that is needed is that the name should be expressive of a meaningful sense of history and a separate and distinct identity.

A few questions before the finale! Why are the Hindus waging a caste war against us? Do they consider and recognize us as Hindus? Why have they indulged in hostility and enmity toward us? On our part, what do we consider ourselves? Are we Hindus or a separate entity? Again, what do we consider the caste Hindus? These are some of the pertinent questions that must be considered dispassionately with cool minds and not in a huff.

For this purpose we must discover our identity, and also we must find our roots in the past. As already hinted elsewhere, not very long ago the Hin-

dus did not regard us as part and parcel of their society. They always kept us out of the pale of their culture and civilization and denied us all the social, religious, educational, economic, and political rights. We were just regarded as hewers of wood and drawers of water, only camp followers to work as slaves. We were fixed up in that position on the strength of sanction of their social and religious laws best represented by the caste system. Therefore, they did not and could not regard and accept us as Hindus. It may be mentioned in the passing that the word "caste Hindu" is used only loosely. The word Hindu automatically means a person having a caste. There cannot be a Hindu without a caste, and a caste without a Hindu. So the correct word is Hindu and not a caste Hindu for the purpose of distinguishing the Hindus from others including the scheduled castes.

The Hindus picked up the idea not long ago of declaring that the untouchables also were Hindus when it came to the counting of heads for getting political gains. By doing so, they did not lose anything while they gained everything. By this method, they had been enjoying all the benefits and privileges accruing from our numbers without sharing any gains with us. It served them well. We were used only as a catalytic agent. The Arya Samaj, however, gave it a social complexion; but in this respect, they could go only to a certain extent, that is, so long as it did not interfere with the vested interests of the Hindus.

Truly speaking, the Hindus have developed an individualistic character as contradistinguished from a unified and cohesive trait of brotherhood as a whole. This is an inbuilt characteristic of the caste system. This system has led to a lopsided development of society. Basically this trait is the cumulative product of four fundamental Hindu beliefs, namely, the theory of karma, the theory of transmigration of soul, the stratified caste system, and the pursuit of individual salvation. This has given rise to an unshakable belief that every moment of life is preordained, and that one's destiny is unchangeable. This has made the Hindus accept the worst type of political tyranny, economic servitude, and social degradation without protest and literally to lead a life like a lotus above the mire, making agreeable to live with evil without fighting it. The caste system has rendered everybody, except the Brahman and the Kshatriya, incapable of defending himself against injustice and aggression, let alone the defense of the country. Only the Kshatriya had the right to possess and use weapons of offence and defense, and the Brahman perched over his head. All others were rendered supine, impotent, and defenseless. So emasculated, they were without power and could have no means of fighting the evil. Any revolution for liberation was thus ruled out. The king was projected as the representative of God, and the Brahman a god himself. It was entirely unwise, rather disastrous, to leave the defense of the country to a handful caste-based Kshatriyas, and for obvious reasons, every one of them could not be a good warrior. This stratified classification of society based solely on birth has done great damage and harm to society and the country as nothing else has done. This system also gave birth to the myth of martial race, which has since been exploded and discarded.

Just see the results. Alexander the Great of Greece, a far-off land, was the first to conquer Punjab and Sind in 326 BC, thereby charting out the key way to India for later conquerors. All the rajas and mahara-

jas that came his way fell one by one. They lacked dedicated and efficient soldiery and a unified nation. But these qualities were the outstanding casualties of the Hindu social system. Mahmud of Ghazni successfully invaded India seventeen times between 1001 and 1025. His hurricane invasions seldom met with any worthwhile resistance. His ransacking and plunder of the famous temple of Somnath is even today sadly fresh in our minds. He carried with him not only the loot of gold, silver, and valuable jewelry but also women and girls who were sold in the open bazars of Ghazni to the great shame and ignominy of this country. While he was playing havoc our brave caste-based hereditary warriors, the Kshatriyas, dazed as they were, looked on in sheer helplessness; and the Brahman priests went on ringing the temple bells frantically, invoking the help and blessings of the invisible gods and deities. But alas! to their utter dismay no help came either from the land or from the heavens.

Babar, who was driven away from his small principality of Farghana, now in Chinese Turkistan, ascended the throne of Delhi after his resounding victory in the first battle of Panipat in 1526. Not only did he defeat the Lodhi army of over one hundred thousand men with no more than twelve thousand war-weary soldiers under him, but he was also able to lay the foundation of the Mughal Empire which lasted for more than 325 years.

Nadir Shah defeated Mohammad Shah's two hundred thousand strong lashkar (military force) consisting of infantry and cavalry, besides a horde of elephants, in 1739 on the outskirts of Delhi. He had under his command no more than fifty thousand soldiers. Besides, he was overencumbered with plunder, abducted women, ladies of the harem and nautch girls. In 1757 during the battle of Plassey, Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah's forces consisted of twenty thousand cavalry, forty thousand infantry, and nearly fifty guns, mostly twenty-four and thirty-two pounders. As against this, Clive's army had less than one thousand European soldiers, about two thousand sepoy, eight field guns, six pounders, and one howitzer. In the battle, which did not last even one full day and changed the course of Indian history, only four European soldiers were killed, nine wounded, two were missing, and sixteen native sepoy were killed and thirty-six wounded.

But what is more, and rather surprising, is the fact that no sooner did each one of these marauders and the empire builders ascend the throne of Delhi than he received popular support. Neither he nor his descendants or successors could have lasted long had there been a hostile people around them in a foreign land. But the social and defense systems lacked all the basic qualities that constitute a good, viable, and strong nation.

The caste system and the philosophy of life were the root cause of all these ignominious defeats suffered so easily and silently. There had been no community of interest and a purposeful sense of nationalism among the Indian people. A Brahman on the one hand and a Bhangi (sweeper) or a Chamar on the other have nothing in common. They enjoy or suffer life in complete isolation and segregation from each other. That is the bitter fruit of this baneful social system. As is well said, a tree is judged by the fruit it bears. Similarly, the proof of pudding is in the eating. Most importantly, who are these non-scheduled

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castes who have turned inimical toward us and ferociously pounce upon us? Whether their forefathers came to the country from Central Asia or from elsewhere, they are outsiders, foreigners, though they have since become citizens of this land by the process of naturalization. The original and the real inhabitants are the untouchables, the Adivasis, the tribals, the Sudras (people from low caste), and an overwhelming majority of the converts to Islam and Christianity. And therefore, they are the real sons and daughters of this Matribhoomi (motherland). This motherland belongs to us, and we belong to her.

The Aryans who came from outside were an intelligent and pushing, and at the same time, amoral and unscrupulous people while the original inhabitants were simple and peace-loving. They got an easy foothold here. They subjugated the original inhabitants, deprived them of everything, destroyed their culture and literature, and also distorted their history. They themselves became devas (gods) while the subjugated people were painted as rakshas (demons). The outsiders have become aggressors, oppressors, ruthless exploiters, and usurpers. The real sons and daughters of the motherland have been rendered orphans in their own land, and the outsiders had foisted on them an unjust social order and a religion of superstitions, idol worship, ritualism, sacrifices both human and animal, inequities, tyranny, and hatred between man and man. What is this alien culture and civilization like? It finds its roots in exploitive discrimination between the original inhabitants and the foreigners. Side by side, the sophisticated and ostentatious life of palatial bungalows, one-fourth Indian, one-fourth English, one-fourth American, and the rest one-fourth French while there are people who live in jungles, half-naked, half fed, and shelterless. Crores



of others are submerged in abysmal poverty. Look at the condition of janitors and sweepers carrying night soil and garbage on their heads. They have no approach and nearness to the changed and changing way of life. Still Indians are a compact nation! Even in the face of the notorious social system, it is claimed that we are secular.

Now under the Constitution and the national

and international compulsive forces, we are getting some opportunity to rise and redeem our status and standard of living. But the inimical forces and the vested interests are up against us. Their persistent endeavor is to save and maintain the status quo. They cannot see us self-reliant and equal partners in the economy and administration of the country. The present campaign of agitations and vilification against the scheduled castes, and reservations for them is symbolic of the struggle between the haves and have nots, between the aggressors and the aggrieved. We are being harassed and tyrannized on all conceivable pretexts. Our opponents do not want to part with their ill-gotten vested interests and privileges, and that is the real cause behind the agitations raging throughout the country. There is a serious clash of interests.

In this grueling and lamentable situation we have no option but to gird up our loins and give a fight to the evil forces with all our might. History has shown times out of number that it is well-nigh impossible to convert a governing and privileged class into forsaking power and giving up privileges. They have to be challenged by power. We are facing a life-and-death struggle. Our path is strewn with seemingly insuperable difficulties but with a will and

determination

we shall achieve our objective. We have already made great sacrifices but there seems to be no end to our troubles and sufferings. Ultimate victory is surely ours because our cause is just. We shall get ourselves liberated from slavery and exploitation sooner than expected provided we stand united and steadfast.



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