

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OU_150154

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

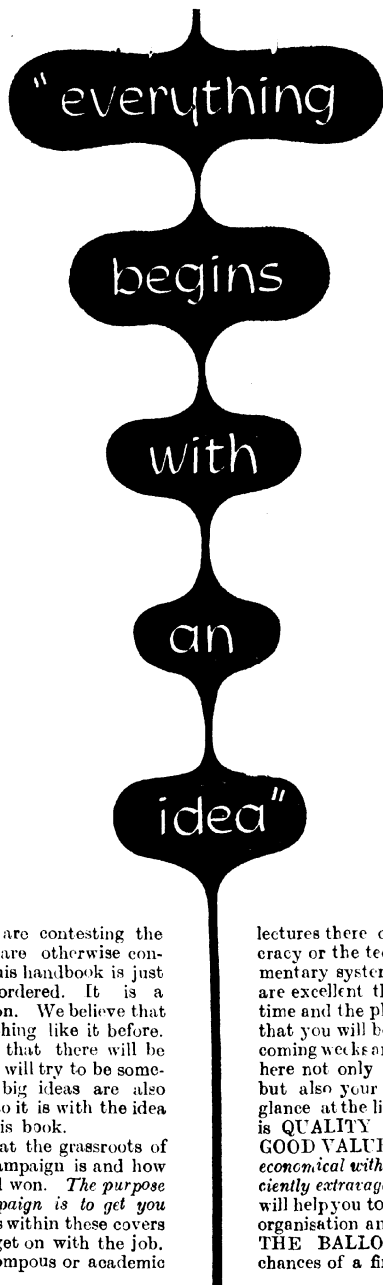
OSMANIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Call No. 324 / M498 Accession No. 37752

Author Mehdiratta, R.S.

Title Battle of the Ballot.

This book should be returned on or before the date last marked below.



To those who are contesting the coming elections or are otherwise concerned with them this handbook is just what the doctor ordered. It is a *UNIQUE* publication. We believe that there has been nothing like it before. But we are sure that there will be many hereafter that will try to be something like it! All big ideas are also simple ones. And so it is with the idea that has inspired this book.

This idea gets at the grassroots of what an election campaign is and how it is to be waged and won. *The purpose of your election campaign is to get you elected.* In the pages within these covers we tell you how to get on with the job. You will find no pompous or academic

lectures there on the virtues of democracy or the technicalities of the parliamentary system of government. They are excellent themes but this is not the time and the place for them. We realize that you will be very **BUSY** now in the coming weeks and we therefore offer you here not only your **MONEY'S** worth, but also your **TIME'S** worth. Just glance at the list of **CONTENTS**. There is **QUALITY** for **FIRST SIGHT** and **GOOD VALUE**. *We have been severely economical with the words, but magnificently extravagant with ideas.* Ideas that will help you to streamline your election organisation and fight the **BATTLE OF THE BALLOT** with the **maximum** chances of a fine victory.

THE BATTLE OF THE BALLOT

(A strategy for successful electioneering)

Editor :
R. S. Mehdiratta

A BALLOT PUBLICATION

Dedication

WITH GRATITUDE

TO THOSE WHO BUY THIS BOOK

WITH ADMIRATION

TO THOSE WHO STUDY IT

WITH BEST WISHES

TO THOSE WHO MAKE USE OF IT

WITH "BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME"

TO THOSE WHO MAY STILL FAIL

WITH "WELL DONE" AND "WE ARE PROUD"

TO THOSE WHO MAKE THE WINNING POST

WITH PRIDE IN OUR DEMOCRACY

TO THE MILLION WHO WILL GO TO THE POLLS

WITH FAITH IN OUR NATIONAL DESTINY

TO THE COMING GENERATIONS

THE VOTERS AND CANDIDATES

OF TOMORROW AND TOMORROW AND TOMORROW

Published by :
The Ballot Publications,
Asaf Ali Road, Post Box 95,
New Delhi.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

C O N T E N T S

<i>Section I</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. ABOUT YOU AND US	9
2. ALL OUT TO WIN	14
3. SHOW THEM THE WAY	17
4. THE PARTY ? OR THE PERSON ?	20
5. THE ROLE OF THE RUPEE	25
6. MEN AT THE TOP	29
7. MEN IN THE FIELD	34
8. SYMBOLS FOR SUCCESS	38
9. POWER OF THE PEN	41
10. THE PERSONAL TOUCH	47
11. SAY IT IN THE STREETS	52
12. TELL IT IN THE MARKET PLACE	57
13. MESSAGE FOR THE MILLIONS	61
 <i>Section II</i>	
14. THE POLITICS OF PRICES	66
15. MEN AND JOBS	73
16. LAND AND THE LANDLESS	79
17. FOR LABOUR'S SAKE	93
18. THE DOWNTRODDEN ON THE MARCH	99
19. THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES	103

ABOUT YOU AND US



The aim of this Guide, dear Candidate, is clear and simple. It proposes to give you all the help it can in your election campaign.

This Guide is not a learned or scholarly tome. It is just what its title indicates—a practical hand-book which, we believe, you will find useful in working out your election campaign.

This Guide has been planned on a straight central principle. That principle is that elections are in their essential sense an intensely human activity and not a mechanical process. It is quite

true that the election machinery counts. Organization, no doubt, is an important thing. Rules and regulations again have their conspicuous place. Nevertheless, above and beyond all this elaborate apparatus of elections, rules the human aspect.

You will surely appreciate this truth. *You realise, for instance, that when you go out to get votes in your constituency, you are in fact going out to make friends and influence people.* Some of these people may be your friends and among them a few may be known to you more or less intimately. There may be a larger number who may know you in a general way, or have heard of you. Naturally, if you are socially prominent, the circle of your friends and acquaintances will be a large one. If you are also popular and influential in your locality and active and well-known in the public life of your area, it is but natural that a great many people should know you in a general way, or have heard about you and possibly entertain feelings of respect, admiration and liking for you.

You may of course normally expect all your friends and acquaintances to vote for you. You may also justly believe that your general popularity and position in public life may bring to you the votes of others besides friends and acquaintances. That, however, will not be enough. For a Parliamentary constituency has a minimum of 500,000 people and an Assembly constituency a minimum of 75,000 people. *Your candidature, therefore, should make a positive appeal to a very large body of men and women of whom your friends and acquaintances can only be a tiny fraction.*

Now it must be obvious that votes of your friends and acquaintances or even of those who know you in a general way will not be enough by themselves to get you elected. The fact that you have a large circle of friends will of course be an asset to you in your election campaign as these friends, besides giving you their votes, may also be willing to canvass votes for you or otherwise assist you actively in waging and winning your campaign. Similarly, if people in your area already know you and are generally inclined to be appreciative of you, it ensures to that extent a favourable and fertile soil

for the seeds of your election propaganda.

But the votes which will actually elect you will still have to come from that very much larger number of people in your constituency, who may not have any decided preference for you or may even be completely indifferent to you. They are, for the most part, people who may have only vaguely heard of you. To the majority of them you may even be a perfect stranger. *This brings us to the core of that central human factor which will make or mar your candidature. How, in the few months that are available to you before the people actually go to the polls, are you going to persuade a very vast number, running into thousands, of people who are strangers or near-strangers to you to develop a respect and liking for you and make them trust you sufficiently to elect you as their representative to Assembly or Parliament ?*

It is to this question that this Guide will attempt to find an answer or rather answers for it is recognised that no single formula or set of rules will cover all the situations which election campaigns may have to take into account. No constituency is like any other constituency, just as no candidate is like any other candidate. Each candidate, constituency or candidature is a distinct thing, with its own particular situations and problems. It is not possible of course to visualise all the problems that may arise or all the situations that are probable. Nevertheless if this Guide is to have any value at all, it must discuss, in broad terms at least, a fairly wide range of situations in one or the other of which a candidate may find himself.

Let us make ourselves clear. A constituency may be an urban one. It may have an electorate of which a high percentage is politically conscious or it may be politically backward. Again it may be under the dominant influence of a particular political party or even public personality or it may be a constituency where there is something like a battleground of persons and parties. It is also the case that one constituency may have a considerable concentration of industrial workers, while another constituency may have a large element of the professional middle class. In some cases rural

or farm issues and interests may dominate the situation. Elsewhere it may be the influence of trade and commerce that may exert the greatest pull. We, as realists, should not also forget that caste, communal and other social attitudes are still very much alive. Nothing should be done of course to encourage or exploit destructive and reactionery forces, but election strategy must take note of them so that it may be able to deal with them successfully.

As constituencies differ, so do candidates. The first major distinction of course is whether the candidate is going to contest elections on behalf of a particular party or as an independent. The second important point is whether he is already an established public figure or relatively a new-comer to public life. Then there is the question of the social or economic class to which he belongs. Whether the candidate is a man or a woman is also relevant and is sometimes a decisive factor.

The enumeration of possible differences in election situations which we have attempted here is not exhaustive. In the following pages we propose to give some attention to as large a number as possible of several kinds of election situations. We hope that you will find somewhere or other in these pages ideas or information which may be useful to your own particular election situation. Please remember, however, that while your own election situation is a distinctive thing, it does share with the election situations of all the other thousands of candidates who will be participating in the coming general elections a basic trait. This trait as we have explained earlier is that all election campaigns are essays in human relations; they are, we repeat, attempts to make friends and influence people in as large a number as possible within a short period of time.

The core of the election effort in other words, is to project your personality effectively and agreeably into the minds and hearts of thousands of people to most of whom you are probably only a name and to a large number of whom you may not be a name even. Look at it from any angle and you will see that it is a formidable task. You will also realise that it is therefore a task which you must set about in a systematic manner, using

your resources in the most effective manner, keeping the human aspect always before you and remembering all the time that your election campaign can have only one purpose and that is to get you elected.



May we request you to read the last sentence of the first chapter once again? Your election campaign, we would urge again, can have only one purpose and that is to get you elected. We think it important that from the moment you have taken the definite decision that you are going to stand for election to that ultimate moment when the last voter has recorded his vote and left the polling booth, you should have only one feeling and one thought: *TO SUCCEED.*

After all contesting elections is not just fun ; It is too troublesome, too expensive and above all too important for your career if you are a true public man to be taken up with anything but great seriousness. The results, of course, are not in your hands and a wise candidate will always be psychologically prepared to win or lose and if he does not win, to try again. We do not suggest, therefore, that you should be nervous, worked up, or obsessed with the results. But we do say that you should not plunge into the election fight half-heartedly, casually, indifferently or in a falsely philosophical mood that it does not matter whether you win or lose. *You must have faith in yourself and make others have faith that you are in it to win. It is only when you have genuinely cultivated this mood of constructive optimism and robust self-confidence that you will be able to create among your associates and workers a sympathetic atmosphere of courage and hopefulness without which the great effort of persuading thousands of people to make a deliberate choice in your favour for an important public office cannot be undertaken in a fullblooded spirit.*

It is often said that the true spirit of sportsmanship is to enter any contest with the flourish "May the best man win !" That is a good thing to say, provided you remember to add always that the best man is you ! We are aware that many candidates say generally to others, sometimes to themselves, that they are fighting the elections as a public service, that it does not matter to them whether the people elect them or not as after all it is the people's affair. Such sentiments may sound well and create an impression of proper detachment and objectivity on the part of the candidate. But we must again say that this attitude may not be as effective as it may be thought to be. After all there are many other ways of taking part and serving in public life than by becoming a member of the legislature. And if your constituency gets a feeling that you are not in earnest about this election business, they may be disposed to take you at your word and decide that "he is a good man no doubt but as he himself says let him serve the public in some other capacity which is

more to his taste". *Now, that surely is not the psychology which you want to create among your voters. On the contrary what you should powerfully and clearly suggest to them is that you place great value on the privilege of representing them in the legislature and that you are indeed very serious that they should honour you with their votes. Remember the main business of the election campaign is to put your personality across to thousands of people most of whom know of you, if at all, only from a distance.*

Here, then, are some of the first essential principles of a successful campaign:

1. Don't be half-hearted, casual or even light-hearted about your candidature. Take it completely seriously and tell yourself and make your entire being believe that you are in it to win.
2. Convince your election associates, organisers and field-workers that you are out to win. Make them understand perfectly that so far as you are concerned it is not going to be a *jumboree*, a *tamasha* or a political holiday. Imbue them with your conviction that it is all in dead earnest. Make them think with you that an election campaign can have no purpose except that of winning the election.
3. Get the same spirit of aggressive confidence worked into all the literature and methods of publicity of the campaign. Your object should be to create a feeling throughout the constituency that here is a candidate who is very serious about it all and who not only desires to succeed but is also making the effort to do so.

We believe that once you have succeeded in creating this psychology in yourself, in your election machinery and your election propaganda, you will have won the first round.

SHOW THEM THE WAY



An election campaign, as you know, begins months before the elections themselves. An useful preparatory work in which we would advise you to take an active part is the preparation of the electoral rolls. You and your workers and agents should take a positive interest in assisting all eligible voters in registering their names on the electoral rolls. It is not possible to exaggerate the importance of your efforts at this point. A good number of our people are not aware of their right to vote or how to exercise that right. If you arrange to give them

the necessary information and show them the way, they will naturally feel obliged to you. That will be a very useful psychological attitude to create among the voters.

You must see that the staff which is deputed to register voters makes house-to-house inquiry, enumerates all eligible citizens over 21 years of age and records their names, the names of their fathers or mothers or, in the case of married women the names of their husbands, their house numbers and addresses, their sex and age and whether they are Muslims or Christians or persons belonging to any Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribes. *It will be a good idea to send your representatives to the various localities to call on the people and provide advice and assistance to all eligible voters to have themselves enumerated with all the necessary details.*

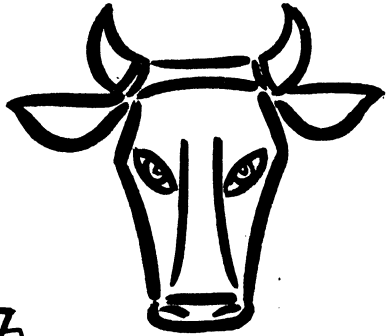
The next stage is the publication of electoral rolls. These rolls are published in draft to offer an opportunity to persons whose names though eligible have not been registered, to make a claim for the rectification of the omission. It also gives an opportunity to every elector of the constituency to oppose the inclusion of the name of a person who is not entitled to be enrolled as an elector. A period of 21 days after the publication of the electoral rolls is allowed by law for the filing of claims and objections but this period can be extended by the Election Commission. The experience at the last elections shows that the average voter is apathetic and little interested in availing himself of this opportunity unless political parties and workers or the agents of private candidates take an active interest in persuading him to file a claim for the inclusion of his name. We would strongly advise every candidate to undertake adequate educative propaganda among the public and give guidance and facilities for filing claims. The candidate should also ensure that the rolls are displayed at a convenient place in his office by the Electoral Officer.

Here we would particularly underline the fact that the candidate should take every care to ensure that his own name, above all, is not omitted from the electoral rolls and that it is included with all the relevant particulars. If there is any

lapse there, he will not be able to stand for elections at all. You should not treat this warning lightly or think that it is not needed. In the last elections, after the final publication of rolls, the Election Commission found that it had to allow as many as 732 applications for inclusion of names in the rolls, mostly from intending candidates.

Special difficulties are met in the registration of women voters. One of the most important obstacles is that in many areas *viz.*, Bihar, U.P., Madhyabharat, Rajasthan and Vindhya Pradesh, local customs forbid women from disclosing their proper names to strangers. The tendency therefore is for women in these areas to identify themselves not by their own names but by the description of the relationship they bear to male relations. Since enrolment cannot be effected without the names being given, these women cannot be registered. Candidates should therefore pay special attention to educative propaganda among women voters so that all of them will be persuaded to give full co-operation to the registration staff and have themselves enrolled as voters.

THE PARTY-?



OR THE PERSON ?

The first key campaign decision you should take, clearly, is whether you will contest as a candidate of any particular political party or as an Independent.

Perhaps we are not quite accurate in putting the proposition like that. It may more precisely be the case that you have thought about these things even before finally making up your mind to contest the elections. *In fact it often is the case that many candidates or would-be candidates*

take that decision about contesting the elections only after they have satisfied themselves that there is a chance of getting the nomination from the political organisation to which they belong.

To a very large extent there is really no free choice for the candidate in this matter. Generally speaking those who enter State or national elections are already public figures of standing with prominent party background or affiliations. They naturally think in terms of getting the party nomination. It is only when they fail to do so that a few of them may be disposed to look to other parties or decide to contest the elections on their own. The number of such "adventurers", however, is few. Party discipline is a harsh monitor and seldom is it possible for a person in public life to defy it. "Renegades" are not usually looked upon with respect either by political organisations or by the public. Those who desert a party after failing to get nominated by it are seldom welcomed by other parties unless they are public men of outstanding status and are in a position to bring large new electoral strength to the party to which they seek admission. It is more usual for a candidate who has failed to get nomination from his party to stand for elections as an Independent rather than seek nomination from a rival party. The position of such a candidate is not of course an easy one, if only because there will be plenty of scope for his opponents to denounce him for disloyalty, attribute to him motives of personal ambition and otherwise present his conduct in an unfavourable light.

Normally, however, most would-be candidates are likely to contest elections only as nominees of the political parties with which they have been associated. Failure to get this nomination often means an early finish to many an electoral ambition. *So in most cases the first and foremost need of the prospective candidate, when he already belongs to a political party, is to secure the party nomination.*

In case you are a public man, but without definite political party affiliations or background, you may desire to stand as an Independent candidate.

Now we do not want to sound discouraging but we will be

lacking in frankness if we do not warn you that Independent candidates have to fight against far heavier odds than candidates contesting on behalf of parties. This is so for a number of reasons. Let us refer to the most important of them here.

First there is the fact that organization constitutes nine-tenths of a successful election campaign. A resourceful and influential Independent candidate may no doubt be able to make a fair attempt at organising his election resources and machinery. But you will admit that no individual, however well-placed in respect of resources, popularity and influence, can have the same advantage on the organizational side as political parties, which are often nation-wide in their membership and active in political work. It is so much more easy for a political party to mobilise and deploy campaign resources in the interest of its candidates.

Secondly, for quite obvious reasons, a political party is very much more able to recruit voluntary workers for its election campaigns. We need hardly tell you that it is the ordinary workers, in large numbers, who are the backbone, as well as the sinews, of the election campaign. An Independent is hardly likely to attract voluntary workers in any considerable numbers; this places him at a substantial disadvantage.

Candidates of political parties possess yet another advantage. In their case the electorate is usually familiar with the programmes and principles and the past record of the respective parties. Candidates of this class therefore start with the initial advantage that they need not spend time explaining to voters the elementary details about what they stand for or what the electorate will be voting for when it is voting for them.

The Independent candidate on the other hand has to start from, so to say, a blank platform. He has to do a great deal of propaganda for his ideas and attitudes to public issues and present them in an attractive light to the electorate. This is besides the normal electioneering work of publicising the superiority of his candidature over that of his rivals.

It should not be forgotten, moreover, that our electorate

is swayed by big names in public life. Most of these names belong to leaders of the various political organisations. The electoral organisations of the various political parties are therefore in a position to take advantage of the regard, admiration and even devotion which the masses feel for great public figures. This is apart from the fact that these big personalities themselves take a direct and active part or are persuaded to do so on behalf of their party candidates by addressing public meetings, sponsoring statements and appeals to voters etc. The Independent candidate lacks the advantage of similar endorsement of his candidature by great political personalities.

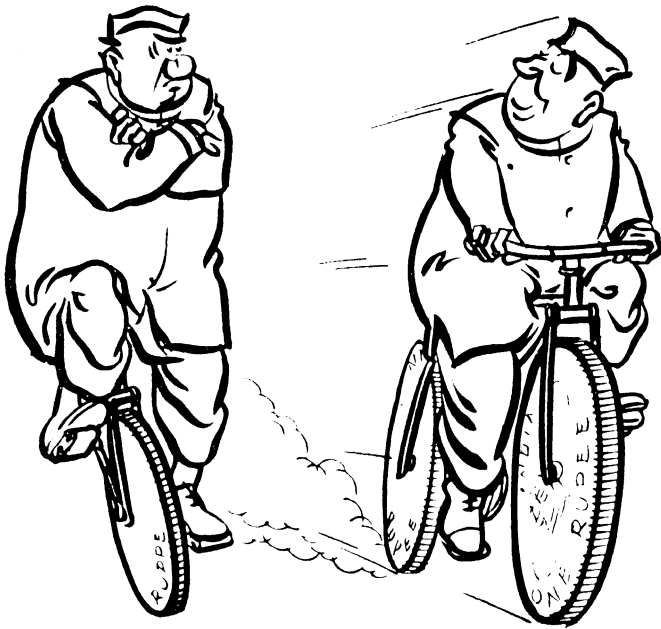
Finally it is also a fact that large sections of the electorate have become politically conscious and that this process is continuing. More and more voters have come to realise that, in modern democratic countries under Parliamentary forms of Government, only organised political parties with clear policies and programmes can influence public affairs decisively. Therefore, politically conscious people have a natural preference for candidates of parties whose ideals and purposes appeal to them. Consequently an Independent candidate appeals rarely to the politically conscious sections of the electorate.

If you analyse the results of the last general elections, you will quickly find that the electorate had not been kind to the Independent candidate. Indeed, as some wag has put it, those elections were a Slaughter of the Independents !

We would like to make it clear here and now that we are not out to frighten away the would-be Independent. We only think that we owe it to our readers to state frankly that the Independents' candidature will be a very difficult one. But we do not believe that they will be an impossible one in every case. *After all even in the last general elections a certain number of Independents did get elected to Parliament and State Assemblies.* We must therefore also consider the circumstances that may favour an Independent candidate just as we have enumerated the circumstances which are not in his favour.

The most important favouring circumstance, of course, is the personality of the Independent candidate. He has to be a well-known public figure with vast influence in his community and in the neighbourhood. The electorate concerned should not be politically conscious. It must be a respecter of persons rather than of parties. *No single political party should dominate the loyalty of the people of that area.* If a number of parties sets up candidates, the chances of the Independent improve since the politically conscious electorate will divide its votes among the various party candidates. Occasionally an Independent may be able to secure the backing, formal, or informal of a political party which may not itself be setting up a candidate of its own in that constituency. If in the locality there is some local issue which the various parties are precluded from championing by their programmes and objectives, the Independent may gain advantages to himself by taking up that cause. The success of an Independent is often the result of an assertion by the constituency concerned of its views or sentiments on some local issues to which the main local parties may have failed to pay attention. You will understand therefore that an Independent candidate will have to possess certain very definite advantages in his electoral circumstances if he is to have a fair chance of success. His main election strategy of course should be to exploit these advantages wherever they exist.

THE ROLE OF THE RUPEE



One of the amusing aspects of this election business is that, although every body knows that large sums of money have to be spent and are being spent in election campaigns, it seems to be the general attitude not to speak too much about the role of the Rupee.

Frankly we have no sympathy with this ostrich-like attitude. After all we live in a money economy, and from the cradle to the grave every human occasion or activity makes its demand on the purse. *Elections as all will admit essentially require large-scale organisation*

and an efficient machinery. How can this be secured without money ? We readily agree that money, beyond a certain limit, may play a corrupting role in elections and in public as in private affairs. All of us know of course that voters can be and are sometimes bribed and that their votes are bought.

In local elections, especially, money has been often abused. We have heard stories of voters being given currency notes of various denominations and asked to swear at pseudo-religious ceremonies solemn oaths that they would vote for particular candidates. There have been amusing instances of voters having been plied with liquor on election eve, guarded in secret places and taken to the polling booths in lorry loads and in a drunken state to record their votes for the candidates who had been paying for all that entertainment.

We must realise however that such indulgence in the corruption of voters is possible only where the constituencies are small as in the case of elections to local bodies. So far as elections to State Assemblies or Lok Sabha are concerned, the danger of the abuse of money has always been exaggerated. It is true that in olden days in the provincial elections money was lavishly spent by rich candidates. But as political awakening progressed it was found even in those times that candidates who indulged in the corrupting of voters usually failed to get their money's worth of votes.

An interesting story is told of a certain popular Congressman of the south in the thirties, who was a first class election campaigner. In the course of an election speech on a certain occasion, Mr. Satyamurti gave his audience an admirable piece of advice. The rival candidate, he said, was reported to be offering money for votes. Well that candidate was a rich man, while most of the voters were poor. The temptation to take money, therefore, would be strong. What he, however, would say was that the voters might take the money if they needed it, but they should quietly drop their voting slips into the Congress box. If it is a rich man's right to spend money as he likes, is it not the poor man's right to use his vote as he wants ? This

clever campaigner would blandly ask. The results of that election showed that voters in large numbers had apparently taken that advice.

The point is that as the people have become politically conscious it has become virtually impossible to make them vote for money. We do not believe that corruption of voters by bribing is a real problem now. In the circumstances election expenses are largely related to the organizational functions of the campaign. The law believes that some limitation is desirable even in respect of these expenses. The assumption is that the rich should not be placed in an unduly favourable position. This assumption perhaps is not as important as it sounds because in the present circumstances, the distinction is not so much between the rich and the poor candidate as between the candidate contesting an election on behalf of a political organisation and an Independent candidate. The latter, whether he is rich or poor is essentially at a disadvantage.

The amount of money which a candidate may actually spend is however likely to be more or less strictly limited through his own or his party's ability to command resources. This suggests that the candidate should give careful attention to the role of the Rupee in his election campaign. Firstly there is the matter of getting adequate number of rupees. If the candidate is an Independent, he will have to find most of the money himself either from his own resources or from his backers. If he is a party candidate then the political organisation can make a substantial contribution depending on its own opulence and the candidate's personal resources.

In most cases, irrespective of whether the candidate is an Independent or a party man, he may have to undertake a fund-raising campaign to some extent. *In this context the possibilities of approaching non-political organisations should be explored. One such important source of revenue is business firms and public limited companies. It is no secret that these bodies contribute very considerably to campaign funds of political parties as well as Independent candidates. Political parties are, well-placed to benefit from such resources*

as it contributes both to the prestige and profit of business bodies to stand well with the leading political organisations. Some times however, it so happens that business organisations are willing to support non-party candidates who if elected could act as independent critics of Government policies which are not in the interest of the business community or certain sections of it. An Independent candidate may legitimately take advantage of this source of funds provided he holds opinions which are genuinely in agreement with those which the donors to his campaign would be expecting him to foster if elected.



We have referred earlier to the importance of your election machinery. Now we propose to devote some attention to the broad pattern and problems of the organisations of this machinery. Such suggestions as we make here will necessarily have to be adapted to your circumstances, but we believe that they will be basically useful to you for working out your individual organisation.

We recommend strongly that you should set up as promptly as possible a small brain-trust or general staff to advise and guide you in matters relating to your campaign. It is obviously not possible to specify how small or how big this body should be. But we would certainly say that the strength cannot be fewer than three or more than ten. There must obviously be a sufficient number of people on this body to give specialised attention to different aspects of the campaign. At the same time too large a body would probably prove unwieldy, slow-moving and disputatious. What you should aim at is an advisory council, reasonably versatile in its talent and still compact and quick-moving.

The proper constitution of such an agency would pose a difficult task for your diplomacy and talent for public life. You should keep in mind two purposes. Since an invitation to serve on this body will be a gesture of esteem and friendship from you to the invitee, you should so use it as to secure the goodwill and support of the leading individuals in your constituency. Simultaneously you should also strive to ensure that by leaving out some and inviting others you are not antagonising or alienating the sympathies of powerful personalities.

As we have indicated, the functions of this body will be those of general guidance and advice relating to the elections. You should arrange for this body to meet once a week to survey the work that has been done, chalk out the programme immediately ahead, consult on important problems and decide major courses of action.

It is also necessary for you to have professional assistance. Election laws and regulations are complex matters and we would advise you to have a legal adviser to assist you especially at the time of filing nomination papers and their scrutiny.

Another type of professional assistance which you may require is that of a competent public relations officer. As we have been at pains to emphasize an election campaign is first and foremost a grand strategy in public relations. We therefore believe that first class professional talent in this line is a vital

part of your election machinery, if your campaign is to be carried to the largest number of people in the most effective manner possible.

It is quite true that in our country the media of publicity and propaganda are confined to the tradition of the open air meeting, the handbill, the local band or *bhajan* party and the tom-tom. In Western countries radio and television are pressed into service in a very elaborate manner. Here in India in the absence of commercial broadcasting and in the total absence of television, the only mass media is the press. Only a skilled professional public relations man can therefore get substantial results from the meagre means of publicity and persuasion that are at the disposal of election campaigns in this country.

A third important professional, whose services you may engage, is an organizer. Not everybody is a good organizer though most of us may try our hands at the game one time or another. Executives of political parties generally make good organizers. They are generally men who have made their careers by skilfully handling other men. Politics are in their blood and we would say without hesitation that if you can get an organizer of this type, DO GET HIM !

If you are a party candidate you will naturally have the advantage of the services of your party organizers. If you are an Independent, we would advise you to look for a competent man among business executives or retired Government officers such as revenue or police department officials.

We would suggest that three qualities are necessary for an ideal organizer. In the first place he should have an adequate knowledge of election law and procedure ; if he has also experience of election campaigns that will be an additional asset. Secondly he should be quick-witted, alert, genial, sociable, with a flare for public relations and a talent for organization. Thirdly he must be a man who puts his heart into his work not merely for the profit it puts into his pocket but also for the pleasure he gets from it. We do not pretend that it will be easy to get a person having all these qualities. An ideal election organizer is no more common

than an ideal candidate, an ideal schoolmaster, an ideal doctor, an ideal Prime Minister, or an ideal anything. But you should still make an effort to get the best man possible. After all you will have to spend the greater part of your working hours in the company of this man during a tense and hectic phase of election activity and if you do not find him genial and congenial, you may find it all very hard going indeed.

Let us now proceed to discuss the field-staff for your campaign. We suggest that you should have a large number of mobile task units working on various aspects of the campaign or in specified sections of the constituency. We would advise you to put each of these units under the leadership of an honorary worker, who will most probably be a friend of yours, but you should not grudge obtaining sufficient assistance even if you have to pay for it. It will be money well spent. We believe that you can manage to secure paid assistance on an economic basis if you hire workers on a part-time basis. After all two hours of concentrated work in the morning and two hours in the evening should be enough. That should make it possible for people already employed elsewhere to take up the work on a part-time basis. Respected persons of the community such as school masters, journalists, lawyers, doctors and bank officials may be employed in this manner.

This task force, as we have said, can be split up into functional and territorial units. Each functional unit will look after one selected aspect of the campaign. There can be, for instance, a voter enrolment unit which will undertake educative propaganda and other activities relating to the preparation of electoral rolls in your constituency. There may be a planning unit which may study the political persuasions, social attitudes, economic interests, religious dispositions, sentimental motivations and class or caste prejudices of the various sections and strata of your constituents. The purpose of this section will be to collect all the data that is relevant to the electoral behaviour of the voter and then plan your election strategy in such a manner as to appeal

to the largest number of these voters. There may be a third unit which may be the publicity unit. It should be the function of this unit to devise a programme of propaganda which will make the best possible use of the available means of mass communication. This section may prepare texts for speeches, press statements and advertisements and handbills. It should also concern itself with coining attractive and catchy slogans, providing field-workers with talking points and in general plan and prepare attractive and popular election literature, besides ensuring their effective dissemination.

MEN IN THE FIELD



We now come to the field force proper. This service will have to be on a mainly honorary basis, but it is only proper that you should give the workers a small allowance or in its place make liberal arrangements for refreshments and transport facilities. It is better to be generous rather than austere in this matter. The field staff has to put its heart into the work and it is very much up to you to keep it in proper trim.

The field staff will of course be advised and directed by your headquarters' organization which has been described already. It will be

the job of field workers to apply to persons the strategy that has been worked out on paper. For this purpose there is a great advantage in spreading out the workers in several small groups, each with its allotted area of work.

Probably the first election task on which this field staff should be employed is to help get all eligible voters enlist themselves. This will serve to bring your workers in close and friendly contact with the electorate. The ground for this service should be prepared by distributing in advance handbills announcing your candidature, appealing for the people's support and inviting them to make use of your election organization and workers for getting themselves properly enrolled as voters. This may be followed by visits of your workers to the houses of voters in order to give them advice and assistance relating to the process of registration.

Your field force should have a high proportion of middle-aged persons. Youthful enthusiasm is excellent no doubt and it is of course wellknown that many candidates draw their field force most easily from the student population. But it is doubtful whether young students can much influence voters older than themselves. There is a risk of these young men being taken lightly. We would therefore say that the backbone of your field force should be of persons between 30 and 50 years.

It is also necessary that a large number of field-workers should be women. Only then will you be able to reach women voters freely and directly rather than through their male relatives. Here again middle-aged matrons are likely to prove more effective propagandists than girls or young women.

Deep down in our hearts lurks a certain element of snobbery. An intelligent candidate should not fail to exploit this weakness. This he can do by seeing that his field workers come from a slightly higher social class than the voters among whom they would do propaganda. We are quite sure, for instance, that, if a lawyer's or a doctor's wife is sent to a workers' colony or to a village to solicit votes, the response will be specially good. We do not of course suggest

that other classes of voters, higher in the social class than workers and peasants, are not susceptible to snobbery. Quite possibly snobbery might be more pronounced in the higher strata of society and you may profit to a great deal from this prejudice or sentiment if you could get, for instance, the local judge's wife to do a little canvassing for you in society circles in your constituency.

The workers should be good conversationalists. They must be fluent and ready-witted, but they should not be the kind that loves to listen to its own voice. They should of course have adequate knowledge of you and your party's political principles and purposes. They should be able to talk about local and national issues and discuss intelligently the political programmes of rival candidates and draw comparisons which are favourable to your candidature. More important still, they should know about the problems, interests and even the prejudices of the voters among whom they are working. They should of course be briefed intelligently by your organizers in all these matters. Here we may indicate some of the more important do's and don'ts :

The field worker should avoid :

(a) Visiting the house of voters at a time when the latter are likely to be busy or preoccupied. For instance it would be obviously unwise to call say at 9 or 10 O'clock in the morning when the household may be busy with the husband preparing to go to work and the wife engaged in getting the children ready to school and in other domestic jobs;

(b) Talking at great length without watching the listener's reactions. A canvasser in his enthusiasm is apt to become voluble and thus cause irritation or annoyance to his listener who may be pressed for time or feel bored;

(c) Giving an impression that he is trying to impose his personal political opinions on the voters. Nobody likes to be told how he should vote and most people are apt to resent what they might regard as an attempt on the part of some one else to make up their minds for them ; and

(d) Indulging in controversies : Controversies give way to anger and acrimony and it is necessary not to let an

argument develop into a controversy.

The canvasser should attempt to :

(a) Choose such a time for visits as to catch the voter when he is relaxed and has some free time on his hand. Thus the best time for visiting in the case of middle-class women, for instance, may be in the afternoon, when they may have some free time. In the case of an office-goer, the proper time for a visit may be at about, say, 9 p.m. or so when he may have taken his supper but may not be going to bed for some time ;

(b) Be courteous, polite and informative while doing the propaganda-talk ;

(c) Be as ready to listen as to talk and be quick to sense when his presence is becoming irksome; and

(d) Make his points firmly and clearly. While controversy should be avoided and he should not be dogmatic or assertive, he should also try to put across his view and carry conviction by persuasive arguments. The purpose of canvassing is after all to convert and the canvasser should be quite clear about this.

We have no hesitation in saying that a very important element in your electioneering is house-to-house visiting by your field workers. It is desirable that as large a number of voters as possible should be thus contacted at some time or other during the election campaign.

SYMBOLS FOR SUCCESS



You are aware what great part the use of symbols for ballot boxes played in the last general elections. In a country where most of the voters are illiterate the symbol system has made it easy for illiterate voters to distinguish between the ballot boxes of different candidates. This apart, symbols are useful for appealing to the instincts, emotions, and self-interest of the people. *By a suitable choice of symbols, candidates*

may also be able to project a simple but strong pictorial representation of what they or their parties stand for. In fact symbols are used as means of mass propaganda and persuasion. The Election Commission has recognised national and State parties for the allotment of approved symbols. *The symbol allotted to a party is reserved for the use of that party and it cannot be used by candidates from other parties or Independents.* But where a national party does not set up any candidate at all in a particular State, the symbol allotted to it would be free and could be made available to a State party or to an Independent candidate in that State. The Election Commission approved a list of 26 symbols to be used for the last general elections. The items in the list were :

Two bullocks with yoke on; Tree; Standing Lion; Human Hand; Horse and Rider; Hut; Rising Sun; Elephant; Ears of corn and Sickle; Spade and Stoker; Flaming Torch (*Mashal*); Star; A cultivator winnowing grain; Lamp (*Deepa*); Bow and arrow (except in Bihar); Railway engine; Cycle; Cart; Boat; Flower; Pitcher; Ladder; Scales; Cock; Camel and a twig with two leaves.

We would like you to study these symbols. You will notice certain common characteristics. *All these symbols indicate familiar objects which everybody can recognise and which are easy to remember. Secondly, they are symbols of ideas which may appeal to voters.* Thus the Congress symbol of the yoked bullocks may have a special appeal for the large rural population. The lamp or *deepa* symbol stands for the good things of life, such as peace, plenty and prosperity and consequently may commend itself to all men and women. Candidates are also guided in the choice of symbols by an intention to depict in an expressive manner the ideals or the objects for which they or their parties are contesting the elections. Thus the Praja-Socialist symbol of the Hut was designed to emphasise the party's concern for the wellbeing and progress of the people who live in huts, *i.e.*, the poorer sections of rural and urban workers.

If you are a party candidate, your symbol will be the

one which has been allotted to your party. If you are an Independent candidate you may choose one of the 'free' symbols. You will of course get the chosen symbol allotted to you by the returning officer.

In selecting a symbol, the following principles may be of use :

- (1) The symbol should not be that of an object which is either too familiar or too rare. To put it positively, while it should be sufficiently common and easily recognisable, it should also be an object of interest and not a dull object.
- (2) It should lend itself to striking and colourful pictorial representation. You will be using it in posters and banners and it is therefore desirable that it should have good pictorial value.
- (3) The idea which you want to symbolise should not be too involved or obtuse. It should be simple and appealing.
- (4) The symbol should also provide scope for the coin-ing of striking slogans on its theme.
- (5) You should not of course choose as a symbol any object which is apt to give scope for contempt or ridicule and can therefore be made fun of by the propagandists of the rival candidate or candidates.

POWER OF THE PEN



You will have to reach the voter by the written word as much as by the spoken word. The written word has certain advantages over the spoken. It reaches directly the educated and the literate sections of the community, whose views profoundly influence the more general public. It necessarily secures wider coverage than the spoken word. People do not ordinarily take the trouble of going to public meetings unless

the speaker is a prominent leader or the issue is of intense public or political interest. Moreover there are limits to the number of public meetings a candidate can arrange or address.

It cannot be denied, however, that the printed word is in a way less forceful in its impact than a well-delivered verbal exhortation. "Cold print" is a common phrase, but the chilliness of the printed word can be warmed up considerably by a clever use of language.

Slogans are of great help in this matter. Now what is a slogan? A slogan is a catchy assertion. It must be brief, pointed and picturesque. It must use words from the vocabulary of the common people. These words should be intelligible and expressive. A slogan should convey its meaning directly and immediately. It must not tax the understanding of those to whom it is addressed. It would be unwise to underestimate the talent of a good slogan-writer. In fact some of the highly paid executives in the advertisement business owe their success chiefly to their flare for coining slogans with mass appeal.

Once a good slogan has been coined it gives the deceptive impression that the making of it has been an easy job. Actually good slogan-making demands vast general knowledge, considerable literary skill and above all a deep insight into the psychology of the people to whom the slogan is to appeal. Occasionally the perfect slogan is a gift of inspiration; more usually it is a reward for hard work and laboriously acquired technical proficiency.

If you have read through the parts of this Guide carefully you would by now have realized that our purpose is to give you the best advice we can and so we ask you now to go to an expert for your slogans. If you have to pay him well, you need not grudge it, for it will be good investment. If you can get hold of persons in the advertisement business to help you in this matter it will be fine indeed. Another possible source of useful assistance will be journalists, especially members of the editorial staff whose jobs require them to provide appropriate and attractive captions for news and articles. An effective slogan should be good both

in style and substance. The theme can be anything that advances your cause or strikes a blow at your opponent. Broadly speaking there are two kinds of slogans. The first one attempts to persuade the electorate to vote for you and the second to dissuade the voter from voting for your opponent.

In the first category the most common type of slogans are those which praise your or your party's principles, policies and programmes. Most of these slogans are general in their content. Thus a Congress slogan may read : "Congress GAVE YOU FREEDOM AND WILL GIVE YOU PROSPERITY". A slogan of this kind is bound to appeal to a wide public, by stimulating the people's sentiment and national pride. A more definite direction may be imparted to a slogan by stressing a large and still sectional interest. A P-S.P. slogan may assert, for instance, that the "P.S.P. is The Poor Man's Friend".

Although generalized slogans have an important place in election propaganda, some of the most effective impressions on the public mind are created by slogans which have more direct impact on particular sections of the people. These particularized slogans make clever use of sectional interests, grievances and local or regional problems, group causes and even of popular loyalties to public figures held in great esteem.

Such slogans, however, can turn out to be double-edged weapons. The very fact that they commend themselves to one section of the people by praising or supporting their point of view implies that they may not be appreciated or may even be violently disliked by some other section of the people. Hence great care is needed in framing such slogans. This exercise often calls for a nice balance of judgment so that the electoral advantages of the slogan may be clearly more substantial than its electoral disadvantages.

The Communist party is a great employer of particularized slogans : "Land to the Tiller"; "Down with the Capitalists"—these are two typical sectional slogans. Communal parties and parties based on regional causes or in-

terests naturally have much use for particularized slogans. "A Vote for Jan Sangh is a Vote for your Dharma", can well be a very acceptable slogan for that party. One can imagine a State party in Madras having a slogan claiming that it is a defender of southern interests in language policies or the economic sphere.

Perhaps it is the Independent candidate who can make the fullest use of particularized slogans. An Independent candidate does not fight an election primarily on national issues, although he may not be able to avoid taking a stand on some of them. He naturally bases his election stand on specific matters which are of direct importance to his constituency. This naturally widens the scope for the employment of particularized slogans pertaining to those local themes. An anti-cow slaughter propagandist, for instance, may favour a slogan saying "Vote to Save the Sacred Cow". Another candidate campaigning against casteism may say "Vote for the Man, not for his Caste".

The borderline which divides the slogan which seeks to persuade one to vote for one candidate and the slogan which seeks to dissuade one from voting for another candidate is a thin one. A typical example is the one given at the close of the last para. "Vote for the Man, not for his Caste". Here the first part is persuasive; the second dissuades by implying that the opponent should not be allowed to exploit casteism. Slogans which are categorically "anti" the opponent are of course very popular in election campaigns. They undoubtedly make a stronger appeal and no zealous propagandist should fail to make full and fair use of them. Great caution, however, will be necessary because there is always a temptation to score a hit by indulging in language which may be in bad taste, abusive or even libellous. One golden rule will be to keep clear of disparagements at the personal level. It is also desirable to employ humour more than sarcasm, irony more than ridicule and wit more than virulence in portraying the opponent's campaign in an unfavourable light.

It is a common practice in this country for candidates

to use their photographs on posters, handbills and other election literature. This has the advantage of familiarising the electorate with the personality of the candidate, but the latter should always try to meet as many voters as possible in person rather than depend upon his photograph to do the trick.

The poster is a useful tool of publicity. It must be brief, bold and colourful. We would suggest that you should not go to a cheap press for your poster. You must choose the best in the town. It would be worth the trouble and expense. You should insist on the best lettering, the best composition and the best of everything by way of printing and display.

A more exacting class of election literature is the handbill. It must attempt to convey a few outstanding messages, the fewer the better and it should not contain unnecessary or distracting words. It should be short, snappy and substantial.

A handbill may carry at the top your symbol. It will include the best of your election slogans and an appeal to the voter for his support. Some candidates like these handbills to carry pictures of themselves.

The election manifesto is an important item of election literature. If you are a party candidate, your party will prepare this manifesto for the use of all its candidates. If you are an Independent, you will have to prepare your own. But even in the case of party candidates there is no reason why in addition to the general manifesto of the party the candidate may not draft his own manifesto with special emphasis on local needs and issues. The manifesto again should not be a lengthy document. It should only give your constituents a general idea of your approach to public issues. But it must find space within its limits for an adequate reference to subjects which are of importance to the constituents concerned. A manifesto again should be drafted in a dignified but not bombastic style. It should be easy enough and familiar enough to be understood by the general public. But at the same time its standard of expression should be such as to win the respect of the more sophisticated sections of

voters. Here again a good journalist can help you very much. He not only has the professional competence to write about public issues in a readable manner, but he has the added qualification of being aware of the problems which are topical and of current public interest.

THE PERSONAL TOUCH



The quality of your election literature in its various forms is no doubt of the greatest importance. But no written word can be a substitute for the personal touch. You yourself must do much of your election campaign. Here we would suggest that you cannot do better than study the electioneering technique of the American Senator Estes Kefauver who was the Democratic Vice-Presidential candidate in the U.S. Presidential elections this year. Mr. Kefauver is famous for the down-to-earth approach he makes to individual voters in their millions.

The chief weapon in the Kefauver armoury is the handshake. At an early period in his political career, when he was campaigning for a Senate seat, a friend gave him a piece of advice which has since served him well. What the friend told him was this: "Shake at least 500 hands a day until election time". Kefauver did it and won and since that time every time he goes campaigning Mr. Kefauver makes it a point to shake at least 500 hands between sunrise and sunset.

The U.S. magazine *TIME* has an amusing and instructive paragraph on the Kefauver touch :

"The Kefauver handshake has decidedly become a national monument. It is not bone-crushing or even firm. It is limp but not clammy. An inward turn of the wrist prevents pressure that would later cause aches and pains. Unlike Adlai Stevenson Kefauver does not lecture as he shakes, he utters one friendly sentence and reaches for the next hand. As he shakes with his right hand he applies a light pressure with his left on the well-wisher's right elbow, thus keeping the line moving. When someone launches an extended conversation Kefauver seems to give undivided attention but he grabs for the next hand in line. The resulting traffic pile-up generally gets rid of the talker."

Another and more traditional technique of the personal approach is the practice, particularly with candidates in Britain, of kissing the babies. Just as the handshake is the point of pride with the Kefauver approach, the number of babies kissed becomes the barometer of personal election effort on the part of a candidate in Britain. It is always amusing but often very effective to find impeccably groomed Tory gentlemen stooping to peck at the cheeks of grimy East End kids held up to them by enthusiastic mothers. The way to a mother's heart is said to be petting the baby and kissing babies in their thousands is reckoned to be as effective a way of establishing sympathy and popularity with women voters as any other election trick that may be thought of.

In India the handshake is a foreign gesture and can be used only with a small section of sophisticated people. Bet-

ween the sexes it is virtually barred. There is however another gesture with equally good mass appeal which the Indian candidate can employ with effect in the place of the Kefauver handshake. This is the gesture of the folded hands. It is a very graceful form of salutation. It is calculated to flatter the vanity and self-esteem of the person towards whom it is directed and is therefore excellently suited to the easing of feelings of difference caused by social or caste barriers, especially where a candidate happens to be of a *superior* caste or status. It is a gesture which is easily understood, appreciated and responded to by men, women and children.

There are many variations in the technique of the folded hands. Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, whose motions and movements always have a characteristic grace and vigour, is a skillful practitioner of this gesture. He raises the two palms, stuck together, to the level of the ridge of the nose, holds them straight, a little away from the face, and turns about in a semi-circle. When he is busy or wants to get down to business immediately, Mr. Nehru dispenses with the semi-circular movement; instead he just makes a quick slight bow.

The President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, is another skilled exponent of the gesture of the folded hands. With him, the tips of the fingers are raised to the level of the chin and in that position the folded hands are slowly moved this side and that while the head also is swayed in step. The effect produced is that of simplicity and graciousness.

It is of course necessary that you should try to work out the precise pattern of the gesture which suits your personality. Only practice will help you. You should try out various motions in front of a mirror as well in the presence of an intelligent and sympathetic circle of keen observers who can make useful suggestions for polishing up your actions. Two general principles should be borne in mind. The first is that there should not be the slightest suggestion of condescension in your gesture. Secondly it should not have the appearance of artificiality or mechanical repetition. It will be a poor act for instance to stare ahead or rigidly in any one direction, with hands raised and held stiffly and the face grim

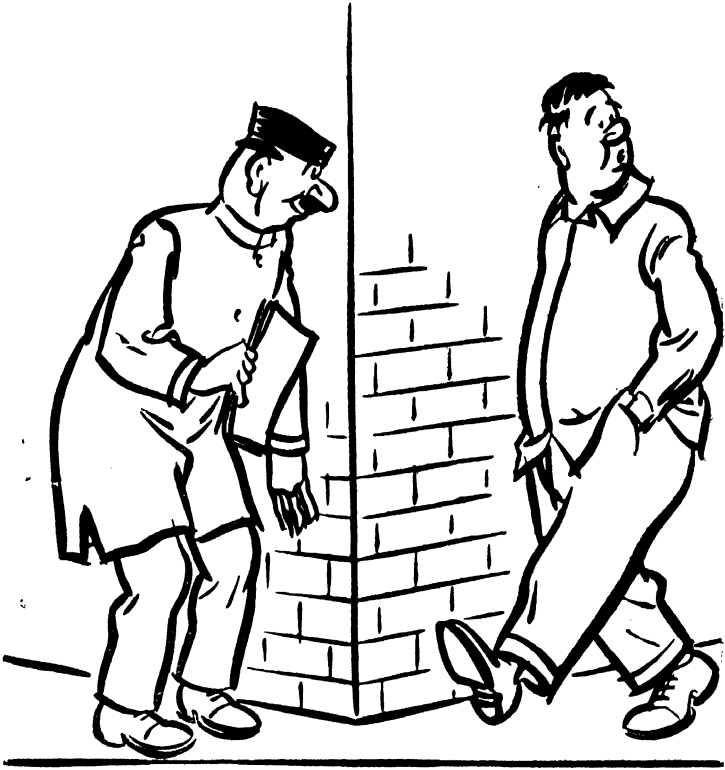
or immobile. It is most desirable that impressions of spontaneity, warmth and genuine friendliness should be infused into the gesture. Perhaps the most effective way of doing this is to bring on as naturally as possible a warm and sunny smile on the face. When meeting voters in small groups or in the course of house-to-house canvassing, it is desirable that the greeting gesture with folded hands should be repeated for the benefit of every individual present at the place. It may be a great temptation to include everyone present in the sweep of a single gesture. But it will pay very good dividends if the candidate wisely refrains from grudging the extra physical effort involved in individual greetings.

As you will have seen we have always been emphasizing the great importance of your meeting personally as many voters in your constituency as possible and establishing contacts with them at a man-to-man level. This cannot be done, as you will realise, unless you are prepared for a great deal of personal house-to-house canvassing. We suggest that you make it a point to cover some area every day in the course of morning or evening rounds of visits. On these occasions it should be useful to take a small group of your election associates and workers with you. This group need not exceed half-a-dozen in number. It should include wherever possible a socially prominent individual and a public worker who comes from the locality you are visiting and who is friendly to your cause. It must also include those field workers who may be doing the detailed day-to-day canvassing on your behalf in that locality.

It should be your aim during your visits to keep away from detailed or controversial discussions on public issues on which sharp differences of opinion may exist. You should confine yourself to broad statements of your ideas and approach and talk briefly, but clearly of how you believe you can pursue the public interest generally and the interest of the people in your constituency particularly. If you are a good conversationalist you will be at a great advantage in doing this kind of electioneering work. If you are ready-witted and know how to utter the soft word that turneth

wrath, you will be able to do your candidature a great deal of good by personally undertaking this kind of house-to-house canvassing. You will need above all an inexhaustible fund of patience and a genial temperament that refuses to take or give offence.

SAY IT IN THE STREETS'



Street-Corner meetings should occupy a solid place in your electioneering strategy. Next to house-to-house canvassing they are the best means of detailed propaganda and intimate canvassing. It is very desirable to hold frequent street-corner meetings in every locality of your constituency throughout the period of the election campaign. You should make it a point to be present personally at, at least, two of such meetings held in each locality. You should be

present at a meeting held in the early weeks of the campaign and again at a meeting held in the closing weeks.

There is a useful general pattern to be followed for meetings of this type. In the first place the presence of people at these meetings should be availed of to familiarise the electorate with your election slogans and election symbols. Posters, handbills and vocal choruses may be freely used for this purpose with great effect at these gatherings. Handbills, manifestoes and other election literature may also be distributed.

It will be a good idea to ask a friendly personality from the locality to take the chair at such meetings. He could introduce you to the gathering, commending your candidature and appealing to the voters for their support. You may follow these introductory remarks of the chairman with a short speech.

Public speaking is an art but not wholly so. It is a case where practice makes perfect but at the same time one must also have a natural instinct or flare for it. Great orators, like great poets, are born and not made. If you are one of the natural orators so much the better, for you have an electioneering asset of inestimable value. Most of us, however, are not naturally gifted orators. Hence it becomes necessary for us to acquire fair competence in public speaking by taking pains and learning the hard way.

There are very few speakers who can hold the interest of an audience for a long period of time. So the first lesson one must learn as a public speaker is to make a short speech rather than a long one. As a general rule it may be said that about half-an-hour is a desirable time-limit on most occasions. You may finish earlier but do not, except for the clearest reasons, go on longer. The great thing about the short speech is that it will make a specific and powerful impact on the audience by concentrating their attention on the essential points you want to make.

In order to make your speech short you should know where to start and when to stop. So far as local or street-corner meetings, with which we are now concerned go, some

suggestions may be made here. It will be advisable for you to start with a few references to the locality and its people. You may speak in a commendatory manner about their political awareness, civil sense and general public spiritedness. If there is in that locality a venerable public figure or local hero, you may make flattering references to him provided of course he has not aligned himself with some other side in the elections.

You may next proceed to a broad discussion of the larger public issues in the context of which the elections are being fought, indicating in a general manner the distinctive features and merits of your candidature, party or programme. You should also make a few sharp distinctions between your political programme and those of your rivals, wherever such distinctions are clearly to your advantage in the particular context of your audience on the occasion.

The third and final stage of your speech should concentrate on local problems and interests. This may well be the most important part of your speech for making friends and influencing people in the locality. We advise you to consult beforehand some intelligent and informed people in the locality, and find out the problems in which voters of that locality are interested and learn about the attitudes, prejudices and preferences of the main groups and sections of the electorate in that part of the constituency. You should study this data carefully with the help of your campaign advisers and workers and then decide what are the local interests and attitudes which you can endorse and promise to work for, consistent both with your general political principles and approach and the need for getting electoral support from the locality. Once you have made up your mind on this point it should be possible for you to make your speech one of direct, immediate and personal interest to the people of the locality. The entire object of your effort in this part of your speech should be to produce a strong impression among your audience that you are more likely than any of your rivals to be active and effective in furthering objects which are of close interest to most members of that area.

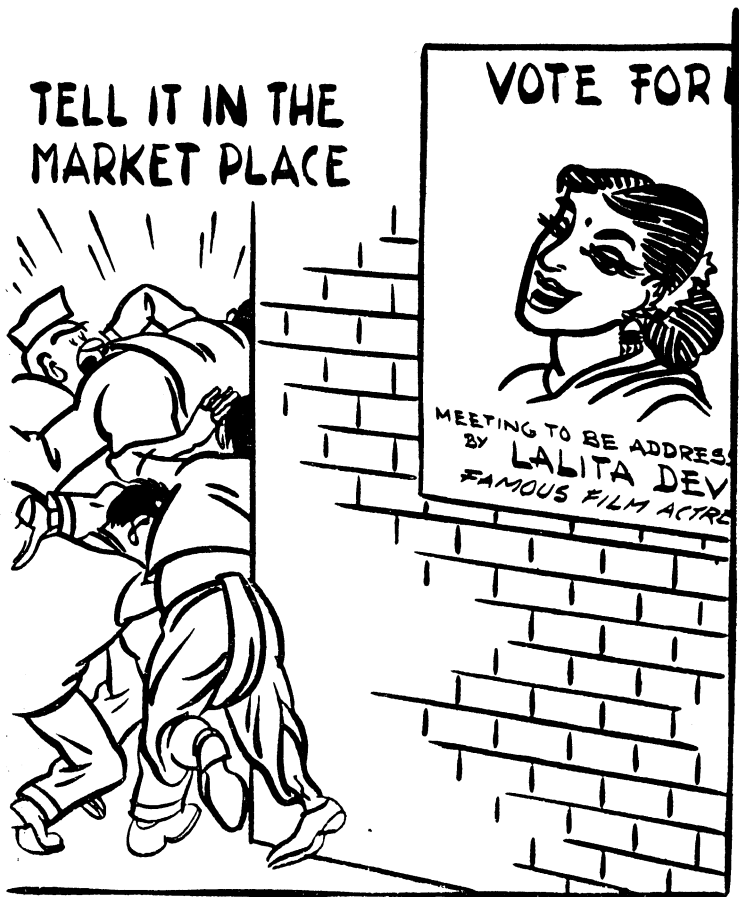
On the general question of the style you may adopt for speeches of this kind a few hints may be given now. Generally speaking you should adopt that style which is best suited to your personality and temperament. If sweet reasonableness and gentle persuasion are your forte, by all means make them your stock-in-trade. If on the contrary an aggressive and forceful style suits you better, do not hesitate to get the best out of it. But whatever may be your main style you should be capable of a certain flexibility. Audience reaction is best when your speech strikes a variety of notes rather than a single one. To put it simply, if your main strategy is that of gentle persuasion you should punctuate it by well-spaced tactical changes of hard-hitting passages. Conversely, if your main style is the aggressive one, you should intersperse it with milder passages. Unless you are able to ring these changes carefully you may run the risk of boring or wearying out your audience. In a general way you should employ the persuasive style to win over your audience to your side and the aggressive to wean them away from your rival's cause.

A question is sometimes asked whether abuse is a good tactical weapon in election campaigns. Our answer is that it is not. Indulging in personal attacks on rival candidates may create some sensational effect but it is highly doubtful if its consequences will be of permanent value to the attacker. More often than not abuse becomes a two-edged weapon. It must necessarily provoke retort in kind with the result that a slanging match results, a lot of mud is thrown about and nobody's reputation gains while everybody's loses. There are hardly very few public men who can boast of complete invulnerability from personal attack and provided the attacker is unscrupulous enough, it is always possible to discover some dirty linen if not a skeleton or two in most cupboards.

We would, therefore, rule out abuse completely as a useful weapon in election propaganda. But we most certainly are not ruling out such legitimate weapons of public speaking or debate as irony and sarcasm. All is fair in love and war.

It is certainly fair in electioneering to employ all the aids of oratory to present the rival's political and public record and his party's principles and performance in the worst light. Deliberate falsehood and misrepresentation of course should be avoided but there is certainly no obligation on the part of a candidate to desist from presenting facts and arguments in such a way that it helps his candidature while hurting his opponents'.

These local or street-corner meetings need not be lengthy affairs. On the occasions when you are able to address these meetings yourself you need not have any other speaker except the chairman who would make the introductory as well as the concluding remarks. But at other times when you do not personally attend these meetings you should at least arrange for two speakers at each meeting. One of them could be an influential public figure in the locality and the other a powerful speaker from your election organization who enjoys a good local reputation as an interesting and hard-hitting orator. It will be necessary for your headquarters staff to brief your speech-makers adequately on subjects which are of live public interest in connection with the elections. To assist you in this matter we are giving in another section of this Guide the main discussion points on various issues. Since this Guide is not intended for the candidates of any particular party, we have attempted in this section to discuss the issues from a variety of angles. This should help you to learn what your opponent's arguments may be as well as frame your arguments or counter-arguments.



The highlight of an election campaign is the mass meetings. These mass meetings are a test of voter support which a candidate may enjoy in his constituency as well as a means of mobilising that support. Big political organizations dominated by great public figures are naturally able to draw large crowds. Those who find themselves in other camps should therefore exert themselves a great deal in order to attract fair-sized crowds to their mass meetings.

The first thing about organizing a mass meeting is to take every possible precaution to see that the attendance is as large as possible. This means detailed and intelligent planning of all the arrangements for holding a mass meeting, such as choice of place and time and other particulars such as adequate advance publicity and attractive arrangements at the place of the meeting itself.

Place and time are very important. They may make all the difference between success and failure of the meeting. The place where the meeting is held should provide a congenial atmosphere. It should not be in a very crowded or noisy locality, nor should it be in a remote or inaccessible corner of the town, but in a central locality well connected by means of transport with all parts of the town. Public parks or *maidans* and open spaces in front of temples are some of the familiar places where mass meetings can be or are usually held with advantage.

Generally speaking, in most parts of the country these meetings can be held in the open air but since the winter months are ahead it may be desirable in northern India to arrange for meetings held late in the evening to take place in roofed places. Halls in municipal buildings, schools and colleges and philanthropical or social institutions and theatres may be available in many places for the holding of election meetings. But such accommodation is not generally enough to hold really big meetings nor is it available sufficiently to satisfy the exuberant demand that must arise, especially when the election campaign is at fever-heat. It would therefore be a good idea to use *shamianas* in the north and *pandals* in the south for providing weather protection for audiences at mass meetings held in open spaces. But whatever arrangements you make, do not omit to make fool-proof arrangements sufficiently in advance for the accommodation you want to have for your meetings. It will be inadvisable to leave things to chance.

The timing of meetings is not less important than choice of places. The very first thing that you should make sure of is that your dates should not clash with those of any

other powerful alternative attractions for the public. It is of course true that organizers of election meetings may avail themselves of *melas*, festivals and public holidays to attract large numbers of people who have time on their hands on such occasions, but at the same time it is not very wise to organize a mass meeting on a day when, for instance, a popular music festival is promised in the town or a popular religious leader is delivering his discourse or a national personality is visiting the place, unless of course that personality is on your side and the very visit can be availed of by you to organize a meeting. If the meeting is held on Sundays or other public holidays, they may be held in the late afternoon or early evening. If they are held on normal working days they may start an hour or two later but in winter months they should not drag on late into the evenings. Except on special occasions, when some popular personality is scheduled to speak at these meetings, it would be a mistake to let these meetings drag on after the usual supper time.

The place, time and other particulars of meetings should of course be publicised sufficiently in advance. Posters, handbills, and street processions may be used for the purpose. Advertisements may also be inserted in local papers. On the day of a meeting, it will be profitable to send small groups of your workers to the various localities for house-to-house visits to invite voters to the meeting.

Most public gatherings, unless when addressed by a big personality or when devoted to "hot" public issues, are apt to be dull affairs. Special care, therefore, has to be taken to provide as much interesting time as possible for the audience. Your trump card of course is good speakers. But this is not a card that every one can command at his pleasure. So all the arts of publicity will have to be exploited to capture audience interest and hold it. It is our feeling that organizers of public meetings do not pay sufficient attention to these aspects of their responsibilities. For instance, we see no reason why good band, or *shahmai* music should not be arranged to attract people to meetings.

There is perhaps a tendency to place too much emphasis

on political personalities as crowd attractions. We have not yet realized that so far as the general public is concerned, a popular film star, actor, musician, athlete or sportsman is probably a much more potent drawer of crowds than most political leaders. We do suggest that you should enlist the services of public figures for stimulating audience interest at your election meetings. Many of these artistes no doubt have strong political views or sympathies of their own. We see no reason at all why a candidate should not seek the assistance of such of those artistes as are favourable to his candidature.

The technique of speech-making at mass meetings is different in some ways from that suitable for street-corner or local meetings. Here more attention has to be paid to the larger political issues and the candidate's campaign has to be clearly placed in its state and national perspective. Here again you should normally speak yourself because the voters like to feel that the candidate is fighting his own campaign and is not merely standing behind or letting others fight his battles. But in addition to your speeches there should also be other speeches and one of them may possibly be by a public man of national or at least wide standing.

As we have mentioned earlier these mass meetings should be taken advantage of to give full publicity to your election symbol and your election slogans. Finally one word of caution. You must make sure that the loudspeaker, lighting and other arrangements are quite efficient. Very often a meeting which is going on fine is thrown into chaos and disorder, say, by the failure of a mike or some such mishap.

MESSAGE FOR THE MILLIONS



In the world's leading democratic countries, politically and economically well-advanced, the various media of mass publicity are used on a vast and elaborate scale. To begin with it was the press and the newspapers particularly that played a big part. Then came the radio and now television. Television has indeed become the main propaganda means of electioneering in the United States and, to a less extent, in Britain. The Presidential election in the United States this year were fought mainly over the vast national TV net-works. The *TIME* magazine recently

described the preparations that were going on for this electronic stumping, as it called it, in the following vivid terms :

“The two main political parties this week (September 3) will kick off the biggest, costliest, best organized TV political campaign in history. Long before the conventions decided on the candidates Republicans and Democrats retained advertisement agencies and took options on dollars 4·5 million worth of radio—TV time (three times the 1948 cost). Democrats are working out about ten times as much money on the radio-TV as on all other media combined. They have budgeted £1,600,000 for TV time, about £500,000 for radio—total £2,100,000. Republicans will spend some £2,200,000 for air time, 80 per cent of it on TV”.

We, in this country, have no television yet, but we have the radio. Radio broadcasting, however, is a Government monopoly and for obvious reasons it has been insulated from election propaganda.

In the circumstances the only media of mass publicity is the Press. Here the great national parties are of course at an advantage. Many of them have their party papers all over the country, while even the unattached or independent sections of the press take a line on election issues and give active support and sympathy for this party or that. In this way these big political parties have their election literature promptly publicized without much expense and indeed free of cost. Their election manifestoes are printed in the Press, the speeches of their leaders are fully reported, the progress of their election programmes is commented upon and in the more friendly papers editorial support is also given.

Minority political groups and independent candidates cannot hope for anything like this kind of cooperation from the regular press. This explains why candidates from this class often find it useful to start *ad hoc* newssheets specifically for election time. District and local papers often circulating in no more than a few constituencies make their sudden appearances on election eve. This *ad hoc* journalism has its advantages. For one thing, it costs less to post a registered newspaper than even a postcard. Thus there is a big saving

in postage in the matter of postal canvassing.

Secondly literacy and studying habits are spreading fast. The people at large are more and more interested in reading all kinds of newspapers and journals. Topical and bright newssheets are consequently in a position to rouse much interest.

Thirdly a newssheet gives an opportunity to friends and well-wishers, especially from the business community, to express their cooperation by taking advertisement space and helping the election campaign thus with funds.

We would certainly suggest that wherever a minor party or an independent candidate is able to bring out such election bulletins on an economic basis, it should be done. It is of course necessary to employ a shrewd and alert journalist with good political background to edit the newssheet. The writing should be racy and readable. There is no harm in a little gossip provided it is not malicious.

The theatre, including in this term the village theatre, can be made use of for educating voters on election issues and spreading election messages. India has a fine tradition of village plays and dramas through which the people's religious education, cultural values and social and economic attitudes have been promoted through the centuries. There is no reason why this excellent medium of communication should not be fully availed of. Dramas and plays, short or full length, can be got written on appropriate themes and professional troupes engaged to stage them.

Some leading business houses have of late taken to making short films for advertising their businesses or products. Similar films may be an economic vehicle of propaganda for national organizations. Some of them may surely explore possibilities of making use of short films for mass propaganda.

An important propaganda technique is to build up interest and enthusiasm on a steadily ascending scale. In this matter it is very important to avoid working up voters' enthusiasm too early in the campaign. For there is then danger of interest flattening out before polling day. It will be

a good idea to devote the earlier part of an election campaign to the basic education of the electorate on the fundamental election issues. The aim should be to give plenty of facts and information to consider and ponder over, to keep them well informed and instructed and steadily influence the making up of their minds and opinions in a favourable direction.

As the campaign proceeds and polling day approaches it will be necessary to shift the emphasis towards an intensive appeal to the emotions. This does not mean of course exploiting prejudices and passions. But it does mean stirring up people's sentiments, emotions and hearts in such a way that they will have the feeling that they have a vital stake in the issues. In this manner the psychological atmosphere and emotional tension should be gradually built up so that on polling day there is widespread enthusiasm drawing people to the booths in large numbers and in the right mood.

There is a feeling among election strategists that in certain circumstances poor polling may actually help a candidate. It is argued, for instance, that if voters are apathetic or the dominant political organization in the area does not exert itself due to overconfidence, a hard working rival candidate may succeed in bringing off a majority in his favour if the total poll is poor. Such assumptions, however, are of doubtful value and unless there are clear indications to the contrary it may be wise to aim at high and active polling which is generally to the advantage of all. In any case a candidate cannot properly ask voters to stay away and not exercise their valued right of citizenship to participate in the ballot. It therefore seems sensible for the candidate to encourage the electorate to exercise its right to vote to the fullest extent—and make them cast their votes for him.

We have now come to the end of this short, necessarily broad, attempt to provide you with suggestions regarding the organization of your election machinery and campaign. You are no doubt a person with experience of public affairs. Much of what we have said so far may not be new to you but you will readily agree that putting down ideas on paper doe

help one to gain a clear picture of the needs and nature of the election campaign that one must fight and chalk out the actual programme in the most appropriate manner. We do hope that this Guide has helped you in some little manner. In the following section we have attempted to discuss the various issues and themes of public interest in such a manner that it will help you to collect talking points and information for briefing your helpers and workers in their canvassing and propaganda activities.

THE POLITICS OF PRICES



In the 1952 elections to the U.S. Presidency, the Republican campaign advisers hit upon what proved to be an effective question-and-answer TV programme. People from each area asked Mr. Eisenhower for his views on a “pressing problem”. These questions were carefully selected in advance on the advice of a professional pollster and the Eisenhower answers were also carefully drafted beforehand.

One of these tailor-made dialogues was :

Voice : Mr. Eisenhower, what about the high cost

of living?

Eisenhower : My wife worries about the same thing. I tell her it is our job to change that on November 4 (the date of inauguration of the new President).

The moral of this American election story is that prices and the cost of living are always a people's problem, whether the country be as rich as the United States or as poor as India. When elections are on, the price and the cost of living questions are therefore debated or exploited by various parties for their own purposes.

On these occasions the party in power is always at a disadvantage. It is easy for opposition candidates to say that the Government is responsible for the high prices and consequent hardships. He can blame the Government's economic policy and may say that if his party is put in power it would bring down prices and give relief to the people.

We are now passing through a phase of rising prices. The cost of essential articles of common consumption has gone up and is going up. The prices of grains have risen by about half as much as they were a year ago. Cloth has become as costlier. The prices of some of the essential commodities, notably vegetable oils, have nearly doubled in a year. Naturally people with low incomes, which include the urban middle class besides workers and peasants and other labouring classes, are feeling the pinch. Equally naturally all the parties opposed to the Congress party which is in power are keen on making this price problem one of the main issues. Independent candidates also will no doubt avail themselves of the opportunities presented by the rising price situation.

The Congress, which is the Government party, must to some extent be on the defensive on this issue, but it may nevertheless make an effective defence. It may, in fact, even move forward to attack its critics for exploiting inevitable economic circumstances and the people's difficulties for political propaganda.

The opposition attack in respect of the price and cost of living problem may broadly be in two parts. The first part

will point out acts of commission and omission on the part of the Government which may be said to have brought about the rising prices. The second part will describe the measures which, it is believed, should have been taken, and will be taken if the opposition is put into power. The following are the main talking points for a charge-sheet against the Government :

(1) The Government did not assess in time the correct volume of demand for foodgrains in the country. Two years ago they came to the premature conclusion that enough foodgrains was being produced in the country to feed the people without imports. On that assumption they hastily cut down the import of food in the last two years. The result was that Government stocks were depleted and last year when prices began to rise the Government could not stop this by releasing supplies from their stocks. It was only after prices had risen substantially that the Government realized their mistake and rushed to import foodgrains. Meanwhile, however, the mischief had been done and the people have to pay for the Government's blunder and error of judgment, in the form of higher foodgrain prices.

(2) The Congress Governments are unwilling and unable to take strong measures to check hoarding and profiteering in foodgrains. This is because they have a soft corner in their hearts for the rich people and are linked to them in many ways.

(3) The Government may have opened fair price shops here and there, but they are not enough in number. Moreover the prices charged are high and the quality of supplies is poor.

(4) Although our own country is going short of foodgrains, the Government have not been able to stop smuggling of wheat and rice into East Pakistan. There again the Government are powerless or reluctant to act against big business.

(5) In the case of cloth too the Government have muddled. Here also they have not properly estimated the needs of the country. Although the consumption of cloth

has been going up, they have done nothing to increase production.

They have prevented mills from expanding their capacity on the plea that they want to encourage handloom and khadi cloth. But it is not possible for handloom and khadi to meet all the demand for cloth. In any case the Government have not been able to take effective measures for khadi and handloom production. They are still experimenting with the Ambar (Charkha), while they have created discontent and dislocation in the handloom industry by their proposal to introduce powerlooms. Moreover handloom and khadi cloth are dearer than mill cloth. So the Government's policy is such that the cloth has become both scarce and costly. To add to it all they have recently imposed an excise duty on cloth and that too at a time when people whether rich or poor are compelled to buy cloth for the festivals such as *Dussehra*, *Diwali* and *Sankranti*.

In the case of edible oilseeds, again, the Government have added to the price by imposing new excise duties. They are also allowing prices to rise by permitting exports although it is clear that supplies are not enough for our own needs.

Some of the talking points about the measures to deal with the price rise which the critic may claim that his party will take are :

(1) Acquiring stocks from big landlords and merchants and selling them through fair price shops.

(2) Setting up more fair price shops and ensuring that they are managed properly so that the quality of grain sold may be good.

(3) Taking measures to stop movements of food-grains from areas where there are already shortages.

(4) Ensuring top priority for the movement of food-grains by rail to all needy areas.

(5) Since prices in fair price shops are too high for poor people, provision of some Government subsidy for food-grains sold to lower income classes.

(6) In the case of cloth also stocks would be taken

over from mills and wholesalers and distributed through fair price shops.

(7) Really effective steps would be taken for increased production of cloth by mills as well as handlooms.

(8) Taxes on cloth would be reduced.

(9) Stopping immediately exports of vegetable oils, directing manufacturers of soap not to use edible vegetable oils. The tax on vegetable oils would also be withdrawn or reduced.

Moving over to the other side of the debate, we would put forward the following talking points for the Government or the Congress side :

(1) It is true that prices have risen. But this is because both Government and private industrialists are investing a lot of money in developing the country. This development expenditure naturally gives more employment and more income to the people. One effect of this is people have more money to buy things and so their consumption goes up. Meanwhile development expenditure is also resulting in increased production, but there is some time-lag. Demand increases more quickly than supply. So prices rise to some extent. This increase in prices therefore is a healthy sign. Of course it can be stopped tomorrow if development expenditure is stopped, but that will not be a good thing as it will mean that there will be no economic progress. Our country will become poor.

(2) The correct policy, therefore, is to increase production. It is wrong to say that the Government are not doing this. If one looks at the Plan it will be seen that big increases in production are proposed in agriculture and industry. It may be that bigger increases are needed. Government are quite prepared to attempt that. In fact in agriculture they have already taken up the question of increasing production by 25 per cent. That is much more than what was originally thought of.

(3) In the case of cloth also both handlooms and mills may be asked and assisted to produce more cloth. If any restriction is placed on mills it is only because it is essential

to provide more employment through hand-spinning and hand-weaving. It is also important that there should be more production more quickly and Government are also taking steps to secure this. In the case of agriculture unfortunately the weather plays a big part in deciding the size of the harvest. But the Government for their part are encouraging the use of better seeds and more manure and the adoption of improved agricultural practices. In the case of cloth, assistance in various ways are being given to the handloom industry and production is steadily increasing.

(4) It is wrong to suppose that Government are not taking effective measures to deal with the increases in prices. Imports have been stepped up as food prices started rising. Adequate supplies have now been ensured and in no part of the country is there a shortage really of foodgrains. Prices of course have risen. But fair price shops have been opened wherever necessary and this has already checked the rise of prices.

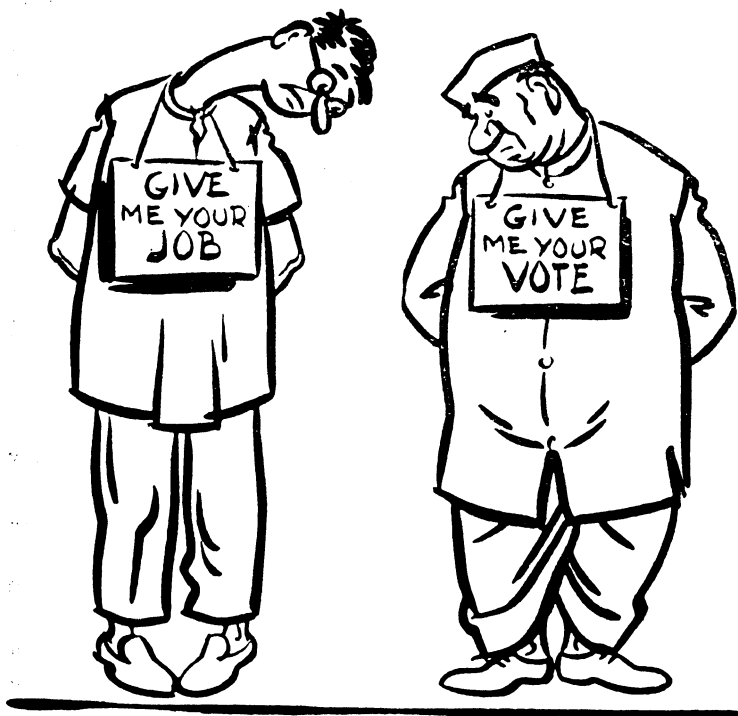
(5) If necessary the Government will consider subsidizing foodgrains. After all they were doing that some years ago. But the money for the subsidy should also come from people in some manner or other or money will have to be taken away from development projects. So it is only when other means fail that subsidy should be thought of.

(6) It is unfair to say that the Government are not dealing with hoarding or profiteering. It is true that they do not want to interfere with normal trade channels merely for the purpose of doing so. Experience has shown that nationalization is not without its disadvantages to the public. Government do not want to dislocate the markets and the trade when there is no actual need for desperate measures. After all the Government are in a better position than their critics to judge the situation. It is their considered judgment that no violent interference with trade is necessary. Of course the Government will not hesitate to interfere when necessary. Meanwhile they are certainly not idle. They directed banks to restrict advances against foodgrains and textiles. They have also directed textile mills and the

wholesale trade not to stock goods beyond certain levels. Restrictions have been put on movements of foodgrains wherever such restrictions are desirable.

(7) The Government after all have nearly ten years of experience in handling these problems. Critics on the other side have none. There is no reason for believing that they can do better. This country's economy is in a special situation. We have economic planning. This means that we must invest at a higher level than we might otherwise do in building our economic strength more rapidly than we can do if there is no plan. This higher rate demands sacrifice from the people. It is the obligation of the Government to see that the burden of high investment is justly distributed between the rich and the poor. The sacrifices imposed on the poor should be kept as low as possible, but at the same time they cannot be entirely avoided. Higher food and cloth prices are one form of the sacrifice which people must make for their own economic progress. The Government naturally want to ensure that this form of sacrifice which is particularly harsh on poor people is reduced to the minimum. They certainly have been trying to do this. Their efforts have been meeting with substantial success. They will continue to succeed and be even more successful as public co-operation comes forth in increasing measure.

MEN AND JOBS



Next to prices and the cost of living, the unemployment situation is likely to be the most discussed issue. Here again the opposition parties or candidates will try to make out that the Congress Governments have been either unwilling or unable or both to deal with the problem effectively. The Congress position naturally will be to say that a good deal has been done and much more is proposed to be done through the Second Plan to increase employment opportunities and that the Congress programme in this respect is much superior to any that

opposition parties may have or pretend to have.

Some of the non-Congress arguments may be as follows:

(1) The Congress and Government propagandists have been talking so much about plans and planning, but their policies have completely failed to make any impression on the problem of mass unemployment. On the contrary more people are unemployed now than five years ago when Congress began planning or ten years ago before the Congress came to power.

(2) In the rural areas there has been no improvement in the lot of millions of landless labourers who continue to get only meagre employment for about six or seven months in the year. There has been much talk of land reforms and all that but nothing has been done really to improve the miserable lot of landless labourers who need more employment.

(3) The village artisans and craftsmen are actually faring worse under Congress policies. The Government are merely exploiting Mahatma Gandhi's name and the Sarvodaya movement. Actually in the name of village industries boards and corporations are being set up with high salaried people and costly paraphernalia and public funds are wasted to ensure unproductive publicity. The only cottage or small-scale industry which has been able to show some improvement in its position is the handloom industry but its position is now being threatened by the Government's proposal to introduce powerlooms among handloom weavers. Actually, in the villages, competition from factory goods is threatening the livelihood of village craftsmen more and more. In the country-side the blacksmith has practically disappeared from the scene and so has the potter. The village ghannies are also vanishing.

(4) It is perhaps the lot of the middle class that is most depressing. In the villages such land legislation as there has been has merely succeeded in ruining small or middle class landowners without benefitting correspondingly any other class of rural society. The dispossessed landlord families have been provided with no means of livelihood.

The position of the urban middle class is deteriorating. The Government are boasting about more students going to schools and colleges but has this education done any good to the students or their families? Actually it has done immense harm. Because the supply of graduates has increased, even simple clerical jobs are now open only to graduates. Formerly matriculates and failed matriculates were able to get these jobs. Now only graduates with a good class have a chance. This has imposed a terrible pressure on middle class families who cannot afford to send their boys to college. The position among graduates is also heart-breaking. After an expensive education which has impoverished their families, most of them have to accept low-paid clerical jobs with no prospects. Thus the living standards of the middle class keep going down. Many of them do not get even these low paid jobs. They are simply told that their academic education is of no use and that only technical men are wanted. But is the situation in regard to technical education at least satisfactory? There are very few such institutions and a fraction of college-going students gets seats there. The courses moreover are so expensive that they are beyond the resources of the middle class.

(5) The Government's economic policies are coming in the way of the normal expansion of factory industries. While the private sector, discouraged by the Government's policies, is reluctant to expand, the public sector is not able to make good the deficiency. Thus the relief to rural unemployment which could be provided by the absorption of workers in mills and factories is denied. Also employment for educated people in industry is restricted.

The Congress and the Government point of view would be summed up in the following manner :

(1) The unemployment problem is not a new one. It has been there for a century or so. It only shows that our country's economy is not progressing but is stagnant. Our large population is also increasing by 5 million people every year. This is not a situation which can be cured by magic or *mantra*. The only solution is to develop our economy

as rapidly as possible. We have completed the First Five-Year Plan and we have begun another. These Plans are primarily an effort to deal with the unemployment problem by the development of agricultural, industrial and other economic activities and it is the Congress Government that has conceived these Plans while the opposition parties are only trying to find fault with them and making sweeping criticisms for political purposes.

(2) It is not fair to say that the Government measures to provide more employment have been ineffective. What is happening is that while jobs are increasing the population and therefore the job-seekers are also increasing, perhaps a little faster. This lag has certainly to be overtaken as planning proceeds. In fact the Second Plan has been framed with a special emphasis on creating more employment. Great importance is given in it to labour-intensive programmes such as the development of decentralized industries.

(3) Agricultural production in the Second Five-Year Plan is expected to go up by about 25 per cent. This will certainly give more employment to all classes of rural population. There will be growing demand for agricultural labour and for the services of rural craftsmen.

(4) The Government have prepared a very careful plan for the rehabilitation and development of village industries wherever this can be done on a sound economic basis. It is a difficult task and much hard work and patience are needed before results can be seen after centuries of neglect.

(5) Apart from village industries and handicrafts as such, the Government do have an effective programme for promoting small-scale industries. They have already succeeded in putting the handloom industry on a stable basis by assisting it in all kinds of ways and enabling it to stand on its feet. The Government are anxious that these small-scale industries should give not only employment but also good wages. That is why they are keen on giving small-scale producers all the benefits of modern technology such as power-driven implements, which enable them to produce more at less cost and therefore sell more and earn more.

This is the reason behind the Government's plan for encouraging handloom weavers to take to powerlooms gradually. This is also the motive behind the Government's programme for other small-scale industries. Far from allowing bread to be taken out of the mouth of the rural artisans, they are anxious to give the artisans modern equipment and help them in other ways to become efficient producers who can compete with factory goods and earn good incomes. The Government have already undertaken schemes for supplying power-driven machines to village artisans on a very liberal credit basis. The effect of this programme will be felt in the next few years.

(6) As regards the educated unemployed the Government do have a definite policy. They are encouraging technical education by putting up more and more institutions and colleges. Their schemes for the development of small-scale industries are expected to provide jobs in the coming years to the young men with high school education after a short period of workshop training.

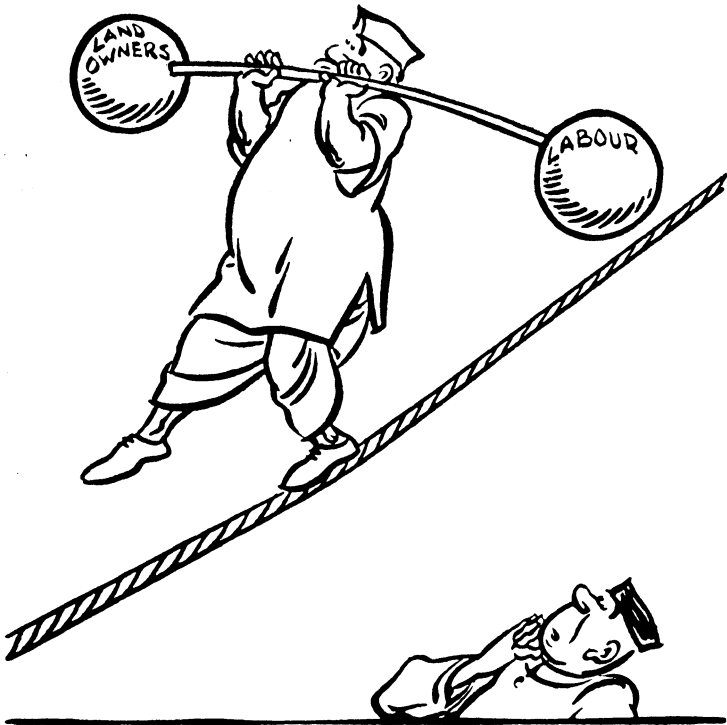
(7) At the higher levels of education the various development projects are already stepping up the demand for engineering graduates and other technically qualified personnel. In fact there is a shortage of personnel, such as engineers of all kinds and certain categories of agricultural technicians. Even in the case of arts graduates a steady expansion in the machinery of Government and the rising tempo of general economic activity is producing relief. Meanwhile the Government have set up employment exchanges and other facilities for helping the unemployed to secure jobs.

(8) Then there is also the fact that vast construction activity is going on, either through Government participation or as a result of Government stimulation, in such spheres as housing, factory building, road making and above all irrigation and power projects. The employment potential of such activities is very high.

(9) Finally no other party or individual critic of the Government seems to have a better policy or more constructive suggestions to offer in this connection. Unemployment

is in its essence both the cause and the effect of the country's poverty and its economic backwardness. It follows that any attempt to remove this backwardness and expand the economy of the country must have its effect on the unemployment situation. The greater the pace of economic development the greater also is its impact on the unemployment situation. The Five Year Plans which the Congress Governments are pursuing have the specific purpose of making the development effort as big and powerful as the country's resources permit. There can be no better way of seeking a genuine solution of the mass unemployment which poverty breeds and which, in turn, breeds poverty.

LAND AND THE LANDLESS



India, Mahatma Gandhi used to say, lives in her villages. Seven out of every ten of us, Indians, actually live in the country-side or have close rural interests. Constituencies which are wholly or predominantly rural form the majority. Rural problems and policies therefore play an important part in deciding elections. The main political parties have always had their respective platforms on rural policies.

The Congress, for instance, has declared itself against absentee landlordism and in favour of peasant farming based on Cooperative

organization. As the party which abolished zamindaris and has pronounced itself in favour of limiting the size of individual land holdings, the Congress cannot hope for much active sympathy from the upper crust of the landowning class. But this need not be a positive electoral disadvantage to that party, except in a very few constituencies where the large landowners are considerable numerically and there is a local candidate who is from their own social class or is sympathetic to their cause. Such exceptions are rare. What is the rule is that although the landlord class has no reason to love the Congress, it has every reason to fear the main rival parties such as the P.S.P. or the Communists. The Congress has at least declared itself in favour of compensation for landlord rights extinguished or curtailed by land reform measures. The programmes of most other parties are much more hostile towards the landlord class.

So far as the rural electorate is concerned, candidates mainly seek to make their appeal as acceptable as possible to the two main economic classes in the countryside. These classes are the cultivators who largely farm land taken on lease but who also include some who own partly or mostly the land they cultivate. The second class is that of agricultural labourers. The relative numerical importance of these two groups changes from constituency to constituency and electioneering techniques have to be correspondingly adjusted. As a general principle, however, it will be safe not to antagonize either section too much. This is particularly advisable for party organizations fighting in more than one rural constituency, as, if the cultivator class is stronger in one area, the landless labour class may be more important in another.

A great deal of diplomacy and political agility is needed to strike the optimum of propaganda among these two classes taken together. Talking points for the Congress side may include the following :

(1) The Congress is against concentration of land-ownership and management. It has demonstrated this by abolishing zamindaris and by its proposal to put a ceiling on

land holdings. This policy must ensure fair distribution of land and livelihood in the rural community and must consequently benefit the have-nots, whether they are petty farmers or agricultural labourers.

(2) The Congress at the same time does not want to nationalise land and expropriate the small and medium-sized peasants. On the contrary it wants to make it possible for small tenants with uneconomic holdings to expand their holdings and for other tenants who are tilling other peoples' land to own lands themselves. This it proposes to do by gradually enabling these two groups to obtain land released by ceilings on big holdings and the discouragement of absentee landlordism.

(3) As for the landlords again, the Congress believes in fair treatment. It does not believe in expropriation. It has accepted the obligations to pay compensation for land acquired. Its policy on ceilings allows landowners to retain economic or even optimum units for personal cultivation. The Congress certainly is against absentee landlords as a class in agriculture but even in their case it is prepared to be sympathetic so that their disappearance may be gradual and relatively painless. Thus while its policy is to reduce the level of rentier earnings, this policy has nevertheless been so framed as to give an income to the landlord consistent with the legitimate needs of the tenant who does the actual cultivation.

(4) The Congress has the greatest sympathy for the landless labour class because this class includes those who are both economically and socially under-privileged. Since it is the policy of the Congress to improve living conditions at the lowest level before raising standards of living at higher levels, it follows that this class is entitled to the most sympathetic deal from Congress policies and programmes.

(5) During the first Five-Year Plan minimum wages for agricultural workers have been fixed over the entire territory in the States of Punjab, Rajasthan, Ajmer, Coorg, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Cutch and Tripura. In Assam, Bihar, Bombay, U.P., West Bengal, Mysore and Vindhya

Pradesh minimum wages have been fixed in those areas where the wages were unduly low before. In a number of other States minimum wage legislation is envisaged and the Government's policy is that the minimum wages should be prescribed in all States and for all areas if possible during the plan period.

(6) In several States special attention is being given to the improvement of the conditions of agricultural workers. In particular in several States laws have been enacted providing home-sites in villages for landless labourers. Assistance in the construction of inexpensive houses with local materials and the possibility of making building sites free of cost are being considered.

(7) There is not enough land in the country to give every agricultural labourer some plot of his own to cultivate. At the same time the Government are sympathetic to the Bhoodan movement which aims at the redistribution of land through voluntary gifts of part of their hoardings by big landlords, to landless labourers or to the village community. Several State Governments have enacted laws to facilitate such Bhoodan transfers. The Government also propose to bring out a certain redistribution of land by their land reform measures. The fixation of a ceiling on land obviously has the effect of reducing inequality of ownership of land. Land in excess may be made available for easy purchase by tenants or taken over by the Government for the purpose of arranging co-operative farms for agricultural families. Steps have also been taken for resettling landless labourers wherever Government land is available. In the second Five-Year Plan, 14 States have schemes estimated to cost about Rs. 5 crores for the settlement of about 5,000 families of landless workers on 1,000 acres of land.

(8) Under-employment in the sense of lack of work all the year round is probably the main cause of poverty among agricultural families. The measures taken by the Government to promote small and village industries for which Rs. 200 crores have been provided in the second Plan should, therefore, be beneficial to landless labourers. Moreover

village co-operatives have been organized to undertake the responsibility of supplying labour on a large-scale for the construction of irrigation and power projects, both large and small, for which provision has been made in the second Five-Year Plan.

(9) In the case of cultivators, whether they are peasant-proprietors or tenants or are partly the one and partly the other, Congress policies promise economic progress in many ways. So far as tenants are concerned the Government have committed themselves to the scaling down of rents to a level where absentee landlordism is discouraged and the actual cultivator is enabled to secure fair return for his work. Necessary legislation has been enacted in many States already and the process is expected to be completed in the current Plan period. This policy, coupled with that of the policy of ceiling on land, should enable tenants to acquire progressively ownership of the land they cultivate.

(10) Agricultural production, just as other production, needs men and money. Men there are in plenty on land but they lack money. The welfare of the peasantry depends to a very large extent on cheap and sufficient credit. In this direction the Congress policy promises large benefits to the peasantry. Already the Imperial Bank of India has been nationalized and converted into the State Bank of India primarily for expanding rural credit facilities. Simultaneously the Reserve Bank of India has been enabled to establish a National Agricultural Credit (Long-term operations) Fund with an initial contribution of Rs. 10 crores. Further contributions at Rs. 5 crores per annum will be made available during the current Plan. From this Fund State Governments will be enabled to promote cooperative credit by subscribing to the share capital of cooperative credit societies. A second Fund known as the National Cooperative Development Fund will assist State Governments similarly to promote non-credit cooperative institutions. Another big step is the setting up of the Warehousing Corporation, with a capital of Rs. 10 crores for organizing large-sized warehouses at about 100 important centres. State Governments are also

to set up their own warehousing corporations. It is expected that during the current five year period 250 warehouses with a total capacity of about one million tons will be set up at the smaller centres. Loans will be advanced on the security of warehouse receipts. By these and other measures about Rs. 225 crores are to be made available over the Plan period to cultivators as short-term and long-term credit.

(11) Ultimately the welfare of the cultivator must depend on two factors; how much he produces and at what price he sells. The Government's agricultural development programme is concentrated very much on expanding agricultural production. They propose to devote Rs. 568 crores in the second Plan to agriculture and community development. Another Rs. 486 crores, earmarked for irrigation and flood control, are of direct importance to the agriculturists. The greater part of Rs. 427 crores provided for power development will also create direct facilities for agricultural production.

(12) Originally it was proposed that agricultural production should increase by about 18 per cent on the whole. Subsequently this figure has been considered inadequate and now an intensive drive is to be made by State agriculture departments as well as the National Extension and the Community Projects organization to raise the yield per acre throughout the country by about 25 per cent or more. With this purpose in view the Government propose to make available better seeds to every cultivator's family in as short a period as possible. The aim is to cover the entire irrigated area with improved seed within the next five to ten years. The supply of manures of all kinds is to be increased very much and made available to every cultivator's family. Simultaneously short-term credit is to be given freely so that cultivators may be able to buy seeds, fertilizers and manures.

(13) Along with yield, prices determine the level of agricultural incomes. The Government have made it their policy to maintain agricultural prices not only at a fair level but also at a level attractive to the agriculturist. This is no mere verbal declaration. Two years ago when foodgrain

prices tended to slump, the Government entered the markets to buy grain at specified prices and thereby prevented an unreasonable fall in prices. The Government have also guaranteed prices for raw cotton and sugarcane, while foreign trade policies have been adjusted to the need for maintaining reasonable prices for raw jute and oilseeds.

(14) The Congress symbol is "two bullocks and a yoke on." This is no mere symbol. It stands for the Congress policy of prosperous agriculture where no man will live on the labour of another and every man will be progressively enabled to enjoy fully the fruit of his work. It is a policy of peaceful revolution in the countryside, whereby not only age-old injustices are eliminated but dynamic social and economic forces are set in motion to create prosperity where there is now poverty and healthy economic and social relationships are stimulated where there are now gross inequalities or sectional barriers.

Congress propaganda thus has a powerful case to put across to the people in the countryside. Nevertheless it is also in the countryside that opposition candidates have ample scope for an effective offensive against Congress policies and performance. This is because the social and economic problems of our village economy are complex, numerous and difficult to solve. For this reason there must necessarily be a large area of dissatisfaction with what has been achieved by the Congress and discontent that more has not been done. Opposition parties and candidates have thus a fine field to work in.

Broadly speaking the opposition case can be either of the Rightist type or of the Leftist kind. Of the three main national parties opposed to the Congress two are left of the Congress in their economic and political programmes. They are the Communist and the Praja-Socialist Parties. The only Rightist party which is of some inter-State importance is the Bhartiya Jan Sangh. Although this party may not admit openly that it is Rightist in economic matters, its essential character is no doubt so. There are apparently many groups which are opposed to and apprehensive

of Congress policies of land reforms in their areas. There are already instances where such groups have formed associations for contesting elections in their constituencies. Even where such associations have not been formed, Independent candidates holding Rightist views on economic matters will probably enter the elections with the support of people of like views in their areas. It is of course true that Rightist participation in elections at these sub-national levels will be counter-balanced by similar local groups of Leftist-minded State parties or Independent candidates.

It is obvious that the Leftist attack on the Congress position in the countryside will be quite different from the rightist attack. We may now indicate the central points of Leftist attack :

(1) The Congress has been talking much about making the tiller of the land the owner of it, but what is its actual record after it has been in power for ten years ? Of course it may claim credit for the abolition of Zamindari. But this is an elementary reform which even British rule could not have postponed indefinitely. What the Congress has done is to give these zamindars a much better deal than they deserved. Not only have they been compensated very liberally, but thanks to their membership of and influence with the Congress party, especially in States such as U.P. and Bihar, they have also been allowed under various pretexts to keep large areas of land for their personal cultivation. As a result the actual tillers of the soil in the zamindari areas have not profited much. Because of the heavy burden of high compensation, the State Governments have had to impose high land revenue rates on the peasantry. So far as real land redistribution is concerned some rich farmers have become richer but the bulk of the tenants and the entire landless labour class have not received any advantage.

(2) Congress indifference to basic redistribution of land is brought out by the attitudes of Congressmen towards the Bhoodan movement. It is because a close associate and faithful follower of Mahatma Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave,

has no confidence in the official Congress protestations of sympathy for the peasantry that he has started this movement on his own. Thereby he has exposed the hollowness of Congress policy. There is of course a lot of lip sympathy from Congress leaders and some Congress State Governments for the Bhoodan movement. Some Congressmen have also taken part in a demonstrative way in the Vinoba campaign. But all this is merely to mislead the peasantry and confuse them. Basically the official Congress position is to exploit the Bhoodan movement for political purposes without effectively supporting or strengthening it.

(3) The Planning Commission has been talking a good deal about putting a ceiling on land. Here again there is more talk than action. For one thing the ceiling is not fixed at a level which will really make large areas available for redistribution among landless labourers or tenants. This ceiling has been fixed in such a manner as not to eliminate the sympathies of landowners. For the same reason exemptions of various kinds have been made with regard to the ceiling. Although these exemptions are falsely represented to be in the interest of raising the level of farming the real purpose is to favour the influential and wealthy proprietors of land, who occupy important positions in Congress organization. The real nature of Congress policy on land reforms has been fully exposed in PEPSU where the original proposals were watered down under pressure from landed interests. But it is in Bihar that the most complete exposure has taken place. In that State not only the Congress party but the State Cabinet too is split over land reform legislation with the result that every possible obstruction is being placed in the way of even remotely reasonable measures. On the whole State Governments are reluctant to implement even the moderate proposals of the Planning Commission. Their purpose has been always to bring pressure on the Planning Commission to weaken its proposals and even after securing this weakening, to delay or avoid implementing them as far as possible.

(4) Congress propaganda has been breathing fire and

fury against absentee landlords. But when it comes to putting an end to this system, the Congress party comes out in its true colours. Because these absentee landlords form an important part of the urban middle class whose votes the Congress must have, land reform legislation or proposals taken up by Congress State Governments have gone to the limits of ingenuity in preserving the vested interests of absentee landlords to the maximum extent. That is why State Governments have been keen on fixing ceilings on rents at as high a level as possible. It is significant that the Planning Commission itself has said that it sees no reason for rents exceeding a limit of one-fifth of the produce in any part of the country. The various laws and bills passed or proposed in the States do not honour this view. On the contrary pressure is being brought on the Planning Commission to go back on its word.

(5) The crux of the problem of land reform is how far landless labourers can be enabled to escape from their miserable conditions. The only real approach to this problem is to push through a cooperative system of agriculture which makes it possible for uncultivated land to be brought under the plough and added to the cultivated area and the entire land pooled and brought under cooperative cultivation for the benefit of all the agricultural classes in the countryside. The Congress party certainly does not seem to have any such genuine solution in view.

(6) The proof of the pudding is in the eating. The Congress Governments have been in power for nearly ten years, but have they really improved the lot of the small tenants or the peasants or the landless labourers? There is perhaps some improvement in the money income of villagers but this is only because the Government have been printing more notes to meet public expenditure and the increase in this paper money is spread among some sections of the people. While the farmer may receive more money for his produce, it is not to be forgotten that he has also to pay more for his cloth and other articles made in factories. Again small peasants or tenants have nothing much to sell. So it

is only the big landlords who derive advantages from high agricultural prices. Moreover, it cannot be ignored that Congress Governments have always tended to side with the manufacturers and the merchants as against the agricultural producers of commercial crops. Thus sugarcane growers in U.P. and Bihar have been repeatedly unsuccessful in getting a price for their sugarcane which will enable them to share in the enormous profits made by the sugar industry. Even if State Assemblies, yielding to public opinion, pass resolutions in favour of better cane prices, the Central Government completely ignore such proposals. In the case of cotton and oilseeds although prices are high both in the domestic market and abroad, the cream of the gains goes to merchants, big traders and shippers, both Indian and foreign.

(7) In the name of taxing the people for development the Congress policy is to shift the burden of taxation more and more on to the shoulders of the rural people. It is being constantly preached that the rural people do not pay enough taxes and that therefore they should be made to bear the bulk of the new taxation. Irrigation rates are raised sharply wherever a dam is built or a canal dug. Since there is huge corruption and public waste in building these projects, hundreds of crores of rupees are spent and the irrigation rates are put up in order to recover all this money. Thus the peasant is deprived of a substantial part of the benefits of these irrigation projects. There are proposals for even doubling the land revenue, although the land revenue is like a poll tax which both the rich and the poor agriculturists pay. Moreover the greater part of all the direct taxation that is put on agricultural as well as industrial products has to be borne by the rural population which constitutes three-fourths of the country's population. It is falsely said that sales tax is not paid by villagers. This might have been true when villagers did not go to nearby towns to buy factory goods, but it is not true now when village industries have been destroyed and village people have to depend on towns for so many articles of daily consumption or use.

(8) The Congress has got lots of political experience

and vast organization. So it is very good at spreading all sorts of false impressions among the people. By effecting minor land reforms here and there it has managed to create an impression that it is a progressive and radical party. That of course it is not. In fact its real purpose is to protect vested interests as much as possible from the onslaught of the revolutionary spirit of the times. The Congress is essentially a conservative party. The small reforms it favours are only intended to ward off the big reforms which other progressive parties will carry through once they come to power. The Congress brand of socialism is for display on platforms, not for practising through actual policies. This is conclusively demonstrated by one among several instances. Many official delegations of Congress Governments or unofficial delegations enjoying Congress favour have been visiting China at public expense, for the proclaimed purpose of studying land reforms there. But every one of these delegations returns only to report that Chinese policies have more defects than merits and that, at any rate, they are not applicable to conditions here.

The Rightist attack may find use for the following talking points :

(1) The so-called land reform policy of the Congress is sheer demagoguery and cynical opportunism. Because landlords are a very small class, the Congress has no scruples about oppressing them for the sake of winning votes from the other sections of the rural people.

(2) The Congress has so quickly forgotten that it is this small landowner class which was the backbone of the struggle for independence in the olden days. Now that the Congress has succeeded in gaining power it is kicking the very people to whose patriotic and unselfish support it owes its present position.

(3) The Congress says it has a hatred of communism but its land policy is in many respects precisely what communist countries such as China have been practising. Even the Prime Minister, Mr. Nehru, has publicly stated on many occasions that the country can follow Chinese methods in

organizing its peasantry.

(4) It cannot be overlooked that in many States such as Rajasthan, PEPSU and Bihar the net effect of Congress land policy is to destroy the economic stability of one class in the interest of some other class.

(5) Where landlord rights are reduced or extinguished, just compensation is not given. There is also no proper scheme for the rehabilitation of the dispossessed landowners. To put it bluntly the Congress has been behaving like a tyrant in its harsh treatment of a section of the citizens of this country.

(6) The Congress has one rule for agricultural property and another rule for industrial property. It talks of a socialistic pattern of society, but it is afraid to interfere with the big industrialists or merchants. Because there are only a few moneyed men in agriculture and most landowners have small properties, the Congress does not hesitate to take away their land and impoverish them.

(7) The Congress proclaims that the purpose of land reform is to give land to the landless peasants and labourers. But it knows well that there is not enough land in the country to make it possible for plots to be provided to all the landless people. Its real motive is not to transfer land to tenants and labourers but to collectivise land in the name of cooperative agriculture. The Congress, in other words, proposes ultimately to take away land from everybody and reduce all rural classes to the status of workers in some kind of Government or collective farms.

(8) The Congress knows that the landlord class is a class with some traditions and a deep cultural background. It wants to destroy this class so that it may be free to pursue its offensive campaign against our social customs and ideals.

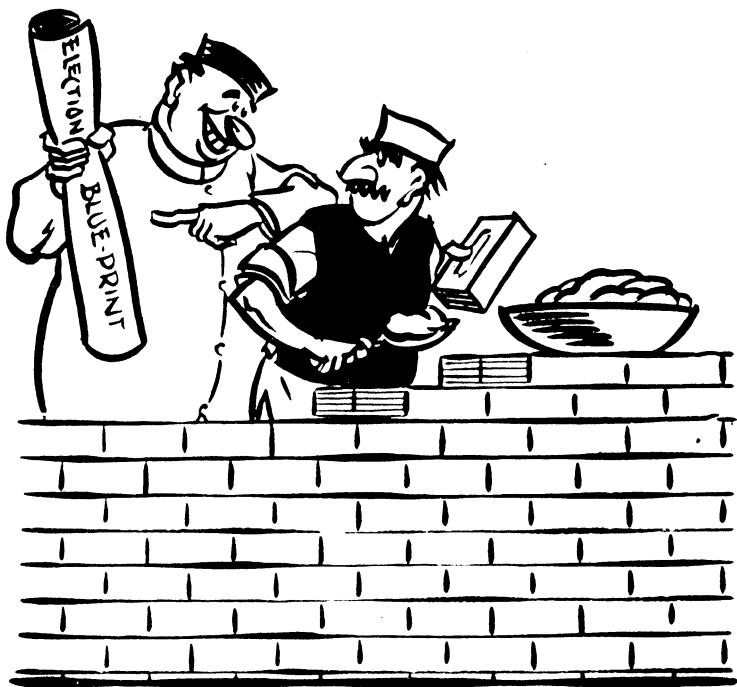
(9) Although there is a food shortage and there are not enough cotton and oilseeds produced in the country, the Congress does not hesitate to run the risk of ruining the agricultural economy by driving out the few people with resources. The prime need of healthy agriculture is investment of capital in land. This investment becomes all the

more important when the aim is intensive farming which means the use of more fertilisers, better implements etc. It is not at all wise in these circumstances to drive out from agriculture the few men who have got the money to invest in land. As a matter of fact everybody can see that Congress policy has already led to an acute shortage of funds and private credit in the agricultural sector. There is no meaning in saying that the shortage is only temporary and that it can be remedied once the Government begins to distribute co-operative credit on a large scale. The mischief, in any case, is done.

(10) Under the guise of transferring land from the rich to the poor the Congress Government has often bestowed land taken from their owners on grounds of public interest, on individuals for their past political services to the Congress organization.

(11) Finally while the Congress has certainly succeeded in disrupting the social stability of the village community, it has brought about no improvement in its economic structure. On the contrary it has created and aggravated tensions which in many States have led to a breach of the public peace. If, as a result, opportunities have been created for disruptive movements such as communism, the blame must rest on the Congress for its spade-work of loosening the foundations of the rural economy.

FOR LABOUR'S SAKE



In many urban constituencies the art of organising labour is an important factor. Many national parties have their Trade Union wings, affiliates or alliances. The Indian National Trade Union Congress, for instance, is closely allied to the Congress. The Communists have also their Trade Union Congress. Other important national parties such as the Communists and the P.S.P. have similar relationships with other Trade Union organizations. *The labour vote is important not merely because of its number. Organized labour is highly disciplined and politically conscious and*

tends to act as a body. This is a factor making for convenience where canvassing is concerned. This apart, the extent to which a political party attracts labour is generally taken as a measure of its progressiveness.

There are signs that parties which are opposed to the Congress and are of the Leftist persuasion will go all out to win Labour support. *Their basic strategy obviously would be to depict the Congress as a friend of the capitalist class. Talking points for propaganda on these lines would include the following :*

1. The labour policy of the Congress is basically unduly restrictive of Labour's valued right to strike. While conceding this right in principle, the Congress Governments have taken it away in practice. The legislation relating to industrial disputes is so framed as to make it virtually impossible for trade unions to go on strike, without violating the law and thereby committing an offence.

2. Again, on paper the aim of industrial legislation is stated to be to settle disputes by negotiation or adjudication. In practice the law is so complex that it discourages Labour to seek legal remedies while it places a premium on employers' intransigence, as employers are rich people and can afford litigation.

3. The Government's record of employment is very poor. For instance it has become a habit with the railway administration, which employ over a million people, to let employee's grievances accumulate to breaking point. And when in sheer despair employees are driven to demonstrate they are charged with resorting to violence and severe police repression, not excluding indiscriminate shooting, is employed to break union morale and cowdown workers. Kalka is a recent example of anti-Labour high-handedness.

4. The Government is nationalizing industries and putting up new industrial undertakings in the public sector, whose importance is steadily rising. But it is most disappointing to find that the Government are not only not acting as model employers, but are not even emulating the example of the better type of private employers. They in fact exploit

their position as both Government and employer to deprive employees completely of the right to strike and to evade obligations which private employers have to bear. There is a rule for example that bonuses are not to be given to workers in government-undertakings. The Government's dealings with the employees of the Life Insurance Corporation is an issue in point.

5. The Government's attitude to civil servants is very reactionary. This class of workers have been denied basic rights such as the right to form trade unions and organize themselves to secure better terms of employment.

6. The Government's attitude towards wages is far from progressive. Although the cost of living has already risen and will continue to rise, they refuse to allow an increase in wages. The result is that the already low standard of workers is likely to be further depressed. While, thanks to the heavy public expenditure and the increase in large demand, rising prices are boosting the profits of industrialists, the Government are indifferent towards assisting labour in getting a share in these larger earnings.

7. The reactionary wage policy of the Government has been brought out by the unjust fixation of pay scales of life insurance employees after nationalization. While employees have been hoping that nationalization would bring improvement, what has happened is that, instead of bettering the conditions of employees, the Government have actually made worse the position of employees of insurance companies which had a better employer record.

8. There had been repeated demands from government servants for another Pay Commission to revise their salaries in the light of present and prospective cost of living. The Government have been stubbornly resisting this demand.

9. Perhaps nowhere is the callousness of the Government towards their employees more grossly displayed than in the starvation wages which State Governments are paying to their non-gazetted staff. By the standards they have laid down they are keeping down salaries in the private sector also. The result is that the urban middle class is being reduced

to the state of a pauper class and is being driven to frustration and despair.

10. In other aspects of labour policy also the Congress Government is reactionary rather than progressive. Much is talked about Employees State Insurance but the administration is so inefficient and wasteful that the real advantages accruing to Labour are very slight.

11. In the case of housing, again, the Government are talking big but when put to the test in slum clearance the hollowness of their pretention is fully exposed. The Constitution was amended with a pompous flourish for the proclaimed purpose of acquiring slum areas without having to pay burdensome expenses to slum landlords but the amended law has remained a dead letter because the Congress being what it is, it cannot afford to go against the interest of the propertied classes.

The Opposition talking points on labour problems may include the following :

1. The Congress does not believe in a truly proletarian labour movement which will fearlessly fight for Labour's right. What it wants is a captive trade union movement which will be subservient to the party in power which the Congress is and also hopes to continue to be. Its purpose is to exploit the workers for its own political ends and it is really fundamentally opposed to workers organising themselves effectively to secure their just share of wealth and political power in the community.

2. The Congress Governments in the Centre and the States have virtually taken away the right of labour to strike. The right to strike is the fundamental right of organised labour. It provides the ultimate sanction for labour's just demands. Any political party which is friendly to Labour should help in strengthening this right. But what the Congress has done is to whittle it down to nothingness. In the name of arbitration and adjudication it has put so many restrictions on effective trade unionism that organised labour is today at the mercy of the employers and the law courts for even token recognition of its rights and needs.

3. The Congress Governments have enacted elaborate labour legislation ostensibly to protect labour ; but, actually, it is the employer who is protected. Because employers have more resources and are in a position to exploit prescribed procedures to prolong trade disputes and defer their settlements.

4. Although there is a lot of lip sympathy for labour in Congress circles, there is little support from those quarters even for the pressing demands of organised Labour. It is wellknown that although one or two Union Ministers have been speaking in public in favour of a general wage increase, the real intention of the Government is to freeze Labour's earnings on the pretext that any increase in wages will lead to inflation.

5. It is perhaps as an employer of labour that the Congress Governments are seen at their worst. In the Railways, for instance, their grievances are allowed to accumulate to breakingpoint with the result that tense situations are created and often indiscriminate police firing is resorted to in the name of law and order. There are several instances where valuable workers' lives have been sacrificed in this manner.

6. The Congress is never tired of talking about a socialistic pattern of society but the real test of such a society is the recognition of the right of Labour to participate in management. Although the number of Government undertakings is increasing not even a beginning has made in associating workers with the running of those industries. All sorts of excuses are given and in fact public ownership of industries has given rise to more disadvantages than advantages for the workers. Labour's right to bonus, conceded by private employers, is denied by the State to its own workers. A glaring example of unsympathetic and unjust treatment of Labour's right is provided by the chaotic conditions now prevailing in nationalised life Insurance, where employees who welcomed and demanded nationalization are now regretting their having done so.

7. The constitution has asked for the abolition of child

labour. But child labour is rampant as official reports show and no effective steps have been taken to deal with this most deplorable situation. As a matter of fact what the Congress is doing in the name of protecting village industries and handicrafts is to create uneconomic industries which cannot pay living wages to their workers despite the subsidies borne by the tax-payer and high prices paid by consumers.

8. Finally, the very low levels of pay obtaining in State Government services have had the effect of maintaining in our towns and cities an impoverished lower middle class which has not enough to eat, not enough to clothe itself properly and not enough to provide education or medical care for its children. While the excuse is given that there is not enough money to improve the lot of these people, Congress Governments do not seem to have any desire to reduce the top salaries of Government officers or to cut administrative expenditure which is increasing by leaps and bounds.

THE DOWNTRODDEN ON THE MARCH



The issue of untouchability will certainly be exploited in the elections. This is because it is a social, political and economic problem affecting millions of people and is tied up with deep-seated passions and prejudices on the one hand and surging and often aggressive aspirations on the other side. It is, probably, true that any individual or political group standing for the Hindu orthodox approach and religion in this matter is unlikely to enjoy much electoral advantage.

The main debate, therefore, will not be between those who are for untouchability and those who are opposed to it, but between those who believe in the peaceful demolition of reaction and prejudice and those who demand that there should be more vigorous and forceful progress. It is possible that the Leftists, the Socialists and the Communists may take the line that the Congress is not doing everything that they can do and should do to hasten the elimination of untouchability. The sectarian organizations will no doubt concentrate on this issue in the election campaign.

The main lines of attack on the Congress position may be as follows :

1. Whatever may be the abstract principles the Congress party professes or its leadership may believe in, the fact remains that the Congress is full of people who believe and practice untouchability in their private and social life.

2. It is because of this disloyalty of the members of the Congress Party to the declared ideals of their organisation that the Constitutional provisions and the various acts of Parliament abolishing untouchability and penalising its practice remain a dead letter. The problem of untouchability cannot be dealt with only by formal law. The heart of the matter is the social education and moral conversion of the people. It can hardly be said that after the death of Mahatma Gandhi the Congress has done anything at all to further his good work of moral conversion of the people. On the contrary the Congress to-day pretends that untouchability does not exist because the Constitution has said that it should not.

3. Statistics clearly show that very few offences relating to the practice of untouchability are brought to the courts and punished. Since our practical everyday experience shows that untouchability is as rampant as ever, this virtual disuse of the law against it only shows that the law does not and is not made to function in the interest of those whom it is to protect. Everywhere the inertia and the massive resistance of custom and usage are getting the better of the conviction and confidence of the Congress party and

the Congress Governments where the genuine elimination of untouchability is concerned.

The Congress position will have to be largely defensive and explanatory. The arguments may be as follows :

1. The fact that untouchability is outlawed by the Constitution and made a crime in the eyes of the law is of no small significance. It is on the other hand the largest single contribution that can be made towards rescuing the millions of victims of untouchability from their depressed condition and helping them to social and political equality with the rest of their fellow citizens. There is no untouchability in the eyes of the law. This means that the victims of untouchability can now claim equal civil and political rights with the rest of the people. This is nothing short of a great revolution in the status of the former and it is certainly a vital first step towards complete disappearance of untouchability.

4. The Congress believes that untouchability is no longer a civil rights problem in its essence. It is rather a problem of the political, social and economic backwardness which is the inheritance of the victims of untouchability. The Congress, therefore, aims to deal with the problem as one of amelioration and advancement of the backward classes of the population. This approach, besides being logical has also the great advantage of making possible a peaceful solution of the problem. This is because deep-seated religious passions will be by-passed and with the improvement in the social and economic position of victims of untouchability the process of their absorption on terms of equality with the rest of the population into the general life of the nation will be smoothly brought about. It is wrong to say that this will be a slow progress. After all, any other approach which arouses passions and class antagonisms will only disrupt the social set-up and thereby create difficulties not only for this reform but for every other reform.

5. Consistent with this policy the Congress has been taking various steps to provide special privileges and facilities to backward classes in the areas of social and economic opportunities, education, public services and Parliamentary

life. These are some of the important matters with regard to which the backward classes are provided with privileges and concessions of various kinds.

6. It is quite true many in the Congress fold believe in and practice casteism. That is an evil to which the Congress is not blind and the Congress indeed is superior to other parties in that it admits its domestic ends and attempts to deal with them. The critics of the Congress are not even in a position to face squarely this evil which is equally rampant in their ranks. As a matter of fact by turning the movement for disappearance of untouchability into a militant campaign of aggression against certain sections of community, they are not only keeping alive the evil of casteism but are themselves practising it in a way which is bound to disrupt the solidarity of the country.

THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES



The women's vote is a very important factor in the elections. Apart from the fact that women form roughly half of the community, the fact that this country is passing through a phase of women's emancipation from ancient social and economic bondages has made the fair sex very conscious of its political rights. *It is sometimes assumed that a wife votes as the husband does, a daughter as the father does, or a sister as the brother does. This is in all circumstances a doubtful assumption.* It is even more so in a country where there is vast illiteracy, since this means

that the bulk of the male population is illiterate even as a bulk of the female population. It is quite true of course that so long as women were subject to rigorous social restrictions, they were not able to participate freely in public activities but with the loosening of these restrictions women have clearly begun to take to their own in public affairs with all the zest and determination of a new-found freedom.

The importance that women enjoy in public life is strikingly recognized by the Congress party's decision to earmark a certain percentage of Congress candidature to women members of the party. *It is clear that other parties will also give adequate weightage to women in their election campaigns and that a nationwide bid will be made to court women voters.*

The psychology of the female species is one of the involved problems of human existence. Philosophers have confessed themselves to be beaten. Poets have expressed their puzzlement. Great warriors in history have trembled before women's whims. Still there is no need to be frightened or to despair totally. Thanks for this are due to the great army of advertisement copywriters who have often been able to find the right way to the feminine heart, whether it be a matter of glamourizing Paris fashions or merely marketing depilatories. The election propagandist, springing as he does from the same spiritual background will no doubt find his own formulae of courting and capturing the woman's vote. While he will necessarily have to draw on his imagination in order to appeal to the susceptibilities of a woman's heart, he will also find it useful to build upon a foundation of substance as, disturbingly often, women are found to be quite hard-headed even if warm-hearted.

For Congress propaganda are the following talking points :

1. The Congress throughout its history has fought for the equality of the sexes. Even during the freedom struggle, *i.e.*, long before the Congress came to power, it was the Congress tradition to encourage women to come out of the seclusion and slavery of age-old customs and participate shoulder-to-shoulder with men in public activities including political and social movements.

2. Even before Independence, when Congress formed provincial Governments, women were able to acquire representation in the legislatures as well as in the Governments. This practice continues to the present day and no doubt has gained further strength as indicated by the Congress decision to reserve at least 15 per cent of its candidatures to women. Incidentally this percentage is only a yardstick and Congress will of course encourage a very much more liberal attitude than is represented by this figure, provided women of suitable qualifications become available in due course.

3. The Congress stands for social equality of men and women. Congress Governments have already embarked on a programme of demolishing male privileges enjoying the sanction of religion or custom. An outstanding act in the field are two fundamental laws relating to marriage, the one the Special Marriage Law applicable to all communities and the other the Hindu Marriage Law applicable to Hindus. The two great benefits conferred by these acts are : (a) freedom of choice in marriage and (b) parity with men with regard to separation, divorce and remarriage. The Congress has had to carry these great ameliorative social laws in the teeth of orthodox and reactionary opposition, while at the same time resisting the arguments and pressures of those who would sacrifice social stability in the pursuit of extravagantly radical objectives.

4. On a par with these social measures is the great reform of Hindu property law which has taken women towards a parity of economic status with men. By providing daughters the same inheritance rights as sons, and otherwise giving women generally equal rights with men in the inheriting, holding, enjoying and bequeathing and otherwise disposing of property, the reform of inheritance law has revolutionized social status of women in the family and in the community.

5. The Congress Governments have taken steps for encouraging women in public services and they have indeed thrown open even the Central Services, including the Indian Administrative Service, to the recruitment of women.

6. In the labour field the Government's policy towards women workers have two objectives (a) the employment of women in difficult and dangerous occupations is being eliminated, and (b) special steps have been taken to improve the status and condition of women workers. Sweated labour is being abolished and in the matter of wages Government have favoured equal pay for equal work. Maternity aid is being given and labour welfare measures for women are being extended rapidly and amplified.

7. In the matter of education, there is no discrimination against women. On the contrary, in addition to general educational institutions for both sexes special institutions for women are being encouraged.

8. In the social welfare field, vast resources have been organized to attend to the welfare needs of women, especially in the rural areas. The importance of social education to women is being recognized in practical programmes.

9. The exploitation of women for immoral purposes is being strictly proceeded against and there is a nation-wide drive especially in big cities to make police measures strict and effective. Simultaneously, institutions are being set up to rehabilitate the victims of immoral traffic and provide them with opportunities for a return to normal life.

10. Finally, the Congress has fully realized that the women of India are the largest depressed population in the country. The social and economic disabilities under which they labour cut across religious, communal, caste and creed barriers and that their common lot has been one of discrimination practiced against them by law and custom, the code of mortality, the social criteria and the modes of national life. Recognizing this the Congress has from the beginning emphasized the importance of encouraging women to claim equality with men. It has now in the first few years of its power as the Government of the country provided the basic legislative foundations on which a new life for the women of India is to be erected largely by the efforts of women themselves which Congress reforms have now inspired, strengthened and equipped with the means of 'progress.

The Left opposition may concentrate on the following points :

1. The Congress is only acting under the pressure of more progressive forces in bringing about the social and economic emancipation of women. As a matter of fact its measures have been halting and also calculated to preserve the reactionary privileges of the male sex. Under a more liberal dispensation the progress made in the advancement of the women would have been greater and not less.

2. The essentially reactionary nature of the Congress towards social reforms was fully demonstrated in the difficulties and obstruction which the codification of Hindu law encountered among influential members of the Congress party in the legislature and outside. As a result of the opposition of reactionary elements in its own ranks the Congress had to make many concessions and water down the original proposal for radical reform. Indeed at one stage there was even danger of the inheritance rights of women being given only token recognition. It was only because of the advanced sections of the community, both men and women, organised themselves promptly against such efforts that reactionary groups in the Congress could not win through. But the real danger of reaction entrenched in Congress ranks is very much there and will continue to be a threat to radical social reforms. In this sense women's rights stand to lose more than they may gain from Congress policies.

The Rightist propaganda may be on the following lines :

1. The "Social" reforms sponsored by the Congress party Governments do not have for their purpose the emancipation of women. The real object is to undermine the solidarity of the Hindu community, its religious beliefs and practices, its time-honoured traditions and sacred customs. This is clear from the fact that all these "reforms" alleged to be in the interest of women have been confined to one community, the Hindu community. If these reforms are good in themselves why is there no demand from any section of the Muslim community for the extension of these laws to their community ? Again how is it that,

although the Congress is never tired of shouting about its non-communal and secular nature it has not thought of bringing the non-Hindu community into the folds of a common civil law along with the Hindu community.

2. Far from strengthening the position of women in society or the family the Congress in India has exposed the Hindu women's status to grave risks by its marriage and property laws. The marriage law has only nominally secured monogamy. In actual practice, it will only lead to divorce and remarriage which may in due course achieve the proportions which they have assumed in western countries. In theory the woman also has an equal right to divorce and remarriage. In practice this right will be only nominal because given the economic circumstances which are prevailing in the country and which certainly cannot be changed overnight through a few enactments, a woman cannot have recourse to divorce or remarriage in the way a man can. Thus whatever may be the declared purpose of its marriage law reform, the Congress is responsible for striking a blow at the roots of spiritual, religious and moral concepts of Hindu marriage, loosening the ties of moral responsibilities among the members of the family and paving the way for the distintegration of the Hindu character of the institutions of marriage and family life. By removing the moral and social restraints on the man's disposition in certain circumstances, to seek the easy way of escape out of matrimonial obligations, the new law has placed a premium on the destruction of Hindu ideals of family responsibility and morality. Simultaneously the new laws have exposed the socially and economically more vulnerable female sex to the tender mercies of Courts, lawyers and litigation, which are but a poor and unhappy substitute for the individual's sense of morality and the influence of the social conscience both of which have now been placed at a discount by these so-called reforms of marriage laws.

