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# Bharatiya Jana Sangh

*Presidential Address*

**Shri L. K. Advani**



18th All India Session

DEENDAYAL NAGAR

KANPUR

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**Presidential Address**  
**Shri L. K. Advani**



Bharatiya Jana Sangh,  
1952 All India Session,  
Deendayal Nagar, Kanpur.

Mr. Chairman of the Reception Committee and  
fellow delegates:

Towards the end of 1952, in this very city of Kanpur, washed by the sacred waters of the Ganga, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh had held its first plenary session. The session was presided over by the illustrious founder of our party, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerji. Now when two decades later, Kanpur is hosting an All India Session for a second time, an ordinary worker like me has been elected to preside over the session, incidentally, thus projecting sharply the fundamental character of our party, namely, that of a party which derives its strength not from one or two individuals but from its cadres. For me, this is no doubt a proud privilege and a unique honour for which I feel deeply indebted to all of you.

I am revealing no secret when I say that I have been extremely reluctant to accept this responsibility. I am too conscious of my own limitations not to feel a measure of trepidation stepping into a chair which has been adorned in the past by such stalwarts as Dr. Mookerji, Pandit Dogra, Dr. Raghuvira and Pandit Deendayalji. Even in the immediate past we have had Shri Vajpayee investing this office with a stature and dignity not attached to the Presidentship of any other political party. In a way, however, I am more fortunate than Shri Vajpayee.

February 5, 1973.



Shri Vajpayee took over the mantle of office under a pall of gloom. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, the main architect of the party's policies as well as organisation till then, was snatched away from us by the cruel hand of an assassin. It was against this tragic background that Shri Vajpayee was called upon to lead the party. In my case, on the other hand, the responsibility has come essentially because Shri Vajpayee has desired relief from the constraints of formal office so that he could work even more vigorously for the organisation at the grass roots. So, even though the assignment is challenging, the circumstances are happy. With the blessings of God and with your cooperation I hope I shall be able to measure up to the responsibility placed on my shoulders.

#### The Ecstasy And The Agony

The year just ended has been in one respect the most remarkable year of independence. During its opening months the Indian people experienced in the victorious war of 1971, leading to the liberation of Bangladesh, a sense of achievement and pride they had not felt in all these twenty-five years of freedom. But by the time the year ended, the country had been plunged into a trauma of gloom.

This anti-climatic depression in popular mood has been endangered mainly by our dismal performance on the economic front. Indian economy is at the moment in the grip of an acute crisis. National growth rate has been steadily declining. In 1970-71 it was 4.7 per cent. In 1971-72 it came down to 1.5 per cent. This year it is likely to be even less. We are fast approaching zero growth rate.

Our industrial growth rate also has been going down from 7.1 per cent in 1969-70 to 4.8 per cent in 1970-71 to 2.9 per cent in 1971-72. The estimate for

1972-73 is 2.5 per cent. When one recalls that even in the pre-independence years the rate of growth of industrial production was about 4.7 per cent, the miserable state of our industrial development becomes very obvious.

Agricultural growth has also been seriously retarded. In 1969-70 the growth rate was 7.1 per cent. In 1970-71 it was 7.0 per cent but in the following year it has been minus 1.3 per cent. In 1972-73, the growth rate is estimated to decline even further—to minus 5.0 per cent!

#### Dizzy Spurt In Prices

So far as the common man is concerned, the most malignant manifestation of the present economic crisis is the dizzy spurt in the prices of essential commodities. During the financial year 1972-73, wholesale prices shot up by 15.1 per cent, double the increase in 1971-72, which in turn was double that of the previous year. Today sugar costs twice as much as it cost a year back. The price of cereals is up by 13 per cent and that of pulses by 16 per cent.

Official spokesmen often try to explain away rising prices by suggesting, firstly, that an upward trend in prices is inevitable in a developing economy and, secondly, that increase in prices is a universal phenomenon. These explanations are wholly unacceptable. Indeed, they are little more than lame excuses. Neither Japan nor Germany, two of the fastest growing economies, have experienced a price spurt. Indian economy developed faster during the second plan period, when prices rose the least. Elsewhere in the world rise in prices has been accompanied by an even steeper increase in money incomes. In India, on the other hand, over the last 25 years, the rupee has lost 60% of its purchasing power.



The current inflation has been caused in the main by the reckless scale of deficit financing undertaken during the last two years. In the year 1971-72, the economy suffered as large a dose of deficit financing (that is, net bank credit to Government) as Rs. 850 crores. This year, too, even though there is no excuse either of refugee relief or war, deficit-financing may well be in the region of Rs. 1200 crores.

### Still Darker Days Ahead

The situation has been aggravated by Plan failures, and serious shortfalls in production targets of foodgrains, fertilisers, coal and electricity. The full impact of these shortfalls is likely to be felt only in the coming year. One estimate is that during the current year (October 1972 to October 1973) food prices will increase by another 16 per cent, over and above the 16.5 per cent rise registered in the preceding 12 months. The cumulative effect of this would be that between October 1971 and October 1973, food prices will have risen by 35%!

The worst sufferers of this inflation are the weaker sections of society, small peasants, industrial workers and the low-salaried middle class. Their plight is indeed pathetic. Again, I would let statistics tell the stark story. Of the 42 crore rural population, full 29½ crores, that is, 70 per cent, live in conditions of abject poverty and have a per capita monthly consumption of just Rs. 22. Even in the urban areas, half the population vegetates at this level.

It is noteworthy that even though there is an over-all decline in industrial activity, production of luxury goods has been growing at a surprisingly high rate of 25-45 per cent. This only underlines the fact that the garibi hatao years mark not only a fall in overall growth rate but also a growing disparity in living standards.

Crucial programmes of social welfare have gone hay-wire. For lack of schemes, the rural employment programme of Rs. 50 crores is to be terminated at Rs. 32 crores. Out of the Rs. 25 crores allocated for eradication of educated unemployment in the urban areas only Rs. 9 crores are to be utilised. Of the Rs. 11½ crores earmarked for small and marginal farmers, only Rs. 3½ crores will be spent.

### An Army Of Jobless Youth

As on the price front, so on the employment front, the Government's performance has been a disaster. The number of unemployed in the country today is somewhere around 40 million! Nearly one lakh engineers are without jobs. What is particularly disturbing is that, in recent years, our capacity for absorption of these unemployed, in itself at no time high, has further gone down.

During the first five years of the 1961-71 decade, the number of jobs provided in the organised industrial sector went up from 122 lakhs to 162 lakhs, that is, a total increase of 33 per cent. In the latter half of the decade, 1966-71, that is during Mrs. Gandhi's tenure, employment rose only marginally, from 162 lakhs to 174 lakhs, that is, by just 7.5 per cent.

If the Indian economy is to be saved from utter collapse these twin problems of inflation and unemployment must be tackled effectively and imaginatively. There must be an immediate halt to deficit financing and a drastic curtailment in non-developmental expenditure. The Fourth Plan envisaged that non-developmental expenditure would increase by only 2% per year. But actually the rise has been as much as 14 per cent per year.



### Tap This Rich Source Of Revenue

For resource mobilisation, the present import licence policy must be overhauled to mop up for the State exchequer the huge profits now made by the private licensees by trading import licences in the black market. It has been calculated that transactions in import licences generate black money to the tune of Rs. 1600 crores each year.

Our plan also must be reshaped to make it employment-oriented. The Jana Sangh has already published an alternative plan in outline, which would aim at a 10 per cent growth rate and full employment by the year 1960. On this score, we would like Government to commit itself unequivocally to full employment by incorporating the Right to Work among the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution.

During the six years that Mrs. Gandhi has been in office she has proved herself to be a shrewd politician. But as an economic strategist and an administrator, she has been a dismal failure. In both these fields, with which the common man is vitally concerned, the country has not progressed an inch during these six years. It has rather gone back, and continues to slip. For all economic problems Mrs. Gandhi seeks political solutions, and actually ends up with just alibis and explanations for failures.

### From 'Garibi Hatao' To 'Opposition Hatao'

The 'right reactionaries' in the Congress, the princes, the industrialists, the bureaucrats, the judges — all these, severally and jointly, have at one stage or the other been identified as obstacles in the way of the "Garibi Hatao" plan. This search for scapegoats arrived at its stupidest limit when the Congress (R) President discovered that the villain of the

piece was the C.I.A. The idea had no buyers. It only earned the ruling party ridicule. No wonder, in the Niagara of words poured out at Bidhan Nagar last month there was not even an oblique reference to the CIA. The latest alibi concocted — now by the Prime Minister — is that all would have been well but for the opposition parties. Her newest slogan seems to be "Opposition Hatao". However, like the earlier alibis, this too is not going to wash. The people are now sick of excuses, they want results.

The performance of the Congress Government on the economic front has been unsatisfactory throughout the 25 years of independence, but it has never been as bad as during the last three years — that is, since the Congress split. The fact that the Ruling Congress acquired its present dominating position on the basis of fantastic popular expectations has made its failure only more galling for the common man. His disappointment today is as deep as his hopes were high. Therefore, the lash-back is all the more furious.

### Seething Unrest

The rash of violent incidents which have erupted in different parts of the country has not a little to do with the sense of frustration and failure prevailing all round. Shrimati Gandhi may fret and fume that violence is frustrating her *garibi hatao* programme, but truth is that it is the patent collapse of her *garibi hatao* programme (if ever she had any) that has resulted in violence. Mounting unemployment among the educated unemployed is directly responsible for the seething discontent among the youth and in the universities.

There are people who advocate that the country's economic ills would be cured automatically if the State withdrew itself completely from the domain of



economic affairs and allowed the laws of market economy to operate freely. The Jana Sangh does not subscribe to this doctrine of *laissez faire* and holds that in the present stage of India's development, Government has necessarily to play a key role in shaping the economy in a manner so as to subserve the twin goals of growth as well as social justice. This can be effectively achieved by proper planning, pragmatic monetary and fiscal policies and efficient implementation.

The Jana Sangh disagrees even more sharply with those who equate progress with the increasing hegemony of the State over the economic field. Monopoly of individuals or cartels is bad, but that of the State is worse. Private monopolies can be contained by the State; but who can control State monopolies?

#### Public Undertakings In The Red

The country's experience to-date about public-sector undertakings should be a caveat against the take-over mania now very much in evidence. Barring a few exceptions, the performance of public undertakings has been extremely poor. As pace setters in basic and strategic industries, these undertakings are expected to play a very vital role but, unfortunately, so far they have failed to get anywhere near the targets they set for themselves. Their failure in the field of basic industries such as steel, fertilizers etc. has seriously impaired production in other sectors also.

The country has invested something like Rs. 5000 crores in public undertakings and it has a right to expect a reasonable return on this heavy investment. But a majority of the 99 undertakings being run in the public sector continue to be in the red.

Many of the ills which beset these industries derive from governmental mismanagement. It is scandalous that as many as 19 public undertakings are 'topless' and are functioning without a chairman or a managing director for months together, in some cases since more than a year.

Also, it needs to be realised that an industrial organisation has to function differently from an administrative organisation. No doubt, the primary objective in the running of a public sector industry has to be social purpose and not profit; but the plea of social purpose should not be allowed to become a cloak for inefficiency and mismanagement.

#### Worst Of Both Worlds

Under Congress rule today we are having the worst of both the capitalist and the communist worlds. Pseudo-radical talk has been scaring away honest entrepreneurs and dampening investment, but monopoly houses continue to fatten even faster than before, thanks to the nexus that exists between corrupt businessmen, corrupt politicians and corrupt bureaucrats. A vast parallel economy in black money is in open operation.

There is a lot of pep-talk about self-reliance and restraints on conspicuous consumption. But there is not an iota of evidence to suggest that any one means it honestly. The Approach Paper to the Fifth Plan just published envisages foreign aid to the tune of Rs. 3,200 crores, about the same as obtained in the Fourth Plan. One really feels scandalised to note that in this Approach Paper Rs. 280 crores have been set apart for disbursement of loans for cars (presumably, small cars) and scooters. And the allocation for public transport is just Rs. 250 crores. Out of the 83 collaboration agreements approved for the Fifth Plan, 15



relate to the manufacture of ladies' garments, alarm clocks etc. What kind of consumption-restraint and self-reliance is this?

#### Wanted: A Tax On Consumption

I think that urgent fiscal measures can be, and should be, devised to curb ostentatious expenditure. A direct consumption tax may be introduced on consumption above, say, Rs. 2,500/- per month per household. Individuals beyond a certain income bracket may be required to file in addition to their income statement a savings statement also (in terms of bank deposits, shares purchased etc.). The difference between income and savings would be reckoned as consumption. A tax on consumption would promote austerity, reduce the wide disparities in the living standards of the rich and poor and at the same time encourage savings. The Jansancho has been of the view that the ratio between the minimum and maximum expendable income should not be more than 1 : 20. Consumption tax would be a step in this direction.

Simultaneously with the introduction of this consumption tax, a scheme of income-tax rationalisation should be introduced broadly on the lines recommended by the Wanchoo Committee on Direct Taxes. The Committee's report has very cogently shown how the present income-tax structure promotes wasteful consumption expenditure on the one hand and encourages dishonesty and tax evasion on the other. The Committee has estimated income-tax evasion for the year 1968-69 at about Rs. 100 crores. By now, the extent of income-tax evasion must be well over Rs. 500 crores per year. This huge amount goes to augment the massive tide of black money already overwhelming the economy.

#### A Party Of Self-Seekers

Egalitarianism is a worthy ideal and those who aspire to it must themselves be imbued with a sense of idealism and purpose. Perpetuating oneself in office surely serves no national purpose. But that is about all the present set of rulers seem interested in. A party created on the debris of political and moral values, and whose main organisational headache continues to be its millions of bogus members, just does not possess the moral fervour and élan necessary for the mighty task of social regeneration.

One of the worst features of the Indira regime has been the steep fall in administrative standards of honesty and efficiency. Never very high even in the past, these standards have lately touched a new low. At all points of public contact with Government departments, little moves except with the help of 'grease-money'. The Secretariat corridors are reeking with an over-powering stench of corruption, and all that the authorities do in the name of tackling this fell disease, is to punish a chowkidar here, or an assistant there.

#### A Vested Interest In Corruption

It is my firm conviction that the roots of administrative corruption lie in political corruption. Years ago the Santhanam Committee formed by the Home Ministry, made some very valuable suggestions in this regard. Later, the Administrative Reforms Commission also produced a learned tome on the subject, its most important recommendation being about the setting up of an Indian Ombudsman called Lokpal and Lokayukta. The Santhanam Committee completed its job in 1964 and the A.R.C. submitted its report in 1966. Since then there has been a lot of talk on this subject, but nothing besides. Even the Lokpal Lokayukta Bill—



anacronic as it is—has been pending before Parliament since years, but the Government is unable to find time for it. The present regime, I charge, has a vested interest in seeing to it that no effective action is taken against political corruption.

The Santhanam Committee, you will recall, had recommended that if ten legislators accuse a Minister of corruption, an enquiry should be instituted. But in the case of Shri Bansi Lal, Chief Minister of Haryana, as many as 102 MPs and a large number of Haryana MLAs, have submitted a formal charge-sheet to the President, and yet the Government of India has summarily rejected it and given a clear chit to Bansi Lal.

#### P.M. In The Dock

What makes the Government's conduct particularly reprehensible in this case is the fact that one of the main charges against Bansi Lal relates to his Government's dealings with Shri Sanjay Gandhi's Maruti Ltd. Therefore the Prime Minister herself may be regarded as an interested party in the matter. It was expected that she herself would insist that the matter be referred for a judicial probe. By failing to do so she has seriously compromised the high office she holds.

If the charges levelled against Bansi Lal were frivolous, they should not have been referred even to a Cabinet sub-committee. The fact that they were so formally referred is, in itself, an admission that a prima facie case does lie. Having made that admission, the Government of India has no moral right to deny a proper judicial probe. I demand that a Commission of Inquiry should be instituted to investigate the charges made against the Haryana Chief Minister in the representation made to the President.

The famous French writer Romain Rolland tersely explained the defeat of France in the Second World War thus: "France fell because there was corruption without indignation." These words have a lesson for us in India where cynicism is spreading that corruption is incurable and so one need not get worked up about it. It is our patriotic duty to organise a powerful wave of popular indignation against the corruption which abounds in the country today, particularly in high places.

#### Surrender At Simla

No less disconcerting than Government's failure on the economic front has been its let-down vis-à-vis Pakistan. In Simla last July, with one stroke of the pen, the Government dissipated the immense advantage won for India by our armed forces at the cost of thousands of precious lives. If Government had played its cards well, the 1971 war may well have become the last Indo-Pak war ever. At Simla, a firm foundation could have been laid for an enduring detente on the sub-continent. The Simla Agreement as formulated was thus a betrayal not only of the blood of our Jawans but also of the cause of durable peace between India and Pakistan.

Pakistan's post-Simla behaviour has made it clear that Pakistan has in no way renounced its hostile intentions against India. The other day, we had it from no less an authority than Field Marshal Manekshaw that the danger from Pakistan still persists. Pakistan has raised several new divisions and its overall military strength today is known to be even greater than what it was before the 1971 war. Only last week General Tikka Khan was in China for another arms-shopping spree.



### No Partitioning Of Kashmir

While trying to sell the Simla pact to the Indian people, official spokesmen had been suggesting that by agreeing to delineate a fresh line of actual control in Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan had virtually agreed to make this line the de facto Indo-Pak boundary. While it is shameful that Government should regard legitimising of Pakistan's illegal occupation of one-third of Kashmir as some kind of achievement for India, we think that the Simla Pact has failed to secure for the Government even this defeatist objective. Only recently President Bhutto of Pakistan has described the Kashmir issue as the 'burden of burdens', bigger even than the question of POWs. Obviously, Pakistan is determined to keep the Kashmir issue alive, and has not the remotest intention of abandoning its aggressive designs against it.

The Jana Sangh is of the considered view that conversion of the line of control in Kashmir into an international boundary is constitutionally illegal, politically immoral and militarily myopic—this last objection having a particular validity in the context of China. Strategically speaking India's frontier should be along the Karakoram, reaching Pamir complex.

On the question of Prisoners of War, I think there is no room for sloppy sentimentalism of the kind now being canvassed vigorously in certain quarters. We hold that outstanding issues with Pakistan should not be settled piecemeal, but should be settled as part of a package deal. With regard to the Prisoners of War atleast, we see absolutely no justification for any retreat from the correct position India has already taken, namely, that this issue of POWs can be settled only with the concurrence of Bangladesh. However, Bangladesh should be persuaded to expedite the initiation of action against war crimi-

nals. Allowing this matter to hang fire indefinitely benefits neither India nor Bangladesh.

### Betrayal Of Chhamb

At one stage, it appeared that the Government of India also was trying to salvage some portions at least of the gains it had frittered away so recklessly at Simla. The hard bargaining that went on over Thako Chak did suggest this. India's claim on Thako Chak, after all, was based on the reasoning that the line of actual control in Jammu and Kashmir had a relevance only to intrusions across the cease-fire line, but that where the international boundary had been violated, the Simla Pact warranted vacation of occupied territory even in Jammu and Kashmir. If India had stood firm on this position, and compelled Pakistan to concede this rationale, it would have meant the withdrawal of Pakistani troops not only from the small area of Thako Chak, but also from the sizable and strategic chunk of territory that is Chhamb, an area which, like Thako Chak, had been seized by Pakistan by sending troops across the international border.

It is a matter of deep regret that New Delhi failed to adhere to the principle and agreed to compromise and let Chhamb remain on the other side of the Line of Control. Throughout the course of negotiations the thousands of refugees from Chhamb were being assured that Chhamb was indisputably Indian territory, would remain so and that they would be enabled to return to their hearths and homes. These thousands of displaced persons naturally feel betrayed.

The Jammu and Kashmir Government has been extremely unhelpful with regard to the rehabilitation of these Displaced Persons. I would like to urge the Central Government to do its duty by this unfortunate population.



### Citizenship For Sind D.Ps.

An even bigger refugee problem imposed on us by this last war is that of the refugees from Sind who were forced to cross over into Rajasthan and Gujarat during the war, and for whom it was impossible to go back except at the peril of their lives. This population totals about one lakh. They are all Hindus who had been living in the Hindu majority region of Tharparkar abutting on Rajasthan and Kutch.

Thanks to the commendable efforts of Rajasthan and Gujarat Jana Sangh, these hapless brethren of ours have been provided some kind of temporary relief facilities. But their basic problem is acquisition of citizenship rights, and on this the Government of India has been dragging its feet. The Jana Sangh demands that these refugees be immediately granted full citizenship rights and absorbed fully into the body politic. A comprehensive scheme for their rehabilitation should be urgently drawn up and implemented. The Jana Sangh units in both these States would be willing to render all possible co-operation in this task.

### No Let Up On The Defence Front

There are people who believe that the 1971 war has cut Pakistan down to size, that it just cannot pose a serious threat to us any more, and that, therefore, India should reduce its defence budget.

This line of thinking is fraught with danger not only because it makes false assumptions about Pakistan's intentions but also because it underestimates Pakistan's capacity for military mischief. Indeed, unencumbered by the burden of having to defend an area 1200 miles away, Pakistan, in pure military terms, would be a far more formidable adversary henceforth than it was in 1971.

The Jana Sangh, therefore, is strongly of the view that India cannot afford any let-up on the defence front and that in fact there is need to strengthen our defences even further in the light of the experience gained during this last war. Our navy, particularly, needs to be modernised and equipped with submarines and more coastal vessels.

The situation in the Indian Ocean where the super-powers are muscling in for domination must receive our immediate attention. Apart from expanding our own naval strength we should explore the possibility of naval understanding with littoral countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Burma and Mauritius aimed at making the Indian Ocean an Ocean of Peace, free from Big Power rivalry.

### India Must Become Nuclear.

It is high time also that the Government revised its irrational approach towards the question of nuclear armaments. It was around 1961 that the late Dr. Homi Bhabha had declared that if Government were to give him a green signal for the manufacture of an atom bomb, India could have its own bomb in two years. A whole precious decade has been lost since then during which period China has gone nuclear and has been recognised a Great power as a result thereof.

In the earlier years, the Government of India's reservations on this question were cloaked in moral shibboleths. Subsequently the excuse for inaction has shifted to economic levels. Truth, however, is that it is the mental inertia of the earlier years, combined with the strong pressure of the super-powers which has hamstrung India's initiative in this regard. I would urge upon Government to shake off these inhibitions and go in for the bomb, regardless of the displeasure of the super-powers.



An independent nuclear deterrent, the Jana Sangh thinks, would be beneficial alike for the country's defence, its foreign policy and its economy.

### What's Cooking In Kashmir?

Sheikh Abdullah and his cohorts have lately had a series of confabulations with official New Delhi. Their subsequent statements indicate that the Government of India is in a mood to buy a political settlement with them at the cost of some compromise over the constitutional status of Kashmir.

For several years now, even while making strident noises about self-determination, the Sheikh has been willing to strike a deal if that could secure for him the 1953 position, when, except in the matter of Defence, External Affairs and Communications, Kashmir was virtually an independent preserve of his. Pakistan's defeat in the last war has been a positive damper on his ambitions. It would be extremely deplorable if the Government of India, for the sake of short-sighted political expediency, is willing to obliterate the gains for national integration made during the last two decades. The nation has paid a very heavy price for what has been accomplished, starting with the martyrdom of Dr. S. P. Mukherjee. It must also be realised that such a compromise would give a filip to fissiparous demands elsewhere in the country.

The Jana Sangh is therefore resolved to oppose any attempt to put the clock back in Kashmir. It will continue to fight for the abrogation of Art. 370.

### Financial Rearrangement Of Centre-State Relations

We are of the view that in the matter of Centre-State relations, the Centre's political authority qua the States as now laid down in the Constitution should

be maintained—the Centre should continue to be strong—but that in the matter of financial relations, there should be a rearrangement. Over the years the developmental obligations of the States have been growing rapidly but the inelastic sources of revenue allocated to them under the constitution are not at all commensurate with these responsibilities. The result has been an over-dependence of the States on the Centre, and particularly on the discretionary grants they receive from the Centre under Art. 282.

We think that the financial arrangements between the Centre and the States should be modified firstly so as to apportion in the States a larger share of revenues, and secondly, to ensure that the States get more and more through assured statutory devolutions under Art. 275 rather than through discretionary ones.

### Andhra In Revolt

Many of you may recall that when the Jana Sangh was holding its annual session at Bombay in 1969, the people of Telangana in Andhra were up in revolt against the establishment, and were urging that Telangana be carved out into a separate State. The Jana Sangh had considered the situation objectively and had taken a stand which is a credit to the party's capacity to look ahead and foresee events. It would be in place to recall today what we had said then. The Conference's resolution on the subject stated:

"Telangana is not the only corner where regional imbalances have given rise to intense popular unrest. There are other areas also where sections of the population nurse real or imaginary grievances. With Himachal Pradesh and several other Union Territories demanding full statehood, the question of Union Territories as a whole also needs to be objectively considered.



"The Jana Sangh feels that the Government of India's present policy of initial indifference and drift, and subsequent surrender to the pressures of mass agitation or violence is doing incalculable harm to the nation's unity. It would be prudent and farsighted if instead of a piecemeal and political response to these variegated demands, a high powered Experts Commission is constituted to consider all these issues in an integrated manner. This Commission should be charged particularly with recommending measures to remove regional imbalances and to reconcile regional aspirations with the paramount needs of unity and security."

I wish Government had heeded this advice. If it had, the conflagration which we are witnessing in Andhra today would have been avoided.

#### **Bifurcation Is The Only Remedy**

Even though the question at issue in Andhra today is substantially the same as that in 1960, namely, as to whether Andhra should remain one state or should be divided into two, the situation is qualitatively different from that of four years ago. In 1960, the demand for separation had sectional support, from Telengana. The rest of the population was bitterly opposed to it. Today, however, the demand for division has the complete backing of all sections. The only obstacle in the way appears to be the ego of the Prime Minister who has needlessly made this a question of prestige for herself.

There is really no other solution now to the Andhra imbroglio than bifurcation. The sooner Government agrees to it the better for all. The violence and vandalism going on in Andhra is deplorable but it is the Government's obtuseness which is primarily to blame for it.

#### **A Second Look At The Political Map**

It is argued that agreeing to divide Andhra would touch off a series of similar demands elsewhere. The possibility cannot be denied. The Government would do well to anticipate events and, as we had suggested earlier, should immediately set up a Commission to have a second look at the country's political map. This Commission's recommendations, I may further suggest, should be in the nature of a binding award, and not even Government should be entitled to change it.

The Bombay resolution cited above had referred also to the question of Union Territories, and their demand for full-fledged Statehood. Since then Himachal Pradesh, Manipur and Tripura have been granted Statehood. Delhi's case continues to be ignored, primarily because of political reasons, even though, of all the Union Territories, including the above three now made States, Delhi has not only the largest population, it is also economically the most viable unit. This step-motherly attitude towards the people of Delhi must end and Delhi must be given full Statehood.

#### **Electoral Reform Is Urgently Needed**

At its Bhopalpur Session last year the Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha had urged radical reforms in the electoral system so as to make Indian elections a truer index of national opinion than they are now. We had specifically suggested introduction of the Lists System which would make the voter exercise his choice primarily on the basis of the respective programmes of the contending parties rather than, as he generally does now, on the basis of the candidates' caste, community etc.



Since then we have had two Chief Election Commissioners. Shri Nagendra Singh held office for a brief term and has now resigned following his election to the International Court at Hague. Only last week Shri Swaminathan has taken over. I would like to urge the New Chief Election Commissioner to take a fresh look at this entire question and advise Government accordingly.

Already, the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Amendments to Election Law has recommended that an Experts Committee be constituted to examine the feasibility of adopting the Lists System in India. This Committee has also accepted several other reform measures which we have been advocating. Some of them are of a very far-reaching nature.

Thus, this Parliamentary Committee has accepted in principle that all election expenses should be regarded as a legitimate charge on the public exchequer and that expenses today borne by the candidate or his party should be progressively shifted to the State. It has also recommended reduction of voting age from 21 years to 18 years, and constitution of a multi-member Election Commission. This Committee's report has been with Government for nearly a year now. It is high time the Government accepted it and took necessary action.

#### A Crisis Of Confidence

In her recent speeches the Prime Minister has been complaining that opposition parties have been non-cooperating with Government. The patriotic role of opposition parties during the Indo-Pak war gives the lie direct to this charge. However, there is no denying that ever since the 1971 elections in which the ruling party resorted to gross abuse of Governmental machinery on a scale totally unprecedented

there has indeed been a crisis of confidence as between the ruling party and the opposition. The main reason of this distrust is the near-conviction prevailing among opposition parties that in order to perpetuate itself in power the ruling party has no qualms in throwing overboard all norms of political honesty and ordinary decency. In some quarters the view is freely expressed that, to this end, the present rulers would have no hesitation even in scuttling democracy altogether.

If the Government is sincerely desirous of restoring this shattered confidence, the minimum it must do is to take steps which ensure that elections are free and fair, and that the ruling party is barred from utilizing Governmental agencies and resources, including the All India Radio, except on terms of parity with other opposition parties. I suggest that the Prime Minister convene an all-party conference to thrash out this issue threadbare.

#### New Power-Equations

On the international plane, America's detente diplomacy towards Soviet Russia on the one hand and Red China on the other has brought about a fundamental change in the nature of power equations. Indian policy-makers, unfortunately, continue to think and speak in terms which have long since lost their relevance. All talk about non-alignment, thus, is totally meaningless in the changed situation. And against the background of the Indo-Soviet Treaty it even sounds hypocritical.

When this treaty was signed we supported it, but with reservations. We approved of it to the extent that it counters the continued arming of Pakistan, deters Chinese intervention in Indo-Pak affairs and



ends the isolation of India" (in the matter of Bangladesh). But we had strong objection to the treaty being a treaty in perpetuity, valid for 20 years in the first place. Also we had expressed the view that the treaty can be of equal advantage to both India and the U.S.S.R. only if India built up strength to become an independent power centre.

#### Ninth Member Of Warsaw Pact?

What is really pertinent in the new situation is not whether we are aligned or non-aligned to this or that power, but whether in the conduct of our foreign policy, we are independent of that power or whether we are subject to its influence and constraints. It is distressing that in the eyes of most countries of the world Indian foreign policy has ceased to be regarded as independent. For all practical purposes, India is locked upon as the ninth member of the Warsaw Pact. This, I think, is the most important reason why India's voice has ceased to command the attention and respect it once did.

Government of India leaders, I am sure, would fiercely deny having accepted a satellite status for India. But verbal denials cannot negate actual conduct. Recurring pilgrimages to Moscow by one Indian V.I.P. after another are had enough, but all this talk of dovetailing India's economic plans with those of the Soviet Union is outrageous and has seriously compromised India's position.

The Jana Sangh is all for friendship with the Soviet Union. But this friendship has to be based on equality and reciprocity. India cannot become the ramp-follower of any other power.

#### Bending Backwards To Please China

With regard to China also, Government is wrong in thinking that a thaw can be effected by bending backwards. Government no longer talks about Aksai Chin, to whose liberation we are by honour pledged. During the last couple of years numerous leaders have been thrown out by Government leaders from the Prime Minister down, expressing our anxiety to normalise relations with China. But all that these gestures have evoked from Peking is sullen contempt. Unless through quiet behind-the-scenes diplomatic soundings we are able to assure ourselves that Peking is prepared to start a new chapter, there is no meaning in making barren gestures of this kind.

#### End Of A Nightmare

In Vietnam, a ghoulisn nightmare has ended. After 32 years of bitter bloodshed, the people of Vietnam have arrived at the threshold of peace. We hope this cease-fire is not going to prove merely an interlude between two wars as it happened in the mid-1950s. With war still raging in neighbouring Cambodia and Laos, the danger of a spill-over is always there.

The forthcoming peace conference should concern itself with bringing about peace not only in Vietnam but in the entire Indo-China region. India has been edged out of the Vietnam peace arrangements, but it is still the Chairman of the International Control Commission in Laos. As such, it must exert to secure the withdrawal of all foreign troops from the region.

Events in Vietnam, incidentally, are a glowing testimony to the indomitable strength of nationalism.



### Attention To Asia

The Jana Sangh has for long been of the view that New Delhi's South Block should take a keener interest in the goings-on in our neighbouring and S.E. Asian countries than it does. With most of these we have very close cultural ties. But our External Affairs Department has been inclined to be indifferent to them. Even in the matter of diplomatic postings, our more talented personnel are given—or, may be they contrive to obtain—western assignments, so that Asian postings are generally for the left-overs.

This lopsidedness must end and Indian foreign policy must consciously aim at acquiring a weight and voice in Asian affairs rightly due to us. In the light of recent developments, this is all the more imperative.

### Neither Right, Nor Left: Just Forward

Ever since our Ghazalabad Session there has been a lot of comment in press and political circles about the Jana Sangh turning left. Even at the cost of being repetitious I would like to affirm what our leaders from Dr. Mookerji to Pandit Upadhyaya to Shri Vajpayee have said in this context, namely, that the Jana Sangh is not wedded to any economic 'ism' and that the terms 'left' and 'right' are just not relevant in the Indian context.

Having said this I think there is need to analyse the comments that are being made and to identify precisely where we stand in relation to this analysis. I need not trace here the history of the origin of these words which came into parlance in France in the 18th century. But by now in Western democratic politics the term 'left' has come to mean, broadly, propensity in favour of State control. Two other important criteria on which the left-right distinction has been based

In the West are: attitude to equality and attitude to change.

Judged by the first criterion the Jana Sangh may be called a rightist party. However, tested on the touchstone of the other two attributes the Jana Sangh would be classed a leftist party. Truth is that it is neither leftist nor rightist, it is forward-looking.

### Pragmatic Approach

The Jana Sangh's stand on agricultural reform provides a characteristic example of its pragmatic approach to economic issues. The Congress' commitment to doctrinaire socialism has made it advocate not only land ceilings, but also cooperative farming. The Swatantra, on the other hand, has opposed both these measures, and thus bound itself to the status quo. The Jana Sangh has been wholeheartedly in favour of Jagir and Zamindari abolition, and also imposition of land-ceilings, but it has strongly opposed cooperative farming as being harmful to our agricultural economy.

It may surprise many — particularly those who have discerned a "leftwards shift" in Jana Sangh policies of late — that as early as in 1952-53, on the issue of Jagir abolition the Rajasthan Jana Sangh took up the stand that Jagirs are not property but simply a system of land-tenure, and so their abolition should not entail payment of compensation to the Jagirdars, but just a rehabilitation grant. Six out of eight MLAs of the party opposed the stand. The Jana Sangh chose to work company with these legislators rather than compromise its stand. When this crisis broke out — I recall that it was about the same time as the Kanpur Session of 1952 — Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee was alive. And he had the Central Executive fully endorsed the State Unit's principled stand in this regard.



### Right To Property Not Absolute

Similarly, taking its cue from basic Bharatiya concepts, the Jana Sangh does not regard right to property as absolute but holds that it should be subject to definite limitations (*maryada*). Indeed, our ancients prescribed a very stringent *maryada* to this right and declared --

वाग्दं क्रियेत जडर जावत् स्वर्त्वं हि देहिनाम् ।  
अधिकं योभिवन्त्येव स स्तेनो दण्डमर्हति ॥

(Every living being has a right to property enough to fill his belly; whosoever claims more is a thief, and deserves punishment.)

Affluence and luxury, we hold, are as injurious to the individual's *dharm* as is penury. It is, therefore, the duty of society to impose appropriate curbs on the accumulation of wealth.

### Jana Sangh Stress On Egalitarianism

Egalitarianism has underlined the party's policies from the very outset. The insistence that the ratio between minimum and maximum expendable income should not be more than 1:20 and that the final policies should aim at achieving this objective, was hailed by many press commentators on Ghaziabad as a welcome change in the party's policies. But it was no innovation. This has been one of the salient features of the Jana Sangh's policy since 1952, when it was formally accepted in a Central Executive resolution.

Because of its basic commitment to egalitarianism and change, and its non-commitment to any economic dogma, the Jana Sangh has been taking, and will continue to take, many dynamic and far-reaching decisions which may baffle those who would like to fit the facts of Indian political life to the irrelevant left-right spectrum.

### From Kanpur To Kanpur

The journey from Kanpur to Kanpur has been a memorable one. There have been moments of joy as when after the First General Elections, the Jana Sangh was declared an All-India Party, or when after the Fourth General Elections, the Jana Sangh scored a spectacular victory in Delhi. There have been moments of tears as when tragedy struck cruel blows at us and took away from us three of our eminent Presidents—Dr. Mookerji, Dr. Raghuvira and Pandit Deendayal. But in the midst of this all, the Jana Sangh's resolve to continue its march forward has never flagged.

During these twenty years, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh has made a place for itself in the hearts of the people as a patriotic party comprised of disciplined cadres, fired by a sense of devotion to the motherland. The party's Bharatiya character has been indisputably established. The events of these last two decades, during which the country has seen four wars, have naturally served to underline this aspect.

Apart from nationalism, the second cardinal plank of the Jana Sangh's philosophy is democracy, political as well as economic. Our Sangh is not only a Bharatiya Sangh, it is also a Jana Sangh—a party of the *demo*, the people. It is this Jana character of our party which needs to be brought home to the country even more forcefully during the coming years. We must consciously strive in this direction.



An overwhelming majority of the Indian people are today oppressed by want and injustice. Twenty-five years of independence have failed to bring to them two square meals, adequate raiment or even a small roof to stay under. Anti-democratic forces have been trying to exploit their misery to strengthen themselves. We have to combat them and vanquish them. To achieve this, we have to identify ourselves with sections of the population which have been economically depressed and socially neglected. Let us in this Session resolve to achieve this, and, holding aloft the banner of national reawakening and reconstruction, march ahead on the road to victory. The challenging times of today are a test of our determination. Let us spare no sacrifice and shirk no suffering to accomplish the mighty task destiny has entrusted to us.

#### VANDE MATARAM