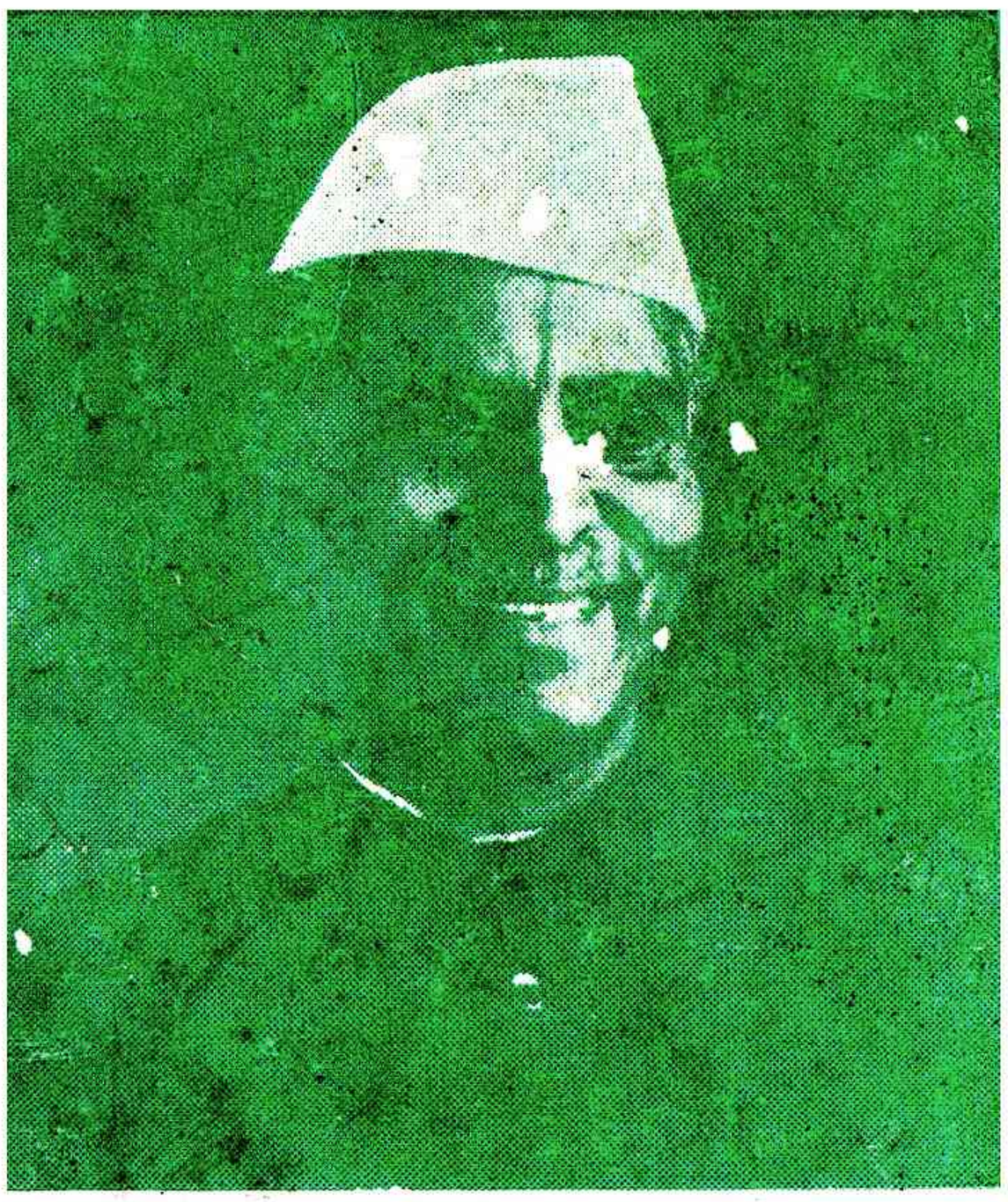
Why Ranga Resign- ?



THE INDIAN PEASANT INSTITUTE
NIDUBROLU

Why Ranga Resigns ?

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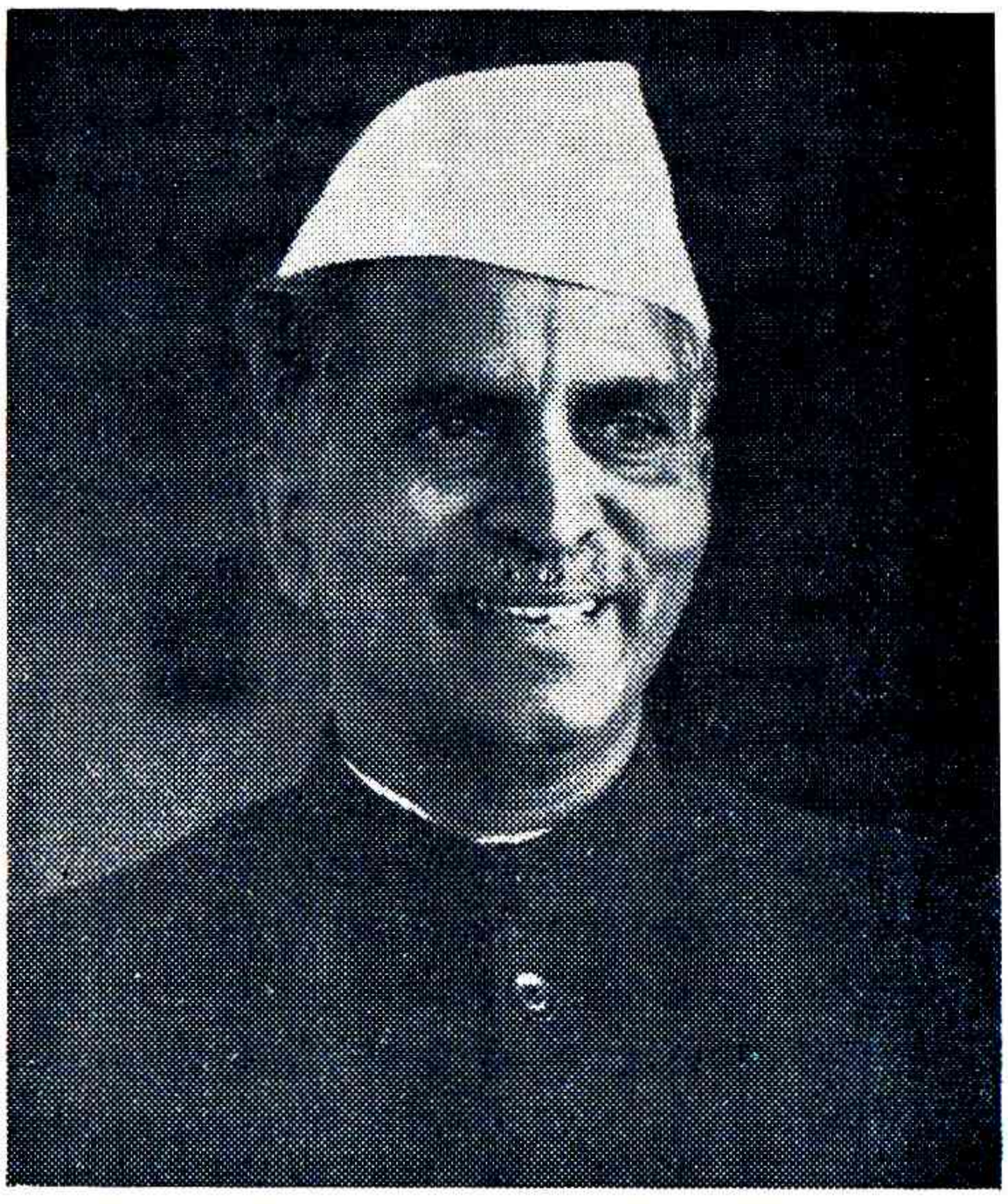

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THE INDIAN PEASANT INSTITUTE
NIDUBROLU

June 1959 *Price* : Re. 1

DEDICATED

TO

Our Senior Comrades in Peasant Movement

Sri Achanta Nagayya

of

Appikatla

and

Sri Chunibhai L. Patel

of

Akaramsad (Dt. Kaira-Bodlas)

In appreciation of their 30 years services

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PREFACE

Acharya Ranga, veteran Congress leader, resigned the secretaryship of the Congress Parliamentary Party on February 16, 1959 as a result of serious and basic differences between him and Shri Nehru and his colleagues on the question of co-operative farming. As is well known to all, Acharya Ranga had been one of the top leaders of the freedom movement; and had associated himself closely with Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Shri Nehru and Netajee. In addition to his activities as a national leader, he has also been a champion of peasants founding and leading many peasant organisations and carrying on many a struggle against zamindars, money-lenders, and the like.

It was his championship of the peasants' cause that forced Acharya Ranga to resign from the Congress soon after independence. The policies of Congress Governments in those days ran counter to the interests of the peasantry, and the need arose for a strong peasant organisation, which would concentrate on the rousing and strengthening the peasantry and other rural people. While in Congress he had to wrestle with his own colleagues to secure justice for the peasants during the control regime and had to leave the Congress and form the Krishikar Lok Party to safeguard the interests of peasants and other rural people.

In 1955, however, a situation developed in Andhra which practically forced Acharya Ranga to revise his stand towards the Congress. Communist forces gained rapidly in strength in the State and were about to sweep out the Congress and the peasants together. The Congress and the Krishikar Lok Party realized the danger that this constituted to the democratic forces and Acharya Ranga had to join hands with his former party and colleagues, in order to restore the political equilibrium in the State. This defeated the Communist strategy and saved the day for the peasants as well as the Congress Party in Andhra.

The Congress was, however, not grateful to him and the peasants. As soon as it found itself in power, the party again began undermining the foundation of peasant economy by advocating a policy of co-operative farming to replace the existing system of peasant family farming. Acharya Ranga, therefore, found it necessary to warn the country of the possible disastrous consequences of such a policy and he went on to develop step by step his thesis in favour of peasant family farming and the constructive role of the self-employed people in our democracy. He was not content with mere declamation against co-operative farming. In his latest theses, "The Peasant and Co-operative Farming" and "Self-Employed Sector", Acharya Ranga has proved the superiority of peasant family farming over

co-operative farming. They were hailed by the protagonists of both economies as a scientific contribution to the controversy and attracted the attention of international organisations.

Congress leaders would, however, seem to have pitched their faith on Shri Vinoba Bhave, who has been preaching the abolition of all private property, more especially in land, and the conversion of peasants into landless workers toiling on the land belonging only to village panchayats. Acharya Ranga warned the Congress and other parties against supporting the Gramdan Movement, pointing out that it would result only in enslaving the peasants to the new landlordism of village panchayats. At every stage, Congress leaders tried to use their influence to restrain his opposition but with little effect. Ultimately, they took the final decision to come out openly in favour of a national campaign for co-operative farming in preference to the self-employed peasant economy. Acharya Ranga was obliged once again to take the drastic step of resigning from the secretaryship of the Congress Party in Parliament risking even the Chairmanship of the Public Accounts Committee in order to record his emphatic protest against this anti-peasant policy of the Congress. He has been maintaining, and rightly, that it is against all parliamentary decency for the ruling party, or any party for that matter, to introduce such a radical change in its political programme which affects the basic interests of the majority of the people without obtaining a proper and specific election mandate for the change.

A careful study of this brochure would bring out how political expediency rather than any principle has been the guiding factor in Congress politics. When the party wished to regain power in Andhra, it sought the support of Acharya Ranga and the KLP, of which he was the founder-leader; he had himself accepted the invitation to return to its fold, only to assist in safeguarding democracy. Unfortunately, the Congress has forgotten its responsibility towards democracy and to the peasant masses and has been trying to hold him with its usual party discipline, unmindful of his mission on behalf of the peasantry and his passion for democracy, with the result that the events of 1951 seem to be repeating themselves today in 1959.

Acharya Ranga may have failed to halt the march of the Congress towards Sovietism, but the latter too has failed to prevent him from fearlessly espousing his life-mission. This brochure should bear eloquent testimony to it.

We are grateful to Messrs. K.R. Seshagiri Rao and Bujji for having edited this brochure.

N.V. Naidu, M.L.A.
P. Rajagopal, M.L.A.
Indian Peasant Institute

NIDUBROLU
June, 1959

PRELUDE

NEED FOR DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION

Rangajee and the late Shri T. Prakasam left the Congress in April-May, 1951. *Rangajee wrote to Shri P.D. Tandon, the then Congress President and to Shri Nehru giving his reasons for resigning from the Congress Working Committee and all other organisations within the Congress set-up. A few extracts from his letter to Panditjee which are relevant to the present political situation are reproduced here.*

19*th*, *May* 1951

My dear Shri Jawaharlaljee,

Ever since 1930 I have been striving with the blessings of Bapu, for the achievement of political and social conditions which would make possible the establishment of democratic Kisan Mazdoor Praja Raj under the political leadership of the National Congress. But, as I have often made clear during our discussions in the Working Committee in the last two and a half years, I have been very uneasy and disappointed because of the unfair attitude of the Working Committee, particularly towards the Andhra Congress and the Madras ministerial affairs. Recent events have brought this disappointment to a climax.

It is strange that the Working Committee should once again have directed Congressmen not to criticise Congress Government in public, even in present circumstances. I need not mention here that if I had been present at that meeting I would have resisted such a wrong directive. How can there be any check on the Congress Governments, if the High Command helps the ministerialists both in the States and at the Centre to take advantage of their own power and influence in the A.I.C.C. and make use of the Congress as their tongue-tied maid-of-all work? As a result, people will be left so helpless that they may fall into the hands of the malignantly disruptive forces.

You have often expressed disgust at the unhealthy tendency of Congressmen to fight and hate each other, and to develop factions within the Congress, but you would never come to grips with the problem. Asked in the Working Committee to suggest ways and means of getting over these conflicts and establishing unity, you have frankly stated that you are not clear how it is to be accomplished. At the Ahmedabad Session I suggested that it was necessary to reconstitute the States' Ministries and P.C.Cs., giving representation to all sections, and you endorsed the suggestion; but it was not effectively pursued further. It seems that the Working Committee, with a national leader of your standing on it, could not get things right even to a small degree of satisfaction.

I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that the Congress, as it is shaping itself, thanks to its insoluble quarrels and its ministerial misdeeds, cannot enable us to raise the living standards of our people during the next ten years; nor can it promote our ideal of Kisan Mazdoor Praja Raj.

That is why, I have been suggesting for the last year and a half, both in the Working Committee and in private discussions, that it would be better to allow the Congress to split into two parties, instead of letting ourselves become silent spectators while this great national organisation is gradually disintegrating. We might in this way divert the leaders and workers who do not see eye to eye with the present Government on certain matters, from their tendencies to join with the forces of disruption. I suggested that it would be good for the country if a healthy opposition were provided from among our own Congress comrades who have earned popular respect and gratitude by their services. On the occasion when I was asked to say how this could be brought about, I suggested that all those Congressmen who were dissatisfied with the Congress administration should be allowed to form the opposition party, with the blessings of the majority section, and to function as the alternative democratic leadership. I said that I would myself prefer to join such an opposition. It would in effect be a very different thing from disowning the basic ideals of

the Congress which has trained and disciplined us in the long struggle for national freedom.

Besides all these, I have come to be oppressed by a painful mental conflict, between my conviction that certain aspects of your foreign and economic policies are wrong, and my personal regard for you and sense of discipline under your leadership.

I have often made it clear, both in my correspondence and in Parliament, that I had no wish to associate myself more closely with your coalition Government because I had no hope of rendering effective service to our kisan masses by being in a hopeless minority, and by implementing the policies of controls and food prices so much opposed to kisan interests. I have differed too deeply with many of your Government policies. But, as a disciplined Congressman, I have not given vent to my feelings all this time except under great restraint; I was even willing, as I wrote to you soon after your Ahmedabad appeal, to extend my cooperation in the interest of the country during this critical time.

Therefore, the need to reorganise the political leadership of our country into more or less equally balanced but friendly political parties, both aiming at the same Co-operative Commonwealth and Kisan Mazdoor Praja Raj but making their approaches in different ways, has become too insistent. Otherwise, we shall be running the grave risk of allowing the Congress Party alone to monopolise the national leadership and then to rot from inside and collapse all too suddenly, thus making a free gift of our country to the Communists, as has happened in China.

Many of us are, therefore, obliged to build an alternative democratic leadership and thus ensure future progress of our country and protection of our masses from the threats of totalitarian forces both from inside and outside. We hope that the country would support the alternative leadership that we are building up.

Yours sincerely,

N.G. RANGA

The 1951 general elections were held for the first time under adult franchise. The Krishikar Lok Party founded by Rangajee four months before the elections entered the lists and fought both the Congress and Communist Parties.

The Communist Party emerged as the single largest group in Andhra and the vanguard of the United Democratic Front (U.D.F.) in the then composite Madras Legislative Assembly. The UDF needed the support of only twelve more members of the Assembly to achieve a clear majority and thus claim to form the Cabinet. The Congress Party was so badly mauled by the electorate that it had lost its huge majority (1946—51) and found itself in a minority and in a greater sense of depression. The KLP had then the opportunity of swinging the pendulum with its seventeen members and placing either the UDF or the Congress in a majority and in the Cabinet. At that critical stage, both the rival parties made their offers of political advantage to Rangajee. He spurned all such offers and maintained that the voters "have expressed their unmistakable preference to the coalition of all democratic parties to provide for them an efficient, honest, progressive Government" and so offered to co-operate with any coalition that Congress might form. The pamphlet entitled "KLP's Role in Madras Democracy" explained the reasons for this offer. Unfortunately, the Congress Party belied once again public expectations and dishonoured political conventions and formed its ministry without inviting the other democratic parties into coalition, thanks to its influence with the Governor and the KLP was obliged to support it, if only to keep out the Communist-led UDF from the citadel of power. Thus, the KLP paid the biggest price for democracy by keeping in power the Congress Party, although it, however, declined to invite KLP's leaders to join the Cabinet, just because of its fear that the Communist Party was the biggest enemy of peasants

and their "ennobling ideal of democratic Kisan Mazdoor Praja Raj".

Later in the year (1952) good and great Andhra, Potti Sriramulu died after a prolonged satyagraha for the achievement of separate Andhra State and the Union Government was forced by the enraged public opinion to agree to form the Andhra State from out of the former multi-lingual Madras State. But, the Congress leaders were face to face with the aweful prospect of having to yield the privilege of forming the first Andhra Cabinet to the Communist Party, since it emerged as the single largest party in the Assembly. All that Communist Party needed was the support of the KLP to form the majority. Thus, once again the KLP held the balance. It was under such circumstances that the Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee and Rangajee began discussions over the former's proposal for a re-union between the Congress and the KLP.

The following bunch of correspondence indicate the trend of Rangajee's thoughts about democracy and peasants' interests.

It will be interesting to note that Rangajee was once again keen on protecting and promoting Indian democracy and the freedom and interests of peasants and not on any bargaining for places in the Cabinets. It is also worth noting that though the KLP offered to cooperate with the Andhra Congress in forming the Cabinet, the late Shri Prakasam, the leader of the Praja Party, formed his Cabinet but abstained from inviting into his Cabinet the one and only candidate offered by the KLP just because the Congress Party once again wanted to betray all democratic decencies. In spite of all such betrayals of democracy by the Congress, the KLP continued to strengthen democracy as against CPI.

This correspondence happened to be prefaced by Rangajee's speech (summarised) in Rajya Sabha on 12th December, 1952.

* * *

OPPOSITION TO FIRST FIVE YEAR PLAN

(First Warning Against Co-operative Farming)

Rangajee spoke in Rajya Sabha on 10.12.52 *against the First Five Year Plan. It may be mentioned that he formally walked into the Opposition lobby to mark his disapproval of the plan regarding peasantry and agriculture. We give below summarised extracts from that speech.*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, one of our friends has stated that this is not a national Plan. But my hon. friend Dr. Kunzru felt inclined to think that it certainly can be taken to be a national Plan. I began to think about it, whether I can possibly agree with Dr. Kunzru. Now, what is the meaning of a national Plan? If it means for all the people of the country—that is one thing. If it can be considered to be a Plan which is acceptable to all the important sections of the people—that is another. If on the other hand, in the implementing of it all the different sections of the people and all the political parties have taken part—that is the third point. If all the political parties have been approached for their cooperation for the implementation of the Plan—that is the fourth point. If I were to look at all these four aspects, I find that it is difficult for me to accept Dr. Kunzru's contention that it can be taken to be a national Plan.

On this Planning Commission, there was no proper representation either. There was some representation for the industrialists and proletariat but there was no representation for the agricultural class or for the handicrafts men. Yes, there was representation for the industrial workers as the Congress had seen them through my hon. friend Mr. Nanda. There was also representation for the superannuated officers; and also for the Provincial Ministers, but, certainly, there was no representation for the important agricultural masses. That unrepresentative

Commission is going on working. It appointed a number of panels and on them there was representation for a number of experts, but no representation for the farmers. Then a draft Plan was made. Was it presented to the members of all political parties in the interim Parliament at the committee stage ? There was no such opportunity given at all.

Therefore, it is not a Plan which has been evolved with the cooperation of all political parties. Next, this Plan, they say, is going to be implemented with the co-operation of all political parties. Because, we have already seen that two of the important political parties in the country are not prepared to associate themselves with the implementation of this Plan for their own reasons, how can we take this to be a national Plan?

Then, Sir, I represent my own party—the Krishikar Lok Party. I am not able to associate, I can tell you, the farmers or the artisans whom we represent with the collectivist plans that are suggested in the Plan. I take strong exception to the many academic suggestions that are made here for the so-called solution of the land problem. Then, there are handicrafts, too. There, too, their recommendations have been very halting.

BEWARE OF HIGHER TAXES

We were promised, Sir, the establishment of what is known as an Agricultural Finance Corporation in the States and also for the cottage industries. Nothing has been done. Now, there is the Industrial Finance Corporation. It was to be coupled with similar corporations in the States in order to finance the middling as well as small-scale cottage industries. They do not propose here to show any kind of energy to implement all the things that they have themselves suggested.

Even to this extent, my hon. friend Dr. Kunzru said they are not likely to have funds. I agree with him. The question is whether they will be able to raise the funds. How do they propose to do it? It is suggested in the Plan that

the farmer and the industrial proletariat have all to be prepared to bear more and more taxation in the years to come. They have said, not once but several times, that the topmost men have already borne too heavy a burden of taxation, and therefore, not much more can possibly be expected from them, and so the other people must be ready. They say : 'Our taxation burden is 8 per cent of the national income. The basis on which it has been based is very narrow. Therefore, it should be widened'.

So, you see, all these things are an indication to the Taxation Commission—to suggest various ways and means, by which taxation can be levied upon our masses. Then, they talk of betterment tax to finance the irrigation schemes. Our friends here were complaining that too much attention is being paid to agriculture and agricultural development. Let us remember one thing—that a good portion of the agricultural development is supposed to be financed through what is known as betterment levy. May I ask, 'Is that fair?' Some friends have said that undeveloped areas should be developed and should be given preference. And, how they are to be given preference? At their own cost?

All these gentlemen of the towns who are going about enjoying are not to be touched. Sir, one of our friends, the capitalists' spokesman, was saying yesterday that they could not bear any more taxation, and actually, they would like to have further remissions of tax if only Mr. C.D. Deshmukh, the Finance Minister, would agree. But the people in the deficit areas, who have been crying for more water, electricity, irrigation facilities, would be made to pay through their nose, in order that they might have development. But the Plan suggests that the betterment levy has to be collected from them, through money, on instalment payment basis, even through land; that is, a portion of the land of the poor peasant has got to be given to these gentlemen. Why? Because, in order to enable them to develop their projects. Is it not unfair that you should be taking away one portion of the land even while talking of development of land? Moreover, why should Government take into

account speculative prices of land, when peasants are interested only in the agricultural incomes they can get from the introduction of irrigation. Our farmers want a living from their holdings and the Government talks of land values. These are the funny sides of the land problem.

PLAN IS OPPOSED TO POOR PEASANTRY

Referring to proposals for eliminating small-holdings, he said that "Some people have been making rather ill-considered statements to suggest gifts of land from the small peasantry, because they are said to be unable to produce efficiently. It is a big question whether the small holder is not now producing more per acre than the large land-holder. Our friends talk about this in a clever manner. They do not say it straightaway that big holdings are more productive. Sir, there are 162 million tillers, 34 million others who cultivate others' land. They are altogether 200 million people. Why does not the Plan say to these people : 'Look here, your holdings are useless, wasteful. Your work is not scientific. Why don't you use tractors and such other machinery so that you can produce surplus in order to enrich our towns-people—people who sit on the desks, and the rest of us. Otherwise we are going to dispossess you.' They dare not say so lest all these vast masses might vote against the planners. From one end of the Plan, they are going to distribute land and from the other end, they are going to dispossess all these poor people through legislation, as they say, in a calculated way but slowly and in a persuasive manner. *From one end the Communists and from the other the Government wish to squeeze the smaller holdings out of land economy*. Sir, the controversy between the small and big holdings is a century old and it is wrong for the planners to decide against smaller holders."

Shri Pattabhiraman : You are talking of landlordism.

Prof. N.G. Ranga : The planners wish to bring it in. I was saying that the planners wish to dispossess all those poor people, and convert these lands into big private

farms. They don't have any objection to starting of capitalist land-holding concerns. Because, men like Ambalal Sarabhai can have 2000 or 3,000 acres of land. And they have use for it, because they are able to show that they are getting superior yields. They will be allowed to go on merrily, because they have on their land scientifically trained managers. So, more and more encouragement will be given to them.

CO-OPERATIVE FARMING

Then, there will be also co-operative farming societies and these will give scope for the employment of these gentlemen's sons and nephews who are unemployed—these educated unemployed people. They will be appointed as managers and under the management of these people, the poor kisans will be working like...

Shri H.D. Rajah : Slaves.

Prof. N.G. Ranga : Yes, they will be forced to work like slaves. Is that what they (planners) want to achieve? That is what is supposed to have been achieved by U.S.S.R.; what is sought to be achieved in China. My friends here may like it, but I do not like it. Sir, I do want my subsistence farmers to remain in possession of their holdings for about the same reason—I do not say for the same reason—that you want to provide for your educated unemployed. That is, our peasants too need employment and their holdings are a source of such employment. The educated unemployed ask the Government for employment; but the kisan does not ask the Government for employment; but on the other hand he asks you to leaving him alone in possession of his land to allow him to carry on his productive activities. To that extent, you should be grateful to these two hundred million people. They do not bandy you about, they do not trouble you. They find their own employment. But the planners want to come in their way. A cultivator may have two or three acres. But, each acre gives employment for fifty days. To that extent he is not a burden on the State. For the other three hundred days only

he expects Government help. If he has five acres, he gets employment on his own land for 250 days. So far as the town people are concerned, these educated people look to the Government for employment for all the 365 days. And if they are not provided with proper employment, they are prepared to kick up a revolution with the help of various friends. Therefore, I do not want peasants to be coerced. I do not want them to be dragooned into all these various kinds of farms which you want to bring into existence with or without their co-operation. If you attempt to do that in a coercive manner, I want to warn the Government that so far as this recommendation goes, the farmers are not going to, and they are not prepared to, accept it.

Now, have these planners studied properly the working of the co-operative societies in this country, the manner in which the internal organisation is developed, their elections, their disputes, their quarrels and all the rest of their troubles? If they had made any such practical study of these things at all, they would not be so very professorial-like as they appear to be in simply saying 'yes, there will be co-operation, either voluntarily or compulsorily.'

The co-operative societies and the village panchayats as they are conceived of in this report are not going to be properly worked at all. Therefore, our farmers cannot be expected to be handed over—I mean by farmers not merely the land-owning but also tenant farmers—to these organisations. Sir, these organisations (co-operative farms) which will control the farmers will come to be controlled through the mamlatdar to whom my hon. friend, Dr. Kunzru, wants to give much more power than they have already got. If anybody were to go into that question, they would be able to find out how the Tenancy Act is being implemented in Gujerat by the mamlatdars, who are the hand-maiden of the past Revenue Minister who is also the present Chief Minister. I do not want these peasants and agricultural workers to be handed over, bound hand and foot to these mamlatdars. Hon. Members may ask, 'if you are not going to employ the mamlatdars, how are you going

regulate your own economy and ensure greater agricultural production?' My answer is, that if you were to pay remunerative prices to our producers, they will produce more. Have they not done so in regard to sugar, jute, cotton, oilseeds, wheat and rice ? People are there ready to work hard. Let me tell these hon. gentlemen who are grumbling about working for about 8 hours in these offices and various other concerns that our peasants work much more hard than these people. Our peasants never ask for all sorts of holidays; on the other hand, they work themselves right up to their bones. They are much more efficient, capable, hardworking, and conscientious. And you should be thankful that they have been carrying on this most essential productive effort; they have been feeding millions of urban people in spite of the neglect shown towards them for ages, and even after you have achieved freedom.

This Government, if you examine the Plan you will find in the implications behind the recommendations, wants to keep the control over the economic and social activities of every individual and every group in rural India for the benefit of the urban people, and thus go farther and farther away from the ideal that Mahatma Gandhi held, the ideal of decentralisation. The idea of the Plan is that there should be as much control as possible at every centre of social activity, centralisation and control from the top here, with a number of experts. I know they have got their answer. They will say, 'in the village it is the Village Panchayat which is going to be given the control over land management, crop planning, etc.' But, what does this mean? It means that the non-agriculturists will be controlling the Panchayats while the people in the village will be fighting among themselves. If you go to sleep at night, you cannot be sure if, in the morning, you will have your holding in your possession or whether your neighbour would not have made a representation to the Village Panchayat saying that you are not using your labour, you are not cultivating your land properly, and, therefore, show cause why you should not be dispossessed by the Panchayat.

Through the game of this Plan there would not be any peace at all in the villages. These gentlemen in the North have not so much experience of Village Panchayats as we have had in the South in the past 40 years and we know to our cost what these Village Panchayats have come to be. There are factions, and plenty of other troubles and you are going to hand over the minority of people to the majority, no doubt with all these powers in their hands and, then, say to them 'Look here, it is your own Village Panchayat which has got to decide your fate'. Can we entrust our Panchayats with such drastic powers as removing a peasant from his landownership on the ground of bad management?

I now come to the tenants. My friends over there put me the question, whether I was in favour of landlordism. I am not favouring landlordism, but I favour land ownership and also protection of our tenants. Planners say that there should be assistance for the agricultural workers. What is proposed to be done for them? I am sure that there must be legislation enabling them to get the unoccupied land or undeveloped land of landlords. How are they to get it? The unoccupied land of the Government has got to be placed at their disposal. There should be a law for that, otherwise, what will happen is that the capitalists will snatch it away from them. In all these new irrigation project areas, Sir, there is plenty of Government land, and the surplus land of the rich has to be purchased or acquired. Make all that land available for the landless first of all, and then for the very small holders and not for others. There is no suggestion at all in regard to these matters.

Then, there is this housing problem. Mr. Nanda, who specialised in the welfare of industrial workers, has been fortunate in providing Rs. 20 crores for industrial housing. But what about rural housing?

Shri H.D. Rajah : Nothing.

Prof. N.G. Ranga : Not that he was not forewarned. I told him about this need when I was one of his colleagues in the sub-committee, when this draft Report was being

discussed; and again at the time of the Budget discussions here; but they did not think of it. Our friends over there are both (Congress and Communists) united in squeezing out the land-owner, the poor peasant. They themselves have stated that the maximum holding should be three times the minimum. I have stated in my minority report to the Agrarian Reforms Committee that it should be five times. The Sarvodaya Committee by which some of our friends here (Congress) swear, have fixed it at six times. But, if there were to be a maximum for rural incomes and holdings, then I want simultaneously steps to be taken in regard to urban incomes and urban properties. If, on the other hand, you are not going to do it and if you are going to come down with your axe upon the farmers alone then I can tell you that our farmers are not likely to accept it and all your schemes will remain imaginary.

There is this inviduous distinction between the rural people and the urban people made by the Plan. I demand parity between the rural and urban people in the Plan. The Planning Commission wants to go back and wants to be as academic as possible, and wants to make it three times. Even if it is three times, up to that, please do not interfere with these peasants.

But you must help them to make a better living with what they are left. Are you providing them with the equipment they want? Are you helping them to be more efficient in regard to finance? My hon. friend Pandit Kunzru told us just now how it was that these people got indebted, how they have become even more indebted so far as certain stratas of them are concerned, even after the war. These people pay from 12 to 24 per cent interest for their loans. You have your industries and for them the Industrial Finance Corporation, for instance, lends money at 6% interest. But what about these poor farmers? You ask them to show profit, to show more production. But the point I want to ask is, which industry in the world can become productive, can become profitable, if it gets its

finance after paying an interest of 24 per cent? What facilities have you created for them? You created the Reserve Bank and charged it to have a sort of special branch in order to finance rural folk. But what are its achievements?

What have you done for their manures, co-operative godowns, tested seeds and other basic equipment? There are to be roads, and that is the only bright feature of the Plan. But even that bright feature does not reach the farmer. When the road reaches the village limit, the farmer is expected to provide labour, often free labour, and other contributions to construct the further reaches of the road. And the peasants are prepared to make these contributions and give you their co-operation.

Panditji said yesterday that it should not be a 'school book Plan', but what else is it? It has certain pet ideas. What are they? They are the pale imitation of the Communist ideas, of Sovietism boiled down in this fashion so that it would be a Nehru Plan. You my put Nehru's name on it, like Elizabeth's picture on those coins. But, it would not become a Nehru Plan; it would not become a Gandhian Plan. It would only become a pale imitation of the Soviet Plan. Such a pale imitation will not do for us and we cannot accept it.

But where is the spirit of co-operation from your end? Therefore, I say, your Plan has to become a national Plan first, so that it may be accepted by the farmer, by the artisan, by all the different classes of our people.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS NEEDED

And for that your Government itself has to be changed. It should change from being a party government here. The time has come long ago when there should be a national government in this country. You should extend your hand of co-operation to all parties here. If any party is not willing to co-operate with you, it will be its own fault. But with such parties as are willing to co-operate, you should form a coalition government, not only here but all over

India. Then alone it will be possible for you to implement the Plan. With various parties going about the country, from village to village, from town to town, saying that this is not your Plan, with all their non-cooperation and obstruction, would it be easy for you to implement this Plan? My hon. friends here already told you yesterday that only within 27 years you are going to double the national income of our people. Till that time are the people to be patient? Hungry people are not going to be patient. Shivering people are not going to be patient. There will be patience where there is hope. That is what our Prime Minister said yesterday, and I agree with him. But, how long will they be patient when there are people who go about saying, 'this is not our Plan, we have nothing to do with it'? If, on the other hand, you reconstitute your government, you will succeed in maintaining the public morale and encouraging them to be patient and co-operative in working for their own progress. Let them not sit here on the high pedestal of a party government and say that the line you draw is the law for everybody, therefore everyone should prostrate before you. If you do that, you will not be able to implement the Plan. You cannot prevent the masses from rising against you whenever it becomes possible for them to do so. Then they will say "Look here, you are not the proper leaders for us".

FIRST INVITATION TO RE-ENTER CONGRESS

"BUT, WHAT ABOUT KISAN INTERESTS?"—*Ranga*

(*Letter from Shri Balvantray Mehta*)

New Delhi,
December 20, 1952

My dear Prof. Ranga,

About a year ago you parted company from the Congress in which you had played an important role for a large number of years. A year has now passed since then and this year has seen many developments. Parliament has approved of the Five Year Plan, which throws great responsibilities on all of us and demands from us active and united work. It has been decided, as you know, to form a separate Andhra State.

Andhra, in particular, will have a heavy burden to carry in the near future. Unfortunately in the past Andhra has suffered from inner dissensions and because of this, it has not pulled its weight as it otherwise should have done. It seems to me that it is urgently necessary for the progressive forces in the Andhra to work together under the banner of the Congress. Practically speaking those who oppose the Congress today are largely the communalists and communists. Neither holds out promise of good to India and indeed they may bring much harm if they had an opportunity.

It seems to me, therefore, that we should consider a coming together of progressive forces within the Congress. This applies of course to the whole of India but more particularly to Andhra. I feel sure that these ideas must have come into your mind also. If you agree with what I have suggested, we can have a talk about the matter. I would also suggest your having a talk with Shri Sanjeeva Reddy. I shall gladly be of help in so far as I can.

Yours sincerely,
BALVANTRAY MEHTA

New Delhi,
Dated 22.12.1952.

My dear Balvantrayjee,

Thank you for your letter of the 20th instant. I am glad to learn that you are thinking so actively in terms of co-operation and comradeship between us all. I appreciate your sentiments that though we were separated for more than a year, we were all bound together by the loyalty to our common approach the Gandhian way. As you have known only too well, I am devoted to the Gandhian conception of democratic Kisan Mazdoor Praja Raj. That is why I have found it possible to extend my support to every progressive measure propounded by Nehru's Government.

Having realised the growing seriousness of the communist threat to our democracy—perhaps much earlier than many others within the Congress and outside—I have also been wondering whether we could not display enough of statesmanship to achieve unity among us all. You have taken this initiative none too soon.

But there are a few points in regard to which I should like to get a clear conception of Jawaharlaljee's approach. We have felt disappointed that Jawaharlaljee, being the custodian of our national interests, not only because he is the Prime Minister and the President of the Congress, but even more so because he is the heir of Mahatma Gandhi, has not been able to succeed in providing for as effective a voice for the interests of peasants, artisans and other rural masses as they need and deserve in the counsels of the Governments and the Congress. I realise that Jawaharlaljee has to work for every one's welfare, but because all other classes are better organised for political action they have been able to command more of his attention. I am sure you would agree that it is only reasonable for us to expect from him much greater sympathy and support.

You say that Parliament has approved the Five Year Plan. But I have had to vote against it, because I could

not agree to the planners' approach to the interests and problems of our 180 million small-holders. I feel they have shown little consideration for the contribution that our small landowning peasants are actually making to the improvement of our social economy. I find that the planners have looked at the immense problem of husbanding of our land from the angle of greater production—important though it is—and failed to appreciate the social advantages such as the present diffusion of ownership of land among more than 120 million small holders, the opportunity the cultivation of such holdings gives to more than 150 million small peasants to assure themselves of some employment on their own and to display their initiative, enterprise and invest all their spare time and energy in their incessant process of insurance against destitution and helpless proletarianisation which can be desired only by the enemies of our people.

The planners seem to be keen on centralisation and authoritarianism even when they care to suggest the utilisation of the co-operatives and panchayats. As you know, I do not hold doctrinaire views regarding controls and decontrols. I have already offered my whole-hearted support to the practical way of implementing the food policy which is now being followed by Government and the cautious experiments that are being made to free the people from unnecessary rigours incidental to the controls.

If you and Jawaharlaljee feel that there is scope for proper re-orientation of these important aspects of the Plan, I am sure the whole of my party will be quite glad to place its resources at the disposal of the Congress under one leadership for the fulfilment of the immediate objectives of the Plan and especially for achieving democratic progress. And I cannot think of a better leader than Jawaharlaljee for all of us.

I have already expressed my gratification on the floor of the Council regarding the immediate formation of Andhra Desa. But the pity is that it came at such a late hour. I do agree with you it is high time the democratic

forces in Andhra Desa and elsewhere should come together under one national leadership. I may remind you of my letter to Shri Nehru published in the press in June, 1951 in which I have indicated how certain forces were working towards the disintegration of progressive forces in the Congress in Andhra Desa. I do not know how the Congress forces in Andhra are working at present. But if you are sure that there is any likelihood of their progressive forces asserting themselves and offering as well as welcoming wholehearted co-operation with us, I for one feel that it should be possible for all of us to come together under the leadership of Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. I will be glad to meet you or Shri Jawaharlaljee to have further discussions on these and other matters.

Yours sincerely,
N.G. RANGA

(*Sri Balvantray Mehta's reply*)

New Delhi,
December 22, 1952

My dear Prof. Ranga,

Thank you for your letter of the 22nd December.

I am glad you are at one with me in thinking that in the circumstances of today, the progressive forces should co-operate together. There are far too many disruptive and disintegrating tendencies in the country. We have seen them at work in Andhra, as you know well.

As regards the wider subject that you have mentioned in your letter, I can hardly discuss this problem in all its aspects. I have no doubt whatever that the Congress has stood for the vast masses of this country, which means primarily the peasantry. It may be that the steps taken from time to time in various States might not have been as rapid or as advanced as many of us might have liked them to be. In fact even there are some States which are rather backward in this respect. They might have some local reasons for that or not. This is essentially a matter for the

States, whether the Government or the State Congress, within of course the ambit of the larger national policy.

I am sorry that you voted against the Five Year Plan. No subject considered by the Planning Commission took so much thought and time as land policy. Inevitably they could not be precise because conditions differed so much in different States. Nevertheless, the policy they have laid down is wide enough and broad enough for subsequent improvement.

You refer to centralisation. I should have thought that the Planning Commission's stress is not on centralisation, though in the circumstances of today they had necessarily to lay sole stress on centralisation. Indeed, without the centralisation, there would be disruption in many ways all over the country.

It is also true that stress has been laid in the First Plan on greater production. Without greater production not only does the Plan fail but our economy fails and any system of present diffusion of ownership also fails. But the object is diffusion of ownership, while at the same time increase in production.

I can hardly ask Jawaharlaljee, the Chairman of the Planning Commission to sit down and change the Plan now a few days after we have passed it. But as I have said the Plan itself has scope for advance in any direction that appears feasible.

The virtue of the Plan, as I conceive, is that something practical can be done. It would be easy to lay down a better theoretical proposition; but this might not be practical for the moment.

I shall be glad to meet you of course to have further discussions and I am sure that Jawaharlaljee will also gladly meet you.

Yours sincerely,
BALVANTRAY MEHTA

BIRTH OF UNITED CONGRESS

(*To General Secretary of K.L.P.*)

Vijayawada,
16*th December*, 1954

My dear Chunibhaijee,

I am glad to inform you that at long last the Congress leadership including Nehrujee have agreed to be realistic and accommodate the other democratic parties also in developing a united democratic party in Andhra against the Communists.

To make them come to this reasonable frame of mind many developments have helped :

(*a*) Their defeats in the last general elections and later development of habit of united action with non-Congress opposition parties.

(*b*) The refusal of Prakasam's group to join the Congress, though they remained in ministerial partnership (1953-54).

(*c*) The disinclination of our own Andhra KLP to agree to the proposal to merge with the Congress or to let our candidates accept Congress symbol so far as Andhra goes and for the sake of this General Elections.

(*d*) The anxiety of Nehrujee to accommodate their ministerial partners, the Praja Party.

When the draft proposals were mooted with me, I made some suggestions and the following were agreed upon after much discussion between the leaders of the Praja Party, Congress Party and ourselves :

(1) each party is to have its own symbol for its candidates;

(2) once the candidates are chosen by the joint committee of leaders, they are to be free to choose the symbol they like to fight under;

(3) it is to be explicitly understood that the non-Congress candidates are to remain members of their respective parties;

(4) any disagreement between the leaders over the choice of candidates is to be referred only to Pandit Nehru and not Congress Parliamentary Board;

(5) any serious disagreement, if and when it arises, in the implementation of the programme is to be referred to the judicial decision by Pandit Nehru, who has to be helped and advised by the leaders of the parties plus the leader of the joint parliamentary party. Of course every effort is to be made by the parliamentary party to reach agreement through maximum degree of harmony and mutual accommodation, while ordinary questions are to be decided by majority vote. Thus, the Congress Parliamentary Board is to be kept out of this sphere, and the parliamentary party need not be allowed to swing to any one side of opinion or interest at the mercy of momentary passions or prejudices or manoeuvres and the uniting parties and their leaders will have some salutary influence over the united party so as to prevent injury to any one side in a partisan manner.

(6) The Congress suggested that the parliamentary party should be called the Congress Parliamentary Party. I suggested that it would be best to call it the "United Congress Parliamentary Party" to indicate how other parties too are included in this new entity. The Congress people were inclined to agree. On further consideration, we postponed decision on this until after the elections.

(7) I have made it clear to the Andhra Congress leaders and they have agreed to see that due and just representation will be given to the uniting parties in the formation of the ministry and the

unhappy and immoral October 1, 1953 tactic of eliminating our Party from ministerial responsibility will not be repeated.

I think these points form a reasonable and acceptable basis for united action and I propose to recommend this for acceptance by our Party when our Andhra General Body meets here tomorrow to finalise this matter.

I trust that you will also feel satisfied by this agreement.

Apart from the immediate objective of staving off Communist threat that faces us in Andhra, this agreement indicates the following :

(1) the recognition by the Congress of the need for reaching electoral alliances with other democratic parties, though it is not ready to accept the principle of full-fledged coalition ministry;

(2) the need for more than one democratic party to protect democracy and their necessity to work together;

(3) yet a chance for a third force to take shape to protect and champion the cause of democracy and thus to prevent the emergence of the Communist Party as the only alternative leadership to the Congress in the event of its being defeated in a democratic election;

(4) the possibility of saving democracy in other States through non-Congress democratic parties working either independently or in co-operation with the Congress; and

(5) the abandonment by the Congress, though reluctantly, its totalitarian claim to be the sole democratic party.

I think all the democratic parties of Andhra can congratulate themselves on this achievement.

Yours sincerely,
N.G. RANGA

SOON AFTER 1955 ANDHRA GENERAL ELECTION

Resolution adopted by the General Council of the Bharat Krishikar Lok Party held at New Delhi on 1st March, 1955, with Prof. N.G. Ranga in the Chair.

"This meeting of the General Council of the Bharat KLP has given deep consideration to the political and economic developments that have taken place since the last meeting of the General Council and has taken stock of experience gained by the Andhra KLP in forming and working the Democratic United Front with the Congress Party and has come to the conclusion that in view of the growing Communist menace to the very existence, legitimate and traditional rights and hegemony of the peasantry and artisans and other toiling masses of our country, the KLP shall welcome or take initiative on a suitable occasion and in an honourable manner, to achieve unity of all genuine democratic forces and parties in the country. The Council had already authorised the President on a previous occasion to allow the Andhra KLP legislators to accept associate membership of the Congress Legislature Party. The Council, therefore, resolves to empower the President to welcome or initiate such further steps as he deems fit in order to achieve the desired unity with the Congress and such other allied democratic forces and take final decisions, so that Indian democracy which is indispensable for the continued existence of peasants and their economic independence, heritable rights of ownership, and employment on their holdings, can be safeguarded. The General Council is convinced more than ever that only through the achievement of effective political influence and power over the institutions of the democratic state, that our kisans, kalakars, and mazdoors can really progress towards the achievement and enjoyment of fully democratic Kisan Mazdoor Praja Raj and trusts that by the course of action that it proposes to adopt, it will be promoting the cause and

the ideal for which the KLP has been formed. We are fully confident that the KLP will come to gain fuller life and light through its metamorphosis in the proposed democratic unity."

TRIUMPH OF THE UNITED CONGRESS

Letter from Shri U.N. Dhebar, President, All-India Congress Committee, to Prof. N.G. Ranga, leader, Bharat Krishikar Lok Party, on 7.3.1955.

"I was very glad to meet you yesterday. Andhra has done exceedingly well and I must congratulate you for the great part you played in achieving the result. I will be failing in my duty if I do not congratulate and thank the people of Andhra, who took up such a decisive stand against Communism in what was nothing less than a forthright attack of the Communist Party of India to capture power in Andhra. As I said yesterday, I interpret this result as an evidence of the greatest urge the people of Andhra have been nursing in their hearts for a united and stable leadership by a united and stable party. Circumstances have conspired up to now and the hope has remained unfulfilled so far. But after the signal demonstration of their love for the principles of unity, if we all do not rise to the occasion, we shall be failing in our duty. It is up to us therefore to justify and fulfil their hopes. The alliance at the time of the election has been very fruitful and I am happy to note that you also realise like me that it has become inevitable for all of us to function as one body both in the legislature and outside.

"I am writing to you once again to congratulate you on the result as also to express my hope that you will soon be able to make this possible by advising your people to join the Congress both in Andhra and elsewhere. I wish all success to your efforts in that direction."

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Reply from Prof. N.G. Ranga to Shri Dhebar on 7.3.1955.

"I am happy to receive your letter expressing your warm feelings for us all in Andhra. I must say I was very

much touched by the spirit in which you have inaugurated our talks and your sincere anxiety to bring about reunion between all of us.

"I agree with you that the people of Andhra have expressed their sincere urge for united leadership for safeguarding and protecting their democratic way of life by giving such a wholehearted response to the call of our United Front urging the recent General Elections. I am glad to inform you that the General Council of the KLP which met on the 1st instant has also appreciated the strength and significance of this—people's message as it were—and has therefore decided to achieve the desired unity with the Congress, under whose banner we had all worked together for so many years for the achievement of our national freedom and democratic State. I am therefore glad to be able to assure you that I will take the earliest steps to bring about this unity both in the legislature and outside in Andhra and elsewhere. I trust that you will also be good enough to advise the various State Congress Committees to strive and bring about this unity in their respective areas between my colleagues and comrades in the KLP and themselves so that it would be a real and creative unity from the primary upwards.

"I am grateful to you for your felicitations to me and I am sure that the Andhra people deserve our admiration for having raised the prestige of our country and our national leader, Jawaharlaljee, in the eyes of the freedom-loving peoples of the world.

"I am enclosing copies of the correspondence that took place between Shri Balvantray Mehta and myself in 1952 regarding the AICC suggestion for a reunion between the KLP and the Congress."

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Letter to Shri Jawaharlal Nehru from Prof. N.G. Ranga on 7th March, 1955.

"I hope you have received the brief note I sent to you on 23rd February assuring you that the Andhra elections

would yield at least 120 seats and quite possibly up to 150 seats.

"I am glad that my confidence in Andhras' determination to vote for the United Front has been thoroughly justified.

"I wish to thank you for having displayed so much concern for the welfare of our Andhra people and helped us to forge the United Front which has saved our democracy from the threat of Communist Party.

"The KLP has fulfilled one of its principal functions through this United Front, namely, to protect our democracy which is the very first requisite for the freedom and progress of all, more especially our peasantry and artisans and intellectuals.

"I was so much impressed with the sincere urge of all our masses for unity among all our democrats under your leadership as I was communing with them during these 55 memorable days of my crusade for democracy that I appealed to our General Council to agree to unite with the Congress. I would like to say that the General Council agreed to join with the Congress and thus safeguard our democracy and work for the Gandhian ideal of Kisan Mazdoor Praja Raj.

"I had a very pleasant talk last night with Dhebarbhai, the President of the Congress, and I dare say he had mentioned it to you. I am now enclosing for your information a copy of his affectionate letter to me and my own reply to him.

"I trust that you will be satisfied with this first good fruit of your statesmanlike initiative in helping to form the Andhra Congress United Front."

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Letter from Shri Jawaharlal Nehru to Prof. N.G. Ranga on 7.3.1955.

"I was happy to have a glimpse of you last evening. Unfortunately we came away immediately after the show and I could not see you again.

"I need not tell you how happy I am at the result of the Andhra elections, This has cast a heavy burden on all of us. The people of Andhra have undoubtedly expressed themselves forcefully and put their faith on us. We have to be worth that faith. Nothing will be more dangerous than for us to go camplacent.

"Dhebarbhai came to see me this evening and told me about his talk with you yesterday. He also showed me his correspondence with you of today. I was happy to read this and to know that you and your party have decided to enter the Congress again and work shoulder to shoulder with all of us."

IN PARLIAMENT—ON CO-OPERATIVE FARMING

Rangajee's warning was sounded in Parliament (Lok Sabha) on 30.7.1957 *on the cut motion of Shri M.R. Masani to discuss the policy in regard to co-operative farming. Some summarised extracts are reproduced here.*

I am opposed to two of the policies that are being threatened to be followed by the Government in regard to our peasants in this country. One is the new enthusiasm that my hon. friend, the Minister of Food and Agriculture, has developed, I do not know on what persuasion, for what is known as co-operative farming. The other is the new fright into which he has got in, I do not know under what pressure and from what directions, in regard to the agricultural prices that are prevailing in this country.

I would like to warn Government that I had voted against the Five Year Plan when it came up for discussion in the other House some years ago, a few days before I was being asked to rejoin the Congress. I was then the leader of the Krishikar Lok Party. I went into the Opposition (lobby) on that vote, in order to record my wholehearted and convinced opposition to the threatened policy that Government was then trying to impose on the country and make Parliament also give its assent to the policy of carrying on a national campaign for converting crores and crores of our small peasants in this country into wage-slaves, by making them all members of co-operative aggregations of management and placing them at the mercy of supervisors, managers, engineers, and technicians and all other types of know-how experts, and making them all work to the order, possibly in a worse manner, than what has come to prevail in China.

I warned the Government on that occasion. I warn it today (against Plan's fascination for co-operative farming). I am not afraid that the hundred million peasants in

this country are going to be successfully forced and coerced by this Government or by any other Government. Such peasants have made the Soviet Government bend on its knees. Such peasants are making today the Soviet Governments of the South-East European countries bend on their knees. And those peasants will succeed even in China.

I would like to tell them also that when I was rejoining the Congress, there were two phases, the earlier and the later. The later one was the final one. At the earlier stage, I made it perfectly clear to the then General Secretary of the Congress, and through him, the Congress President also, namely Shri Jawaharlal Nehru.

I made it perfectly clear that I would be prepared to join the Congress, and I was considering the question of joining the Congress only subject to this, that I would not be forced to vote in favour of the liquidation of the peasantry in this country.

That is my policy. That is my belief. My belief is that I am pursuing the line of public work in this country in order, among other things, to protect the interests of more than 60 million peasant families, who own their own holdings, or who rent others' holdings or fields, but who, nevertheless, carry on their cultivation as tenant-farmers, all on their own without being bossed over by anybody else, without being supervised, conducted and turned into wage-slaves by any other bosses.

I wish to warn Government that it would be better for the Government to be a little careful even if they cannot be very wise in their dealings with peasants in this country. Only the other day the Prime Minister was saying in another place that the greatest degree of support that they got during the last elections was from the countryside, which means the peasant. I do not want them to forget those people. You may have, as Ministers, plenty of influence in this country, but some of us who do not happen to be Ministers also possess some influence; and my influence, I can tell you, is derived mostly from the peasants and is also over the peasants. And I speak for them.

I can assure Government that the peasants are not on their bended knees in order to request these Ministers, 'Please do not liquidate us'. In Poland, Gomulka has shown to the rest of the world that peasants cannot be trifled with. In Hungary, too, the Hungarian revolution has shown to the friends of these friends here (CPI) that the peasants cannot be trifled with. I do not want the Indian peasants to be frightened by the statements from the 'heighty and the mighty' that if the peasants are not going to be reasonably obedient and march into these co-operatives, force will have to be used.

I am very glad that my hon. friend, Shri M.R. Masani, has made his speech this morning. I am entirely in agreement with that speech. I do not wish to traverse that ground, again. But I can say in addition that peasant economy any day can deliver the goods better and more satisfactorily in the interests of the country and more in the immediate interests of this particular Plan than the co-operative farming with which so many of our planners and our Ministers seem to have fallen in love.

We have decided, on behalf of the Federation of Rural People's Organisations and also on behalf of the Bharat Kisan Sammelan, to launch a campaign, called the four P's Campaign, that is to make an appeal to the peasants, 'Ye peasants ! Produce more to protect yourselves from all these great authorities and powerful people who are installed in these gaddis, and also to protect the nation'.

One of the suggestions made by one of us which the Government were good enough to adopt was the issue of prizes for crop production. And they found these good results : in Bombay 160, Madras 107, Kerala 128, Mysore 150, and Coorg 100 maunds per acre. These are States where there was the ryotwari system, peasant proprietorship, family farm production—not for one or two centuries but for many centuries. On the other hand, the production in the other States, where they have had these zamindari and talukdari and all other intermediary systems of land tenure for centuries and centuries, was very low. Only

in the last seven or eight years that intermediary system has been abolished by the Congress Ministries in the States. All credit to them. And in UP, these bhoomidari rights of ownership are just now being handed over to the peasants. They want to erase all that they write on a paper, on their pattas, even before the ink is dry. Is that the idea of the Government? Millions of people, hundreds of millions of individuals all over the country are becoming owners of their lands at long last after centuries of denial of their ownership of the land. And they want to deny them that?

That is what Soviet Russia had done. They promised small holdings for the peasants. So they got their help in the 1917 revolution. But by 1924 every peasant had been deprived of his holdings and turned into a wage-slave, and collectivisation was brought in—with what results, everybody knows. Do you want to do that here again? There they did it in the name of totalitarianism. These planners want to do it in the name of democracy. How dare they do that? How courageous they are!

I wish to assure them that I am convinced by my observations, by my study of rural economics, by my study of the actual economics of the farmers and farms themselves, that with peasant family farming, several hundreds of thousands of Harijans, depressed classes and backward classes today are owning one acre or half an acre in certain areas—they are able to produce more per acre—not per every person, because we have too many people. They can always produce more than by your so-called co-operative farming. What has been the experience of those people in co-operative farm ? During the last four or five years they made two hundred experiments on two hundred farms. Everywhere they have failed.

There was a South-East Asia Regional Conference of the FAO in Bandung. All the experts gathered there. They pooled their experiences and came to the conclusion that co-operative farming is not the right thing. And when I warn you not to launch upon a national campaign

against peasants, I am not an opponent of co-operation. I have been building up co-operatives in my own district, in my own State. All over India I have been encouraging peasants to go into co-operatives. But when we ask people to go into co-operatives, just as you say that 'water is good, but do not drink too much of it till you die', so also in regard to co-operation, there is a limit beyond which you cannot have co-operation. I say, have your co-operation by all means for all the activities of the peasants except on his farm, in the organisation and utilisation of the family labour, in carrying on his farming activities. If you interfere in that, then what will happen is, as is happening in China and in all the other countries, you will be forced sooner or later to give to each one member of your collectives or co-operative farms one or two or three acres of land, call it orchard or backyard or kitchen garden, and make him work on Sunday also and slave night and day after he puts in seven hours' work on the co-operative farm (in order to induce him to work whole-heartedly on the co-operative farm). I saw in Soviet Russia they work on Sundays also on their own farms when they are supposed to have a holiday, with the result that they in Russia do not have a holiday. They are forced to work for ten or twelve hours on a Sunday, because they must add a little to the inadequate wages they are paid on a collective or co-operative farm.

I am concluding, by repeating what I have said in the beginning, that so far as my voice counts in this country, I am opposed to this policy Government wishes to pursue.

THOUGHTS ON CO-OPERATIVE FARMING
(SECOND WARNING)

Rangajee attended the Conference of Ministers of Co-operation held in Mussoorie in June 1956, *as a representative of the All India Co-operative Union and warned the Conference against the proposal of the Government of India and Planning Commission to launch a national campaign in favour of co-operative farming. Soon after that, the Planning Commission invited Members of Parliament to offer their advice over the Draft Second Five Year Plan. Rangajee once again reiterated his demand in the course of his special memorandum submitted to the 'C' Section of that Conference of M.Ps. that until and unless experiments were made with co-operative farming and its superiority came to be demonstrated over and above the merits of peasant farm economy, it would be harmful to decide in favour of co-operative farming in preference to peasant economy.*

He added, in that memorandum, that he was not opposed to the imposition of ceilings but such ceilings should not be fixed at too low a limit and similar ceilings should be simultaneously imposed upon non-agricultural properties and incomes, to avoid discrimination against peasantry. He also suggested various measures calculated to protect the interests of tenants, cultivating the lands of even the ryotwari pattadars who had never been the traditional rent-receiving landlords and to provide small holdings to a large section of agricultural workers from out of the vast areas of Government lands which have till now been under-developed.

He realised the danger of the prejudice of the National Planning Commission against peasant economy not only to our peasant masses but also to the whole of our social economy and so he

hastened to initiate an open discussion on this question of co-operative farming versus peasant economy through his article entitled "Thoughts on Co-operative Farming" in the August 1956 *issue of the All India Co-operative Union Journal. Thereafter, he has continued to study this problem from a scientific angle in co-operation with the honorary research fellow of the Indian Peasant Institute, Shri P.R. Paruchuri, and published various chapters in the same Journal and thus welcomed co-operators all over India to join him in that scientific search after the truth. Eventually, he published the results of those researches in July* 1958 *in the thesis "The Peasant and Co-operative Farming".*

We are, therefore, reproducing here the original warning of Rangajee which formed the basis for his later thesis.

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THOUGHTS ON CO-OPERATIVE FARMING

By

PROF. N.G. RANGA

Vice-President, All India Co-operative Union

I shall try to present my first reactions to the proposal made by the National Planning Commission in regard to co-operative farming. As I have had no opportunity to consult any of my colleagues in the Bharat Kisan Sammelan or in the Indian Peasant Institute, these views can only be provisional and entirely personal. Therefore, it is but natural that I reserve the right of reconsidering them in the light of the views of others who are similarly interested in the protection and progress of our crores of cultivating peasants, tenants and all other agricultural classes.

I am an ardent believer in the philosophy of co-operation and it is my firm conviction that the farmers of our country will benefit much, economically and socially, by the adoption of the co-operative method. Since the

introduction of the co-operative movement fifty years ago, many of our farmers have willingly taken to co-operation in the matter of credit, supply of consumers' goods, marketing, etc. Consequent on the recommendations of the Rural Credit Survey Committee, the State has started taking active steps to strengthen the co-operative movement in order to make it succeed, which is a very welcome feature. There can be no two opinions on the point that we have to cover a long way to success even in the matter of credit.

It is in this background that the proposal of the National Planning Commission comes *viz*. to organise co-operative farming throughout the country. The Planning Commission thinks that the villagers, who could not successfully work co-operative credit during the past half a century, could be persuaded to work successfully co-operative farming, which is certainly more complicated than credit. Secondly, I am naturally apprehensive of its over-zealous faith in co-operative farming as the only means of improving agricultural production and the socio-economic conditions of our peasantry and its impatience to go on with the programme of organisation.

I am all in favour of the adoption of the co-operative method in the maximum avenues of life. But I am afraid the National Planning Commission has not fully considered the social value, socialistic significance and economic utility of non-exploitative agricultural employment, organisation and production under owner-cultivated agricultural economy, which need not give room for exploiting the occasionally hired labour and which relieve the society and the state of the responsibilities, in full or in part, of providing them employment and social security. It is most essential that society recognises the significant and extremely productive and progressive role that peasants who cultivate family holdings—either owned or rented—can and do play to supplement the activities and responsibilities of the state. It is, therefore, the duty of Parliament to protect and promote the interests of all the millions of owner cultivators as well as the tenant-farmers and not to jeopardise or diminish any of their present rights or

opportunities before creating compensatory rights or privileges for their full employment and social security.

This means that as and when more openings by way of industrial, commercial or agro-industrial employments are being created, more and more scope and justification can arise for ever larger number of peasants having too small holdings below the basic minimum for being persuaded to give up the ownership of their holdings and all that scope for economic self-governance they are capable of yielding and exchanging their ownership rights for the membership of co-operative farming with its agro-industrial equipments and social securities. It also means that these peasants, the extent of whose lands lie between the basic and maximum limits of holding and who can cultivate their lands with the help of their family members and who seek the co-operation of other peasants on a non-exploitative basis and who are prepared to join the multi-purpose or better-farming co-operatives for all purposes, excepting in the actual process of their daily employment on their farming ought *to be hailed as productive, progressive and socially desirable elements of our society*. Therefore, it will be conducive to socio-economic progress and to social justice if more and more families, related by ties or kinship or friendship are encouraged to come together into a co-operative farm and provided with all the facilities that are to be made available to any co-operative farm and considered as deserving of every legitimate encouragement and appreciation.

I trust that Parliament will help the National Planning Commission to accept this social standard and reorientate its attitudes and Plans regarding peasantry. It is high time to put a stop to the process of disintegration of our traditional socio-economic institution of joint family because it is conducive to so much of co-operative economic effort by the largest group of people held together by bonds of unity, socially more homogeneous and economically better integrated than a co-operative farm can be expected to be.

It is wrong to look upon co-operative farming as the only progressive and socialistically justifiable means of

organising agriculture and utilising land as a means of livelihood and a way of life. It is certainly one of the means for progressive use of land : so also is the peasant farming carried on in a non-exploitative manner. Let it be remembered that while co-operative farming creates hitherto-not-so-fully solved problems of incentives for better and larger quantum of work, work-management, human relations between the managers and members, bureaucratism and individual indiscipline and work-sabotage and managerial corruption, inefficiency and cost of supervision and management; farm-family economy, besides being free from all these evils, saves the State from the responsibility of finding and organising employment for all such families providing the all-round complex social securities as are legitimately demanded by wage-earners and professionals.

We cannot so light-heartedly ignore the fact as the Planning Commission seems to do, that it is in the best interests of a socialist society to enable as large a percentage of its people as possible to live on their own farms and means of employment, tools, etc., find maximum degree of employment and leisure and pleasure in their own family groupings. The state should provide self-governing institutions and occupational opportunities in economic or administrative avenues, only when such collective activities become necessary and are demonstrably in the interests of both society and the individual concerned.

I have, however, been urging since 1935 that all Government or otherwise public lands should be reserved for cultivation by the landless agricultural workers and small landholders. It is admitted by all that co-operative farming, however desirable it may appear to be in theory as a means towards ultimate socialisation of all national, economic and social activities, is yet to be experimented within our democratic set-up. The various techniques of organisation, management, work-loads, incentives to work, remuneration and self-governance in the working of co-operative farms have yet to be evolved. We have still to explore the ways and means by which the members of such a co-operative farm can be enabled to feel themselves strengthened, enriched and

made happier than they are at present or they would be, if they continue to work on their own. *Therefore, there is enough and more scope for all the experiments to be made in co-operative farming on the public arable lands.* It is, therefore, up to the Planning Commission to prepare its plans, for the State Governments to launch upon experiments to be followed by a campaign in co-operative farming on these public lands so that, in time to come, the owners of small holdings may be able to learn from their experience and decide upon their own mode of cultivation.

I am in favour of carrying on experiments in co-operative farming in the areas which are being covered by the National Extension Services. But, let not the Planning Commission give rise to any campaign against the non-exploitative peasant family economy, as if it is inimical to socialist ideals or co-operative commonwealth and *as if these experiments are being made only with the purpose of eliminating the family farm economy.*

We have to guard against the evil repercussions of any such campaign for it will discourage peasants from ploughing back their savings into their land improvements. It will prevent any more investments in land. It will bring down the land values, thus undermining the economic position of substantial portion of our total population. It will induce the highly educated and more enterprising elements among peasants to give up agriculture and seek employment in other walks of life thus robbing peasantry of their own intellectuals' co-operation. It will set in motion the disintegration of villages, rural life and family economy. If such is not the intention of Parliament, then it is up to it to reassure rural India that family farm economy of non-exploitative level and type will be looked upon as an essential element of socialist society and will be helped to become the most progressive sector of such a society.

We have to remember that the Planning Commission is not imposing any such co-operative, socialistic or collective experiments or campaigns for the urban, commercial, industrial means of livelihood in any way comparable to its

proposals for peasantry. The discrimination is likely by its very injustice, to weaken the faith of peasants in the socialistic *bona fides* of the Commission's approach.

We have also to recognise that just as the monogamous family as a socio-economic unit has been evolved through the trials of human history as the most wholesome co-operative unit of society, so also the family farm has come to be evolved by socio-economic history of mankind as the best socialistic co-operative unit, admitting of the least degree of exploitation and offering the best co-operative contribution to social economy of modern society. Therefore, it is perhaps wrong to insist upon breaking up the spontaneously self-governed and non-exploitative family farming and rushing them all one by one only as individuals into larger units of co-operation involving complicated management and capable of exploitation by supervisory staff, etc., as if that alone is the pure form of co-operation. It is in the best interests of socialistic society and most conducive to the development of economic self-government to organise co-operatives for the supply of all inputs, needed by agriculture, for the sale of agricultural produce, their processing, storage and semi-industrialisation and for the supply of their needs as consumers. The achievement of a significant measure of co-operation in these fields will be the biggest contribution we can make in the next twenty years towards the achievement of Co-operative Commonwealth.

FRPO'S WARNING

At the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Federation of Rural People's Organisations held in New Delhi on 20-12-56 *with Prof. N.G. Ranga, M.P., presiding, the following resolutions were unanimously passed:*

This Federation is appreciative of the progressive, freedom promoting and patriotic role played by the emergent peasant family economy of our country, embracing as it does more than 80 per cent of our agricultural population. It is, therefore, happy to note that the Planning Commission and the Prime Minister have decided to accept it as the basis for our national reconstruction through planned development.

The Federation is anxious that every possible assistance be given to the peasants to enable them to organise their own agricultural co-operative societies, and to obtain assistance in all such aspects of farm production as credit, cattle, seeds, fertilizers, implements and the processing of farm produce. Co-operative marketing could further aid the peasant by eliminating the middlemen's profits.

We welcome the recent steps taken by the Government to increase available credits and to inaugurate co-operative warehousing and marketing development boards. Having taken into consideration the almost total failure of co-operative and collective cultivation to increase production in a number of countries, as has been recorded by the Regional Conference of FAO at Bandung in October 1956, the Federation is willing to support experiments being made in co-operative cultivation but only on lands belonging to the Government and to bhoodan villages in order to see how our peasants react to the pooling of land and to collective cultivation. We can then determine what incentives can be provided to stimulate productivity, and to what extent the yields per acre and per farmer can be augmented after

deducting the inevitable overhead charges. It may then become clearer whether peasants will be able to continue to enjoy their present freedom and incentives to maximum production while producing at least as much as under the peasant family economy.

Therefore, the Federation warns against the initiation of hasty campaigns against small holders in order to mislead them and induce them to join co-operative farms without proper preparation and without the benefit of any experience in working such co-operative farms in a truly democratic and economical manner. The Federation exhorts kisans once again to hasten to organise service co-operatives to save themselves from the middlemen and also to increase their productive efficiency and their incomes, thereby enhancing their contribution to national agricultural production.

The Federation is strongly apprehensive that as a result of the Second Five Year Plan also, existing inequalities in incomes, employment facilities, productive resources and public utilities, prevailing between rural and urban sectors (to the detriment of the former) are likely to increase. The Federation declares that if the country is to progress in a socialist manner, the employment facilities, productive equipment and sources of income of the rural population should be augmented rapidly, with a view to eliminating the present unjust disparity between their low standard of living and the comparatively better conditions of the urban population. To this end, the Federation requests the Planning Commission to reformulate its Plan and the various schemes included in it so that more can be done to improve rural employment, housing, education and social life, and thereby bettering conditions in the under-developed rural areas and making life more bearable for the rural population.

The Federation welcomes the publication of "Plan and the Peasant" by the Indian Peasant Institute and requests the Government to give due consideration to the suggestions advanced in it.

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BOLD LEAD

From the Hindustan Times, December 25, 1956

There can be no doubt of the Federation of Rural People's Organisations political courage in coming forward to state its views frankly on the issue of collective farming. It is good that an organisation claiming to speak for the farming interests has warned against "hasty" campaigns for the introduction of collective cultivation The idea of agrarian co-operatives has lately—and rather unaccountably abruptly—gained ground at the highest levels of planning and political leadership and the fact that the Chinese example has in this connection been cited with appreciation does not serve to lessen the apprehensions of those who believe that anything like a forced programme of pooling the ownership and management of peasant holdings is not warranted either by the experience of countries which have tried these methods or by the felt needs of our agricultural expansion plans. The Federation has suggested that careful experiments in co-operative cultivation should first be tried on Government land and in bhoodan villages to assess peasants' reactions and the precise possibilities of better farming. This approach certainly links with the Government's own policy for revivifying the traditional co-operative movement and developing credit, marketing and multi-movement and developing credit, mutli-purpose agencies on a national scale and as an integral part of the community development programme. In a democratic society the task surely is to preserve the individual freedoms and incentives of peasant cultivators, while helping them to develop their own organisational strength for co-operative action. With the progressive implementation of various land reform measures, this country is gradually finding itself in a position where it can at last effectively help its farmers to rear a co-operative structure of economic activity and social living. It ought not to throw away this fine opportunity for the bird in the bush of a hastily hazily seen agrarian revolution.

REACTIONS OF CONGRESS LEADERS TO RANGAJEE'S OPPOSITION TO GRAMDAN MOVEMENT

Rangajee's spirited opposition to the gramdan movement, sounded at the Masulipatam Conference was seized upon by some of the leaders of the Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee, as meriting expulsion from the Congress Party. Thereupon, Messrs. Jawaharlal Nehru, Govind Ballabh Pant, the leader and deputy leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party respectively and Shri U.N. Dhebar, President of the Indian National Congress, hastened to write to Rangajee about his renewed opposition to the threat of co-operative farming. We give below this bunch of letters from them and Rangajee's reply. We also add the relevant extracts from the editorial of the influential Madras Weekly "The Swarajya" of 2.11.1957 *to indicate the reactions of that veteran fighter for National Freedom and distinguished journalist, Shri K. Subba Rao.*

New Delhi,
October 19, 1957

My dear Ranga,

I have seen a press cutting in which you are reported to have said that there was a conspiracy by the Central Ministers, newspapers and the town people against Andhra millers and ryots. I do not understand this. Where is this conspiracy? The Congress has a clear policy which we are trying to further. I take it that you agree with that policy. Anyhow, it is odd for you to say that the Central Ministers are conspiring against the Andhra ryots.

Yours sincerely,
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

New Delhi,
October 22, 1957

My dear Ranga,

My attention has been drawn to a report that appeared in *The Mail* of Madras dated October 15, about the speeches delivered by you at Masulipatam on the previous day. According to this report, you criticised the gramdan movement, and advised the ryots to prepare themselves for a fight with the authorities. You are further stated to have referred to the existence of a 'conspiracy' on the part of Central Ministers etc. and directed against the millers and ryots of Andhra. I find it difficult to believe that a public man of your standing could have indulged in this kind of criticism not only against the leaders of the Central Government but also against a movement which owes its origin to Vinobaji. Having regard to the seriousness of the matter I have felt it necessary to draw your attention to it.

Yours sincerely,
G.B. PANT

Nidubrolu,
25.10.57

My dear Jawaharlaljee,

Thank you for yours of 19th October, 1957.. I am afraid you have been misled by the wrong press reports of my speech. I did not speak about any conspiracy between the Government, Congress, urban interests, etc., against Andhra rice producers and millers, nor did I charge the Government with conspiracy in any other matter, at the Masulipatam conference. Unfortunately, some of the Andhra Congress politicians took advantage of suggestion like that made in some of the press reports and bad translations.

It is true that I have found it necessary to give vent to the strong resentment felt by most people in Andhra,

especially rice producers and millers against the unfriendly, contradictory or confusing orders passed by the Food Department of the Centre and shortage of wagon supplies.

I have had to wonder whether the policy of the Central Government followed during the past six months was not discriminatory against our agricultural producers and wanted Government to review its attitudes and policies in the light of our resentment. Surely, it cannot be your desire to ask me to abstain from such expression of people's feelings, in the hope of influencing Government to review its attitudes.

Regarding the idea of gramdan panchayat ownership, management and cultivation of all the lands in a village after persuading all the peasant-owners of lands to give up their ownership and management of the cultivation of their holdings, I must say that I was most unhappy like many other peasants over Yelwal agreement on this socially dangerous and economically unproductive move reached without consulting those of us who have been in intimate contact with peasants and their organisations. What hurt me even more is the decision of the conference over this crucial matter for which Communists have been waiting for such a long time.

I will be glad to meet you to explain, if you can spare time, what all implications are involved according to me, in this gramdan panchayat ownership of land.*

Yours affectionately,
N.G. RANGA

New Delhi,
November 3, 1957

My dear Ranga,

Thank you for your letter of October 25th. You refer to what you call the unfriendly, contradictory or confusing

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* Later expounded in "Panchayat Landlordism *Vs* Peasant Economy". see pp. 51-59.

orders passed by our Central Food Ministry. I do not know to what exactly you refer and, therefore, I cannot deal with that matter. Here we are facing a very grave food situation in India, more especially in relation to rice. It has always been our policy to build up stocks of food grains. This is quite essential and there is no escape from it. Naturally, this has to be done taking every factor into consideration, including the interests of the food-growers. I must say that I have no particular sympathy for millers who want to profit by the country's disaster.

You then refer to the idea of gramdan panchayat ownership. What form this might take ultimately, I do not know, and it may take many forms. The essence of it is co-operation. In the Five Year Plan as well as in repeated policy resolutions of the Congress, co-operation has been laid down as an essential objective to be aimed at. With this, it has always been said that this is a voluntary movement.

Co-operation can be of the service type, that is, apart from joint cultivation. This, of course, is absolutely essential anywhere, but more especially in a country with very small holdings. There can be no scientific progress otherwise. So far as joint farming is concerned, I think that is desirable. But, it is a matter to be proceeded with afterwards and, naturally, with the consent of the people concerned.

As a matter of fact, so far as gramdan panchayats are concerned, the matter is left rather vague. I really do not see what is socially dangerous and economically unproductive in this. Indeed, it is the natural social direction in which every country moves, and as for production, the whole purpose is to increase it.

This has nothing to do with Communists as such. As I have said above, our Planning Commission has dealt with it for several years past, and so has the A.I.C.C.

Yours sincerely,
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

New Delhi,
November 12, 1957.

My dear Rangajee,

I received your letter of the 19th October on the 24th October. Since 25th October I have been away from Delhi. I have gone through your speech very carefully. I am sorry you could not remain present at the last meeting of the A.I.C.C. where the question of co-operatives in agriculture and farming was discussed. The proceedings have been published. I did not like to record any decision but the Prime Minister summed up the position on behalf of the A.I.C.C. His speech also is there in the proceedings. As soon as I reach Delhi I shall make available a copy of these proceedings to you.

I know that you hold certain views on the problems of peasantry in the country. It is good that we discuss these views with a view to persuade one another. But what is of equal importance is that the organisation is not led into a bewildering controversy. That is likely to confuse the peasantry much more than anything else. We have all accepted the Plan generally. There may be differences here and there. They have got to be reconciled. But if we begin attributing motives to one another or criticise in a non-constructive manner, the only person who benefit by it is the Communist.

You have discussed the decisions of the Yelwal conference. I wish if you had any apprehension, you had first of all discussed them with some of us. We have been associated with the bhoodan and gramdan movements for a long time, and I can tell you that none wishes the peasant to be subjugated to officialdom or bureaucracy. Mr. Chenna Reddy has sent me Shri Sanjiva Reddy's statement. I have passed it on to Shri Sanjiva Reddy. I shall discuss it with him when he comes here. You have so far kept out of the provincial politics. I wish everybody tries to rise above their local selves. There is so much to be done in the country and while honest expression of opinion on basic

policies with a constructive approach is likely to contribute to confusion and disruption.

We shall meet as soon as it is possible for you. I will be busy till the 17th with the Working Committee. My Personal Secretary will ring you up and fix up the time.

Yours sincerely,
U.N. DHEBAR

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THE LAND REFORMS MUDDLE

(From "SWARAJYA" Dated November 2, 1957)

Andhra Pradesh is now torn by a clash of opinion between Professor Ranga and the provincial leaders of the Congress over the Government's land reform proposals, particularly the projected ceiling on land holdings. In the controversy going on in the press and on the platform, the Congress leaders have sought to make capital out of the argument that Professor Ranga has placed himself in a position justifying the infliction of disciplinary action against him.

It is fortunate for the public interest at the present moment that Professor Ranga is not daunted by fear of being branded as indisciplined by the powerful Pradesh Congress leaders. There is some chance, therefore, of the impending land reforms being considered from standpoints other than those deriving power and significance from the Congress steam roller majority. None is more qualified for this service of disentangling the Congress reform scheme from its authoritarian base than Professor Ranga himself. For he is more well versed in the intricacies of agricultural economy in South India than all his antagonists put together. While they feed on slogans he has knowledge and experience to sustain him, and for integrating the interests of landlords and tenants and also of the vast army of landless agricultural labourers, there are few that possess his qualifications and resources of comprehensive knowledge and understanding. He has failed in the political game in which every politician

strives to seize power. But his standing as an economist of distinction with unrivalled comprehension of the problems affecting land, still remains unchallenged, and Pradesh Congress leaders would do well to give serious attention to what he says and deal with it on its merits, instead of running helplessly to the High Command in Delhi to get the weight of their disciplinary authority put on him to gag and silence his arguments which they are not able to meet otherwise.

Professor Ranga seems to us on the present occasion to be emblematic of democratic freedom. Congress leaders have mistaken democracy as the pampering of the numerically strong, victimising for their benefit smaller minorities in proportion of their smallness. This is a gross travesty of that honoured system of government. The true conception of democracy permits of no depredatory onslaughts on any section, however powerless politically, and under it none would feel unsafe because others stronger cast covetous eyes on his inheritance or property. Merely to concede this point would suffice to drive home the injustice of the confiscatory orgies indulged in by the Congress in the name of land reforms and the socialistic pattern.

Mere possession of land does not facilitate its cultivation. It needs credit more than capital, and the customary avenues of credit in rural areas have from times immemorial sprung out of the propriety status of the landed agriculturist. The Congress handling of land has squeezed value out of it and rendered it unsellable, with the result that the traditional forms of credit have disappeared from the countryside. Having destroyed rural credit, the Government are desperately casting about for ways and means of remedying the destruction they have wrought. The Prime Minister has announced that co-operation is the great maha mantra for renovation of our agricultural economy.

Peasant proprietorship of land has in India preserved a large area of freedom and economic and cultural independence, which even foreign rule has not been able to disrupt with its subversive pressures and influences. Successive invasions of alien authority passed over it, leaving its integrity in a

national sense undisturbed and unimpaired. This treasure of an asset through which the nation's spirit of freedom has been preserved through all vicissitudes, the Congress rulers have now set out to destroy, paving the way to a new dreadful state of affairs where, on land as in industry, nobody can live and earn a livelihood without grace of the ruling power. Some premonition of this mass misery worse than slavery must have impelled Prof. Ranga to raise the standard of revolt against the so-called land reforms of the Congress.

INTERNATIONAL'S WATCH

"PANCHAYAT LANDLORDISM VS. PEASANT ECONOMY"

Rangajee's rejoinder to the decision of the Yelwal conference in Mysore State held in September 1957 *was published in this brochure. Leaders of all the so-called left parties, including the Congress, Praja Socialist Party, Communist Party as represented by Messrs. Jawaharlal Nehru, U.N. Dhebar, A.K. Ghosh, Jayaprakash Narain and others took part in that conference, held in the presence of Shri Vinoba Bhave. Prof. Ranga was the first to protest against that decision. He sounded his warning to peasant masses against the possible consequences against their economic independence and self-employment in his presidential speech at the kisan conference held in Masulipatam in October* 1957. *Shri Vinoba Bhave gave his reply to that by assuring that the gramdan movement was not being conceived as a threat to peasants' freedom and Rangajee reiterated his fears about this new movement as being anti-peasant and calculated to destroy the freedom of hundreds of millions of peasants. All these statements and speeches were incorporated in this brochure published in January* 1958. *The International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) and International Peasant Union (IPU) have both studied this brochure carefully and published the following extracts from it in their journals to draw the attention of the farmers all over the world to what is at stake in the present controversy in India.*

IN DEFENCE OF INDIVIDUAL FARMING IN INDIA AGAINST COLLECTIVISATION

India's Farm Population

The population of India in 1951 had already reached a total of 361.3 million, of which those engaged in agriculture

constituted 71.8 per cent. Peasants who owned less than ten acres of land, together with their families, exceeded 167.3 million persons, while 31.6 million peasants rented their lands from landholders. Consequently, small holders and tenant-cultivators together add up to 198.9 million persons, or 56 per cent of the total population of India. In addition, there are, in India, 44.8 million agricultural labourers who do not possess land.

The advocates of village community land ownership want to deprive 198.9 million self-employed agriculturists of their status of full or partial economic freedom and of their independence from the disabilities of the landless proletariat in order that 44.8 million agricultural workers might be given the satisfaction of knowing that four times their number have been reduced to their own unhappy level of wage slavery. (IPU)

Why do the leaders of the political parties think that our essentially self-governing and freedom-yielding peasant economy based so much on self-employment is not conducive to social well-being and to the creation of a really free society, asks Professor Ranga in his pamphlet. (IFAP)

They may say that they have not decided against these institutions but have only tried to place an alternative before our masses of peasants and artisans. Can they say that the merits of their favourite alternatives, co-operative cultivation and panchayat land-ownership and cultivation, as are implied in the gramdan movement, have anywhere yielded consistently over a period of two or three decades more produce, greater freedom, less wastage of natural and other resources, and more economical use of national resources and higher quantum of essential leisure and happiness to the people employed thereon than what has been possible under peasant economy? Is it not a fact, on the other hand, that peasant economy has not destroyed land, nor has it been accused of encouraging too high overhead charges or holding society to ransom as so many other systems under both capitalistic and communistic dispensation have done? (IFAP)

Certainly it is true that peasants are badly in need of co-operative organisation for the supplies of capital, implements, machinery, manures, drought, cattle services and warehouses, processing, dehydration, and refrigeration facilities, etc. in addition to much structural equipment. For want of these facilities and for their dependence upon such key services, too high a proportion of their costs of production is being paid. These institutions have come to be loaded with many defects and undesirable economic and unsocial practices. All such disabilities are a challenge to the statesmanship of the national leaders of our political parties but not an excuse for turning against these great institutions, the symbols of freedom and progress. It is the combined duty of government and peasants and all political and other leaders to provide our peasant economy with the badly needed co-operative equipment. (IFAP)

It is true that the organisational and planning side of agriculture under peasant economy can be very much improved to the advantage of both the peasants concerned and the country. Such an improvement can be best achieved by state effort as most of the improvements needed by way of irrigation, flood protection, prevention of soil erosion, overcoming pests and cattle epidemics are too costly and demand organised state efforts. Crop planning can also be bettered if peasants as well as the local representatives of national and state planners can confer and co-operate with each other. (IFAP)

Collectivisation would increase unemployment

The 1951 census indicated that India's 44.8 million agricultural workers are employed from 180 to 245 days in the year in most parts of the country, and the Planning Commission pleads inability to suggest any specific schemes for providing them with work during the three to four months of their unemployment for the next 10 to 15 years. Yet the champions of community land ownership, together with the Planning Commission, are prepared to advocate the creation of large collective holdings, big enough to embrace one or

two entire villages, although they are fully aware that such a transformation can only lead to a situation in which more than half of the presently self-employed peasants (198.9 million) become surplus labour. They do not seem to have the vaguest idea of how to provide alternative employment for the hundred million peasants who would be thus displaced.

It is a well-known fact, born out of the experience of all countries in the world, that when the size of the average holding increases, overhead, supervisory and administrative costs go up, the demand for labour is reduced and a large section of the hitherto employed population becomes surplus labour. What will happen when this additional surplus and unused labour of the erstwhile small holders is added to the already large numbers of unemployed and under-employed agricultural workers? How could our governments, whether provincial or national, tackle that almost overwhelming problem of unemployment? (IPU)

From Independent Peasants to Wage Slaves

It is not difficult to visualize what will happen when all the peasant landowners are persuaded to part with their holdings and to engage themselves in the employ of the village community to which all their lands have been handed over. Will it not be the greatest tragedy that can befall our independent peasants, that during the largest portion of any work day they are to be forced to work under the orders of supervisors or masters instead of being their own masters and employers? I am sincerely convinced that the projected economy of collective agriculture would take India along the erroneous, dangerous and suicidal path of increasing wage slavery and managerial exploitation of the land and the agricultural population. (IPU)

Even Communist Poland and Yugoslavia have abandoned Collective Farming

We know that the Communist Governments of Yugoslavia and Poland have had to abandon their prejudices

against an independent peasant economy as well as their obsessive preoccupation with collective farming, because they have found the former to be far superior to the latter. They have been forced to offer the peasants a choice and to accept their rights to permanent cultivation and ownership of land. We also know that in every one of the experiments made in hundreds of regions throughout our country, the evils associated with majority rule, official red tape and the slackening of incentives have not been eliminated, and the results have been very discouraging to all concerned. In the debate in the Lok Sabha, held in August 1957, all but one non-official speaker warned the government against favouring co-operative farming. Even those experts on co-operation consulted by the Planning Commission, such as Sir Malcolm Darling and Mr. Otto Shiller, have advised in favour of encouraging self-employed peasants to work on co-operative lines in all organisational spheres, outside actual farming. No less a statesman than Shri Rajagopalachari has also warned against depriving peasants of their land and their self-employed status. We must ask the Government then, why it should be so strongly opposed to our peasants and their system of using the land as the source of their employment and their freedom, and why it is so keen on placing us at the disposal of a co-operative society and its officials and at the mercy of a hierarchy of departmental officials of government who would impose upon us their whims and pleasures, red tape, inefficiency, corruption and unbearably heavy overhead costs? (IPU)

What Political Parties have to answer?

The political parties have to answer the question as to why they want gramdan, that is village ownership and management and cultivation of the lands in the village. Is it because they think it will yield better crops or create better or higher incentives for more or better productive efforts? Can it be because village collective management of land and cattle and implements and finances will be more efficient, economical, and constructive? Is it wise for them to overlook the proved merits of the peasant economy,

undermine the morale of more than a hundred million peasants and their dependents, and weaken their incentives for better and higher efforts by inaugurating a national campaign in favour of the alternative economy, another system of landlordism and management and against the continuation of existing owner-cultivation and self-employment economy of peasantry? We would like to know whether the leaders who support gramdan landownership and profess faith in democracy have cared to study the nature, magnitude, and incidence by way of human suffering caused by the defective working of panchayats and co-operatives, that is, the loss of faith and interest in the so-called democratic elections and the amount of litigation and administrative complaints and counter-complaints which have accumulated during the past ten years over their defective working ? If they had done that, they would certainly not have hailed so readily and light-heartedly the idea of panchayat management of land as a better alternative to peasant economy. (IFAP)

They might have turned a blind eye towards the notorious defects and evils that have shown themselves in the working of co-operatives and village panchayats of our country, because of their idealistic belief that all the most important decisions would be taken unanimously. But the millions of people of South Indian States who have organised and worked a much larger number of these institutions and worked them for a much longer period than the people of North Indian States know to their bitter cost, what it is to be in the minority. They also know how difficult it is to have impartial administration and also judicious-minded ministry. They realize how dangerous it would be when the whole of the land, much the most important source of employment and living of most people in any village, comes to be owned and controlled by the co-operative farm or by the village panchayat which will be exposed to the unbearable politics of factions and castes. We would like the political leaders to know that it was our peasants who have so far displayed greater enthusiasm in asking for the registration of co-operative societies and also for the establishment of village pancha-

yats. And therefore we ought to be given a more careful hearing when we say that there are limits beyond which these institutions ought not to be loaded with responsibilities which encroach upon essential and primary freedoms of everyday economic life of the masses.

We will face the Challenge

We are quite prepared to face the challenge of these alternative systems of land management and agricultural production and employment, that is, co-operative farming and village landownership and management of land. We are convinced that our peasant economy yields better crops per acre, an immensely nobler set of incentives, and an incomparably greater degree of freedom and sense of personal and family freedom and independence, than can ever be possible under either the namesake Chinese co-operative farming or the Soviet systems of kolkoz or solkoz farms of the gramdan villages. (IFAP)

We shall have no objection to the Government trying its experiments in co-operative farms organised on the lands belonging to it with the co-operation of the landless agricultural workers and gaining experience in that form of farm economy. We are prepared for such healthy competition. We are convinced that our peasant economy will emerge successful as being capable of giving the largest degree of ennobling freedom and inspiring our peasants to give their best to the nation by the display of all their creative and productive capabilities. (IFAP)

Let Facts Speak

There is a wrong impression that the proposed formation of basic economic holdings and the fixation of ceilings would solve the problem of the great majority of our peasants and that the small-holders who will have to be liquidated would not be too many. The facts emerging out of the All India Census of Land Holdings conducted by the Planning Commission in 1953-54 belie these impressions. The peasants who own less than 15 acres per family form 90 per cent in Andhra, 81 per cent in Bombay, 87 per cent in Madhya

Pradesh, 91 per cent in Madras, 82 per cent in Rajasthan out of all the holdings and they own 40 per cent to 50 per cent of all the cultivated land. That the formation of only basic and bigger holdings can employ and interest much smaller numbers of people is indicated by the fact that those who own between 10 and 15 acres are only 6.7 per cent in Andhra, 10.2 per cent in Bombay, 8.7 per cent in Madhya Pradesh, 6.5 per cent in Madras and 10.1 per cent in Rajasthan out of all the landowners. But they own 12 to 14 per cent of the total land and this is the only group which may be said to stand to gain under the Commission's proposals. (IFAP)

What do India's Peasants Want ?

The Indian peasant movement wants land reform to strengthen and not to liquidate small-holders. We want Village Development Councils and Service Co-operative Societies to reinforce the self-employed, industrious, free peasants who extract employment, national wealth and personal freedom from their tiny holdings. In short, we are in favour of service co-operatives and not land co-operatives. We are anxious that the government should agree to implement in practice the general principle of parity between the agricultural, industrial and commercial classes in the evaluation of their respective services to society and in the fixing of prices for the products of their labour or their services. Throughout the world, this principle has come to be accepted during the post-war era, but it is only in the democracies of the Free World—the countries of Western Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand—that it is being implemented more or less satisfactorily, at least in the fixing of food and grain prices. When will our Government also decide to shoulder this responsibility? (IPU)

Our Pledge

We maintain, without any fear of contradiction, that our free, independent, non-exploiting toilers—kisans (peasants) and kalakars (artisans)—who form more than

half of the Indian population, provide the granite foundations, on which a genuine, full-fledged social democracy can be built. We are convinced that an Indian economy based upon our self-employed kisan and kalakar family units of creative and free labour, will have the finest and largest base upon which Guild Socialism can be built. And by progressing along the path trodden by these regenerated, free and self-employed toilers, India may yet prove to be a new beacon of progress for the rest of the world. We trust that the Government and the leaders of the various political parties will heed our warning, that they should respect our love of economic freedom and appreciate the merits of our family farming economy. They should not take it amiss if our peasants and artisans try their best to organise themselves in order to protect their centuries-old freedom and their self-employed social status. They should rather encourage them to work more intensely and produce more through greater application of improved methods. The Government should encourage the peasants to extract a maximum of profit from their land and from their supplementary and auxiliary occupations; it should try to obtain higher incomes for them and to reassure them of the continued family utilisation of their holdings. (IPU)

VINOBAJEE ON RANGAJEE'S OPPOSITION TO GRAMDAN

The following are the relevant extracts from Vinobajee's interview to the press on 18.11.57 *as published in the "Bhoodan" of* 20.11.1957 (*Italics Ours*)*:*

Q. Shri N.G. Ranga has criticised gramdan bitterly. What do you think about it?

Vinobajee: Shri Ranga is a member of the Congress organisation and yet he has dared express his views on gramdan so frankly. I congratulate him for that. Men in an organisation show such freedom of opinion rarely. Organisation makes for uniformity. It does not give freedom of expression to the dissenter. Shri Rangajee has

expressed his views without any hesitation. I feel respect for him. If he understands the gramdan thought clearly he will, I have no doubt, support me whole-heartedly. He seems to feel that gramdan necessarily means collectivisation of land. It will reduce owners of land to the status of wage-earners and create a managerial class who will assume ownership in practice. There will be no initiative in the hands of the people. Gramdan, he feels, will facilitate imitation of the Russian model of collectivisation. He has; therefore, denounced the gramdan idea vehemently. In fact, the pattern of land-holding in a gramdan village is going to be decided *by the people themselves*. No one can have the right to force any particular pattern on them. Actually the inhabitants of gramdan villages are making varied experiments. *In some villages they are treating all land of a village* as one plot and cultivating it collectively. In others they have given separate plots to every family. In some they are trying to have co-operative farming. This is as it should be. Fertility of land, irrigation facilities and climate differ from one taluk to another. How can we have one stereotyped method or be dogmatic about any pattern of holding? Gramdan expects that everyone in the village will have initiative and a say in deciding various questions pertaining to land. It presupposes that there will be mutual goodwill and a feeling of friendliness amongst the people. They should be ready to work as one family. Many exponents of gramdan speak of co-operative or collective farming and so an impression is created that gramdan would enforce co-operative farming. It means various things to various people. But it is clear that the people have full freedom to decide the pattern of cultivation.

Q. What would be the nature of an administration in a gramdan village?

Vinobajee: Every adult over the age of eighteen will be a member of the gramsabha. Gramsabha will be the supreme authority of the village. It will own all the land of the village. A small advisory committee will be elected unanimously from amongst the members of the gramsabha. It will be a committee of experts. It will have only

advisory powers. The gram panchayat today is elected by a majority vote. There is social and economic inequality in the country. In a gramdan village there would be very little economic inequality and an election will be on the principle of unanimity. The villagers will decide all questions after a free discussion unanimously.

Q. In the beginning you asked for only a share of land holding in bhoodan, that is, private property in land was accepted. Does not gramdan alter the conception of bhoodan materially?

Vinobajee: I had never accepted private ownership in land even in bhoodan. I have been saying from the first that *land must be free to all like air and water. There was no equivocation or doubt about it.* But I wanted people to understand the new thought. *Bhoodan was only the first step. Gramdan is the natural development of bhoodan.* Basically there is no difference between the two. I have emphasised from the first that the meaning of the word is not charity but equal redistribution: दानं संविभाग: That is the classical definition of Shri Shankaracharya. There is no contradiction or discrepancy in bhoodan and gramdan.

Q. Joint family system is breaking up before our eyes and you are advocating that all the inhabitants of a village should look upon themselves as members of one family. How can it be practicable?

Vinobajee: Joint family system is breaking up because of causes which will not be present if a village forms a family pattern of society. In a joint family system every member had certain rights. The father, the husband, the wife, and every other member has some specific rights. *An association based on rights is bound to create conflict.* An association of brothers can quarrel amongst itself like the Kauravas and Pandavas. If a wife fails in her duty to her husband on a day her services during the long years before are forgotten. An association of friends would act differently. There people come together by choice of their own free will. In a family members have no choice. Friends come together because they have decided that it is in their

interests. We had khadi in ancient India. But then people had no choice. There was no alternative. But after Gandhi people chose khadi because they had accepted the thought behind it. A gramdan will represent a choice or acceptance of a new thought by the people.

Q. Will not gramdan make for state-ownership?

Vinobajee: Sarvodaya means decentralisation. It says that land belongs to God and not to man or the state. It means land belongs to no one. It is a part of the large world which God has created. It is meant for all who are in the world. *So God is the real owner of all land.* The management will vest in the gramsabha. It will be tilled by individual farmers. There is no question of state ownership. I believe that land belongs to the world. A government of any state cannot be the owner. This is a revolutionary idea. *It has nothing to do with state ownership.*

Q. Do you really think that owners will give land without any coercion?

Vinobajee: I am absolutely convinced that coercion and change of heart is a contradiction in terms. You cannot force anyone to accept a thought. You may thrust an idea on another by force but it will always be temporary. The moment pressure is relaxed he will fall back on the old pattern. Violence or state coercion will never change the heart and mind of man. There was a time when the hands of a thief were cut off as a punishment. But now we give him work. That is, our ideas about crime and punishment are undergoing a material change. In olden days multiplicity of wives was a mark of social position. But now you are not allowed to have two wives. Ideas change. *We are today witnessing a similar change in the idea of ownership.* Since the bhoodan movement and abolition of landlord system ownership of large tracts of land has ceased to be a matter of pride and distinction. *People now like to hide their ownership* whereas in olden days there was a tendency to show off.

Q. The Government has been anxious to introduce collective farming. They have so far failed to popularise

it. Is it possible that they have supported gramdan in the hope of popularising it?

Vinobajee: I am not sure that the Government is so keen on collective farming. They lack a collective mind themselves, that is, every Minister has a different view. There is, if I may say so confusion in their minds. It is difficult to say that the Government is anxious to introduce collective farming. It is true that they have realized that it is necessary to end fragmentation of land if agricultural production is to increase. But even then, there are differences of view amongst the economic experts for bringing about consolidation of land. The Government has not been able to define its attitude very clearly. They have an open mind. The various State Governments are following their own pattern. If they have now supported gramdan it means that they recognise the moral climate it creates. It is bound to have salutary effect on society as a whole. They look upon it as a kind of moral rearmament.

It is also bound to create a climate which would be favourable to co-operative farming and that is why they have given whole-hearted support to gramdan.

In this age of science it is stark realism to offer one's private property to society. Gramdan is not asking men to renounce ownership in land and become sanyasins.

By gramdan they can be happy only when private ownership of land is merged in the collectivity of the village. Everyone must grow something in a small plot in his house.

And there is not the remotest possibility of individual proprietorship in land being extinguished by legislation. No party would risk losing the votes of the majority of the electorate, namely, the small-holders.

AT THE CO-OPERATIVE CONGRESS

The following are the extracts with relevant additions which were implied from Rangajee's speech before the Co-operative Congress held in New Delhi on 12th April, 1958.

Actually, like every other aspect of co-operation, co-operative farming can also be developed and ought to be developed. No co-operator would like to put a ban on any kind of co-operative effort. Only, we do not want the Government to come into the field and say, "All other co-operative efforts are useless, they are of no importance, this alone is important, therefore take it up, otherwise you are not competent."

In our report on co-operative development in India, we have ourselves taken the trouble of giving you information (it is not encouraging) as to the results of the efforts being made in different States in the direction of co-operative farming. We are getting plenty of land (for the landless, after imposition of ceilings). Take that. Then there is the Government land, which is more than a fourth of the land now under cultivation by the peasants. Take that also. Make your experiments (with co-operative farming).

If they are a success, I can assure you, speaking on behalf of peasants, that the peasants would be the first people to take to it. But, until then, I do not want them to be unnecessarily forced or driven into a kind of nightmare that the peasant proprietorship (self-employment) might be endangered. I want to assure the peasant proprietors—I want all co-operators and the Government also to assure them—that their interests are as dear to us as the interests of other toilers in this country.

ON OUR THESIS "PEASANT AND CO-OPERATIVE FARMING"

Prof. B.R. Shenoy of Gujarat University has written the following letter to Rangajee after reading his thesis on "The Peasant and Co-operative Farming". He studied the book purely from an academic point of view and expressed his views, without indicating that they might be published. We have found his views to be of such relevance to the cause of our peasants and their self-employment status that we have made bold to place them before the public. It might be remembered that Prof. Shenoy was the lone member of the Panel of Economists called into consultation by the National Planning Commission who had the courage to point out the defects in the optimistic estimates of the N.P.C. over resources for the Second Five Year Plan and his warning came to be justified by later events:

School of Social Science,
Gujarat University,
Ahmedabad-9,
19th August, 1958.

Dear Professor Ranga,

I thank you for sending me a copy of your book on "The Peasant and Co-operative Farming". It is a delightful effort at independent thinking which is so different from the uncritical adoptions of theories and doctrines evolved in other countries, where the environment and the historical context are, in vital respects, different from the Indian environment and the Indian tradition. I am almost wholly in agreement with you that we would be misapplying the principle and the spirit of co-operation and of socialism if we advocate co-operative or collective farming. These are integral to the communist philosophy. It appears to me that some people are trying to pass off communist

theories in relation to farming under the cloak of co-operativisation.

I agree with your distinction between the peasant family economy and the capitalist individualism which obtains in the rest of the private sector. Under the prevailing technique maximum agricultural production can be achieved only through the regime of peasant proprietorship. The need of the situation is not collectivisation or co-operativisation, but, as you have rightly pointed out, Service Co-operatives to provide the farmer with the key services of credit, water supply, marketing and insurance.

In a discussion of this problem, the non-economic aspects of peasant farming, to which you have drawn attention, are too often ignored. The peasant values his possessions no less for the economic than for the non-economic satisfactions which they bring. As in other countries, any attempt to impose co-operative farming on him would be to eliminate the non-economic benefits of land and agriculture to the peasant. As elsewhere, he is likely to resist such imposition which, doubtless, will lead to a great deal of human suffering.

Considerable scope exists for action by the state to help the peasant farmer in his efforts to maximise agricultural production. This applies, in particular, to the key services, referred to above, in which the initiative and the organisational background must be induced by the state.

The evils of population pressure on land, uneconomic holdings, under-employment of the rural population, inefficient cultivation and rural poverty are, in large part, the outcome of colonial rule of 200 years which exposed India to the impacts of industrial revolution in the ruling country and which, at the same time, denied manifestation of the phenomenon and its benefits in India. This problem cannot be solved adequately by distribution of land, by legislation or by limiting agricultural incomes. True solution of the problem lies in reversing the process which brought it about, namely, to take away from the land the surplus of population through the development of non-agricultural

vocations and industries. In bringing about this change, the state should resist the temptation to adopt a paternalistic role. Historically the motive power of progress has been free enterprise. It is only in Russia that economic progress has resulted through suppression of free enterprise. This achievement, however, has been built on the grave of human personality, the liberty of the individual being replaced by the tyranny of the "New Class" of bureaucrats and partymen. In our bias against the rich we are often blind to the dynamism and potentiality of free enterprise. The evil impacts of this can be prevented from manifesting through the various techniques which we have evolved from the experience of the past couple of hundred years. It is not necessary to eliminate private enterprise, even as it is not necessary to eliminate the peasant proprietorship, to achieve speedy economic progress. So far from this being the case, for maximisation of the national product, free entrepreneurs, like free peasant proprietors, are essential in the prevailing situation.

It is tempting to think that your book will produce the desired impression and influence the policy in the field of agriculture on the part of the Planning Commission and the Government of India. I wish your book every success in this regard.

Yours sincerely,
B.R. SHENOY

FIFTEENTH DECEMBER, 1958 TO SEVENTH MARCH, 1959

The Bharat Kisan Sammelan has sensed from Delhi's political manoeuvres that something, a major move against peasants' freedom, was in the offing. So, Rangajee, its President, convened the Bharat Kisan Convention at Delhi on 14.12.58 *and invited the representatives of the All India Agriculturists Federation and such of the Members of Parliament who believed in peasant economy also to take part in the Convention. Some of the resolutions of the Convention are being reproduced here to indicate the latest trends amongst all sections of our agriculturists.*

In the wake of this Convention, the 108 *members of Parliament sent their Memorandum to the Prime Minister. A fortnight thereafter the Congress was made to adopt its New Lead at Nagpur. Within ten days after that fateful decision, Rangajee sent his protest against it as well as his plea for freedom of expression to Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, the leader of the Congress Party. It can be seen from this letter how Rangajee has reminded the Congress leader about the special right he has reserved for himself, from the time of Congress invitation to him in* 1952 *to rejoin it, to plead, work and fight for the fundamental interests of peasants. It is no use for Congress leaders to say that even the First Five Year Plan has hinted at the possibility of the advent of co-operative farming, because, Rangajee took care to oppose all such implications and actually voted against that Plan and warned the A.I.C.C. authorities about his attitudes. It does not cut much ice with him to quote the* 1957 *Election Manifesto because, he can be loyal primarily to the* 1955 *Election Manifesto of the*

United Congress of which he was one of the principal architects and that emphatically stated the need to protect and promote the interests of peasant proprietors and talekd of only multi-purpose co-operatives, needed by peasants to strengthen their economic independence.

Even tke 1957 *Election Manifesto did not specifically refer to joint co-operative farming and all it could be said to have referred to was only the service co-operatives and that too in a vague fashion. All these implications were hinted at by Rangajee in his letter of* 19.1.1959 *to Jawaharlaljee. This chapter is thus devoted to this period between* 15.12.58 *to* 15.2.59*; which has witnessed such eventful happenings as the Convention, M.Ps' Memorandum, Nagpur threat and Rangajee's resignation from the Secretaryship of the Congress Parliamentary Party.*

KISAN CONVENTION (DEC. 1958)

The Bharat Kisan Convention was held at New Delhi on the 14th December, 1958, and passed the following resolutions:

(1) The All India Kisan Convention wishes to remind the public that the All India Kisan Sammelan has been giving its best thought for many years, especially since the publication of the Minority Report signed by Shri O.P. Ramaswami Reddiar and Rangajee of the Congress Agrarian Reforms Committee to the vital question of the advisability or otherwise of ceilings on land holdings and has published its conclusion boldly that it would certainly favour the conception of ceilings on all incomes and properties as a part and parcel of the achievement and application of the conception of social justice in a Welfare State. But the Convention regrets to observe that the main political parties have only been demanding ceilings on agricultural incomes and properties alone and have either opposed or soft-pedalled the demand for imposition of similar or any kind of

ceilings on all types and sectors of non-agricultural incomes and properties derived especially from urban, industrial, commercial and governmental professions. It regrets that the Union Government has set its face against the imposition of such ceilings even on urban and professional incomes above Rs. 2,500 per mensem per person or Rs. 30,000 per annum per family, but yet its leaders and the Planning Commission are constantly pressing—a pressure bordering on political coercion—the State Governments to impose ceilings on agricultural incomes and see that such ceilings should not be above Rs. 3,600 per annum, per family. This Convention warns the public and the Government that their persistence as also of the urban and professional peoples upon this inequitous and coercive pressure upon agriculturists alone to the exclusion of all non-agricultural incomes and properties, are bound to constitute the unmistakable evidence of their special antagonism and discrimination against the big but helpless class of peasants of this country.

(2) This Convention is definitely of the view that it is in the interests of national economy and progressive agriculture and expanding agricultural production and efficiency that peasants and their youth should be assured that the most enterprising, hard working, and skilled sections of them should be able to get Rs. 500 per mensem per adult male worker according to the present-day price index, from their utilisation in the most scientific and efficient manner of such of their holdings as can today yield that much income. The Convention is thus asking only for minimum justice and scope for the display of initiative, industry, efficiency and skill and the utilisation of the best methods of agriculture by the most enterprising peasants in the cultivation of their present holdings. This Convention, therefore, appeals to all organisations interested in the agriculturists and claiming to cater for their interests to carry on nation wide campaign against the one-sided and anti-peasant policy of the Planning Commission and be prepared to take all protective steps in a non-violent and organised manner to secure that equal social justice is meted out to them as to all other classes of people.

FARM SERVICE CO-OPERATIVE TO SERVE BOTH PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS

(3) This Convention wishes to assure the consumers of food grains that kisans are not at all anxious to profiteer either in production or marketing of food grains and are only keen on protecting themselves by demanding nothing more than remunerative prices. Peasants are willing to co-operate with the consumers in demanding that the Government should take all such measures as the opening of fair price shops and selling food grains to vulnerable, under-nourished and under-privileged sections of the people at subsidised levels of prices.

This Convention, therefore, requests Government to develop the co-operative movement with the objects of strengthening the family farm economy and not to weaken it, and to fostering democratic development and control of farm co-operatives by peasants themselves, but not to poison them with bureaucratic control. This Convention is also anxious that Government should utilise co-operative marketing societies organised mainly by peasants themselves in purchasing food grains from peasants at remunerative prices and supplying them to the co-operative stores in the consuming centres; eliminating the middle-man's profits and thus benefit both the producers and consumers of food grains. Whenever and wherever licences are being issued for wholesale purchase of food grains, such farmers' co-operative marketing societies should be given first preference.

LIBERATE CO-OPERATIVES FROM OFFICIAL INTERFERENCE

(4) This Convention welcomes the lead given by the National Development Council in favour of developing farm service co-operatives and increasing the total supply of working capital needed by peasants for fully financing their agricultural operations and their own maintenance during the crop season mostly based on the credit of their crops to be produced; and trusts that peasants as well as co-operators and co-operative societies would rise to the

occasion, take the fullest advantage of this new lead and see that at least 50% of the total productive effort of those employed therein will come to be benefited by this co-operative atmosphere of assistance from Government. At the same time the Convention warns Government against turning this new atmosphere of co-operation into another engine of exploitation and coercion against our peasants through the continuation and expansion of their present-day habits and methods of bossing over the co-operative societies and interfering in their internal administration and turning them all from being self-governed institutions into guided missiles of bureaucracy and political influences and interests.

PROTECT SELF-EMPLOYED PEASANTS

(5) This Convention is convinced that the family farm economy of our peasants is based upon the socialistic and Gandhian principles of social justice, non-exploitation, self-governance and decentralisation in economic life. All those peasants who are cultivating their own lands with or without occasional hired labour are the self-employed and self-respecting and self-reliant members of our society and as such any socialist society should welcome their presence, activity and stake in its midst as forming the backbone for its economic and social independence and self-governance. It is fortunate that in our country more than 50% of our working population happens to be such self-employed peasants and they are aided by the similarly self-employed four crore artisans. It is, therefore, the minimum duty of any Government which puts its faith in socialism and social justice to give every possible encouragement to our self-employed peasantry and artisans to continue to maintain their independence and enjoy their self-employment status.

The Convention calls upon the Government to make up its mind once for all to appreciate, support and strengthen the self-employed economy of peasant proprietors and to give them every possible assistance including the supply of working capital, manures, cattle feeds, tested or improved seed and know-how and also the organisation of farm service co-operatives and the establishment of a chain of

warehouses to be owned and managed by the self-governing Co-operative Marketing Societies. The Convention also requests the Government to realize that it has as great responsibilities towards the self-governing peasant proprietors as towards the industrial proletariat and the professional classes and that it is as much its duty to organise for them protective and insurance schemes against floods, famines, failure of crops, cattle epidemics, erosion of soil as to organise social insurance, provide employment to industrial and professional classes.

The Convention has taken note of the controversy that has been created by the Planning Commission through its ill-advised plans and efforts to replace the self-employed peasant proprietors by the so-called co-operative farms and thus achieve uniformity among all the villagers through their conversion into mere members of the so-called co-operative village community. While the Convention has, however, no objection to the organisation of co-operative farms through voluntary efforts on bhoodan and Government lands for the benefit of the hitherto landless agriculturists as an experimental measure, the Convention is definitely opposed to any national campaign being organised by the Government to drive peasant proprietors into the so-called co-operative farms because such a campaign, if organised without first of all proving the comparative greater advantages of such a co-operative farming over and above the proved merits of peasant economy of self-employed people would only create such coercive atmosphere as to deny the self-employed peasant proprietors their freedom to continue to be so self-employed, self-reliant, self-governed and self-respecting producers befitting a socialist society. This Convention appeals to Government not to be so hasty in initiating any such campaign in favour of co-operative farming to the detriment of self-employed peasant economy.

ALLOW BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TRADE IN FOOD GRAINS

(6) This Convention takes strong objection to the recent moves of the Governments at the Union and State

levels to procure compulsorily rice and wheat at arbitrarily fixed level of prices against which peasants have been, all along, complaining in vain as being uneconomic, unremunerative and far below the costs of cultivation. The decision of the National Development Council to take over completely the wholesale trade in food grains and entrust it to the State Trading Corporation with its State units and its allies the licensed wholesale merchants only, to procure all surplus food grains from our peasants at the arbitrarily fixed prices can only result in depriving the peasants of any possible benefits of free trade in food grains and placing them at the mercy of Government servants and licensed wholesalers. This policy would make them victims of the vagaries of official policies regarding fixation of prices, procurement, and estimation of peasants' capacity to supply food grains to the market. This would end in castigating all so unjustly such of the peasants as are obliged to fight against the State monopoly of procurement either directly or indirectly, knowingly or unknowingly as blackmarketeers and as anti-social elements. Therefore, this Convention requests Government to revise its decisions to ban all free trade in the marketing of food grains and to give freedom to peasants to sell at least 50% of their surplus food grains in free market *i.e.*, to unlicensed merchants. Government should anyhow be prepared to purchase from peasants under all circumstances such of their surplus food grains as are offered by them voluntarily at the procurement prices.

If, however, in spite of the costly experience gained by Government and the public through the cruel and inefficient control administration of 1948-52 Government wishes to inflict upon our peasants and consumers the rigors and sufferings of compulsory procurement at procurement prices, this Convention demands that Government should at least be willing to take the leaders of peasants into the fullest confidence in all the States in fixing the prices of food grains at remunerative prices only and thus prevent further pauperising of peasants and ensure the continuance of minimum incentives for efficient production and intensive cultivation.

PAY REMUNERATIVE PRICES

(7) The All India Kisan Convention reiterates the universal demand of peasant masses that the State should take necessary steps to assure them of remunerative prices at least for their major produce such as rice, wheat, cotton, jute and groundnuts in order to provide minimum of incentives to peasants to produce more and more, to achieve maximum productivity from land and also to protect them from the vicissitudes of season and also of markets.

It is unfortunate that till now Government has not taken any concrete steps to ascertain, if need be, through a number of pilot enquiries made in different States and in different areas the cost of cultivation of the major crops and also the standard of living of peasants both landed and landless to fix the price of major agricultural products based upon the results of such enquiries.

MEMORANDUM

New Delhi,
23rd December, 1958

My dear Jawaharlaljee,

I am enclosing the representation to you from more than 100 of us in our Congress Parliamentary Party regarding the present proposal to introduce ceilings unilaterally upon lands and agricultural incomes, and the urgent need to introduce simultaneously such ceilings on at least one of the many types of urban, industrial, commercial or professional incomes.

I request you to give your earnest attention to our urgent and just plea.

Yours affectionately,
N.G. RANGA

New Delhi,
23rd December, 1958

To,

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, Leader, Congress Party.

Sir,

We are anxious that the proposal for imposing ceilings on incomes and properties as a matter of social justice ought to be made applicable to all types of incomes and properties of all classes of people and implemented simultaneously if we are to be just to all sections of our society and if we are not to be accused of discriminating against our peasant proprietors alone. Even if practical exigencies were to be considered, it is essential that ceilings should be imposed on at least any one of the many types of urban and professional incomes and properties simultaneously with the imposition of land ceilings if at all we are to justify our stand before the bar of public opinion and the social conscience of our nation. Therefore, we request that if the Congress were to

be so very particular about the imposition of land ceilings not only on future holdings, but also on present holdings and incomes, then it should not be done unilaterally but simultaneously with the imposition of similar ceilings, at least on the incomes of Government employees or professional employees or any other urban class of people. We trust that nothing will be done to make the Congress open to the charge of discrimination against the broad masses of agriculturists.

List of Signatories

ANDHRA PRADESH:

1. Prof. N.G. Ranga.
2. Shri R. Narapa Reddy.
3. Shri V. Rami Reddi.
4. Shri Pendekanti Venkata Subbayya.
5. Shri T.N. Viswanatha Reddi.
6. Shri B. Rajagopala Rao.
7. Shri Missula Suryanarayanamurthy.
8. Shri R. Lakshmi Narasa Reddy.
9. Shri B. Anjanappa.
10. Shrimati Sangam Laxmi Bai.
11. Shri Etikala Madhusudhan Rao.
12. Shri P. Hanumantha Rao.
13. Shri D. Balarama Krishnayya.
14. Kumari Mothey Vedakumari.
15. Shri M. Ranga Rao.
16. Shri V. Venkata Ramana.
17. Shri S. Channa Reddy.
18. Shri Mudumala Henry Samuel.
19. Shri Narothama Reddi.
20. Shri M. Satyanarayana.
21. Shrimati Yashoda Reddy.
22. Shri A. Balarami Reddy.

ASSAM:

1. Shri Prafulla Chandra Barooah.
2. Shri S.C. Deb.

BIHAR:

1. Shri B.B. Varma.
2. Shri D.N. Tewari.
3. Shri Bibhuti Mishra.
4. Shri Kailash Pati Sinha.
5. Shri Digvijaya Narain Singh.
6. Shri Mahendra Nath Singh.
7. Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee.
8. Shri Mahesh Saran.
9. Shri Braj Kishore Prasad Sinha.

BOMBAY:	1. Shri Venkatrao Srinivasarao Naldurgker.
	2. Shri V.N. Swamy.
	3. Shri Deokinanda Narayan.
	4. Shri Ramrao Madhavarao Deshmukh.
	5. Dr. Waman Sehodan Barlingay.
MADHYA PRADESH:	1. Shri Mohan Lal Bakliwal.
	2. Pandit Jwala Prasad Jyotishi.
	3. Sardar Amar Singh Saigal.
	4. Shri B.L. Chandak.
	5. Shri Radhelal Vyas.
	6. Shri Ram Sahai Tiwari.
	7. Shri R.C. Sharma.
	8. Captain Awadesh Pratap Singh.
MADRAS:	1. Shri N.R.M. Swamy.
	2. Shri S. R. Arumugham.
	3. Shri P.R. Ramakrishnan.
	4. Shri M. Panaiyandy.
	5. Shri R. Narayana Swamy.
	6. Shri P. Subbayya Ambalam.
	7. Shri M. Gulam Mohiddin.
	8. Shri R. Govinda Rajulu Naidu.
	9. Shri K. Periyaswamy Gounder.
	10. Shri R. Kanaka Sabai.
	11. Shri P.D. Muttukumare Sami Naidu.
	12. Shri K.R. Sambandam.
	13. Shri A. Doraiswamy Gounder.
	14. Shri Vairavan.
	15. Shri T.V. Kamala Swamy.
	16. Shri P.S. Rajgopal Naidu.
	17. Shri N.M. Lingam.
	18. Shri S. Venkat Raman.
MYSORE:	1. Shri Tekuru Subramanyam.
	2. Shri T.R. Neswi.
	3. Shri H. Siddananjappa.
	4. Shri Mahadevappa Rampure.
	5. Shri H.C. Dasappa.
	6. Shri K.G. Wodeyar.
	7. Shri C.R. Basappa.
	8. Shri K.R. Achar.
	9. Shri A. Agadi.
	10. Shri M. Shankarayya.
	11. Shri B.P. Basappa Shetty.
	12. Shri Mulka Govinda Reddy.
	13. Shri Raghavendra Rao.
	14. Shri Mohamed Valiulla.

ORISSA:	1. Shri Baishnab Charan Mullick.
PUNJAB:	1. Shri Lala Achint Ram.
	2. Shri Daljit Singh.
	3. Shri Diwan Chand Sharma.
	4. Sardar Iqbal Singh.
	5. Shri Ranbir Singh Chaudhuri.
	6. Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava.
	7. Shri Hem Raj.
	8. Shri Sadhu Ram.
	9. Sardar Raghbir Singh Panjhazari.
	10. Sardar Darshan Singh Pheruman.
	11. Shri Jathedar Udham Singh Nagoke.
RAJASTHAN:	1. Shri Jaswantraj Mehta.
	2. Shrimati Sharda Bhargava.
UTTAR PRADESH:	1. Shri Sinhasan Singh.
	2. Shri Bhakt Darshan.
	3. Shri J.B.S. Bist.
	4. Shri Biswa Nath Roy.
	5. Shri M.L. Dwivedi.
	6. Sardar Jogendra Singh.
	7. Shri Braj Bihari Sharma.
	8. Shri Nawab Singh Chauhan.
	9. Shri Gopinath Singh.
	10. Shri Jogesh Chandra Chatterji.
	11. Shrimati Savitry Devi Nigam.
WEST BENGAL:	1. Shri N.B. Maiti.
	2. Shri Upendranath Barman.
DELHI:	1. Shri C.K. Nair.
HIMACHAL PRADESH:	1. Shri Nek Ram Negi.
TRIPURA:	1. Shri Bengshi Thakur.

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JAWAHARLALJEE'S REPLY

New Delhi,
December 25, 1958

My dear Ranga,

I have received your letter of the 23rd December. I have also received the representation you have sent me urging that ceilings should be introduced simultaneously

on agricultural incomes and on industrial, commercial or professional incomes.

This matter is, of course, of importance and has often been discussed. On the broad principle that there should be no discrimination and that we should aim at progressive equality, there is not much dispute, at least I hope, among Congressmen. But opinions differ as to how to attain this objective. I should have welcomed some kind of proposals in the representation. All that is hinted at there is that incomes of Government employees or professional employees should have a ceiling.

I do not think it is correct to say that there should be ceilings on income in rural areas. The ceiling is on the holding of land, which is a different thing. It is a well recognised fact that large land holdings are anti-social and prevent the growth of a community, that is where the population is large and there are many landless people. It would be different if the population was limited and there was a great deal of land available. One of the first steps that any country takes in order to advance socially and economically is land reform. This land reform inevitably includes some kind of land distribution above a certain ceiling. This is what the Americans did even in Japan. Thus, this is not socialism, but the inevitable necessity of the situation.

People living in rural areas can add to their incomes in any way open to them. Thus, the income need not be limited. We want small industries to increase greatly and flourish in rural areas. Then there are so many ancillary industries. It is only in a very backward system of agriculture that people rely on large holdings. If this agriculture is to advance, we have to adopt socially progressive measures, and these include a limitation on the holding of land, intensive cultivation and subsidiary industries.

This, I feel, is the only result we can arrive at in so far as land is concerned. The other question that arises is what we have to do to so-called urban or industrial or professional incomes. How exactly does one limit these incomes? The normal way is heavy taxation, and I am not aware of

any other feasible way. Further, all industrial progress depends today on science, technology, etc. We have to encourage this in every way. This requires highly specialised training and the demand for such people is so great that we are unable to keep our well-trained men in India as they are called out to other countries. We pay them one-third or one-quarter of what they can get in other countries.

I am pointing out just one consideration to be borne in mind. I think that the people who have signed the memorandum, perhaps, have not given thought to this aspect of the problem.

The problem is with us, of course, and we have to take measures progressively to equalise matters in rural and urban areas. But the way is to raise rural incomes, both from intensification of production from land and from rural industry, not taking some step which acts as an effective barrier to all industrial or like progress. I should, therefore, like the signatories of the memorandum to consider this matter and make suggestions which we can consider and discuss.

Social justice is an obvious aim that we must keep in view. But there will be not much social justice or socialism if we cannot drag ourselves out of the state of poverty and under-development that we are in. Social justice may lead to the conclusion logically that we should immediately equalise all incomes and property-holding in India. Even if that was possible, it would result in no great gain to anybody and a sudden winding up of most of our work in industry and other spheres.

Yours sincerely,
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

RANGAJEE'S REJOINDER TO NAGPUR

19th January, 1959.

My dear Jawaharlaljee,

Thank you for your reply of the 25th December, 1958. You have already published your arguments more than once in answer to our memorandum. But I did not wish to publish any reply that I could think of for fear of creating an unseemly controversy between the Leader and the Secretary of the Party.

I am sorry to say, I am unable to appreciate the rationale of your approach to this demand for placing a ceiling more or less simultaneously on the incomes and properties of both peasant proprietors and also professionals, civil servants and other industrial and commercial classes. Your attempt to distinguish a peasant's land-holding from his income does not appear to be based upon the realities of the present social order that is likely to continue to prevail during the next 15 years in view of the practical impossibility for most of our peasants to augment their incomes from any non-agricultural rural avenues. Therefore, for all practical purposes, the present attempts to put a ceiling on land-holdings will result, in almost all cases, in placing a ceiling on incomes of our peasant proprietors alone.

All the weighty arguments that you advance against placing a ceiling on the incomes of non-agricultural sections will appear to any unprejudiced person to be equally applicable to our agriculturists also. Such arguments make it difficult for me to refrain from concluding that different and contradictory yardsticks are being used for different classes for the application of social justice in developing socialistic society.

The lead of the Nagpur Congress (1959) regarding the question of ceilings and social justice may come to be looked upon as the commencement of demotion of peasantry into a new depressed class of the socialistic age.

Through its decision to inaugurate a national all-enveloping campaign in favour of joint farming to be implemented after a period of three years, the Nagpur Congress has gone far beyond the election manifesto of 1957; certainly far beyond the ken of the election manifesto of the United Congress to which I am specially obliged to be loyal in the light of the circumstances of its birth. Such a campaign could only result in the pooled area "constituting a single farm and the pooled labour a single family for the purposes of management without the consideration of the costs" as per the majority report of the Indian delegation to China. But the offer of allowing peasants to retain their titles to their holdings may result in nothing more than a ruse to assuage their loss of economic independence and self-employment.

The only relieving feature is that the inauguration of this portentous disorganisation of our democratic farm family economy which is free from the taint of profiteering and is based on self-employment is expected to come in the wake of the hoped-for-success of the present campaign for the organisation of service co-operatives and co-operative farms in block areas, thus giving an opportunity for all those of us who pin their faith in service co-operatives as the desired armour and buttress of our farm family economy, but not as a stepping stone to joint farming and possibly to communes, to try to dissuade the Planning Commission and others in the light of the social progress to be achieved through non-exploitative and technologically-orientated farm family economy and service co-operatives, not to impose joint farming as suggested by Nagpur Session. As I am convinced that such a national campaign in favour of joint farming in place of peasant economy can only undermine the democratic foundations of our society and lead to economic slavery of broad masses, I would like to be free to press the case against its imposition upon our peasantry as a matter of inflexible and inevitable policy.

Whatever justification there was for us to entertain hopes for the success of joint or co-operative farming in the pre-war fancy for U.S.S.R's. imaginary successes on

agrarian front, there can be none now in the light of the admitted failures of this method of agrarian organisation and production in so many communist countries of Europe, no excluding U.S.S.R. and the partial or full re-introduction o peasant family farm economy for co-existence.

It is highly hazardous, harmful and unstatesmanlik to repose Utopian faith in the Chinese agrarian co-operatives which function under the totalitarian umbrella of communes and rush the country into the projected nationwide campaign in favour of joint farming taking advantage of the overwhelming lead conferred upon the Congress by our grateful country during this first decade of Swaraj.

Yours sincerely,
N.G. RANGA

Annexure

My convictions in favour of peasant family economy and its content of self-employment and economic freedom and my opposition to such a nationwide campaign in favour of its rival, the joint farming and co-operative farming, are not new to you as I have been advocating these policies since 1948—in the Congress Economic Programme Committee, 1948; Planning Sub-Committee, 1949, for both of which you were the President; in the Working Committee up to 1951; and in the Minority Report to the Agrarian Reforms Committee of the Congress, 1948-49. I may also add that the Indian Peasant Institute has published my books "The Credo of World Peasantry" in 1956, "The Plan and the Peasant" in 1957, "Panchayat Landlordism *vs.* Peasant Economy" and "The Peasant and Co-operative Farming" in 1958 and also the "Self-Employed Sector" in 1959, espousing these policies, and in Parliament ever since, and also in my correspondence with Shri Balvantray Mehta, the then Congress Secretary and yourself in 1953 at the time of my rejoining the Congress.

THE FINALE

16*th February*, 1959

My dear Jawaharlaljee,

In continuation of my earlier letter of the 19th January, I am hereby offering my resignation to the Secretaryship of our Party in Parliament so as to avoid causing any embarrassment to you by any speech I may have to make in Parliament on the question of your national campaign in favour of joint and co-operative farming, in preference to or to the neglect of the claims of the self-employed peasants and their family farm economy.

Yours sincerely,
N.G. RANGA

New Delhi,
February 16, 1959

My dear Ranga,

I have just received your letter of the 16th February. I shall place your resignation from the Secretaryship of the Party before the Executive Committee.

I am sorry that you should take up the attitude you are doing in this matter. I can understand your viewpoint, but we have to abide by the decisions of the Congress. In any event, the present programme is service co-operatives with which, I presume, you agree.

Yours sincerely,
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

THE PEASANT AND CO-OPERATIVE FARM

By

Prof. N.G. Ranga and P.R. Paruchuri

Publishers: The Indian Peasant Institute, Nidubrolu, Andhra Pradesh; Rs. [illegible].

". . . is a timely warning against too readily assuming that when agricultural development, that co-operative farming can be a solution to the problems of small-scale farming. Expert opinion must endorse his conclusion that the potentials of co-operative farming cannot be correctly assessed without taking into account the non-economic aspects of individual farming by peasants . . ."

—B. R. Sen, Director-General, FAO, United

". . . the authors have marshalled so much statistical evidence in favour of their arguments that it is difficult to disagree with them. Prof. Ranga and Shri Paruchuri deserve congratulations for this valuable thesis which should help clearing much of the mist that surrounds co-operative farming . . ."

—A. I. C. C. Economic

"This book is a vigorous protest against the Planning Commission's objective of reorganising Indian agriculture on the basis of co-operative farming . . . It deserves to be carefully read by all those who are interested in the future of rural economy . . ."

—The Hindu,

CREDO OF WORLD PEASANTRY

By

Prof. N. G. Ranga

Publishers: The Indian Peasant Institute, Nidubrolu, Andhra Pradesh ; Rs. 7-50.

"Prof. N.G. Ranga, a prominent Indian scholar and parliamentarian . . . was well qualified to have written an extensive volume on the theory of peasant ideology . . . Ranga's 'Credo of World Peasantry' is, undoubtedly, the first serious attempt on a greater scale to formulate the world wide peasant political outlook in well documented monograph . . ."

—International Peasants' Union Bulletin, Ne

"Prof. Ranga . . . is in a real sense the father of the Indian peasant movement . . . In the present volume, Ranga sets forth exactly what the title indicates a credo of world peasantry . . . The book is instructive and thought-provoking."

—The Hindu,