

# Indian Opinion

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## THE JOHANNESBURG MEETING

**A** MEETING of the members of the Transvaal British Indian Association convened by Mr. N. R. Patel (vice-chairman of the Association) was held last Sunday afternoon at the Goodhope Bio Hall, Johannesburg. The hall was fully packed with Indians and delegates were present from various parts of the Transvaal. The South African Indian Congress was also represented by Messrs. J. W. Godfrey, V. S. C. Pather, A. I. Kajee and Sorabjee Rustomjee.

The chairman (Mr. N. R. Patel) in his opening remarks thanked the large audience for attending the meeting and moved a vote of condolence to the family of the late Sir George Paddison which was passed all standing.

### Chairman's Speech

The chairman then called upon Mr. S. B. Medh to read his written speech extracts from which we give below:—

Gentlemen,—This meeting has been convened by me at the request of some 700 members of the Transvaal British Indian Association.

The honorary secretaries of the Association were requisitioned to convene a special general meeting in terms of rule 27 of the constitution. That requisition, to which many of you here present were signatories, has been treated with contempt. In order that you should be afforded the desired opportunity of expressing your views on matters of vital importance to the community I felt it my duty, since the secretaries, supported by a section of the committee, had violated theirs, to call this meeting even though it be convened outside the rules of the constitution. Unfortunately the constitution had made no alternative provision for the calling of a special general meeting in the event of the secretaries failing or refusing to comply with the requisition of the members. Probably its draftsmen never anticipated so serious a violation of the democratic principles it was intended that the T. B. I. A. should embody.

Now, gentlemen, rules are intended to serve not to enslave or even embarrass, certainly not to defeat the larger purpose and welfare of the Association for whose benefit they were formed. Rules that are found no longer to serve but only to enslave must be broken. Similarly, servants who, failing to appreciate the honour and privilege of service, constitute themselves tyrants, dictators, over-riders of the considered opinion of the people they were elected to serve, must be deposed. Principles must not be sacrificed for personal ambitions or sectional selfishness. Whether your views on the matter you desire to discuss are ultimately found to be right or wrong, you have the right to be given an opportunity to express them, and it is just because that right has been refused you that I have felt it my duty to convene this meeting and to preside here to-day. I very much regret to have to confess that the arbitrary ignoring of your requisition by the secretaries is but one of a long series of unconstitutional acts or defaults. I still more regret to have to add that the conduct of the secretaries has not been met by the

corrective attitude of a certain proportion of my colleagues on the Association's committee and their screening support of the secretaries' irregularity must be my further excuse for the attitude I have felt to adopt and follow. After hearing what I have still to say, disagreeable as is the recital, you shall pass your judgment and I shall invite an expression of that judgment by means of certain resolutions that will be submitted for your consideration.

Believe me, gentlemen, in the political history of Indians in the Transvaal, this meeting is the most important one and I felt in my conscience that had I failed to call this meeting to safeguard the interests of the community I would have been unfaithful to the Indian public. I am glad to see that you have responded to the call in such a large number and I cordially thank you for it.

I wish to draw your attention to our present political situation and to the attitude of the Association towards it and to the predicament in which we are placed as a result thereof.

I wish to draw your attention to a very important matter, and that is that at the time of the announcement of Mr. Sastri's appointment and while yet he was in India, the Union Government here gazetted the amended Immigration Bill according to the Capetown Agreement. It was fortunate for us that Mr. Andrews was here then. He at once suggested that a conference of the South African Indian Congress be held to study the Bill and offer our suggestions there anent. The secretary convened an Emergency Conference in Durban and it was there that it was resolved that all the three provinces should present their objections and suggestions in the form of a statement to be presented to the Minister of the Interior.

When Mr. Andrews and the Secretary of the S. A. I. Congress reached Capetown to present the statement to the Minister of the Interior, our Association sent Mr. Camay to Capetown.

The Executive of the S. A. I. Congress and Mr. Andrews tried to persuade the Minister to amend the Bill in such a way that section 5 should not have a retrospective effect, but the Minister of the Interior informed them that such amendment had no chance of passing in Parliament, and if the amendment be lost the Minister would not be in a position to give administrative relief. Consequently it was wise that the amendment should not have been brought, since the Minister of the Interior gave an assurance that he could condone such false certificates provided the people in the country gave him an assurance, firstly, that they would stand by the Capetown Agreement and support it loyally, and secondly, they would no longer encourage or countenance or support by legal or other processes these fraudulent transactions.

Mr. Camay expressed his satisfaction at this arrangement. Although being satisfied with this arrangement Mr. Camay wired from Capetown that the Congress officials were not doing anything in the matter of Section 5, and therefore he was presenting a separate statement on behalf of the Transvaal. It

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## THE KIMBERLEY CONGRESS

**T**HE eighth session of the South African Indian Congress will be held at Kimberley on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th of January 1928. The settlement of the dispute of Transvaal Indians augurs well for the coming Congress. Last Sunday's meeting of the members of the Transvaal British Indian Association, convened by the vice-chairman Mr. N. R. Patel, was very successful. All the resolutions were passed practically unanimously there being just one or two dissenting voices now and then. The existing officials and committee of the Association have been called upon to resign within seven days and provisional officials and a committee have been elected to carry on the work pending the resignation of the old workers. If they fail to abide by the decision of the members of the Association, which would be monstrous, then the newly elected workers will form themselves into a new body calling themselves the Transvaal Indian Congress and will henceforth represent Transvaal Indians and will affiliate with the South African Indian Congress and the Transvaal delegates to the South African Indian Congress will be sent by that body.

Thus the fear that one Province may not be represented at the coming Congress has been removed.

A special feature of the coming Congress will be the presence of the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri. We have had India represented on our Congress once and that was when Mrs. Sarojini Naidu presided over it. Then in the last session we had the very useful guidance of Mr. C. F. Andrews and in the coming session Mr. Sastri will be there to guide us in our deliberations.

There are many matters of vital importance to the Indian community throughout the Union that will have to be considered by the Congress and it is therefore essential that all the Provinces are represented at the Congress by their full number of delegates which is thirty for each Province.

The most important question that will be discussed at the Congress will no doubt be the Capetown Agreement. It must be acknowledged that there has been an earnest

endeavour on the part of Indians as well as Europeans as represented by their Press to work the Agreement in so far as it has been possible and the thanks are due entirely to Mr. Sastri who is giving his life-blood to the successful working of it.

The education scheme which is a part of the Agreement is steadily progressing. Natal, which was deadly opposed to the scheme, has by Mr. Sastri's winning personality been persuaded to co-operate and she has discharged her responsibility by appointing a Commission to enquire into the conditions of Indian education in the Province. It is true that the Commission is not as it should have been and the co-operation of Natal is a half-hearted one. But the conversion from the deadliest opposition to one of partial co-operation is a hopeful sign. There are also experts from India to assist the Commission and while a great deal depends on the recommendations of the Commission Indians in the Province will be well advised not to fail in their duty to tender evidence before the Commission as elaborately as possible. Then there is the Fort Hare project. We are totally in disagreement with the views expressed by a certain section of our bretheren opposing the project.

In the absence of any institution possessed independently by the Indians the institution at Fort Hare has been taken advantage of by a limited number of Indian students and if further facilities are made for a larger number of Indians it is a step to be thankful for. Then there is the proposed Teachers Training College and High School for Indians for which a sum of £1800 has been already subscribed by the Indian community in Natal. Mr. Sastri has asked the Durban Corporation for a site for this institution of six acres but the Corporation has granted two acres. We recognise that there was a great deal of opposition amongst some members of the Council to this site being granted to Indians and we have to thank the Durban Town Council for what they have given. It is to be hoped that they will consider favourably in the near future the advisability of granting the further four acres asked for as two acres of land is not adequate for a huge institution such as is proposed to be built.

While the question of education is thus very favourably progressing the Minister of Justice—Minister of Injustice would be more appropriate—Mr. Tielman Roos is unfortunately trying to deal a death-blow to the whole Agreement by the Liquor Bill he has introduced into Parliament. The effect of that Bill, as has already been explained, will be to throw out of employment thousands of Indians at present working as waiters and cooks in the various hotels throughout the Union merely on racial grounds. The coming Congress will have to reiterate its strong protest against this Bill.

There is then the question of receiving condonation from the Government for those Indians who may have entered and acquired domicile in the Union illegally before the passing of the Immigration and Indian Relief (Further Provision) Act, 1927. The delay caused in receiving this condonation is due to the disorganisation in the Transvaal British Indian Association and the secession of that body from the South African Indian Congress. Now that the Transvaal Indians have again joined the folds of the Congress, the Indian community as a whole will be able to give the assurance asked by the Government that they will generally abide by the terms of the Agreement and will not tolerate or assist in any way any illegal entrants in the future and receive in return condonation promised by the Government.

While giving the above assurance to the Government, it should be understood clearly by the Government that the Indian community as a whole has never countenanced or encouraged illegal entrants nor has it assisted such entrants. The blame for any false entry lies only on the Immigration Department itself and the few individuals who may be Indians or, for that matter, of any other race, who may have made it their occupation. We have no objection to such individuals being brought to book. The assurance on the part of the Congress as representing the community could therefore be nothing more than the policy adhered to by it in the past.

The above-mentioned are among the main points that will come under discussion at the forthcoming session of the South African Indian Congress to which we wish every success.

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was quite natural for the people here upon receiving such information from Mr. Camay to be dissatisfied with the Congress and in view of that the feeling here was aroused to such an extent that the Association passed a resolution of secession from the Congress.

### Mr. Sastri's Appeal ✓

Ever since Mr. Sastri's arrival in this country in public meetings and private conversations he has been appealing very strongly for the T. B. I. A. to affiliate with the Congress and speak with one voice. For the last five months a movement has been on foot for re-affiliation and it has often been discussed at committee meetings but the secretaries of the T. B. I. A. and their supporters being opposed tooth and nail to such affiliation with the Congress nothing so far has matured. ✓

### Administration of the Association

Several meetings of the committee of the Association took place under my chairmanship and what I am now mentioning is the result of my personal experience. It is my firm belief that any resolution passed at the committee meeting must be given effect to by the secretaries. But I am sorry to find that the secretaries do not give effect to any resolution that is not to their liking. When I say this I speak as one who presided over the committee meetings of the Association and I want you to believe me that these are facts and that I shall give you such instances. At the time when a banquet was given in honour of Mr. Sastri a committee meeting passed a resolution to send invitations to the officials of the S. A. I. Congress, but the secretaries for personal reasons did not do so and when on the eve of the banquet it was found that they had not sent the invitations, strong feeling was aroused amongst the members of the committee and the secretaries explained that as they were afraid that the presence of the officials of the S. A. I. C. would cause disturbance here they did not send the invitations. Great commotion was created by this arbitrary action of the secretaries, but in order to allow the banquet to go through peacefully the members dropped the matter there.

Another committee meeting took place also under my chairmanship, whereat a resolution was passed to the effect that a telegram wishing Mr. Andrews bon voyage, and another telegram to Mr. Sastri asking him to receive a deputation from the Association, be sent, and according to this resolution the secretary did send a telegram to Mr. Andrews but not to Mr. Sastri because they felt that if a deputation were to go Mr. Sastri would request them to join the Congress which the secretaries did not want to do.

When there are important occasions for calling a committee meeting the secretaries would not call one. I know this for certain that once when the chairman of the Association wrote to the secretaries to call a committee meeting for some important matter they did not comply with the request simply because they smelt that there would be a discussion re re-affiliation with the Congress.

### Assurance from the Minister

It is necessary that an assurance be given to the Union Government as desired by the Minister of the Interior to the effect that the Indian community will loyally support the Agreement before we could get an assurance in return from the Minister not to apply Clause 5 against those who have fraudulently obtained registration certificates. It is the wish of the Minister that such a letter should be given by the Congress, but in view of the Association's secession from the S. A. I. Congress, it is impossible

for them to give such an assurance. It is therefore necessary that we must join the Congress to safeguard the interests of our community, but as the secretaries are against re-affiliation and not caring whether the community suffers or not it has become impossible for anyone to utter the word "re-affiliation" before them.

While this assurance is not obtainable owing to the arbitrary action of the secretaries, several Indians in Johannesburg have received intimation from the Immigration Department that has proof in its office that they have fraudulently obtained registration and that if they were to approach the Department to get their wives and children into the country action would be taken against them to cancel their registration. The Immigration Officer has not stopped at this only but has caused an Indian to be arrested under Clause 5 and I assure you that similar actions have also been taken in the Cape and Natal. Owing to such state of affairs the secretaries were often urged to attend to this important matter and to call a committee meeting to arrange for an interview with Mr. Sastri but to no purpose. Seeing this state of affairs, Mr. Sastri wired the Association from Durban to send down a deputation, but the secretaries of their own replied by wire that a deputation would come over if nothing was discussed about the Congress. This wire was sent without the knowledge of the committee and you can see how foolish it was to have sent such a telegram. Upon receipt of such telegram Mr. Sastri at once cancelled the invitation. Although leaders of various sections of the community in a deputation begged the secretaries to call a committee meeting the secretaries did not comply with the request. I know for a fact that one of the secretaries abused and attempted to assault a member of the committee during the progress of a committee meeting presided over by me and my appeal to him for order was even unheeded. On account of such arbitrary and brutal action of the secretaries many members of the committee had to cease taking part in any of the committee meetings and I myself and one of the treasurers tendered our resignation which was not accepted.

Mr. Myers who was the treasurer of the reception committee of the banquet given in honour of Mr. Sastri, complained before one of the committee meetings to the effect that he was not receiving vouchers for moneys paid out by the secretaries. The secretaries have communicated twice with the Minister of the Interior on important matters without the knowledge and consent of the committee, and have kept the members in the dark about the replies. There are good many instances which go to prove that the secretaries are very arbitrary and doing things unconstitutionally, not only that, but they even refuse to carry out the resolutions passed by the committee, and do as they like.

### Mr. Sastri's Speech in Johannesburg

On the 10th of October 1927 Mr. Sastri interviewed many leading Indians in Johannesburg representing various sections of the community, and upon discussing the question of re-affiliation with the Congress he was assured by everyone present that they were willing to rejoin. A deputation of the Association also waited upon him, but as the Association did not want to discuss anything concerning the Congress, Mr. Sastri wrote to Mr. Camay (one of the secretaries) to call a general meeting of the Transvaal Indians, independently of the Association in order to enable him to explain to the Indian public the Capetown Agreement, but I knew that Mr. Camay did not call such a meeting. Owing to this attitude of the secretary the leaders of the community convened a meeting of Transvaal Indians independently of the Association on the 12th October 1927 which was presided over by Mr. S. D. Bobat of Potchefstroom. Mr. Sastri delivered a very im-

portant speech at that meeting which made a very deep impression upon Transvaal Indians, and everybody understood how essential it was for the Association to re-affiliate with the Congress to safeguard the interests of the community.

### Mr. M. I. Patel's Interview

After this meeting one of the secretaries of the Association Mr. M. I. Patel gave an interview to the *Star* to the effect that according to the desire of Mr. Sastri he would try to re-affiliate with the Congress. Notwithstanding what he said in his interview, he goes on doing things contrary to it, and I want to draw your attention to these inconsistencies and I leave it to your good sense to judge what will the public think of our secretary who says one thing in the Press and does another thing in committee. Gentlemen, bear in mind that the honour and prestige of the Association is involved in such inconsistencies seeing that the secretary spoke for and on behalf of the committee.

In the beginning of October the secretaries wrote a letter to the Minister of the Interior asking him to let them know what assurance he required on behalf of the Association in order to get a letter of assurance in return from him concerning section 5. The Minister in reply wrote to the secretaries to this effect: "The Minister of the Interior would be very glad to be assured by any influential friends regarding any matter of public importance but he had for some time dealt with the S. A. I. Congress, and he felt he would deal in future with them, as he considered it would be to the advantage of everybody if the Government of the Union treated with one recognised body. He therefore begged the British Indian Association of this Province to address him through the S. A. I. Congress."

The secretaries did not consult the committee before writing such an important letter. When the Rt. Hon. Mr. Sastri in his speech at the mass meeting referred to this important matter then only the public came to know.

In regard to the propriety of affiliating ourselves to the S. A. I. Congress will you forgive me if I ask you carefully to weigh and ponder the following considerations:—

- (1) India has done the honour to send us as her Agent-General one of her most brilliant and self-sacrificing sons in order that we may have an official mouthpiece who knows us and who we understand and represent legitimate needs, viewpoints and aspirations, and who will protect us even from ourselves when in our inexperience we may lack foresight and correct prospective.
- (2) The Government of the Union recognised in Mr. Sastri one who is both a statesman and the soul of honour. Could we have a better adviser or more capable, more trusted advocate and intermediary. If as a community we had still many obstacles to overcome many disabilities to remove, it would be more than difficult to find a safer, more generally honoured and trusted guide, a wise counsellor than the one we have in Mr. Sastri.
- (3) Mr. Sastri is familiar with both sides of the case, namely ours and that of the Union Government. He points out the strong advisability of the several units namely the Transvaal, Cape and Natal, uniting in one Congress so that representation, when necessary, may carry the weight and influence of the South African Indian community. Union, gentlemen, is always strength. Moreover, the Union Government has intimated pretty clearly that it will attach little if any weight to representations of a sectional character and made through other than the S. A. I. Congress.
- (4) This means that remaining outside the S. A. I. Congress is to occupy a position of

dangerous isolation and it would be equally dangerous for other Provinces to remain so. When the Transvaal British Indian Association or rather the Transvaal Indian community is left outside the pole of official recognitions, its local interests imperilled, perhaps even ignored, Mr. Sastri's work made difficult and the Transvaal community and its motives regarded by both the Indian and the Union Governments with distrust and suspicion.

Now, gentlemen, various resolutions will be placed before you one by one according to the objects set out in the requisition and will be fully discussed. I will have to allot a certain limit of time for the mover and supporter of the resolution and votes will be taken for such resolutions. Before giving your votes I request you all to give your proper attention to the resolutions. I request every one of you not to leave this Hall and go away until I declare the meeting closed. I also urge upon you not to create any disturbance when our proceedings are going on. I require the assistance of every one of you present in this Hall to carry out the most important work of this meeting. Once more gentlemen I thank you all.

### A Disturbance

One Moosa Jassat created a disturbance in the middle of the chairman's speech when Mr. Godfrey appealed to the audience to take their seats and assured the disturber to be given an opportunity to speak after the speech concluded.

The chairman accordingly gave an opportunity to Mr. Jassat which he did not take and the chairman's speech was then translated into Gujarati by Mr. P. K. Desai.

### Resolutions

The following resolutions were then passed:—

1. That this mass meeting of the Transvaal Indians convened by Mr. N. R. Patel (vice chairman of the Transvaal British Indian Association,) expresses its dissatisfaction with the conduct of the Joint Hon. Secretaries of the Transvaal British Indian Association of which every adult British Indian here present is *ipso facto* member, and calls upon the said Secretaries to tender their resignations.

In the event of their failing so to do within seven days from date, that they be regarded as having been dismissed from office, and that they be immediately notified in writing by the chairman of this meeting of this resolution.

Proposed by Mr. E. Mall, seconded by Mr. Morarjee Desai and supported by Mr. K. S. Rama of Pretoria.

2. That with a view to reconstituting the Transvaal British Indian Association, the present Committee and other officials of the Association be likewise called upon to tender their resignation within seven days from date.

Proposed by Mr. M. P. Patel, seconded by Mr. Willie Ernest and supported by Messrs E. Patel and Ramlal Mooloo of Pretoria.

3. That in the event of the Joint Hon. Secretaries, officials and Committee of the Transvaal British Indian Association resigning as requested, the provisional officials and Committee to be appointed at this meeting shall take their place, but in the event of them (the officials and Committee of the T.B.I.A.) failing or refusing to act in terms of resolutions Nos. 1 and 2 then the provisional officials and Committee constitute themselves into permanent officials and Committee of a body to be known as the Transvaal Indian Congress, and the said officials and Committee are requested in either case to forthwith seek affiliation with the South African Indian Congress.

4. That the following shall be the officials and Committee with power to add in terms of resolution No. 8 hereof:—

President : Mr. M. D Baroochi. Vice Presidents : Messrs. Naran Ramjee, Alli Dadabhai, C. K. T. Naidu, Baboolal Maharaj (Pretoria) and Ebrahim Jamal. Hon. Secretaries: Messrs. Pragjee Desai, S. M. Desai and K. N. Singh. Hon. Treasurers : Messrs. Tribhovan G. Patel, Rasool Patel and Kara Fakira.

Committee : Messrs. Mavjee Premjee, Nagar Gopaul, V. G. Patel, Ambaram Bhagvan, Morarji Desai, Moolji Patel, V. G. Naidoo, S. P. Padayachi, Sampson Paul, Ramdayal Singh, D. M. Nursoo, S. B. Medh, M. V. Patel J. K. Desai, J. V. Paruk, R. V. Patel, M. V. Desai, Govin Mistri, Govin Premji, G. Parbhoo, A. Billimoria, Ahmed Moosajee, Ismail Coovadia, E. Mall, E. M. Patel, F. S. Laher, E. Bulbulia, M. V. Desai, G. A. Fazaudar, A. A. Mirza, I. I. Hazaree, E. S. Dangor, S. V. Pillay. Rev. B. L. E. Sigamony, D. P. Gidumal, D. K. Patel, Essop Patel, Moosa Bayat, Willie Ernest, V. N. Naidoo, N. Francis Pillay, T. S. Vassen, M. S. Abed.

5. That this mass meeting authorises the officials and Committee appointed under resolution No. 4 to nominate the thirty delegates to attend the session of the South African Indian Congress to be held at Kimberley on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Jan., 1928.

5. That having regard to the item, namely, the amending of the Constitution and standing orders on the Agenda of the South African Indian Congress at its forthcoming Conference in Kimberley, this mass meeting instructs the delegates to earnestly appeal to the Rt. Hon. V. S. S. Sastri to use his influence that the views and requirements of the Transvaal Indian community in regard to the following among other points be not lost sight of:—

1. That the Headquarters of the South African Indian Congress rotate from one Province to another.

2. That matters concerning each Province shall lie with the Provincial body concerned to be dealt with by it.

3. That officials of the S. A. I. Congress should be elected from the Province to which Headquarters may be fixed.

4. Any provincial grievances submitted by the provincial body to the S. A. I. Congress shall be given full consideration whether such grievances are put up in documentary form or otherwise without deletion or amendment.

5. That the question of the finances of the S. A. I. Congress should be adjusted on more equitable basis.

6. That this mass meeting of the Indian community of the Transvaal hereby places on record its deep sense of gratitude and appreciation for the invaluable services rendered to the cause of the Indian community of South Africa by the Right Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri P.C. and expresses its continued confidence in him.

7. That this meeting hereby places on record its sincere thanks to the chairman of this meeting, Mr. N. R. Patel, for his courageous and patriotic action in having convened this meeting in order to bring unity among Transvaal Indians and for successfully and ably conducting this meeting.

In connection with numerous complaints having been received from non-Europeans alleging that they have been prevented from crossing the newly-opened Athlone Bridge leading to Durban North, it was pointed out to the *Mercury* recently that no non-Europeans having lawful business on the estate, such as Indians and Natives working there (servants of site-holders) are interfered with at all, but, as the bridge is not a public one, unless the owners of the estate took some steps to control the traffic, it would simply become a public thoroughfare for the whole of the inhabitants of the North bank of the Umgeni River, which comprises a very large non-European population. The bridge was built at the expense of Durban North Estates, Ltd., and lands and their own private property.

## Mahatma Gandhi's Interview

### "Will cut a sorry figure as Indian Mussolini"

"How the Royal Commission should be constituted is as alien a subject to me as say, the cure for tuberculosis which falls in the province of a medical expert. I have paid no thought to the subject of Royal Commission because it is distinctly outside the sphere of my knowledge, thoughts and activities," replied Mahatma Gandhi when a representative of the *Herald* questioned him during his short stay in Bombay en route to Delhi, as to what attitude he would take up at the Viceregal Conference, if he were faced with the proposition, so much in the air, viz., that the Statutory Commission is to be composed of Parliamentarians and Indians to act as mere assessors.

"Would you accept a seat on the Royal Commission, if one was offered to you?" was the question next put to Mahatmaji. "What is the use of asking me that question? I had once speculated what I would do if I were appointed Viceroy of India, but those days of speculation are gone," retorted Gandhiji.

The conversation then turned to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity.

### Hindu-Muslim Unity

"Have you despaired of achieving communal unity in the near future in view of the break up of the last Simla Unity Conference?" asked the *Herald* man. "Never" said Mahatmaji, adding "I have not despaired; only I do not know how it would have to be achieved."

"I have said some time back that the solution of this question has passed out of man's hand, and the Viceroy is but a man."

"Dr. Besant said the other day that separate electorates were the sole cause of Hindu-Muslim strifes. In support of her contention, she cited that all riots were confined to towns and had not defiled the villages. If you agree with that view, then shouldn't you concentrate all your attention on the immediate abolition of separate electorates?"

Gandhiji replied: "I don't think separate electorates are the sole cause. They may be one of the factors."

"The air is thick with the cry for constitution making. Would you be a party to any such attempt?"

"I really don't know. I have not come to any decision on that point."

"You are reported to have said in the course of your South Indian tour that so long as the council programme stands, you will not lead the Congress nor take active part in the political struggle. Why don't you then in the interest of the country scrap the Council programme, persuade all Congressmen to that effect and come out of your seclusion?" asked the *Herald* representative.

### No Power to Scrap Council Programme

"I don't remember having said such a thing. Apart from that, however, I have no power to scrap the Council programme and I do not want to go beyond those who are the accepted leaders of the nation. I am waiting for the leaders to learn the futility of Council entry by themselves."

Just now I may be said to be obsessed if it is an obsession with the idea of making khadi universal.

The conversation then drifted to the next Congress programme and Dr. Ansari's outlook thereon.

"Don't you think Mahatmaji that the President elect's new outlook on politics, betrays a defeatist mentality? Has it been; in your opinion, rightly interpreted as a clarion call or surrender?" asked the interviewer.

"No" said Mahatmaji: "It has not struck me as a call for surrender or co-operation with Government.

You should judge Dr. Ansari by his actions and not by your interpretation of his manifesto."

In the end, the representative asked "As a sure panacea for the country's ills, it has been suggested that you should be given dictatorial powers in all our national activities and be persuaded to play the Mussolini in India. How do you think that idea will work?"

### Will Cut Sorry Figure as Mussolini

Gandhiji returned a hearty laugh and then replied in all seriousness. "I have neither the ambitions of Mussolini nor can I have his powers. If dictatorship were thrust to me, I should cut a sorry figure as an Indian Mussolini. Moreover you can't impose by force any reforms, social or otherwise. In other words, you cannot make people good by force" concluded the sage of Sabarmati.

## The Story of My Experiments With Truth

[BY M. K. GANDHI]

Part III. Chapter XXIII.

TO SOUTH AFRICA AGAIN

Though Manilal was restored to health, I saw that the Girgaum house was not habitable. It was damp and ill-lighted. So in consultation with Sjt. Revashankar Jagjivan, I decided to hire some well-ventilated bungalow in a suburb of Bombay. I wandered about in Bandra and Santa Cruz. Its slaughter-house prevented us the choice of Bandra. Ghatkopar and places near it seemed to be too far from the sea. At last we hit upon a fine bungalow in Santa Cruz which was hired as the best from the point of view of sanitation. I took a first class season ticket from Santa Cruz to Churchgate, and remember having often felt a sort of pride in being the only first class passenger in my compartment. Often I went to Bandra in order to take there the fast train going straight to Churchgate.

I seemed to prosper in my profession better than I had expected. My South African clients often entrusted me with some work and it was enough to help me to pay my way.

I had not yet succeeded in securing any work in the High Court, but I attended the 'moot' that used to be held in those days, though I never ventured to take part in it. I recall Jamiatram Nanabbai taking a prominent part. Like other fresh barristers I made a point of attending the hearing of cases in the High Court, more, I am afraid, to enjoy the soporific breeze coming straight from the sea than to add to my knowledge. I observed that I was not the only one to enjoy this pleasure. It seemed to be the fashion and therefore nothing to be ashamed of.

However I began to make use of the High Court Library and make fresh acquaintances and felt that I should soon secure work in the High Court.

Thus whilst on the one hand I began to feel somewhat easy about my profession, on the other, Gokhale, whose eyes were always on me had been busy making his own plans for me. He would peep at my chambers twice or thrice every week, often in company with friends whom he wanted me to know, and he would acquaint me with his mode of work.

But it may be said that God has never allowed any of my plans to stand. He has disposed them in His own way.

Just when I seemed to be settling down as I had intended, I received an unexpected cable from

South Africa: 'Chamberlain expected here. Please return immediately.' I remembered my promise and cabled to say that I was ready to start as soon as they put me in funds. They promptly responded. I gave up the chambers and started for South Africa.

I had an idea that the work there would keep me engaged for at least a year and so I kept the bungalow and left my wife and children there.

I believed then that enterprising youths who could not find an opening in the country should emigrate to other lands. I therefore took with me four or five such youths, one of whom was Maganlal Gandhi

The Gandhis were and are a big family. I wanted to find out all those who wished to leave the trodden path and venture abroad. My father used to accommodate a number of them in some State service. I wanted them to be self-reliant.

But as my ideals advanced, I tried to persuade these youths also to conform their ideals to mine and I had the greatest success in guiding Maganlal Gandhi. But about this later.

The separation from my wife and children, the breaking up of a settled establishment, and going from the certain to the uncertain,—all this was for a moment painful, but I had insured myself to an uncertain life. I think it is wrong to expect certainties in this world where all else but God that is Truth is an uncertainty. All that appears and happens about and around us is uncertain, transient. Only there is one Supreme Being hidden therein as a Certainty, and one would be blessed if one could catch a glimpse of that Certainty and hitch one's waggon to it. The quest for that Truth is the *Summum Bonum* of life.

I reached Durban not a day too soon. There was work waiting for me. The date for the Deputation to wait on Mr. Chamberlain had been fixed, I had to draft the memorial to be submitted to him and accompany the Deputation.

Under the auspices of the Indian Social Service Committee Dr. F. G. Cawston will give a lecture on "East Africa" illustrated by lantern slides, in the M. K. Gandhi Library on Tuesday the 27th instant at 8 p.m. All are welcome.

## Natal Indian Congress

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Natal Indian Congress will be held at the Parsee Rustomjee Hall, Queen Street, Durban, on Sunday, 22nd January 1928 at 2-30 p.m.

#### Agenda :

1. Minutes.
2. Secretaries' Report.
3. Treasurers' Financial Statement.
4. Revision of Rules.
5. Election of Officials.
6. General.

AMOD BAYAT, President.

V. S. C. PATHER } Jt. Hon.  
SORABJEE RUSTOMJEE } Secretaries.

19th Dec. 1927.

## નાટાલ ઇન્ડિઅન કોંગ્રેસ

### વાર્ષિક જનરલ મીટિંગ

આથી જાહેર કરવામાં આવે છે કે નાટાલ ઇન્ડિઅન કોંગ્રેસની વાર્ષિક જનરલ મીટિંગ પારસી રૂસ્તમજી હોલ, ક્વીન સ્ટ્રીટ, ડરબન રવિવાર તા. ૨૨ જાન્યુઆરી ૧૯૨૮ ના રોજ બપોરે ૨ા વાગે મળશે.

કાર્યક્રમ:—મીનીસ્ટ સેક્રટરીઓના રીપોર્ટ, ટ્રેઝરરનો હિસાબી રીપોર્ટ, ધારાઓમાં સુધારા વધારા, અમલદારોની સુઠણી, સામાન્ય.

આમદ ભાયાત, પ્રમુખ.

વી. એસ. સી. પથર.

સોરાબજી રૂસ્તમજી.

જે. એન. સેક્રટરીઓ.

તા. ૧૯ ડીસેમ્બર ૧૯૨૭.

## South African Indian Congress

### EIGHTH SESSION

In terms of Clause 13 of the Constitution notice is hereby given to the constituent bodies that the next Annual Conference will be held at Kimberley on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th January 1928.

The following is the agenda:—

1. Presidential Speech.
2. Minutes.
3. Hon. Gen. Secretary's Report.
4. Hon. Jt. Treasurer's Financial Statement.
5. Capetown Agreement.  
(a) Bills passed there anent.  
(b) Education Inquiry Commission.  
(c) Housing & Sanitary Commission.
6. Proposed Liquor Bill.
7. Non-European Conference.
8. Notices of Motion.
9. Revision of Constitution and Standing Orders.
10. Election of Officials.
11. General.

A. I. KAJEE,  
HON. GEN. SECRETARY.

Headquarters :

175 Grey Street, Durban.  
25th Nov, 1927.

Phone 3867. 182, Grey Street, Durban. Box 316.

HEERABHAI MORAR MATVADKAR

Wholesale Fruit & Vegetable Exporter  
and  
Commission Agent.

૧૮૨ ગ્રે સ્ટ્રીટ, હીરાબાઈ મોરાર મટવાડકર, ડરબન  
ફ્રુટ અને વેજિટેબલ એક્સપોર્ટર

અને કમિશન એજન્ટ

ટેલિફોન ૩૮૬૭ અને કોમ્પોઝિટ બોક્સ નંબર ૩૧૬

Printed and Published by Manilal M. Gandhi at Phoenix Settlement, Phoenix, Natal.

# ઈન્ડિઅન ઓપિનિઅન.

પુસ્તક ૨૫ મું.

ફીનીકસ, યુકવાર, તારીખ ૨૩ ડીસેમ્બર ૧૯૨૭

અંક ૫૧

## “ઈન્ડિઅન ઓપીનીઅન”

યુકવાર, તા. ૨૩ ડીસેમ્બર ૨૧ ૧૯૨૭

સાઉથ આફ્રિકન ઈન્ડિઅન કોંગ્રેસની આઠમી બેઠક બન્યુઆરી તા. ૧લી ૨૭ ૩૭ અને ૪થીએ કીમ્બર્લીની કોંગ્રેસ કીમ્બર્લીમાં મળશે ટ્રાંસવાલના હોદીઓની તકરારનું સમાધાન આવી ગયું છે એ આવતી કોંગ્રેસને માટે શુભ ચિહ્ન સુચવનારું છે. ગયા રવીવારે ટ્રાંસવાલ ક્ષીટીક ઈન્ડિઅન એસોસીએશનના મેમ્બરોની વાર્ષિક મેટીંગ મી. એન. આર. પટેલ તરફથી મોલાવાયલી મીટીંગનું કાર્ય સંતોષકાર રીતે પરિપૂર્ણ થયું હતું. સઘળા ઠરાવો અહિં તહિં એકાદ બે વિરોધી અવાજો સિવાય સર્વાનુમતે પસાર થયા હતા. એસોસીએશનના હાલના અમલદારો અને કમીટીને સાત દિવસમાં રાજીનામું આપી દેવા સુચવાનારો ઠરાવ મળ્યો છે અને તેઓ રાજીનામું આપી દે તે દરમિયાન કામ ચલાવવાને કામચલાઉ અમલદારો અને કમીટી યુઠવામાં આવી છે. જો જુના કાર્યકર્તાઓ એસોસીએશનના મેમ્બરોના ઠરાવને અનુસરતાં ચુકશે તો નવા યુઠાયલા કાર્યવાહકો ટ્રાંસવાલ ઈન્ડિઅન કોંગ્રેસને નામે નવું મંડળ સ્થાપશે અને ભવિષ્યમાં એ નવું મંડળ ટ્રાંસવાલના હોદીઓનું પ્રતિનિધિત્વ ધરાવશે અને તે સાઉથ આફ્રિકન ઈન્ડિઅન કોંગ્રેસની સાથે જોડાઈ જશે અને આવતી કોંગ્રેસમાં ટ્રાંસવાલ તરફથી જનારા ડેલીગેટો એજ મંડળ તરફથી યુઠાશે.

આ પ્રમાણે એક પ્રાંતનું આવતી કોંગ્રેસમાં પ્રતિનિધિત્વ નહિ હોવાનો બપ હવે દુર થયો છે.

આવતી કોંગ્રેસનું ખીલું એક ખાસ લક્ષણ એ છે કે તેમાં ના. શાસ્ત્રીની હાજરી થશે. આપણી કોંગ્રેસમાં હોંદુસ્તાનનું સીધું પ્રતિનિધિત્વ એક જ વખત રહ્યું છે અને તે બ્યારે શ્રીમતી મરોહની નાંચકુ તેના પ્રમુખ બન્યાં હતાં ત્યારે તે પછી મધ્ય કોંગ્રેસમાં મી. સી. એફ. એન્ડરસની કીમતી મદદ મળી હતી અને આ વેળાની કોંગ્રેસની ચર્ચાઓમાં શાસ્ત્રીની આપણી ઉપર રક્ષા રહેશે.

આવતી કોંગ્રેસમાં સમસ્ત યુનીયનની હોદી કોમની અલંત અમલના સવાલોની ચર્ચા થશે અને તેથી સઘળા પ્રાંતોનું સંપૂર્ણ પ્રતિનિધિત્વ રહે એ આવશ્યક છે. એટલે દરેક પ્રાંતે પોતાના ૩૦ ડેલીગેટો તો અવશ્ય મોકલવા જોઈએ.

સઘળી વધારે અમલની ચર્ચા તો કેપટાઉન એગ્રીમેન્ટ ઉપર જ થશે. આપણે એટલું તો સ્વિકારવું જોઈએ કે એ એગ્રીમેન્ટનો બનતો અમલ કરવાનો હોદીઓ તેમજ યુરોપીયનો તરફથી તેઓનું પ્રતિનિધિત્વ ધરાવનારાં વર્તમાનપત્રો દ્વારા પ્રમાણિક પ્રયાસ થયો છે. અને તેનો અભાર તો સર્વાંશ શાસ્ત્રીને જ પડે છે કે જેમણે એ કામમાં પોતાનું જીવન રક્ત ધર્યાં હોય છે:

કેળવણીની યોજના જે એગ્રીમેન્ટનો એક મુખ્ય અંગ છે તેની ધીમે ધીમે પ્રગતિ થતી જાય છે. નાટાલ કે જે પ્રાંત એગ્રીમેન્ટની સખત વિરુદ્ધ હતું તે શાસ્ત્રીની વગથી પોતાનો સદમર આપવાને માની ગયું છે અને આ પ્રાંતની હોદી કેળવણીની સ્થિતિ તપાસવાને એક કમીટીની નીમી પોતાની જવાબદારી ઉકાવેલી છે. એ કમીટીને જે જે બેઠકો તેવું નથી અને તેથી નાટાલનો સદકાર બેદિલી છે ખરો પરંતુ હકહકતા વિરોધમાંથી અર્થો પરથી સદકાર આપવાને પણ મનાવી શકાયું. જે આજ્ઞાબંધ ચિહ્ન જણવું જોઈએ. વળી એ કમીટીને મદદ આપવાને હોંદુસ્તાનથી એક્સપર્ટો પણ આવેલાં છે જેને સઘળો આધાર તો આ કમીટીની બલાબજો ઉપરજ રહેશે છતાં આ પ્રાંતના હોદીઓએ તેની સમક્ષ સંપૂર્ણ જુગ્માનીઓ આપવાની પોતાની ફરજમાંથી તો ચુકવું નહિ જોઈએ.

એ સિવાય ફોર્ટલેરની યોજના ચાલી રહી છે. આપણા બાઇઓમાંનો એક વર્ગ એ યોજનાની વિરુદ્ધ પોકાર કરી રહ્યો છે પરંતુ તેની સાથે અમે મળના થમ શકતા નથી. ન્યાં સુધી આપણે આપણી શક્તિથી આપણી પોતાની સ્વતંત્ર સંસ્થા સ્થાપી શક્યા નથી ત્યાં સુધી જે સંસ્થાનો આજ લગી આપણા હોદી વિચાર્યાં મર્યાદિત સંખ્યામાં સંતોષકારક રીતે લાભ લઈ શક્યા છે તે સંસ્થામાં તેઓ વધારે પ્રમાણમાં લાભ લઈ શકે તેવી સમગ્ર ઠરાવો કરવામાં આવે તે સામે વાંધો લેવા જેવું અમે કંઈ જ જોઈ શકતા નથી. બલકે તેવાં પમલાંને કોમે સંપૂર્ણપણે વધાવી લેવી જોઈએ.

તે ઉપરાંત હોદી શિક્ષકોની કેળવણી અને નિર્ધારોને સાફ હાથ રકુલની યોજના ધક્કા રહી છે કે જેને માટે નાટાલની હોદી કોમે પાઉડ ૧૮૦૦૦ સુધીનો ફાળો આપી દીધેલો છે. શાસ્ત્રીએ કરબન કોર્પોરેશન પાસે આ સંસ્થા બાંધવાને કે એક જ જમીનની માગણી કરેલી પરંતુ કોર્પોરેશન બે એકર આપેલા છે. કાઉસીલના કેટલાક મેમ્બરો એ જમીન હોદીઓને આપવાની વિરુદ્ધ હતા એ જોતાં કાઉસીલે બે એકર આપ્યા તે માટે પણ આપણે તેના બાલારી છીએ અને એવી મોટી સંસ્થાને માટે બે એકર જેટલી જમીન ધણી જોઈ ગણાય એ અમજને કાઉસીલ નજીકના બિવિ-ધમાં બાકીના ૪ એકર જેટલી જમીન પણ આપી દેવાનું વાળખીપણું સમજશે એવી આપણે આજ રાખીએ.

આ પ્રમાણે કેળવણીનો સવાલ ધણી જ સંતોષકાર રીતે આમજ વધતો જાય છે ત્યારે આપણા નાય આતાના પ્રધાન — વધારે ખર્ચ તો અન્યાયખાતાના પ્રધાન મી. ટીલમાન રૂસ લીકર ખીલ પાર્લામેન્ટમાં દાખલ કરીને આખા એગ્રીમેન્ટને કમનસીબે એક મરજી તોલ ફટકો મારી ગયા છે. એ ખીલ ની અસર અમાઉ સમજવાય મજ છે તેમ આખા યુનીયનની લિમ લિમ હોટલોમાં વેપાર અને રસોવાની નોકરી કરનારા હબરો હોદીઓને કેવળ તેના વધુના કારણે બેકારી કરી