

SAMYUKTA MAHARASHTRA PARISHAD

OR

The United Maharashtra League

1

A brief Account

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OBJECTS

- (I) To take all necessary steps to constitute the whole of the contiguous areas inhabited by the Marathi-speaking peoples into a single province.

The following are the contiguous areas of the Marathi-speaking people—

- (i) Marathi-speaking areas in the Province of Bombay.
 - (ii) Marathi-speaking areas of the Central Provinces and Berar.
 - (iii) Marathi-speaking areas from the Hyderabad (Dn.) and the Indian states in the territory contiguous to the areas mentioned in (i) and (ii) above.
 - (iv) Marathi-speaking areas from the Portuguese India i. e. Gomantak.
- (II) In this effort to try, as a first stage if necessary, to bring into being a single province of the Marathi-speaking peoples under British Rule and then to try further, as and when possible to incorporate such of the other Marathi-speaking areas as are contiguous to the above Province.

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A Brief Account

Formation of homogeneous linguistic units in a federated India is now considered the best and the most natural process along which the supreme task of building up the permanent political structure of India should proceed. The Indian National Congress has long ago accepted this fundamental basis. The idea was slowly gaining ground during the last quarter of a century or more. As however, the time was fast approaching when India would attain its full freedom, serious efforts became necessary for translating the idea of the formation of linguistic units into actual practice.

So far as the Marathi-speaking people are concerned the need of the formation of a linguistic Maharashtra unit was pressed before the people by the All-Maharashtra Literary Conference at its sessions held at the principal centres of Maharashtrians from time to time. However, at the Belgaum session of the conference in May 1946 Mr. G. T. Madkholkar Editor "Taruna Bharat" and a noted author in Marathi put in a vigorous plea in its favour in his address delivered there. The Conference at once proceeded to appoint a representative Committee with M. M. Prof. D. V. Potdar as the Chairman and Mr. Keshavrao Jedhe, Mr. Shankarrao Deo, Mr. S. S. Naware as members together with Mr. Madkholkar as its secretary.

This Committee felt the need of bringing into existence a representative organisation specifically set up for the purpose. With this end in view, a representative gathering was held at the Blavatsky Lodge in

Bombay on 23th July 1946 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Shankarrao Deo. Mr. S. K. Patil was the Chairman of the Reception Committee. This Bombay Conference unanimously adopted a resolution urging the formation of a linguistic Maharashtra province and asked the representatives from the Bombay Province and the Central Provinces and Berar in the Constituent Assembly to raise there this question and try to bring into being the linguistic Maharashtra Unit.

To implement this resolution the Conference also appointed a Committee and entrusted to it the task of founding the United Maharashtra League. By another resolution the Conference appointed a committee with the Rt. Hon. Mr. M. R. Jaykar as Chairman and Prin. D. R. Gadgil as the Convener to prepare a draft scheme of the United Maharashtra Province after making necessary local inquiries.

On behalf of this Committee Prin. D. R. Gadgil and Mr. Shankarrao Deo undertook a tour visiting some of the principle centres from the Central Provinces and Berar and discussed several important matters involved, with the local leaders and groups. Prin. D. R. Gadgil had submitted to the Jayakar Committee two short but weighty notes § which have been separately published both in English and Marathi. These notes deal with the general principles affecting the creation of homogeneous units in a Federation and discuss some of the devices which may be adopted in case of need such as local autonomy and the institution of subprovinces in a Federating Unit. These notes have no doubt proved very helpful and are calculated to set at rest a number of doubts and difficulties likely to arise as we proceed further in our task.

§ (i) Unification of Maharashtra -

(ii) The constitution of Federating Units.

The work of preparing a draft constitution of the United Maharashtra League, decided to be established with the specific object of bringing into being a United Maharashtra Province, was entrusted to a Committee consisting of M. M. Prof. D. V. Potdar, Acharya Dada Dharmadhikari and Mr. A. S. Patwardhan. Accordingly, a draft was prepared and after discussion a Constitution for the proposed League was finally approved on 28th Sept. 1946 at Poona.

The response from the public to the call of the U. M. League was so prompt and enthusiastic that within about one month to the end of October 1946, the last day fixed for enrolment of members, the number spontaneously went to 13803. Under the constitution elections were held and a Council of Representatives was elected in December 1946.

Under the auspices of the United Maharashtra League thus formed, a conference of the Council of Representatives of the League was held in the Town Hall at Jalgaon (East Khandesh) on 13th & 14th April 1947 under the chairmanship of Mr. Shankarrao Deo. This conference adopted the Report of the work done so far together with a Statement of Accounts submitted by Dr. Y. K. Sovani. Then the election of the new Executive Committee was held. Some changes in the constitution of the League were carried out. It was also decided to hold a supplementary election of the Representatives in view of the very pressing demand from numerous centres to enlist additional members of the League.

In its deliberations, the Council thrashed out several important problems demanding attention and adopted the following resolutions unanimously. The Council organised a Public Session where these resolu-

tions were communicated and explained to the public who welcomed them very enthusiastically.

**The Text of the Resolutions passed at the
Jalgaon Conference held on 13 & 14-April 1947.**

I Unification of Maharashtra.

This Conference reiterates the Resolution regarding unification of the Maharashtra Unification Conference held in Bombay in July 1946. It places on record its conviction that the fully autonomous constituent Units of a Sovereign Indian Union must be homogeneous linguistic units. To form such units it is necessary to redistribute the existing Provinces in India. So far as this question concerns the Marathi-speaking people the contiguous areas inhabited predominantly by the speakers of Marathi in the Provinces of Bombay (including the city of Bombay) and of the Central Provinces and Berar, should be brought together in one political unit as the first step. The constitution of such a unit of unified Maharashtra should form an integral part of the work of the Constituent Assembly. This conference therefore expresses satisfaction at the ‡ Resolution passed in this behalf by the Bombay Legislative Assembly during the recent budget session urging the Constituent Assembly to take the question immediately.

‡ Resolution by Mr. A. J. Doddameti, M. L. A. (10-2-1947)

“ This Assembly recommends to Government to convey to the Constituent Assembly through the Government of India that this Assembly is of opinion that the redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis is a necessary preliminary to the evolution of an integral constitution for India and that therefore this question be taken up for consideration at an early stage of its proceedings.

II States of Janjira, Jawhar and Surgana.

This Conference notes that in the projected confederation of the Western India States are included Janjira, Jawhar and Surgana. The population of these states is Marathi-speaking and they are sought to be incorporated in a Union which will compose, in the main, of units inhabited by speakers of other Languages. This Conference therefore protests against the inclusion of these states in the proposed confederation. In the opinion of this conference, the natural place of these states is in the Proposed Union of Deccan States.

III No discrimination.

In view of misapprehensions that have been expressed in certain quarters, this Conference declares that the claim to form provinces on the basis of linguistic homogeneity involves no discrimination against or diminution of the rights of any groups of residents of the units on the ground of place of birth or of belonging to any original home or of their speaking any language or of belonging to any caste religion etc. No discrimination either in favour of or against any section of the population need, will or can result from the reformation of provinces on a particular basis.

IV Delimitations of Frontiers.

(A) This Conference is of opinion that as a preliminary to the reformation of constituent units the Constituent Assembly should immediately formulate the general principles on which delimitation of frontiers of the new units will be undertaken.

(B) This Conference authorises the Executive Committee to take necessary steps to formulate a draft of such principles for the guidance of our representatives in the Constituent Assembly.

(C) This Conference further asks the Executive Committee to prepare a case for United Maharashtra Province after instituting a thorough inquiry into the question of boundaries.

V Berar and H. E. H. the Nizam.

In view of the reported attempt of H. E. H. the Nizam's Government regarding retrocession of Berar and the latest statements and speeches that are being made on their behalf in this connection, which in the opinion of this conference constitute a threat, however slender, to the future position of Berar as a part of Free India as well as to the integrity and work of the Constituent Assembly, this Conference resolves that :

(i) The people of Berar have long formed part of a British province and have shared in its administration and in the constitutional progress that has taken place in British India. Their representatives are now included in the Constituent Assembly and are participating in framing a constitution for a Sovereign Indian Union of which Berar is to form an organic and integral part. The people of Berar will resist any attempt to deflect them from this future and to force the Sovereignty of the Nizam in any manner, on them.

(ii) This Conference earnestly requests the Constituent Assembly and the Provisional Government which will receive power on transfer from the British to see that nothing will happen at the time of transfer which will detract in any manner from the position of Berar as an integral and organic part of the Indian Union.

- (iii) This Conference would also make it clear to H. M. G. and the Government of the Nizam's Dominions that no agreement or action on their part which will prejudice the political future of the people of Berar, indicated above, will be binding on the people of Berar and that such agreement or action will also constitute an infringement of the sovereignty of the Indian Union.

VI Homogeneous Linguistic Constituent Units

This Conference realises the responsibility placed on the people of India by His Majesty's Declaration of 20th February 1947, to prepare themselves to receive the transfer of power and to set up a machinery to carry it out. This Conference therefore requests the Constituent Assembly to pay special attention to this task immediately. This conference further places before the Constituent Assembly its considered opinion that the task of formulating a permanent constitution for the future Sovereign Union of India which involves a number of complications and difficulties could best be accomplished by the creation of homogeneous linguistic Constituent Units.

[Extracts from Mr. Shankarrao Deo's Presidential Address at Jalgaon on 13-4-1947]

".....Whenever I mention Marathi-Speaking areas in Bombay Province I definitely include Bombay City in it. That Bombay City forms an integral and inseparable part of Maharashtra, is a fact on which, no two opinions need exist....."

".....This claim of Sir Mirza Ismail is a challenge to the people of Berar and to all those who are working for a United Maharashtra Province. What is our reply to it? We say, Berar is ours; it forms an integral part of the Sovereign Indian Union which will emerge after the transfer of power to Indian hands. Every attempt to absorb Berar in the Nizam's dominions will be resisted and we are not behind anybody else in fighting for our cause. The very fact that Berar is represented in the Constituent Assembly by British Indian representatives is a clear recognition of the position of Berar as independent of the Nizam. "

".....It is widely felt that the future India will be a federation. But in order that the federating units should develop according to their respective geniuses, each should be a unilingual and culturally homogeneous province instead of the present provinces which were formed in a haphazard manner.

This principle is admitted by the Congress. The enemy of this cause lies not without, but within us. We must now say without any reservation, that we want one Maharashtra. "

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MEMBERSHIP

(1) Anyone who is above 18 and who accepts in writing the Aims and Objects of the League and its Constitution and pays the required subscription can be enrolled as a member of the League.

[Members enrolled up to 31st October 1946-13803]

SUBSCRIPTION

(1) The Subscription of membership will be one Rupee to be paid only once.

[Subscription and donations collected-Rs. 14380]

COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES

[First Council met at Jalgaon on 13-14 April in 1947]

(1) The Council of Representatives of the League shall consist of from 51 to 201 persons.

(2) The Council will be elected according to rules framed for the purpose.

(3) The Council will elect as following Office bearers:—

(i) The President (ii) Vice-Presidents up to 7

(iii) One General Secretary (iv) Four Joint

Secretaries (v) The Treasurer (vi) All the

members of the Executive committee (vii)

Additional members as required by rules to

make up the required number.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

[Elected as noted overleaf]

(1) The Executive Committee shall consist of

(i) The Office-bearers of the Council.

(ii) Ordinary members as required under Rules.

(iii) Together the number shall not exceed 29.

Samyukta Maharashtra Parishad
OR
The United Maharashtra League
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
(Elected at Jalgaon)

President : Mr. Shankarrao Deo.

Vice-Presidents : 1. M. M. Prof. D. V. Potdar, Poona.

2. Shri. Keshavrao Jedhe, Poona.

3. „ Brijlal Biyani, Akola.

4. „ Punamchand Ranka, Nagpur.

5. „ Digambarrao Bindu,
Hyderabad (Deccan).

Treasurer : Shri. D. V. Gokhale. Editor Kesari, Poona.

General Secretary : Shri. G. T. Madkholkar
Editor Tarun Bharat Nagpur.

Joint Secretaries : 1. Sau. Pramilabai Oka.

Editor ' Matrubhumi ' Akola.

2. Shri. S. S. Naware

Editor. Prabhat Bombay.

3. Dr. K. B. Antrolikar. M. L. A.

Sholapur.

4. Shri. V. N. Naik, M. L. A. Nasik.

Members: Shri. S. A. Dange, M.L.A. Bombay. 2. Rao Saheb,
G. M. Thaware, Nagpur 3. Shri. P. D. Rahangadale,
Gondia 4. Shri. B. V. Shende, Wardha. 5. Dr.
Punjabrao Deshmukh, Member of the Constituent
Assembly, Amaraoti. 6. Shri. Anandrao
Waghmare, Aurangabad. 7. Shri. T. S. Bharade,
Ahmednagar. 8. Dr. G. S. Kowadkar, Belgaum.
9. Sau. Indirabai Patankar, Jalgaon. 10. Shri.
M. K. Sahasrabudhe, Panvel. 11. Shri. K. H.
Khadilkar, Sangli. 12. Shri. Gajananrao Naik,
Thana. 13. Shri. D. G. Angal, Amaraoti. 14. Mr.
Abdul Karim Lunje, Sholapur.

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