

' MAHARASHTRA'S CASE

BEFORE THE

LINGUISTIC ' PROVINCES COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

- ★ By THE Rt. Hon. Dr. M. R. JAYAKAR.
- ★ By THE DELEGATION OF THE SAMYUKTA MAHARASHTRA PARISHAD.
- ★ REPLIES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE BY THE SAMYUKTA MAHARASHTRA PARISHAD.
- ★ A COGENT REPLY TO CRITICS,
By Prof. D. R. GADGIL.

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SAMYUKTA MAHARASHTRA PUBLICATION

**Summary of the evidence which the Right Hon'ble
Dr. M. R. Jayakar gave before the Linguistic
Provinces Commission during its session in
Bombay**

12 Noon, Council Hall,
Bombay, 8th Nov. 1948.

Dr. Jayakar gave his evidence before the Linguistic Provinces Commission to-day, commencing at 12 noon and ending at 1-30. He appeared as a witness at the invitation of Government and made clear that he did not represent any Association which had previously given evidence before the Commission. He was expressing his own views which he had independently formed without taking a partisan view of the matter, and his only desire was to place before the Commission what he thought was the correct view of the matter, both in the interests of Maharashtra and Bombay City for the full preservation of its present prosperity and status.

2. The Chairman questioned him on the main point, to which he answered that

- (1) he was in favour of the immediate formation of linguistic Provinces;
- (2) all the Marathi-speaking people at present scattered over different parts of the country like, for instance, Bombay Province, C. P. & Berar, Goa, Marathwada in Hyderabad, etc. should be brought into one linguistic Province so as to give to the Marathi-speaking people full opportunity to develop themselves according to their cultural and historical antecedents and tradition;
- (3) Bombay with its outlying suburbs should be included in this Province and Bombay made its capital.

3. Dr. Jayakar proceeded to say that the matter was extremely urgent and almost amounted to a national emergency, and that if we waited for the future, the problem would become more and more acute, leading to difficulties, which in course of time would affect the unity and solidarity of the Federal Union. It was, in Dr. Jayakar's opinion, a most natural desire of any people speaking a major language to have a Province of their own under their control, in which they could develop their culture, history and political traditions according to their bent, and this desire was not confined only to Maharashtra, but was equally shared by other people speaking a major language like the Kannadigas and Andhras. Gujarat was not free from this wish, and although it did not at present claim a separate Province, it was equally desirous of aggregating into one homogeneous area, whether called a Province or not, composed of those who were connected by historical and other tradition and who spoke the same language. The aggregation of Saurashtra and the present desire to consolidate it into Mahagujarat, including as some want, Baroda, indicates the same wish, and if Gujarat does not claim a Province at present, it is because its leaders are very astutely waiting to see that the residue of what remains after the claims of Maharashtra are satisfied including Bombay city and suburbs, will fall into their lap. Already cries are heard that Mahagujarat, Baroda and Gujarat should be joined to the Bombay Province. No less a person than the present Prime-Minister of Baroda is reported to have said this in clear terms, and in Dr. Jayakar's view it is the expression of the same desire as the Maharashtrians have evinced in claiming a separate Province on the linguistic basis for their own progress. If Mahagujarat is a permissible ambition and ideal, free from fissiparous taints, there is nothing wrong in claiming a Brihan-Maharashtra or a Mahavidarbha, and Dr. Jayakar cannot understand the view of those who favour one, but condemn the other in strong terms, sometimes not befitting their high position in public life.

4. In Dr. Jayakar's view, the formation of strong, well-knit, homogeneous and autonomous units which can well cohere together, is the primary basis on which a strong Federal Union can be based, and this seems to be the view taken in the resolution about laying down the ingredients of a Federal Union, which was moved by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and accepted by the Constituent Assembly in December 1946. The third paragraph of the resolution, which was after a long and heated debate adopted by the Constituent Assembly, laid emphasis on the federal character of the Union and the large sphere of autonomy to be enjoyed by its constituent units. The said third paragraph of the resolution is as follows:—

"Wherein the said territories, whether with their present boundaries or with such others as may be determined by the Constituent Assembly and thereafter according to the law of the constitution, shall possess and retain the status of autonomous units."

(The italics are Dr. Jayakar's).

It is clear from this quotation that those who framed and adopted this resolution clearly had in view the creation of such autonomous Provinces *even* with new boundaries to be determined by the Constituent Assembly, apparently as the very basis of a well-knit Federal Union. This is apart from what the Congress has all these years held out as a promise to the linguistic elements of the country, to be fulfilled as soon as opportunities arise. This resolution confirmed that promise in clear terms, as forming the basis of a constitution of a strong Federal Union. It was assumed that, if the units now irregularly formed were dissatisfied owing to the linguistic antipathy, rivalry and mutual opposition arising from their malformation, the fissiparous tendencies would increase, the Provinces would not be self-satisfied and contented, rivalry would occur, opposition would increase, which would become more and more acute with lapse of time with the result that eventually the strength of the Federal Union would be gone.

The Indian Union is to be a federation formed by the coming together of people inhabiting the various regions of India. Most of these have had an independent political existence in the historic past and have enjoyed a status more or less of independence comparable to that of the nationalities in the continent of Europe. Unless these people are strengthened and consolidated into a separate Province the discontent will grow. Even at present it has assumed enormous proportions, of which perhaps, living as they do, out of Bombay, the members of this Commission can form very little conception. The bitterness is abnormal, and mutual jealousies are sapping the life of the people. Bitterness began with Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas, as an eminent and respected member of Bombay society, calling a meeting of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, from which Maharashtrians were deliberately excluded, an unforgiveable insult to them, and later when one Maharashtrian member attempted to express his views in opposition to the prevailing sentiment, he was peremptorily asked to sit down. Coming from a person who enjoys great prestige and renown in Bombay owing to his own achievements and as a scion and inheritor of the traditions of a great family, the resentment caused by this unnecessary affront has led to a reaction which is equally to be deplored. Whoever was the author of this bitterness, it is not important now, but the extent of the bitterness is and Dr. Jayakar gave a strong warning to the Commission that, if they postponed this question for five or ten years as some Congress leaders were wanting to do, the Commission would make the solution infinitely more difficult at the end of the period. In the meanwhile lakhs of refugees will find entry into the Province and City of Bombay, making the solution more and more difficult. Already five lakhs of refugees, Dr. Jayakar was told, were in Bombay Province. It has behaved very generously towards them, but one effect of that will be that the numerical strength of the people who speak the Marathi language will gradually get reduced, and in course of time they might become 10 per cent or even

5 per cent of the local population. Will this lessen or add to the difficulties?

5. In my opinion, therefore, Dr. Jayakar went on to say, it is no more fissiparous for Maharashtrians to claim a Province of their own than it is for Gujarat to claim a Mahagujarat. I appreciate the desire in both these directions, and if Maharashtrians have a Province including Bombay of their own, there is no reason why Gujarat may not have a similar one to itself, including such areas as are inhabited by the majority of the people who speak the major language of Gujarati or its dialects. We do not grudge them this privilege.

6. I consider it, therefore, said Dr. Jayakar, that it is a wrong view to imagine that this cry has been set up by a few malcontents in Maharashtra, Karnatak and Andhra and that these people must be strictly put on their trial to prove their case. It is the cry of these claimants, it is argued, clamouring for recognition, and it has to be met with force and opposition. The onus is on them to prove. I take a different view, said Dr. Jayakar. As stated above, such linguistic Provinces are the fundamental *sine qua non* of a strong Federal Union, and if so, it is the primary duty of the Government of India and its Constituent Assembly, apart from the clamour from linguistic areas, of their own accord to find a solution by establishing linguistically homogeneous Provinces. The Government of India look upon this question from a superior distance at present, waiting to see the result of the scramble between the linguistic elements. They feel interested only as distant and hostile critics. Some of them have expressed in unmeasured terms strong views about the very matters which have been placed under the consideration of this Commission, thereby breaking the salutary rule that, when matters are *sub judice*, there should be no public comment upon the merits of the questions involved. Such comments have reduced this Commission to a farce. If they had views to express, they should have offered to give evi-

dence before this Commission. But, apart from this, a more helpful attitude should have been taken by the Government of India, for ultimately the matter will have to be decided by the Constituent Assembly and by the Government. But in the absence of such help the public are looking forward to this Commission to state clearly

- (1) whether the division on a linguistic basis is feasible;
- (2) whether it should be made immediately or postponed;
- (3) what procedure and principle should guide the determination of this question;
- (4) that the details of this question should be later worked out, after the findings of this Commission, by another Boundary Commission which will go into all the details as regards tracts, boundary disputes and such other matters and decide definitely the clear boundaries of the divided areas. Census figures can help up to a point, but unfortunately the figures of 1941 census are not clear, and in the areas which may be described as boundary areas, most of which are bilingual, mere census figures will not help, but a village to village plebiscite will have to be taken by the Commission which will be called into existence later.

7. The Commission has had a large body of evidence before it which I do not wish to repeat. I have read the questionnaire of the Commission, and speaking generally, I am in accord with the replies thereto submitted in the written statements presented on behalf of the Samyukta Maharashtra bodies and the evidence which some of them gave here, especially that of Principal D. R. Gadgil. I am avoiding repeating the matter.

8. I propose, said Dr. Jayakar, to confine myself to the problem of the city of Bombay and, briefly stated, my

view is that Bombay city is an integral part of Maharashtra, has been so for several years, it is its economic nerve centre owing to various reasons given in the evidence of Principal D. R. Gadgil, and to cut it out now from the rest of the Province is like cutting off the head and leaving a carcass which cannot flourish but will soon die. I am aware of and appreciate the great prosperity which has sprung up in Bombay during recent years owing to the activities of certain non-Maharashtrian commercial classes. No Maharashtrian desires that this prosperity should be jeopardized, much less destroyed or unjustly controlled, and I have no doubt that we have enough common-sense left amongst us, inspite of the present bitterness, which ought to enable us to sit together and find out some means which will preserve the present prosperity of Bombay even after the city is included in Maharashtra. A very large volume of prejudice against Maharashtrians has been expressed in this behalf, but when dealing with this subject in greater detail in the later part of my evidence, I shall prove that this prejudice is unjustified and is contrary to the facts. It may be possible to find means by which present institutions in Bombay like the High Court, Corporation, Legislatures and similar other institutions can be maintained intact without any damage even after the inclusion of Bombay in Maharashtra.

9. If it is once conceded that self-contained, strong, well-knit, homogeneous and autonomous Provinces are a prime necessity of a strong Federation, it is clear that this homogeneity is to be sought in political, cultural, historical and other traditions. The best indication of these elements is the language test, because speaking a common language causes and is often the result of several affinities, cultural, historical, political and others which arise from speaking the same language. I, therefore, think that the language test is the best one in this behalf, and instead of being distrusted, it ought to receive as much encouragement as possible to prevent future trouble.

10. The main theme of my evidence, continued Dr. Jayakar, will be:—

- (1) that the oldest inhabitants of Bombay were all predominantly Marathi-speaking races;
- (2) that they developed the city from the earliest times culturally, economically, politically and educationally also;
- (3) that they are still active in Bombay in all these matters and constitute the bulk of the population of Bombay City inspite of later inundations;
- (4) that the advent of the non-Maharashtrian trading communities from Gujarat into Bombay was at a very much later period and for many years they were merely migratory;
- (5) that the commercial prosperity which they brought to Bombay, dispassionately examined, is not the result of their unaided effort, though financially they may have been the chief authors;
- (6) that, in considering the true measure of this commercial prosperity, one is apt to ignore the part played by Maharashtrians, especially in providing labour, managership and other forms of co-operation;
- (7) that the later advent of this commercial prosperity cannot be allowed to prejudice the claim of the others who were the makers of Bombay from ancient times;
- (8) that, if this commercial prosperity and its future growth can be preserved by reasonable expedients, it ought not to stand in the way of Bombay being kept in Maharashtra, as it has been for many years;
- (9) Bombay has always been in Maharashtra, and the onus is on them to prove that circum-

stances now require its exclusion from Maharashtra. The onus is not on those who want that Bombay should retain its position in Maharashtra;

- (10) that the evidence is overwhelming that the old Marathi-speaking races made Bombay since ancient times what it is in a very large measure, and their claim cannot be whittled down by the later advent of commercialism;
- (11) that every attempt ought to be made by peaceful negotiations and cordial understanding to preserve the present and future commercial prosperity of Bombay as a part of Maharashtra;
- (12) the argument that it is strategically important & as a port city requires to be separated is unsound and dangerous and cannot be applied to Bombay alone without the principle being made applicable to all similar cities in India like Calcutta, Madras, Vizagapatam, Cochin, etc. There is no reason why Bombay should be selected and made either a Free City or placed under the Central administration without these other towns being treated similarly;
- (13) the areas on the border between India and Pakistan are even more strategically important. On similar principles, if accepted, they will have to be made centrally administered areas. None has advocated this so far.

11. These are the main points on which I wish to give evidence. I shall try to be as brief as possible.

12. That the oldest inhabitants of Bombay were Marathi-speaking people is established by the remarks of Mr. R. X. Murphy, who has written a monograph on the history of some of the oldest races now settled in Bombay. The monograph is to be found on page 16 and following

pages of "Proceedings of the Bombay Geographical Society, January 1837" published in Bombay at the American Mission Press in that year. After describing the "numerous population" of Bombay as it was composed at the date of this monograph, 1837, Mr. Murphy observes (see page 17):

(To save the Commission the necessity of referring to these books which are very rare, I have given wherever possible complete extracts as quotations).

"The language spoken by these elements and every step we take in tracing the traditional or recorded history of these sections confirms us in the conclusions drawn from their speech and marks them as the oldest unconverted settlers in Bombay. These are:—

- (1) Colees or fishermen
- (2) The Bhogles, Bhandarees or toddy-drawers
- (3) The Pulsheas, Joshees or Hindu doctors.
- (4) The Pathany or Pathary Purvos (corruption of "Prabhus", the community to which Dr. Jayakar belongs)
- (5) the Panchkulseas, Wadavuls or carpenters (sutars), which caste also took care of the cocoanut gardens on the whole.

"The evidence of language above adduced will fix these races on the land previous to its occupation by the Portuguese. But that they were so previous to any Mahomedan settlement even so early as the commencement of the 14th century, appears extremely probable from the following circumstances." (The circumstances need not be mentioned here. They are all set out at pages 17 and following).

13. The language of which Mr. Murphy speaks, which later came to be called Konkani, is regarded by him as a "dialect of Marathi" spoken in Bombay. He observes:— "It was the language spoken by the native Christians of Salsette, Mahim, Matunga and Mazagaon and must have

been the dialect of this large body before their conversion from Hinduism by the Portuguese."

14. After amplifying the hold over Bombay of these five different races in pages 17 to 24, Mr. Murphy summarizes his conclusions in the middle of page 25 as follows:—

"Thus we shall have the following races as successively dominant in Bombay between 1290 A.D. and present era:—

- (1) the Colees
- (2) the ancestors of Pathary Purvos (Pathare Prabhus), Pulseas, Panchkulseas
- (3) the invaders from Chaul (a Prabhu colony in those days) of disputed castes, but probably only a different branch of the last
- (4) The Mahomedans
- (5) The Bhongules and Bhandarees
- (6) The Mahomedans again
- (7) Probably the Bhandarees and Bhongules again
- (8) The Portuguese
- (9) The English.

15. It is to be noted that the Gujarati or commercial class is not mentioned anywhere in this grouping.

16. This narrative finds clear confirmation in a compilation called "A Book on Bombay" which was a souvenir presented to the delegates who visited Bombay during the 10th session of the Indian History Congress held there on the 26th, 27th and 28th of December 1947. It is, therefore, the most recent monograph on Bombay composed by scholars of research, viz., Dr. Dighe, Mr. Fernandes and Dr. A. D. Pusalkar. The last-named is an M.A., Ph.D. and a scholar of great eminence who had for some time a very

respected place in the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, a Research University founded by Mr. Munshi in Bombay. At pp. 17 to 19 of that monograph is to be found a confirmation of Mr. Murphy's remark that the races mentioned above are the most ancient inhabitants of the city of Bombay. It is unnecessary to burden this statement with quotations from that monograph. One thing to be noted about Dr. Pusalkar's monograph is the definite opinion (contrary to what I understand has been stated before this Commission by some witnesses on behalf of the commercial classes) that the Colees ethnologically belong to the Dravidian type. This statement explodes the belief that they are the descendants of the "Dubras" who are supposed to have descended from Gujarat.

17. Let us now look at what these races did in building up gradually the city of Bombay. There is clear evidence that they founded the temples which are even now extant and popular in Bombay. The following temples are mentioned:—

(1) Walkeshwar Temple near Malabar Point

see Murphy, *Ibid*, page 17, bottom

see Pusalkar, *Ibid*, page 20,

see Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Extra No. 1900, page 43.

The Journal adds:—

"On the arrival of Bhima in Bombay (Patron king of Pathare Prabhus and others) with his colony of Pathare Prabhus, Pulseas, Panchkalseas and Bhandarees, he found there two temples, Walkeshwar and Mumba devi."

(2) Mumbadevi Temple—dedicated to the patron diety of Bombay.

see Murphy, *Ibid* page 17, bottom.

see Pusalkar, page 19.

See also reference to this temple in the Journal of the Bombay Branch, Royal Asiatic Society, Extra No. 1900, page 46, where details of the temple are mentioned. The Journal adds:—

“A notable Maratha goldsmith by name Pandurang built the temple and looked to its management which has from time to time, continued in his much-decayed family. The Kolis claim Mumba as their goddess.”

- (3) Prabhadevi, the family deity of Pathare Prabhus. Prabhus.

See Pusalkar, page 20, who adds:—

“The present temple is situated near Mahim and was built in 1750 A.D. by the members of the Pathare Prabhu caste.”

See also B. B. R. A. S. Journal, *Ibid*, page 47.

- (4) Gamdevi—see Pusalkar, page 20—is one of the oldest temples dedicated to the village goddess of that part of Bombay—“A Prabhu named Bapuji Mhatre who dreamt of the existence of the image, brought it down from the rocks of the Malabar Hill in 1661 A.D. Another Prabhu, Balaji Bhicaji, built the temple. The temple is resorted to by Prabhus, Vadvals and Sutars (carpenters and Panchkalseas)”.

See B. B. R. A. S. Journal, page 53; “The temple is mentioned as dedicated to that goddess, Gamdevi being a corruption of Gramdevi.” See also Pusalkar, page 55.

- (5) Mahaluxmi: There are two temples of this name, one built by a Prabhu, Dhakji Dadaji, which still exists in a well-preserved form.

See B. B. R. A. S. Journal, *Ibid*, page 45.

The other Mahaluxmi temple (see *Ibid*, p. 56) was built by a Prabhu, Ramji Shivji (supposed

to be one of the ancestors of Dr. Jayakar's family). This also exists at present in a well-preserved form and is of great popularity.

- (6) Kalikadevi—which is situated on the road called Kalbadevi (corruption of Kalikadevi). It was built by and its management is vested in the caste of Palshees.

See B. B. R. A. S. Journal, pages 53 and 54.

18. To this list can be added a large number of smaller temples built by one or the other of these old inhabitants of Bombay, scattered over different places in Bombay. A full account of these temples is to be found in the B.B.R.A.S. Journal, *Ibid*, pages 43 to 55, and the details are too numerous to be mentioned in this short account.

19. It is further to be noted that even up to this date several names relating to the localities of Bombay still survive in spite of commercial changes in the island, for instance,—

- (a) Colaba, corruption of Kolbhat, the abode of the Koli caste.
- (b) Koliwada (abode of the Kolis) at Mandvi and Dongri, two localities in Bombay.
- (c) Oavel (a small area near Chira Bazar) meaning "hamlet of the Kolis."
- (d) Mazagaon—corruption of Machligam (fishing village)
- (e) Ghodapdeo—allocated to the god of the Kolis. Similarly, Khadakdeo.
- (f) Agripada—the hamlet of the Agrees (i.e., salt pan cultivators, a division of Bhandaris).
- (g) Bhau's Dhakka, meaning Bhau's Pier, which was the old name for the present Carnac Bunder. Bhau was a Pathare Prabhu of immense wealth. Even now,

amongst the working classes who occasionally visit their native homes in the Konkan, this is the place of embarkation and disembarkation known amongst them as Bhau's Dhakka. Its British name is Carnac Bunder.

(h) Byculla is reminiscent of Bhau Koli and is the corrupted abbreviation of the two words.

(i) Gunbow Street in the Fort takes its name from Ganba, who was a carpenter owing that district.

20. Apart from this, amongst the Pathare Prabhus several families bear surnames like "Kotkar" indicating their ownership of several parts of the Bombay City. Kot means "Fort" which is the name of the official and business quarters of Bombay. The only non-Maharashtrian community which at later dates owned Bombay along with the Maharashtrians was the Parsi community who came to Bombay very much later...

21. There is further evidence that leading members of some of the Marathi-speaking races were in the vanguard of progressive movements in all civic departments like education, social reform, cultural societies and journalistic ventures, etc., and the learned professions. The Parsis kept them company. In these early days, religious activity took the form of movements of a reformatory character, giving a turn to Hindu religion so as to suit it to congregational prayers. The movement started in Bengal by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar had its reflex in Bombay, and institutions were started by these leading Maharashtrians, some of which even survive up to now. Bombay then was in the vanguard of progress. The Prarthana Samaj, a sect of Hindu protestants who believe in purifying Hinduism on the same basis as the Brahmo Samaj of Bengal, was started, and several literary and educational societies

sprang into existence, a record of which is to be found in the 4th Report, dated 1853, of the Students' Literary and Scientific Society and its branches. The Society was founded on the 13th of June 1848, and the names of its Managing Committee, which are quoted below, indicate what a prominent part the Marathi-speaking people took in these movements with the aid of the Parsi progressives of that time. As an instance I give below the names of the Managing Committee of that Society.

President:—Prof. Green (British)

Vice-Presidents:—Bamanji Pestanji, Esq., (Parsee)
Narayan Dinanathji, Esq.,
(Prabhu)
Mohanlal Ranchoddas, Esq.,
(Gujarathi)

Treasurer:—Bamanji Pestanji, Esq., (Parsee)

Secretaries:—Prof. Reid, LL.B. (British)
Prof. Sinclair, M.A. (British)

Vernacular Secretaries:—Jahangir Barjorji (Parsi)
Narayan Vishnu
(Marathi-Hindu)
Gangadas Keshoddas
(Gujarati-Hindu)

Members:—Ag. Prof. Dadabhai Naorozi (Parsee).
Ramchandra Balkrishna
(Marathi-Brahman).
Ardeshir Framji, Asst. Master. (Parsee)
Vishwanath Narayan (Marathi-Brahman).

22. Similarly, one of its Branches was called the Marathi Dnyan Prasarak Sabha. I quote the names of the members to prove how prominently the Mahratta progressives took part in these movements.

Marathi Dnyan Prasarak Sabha.

President:—Narayan Dinanathji, Esq.,
(Pathare Prabhu)

Members of the Committee:—

Khanderau Moroba (Pathare Prabhu)
Treasurer.

Bhaskar Damodar, (Marathi Brahman)
Secretary.

Narayan Bhai (Marathi Brahman)

Narayan Vishwanath Shastri.

(Marathi Brahman)

Narayan Balal (Marathi Brahman)

Harishankar Balkrishna (Marathi Brahman)

Keshav Shastri (Marathi Brahman)

Vinayak Harichandra (Pathare Prabhu).

23. The Mahrattas at that time were in the leadership of almost all important intellectual activities in Bombay. To quote a few of the leading men Bal Shastri Jambhekar (a Marathi Brahman), one of the earliest professors and journalists of Bombay. Jagannath Shankarsett whose statue voted by the public of Bombay is to be found at the entrance to the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in the Bombay Town Hall, Dr. Bhau Daji (Marathi Brahman), a famous Orientalist, who trained a Gujarathi pupil Bhagwanlal Indrajī, Dadoba Pandurang (Panchkalashi), a pioneer grammarian, Vishwanath Narayan Mandlik (Marathi Brahman), a prominent Government pleader and an author of eminence in Hindu Law, Khanderao Moroji and Shamrao Pandurang, two Pathare Prabhus, pioneer Solicitors of the High Court, Narayan Dinanathji (Pathare Prabhu), a philanthropist and literary man, who had the vision to start in 1857 a public High School called the Prabhu Seminary for all inhabitants of Bombay, irrespective of caste or creed, (the institution is still continuing), Janardan Vasudev (Pathare Prabhu), the first Indian to obtain a place in the Bombay High Court as a Judge, Shanker Pandurang (Marathi Brahman), Sanskritist and Indologist, Kashinath T. Telang, (Marathi Brahman), an eminent lawyer and a High Court Judge, R. G. Bhandarkar (Marathi Brahman), a foremost Indologist, Kashinath Parab (Marathi Brahman), publisher, S. B.

Madgaokar (Marathi Brahman) historian and merchant, Madhav Chandroba Dukle (Marathi Brahman) a high-class Orientalist. Several other names could be added, but I am not burdening this statement with their mention. It is thus clear that at this time, when the advent of Gujaratis into Bombay was meagre, the progressive life of Bombay was developed by these Maharashtrians.

24. There is clear evidence that the ingress of Gujaratis into Bombay on any fair scale commenced in the year 1669, as is shown by a letter dated 26-11-1669. The letter is set out in detail in an old publication called 'English Records on Shivaji (1659-1682)'. It gives a description of the times of Shivaji. In a chapter dealing with Bombay about that time, this letter is set out at P. 136 as proceeding from the President of the English factory at Surat to the East India Company. The material portion of that letter, which is too long to be quoted *in extenso* in this statement, shows that "the Gujarati Bannias of Surat were at this time suffering from unsufferable tyranny exercised by the Lordly Moors (Muslims) on account of their religion. . . . So the Bannias paid large incomes to Muslims to redeem the places of their worship from being defaced and their persons from malice. But, under the various Zeale of the Muslims, the Bannias began to groan under their affliction and took up the resolve of flying the country. . . . A nephew of an ancient Shroff, Tulsidas Parrack, a Gujarati, was among others converted to the Muslim faith, which was a great heart breaking to the Bannias and dishonour to his house. As a result of this conversion, the Bannias killed themselves in grief and made sensible of their common danger and they resolved to leave the town (Surat). But, before they would undertake it, five of the eminent Bannias with their chief broker Bhimji Parrack, on behalf of the rest, came early to Gerald Aungier (the then British Governor of Bombay), declaring their miserable condition and imploring his assistance and protection in the Island of Bombay in case they did or

could fly thither.....They sought Gerald Aungier's protection. Gerald Aungier was somewhat surprised at this idea, though he saw a great advantage might accrue to Bombay. But, under the present conjecture, it did not appear to him safe to enter on such an action because, having regard to the then security of Bombay and its power of defence, it would be impossible to defend them in regard to the weak condition of the city, wherefor, after many expression of comfort and assurance of friendship, Gerald Aungier told the Gujarati merchants that, among other reasons for refusing their request, Bombay was not then fortified sufficiently to protect them against the fury of so great a Prince wherefore he advised the Bannias to convey themselves for the present towards Ahmedabad and from thence make their general humble request to the King who would certainly ease their present burden in some degree though they must never expect to be safe in this country and hereafter as occasion offered they might with more ease and security convey their estates and families to Bombay by degrees where they might assure themselves of favour of friendship, freedom in their religion and encouragement in their trade as they could in reason expect from us". The letter further states that "this Counsel was approved by the Bannias and after their respectful thanks and hearty prayers for the Company's prosperity, they took their leave and on the 23rd and 24th all the heads of the Bannian families departed the town to the number of 8000, leaving their wives and children in Surat under charge of their brothers or next-of-kin". The letter proceeds to state that after this "the Bannias increasing daily in numbers proceeded as far as Broach where they were under safe protection and such courted by the great Governor of Ahmedabad".

25. This letter makes clear both the date after which and the circumstances under which Gujarati merchants began to come into Bombay. But for a long time, as this letter itself states, they remained migratory. Their wives and children were left behind in Surat, Broach and

Ahmedabad and they came to Bombay obviously for the purpose of earning their living and they returned to their native homes after acquiring wealth in Bombay. This migratory life of theirs is evidenced by a Report of Mr. Reid, who was a great scholar of Gujarati and attained eminence in the educational field as a Gujarati scholar, which is to be found at P. 48 in the book already referred to, viz., *The Students' Literary and Scientific Society's IV Report* published in 1853. In discussing the proportion of males and females in Bombay, who sojourn in this island, Mr. Reid states at P. 48 that "there are classes of men who sojourn in the Island without their families". In this category he mentions 'traders from Gujarat and the adjoining provinces'. He proceeds to observe "at present, however, considering that nearly the whole attendance at the missionary schools consists of Marathi girls, the Gujaratis probably contribute but a small quatum in proportion to their contingent to the population. Again, as the increase of children among a caste or tribe must be in proportion to the abundance or scarcity of wives, the boys will also be fewer among the Gujarati people, if more of them reside in Bombay without wives".

26. Reference has already been made to the debased Marathi dialect which was used in the earlier days by the unconverted tribes mentioned above. Reference to this language is to be found in 'Oldest Races now Settled in Bombay' by Mr. R. X. Murphy (*see Ibid*), P. 16 as a dialect of Marathi spoken in Bombay and it is added that it "must have been the dialect of this large body of people before their conversion from Hinduism by the Portuguese". He adds that "this dialect has nothing European in its character and even after their conversion the people lived as a distinct body and came into contact with no other influence likely to effect it. The fair presumption, therefore, is that the dialect spoken by the native Christians of Bombay and Salsette, was the dialect spoken by a large portion of the population of these islands before the arrival of the Portuguese and we are thus prepared to look for the oldest Hindu

inhabitants among those castes whose language is still most strongly tinged with this peculiar dialect”.

27. This dialect at a later stage came to be described as Konkani. I am not here entering on the controversial question whether Konkani is the mother or off-spring of Marathi. It is sufficient to say that Konkani is connected with Marathi and contains a large admixture of Marathi words. Fortunately, there is now available one of the earliest works written in this language, being an epic or Puran, recording Christ's miracles. It was written in this dialect. The Puran is fashioned on the epics in the Sanskrit language, the deity chronicled being Christ. It was first published in Lisbon in 1659 by a missionary father and underwent later editions in Bombay in 1845 and 1879. A detailed reference to this Puran is to be found in a book already referred to, being the Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Extra No. 1900, and at page 37, there is a complete description of this Puran and its contents. I have been able to obtain from an Indologist friend a copy of this Puran. It is here with me and a cursory perusal of the contents clearly indicates that the language employed is preponderantly Marathi though in a debased form. At P. 38 of the Journal mentioned above, occur the following observations: “this curious Puran is in the dialect of the aborigines of Bombay”, and after mentioning the vicissitudes which it underwent, it is observed that the language is “debased Marathi”. To similar effect, showing that the language which was spoken by the majority of the inhabitants of Bombay about this time was Marathi in a corrupt form, are two inscriptions on stone dated, the first one in the year 1109 and the second 1130 A.D. They contain an admonition to the public not to break the orders contained in the inscriptions. Whoever does so will suffer. This inscription was discovered in the foundation excavated for constructing the Government House at Parel in Bombay, in which a Research Laboratory is housed at present. The second inscription dated 1130, is more detailed. Out of the 26 lines which it contains, a

large number is in Sanskrit, but the concluding portion is in Marathi, which appears to bear close resemblance to the dialect to which I have already referred.

28. From this and other evidence, an eminent research worker, Mr. Vinayak Laxman Bhawe, observes in Marathi in his "Maharashtra Saraswat", Vol. 1, published in Shaka 1846 (1924 A.D.) at Pp. 14 & 15: "About this time, high class people connected with the Government used to learn Sanskrit, but in the ordinary populace Marathi language had largely advanced. They used to speak that language which was more often resorted to than Sanskrit. Whenever occasion arose to write something which everyone could understand, they used to leave aside Sanskrit and it seems to have become necessary in the year 1109 to write in this Marathi dialect, because it was in universal use at that time". Contemporaneously with this Puran is to be found published in Rome, first in 1778 and in Lisbon in 1805, a grammar of this Marathi dialect and in the very first page it is stated in clear words that this grammar is of the Marathi language.

29. From all this evidence it is firmly established that the early inhabitants of Bombay from the 13th century onwards, were Marathi-speaking people. They developed the city in all departments of intellectual and civic life. They founded temples, they started schools and societies, they gave names to streets and localities, they were in the vanguard of progressive activities, and they spoke a language allied to Marathi. If this is so, it would be wrong now to take away the city from them merely because the commercial classes entered it at a later stage. From a long time these classes were migratory and during recent times were the authors of the commercial prosperity of Bombay. To permit them to claim the city now would be extremely unfair. The advent of later prosperity cannot be allowed to disturb the foundations of this city, and if the argument was allowed to prevail that a people foreign to the original nature of a territory can claim it by reason

of its subsequent prosperity, it would lead to disastrous results and the violent disturbance of the present commercial equanimity of the whole of the Deccan. In almost every village, Gujaratis have been allowed to settle and carry on trade and prosper. But, if the original inhabitants of such villages were told that, by reason of their generous treatment of the Gujarati trader, the village itself would in course of time be regarded as a Gujarati village, the consequences can be imagined. I make bold to say that it would disturb all the peaceful trade in the Deccan. Gujaratis would be ousted from the villages for fear that they might claim the villages and they would find it very difficult to pursue their trade, as they have been doing peacefully and in contentment in the midst of the Marathi-speaking people. If this argument prevails, it will have repercussions all over the Deccan, leading to confusion and chaos.

30. I understand that a good deal of suspicion has been expressed by the advocates of commercial classes before this Commission that the Mahrattas, by reason of their ancient history, have shown themselves incapable of managing Bombay, in fact of being in the vanguard of progressive movements. The fear is expressed that, if Bombay was to be included in Maharashtra, the Mahrattas would make a mess of the whole matter with consequent disaster to the prosperity of Bombay. I have already stated that we are willing to sit across a table and find out all the expedients which commercial classes may regard as necessary for protecting intact the trade prosperity and the status of Bombay. If they are not content with this offer and must claim Bombay as not belonging to Maharashtra, we are compelled to observe that this fear against Maharashtrians is completely unjustified, is the result of prejudice and is not supported by the achievements of the Marathi-speaking people as recorded in past documents. To begin with, Mahrattas have shown great toleration in co-operating with Gujarathi merchants and allowing them

to carry on trade, which would not have been possible if the Mahrattas had a narrow outlook and were not progressive. Witness the history of a place like Poona, where Gujarati commerce has risen rapidly. Some of the localities called Peths in Poona are completely filled with Gujarati shops. They trade in peaceful cordiality with the local inhabitants. Even in the commotion which took place after the Mahatma's murder, there is no instance recorded that the Mahrattas disturbed either the trade or the properties or families of Gujaratis. These Gujarati merchants came to Khandesh through the Tapti valley, spread themselves over the Deccan. Almost in every village they have shops. They have traded peacefully all these years. But, apart from their connection with progress and civilisation, there is to the present conditions, as regards the past and the Mahrattas, to be found irrefutable testimony in a book published in the year 1885, being "The Memoirs of General John Briggs". It is a record of all that General Briggs found during his life-time in the several parts of India. There was no controversy about this time between Gujaratis and Maharashtrians, and his testimony, therefore, which I am just quoting, can be said to be *anti litem motam*. At pages 274 and 275 of this book are to be found the following observations: "Western India is more decided and more ready than Bengal to appropriate Liberal principles and methods, and much more likely to initiate a serious and well-organised movement against inequalities of race. There are geographical and, above all, historical conditions that place the centre of political thought and action nearer to the cities of Bombay and Poona than to Calcutta or any place in the north of India. The last chapters of self-development and self-dependence in India belong to the Western region. The Mahratta Confederation emancipated the Hindus and extinguished Mussulman domination, destroyed the Mogul Empire and set up religious and social tolerance. Even the battle of Paniput was a triumph and a glory for the Mahrattas. They fought in the cause of "India for the Indians", while the great Muhammedan Princes of Delhi,

of Oude and the Deccan stood aside, intriguing and trimming. And though the Mahrattas were defeated, the victorious Afghans retired and never again interfered in the affairs of India. The Mahrattas did more—they lifted the cold shade of aristocracy and caste from the ranks of the people. They opened a career to talent, irrespective of birth and creed. High Commands, the first places in council, great estates, even sovereignties, fell to men of humble origin. Moslems were welcomed to comradeship on equal terms. Brahmins were preferred for their capacity, not merely for their caste, and had to from their capacity in defiance of tradition and scripture, by leading armies to the field. Mahratta campaigns and conquests brought the more distant parts of the continent closer together, and made their tribes and their languages mutually known. The Hindu revival of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which paved the way for British intervention, was a movement of social and political progress, in which the Mahrattas took the lead.”

31. This testimony apparently from a person who was not interested in praising unduly the Mahrattas, is enough answer to those doubters and cavillers who believe that Bombay would be ruined if the Mahrattas got control over its affairs.

32. Before concluding, I would deal briefly with the view that Bombay should be made a separate Province centrally governed. I have already dealt with the argument that, being a port of strategic importance, its control ought to be in the hands of the Central Government. I do not wish to repeat what I have said. But, dealing with the formation of Bombay as a separate Province, it may be observed that, under the constitution, the draft of which is being considered by the Constituent Assembly at present, there is a Section (I think it is Sec. 149) which requires, for the formation of a separate Province, a minimum number of 60 lakhs of inhabitants in the proportion of one member for each lakh. The population of Bombay, even

including Greater Bombay, which many regard as an astute device for breaking up the numerical proportion of the Marathi-speaking people of Bombay, is far from sixty lakhs. Apart from this, speaking of the sources of revenue, it may be noted that Income-Tax, Customs, Corporation tax and such large sources will be in the hands of the Central Government. Trade and Industry likewise will be controlled from the Centre. Bombay will get as its sources of revenue, land revenue, which is practically little in the city of Bombay. Forests likewise are practically nil. Stamps will undergo considerable reduction, because many documents at present stamped in Bombay will be stamped outside. Similarly registration, and of motor vehicles. Many of these are registered in Bombay, although they are used outside in the Deccan. Likewise, Sales Tax is paid by many merchants in Bombay, with reference to concerns which are outside. It may fairly be argued, therefore, that, as a separate Province, Bombay will not have enough resources to maintain itself. The commercial prosperity of Bombay gives rise to taxes like Income-Tax, Customs and Corporation tax, which will be the Centre's source of revenue. Bombay will not have enough to maintain itself from year to year. Its commercial prosperity will not support it, but it will be absolutely necessary to call for a subvention from the Central Government, just like Sind and the North West Frontier Province upto recent times.

33. Dr. Jayakar concluded his evidence at this stage. He was questioned by Mr. Pataskar about the reasons for Maharashtra having a separate University. "It is alleged", said Mr. Pataskar, "that this separation of a University was due to difference of culture between Bombay and the Deccan". Dr. Jayakar replied in the negative and pointed out that the claim to have a separate University was not only on the part of Maharashtra, but Karnatak and Gujarat also, and it first came on the horizon and was considered in the year 1925 by a Committee of which the

late Sir Chimanlal Setalvad was the Chairman and Dr. Jayakar a member. In that Report, among other things, it was held that the University of Bombay had become extremely unwieldy and found it difficult to manage the education of the people in distant parts of the Province. It was, therefore, thought necessary, even in the year 1925, that Maharashtra, Karnatak and Gujarat should each have its separate University. This was repeated in the Report of a later Committee, of which Dr. Jayakar happened to be the Chairman. The claim for a separate University was rested on two facts: (1) that the Bombay University had become too unwieldy and unmanagable. (2) That it tended more and more to become a City University like those of Birmingham and Manchester. As a City University, it would have no time, inclination or resources to look after the cultural, historical and traditional well-being of the outlying parts of Maharashtra, Karnatak and Gujarat.

34. Mr. Jagat Narain Lal then asked Dr. Jayakar what he thought of the growth of Hindi. Dr. Jayakar's reply was that he was in favour of Hindi gradually becoming more widely known, but he was absolutely opposed to the drastic and artificial way in which English is sought to be killed and Hindi foisted upon an unwilling people. Three days ago, Dr. Jayakar added, a member from Madras protested in the Constituent Assembly against the indecent haste with which the study of Hindi was being forced upon an unwilling people in Madras. A language for national expression must accord with the growth of the national sentiment and if and when the national sentiment of solidarity is deep, the language of expression will find vent. But an artificial compulsion either to destroy a language, like English, of international importance, or to force upon the people a language to which they are foreign would be a mistake and, instead of advancing the cause of national solidarity, it would delay it. English must remain for many years yet a medium of expression amongst the literate classes of Indians and, when Hindi assumes that im-

portance in course of time, English will disappear. But any artificial attempt to kill it is doomed to failure and is mischievous.

**Memorandum Submitted by the Samyukta
Maharashtra Parishad's Deputation to the
Linguistic Provinces Commission
on 4th November, 1948**

The appointment of the Linguistic Provinces Commission may be said to have arisen directly out of the discussions on the question in the Legislative Assembly (Nov. 27, 1947). In the statement made on the occasion, the Prime Minister accepted unequivocally the principle of Linguistic division of political units and indicated that the re-division could come about at a very early date. It is, therefore, now too late to question either the principles on which the demand for the formation of new units is based or the present being a suitable time in which to bring about the re-distribution. It must be emphasised that the demand is merely for the formation of new organic units to take the place of the present mixed and ill-assorted provinces. The talk of a division of the country is in this context, completely irrelevant.

The case for the re-distribution of provinces on a linguistic basis has been fully presented in Chap. IV of the Report of the Committee of the All Parties Conference (1928) which received the support of all political parties in India. The following extract from this chapter puts, in brief, the main reason on account of which the step is considered necessary and urgent.

“If a Province has to educate itself and to do its daily work through the medium of its own language, it must necessarily be a linguistic area. If it happens to be a polyglot area difficulties will continually arise and the media of instruction and work will be two and even more languages. Hence it becomes most desirable for provinces to be re-grouped on the linguistic basis. Language, as a rule, corresponds with a special variety of culture of traditions and

literature. In a linguistic area all these factors will help in the general progress of the Provinces." (P. 62).

The demand for the formation of a province of the speakers of Marathi is felt urgently by the people of Maharashtra and has the full support of all elements in its population. The following representative bodies and persons have recorded their support to this demand. (Statement as Appendix submitted separately).

The decision regarding the formation of new provinces and the principles on which their frontiers will be delimited must be taken immediately. The matter does not brook delay, because in the absence of a decision no progress in the affairs of the people divided among many multilingual areas can take place. The language of administration will, for these people, continue to be a foreign language; they will thus be denied fundamentally democratic Government and, in effect, the substance of independence. The difficulties of polyglot administration will make impossible any cogent, far-seeing plan of educational development. A mixed area will make difficult the adoption of an appropriate State policy in relation to social problems and, of course, no integrated regional plans of economic development can be projected under existing conditions. Conditions of even day-to-day administration may be expected to worsen if a decision in this matter is postponed. To say that the straining of relations between linguistic groups is the result of the demand for the creation of Linguistic Provinces is to reverse the actual casual relation. Different linguistic groups have lived without friction in a multilingual administration only when the aspirations of all of them have been equally suppressed. With the acquisition of political power and the possibility of self-development differences have arisen which have become deeper and deeper as the power and the possibilities have progressively increased. Even the affairs of multilingual Universities like Bombay and Nagpur have shown the evil effects of maintaining polyglot units. The only way out of the

present difficult situation in the multilingual provinces—the result of over twenty-five years of history—is to decide immediately to form unilingual units. If the aspirations in this direction are now thwarted because of the influence of any groups or persons the resulting discontent will mount high and may result in impeding the smooth running of provincial administrations.

Information relating to the area, population and the natural and financial resources, etc., of the potential province of Maharashtra are contained in the publication of the Parishad called: 'A Case for the Creation of a new Province—United Maharashtra'. These have been compiled from published statistical information and in some instances from official records. The assumptions on which they have been based and the periods to which they relate have been indicated in the appropriate places. The Commission will, no doubt, be able to obtain the latest information in full detail directly from official sources. The data set out in the Parishad publication reveal that the State of Maharashtra will be a large state with ample natural and financial resources. No question need, therefore, arise regarding its viability of financial strength.

In deciding upon the question of the desirability and feasibility of any particular unit the Commission will assume the broad probable outline of the unit. In the replies to the questionnaire, and in its publications and map, the Parishad has indicated the probable territory that will be included in United Maharashtra. The Parishad does not claim to be able to demarcate authoritatively the line of the frontier of United Maharashtra. Its only plea is that all the contiguous territory of the speakers of Marathi should be included in United Maharashtra and that the Linguistic Provinces Commission should, in its recommendations, make due provision for this being done. The delimitation of the exact frontiers of the new units will no doubt be entrusted to a special authority to be set up later. The Linguistic Provinces Commission should, however, indicate

the principles and methods according to which this work should be done. In the opinion of the Parishad these should be as described in Prof. Gadgil's brochure, *'The Formation of New Provinces'* published by the Parishad. The conclusions of Prof. Gadgil in this regard are set out below.

1. New units must be consolidated into one expanse of area of contiguous territory with a continuous and unbroken frontier.
2. Tests for the allocation of area between units must be so devised that no region or locality is either allotted to more than one unit or left unallotted to any unit.
3. Territory comprised within the frontiers of any unit must all be allotted to that unit.
4. In boundary fixation, strips of regions claimed to be under dispute on either side of the hypothetical boundary will be determined and the boundary defined after plebiscite in this disputed area.
5. Plebiscite results will be compiled according to votes per revenue village, and the frontier drawn so as to give satisfaction to the greatest possible number of voters.

Prof. Gadgil's note does not cover the problem of those areas in which the dominant group is of speakers of a language or dialect for whom a separate province is not proposed to be formed. For example, in certain areas on the borders of some linguistic regions the predominant group is of the aboriginal population. Separate linguistic units are not being formed for the aboriginal population. Therefore, such areas should be included in the State of the speakers of that language, the number of whose speakers in the area is next to the population of the aborigines. Also the population of speakers of a language or dialect other than a major language in an area on the border should be included in the speakers of the major language to which such language or dialect is most closely allied,

A number of special problems arise in connection with the creation of United Maharashtra. The position in regard to each of them is summarised below.

The area of the speakers of Marathi which will immediately form United Maharashtra is divided at present between two main administrations—(i) Bombay Province (ii) Central Provinces and Berar. These areas have remained separate throughout British times. The land revenue, land tenure and other administrative systems of these two areas have, therefore, developed on different lines. The Districts of Berar had also till last year a special political status. The Marathi Districts of C. P. & Berar had felt the difficulties of their position and had put forward a demand for separation from the Hindi Districts long before the idea of a United Maharashtra attracted any considerable support from the Marathi districts in Bombay Province. The demand for Maha Vidarbha (a Province of the Marathi Districts of C. P. & Berar) had been concretely formulated and special associations, etc. were already working for it when the Samyukta Maharashtra Parishad was established. One of the initial problems to be faced by the Parishad was, therefore, to consider the manner in which the original Maha Vidarbha demand could be modified and the two areas combined into one political unit. Between October 1946 and August 1947 a number of alternative arrangements were discussed. In August 1947, it appeared that the only arrangement that would prove satisfactory to political leaders of the Marathi Districts of C. P. & Berar was the formation of two sub-provinces in a United Maharashtra. This arrangement was, therefore, agreed to and is embodied in, what is known as, the Akola Agreement. To give effect to this, the constitution of the Indian Union will have to make provision enabling a State to create a sub-province within its area and to frame a constitution for it and to delegate to it certain powers. Such enabling provision may be found useful in the solution of the problems of a number of States in the Union.

The future of the area inhabited by a majority of speakers of Konkani also required special consideration. Whether Konkani is to be considered a dialect of Marathi or not has been a matter of some controversy. A strong committee consisting of trained philologists and scholars and of gentlemen from public life whose mother-tongue was Konkani, unanimously held in 1941 that Konkani should be considered as a dialect of Marathi and recently the Government of Bombay has decided that Konkani should be treated as a dialect of Marathi. From the point of view of United Maharashtra, the fundamental question is whether or not the speakers of Konkani consider themselves as allied closely by ties of blood, cultural tradition, literary heritage, etc. to speakers of Marathi. If they so regard themselves and desire in consequence that the political future of their area should be bound up with a United Maharashtra, the Parishad would urge the incorporation of that area in the State of Maharashtra. The available evidence points to a large majority of speakers of Konkani desiring such incorporation. We would in this connection draw attention to a manifesto issued in 1941 by a number of distinguished citizens of Bombay and North Kanara whose mother-tongue was Konkani. The first sentence in this manifesto runs as follows: "Desh and Konkan are merely the two parts of the well defined territory known as Maharashtra". The demand of the speakers of Konkani for their area being joined to the State of Maharashtra has found expression in a number of public meetings and representations during the last year. In view of these, we urge that the area of United Maharashtra should be considered as inclusive of the area of the speakers of Konkani and that for the purpose of determining the frontiers of United Maharashtra, the speakers of Marathi should be considered as including the speakers of Konkani.

A considerable controversy has recently raged over the question of the future of Bombay. It is difficult to

discover the justification for considering that the position of Bombay City in the scheme of re-distribution of provinces is at all open to doubt. The matter under consideration concerns the formation of areas of political units. If any area is shown to belong to a political unit according to the criteria on which the formation of the unit is based, no other considerations can prevail against the inclusion of that area in the unit. The re-distribution of provinces on the linguistic basis seeks to incorporate in each new unit all the contiguous territory of the speakers of a language. The area of Bombay City clearly forms a part of the territory of the speakers of Marathi. This fact of geographical location is self-evident, no other linguistic group has even hinted at a claim to the inclusion of this area within its territory. In the light, therefore, of the sole criterion that is relevant to the decision of this question, Bombay City must be included in the State of United Maharashtra.

Nothing further need properly be said regarding this issue. In view, however, of the financial strength and the possible political influence of a group that has launched a campaign for the separation of Bombay City from Maharashtra, some comments may be offered on the arguments put forward by it. The group which is styled as the Bombay Committee re: regrouping of provinces may be described as consisting of the capitalist interests controlling the financial, industrial and commercial life of Bombay City together with the professional and other interests allied to them or dependent on them. The group (Bombay Committee) appears to claim to speak on behalf of a majority of the inhabitants of Bombay. It has put forward no evidence to substantiate this claim. The views of the population of the speakers of Marathi in Bombay City have been plainly expressed and run contrary to the views of this group.

The Bombay Committee has also no title to speak on behalf of all the Non-Maratha population of Bombay. It has,

half of all the Non-Maratha population of Bombay. It has, for example, not received the support of any leaders of labour which includes within its ranks the vast bulk of even the Non-Maratha population of the city. The only index available of the representative opinion of the population of Bombay is the opinion of the members of the Bombay Corporation. The Members of the Corporation were elected only some months ago and the question of the future of Bombay was one of the questions discussed during the election campaigns. In a meeting of the Corporation of Bombay only two members out of a total of 74 voted for the creation of a separate province of Bombay and others were against. The Bombay Committee can, in these circumstances, not be considered as representing the views of any substantial proportion of the population of Bombay.

As pointed out above, no other linguistic group is putting forward a claim for the territory of Bombay City. The Bombay Committee demands that Bombay City and its suburbs be constituted a separate province. It is doubtful whether the issue can be raised as part of an enquiry relating to the creation of Linguistic Provinces.

The Bombay Committee does not argue the case for the creation of provinces for city areas. It nowhere faces the difficulties for regional planning and economic policy raised by the divorce of the administration of the city from its hinterland. It assumes without question that the water, power, etc. resources of the Maharashtra hinterland will be at the disposal of the Non-Maratha capitalists of the Bombay City even after their antipathy to Marathas has been made clear by forcing on the Marathas a partition of their territory.

The Bombay Committee evidently advocates the constitution of Bombay City & Suburbs into a separate province, because it does not like the retention of the city into its proper and natural regional unit, Maharashtra. And to support this demand it puts forward two arguments,

(1) The development of the city by Non-Marathas; (2) The linguistic composition of the present population of the city. The first argument is based on a naive view of Economic History. It visualises the activities of the Capitalists as the sole and wholly constructive and beneficent element in the historical development of the city. The extent of the naivete is revealed by the reference to hydro-electric development in the memorandum of the Bombay Committee. The Bombay Committee ignores the fact that this hydro-electric development is based entirely on the natural resources of Maharashtra and that it was brought about at the cost of the dispossession and economic ruin of hundreds of Maratha peasant families. However, even assuming the validity of this view of economic history, it would not lend any support to political claims. The right to political rule is based in autocratic regimes on military conquest and in democratic regimes on the territory belonging to the people. Political right over even uninhabited land does not change because of the participation in its economic development by any elements.

The argument regarding the present linguistic composition of the population of the city is based on the entirely false assumption that the regional and political affiliation of a locality can change with a change in its linguistic composition. However, even the linguistic composition of the Bombay City area throughout the period for which reliable statistics are available shows how it is a part of Maharashtra. Throughout this period the speakers of Marathi have constituted by far the largest single linguistic group in the City. Till 1921 they were in an absolute majority, and if speakers of Marathi and Konkani are taken together, as we contend they ought to be, they were in this position even in 1941 according to the sample in the census statistics. The Group has put forward certain figures to show that since 1941 this position has changed. The assumption on which these figures are based are open to grave doubt and the actual estimates are not supported by a single valid

bit of statistical evidence. Apart from the figures, the whole argument, in effect, bases the case for a separation of Bombay City from Maharashtra on the linguistic composition of war-time immigrants and refugees into the city since 1941. It is note-worthy that the statistical argument dodges the issue of the linguistic composition of the area of Greater Bombay to which presumably the Bombay Committee lays claim. In 1941, the Bombay Suburban District showed a clear majority of the speakers of Marathi.

In the light of the insistence of this Capitalistic Group (Bombay Committee) on its non-Maratha Character, it is necessary to draw attention to another feature of the economic history of Maharashtra during British Rule. During the last century, the economic life of Maharashtra has come to be progressively dominated by non-Maratha elements, similar in composition to and closely connected with the Group. The economic dominance of the non-Maratha in Bombay City is not a reflection of the non-Maratha Character of the city, but is merely the result of the dominance of the economic life of Maharashtra by them. The textile industry of centres like Sholapur and Nagpur, many of the sugar mills on Deccan Canals, the ginning and pressing of cotton, rice hulling, oil pressing, the trading in cotton, oil-seeds, etc. of the whole of the Maharashtra area as well as the money-lending and financial operations in it are in the hands of these elements. Having built their strength and affluence to a large extent, on Maharashtra resources they now seek to perpetuate and deepen the economic bondage of Maharashtra by trying to bring under their political influence the city on which the whole of the economic life of Maharashtra is centred. No State can usefully function in modern times which is deprived of control over its economic nucleus and a Maharashtra from which Bombay City is separated cannot hope even to plan for its economic well-being.

Finally, it may be emphasised that the agitation carried on by the Committee of Capitalists has made the people of

Maharashtra extremely apprehensive of any postponement of the decision in relation to linguistic provinces. They fear that if the decision is not taken immediately, the vast financial strength of the members of the Committee may be used, in the intervening period, to build up further claims against Maratha territory and to undermine, in other ways, the political aspirations of the people of Maharashtra.

Replies sent by the Samyukta Maharashtra Parishad
to the Questionnaire of the Linguistic
Provinces Commission on
15th September 1948

P A R T I.

Q. 1. Yes. The contiguous blocks of territory inhabited by speakers of Marathi, Kanarese, Telugu and Malyalam should be formed into the separate States of Maharashtra, Karnatak, Andhra and Kerala.

Q. 2. The boundaries of the proposed new States can be drawn only after enquiry in the field regarding the contiguous area inhabited by a majority of speakers of one language. This will involve either a census or a plebiscite throughout the border tracts where two languages prevail to some extent. The final boundary will have to be drawn on the basis of the census or the plebiscite taking the village as the unit. The final determination of the areas of states cannot be made on the basis of districts or talukas. The Linguistic Provinces Commission should lay down the principles and procedure for the determination of these boundaries, the actual work being done by a Committee or a Commission to be appointed later.

In certain areas on the borders of the linguistic regions the predominant group is of the aboriginal population; as separate linguistic provinces are not being formed for aborigines, such areas should be included in the State of the speakers of that languages the number of whose speakers in that area is next to the population of the aborigines. Also, in the enumeration, the speakers of dialects of Marathi or language groups closely allied to it as Konkani, Halbi, etc. should be included amongst speakers of Marathi.

The only data available at present for indicating the broad frontiers of the new States are those afforded by the census. The full data for mother-tongue, of the 1941 census have not been published. The Taluka figures are not

available even for the sample language data. We give below a list* of the Districts and Talukas inhabited by a majority of speakers of Marathi according to earlier census. The list indicates roughly the bulk of the territory that will fall within Maharashtra. The map prepared by the Parishad indicates graphically the position as revealed by the Census data.

Q. 3. Yes.

Q. 4. The putting forward of the alternative scheme shows an entire misunderstanding of the fundamental problem. The idea of a sub-province, within existing provinces, is a make-shift which might, at the most, solve a

*From Bombay Province:—(whole districts & talukas).

Bombay City and Bombay Suburban District, Thana, Kolaba, Ratnagiri, East Khandesh, West Khandesh, Nasik, Ahmednagar, Poona, Satara, Sholapur, Chandgad Mahal and Khanapur taluka of Belgaum district, Supa Mahal from Karwar District.

From C. P. & Berar:—(whole districts & talukas).

Nagpur, Wardha, Chanda, Bhandara, Akola, Amraoti, Yeotmal and Buldana.

From Merged States:—

Savantwadi, Phaltan, Aundh, Bhor, Janjira, Jawhar, Dang, Surgana, Bansda and Dharampur States (whole areas); and parts of Sangli, Miraj (Junior & Senior), Kurundwad (Junior & Senior), Jath States, which are contiguous to Marathi-speaking Districts, (areas).

From States not as yet merged:—

Parts of Kolhapur State which are contiguous to Marathi-speaking areas, Aurangabad, Osmanabad, Bir, Parbhani and Nander Districts of the Nizam's Dominion and the Portuguese Goa.

From Districts which are in part Marathi-speaking:—

Parts of Belgaum, Athni, Chikodi, Hukeri talukas in Belgaum District; parts of Karwar, Haliyal, Ankola, Kumtha, Honnawar, Yellapur talukas of Karwar District, which are contiguous to Marathi-speaking areas.

Parts of the Tehsils of Burhanpur, Bhainsdehi, Sonsar, Waraseoni, Multai, Balaghat and Baihar from C. P. and Berar, which are contiguous to Marathi-speaking areas.

few minor administrative difficulties. The formation of new States is now necessary on a linguistic basis because it is the only way of constituting large, strong and in every way well-knit autonomous States within the Union. The idea is vigorously supported also because of the natural desire of the speakers of a language to bring all the contiguous territory of such speakers into one State. The idea of a Sub-Province as suggested is useless for dealing with either of these requirements. It will not make for strong, homogeneous State units and it will not satisfy the political aspirations of the people. It will also leave unsolved difficulties because of multi-lingualism of the Provincial administration.

However, within a homogeneous and autonomous State, the idea of a Sub-Province will be found useful for dealing with problems created by large distances and big areas.

Note to Q. 4. By agreement amongst political leaders in Maharashtra, it is agreed to constitute within the State of Maharashtra two Sub-Provinces—one for the Marathi-speaking areas in C. P. & Berar, commonly styled Maha Vidarbha, & the other of West-Maharashtra. The two Sub-Provinces will have separate Legislatures and Cabinets and there would be also a Legislature and a Ministry for the Province. There would be two independent High Courts. The Public Services Commission would be one & the superior administrative services will also be one. It is not expected that the costs of administration will increase significantly because of the formation of Sub-Provinces. There would be a suitable division of powers between the Sub-Provinces and the State. The exact division of these powers may be determined later in relation to the needs of the situation and the financial implications. It is, however, necessary for the Constituent Assembly to provide in the chapter dealing with the constitution of States a section enabling States to form Sub-Provinces within their areas wherever found necessary and desirable and to delegate to them the administration of specific State subjects.

Q. 5. The new State of Maharashtra should have separate machinery for all Government Departments.

Q. 6. Each Government should be trusted to fix these numbers & the salaries according to its requirements. However, if the question is intended to throw light on the extent to which finances of the State will be affected by them, it is clear that no expenditure that is likely to be incurred on this account could disturb the financial equilibrium of Maharashtra.

Q. 7. Unicameral. Re: Salaries, see reply to Q. 6.

Q. 8. Two High Courts exist at present within the boundaries of Maharashtra—Bombay and Nagpur. Re: numbers and salaries, see reply to question 6.

Q. 9. There would be one Public Service Commission for the whole of Maharashtra. The number of members should be three, including the Chairman. Re: Salaries, see reply to question 6.

Q. 10. The State of Maharashtra will have 3 Universities, viz. those of Bombay, Nagpur and Poona. The Vice-Chancellors of all these Universities are, at present, honorary.

Q. 11. Normally, there should be a Head for each Department of Government; the salaries should be on the lines recommended by the Pay Commission.

Q. 12. The scales of pay for the various services should be on the lines recommended by the Pay Commission.

Q. 13. Rough estimates of income of the new State will be found in the publication giving statistics regarding Maharashtra, copies of which have already been supplied to the Commission. The new State of Maharashtra will correspond roughly in size and resources to the present Province of Bombay. Its expenditure pattern is also expected to be similar.

Q. 14. There appears to be not the remotest possibility of the new State being faced with a recurring deficit.

Q. 15. A number of Indian States have been already merged in Bombay Province and it has been agreed that the allocation of their territories should be made on the linguistic basis. The claim for Baster being included in Maharashtra is based on considerations set out in reply to Q. 2. The State of Kolhapur has not yet merged. It is, however, confidently expected that the people of the State will ask for a merger as soon as the State of Maharashtra is formed. The problem of the areas inhabited by the speakers of Marathi and included in the State of Hyderabad and the problem of Goa will have to be tackled on the All-India plane. Even without these areas we should still have the new State.

Q. 16. The seat of the Government of the new State will be Bombay. No costs will be incurred in its creation.

Q. 17. The economic consequences of the creation of the new State will be wholly beneficial. It will lead to the adoption of a uniform and integrated plan of all sided economic development for a whole tract in which the enthusiastic cooperation of all people is assured in advance.

Q. 18. The basic principles, for the division of assets and liabilities that will have to be made in each case in the formation of the new States, should be the same as those adopted in the division of assets and liabilities between Sind and Bombay when the new Province of Sind was formed.

Q. 19. We can think of no reasons why any transfer of population should become necessary because of the creation of the new States.

Q. 20. The City of Bombay is an integral part of the territory of Maharashtra and is its economic nerve centre. The separation of the city from Maharashtra can in no way be contemplated or allowed. A city is not suitable for being formed into a separate Sub-Province. It would enjoy administration by a large Corporation whose powers can be further enlarged as may be desirable and necessary.

**BOMBAY CITY MUST REMAIN
IN
UNITED MAHARASHTRA**

(Cogent Reply to Critics)

By Prof. D. R. GADGIL.

IN this article I reply, in brief, to the series "Bombay's Future: The Other Side" which was called forth by my articles regarding the Future of Bombay City. Because of the limitation of space the reply will not be elaborately argued; I shall also deal only with the salient issues raised by each writer. The sequence adopted in dealing with the articles is that of the order of their publication.

In my articles I assumed the federal character of the Indian Union and the general recognition of the principle of uni-lingual federating units. Prof. Dantwala would evidently deny the federal character of the Indian Union and talks of the danger of divided loyalties. Federation is a political form specially evolved to reconcile the loyalty to a primary state concurrently with loyalty to a group State and the quality of the federal relation does not differ because, formally, the federation is formed out of a previously unitary state rather than by the joining of previously independent States. The federalism postulated in my articles is no other than that indicated in the first resolution of the Constituent Assembly of India.

Prof. Dantwala thinks that there is no consensus of opinion in favour of investing linguistic groups with political sentiments. I can only reply that all pronouncements and actions in India for the last fifty years are in favour of the step. The agitation against the partition of Bengal was based on the implied right of people speaking one language, to be included in one political unit. The creation of Sind and Orissa was based explicitly on the connection between the linguistic group and political sentiments. Among politically significant documents of recent

years one of the most important is the Report of the All Parties Conference 1928 (commonly known as the Nehru Report). Chap. IV of the report deals with the question of the re-distribution of Provinces. It lays down that "the main considerations governing the re-distribution of provinces must necessarily be the wishes of the people and the linguistic unity of the area concerned".

The following paragraph from this Report deserves wide reading at the present juncture. "If a province has to educate itself and to do its daily work through the medium of its own language, it must necessarily be a linguistic area. If it happens to be a polyglot area difficulties will continually arise and the media of instruction and work will be two and even more languages. Hence it becomes most desirable for provinces to be regrouped on the linguistic basis. Language, as a rule, corresponds with a special variety of cultures of traditions and literature. In a linguistic area all these factors will help in the general progress of the province." (P. 62)

As the most recent example of the affirmation of the linguistic principle, reference may be made to Article XVIII of the Covenant relating to the formation of Saurashtra, which contains the following: "Nothing in this Covenant shall be deemed to prevent the Government of Kathiawar from negotiating a Union of Kathiawar with other Gujarati-speaking areas" The wording of the Article clearly implies the possibility and desirability of delimitation of the area of the Gujarati-speaking peoples and the need for the new political unit being a dominantly uni-lingual area. From the agitation against the Partition of Bengal to the formation of Saurashtra, political action in India has been based on concepts, for expressing which in precise terms Prof. Dantwalla would call me a Hitlerite.

My contention that geographically and historically Bombay is part of Maharashtra flowed from Bombay being located in the Konkan, which is a part of Maharashtra, and from the people of the Konkan and the Desh forming,

through historical times, one large social group bound together by ties of blood, language and culture. Prof. Gheewala contends that Bombay cannot form part of Maharashtra, because it was not in the historical past under any Maratha ruler. The argument could not have been put forward seriously, because its acceptance shifts the basis of the formation of new States from the democratic one of the composition and wishes of the people of the region to the authoritarian one of dynastic rule in the past. This basis will not prove acceptable to the Marathas and should prove even less so to the other linguistic groups in the Indian Union. Prof. Gheewala next points out that at the time Bombay came under the British, it was inhabited by only a few Kolis and that its later development was largely through non-Maratha activity. Therefore, he argues, Bombay no longer belongs to Maharashtra. This means, in effect, that any uninhabited or sparsely inhabited piece of land within Maharashtra is, politically, a sort of no-man's land, which, on being developed by non-Marathas, ceases to be part of Maharashtra territory. In the same strain Prof. Gheewala could have gone on to justify the separation from Maharashtra, of say, Matheran, the Poona Cantonment, the plantations developed by Sugar Companies on Deccan Canals, etc. Is the claim to political rule over territory acquired through economic exploitation less weak than the claim through military conquest?

Prof. Moraes looks upon Indian history from a point of view which is obviously different from mine. He regards Shivaji as a factious rebel against beneficent Muslim rule; I regard Shivaji as one of the noblest figures in human history. Our difference in point of view does not, however, extend to the principles on which the future of Bombay is decided. He contends for a state of the Konkan with Bombay as its capital. He and I agree that Bombay is a part historically and geographically, of the Konkan and should continue to be incorporated in the state in which Konkan is included. Our only difference is that, whereas he thinks Konkan and Maharashtra above Ghats are two entirely

different entities, I consider that they are parts of one integrated whole. Whatever the meaning of the phrase "Marathisation of Konkan" used by Prof. Moraes, the recorded language of more than 90 p. c. of the population of the districts of both Ratnagiri and Kolaba was Marathi at the time the facts were first statistically recorded, i.e. at the census of 1881. The contention of Prof. Moraes regarding the completely separate identity of Konkan can acquire weight only if there are any signs of its being backed by the people of the Konkan.

Prof. Vakil advances one economic and another statistical argument. To the contention that Bombay is not only a part of the territory of Maharashtra but is also its economic nerve-centre, he replies that Bombay is economically important for others also. He sets out in support statistics relating to trade. Each state in the Federation will have its own economic nuclei; this does not mean that they will be exclusively concerned with that state. If all cities which are important economically for areas outside their own States are to be separated from those States, the number of such cities will be large. If Bombay is separated from its immediate neighbourhood, the same must happen to Calcutta, Jamshedpur, Ahmedabad, etc., Mr. Mashruwalla is, at least, consistent when he contends for such separation of all cities with a population of over 10 lakhs. Prof. Vakil also appears to ignore the special characteristic of a federal State. The federal State controls, over the territory of all states, activities which are of federal importance. Inter-State Commerce and Ports are, for example, subjects in the federal list. This gives sufficient protection to the economic interests of distant areas involved in any particular city.

Prof. Vakil attempts an estimate of the numbers of the speakers of Marathi in the population of Bombay to-day. He proceeds on the assumption that most of the immigrants of the war period as well as the refugees who came recently were non-Marathas. In rela-

tion to the first category the assumption is highly doubtful; it may be valid regarding the second, though it must be remembered that even among refugees there were Marathi-speaking elements such as those from Karachi. The actual estimates made on the assumptions are not based on any valid statistical evidence. It is not necessary to discuss Prof. Vakil's figures as they are just guesses.

Whatever the merits of Prof. Vakil's statistics, how can they affect the point at issue? Granted the fact to-day that non-Marathas in Bombay City, including the refugees, outnumber the Marathas, how can it affect the geographical position of Bombay City or its political status? In 1881 the percentage of the speakers of Marathi in the population of Bombay City was 50.1 and that of the speakers of Konkani 4.4. In 1921 the corresponding percentages were 51.4 and 2.8 respectively. Mr. Sedgwick noticed in the 1921 report how the combined percentage of the speakers of the two languages was remarkably constant throughout the period 1881 to 1921. In 1931 the percentage of the speakers of Marathi in the population fell to 47.6 and the combined percentage of Marathi and Konkani to 51.1. On Prof. Vakil's argument, Bombay City, which could be reckoned a part of Maharashtra for all the period till at least 1921 has now become separate from it.

The argument that the political allegiance of a locality within a state is liable to change from time to time, with the linguistic composition of its population is not worthy of serious consideration. But that such an argument could be put forward would certainly make Marathas oppose with all the resources at their command the postponement of the delimitation of the areas of linguistic provinces. Within a period of ten years of such postponement, the financial resources of the opponents of United Maharashtra, the large numbers of the refugees seeking settlement and the negligence, connivance, or complicity of the Provincial Ministry may combine to render the Marathas strangers over large stretches of their own home-land.

The main burden of the argument of Prof. Vakil and other writers in the series is the inequity of putting non-Marathas under Maratha rule. However, if in Bombay non-Marathas are really in a majority the strength of non-Marathas will be reflected in the membership of the Bombay Corporation and there will be no rule of Marathas over non-Marathas. To the extent, however, that Bombay City is subject to the legislature of the State of Maharashtra, the minority of non-Marathas in the State, including those in Bombay will be subject to that legislature. In neither case will it happen that a minority rules over the majority.

The insistence of the non-Maratha writers that even though they live on Maratha territory, they must be separated from the State of Maharashtra raises many speculations regarding the future working of the Indian Union. One analogy to that insistence and one corollary of it may, however, be pointed out. The Muslims detested the idea of living under the rule of the Hindu majority, challenged the concept of the integrity of India and insisted on separation from it. When the Hindus were forced by circumstances to agree to partition they, in their turn, challenged the concept of the integrity of the Punjab and Bengal and fought for the territory inch by inch. If the non-Marathas of Bombay do not want to live in the state of Maharashtra and for getting their purpose challenge the integrity of the territory of Maharashtra and insist on the separation of Bombay from it, the Marathas will, of course, oppose to the full extent of their capacity such a procedure. If, however, circumstances force its acceptance, they will in their turn challenge the concept of the integrity of Bombay City. Large portions of the City of Bombay are inhabited by a majority of the speakers of Marathi and most of these are contiguous to the territory of Maharashtra outside city limits. Why should Marathas living in these parts be supposed to welcome non-Maratha rule? If it is to be partition, why not a partition of Bombay City territory as well?

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