

Indian National Congress

1936-37

BEING THE RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY THE CONGRESS,
THE ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE AND THE
WORKING COMMITTEE DURING THE PERIOD BETWEEN
APRIL, 1936 TO JANUARY, 1938

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ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING

Bombay, August 22 and 23, 1936

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

FIRST DAY'S PROCEEDINGS

The following two condolence resolutions were moved from the Chair and passed, all standing.

1. DR. M. A. ANSARI

This Committee records its sense of irreparable loss to the national cause by the sudden and premature death of Dr. M. A. Ansari, a dear and valued comrade, and tenders to the bereaved family its sincere sympathy and condolence.

2. SHRI ABBAS TYABJI

The Committee records its heartfelt sorrow over the passing away of Shri Abbas Tyabji, the Grand Old Man of Gujrat, whose services and brave sacrifices endeared him to the nation, and tenders its sincere condolence to Mrs. Tyabji and other members of the family.

N. W. F. P.

The following resolutions were also moved from the Chair and passed:

1. KHAN ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

"The Committee expresses its indignation at the orders of the Government concerned prohibiting Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan from entering into or remaining in the N. W. F. P. and the Punjab and notes with regret the continuation of their policy of suppression of civil liberty of individuals engaged in national activities.

2. N. W. F. P.

This Committee views with grave concern the reports of interference by officials in some provinces with the activities of the Congress in connection with the forthcoming elections.

In particular it condemns the action of the N. W. F. P. Government in arresting workers of the Parliamentary Board and otherwise interfering with the meeting for election purposes.

(ELECTION MANIFESTO)

The Committee thereafter considered the manifesto submitted to it by the Working Committee. Shri Rajendra Prasad moved for its adoption and the motion was seconded by Shri Narendra Deo.

Several amendments were moved. Two of them were accepted by the mover and the rest were rejected by the House.

(The manifesto as given below, was then put to the vote and unanimously carried:

TEXT)

For more than fifty years the Indian National Congress has laboured for the freedom of India, and ever, as its strength grew and it came to represent more and more the nationalist urge of the Indian people and their desire to put an end to exploitation by British Imperialism, it came into conflict with the ruling power. During recent years the Congress has led great movements for national freedom and has sought to develop sanctions whereby such freedom can be achieved by peaceful mass action and the disciplined sacrifice and suffering of the Indian people. To the lead of the Congress the Indian people have responded in abundant measure and thus confirmed their inherent right to freedom. That struggle for freedom still continues and must continue till India is free and independent.

These years have seen the development of an economic crisis in India and the world which has led to a progressive

deterioration in the condition of all classes of our people. The poverty stricken masses are today in the grip of an even more abject poverty and destitution, and this growing disease urgently and insistently demands a radical remedy. Poverty and unemployment have long been the lot of our peasantry and industrial workers; today they cover and crush other classes also—the artisan, the trader, the small merchant, the middle class intelligentsia. For the vast millions of our countrymen the problem of achieving national independence has become an urgent one, for only independence can give us the power to solve our economic and social problems and end the exploitation of our masses.

The growth of the national movement and the economic crisis has resulted in the intense repression of the Indian people and the suppression of civil liberties, and the British Government has sought to strengthen the imperialist bonds that envelop India and to perpetuate the domination and exploitation of the Indian people by enacting the Government of India Act of 1935.

In the international sphere, crisis follows crisis in an ever deepening degree and world war hangs over the horizon. The Lucknow Congress called the attention of the nation to this grave situation in India and the world, and declared its opposition to the participation of India in an imperialist war and its firm resolve to continue the struggle for the independence of India.

The Congress rejected in its entirety the constitution imposed upon India by the New Act and declared that no constitution imposed by outside authority and no constitution which curtails the sovereignty of the people of India, and does not recognise their right to shape and control fully their political and economic future, can be accepted. Such a constitution, in its opinion, must be based on the independence of India as a nation and it can only be framed by a Constituent Assembly.

The Congress has always laid stress on the development of the strength of the people and the forging of sanctions to enforce the people's will. To this end it has carried on activities outside the legislatures. The Congress holds that real strength comes from thus organising and serving the masses.

Adhering to this policy and objective, but in view of the present situation and in order to prevent the operation of forces calculated to strengthen alien domination and exploitation, the Congress decided to contest seats in the coming elections for the provincial legislatures. But the purpose of sending congressmen to the legislatures under the new Act is not to cooperate in any way with the Act but to combat it and seek to end it. It is to carry out, in so far as is possible, the Congress policy of rejection of the Act, and to resist British Imperialism in its attempts to strengthen its hold on India and its exploitation of the Indian people. In the opinion of the Congress, activity in the legislatures should be such as to help in the work outside, in the strengthening of the people, and in the development of the sanctions which are essential to freedom.

The new legislatures, hedged and circumscribed by safeguards and special powers for the protection of British and other vested interests, cannot yield substantial benefits, and they are totally incapable of solving the vital problems of poverty and unemployment. But they may well be used by British imperialism for its own purposes to the disadvantage and injury of the Indian people. The Congress representatives will seek to resist this, and to take all possible steps to end the various Regulations, Ordinances and Acts which oppress the Indian people and smother their will to freedom. They will work for the establishment of civil liberty, for the release of political prisoners and detenus, and to repair the wrongs done to the peasantry and to public institutions in the course of the national struggle.

The Congress realises that independence cannot be achieved through these legislatures, nor can the problems of poverty and unemployment be effectively tackled by them. Nevertheless the Congress places its general programme before the people of India so that they may know what it stands for and what it will try to achieve, whenever it has the power to do so.

At the Karachi session of the Congress in 1931 the general Congress objective was defined in the Fundamental Rights resolution. That general definition still holds. The last five years of developing crisis have however necessitated a further

consideration of the problems of poverty and unemployment and other economic problems. With a view to this the Lucknow Congress laid particular stress on the fact that "the most important and urgent problem of the country is the appalling poverty, unemployment and indebtedness of the peasantry, fundamentally due to antiquated and repressive land tenure and revenue systems, and intensified in recent years by the great slump in prices of agricultural produce," and called upon the Provincial Congress Committees to frame full agrarian programmes. The agrarian programme which will be drawn up by the A. I. C. C. on the basis of these provincial programmes will be issued later.

Pending the formulation of a fuller programme the Congress reiterates its declaration made at Karachi—that it stands for a reform of the system of land tenure and revenue and rent, and an equitable adjustment of the burden on agricultural land, giving immediate relief to the smaller peasantry by a substantial reduction of agricultural rent and revenue now paid by them and exempting uneconomic holdings from payment of rent and revenue.

The question of indebtedness requires urgent consideration and the formulation of a scheme including the declaration of a moratorium, an enquiry into and scaling down of debts and the provision for cheap credit facilities by the State. This relief should extend to the agricultural tenants, peasant proprietors, small landholders, and petty traders.

(In regard to industrial workers the policy of the Congress is to secure to them a decent standard of living, hours of work and conditions of labour in conformity, as far as the economic conditions in the country permit, with international standards, suitable machinery for the settlement of disputes between employers and workmen, protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment and the right of workers to form unions and to strike for the protection of their interests.)

The Congress has already declared that it stands for the removal of all sex disabilities whether legal or social or in any sphere of public activity. It has expressed itself in favour of maternity benefits and the protection of women workers. The women of India have already taken a leading

part in the freedom struggle, and the Congress looks forward to their sharing, in an equal measure with the men of India, the privileges and obligations of citizens of a free India.

The stress that the Congress has laid on the removal of untouchability and for the social and economic uplift of the Harijans and the backward classes is well-known. It holds that they should be equal citizens with others, with equal rights in all civic matters.

The encouragement of khadi and village industries has also long been a principal plank of the Congress programme. In regard to the larger industries, protection should be given but the rights of the workers and the producers of raw materials should be safeguarded, and due regard should be paid to the interests of village industries.

The treatment of political prisoners has long been a scandal in India. Every effort should be made to improve this and make it humane. It is equally necessary to change the whole basis of the prison administration so that every prisoner might be treated in a humanitarian and rational manner.

The communal decision, which forms part of the new Act, has led to much controversy and the Congress attitude towards it has been misunderstood by some people. The rejection in its entirety of the new Act by the Congress inevitably involves the rejection of the communal decision. Even apart from the Act as a whole, the communal decision is wholly unacceptable as being inconsistent with independence and the principles of democracy; it encourages fissiparous and disruptive tendencies, hinders the normal growth and consideration of economic and social questions, is a barrier to national progress, and strikes at the root of Indian unity. No community or group in India profits by it in any real sense, for the larger injury caused by it to all outweighs the petty benefits that some have received. Ultimately it probably injures most those groups whom it is meant to favour. The only party that profits by it is the third party which rules and exploits us.

The attitude of the Congress is, therefore, not one of indifference or neutrality. It disapproves strongly of the communal decision and would like to end it. But the Con-

gress has repeatedly laid stress on the fact that a satisfactory solution of the communal question can come only through the goodwill and cooperation of the principal communities concerned. An attempt by one group to get some communal favour from the British Government at the expense of another group results in an increase of communal tension and the exploitation of both groups by the Government. Such a policy is hardly in keeping with the dignity of Indian nationalism; it does not fit in with the struggle for independence. It does not pay either party in the long run; it side-tracks the main issue.

The Congress, therefore, holds that the right way to deal with the situation created by the communal decision is to intensify our struggle for independence and, at the same time, to seek a common basis for an agreed solution which helps to strengthen the unity of India. The effort of one community only to change the decision in the face of the opposition of another community might well result in confirming and consolidating that decision, for conflict between the two produces the very situation which gives Governments a chance of enforcing such a decision. The Congress thus is of opinion that such one-sided agitation can bear no useful result.

It is necessary to bear in mind that the whole communal problem in spite of its importance, has nothing to do with the major problems of India—poverty and wide-spread unemployment. It is not a religious problem and it affects only a handful of people at the top. The peasantry, the workers, the traders and merchants and the lower middle class of all communities are in no way touched by it and their burdens remain.

The question of accepting ministries or not in the new legislatures was postponed for decision by the Lucknow Congress. The A. I. C. C. is of opinion that it will be desirable for this decision to be taken after the elections. Whatever the decision on this question might be, it must be remembered that, in any event, the Congress stands for the rejection of the new Act, and for non-cooperation in its working. The object remains the same: the ending of the Act. With a view to this end every endeavour will be made to prevent the

introduction and functioning of the federal part of the scheme, which is intended to perpetuate the domination of imperialist interests and the feudal interests of the States over the whole country and prevent all progress towards freedom. It must be borne in mind that the new provincial assemblies will form the electorate for the proposed federal central legislature and the composition of those provincial legislatures will materially affect the fate of the federal constitution.

We appeal to the country to give every support to the Congress in the elections that are coming. National welfare demands it. The fight for independence calls for it. The effectiveness of the work that the Congress members of the legislatures will do, will depend on their numbers and their discipline and the backing and support that the country gives them. With a clear majority they will be in a position to fight the Act and to help effectively in the struggle for independence. Every party and group that stands aloof from the Congress organisation tends, knowingly or unknowingly, to become a source of weakness to the nation and a source of strength to the forces ranged against it. For the fight for independence a joint front is necessary. The Congress offers that joint national front which comprises all classes and communities, bound together by their desire to free India, end the exploitation of her people and build up a strong and prosperous and united nation, resting on the well-being of the masses.

With this great and inspiring goal before us, for which so many men and women of India have suffered and sacrificed their all under the banner of the Congress, and for which today thousands of our countrymen are suffering silently and with brave endurance, we call upon our people with full hope and confidence, to rally to the cause of the Congress, of India, of freedom.

SECOND DAY'S PROCEEDINGS

NON-OFFICIAL RESOLUTIONS

Lala Dunichand moved the following resolution:

“Resolved that every member of a primary Congress Committee will continue to be its member for a period of

five years from the date of his first enrolment without being required to go into any other formalities except the payment of four annas each year."

The resolution was supported by Shri Choithram Gidwani.

Shri S. K. Patil moved an amendment to this resolution to the effect that "the proposition be forwarded to the Working Committee for consideration and recommendations thereon."

The amendment was carried.

The President in his opening speech on the first day had told the committee that though the constitution gave him the right to nominate the members of his Working Committee and to fill up vacancies whenever they occur, he was averse to exercising that right for he believed that the best procedure would be for the A. I. C. C. to elect the Working Committee and to fill up vacancies therein. He therefore called upon the A. I. C. C. to fill up the two vacancies on the Working Committee caused by the resignation of Shri Rajagopalachariar and Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan.

Shri Satyamurti raised a point of order. He pointed out that the election by the A. I. C. C. of the members of the Working Committee would be against the Constitution. The President however ruled that such a procedure would not be against the Constitution.

Thereupon Shri Satyamurti sought permission of the President to move the resolution that—"The President be requested to exercise his power under Section 12 of the Constitution." On the President giving the necessary permission Shri Satyamurti moved the above resolution. The resolution was put to the vote and carried.

Faizpur, December 25, 1936

A meeting of the All-India Congress Committee was held in the Subjects Committee Pandal at Tilak Nagar, Faizpur on December 25, 1936 at 2 p.m. Shri Jawaharlal Nehru presided.

The minutes of the last meeting held at Bombay on August 22 and 23, 1936 were confirmed.

The President then made a statement about the accounts. Owing to the change in the time of the holding of the open session from March to December it had not been possible for the auditors to audit the accounts of the offices of the A. I. C. C. and the Treasurer in time. The audited accounts, the President said, would be placed before the next meeting of the A. I. C. C.

Faizpur, December 29, 1936

A meeting of the A. I. C. C. was held at Faizpur on December 29, 1936 at 1 p.m. Shri Jawaharlal Nehru presided.

Messrs. Dalal & Shah and Messrs. Chotalal & Agarwal of Bombay were appointed as honorary auditors of the Congress.

The President announced that he had decided to renominate the old Working Committee.

MEMBERS OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE

Shris Jawaharlal Nehru (President), Jamnalal Bajaj (Treasurer), Vallabhbai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Abul Kalam Azad, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Sarojini Naidu, Jairamdas Daulatram, Subhas Chandra Bose (Acting: Sarat Chandra Bose), Bhulabhai J. Desai, Govind Ballabh Pant, Narendra Dev, S. D. Dev, Achyut Patwardhan and J. B. Kripalani (General Secretary).

Delhi, March 17 and 18, 1937

1. THE NEW CONSTITUTION AND CONGRESS POLICY

The All India Congress Committee records its high appreciation of the magnificent response of the country to the call of the Congress during the recent elections and the approval by the electorate of the Congress policy and programme. The

Congress entered these elections with its objective of independence and its total rejection of the New Constitution, and the demand for a Constituent Assembly to frame India's constitution. The declared Congress policy was to combat the New Act and end it. The electorate has, in overwhelming measure, set its seal on this policy and programme and the New Act therefore stands condemned and utterly rejected by the people through the self-same democratic process which had been invoked by the British Government, and the people have further declared that they desire to frame their own constitution, based on national independence, through the medium of a Constituent Assembly elected by adult franchise. This Committee therefore demands, on behalf of the people of India, that the New Constitution be withdrawn.

In the event of the British Government still persisting with the New Constitution, in defiance of the declared will of the people, the All India Congress Committee desires to impress upon all Congress members of the legislatures that their work inside and outside the legislatures must be based on the fundamental Congress policy of combating the New Constitution and seeking to end it, a policy on the basis of which they sought the suffrage of the electorate and won their overwhelming victory in the elections. That policy must inevitably lead to dead-locks with the British Government and bring out still further the inherent antagonism between British Imperialism and Indian Nationalism, and expose the autocratic and undemocratic nature of the New Constitution.

1. The All India Congress Committee endorses and confirms the resolutions of the Working Committee passed at Wardha on February 27 and 28, 1937 on the extra-parliamentary activities of Congress members of legislatures, mass contacts, and the Congress policy in the legislatures, and call upon all Congressmen in the legislatures and outside to work in accordance with the directions contained in them.

And on the pending question of office acceptance, and in pursuance of the policy summed up in the foregoing paragraphs, the All India Congress Committee authorises and permits the acceptance of office in provinces where the Congress commands a majority in the Legislatures, provided the ministries shall not be accepted unless the leader of the Congress

party in the legislature is satisfied and is able to state publicly that the Governor will not use his special powers of interference or set aside the advice of ministers in regard to constitutional activities.

2. ACCOUNTS

The last year's audited accounts were placed before the committee. As they had been received a couple of days before the meeting they could not be printed and distributed. It was therefore decided that they may be printed and distributed among the members and passed at the next meeting.

3. NON-OFFICIAL RESOLUTIONS

Most of the non-official resolutions of which notice had been given, were covered by the main resolution. The three that were not so covered were: (1) Shri Pattabhi Sitaramayya's about States People, (2) Shri Sibnath Banerji's about Jute Mill strike in Calcutta and (3) Deportation of Political Prisoners to Andamans by Sri Sardul Singh and others. The first of these was referred to the Constitution Committee and the latter two to the next Working Committee meeting.

4. SHRI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE'S RELEASE

On news being received of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose's release from detention, the A. I. C. C. directed the President to convey to him their affectionate welcome on his release and their good wishes for his early recovery.

NOTE—Shri Subhas Chandra Bose was released unconditionally in shattered health on the evening of March 17, 1937 after a continued detention and exile of more than five years.

Calcutta, October 29, 30 and 31, 1937

THE AUDITED ACCOUNTS

The audited accounts for the period from 1-1-36 to 15-11-36, the Auditors' note and the General Secretary's explanation on it were placed before the Committee. The

Committee passed the audited accounts.

The following resolutions recommended by the Working Committee were passed:

1. TILAK MEMORIAL SWARAJ FUND

Whereas all the funds collected for the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund have, except the sum of Rs. 47,755-4-8 which was with the A. I. C. C. on November 15, 1936, been spent for purposes for which they were intended or have been handed over to the bodies for whom they were earmarked, it is no longer necessary to head the accounts of the A. I. C. C. as All India Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. Such accounts should henceforth be styled the All India Congress Committee Accounts.

2. CONDOLENCE—SHRI MANILAL KOTHARI

The Committee place on record their deep sorrow at the death of Shri Manilal Kothari, a member of the A. I. C. C., who worked ceaselessly for the advancement of the cause of the Indian National Congress in all its activities and who gave of his best to the national cause since the non-cooperation movement, and the Committee offer their heartfelt and sincere condolences to members of the bereaved family.

3. DR. RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S RECOVERY

The A. I. C. C. felicitate the Nation on the happy recovery of her illustrious son Rabindra Nath Tagore from his recent serious illness and hope that he may be spared for many years for the service of India and Humanity.

4. RATIFICATION OF WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON OFFICE ACCEPTANCE

By a resolution dated the 18th March 1937 passed by the A. I. C. C. at Delhi, it was resolved that permission be given for Congressmen to accept office in provinces where the Congress commanded a majority in the legislature if the Leader of the Congress Party was satisfied and could state publicly that the Governor would not use his special powers

of interference or set aside the advice of ministers in regard to their constitutional activities.

Since the said resolution, statements and declarations were made on this issue on behalf of the British Government. After examining those declarations and the situation created as a result of circumstances and events which occurred after the A. I. C. C. resolution of March last, the Working Committee was of opinion that it would not be easy for Governors to use their special powers.

Having considered the views of the Congress members of the Legislatures and Congressmen generally, the Working Committee at Wardha at its meeting held in July 1937 came to the conclusion and resolved that Congressmen be permitted to accept office wherever they were invited thereto.

Had circumstances permitted, the Working Committee was anxious to obtain the sanction of the All India Congress Committee in the matter but the Committee felt that delay in taking a decision at that stage would have been injurious to the country's interests and that the matter demanded a prompt and immediate decision.

It is therefore resolved that the action of the Working Committee in taking the said decision be ratified.

5. FEDERATION

In view of the announcements made on behalf of the British Government that steps will be taken to inaugurate the proposed Federation, the All India Congress Committee reiterate their emphatic condemnation of and complete opposition to the scheme and their decision to combat it in every possible way open to them. An attempt to inaugurate this scheme, despite the clearly expressed will of the nation, will be a challenge to the people of India. The Committee therefore call upon the Provincial and local Congress Committees and the people generally, as well as the Provincial Governments and Ministries, to prevent the imposition of this Federation, which will do grave injury to India and tighten the bonds which hold her in subjection to imperialist domination and reaction. The Committee are of opinion that Provincial Governments should also move their legislatures to give formal

expression to this opposition to the proposed Federation and to intimate to the British Government not to impose it on their provinces.

6. JAPAN'S AGGRESSION IN CHINA

The All India Congress Committee view with grave concern and horror the imperialist aggression of Japan in China attended with wanton cruelty and the bombing of the civil population.

The Committee express their deep admiration for the brave and heroic struggle which the Chinese people are conducting against heavy odds for maintaining the integrity and the independence of their country and congratulate them for achieving internal unity in face of national danger.

The Committee offer their heartfelt sympathy to the Chinese people in their national calamity and, on behalf of the people of India assure them of their solidarity with them in their struggle for maintaining their freedom.

The Committee, further, call upon the Indian people to refrain from the use of Japanese goods as a mark of their sympathy with the people of China.

7. MIDNAPORE CONGRESS ORGANISATION

The A. I. C. C. strongly deprecate the continuance of the ban on about 110 Congress organisations in the district of Midnapore imposed by the Government of Bengal and are of opinion that the plea put forward by the Government to the effect that the Congress Committees are limbs of a terrorist organisation is an altogether false one.

8. DETENUS AND ANDAMAN PRISONERS

The Committee are of opinion that the detenus who have been detained so long without trial should be forthwith released.

In view of the statement made by the Andamans prisoners in the telegram to Mahatma Gandhi, the Committee are of opinion that they should be forthwith released.

9. REPRESSION IN BENGAL AND PUNJAB

The Committee strongly deprecate:

- (a) Orders against large number of inhabitants of the district of Midnapore, Chittagong and some other areas, restricting their movements and activities and constituting a humiliating interference with the personal and civil liberties of the citizens.
- (b) Orders requiring more than 20,000 Hindu youths in the Chittagong district to carry identity cards.
- (c) Orders restricting entry into Darjeeling of Hindu youths between 14 and 25.
- (d) The detention of Sardar Teja Singh Swatantra, M. L. A. under regulation III of 1818 after having been elected unopposed to the Punjab Assembly, and orders of restraint and restriction against other political workers in the Punjab thus debarring them from their legitimate political activities.

10. INDIAN EXILES ABROAD

The All India Congress Committee urge the Government of India to remove all restraints and restrictions on entry into India of all political exiles including:—

Syt. Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Dr. Abani Mukherjee, Syt. Mahendra Pratap, Syt. Pandurang Sadashiv Khankhoje, Sardar Ajit Singh, Maulvi Obeidullah, Maulvi Abdullah Khan, Dr. Taraknath Das, Qazzi Abdul Wali Khan, Syt. Basanta Kumar Roy, Syt. Prithvi Singh, Lala Har Dayal and Syt. Rash Behari Bose.

The Committee are further of opinion that a general assurance should be given to all Indians abroad, who are not sure of their freedom on returning home, that on their return to India no repressive action will be taken against them for any past activities.

11. INDIANS IN ZANZIBAR

The Committee express their full sympathy with the Indians in Zanzibar in their brave struggle against the new

decrees which are sure to result in ruining Indian interests in Zanzibar and the internal and export trade of the Indian community settled for so long in the country which has helped greatly in promoting the prosperity of Zanzibar. The Committee are of opinion that in order to give adequate help in this struggle and protect Indian interests in Zanzibar it is essential that an embargo should be laid on the import of cloves into India. The Committee further call upon the people to refrain from the use of cloves until the new decrees are rescinded by the Zanzibar Government.

The Committee regret the position taken up by the Government of India on the resolution moved by the Congress Party in the Central Legislature regarding the treatment of Indians in Zanzibar by the Zanzibar Government and are of opinion that the efforts made by the Government and the results attained by them are entirely inadequate to protect the interests of the Indians in Zanzibar.

The Committee feel confident that by the boycott of cloves by the Indian people, the Zanzibar Government will be compelled in the end to do justice to Indians by rescinding the objectionable decrees.

12. PALESTINE

The Committee record their emphatic protest against the reign of terror that has been established in Palestine by British Imperialism with a view to coerce the Arabs into accepting the proposed partition of Palestine and assure them of the solidarity of the Indian people with them in their struggle for national freedom.

13. MEERUT AND MUZAFFARNAGAR DISTRICTS

It is resolved that the districts of Meerut and Muzaffarnagar be separated from the Delhi Congress Province and incorporated in the United Provinces Congress Province and consequential changes be made in the Constitution.

14. SLUMP IN COTTON PRICES

The attention of the Committee has been drawn to the serious plight in which cultivators of cotton in this country

have been placed by the heavy decline in prices of Indian cotton by reason of overproduction throughout the world. The Committee have further been appraised that American cotton has fallen in parity with Indian cotton and this situation has resulted in the encouragement of the import of foreign cotton in this country. The Committee therefore resolve:

- (a) That the Indian Mills and Indian dealers in cotton be requested to refrain from purchasing foreign cotton similar in quality and staple to Indian Cotton.
- (b) That a committee consisting of Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, Shri Bhulabhai Desai and Shri Shankerlal Banker (convener) be appointed to inquire into this matter and recommend such measures as they may consider advisable in the interests of cotton-growers in this country.

RESOLUTIONS BY THE MEMBERS OF THE A. I. C. C.

15. IMPLEMENTING OF CONGRESS PROGRAMME BY CONGRESS MINISTRIES

The following resolution was referred by the A. I. C. C. to the Working Committee for its consideration and for such action as it may deem necessary in this behalf:—

“The All India Congress Committee, while welcoming the steps taken by Congress Cabinets in the direction of the release of political prisoners and detenus, note that there are still several political prisoners in provinces where Congress Cabinets exist and that in many cases steps have not yet been taken to repeal repressive laws, even those which authorise detention without trial.

“The Committee note also with apprehension the fact that certain Congress Cabinets have chosen to take action under such repressive provisions of the law as Section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code and Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

“The A. I. C. C. call for the complete implementing

of the Congress Election Manifesto in this connection by the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners by Congress Cabinets and for the taking of immediate steps for the repeal of all repressive laws."

The following resolutions were passed:

16. BAN ON BOOKS

The A. I. C. C. call upon the Provincial Governments run by Congressmen, to lift the ban on political books.

17. TITLES AND DECORATIONS

The A. I. C. C. are of opinion that in provinces where Congress ministries exist, the Assemblies should adopt resolutions expressing their desire that no further titles or decorations should be conferred on inhabitants of those provinces and that the Cabinets should intimate to the King that they will not make any recommendations for such titles or decorations and do not desire any to be conferred in their provinces.

18. REDISTRIBUTION OF PROVINCES ON LINGUISTIC BASIS

The A. I. C. C. reaffirm the Congress policy regarding the redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis and recommend to the Madras and Bombay Governments to consider the formation of a separate Andhra and Karnatak province respectively.

The A. I. C. C. also ask the Congress Cabinet in Bihar to take early steps to restore the Bengali speaking areas at present comprised in Bihar to the province of Bengal.

19. MYSORE

This meeting of the A. I. C. C. expresses its emphatic protest against the ruthless policy of repression as indicated by the inauguration of various restrictive and prohibitory orders and political prosecutions launched in the Mysore State and also against the suppression of civil rights and liberties by denying the elementary rights of speech, assemblage and association.

This meeting sends its fraternal greetings to the people

of Mysore and wishes them all success in their legitimate non-violent struggle and appeals to the people of Indian States and British India to give all support and encouragement to the people of Mysore in their struggle against the State for right of self-determination.

WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

Wardha, April 27, 28 and 29, 1936

SUMMARY OF THE PROCEEDINGS

1. DONATION OF RS. 10,000

The President informed the Committee that anonymous donation of Rs. 10,000 had been received earmarked for the organization of a foreign department of the All India Congress Committee office.

2. FOREIGN DEPARTMENT

In view of the Congress decision on the subject it was resolved that the President be authorized to organize a foreign department of the All India Congress Committee office and that Rs. 2,000 be sanctioned for this purpose out of the special donation for foreign work.

3. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEPARTMENT

Resolved that a Political and Economic Information Department be created in the All India Congress Committee Office in order to collect and collate information in regard to political, economic and allied activities in the country. The President be authorized to organize such a department and Rs. 2,000 be sanctioned from the general fund of the All India Congress Committee for the purpose.

4. KARNATAK P. C. C.'s LETTER

The Karnatak P. C. C.'s letter dated Dharwar, April 27, 1936 regarding the procedure to be followed for the election of A. I. C. C. members was considered. The Committee held that under the provisions of the Constitution it was essential for a meeting of the delegates to be held at one place for

the purpose of electing A. I. C. C. members and that this could not be done by post.

5. DELHI PROVINCE

The letter from Delhi D. C. C. about the city and the District of Delhi to be made into a separate province, was considered and it was decided that opinion on the matter be called for from the district and town Congress Committees of Delhi, Meerut and Muzaffarnagar, as well as the U. P. P. C. C.

6. TREASURER'S BALANCE SHEET

The following items in the accounts that were being carried on from year to year were either written off or accounted for:—

1. As the Congress pavilion is worn out and has no value, resolved that the amount of Rs. 9,750 be written off.

2. Resolved that Rs. 600 advanced to Mr. Tendulker be written off.

3. Amounts shown as advances against Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru advanced in December 1931 and in 1932, to him and to Srimati Kamla Nehru for work in U. P. and Behar, were amounts spent during the period. These must be accounted for as expenditure.

7. DEPOSIT OF FUNDS

Resolved that the treasurer be authorized to deposit the funds in his hands in such banks or firms doing banking business as he may think fit.

8. ACCOUNTS

Resolved that in future there should be only one account, the treasurer's account. The office accounts at Allahabad should be amalgamated with this. The office should get money periodically from the Treasurer and send monthly accounts with the vouchers to the treasurer's office in Bombay.

9. ANOMALIES IN THE AMENDED CONSTITUTION

Various anomalies being pointed out in the Constitution as amended at Lucknow, Messrs. Rajagopalachari, Jairamdas and Kripalani were requested to examine the transitory provision of the Constitution and to submit proposals on the day following for any consequential changes that might remove these anomalies.

On the recommendation of the Committee the following Consequential Rule and transitory provision were made for removing the anomalies caused in the Constitution by the amendments introduced in it at the last Congress session at Lucknow.

10. CONSEQUENTIAL RULE UNDER ART. XVIII

If any delegate elected to a Session of the Congress resigns after the session is over, the vacancy so created shall be filled in by the constituency concerned and such newly elected delegate shall exercise all the functions devolving on a delegate according to the constitution until the next session, including membership in the Provincial Congress Committee.

11. TRANSITORY PROVISION UNDER ART. XVIII(d)

It is hereby resolved that the next Congress Session having been advanced to December 1936, and the time allowed for enrolment of members being thereby considerably reduced, notwithstanding anything contained in Art. V(a) and the general time-table issued by the Working Committee any member enrolled this year on or before August 31 shall be entitled to exercise his vote at all Congress elections.

12. LABOUR COMMITTEE

Resolved that a Labour Committee consisting of Srijuts Jairamdas Doulatram, Shankerlal Banker, V. V. Giri, M. R. Masani and J. B. Kripalani be appointed to keep in touch with the labour movement and endeavour to co-operate with it, and advise the Working Committee thereon.

13. PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

Resolved that a Parliamentary Committee consisting of Srijuts (1) Rajendra Prasad, (2) Vallabhbhai Patel, (3) Abul Kalam Azad, (4) Rajagopalachari, (5) Bhulabhai Desai, (6) Narendra Deo and (7) Govind Ballabh Pant with the last named person as its Convener, as well as the Presidents of all Provincial Congress Committees (excluding Burma) and Dr. Khan Sahib from the Frontier be constituted, to take such steps as may be necessary in connection with the organisation of elections to the legislatures. The Committee shall report to the Working Committee from time to time and shall be guided by the Working Committee's directions.

Wardha, June 29, 30 and July 1, 1936

1. BUDGET

The following budget for the next six months from July to December 1936, was passed:—

	Rs.
1. Establishment	6000
2. Postage and telegrams	1500
3. Stationery and printing	2000
4. Travelling	2000
5. Rents and taxes	400
6. Furniture	3000
7. Library	1000
8. Repairs to Swaraj Bhawan	2000
9. Miscellaneous	500
TOTAL	18,400

NOTE: Budget for April, May and June, 1936.

The previous budget passed by the Working Committee at its meeting in Delhi in March last for the months of April, May and June, 1936 is as follows:

	Rs.
1. Establishment	2500
2. Postage and telegrams	700
3. Stationery and printing	250
4. Travelling expenses	1000
5. Rents and taxes	200
6. Furniture	200
7. Library	500
8. Miscellaneous	200
TOTAL	5550

The following resolutions were passed:

2. LATE DR. ANSARI

This Committee records its sense of irreparable loss to the national cause by the sudden and premature death of Dr. M. A. Ansari, a dear and valued comrade, and tenders to the bereaved family its sincere sympathy and condolence.

3. LATE SHRI ABBAS TYABJI

This Committee records its heartfelt sorrow over the passing away of Shri Abbas Tyabji, the Grand Old Man of Gujrat, whose services and brave sacrifices endeared him to the Nation, and tenders its sincere condolence to Mrs. Tyabji and other members of the family.

4. ARABS IN PALESTINE

The Working Committee sends its greetings and its full sympathy to the Arabs of Palestine in their struggle for independence against British Imperialism.

5. VACANCIES IN THE PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Under Art. XII(e), the Working Committee rules that any person ceasing to be a member of his Provincial Congress Committee, shall also cease to function thereafter as a delegate provided all such vacancies and the circumstances under which the same might have occurred shall be forthwith reported to the Working Committee.

6. BYE-ELECTION OF DELEGATES

In a constituency where for any reason a bye-election of a delegate becomes necessary, the members entitled to vote and be candidates for such a vacancy shall be,

- (a) those included in the list mentioned in Article VI(a) and
- (b) new members enrolled since the closing of the said list and three months prior to the bye-election.

7. BENGAL ELECTIONS

In connection with the new elections consequent upon Shri Rajendra Prasad's award in the Bengal dispute, the request of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee for the extension of election dates and having a whole district as one plural member constituency and vote by majority was granted. Further Shri Rajendra Prasad was authorised to deal finally with any disputes arising from these elections.

8. CONGRESS AND THE NATIONAL PARTY

The President placed before the Committee the correspondence which passed between him and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. The general Congress attitude in regard to the Communal Award has already been stated by the President in his statements to the press, dated June 2 and June 27. In order to prevent any further misapprehension on the subject, the Committee expect to clarify the Congress position in this matter in the election manifesto which will be framed by the A. I. C. C. and issued in due course. The Committee welcomed the desire for co-operation with the Congress expressed

by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and some of his colleagues and expressed the hope that it will be possible to find ways and means to ensure such co-operation in the national struggle against Imperialism.

9. TILAK SWARAJ FUND

The question of meeting the unfounded charges made against the Tilak Swaraj Fund was discussed. The President's announcement that he would issue a statement to the effect that the account books at the Treasurer's office at Bombay will be open to inspection for the public on a reasonable notice being given to that office was welcomed. The Committee's opinion was that henceforth any malicious or defamatory statement should be challenged in a court of law.

10. DISCIPLINARY ACTION AGAINST A CONGRESSMAN FOR CONGRATULATING THE GOVERNOR

The letter of the President of the Mahakosala Provincial Congress Committee regarding the disciplinary measures against a member of their committee for congratulating Mr. E. Raghavendra Rao upon his appointment to the Governorship of the province was considered.

The Committee was of opinion that the Mahakosala Provincial Congress Committee could take whatever disciplinary action it thought fit in the matter. The question of framing a resolution covering such cases was left over for the next meeting.

11. MEMBERSHIP OF THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE

The letter of the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee about the membership of the Reception Committee of the ensuing session of the Congress was considered.

The Working Committee's opinion was that the Provincial Congress Committee was free to enrol non-Congressmen as members of the Reception Committee and make such other rules in this behalf as it considers fit.

12. THE HISTORY OF THE CONGRESS

The report of the sub-committee of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee regarding "The History of the Con-

gress" was placed before the Committee. Shri Rajendra Prasad was requested to deal with it.

(*Bombay, August 20, 21, 22 and 23, 1936*)

1. SHRI RAJAGOPALACHARI'S RESIGNATION

The Committee considered the matters arising out of Sri Rajagopalachari's resignation. The President informed the committee that he had invited Dr. Rajan to be present during this discussion but Dr. Rajan had expressed his inability to come and had referred to various statements issued by him. These statements were considered and Shri Rajagopalachariar made a personal statement about the events leading up to the step that he had taken. The members of the Committee while appreciating the difficulties which he had to face and the necessity for bringing home to the country and to the Congress organisation in particular, the urgent need of maintaining discipline and loyalty within the Congress ranks, felt that from the larger viewpoint of Congress work his continuation in the Working Committee was desirable. He was therefore requested by all the members to reconsider his decision, in particular his resignation from the Working Committee. Shri Rajagopalachariar thanked his colleagues but regretted his inability, under the circumstances, to reconsider his decision. The Committee thereupon regretfully accepted his resignation.

The Committee further considered the events which led up to Shri Rajagopalachariar's resignation. It regretted that Dr. Rajan had been unable to accept the invitation to attend the Committee's meeting and to present his case. In his absence the Committee had to rely on the statement sent by him. Whether the various charges made by Dr. Rajan in this statement were well-founded or not, the Committee was clearly of opinion that his action in deliberately breaking his pledge and in inducing other Congress members of the Trichinopoly municipality to break their pledges was wholly indefensible and must be condemned. A Congress pledge, or any pledge, is given with a view to its observance and a

deliberate breach of such pledges can only lead to the growth of indiscipline and a lowering of the standards of public life. Members of the Congress who may have grievances against any decisions or activities of Congress Committees have many ways open to them to bring their grievances to the notice of the Congress organisation so that inquiry might be made. All Congressmen are expected to give their willing adherence to Congress discipline, and so long as they function as members of any organisation elected on the basis of a Congress pledge that pledge holds and must be scrupulously honoured. The Committee regrets therefore that Dr. Rajan, whatever the reasons that actuated him, did not adhere to the pledge that he had given.

The Committee is informed that the matter will soon be considered by the Tamil Nad Provincial Executive.

2. ELECTION MANIFESTO

The Committee adopted the Elections Manifesto. This Manifesto was subsequently adopted, with some verbal changes by the A. I. C. C. and is given in its proceedings.

3. BENGAL

The reference made by the B. P. C. C. about the position of Mrs. Nellie Sen-Gupta as a President of the 48th Session of Indian National Congress held at Calcutta was considered. The Committee held that the elected President of that session as well as the previous one held in Delhi was Shri Madan Mohan Malaviya and as such he alone can enjoy the constitutional privileges accorded to the ex-presidents of the Congress.

4. BUDGET

The following excess expenditure under particular heads in the budget of April-June 1936 was sanctioned:

	Rs.	a.	p.
(a) Stationery and Printing	665	15	0
(b) Travelling	758	7	3
(c) Furniture	117	0	0
(d) Miscellaneous	10	15	0

The Budget of Rs. 1,800/- prepared by the Congress Labour Committee for six months from July to December 1936, was placed before the Committee and sanctioned.

5. TEXTILE EXEMPTION COMMITTEE 1931

Shri Banker's letter in this behalf was read. The Committee decided that if the General Secretary was satisfied that the amount claimed by Sjt. Shankerlal Banker was not paid at the time, it may be paid now.

6. PEACE CONFERENCE

Shri V. K. Krishna Menon was deputed to represent the Indian National Congress at the World Peace Conference at Brussels from September 3 to 6, 1936. His expenses were to be met with, from Congress funds.

7. JAPAN

The President was requested to write to Mr. A. M. Sahai to ask his Committee to drop the name of the "Indian National Congress Committee of Japan" and to give to that organisation some other name as the new Constitution did not contemplate the formation of Congress Committees outside India. The work done by Mr. Sahai and his Committee was to be appreciated and continued cooperation from here offered.

The following papers were placed before the Committee:

- (1) Resolutions passed by the Labour Committee.
- (2) Resolutions passed by the Swaraj Bhawan Management Committee and the Swaraj Bhawan Trust Committee.
- (3) Foreign Department Secretary's Report.
- (4) The Political and Economic Information Department Secretary's Report.

8. SWARAJ BHAWAN

The question of filling up the vacancy caused by the death of Dr. M. A. Ansari on the Board of Trustees of the Swaraj Bhawan was postponed to the next meeting.

With regard to the proposed museum to be located in the Swaraj Bhawan the Committee wanted a scheme prepared by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru to be placed before it when ready.

The Committee accepted the resolution of the Board of Management of the Swaraj Bhawan for the maintenance of the Swaraj Bhawan to the effect that the Committee will continue to bear the costs of the maintenance of the Swaraj Bhawan and use part of it for its headquarters.

9. RAILWAY RETRENCHMENT

The Committee passed the following resolution about Railway Retrenchment recommended to it by the Labour Committee:

"The Working Committee has learnt with grave concern that orders have been passed to retrench about 4,000 lower-grade employees in the State-owned Railways, and to reduce the scales of pay of the lower grades of workers, retrospectively from 1931, whereas no such policy has been applied to all the higher grades.

"The Committee considers the demand of the Railway workers for a Court of Inquiry into the question of such retrenchment and reduction in pay, and for the suspension of retrenchment pending the result of inquiry as very fair, and regrets that the Railway authorities should have rejected such a proper demand."

Bombay, December 9-11, 1936

1. MASS CONTACTS

The report of the Mass Contacts Committee not being ready and not likely to be ready before the Congress session, the Working Committee appointed a sub-committee consisting of Shris Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Jairamdas Daulatram, Jayaprakash Narayan and J. B. Kripalani to consider changes in the Congress constitution with a view to increase the initiative of primary members and to make the Congress a more effective organisation for carrying on

its work and also to remove any anomalies that may be found in the constitution.

2. SWARAJ BHAWAN TRUST

In place of the late Dr. M. A. Ansari, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was nominated a trustee on the Swaraj Bhawan Board of Trustees in terms of the Trust Deed.

3. BURMA

The Committee discussed the position of the Burma P. C. C. in view of the new situation created by the separation of Burma from India. It was felt that some member or members of the Working Committee should visit Burma and get personally acquainted with the wishes of the Burmese people in the matter and advise the Working Committee on the question.

4. BENGAL

Shri Sarat Chandra Bose explained to the Committee the circumstances under which he had resigned from the membership of the Bengal Parliamentary Board. The opinion of the Committee was that he should withdraw his resignation in the interest of the Parliamentary work in his province. Shri S. C. Bose respected the wishes of his colleagues and withdrew his resignation. It was also decided that Shri Govind Ballabh Pant should visit Bengal and help the local Parliamentary Board to select finally candidates who were to stand on the Congress ticket from Bengal.

5. PEACE CONGRESS

Shri V. K. Krishna Menon's report about the World Peace Congress was placed before the Committee. The Committee approved of "the conditions and reservation to the four points of the Peace Congress" as stressed by Shri Krishna Menon in his report. The Committee also was of opinion that the question of Imperialism should always be emphasised in this connection.

6. GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE IN ELECTIONS TO THE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES

(1) In spite of unequivocal declarations and assurances by the Under-Secretary of State, the Viceroy and others as to the observance of strict neutrality by Government servants in the matter of elections to the Provincial legislatures, this Committee regrets to note the facts that several local Governments are still persisting in maintaining disqualifications of intending Congress candidates arising out of convictions for political offences, and continuing active interferences in elections as is unmistakably shown by the Court of Wards circular of the U. P. Government.

This Committee further notes that they are hampering the Congress in its election campaign by banning peaceful processions, meetings, hoisting of national flag and preventing movements of respected Congress leaders especially in the N.-W. F. Province and in various other ways.

This Committee still hopes that effective measures will be taken by responsible officials of Government to remedy these matters so that the promise of neutrality given by them is duly fulfilled.

This Committee earnestly trusts that the hostile attitude of the Government will serve to stimulate the people to vigorous activity in support of the Congress candidates so that the victory of the Congress may be fully assured in spite of all these handicaps.

(2) Whereas the method of voting proposed for the illiterate rural voters of the Provincial Assembly in the United Provinces is completely destructive of the secrecy and freedom of the vote, this Committee is of opinion that this should be replaced by the system of coloured boxes with or without symbols which has been adopted by several other provinces and was proposed by the All India and the Provincial Franchise Committees and originally recommended by the local Government itself as a very sound, safe and simple method, especially for illiterate voters.

7. SUPPLEMENTARY MANIFESTO (SINDH)

The supplementary manifesto sent by the Sind P. C. C.

was approved. The P. C. C. was however to be informed that no stress should be laid on minor points and as far as possible they might be dropped from the document.

8. RECENT FRONTIER OPERATIONS

The Committee, after some discussion about the situation in the frontier created by the recent raid, appointed a committee consisting of Shris Vallabhbai Patel, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Bhulabhai Desai to consider the Frontier policy of the Government and the recent military operations there and make recommendations to the Committee and the Subjects Committee of the Faizpur Congress.

9. DISCIPLINARY RULES

In suppression of the previous resolutions of the Working Committee in regard to disciplinary action the following rules were adopted by the Committee.

1. The Working Committee may take disciplinary action against,

- (i) Any Committee of the Congress which deliberately acts or carries on propaganda against the programme and decisions of the Congress or deliberately disregards or disobeys any orders passed by any higher authority or by an umpire, arbitrator or commissioner duly appointed.
- (ii) Any member of a Congress Executive or elected Congress Committee who deliberately acts or carries on propaganda against the programme and decisions of Congress or deliberately disregards or disobeys any orders passed by any higher authority or by an umpire, arbitrator or commissioner duly appointed.
- (iii) Any member of the Congress who deliberately acts contrary to the decisions of the Congress or deliberately disregards or disobeys any orders passed by any authority, umpire, arbitrator or commissioner duly appointed or is guilty of embezzlement of Congress funds or other fraudulent action in connection with funds and

accounts, or of having broken a pledge given to the Congress or any subordinate committee or of any fraudulent action in connection with the enrolment of members of the Congress or election to a Congress Committee or who deliberately acts in a way which in the opinion of the Working Committee is likely to lower the power and prestige of the Congress so as to render his continuance as a member of the Congress undesirable in the interests of the Congress.

2. (i) In the case of a Committee of the Congress disciplinary action may be the supersession of such a Committee; and such further action against offending individual members as may be necessary.
- (ii) In the case of a member of any Congress Executive or elective Congress Committee, the disciplinary action may be his removal from such office or membership, and the fixation of a period during which he cannot be validly elected to any office or membership in any committee of the Congress.
- (iii) In the case of a member of a primary Congress organisation disciplinary action may be a disqualification for a stated period from standing for any election including election to the legislatures and local and municipal bodies or exercising any other right as a member during the unexpired period of his membership and the fixation of a period during which he may not be admitted to the membership of the Congress.

3. No disciplinary action shall be taken without an opportunity being given to the Committee or individual concerned to state its or his case and answer such charges as are made before the Working Committee.

4. The Executive Committees of the Provincial Congress Committees shall also have the power to take disciplinary action against their subordinate committees and mem-

bers of any Congress Executive Committees and members of primary committees within their province. In all such cases the rules and procedure as are laid down for taking action by the Working Committee shall be applicable. It shall be open to the Committee or member against whom such disciplinary action is taken to appeal against it to the Working Committee provided that pending the appeal he obeys the order appealed against. The Working Committee may however stay the operation of the order.

5. When the Working Committee is not sitting, the President may take cognizance of all urgent matters in regard to disciplinary action and shall act on behalf of the Working Committee. In all such cases the decision of the President must be placed before the next meeting of the Working Committee for confirmation.

10. RESOLUTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS TO BE PLACED BEFORE THE SUBJECTS COMMITTEE ON DECEMBER 25 AND 26 AT FAIZPUR WERE PASSED:

1. Elections and Constituent Assembly.
2. Convention.
3. Detenus.
4. World Peace Congress.

(These resolutions, with occasional verbal changes, were passed by the Congress and are given above as Faizpur Congress Resolutions).

Faizpur, December 23-27, 1936

1. THE A. I. C. C. OFFICE ACCOUNTS

As the Auditors could not complete the audit of the offices of the All-India Congress Committee and the Treasurer in time, it was not possible to keep the audited accounts before the next meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. The Working Committee therefore decided that the President should make a statement before the A. I. C. C. informing the members that as the audit of the accounts was not complete

the audited accounts will be placed before the next meeting of the A. I. C. C. Further, the following resolution was passed fixing the financial year for the Congress:

"The accounting year of the Congress for the purpose of keeping Congress accounts shall be from October 1 to September 30. But the accounts for the current year shall be audited as at November 15, 1936."

As the Auditors' preliminary inspection note complained of certain technical irregularities in the system of keeping accounts at the offices of the All-India Congress Committee and the Treasurer, the Working Committee appointed a committee consisting of Shris Jammal Bajaj, Bhulabhai Desai and Mathuradas Trikamji, to consider, in consultation with the Auditors, the system of keeping accounts in the Treasurer's office and the A. I. C. C. office as well as other Congress accounts, central and provincial, and make such recommendations as they may consider necessary.

2. THE BOMBAY P. C. C. ELECTIONS

The Bombay P. C. C. had expressed its inability to organise election of delegates for the Faizpur Congress owing to the situation created in Bombay by the communal trouble. The matter was referred to the President who directed that elections in as many wards as possible be held. Where elections could not be held the last year's delegates were to continue to function. The old and the new delegates were then to elect the members to this year's A. I. C. C. The President of the B. P. C. C. however thought that the procedure was not warranted by the constitution and elections even in the wards free from trouble were not ordered. The matter was brought before the Working Committee and the Committee passed the following resolution:

"The Committee considered the representation of Syt. K. F. Nariman, President, B. P. C. C., regarding the non-election of delegates from Bombay. The Committee was of opinion that the procedure adopted by the B. P. C. after the President had given his directions in the matter, was not correct. But in

view of all the circumstances and the fact that there was no intentional disobedience of the President's directions, the Committee decided that the old delegates from Bombay should continue to function during the Faizpur Congress and after, till new delegates are elected. But the Committee is of opinion that such new delegates should be elected at the earliest possible opportunity after the Faizpur Congress and in any event not later than the end of February 1937. After such elections of delegates, the new members of the A. I. C. C. should be elected."

3. RESOLUTIONS FOR THE SUBJECT COMMITTEE MEETING

Resolutions on the following subjects to be placed before the Subjects Committee on December 25, 26 and 28, 1936 were passed:

(1) Burma (2) Spain (3) B. N. Ry. Strike (4) War Danger (5) Condolence (6) Excluded Areas (7) Frontier Policy (8) Natural Calamities (9) Suppression of Civil Liberties (10) Non-participation in the Coronation and other Imperialist Functions (11) Indians Overseas (12) The Congress Constitution and Mass Contacts (13) Colliery Disasters (14) Agrarian Programme (15) Appeal to Voters (16) Authority to the All-India Congress Committee.

(The resolutions passed by the Committee at its meeting at Bombay on December 9, 10 and 11 together with the resolutions passed at Faizpur on December 23-27, 1936 were placed before the Subjects Committee of the 50th Session of the Congress at Faizpur and with minor modifications in some of them were recommended for the open session. The resolutions as finally adopted by the Congress are given below as Faizpur Congress Resolutions).

Faizpur, December 29, 1936

It was decided that the Convention be called either at Delhi or at Bombay in the third week of March.

Wardha, February 27 and 28 and March 1, 1937

WORKING COMMITTEE, A. I. C. C. AND THE
CONVENTION MEETINGS

The following dates were fixed for the Working Committee, the All India Congress Committee and the Convention meetings at Delhi:

Working Committee	.. ..	March 15, 16
All India Congress Committee	.. ..	March 17, 18
Convention	.. ..	March 19, 20

It was decided that only such persons as are mentioned in the Congress resolution be invited to the Convention in Delhi, that is, members of the A. I. C. C. and Congress members of the various legislatures in India. It was further resolved that the Congress President should, *ex officio*, preside over the Convention.

The Committee passed the following resolutions:

1. CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NATION

The Working Committee congratulates the nation on its wonderful response to the call of the Congress during the recent elections, demonstrating the adherence of the masses to Congress policy, and their firm determination to combat the new Constitution and end it, and by means of a Constituent Assembly to establish an independent and democratic State and remove the many burdens under which all sections of our people suffer. The Committee realises the high responsibility with which the nation has charged it, and it calls upon the Congress organisation and, in particular, the newly elected Congress members of the Legislatures to remember always this trust and responsibility, to uphold Congress ideals and principles, to be true to the faith of the people, and to labour unceasingly as soldiers of Swaraj for the freedom of the motherland and the emancipation of her suffering and exploited millions.

2. CONGRATULATIONS TO PEOPLE OF MIDNAPORE AND OTHER AREAS

The Working Committee expresses its special satisfaction at the response of the people and the voters to the call of the Congress in areas, such as the North-West Frontier Province and certain parts of Bengal where the Government has been, and is, pursuing a policy of intensive repression and preventing normal public activities by banning Congress Committees and imposing laws and rules and regulations interfering even with the day to day personal lives and businesses of the people. In particular, the Committee congratulates the people of Midnapore District in Bengal, who, in spite of the most extraordinary repression, have shown their love for freedom and confidence in the Congress policy and organisation, which is banned in their district by electing Congress candidates by overwhelming majorities, in the case of the Central Midnapore rural constituency the majority being the stupendous record one of 64932. This great victory of the Congress is a striking proof of the utter failure of the Government's policy of repression and of keeping Bengal's young men and women in internment and detention without trial, and is evidence of the people's utter condemnation of this policy.

3. OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

As doubts have been raised regarding the propriety of taking oath of allegiance, the Working Committee wishes to declare that the taking of that oath, in order to enable participation in the work of the Legislatures, in no way lessens or varies the demand for independence, and every Congress member stands by that objective and has to work to that end. The primary allegiance of all Congressmen, as well as all other Indians, is to the Indian people, and the oath of allegiance does not affect in any way this primary duty and allegiance.

4. EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITIES OF CONGRESS MEMBERS OF LEGISLATURES

The Working Committee desires to remind all Congress members of the provincial Assemblies that their sphere of activities is not confined to the legislatures but includes their

constituencies. All effective work in the legislatures must have the sanction of the people behind it and, therefore, all work in the legislatures must be coordinated with Congress activity outside. Every Congress member must therefore keep in constant touch with the people of his constituency, and should consult them and report to them from time to time, and give such help to them as he can in their day to day struggles. He should further keep in touch with the primary and other local Congress Committees in his constituency and share the responsibility of keeping the Congress organisation in that area in efficient working condition and in touch with the masses it seeks to represent.

The Congress Parliamentary party in each province should consult the Provincial Congress Committee concerned and report to it from time to time.

5. MASS CONTACTS

In view of the great awakening of the masses during the election campaign and their interest in Congress work and desire to participate in it, the Working Committee wishes to impress upon all Provincial and local Committees the necessity of increasing the association of the masses with the Congress organisation in accordance with the directions of the Faizpur resolution. The Committees and organisations that were built up in rural areas for election purposes should be kept functioning and converted into local branches of the Congress, so that primary Committees should exist in as large number of villages as possible.

6. CONGRESS POLICY IN THE LEGISLATURES

The work of the Congress members of the Provincial legislatures shall be governed by the following policy:

(i) The Congress has entered the legislatures not to cooperate with the new Constitution or the Government but to combat the Act and the policy underlying it, as this Act and policy are intended to tighten the hold of British Imperialism on India and to continue the exploitation of the Indian people. The Congress adheres to its general and basic policy of non-cooperation with the apparatus of British Im-

perialism except in so far as circumstances may require a variation.

(ii) The objective of the Congress is *purna swaraj* or complete independence and to that end all its activities are directed. The Congress stands for a genuine democratic State in India where political power has been transferred to the people as a whole and the Government is under their effective control. Such a State can only be created by the Indian people themselves, and the Congress has therefore insisted on a Constituent Assembly, elected by adult franchise, to determine the Constitution of the country. The Constituent Assembly can only come into existence when the Indian people have developed sufficient power and sanctions to shape their destiny without external interference.

(iii) The immediate objective of the Congress in the legislatures is to fight the new Constitution, to resist the introduction and working of the Federal part of the Act, and to lay stress on the nation's demand for a Constituent Assembly. Congress members of the legislatures have been directed by the Faizpur Congress to take the earliest opportunity to put forward in the new Assemblies this demand for a Constituent Assembly, and to support it by mass agitation outside.

(iv) Congress members of the legislatures must remember the Congress policy of not assisting or cooperating with any function or activity, calculated to enhance the power or prestige of British Imperialism in India. Ceremonial, official, or social functions of this kind must therefore be avoided and no Congress member should take part in them. In doubtful cases individual members should not take any action themselves but should refer to the Congress party in the Assembly and should abide by its decision.

(v) No Congress members of the legislatures may accept a title given by the British Government.

(vi) The Congress Party in each provincial Assembly must act as a disciplined body, the leaders of which will represent the Party in any conversations with the Government and other groups. Individual members shall have no official contacts with Government other than those resulting from

their duties as members, and such as may be expressly authorised by the Party.

(*ii*) Members will be expected to be in their places in the Assemblies during the session and when the party is attending. There should be no absence except for leave taken and cause shown.

(*iii*) All Congress members of the legislatures shall be dressed in khadi.

(*ix*) Congress parties in the Provincial Assemblies must not enter into any alliances with other groups in the Assembly without the permission of the Working Committee.

(*x*) Any member of the Provincial Legislatures not elected on behalf of the Congress but willing to take the Congress pledge and abide by Congress principles and discipline may be taken into the Congress party in that legislature, if the Party consider his admission desirable. But no person against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congress may be accepted without the permission of the Working Committee.

(*xi*) Congress members should press for the carrying out of the Congress programme as enunciated in the Election Manifesto and the Congress agrarian resolution. In particular they should work for:

1. A substantial reduction in rent and revenue.
2. Assessment of income-tax, on a progressive scale, on agricultural incomes, subject to a prescribed minimum.
3. Fixity of tenure.
4. Relief from the burden of rural debt and arrears of rent and revenue.
5. Repeal of all repressive laws.
6. Release of political prisoners, internees and detenus.
7. Restoration of lands and property confiscated or sold by Government during Civil Disobedience Movements.
8. Eight hours day for industrial workers, without reduction of pay. Living wage.

9. Prohibition of intoxicating liquor and drugs.
10. Unemployment relief.
11. Reduction of high salaries, allowances, and cost of administration of Government.

(xii) Under the existing Act, with all its safeguards and special powers in the hands of the Viceroy or the Governor, and its protection of the services, deadlocks are inevitable. They should not be avoided when they occur while pursuing Congress policy.

(xiii) Congress members in the Provincial Assemblies should further give expression to certain important demands of all India application which may not be given effect to in the Provincial Assemblies, such as, substantial reduction of the military expenditure as well as of the higher civil services; complete national control over trade and tariffs and currency; repeal of all India repressive legislation; freedom of speech, press and association; opposition to war preparations, credits and loans.

(xiv) Congress members in the Assemblies must always endeavour to mobilise public opinion in their constituencies for the particular demand they are putting forward in the legislatures. Work in the legislatures should thus be coordinated with activity outside and mass movements built up in support of those demands and of Congress policy in general.

7. MINISTRIES

In regard to the acceptance or non-acceptance of ministries the Working Committee will make its recommendations to the A. I. C. C. after it has received the recommendations of provincial and local committees.

8. ANTI-CONSTITUTION DAY—APRIL 1

The Working Committee draws the attention of the nation to the resolution of the Faizpur Congress calling for a nation-wide *bartal* or general strike on April 1, the day on which the new Constitution is to be inaugurated. The Committee trusts that the nation will respond to this call in full measure in order to demonstrate the will of the Indian

people to resist the imposition of this Constitution. It calls upon the Provincial and local Committees to work to this end and to invite the cooperation for this purpose of other organisations and groups.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

There was a discussion about the disciplinary action taken at the time of the recent elections to the Provincial legislatures. It was decided that the President was to review the cases. If he thought necessary he may send any case for the consideration of the Working Committee.

Shri S. A. Dange's resignation from the membership of the All India Congress Committee conveyed in his letter to the President was accepted. The Maharashtra P. C. C. was to fill up the vacancy according to the Constitution.

JALLIANWALA BAGH

A Committee consisting of Shris Bhulabhai Desai and Govind Ballabh Pant was appointed to consider and report what steps be taken in regard to the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund and properties.

BUDGETS

November 16, 1936 to September 30, 1937

The budget for the above period was placed before the Committee. It was decided that the budget for Congress publications be separated from the general budget and kept before the Committee at its next meeting. The following general budget was sanctioned:

GENERAL BUDGET

Income

	Rs.
1. Provincial Contributions	5,000
2. A. I. C. C. Membership	1,610
3. Interest	1,500
4. A. I. C. C. share of Delegates' fees ..	5,752
5. A. I. C. C. share of Purse Fund Collections	6,000
6. Sale of Congress Bulletins	100
TOTAL ..	19,962

Expenditure

	Rs.
1. Establishment	10,000
2. Postage and telegrams	1,500
3. Stationery and Printing	1,000
4. Travelling	4,000
5. Rates and Taxes (including electricity and 'phone)	600
6. Furniture	3,000
7. Library	1,000
8. Repairs to Swaraj Bhawan ..	1,000
9. Miscellaneous	500
10. Provident Fund contribution ..	300
TOTAL ..	22,900

The following budget was sanctioned for the Foreign Department:

FOREIGN DEPARTMENT				Rs.
1.	Salaries	..	..	1,500
2.	Postage	..	..	800
3.	Stationery	..	..	500
4.	Printing	..	..	20
TOTAL				2,820

Following separate budget for the Convention was also sanctioned:

CONVENTION				Rs.
1.	Printing	..	..	250
2.	Stationery	..	..	50
3.	Postage	..	..	100
4.	Miscellaneous	..	..	50
TOTAL				450

Delhi, March 15th to 22nd, 1937

1. THE NEW CONSTITUTION AND CONGRESS POLICY

(For the text see the proceedings of the A. I. C. C. pages 54, 55).

2. PARLIAMENTARY SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE

The Working Committee appoints a Parliamentary Sub-Committee of the following members, to be in close and constant touch with the work of the Congress Parties in all the legislatures in the provinces, to advise them in all their activities and to take necessary action in any case of emergency:—

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Shri Rajendra Prasad.

NOTE—The Parliamentary Sub-Committee was also to deal with the question of bye-elections in the provinces and in the Central Assembly in co-operation with the Provincial Executive Councils.

3. MINISTERIAL OFFICES AND MEMBERSHIP OF CONGRESS EXECUTIVES

In the event of any offices of ministers being accepted by Congressmen, the Working Committee considers it advisable that such ministers should not continue to remain members of Congress Executive Committees. But they may retain membership of general bodies like the A. I. C. C. and P. C. Cs.

4. PLEDGE

The following pledge was drawn up for non-Congress members of the legislatures who desired to join the Congress party in the different legislatures:—

PLEDGE

Province
Constituency

I am a member of the Indian National Congress at
I desire to become a member of the Congress Parliamentary Party in

I declare that I will follow the principles and policy laid down by the Congress or by any competent authority on its behalf and will conform to the rules and directions duly issued from time to time, as well as to the instructions issued by the party organisation in the Assembly/Council for the guidance of the members thereof.

I also undertake to resign my seat, whenever I am called upon to do so by a competent Congress authority.

Signature

5. EXCISE DUTY ON SUGAR

The Working Committee has heard with surprise of the recent increase in excise duty on Indian sugar by the Government of India and the Viceroy in the teeth of the opposition of the Assembly and against the declared opinion of every single elected Indian member. This Committee condemns this inhuman step which is detrimental to the interests of the consumers, farmers and manufacturers alike at a time when the sugar industry is faced with a crisis and the harvesting season is approaching its end. The Committee is particularly perturbed as this additional duty is bound to aggravate the difficulties of the agriculturists, specially in the U. P. and Bihar where sugarcane is the solitary marketable crop which enables them to some extent, to meet the heavy demands that are made on them. It appeals to the manufacturers to revise their decision to close their factories before their normal time and to keep them working till the standing cane within the zone of every factory has been exhausted and expects that the railways will at least reduce substantially the rates of freight on sugarcane as a special case for the next three months.

6. CENTRAL PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

The Central Parliamentary Committee submitted the report of its work in connection with the Provincial elections to the Working Committee. The Committee passed the following appreciatory resolution about its work:—

“The Working Committee desires to record its grateful appreciation of the labours of the Central Parliamentary Committee under the chairmanship of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. These labours have already received reward in the splendid election results throughout India.”

7. NATIONAL WEEK

The Working Committee draws the attention of all Congressmen and Congress Committees to the approaching National Week, April 6th to 13th and trusts that it will be suitably celebrated throughout the country.

8. THE ALL INDIA CONVENTION

The Committee considered the procedure to be laid down for the All India Convention.

It was decided that a subjects committee consisting of the Leaders, Secretaries and other office-bearers of the Congress parties in the Central and Provincial Legislatures, with a certain number of members of the A. I. C. C. representing the provinces in proportion of their strength on the A. I. C. C. together with a number of nominees of the President from among the members of the A. I. C. C. be formed, to discuss the procedure to be adopted and the resolutions to be moved at the All India Convention.

A pledge was also drawn up by the Working Committee for the members of the Convention.

9. CONGRESSMEN ACCEPTING MINISTRIES IN MINORITY PROVINCES

It was decided that any Congressman accepting office in any province where the Congress had failed to get the majority made himself liable to disciplinary action.

10. SALARIES OF MINISTERS, SPEAKERS AND ADVOCATE GENERALS

Apart from free provision to be made by the State for residence and conveyance, the salaries of ministers, speakers and advocate generals shall not exceed rupees five hundred per month, as laid down in the Karachi resolution of Fundamental Rights and Economic Programme.

11. MEMBERS AGAINST WHOM DISCIPLINARY ACTION TAKEN

The Committee decided that if a Congressman against whom disciplinary action had been taken desired to rejoin the Congress party in the Legislatures, he was not to be immediately admitted but was to be asked to wait and justify his conversion by work before he was admitted to the party.

12. LABOUR MEMBERS RETURNED ON CONGRESS TICKET

It was decided that even when such members formed themselves in a labour group, they must conform to the Congress discipline as long as they formed part of the Congress party in the legislature.

13. A. I. C. C. MEMBERSHIP LISTS FROM THE PUNJAB AND BENGAL

In place of the old names of the members of the A. I. C. C. the Committee accepted the new list from the Punjab sent by the Secretary, Punjab P. C. C.

The method of counting votes in the A. I. C. C. elections adopted by the Bengal P. C. C. was not recognised as proportional voting by single transferable vote. Therefore a recounting was authorised. If the old voting papers were not in existence, new elections would be necessary.

14. ELECTION OF LEADERS OF CONGRESS PARTIES IN BOMBAY AND UTKAL

On a representation signed by some members of the Congress party of the Bombay Legislature, drawing the attention of the Working Committee to the agitation carried on in some Bombay papers in connection with election of Sri B. G. Kher as leader of the Congress party the Committee called Sri K. F. Nariman and heard him at length and went into the matter fully. The Committee issued the following statement in this behalf:—

“A representation signed by 40 members of the Congress party of the Bombay Legislature, who were present in Delhi for the Convention was received by the President. In this they drew the attention of the Working Committee to an agitation carried on in certain Bombay newspapers in connection with the election of Mr. Kher as leader of the Party.

“It was pointed out therein that whereas Mr. Kher had been unanimously chosen as the leader and entrusted with authority to appoint other office-bearers, irresponsible imputations, charges and insinuations were being made in respect of that election. The signatories requested the President to

issue a statement deprecating this agitation interfering with the free, deliberate and unanimous choice of the Party as the encouragement of such agitation would be highly detrimental to the public life of the country and the cause of the Indian National Congress. Seven other members presented a separate letter to the same effect.

"The Working Committee has noted with great surprise and pain the agitation that is being carried on in the Bombay Press. Besides the press agitation a number of telegrams and other communications were received by the President from individuals and groups in Bombay in the same connection.

"The Working Committee went fully into the matter and heard Mr. K. F. Nariman at great length. The Committee is convinced that there is no reason whatsoever to interfere with the free and deliberate and unanimous choice that the Bombay Congress Party in the Legislature, after fully considering all matters, has made. The Committee is convinced also that the agitation against the decision is wholly groundless and it has no hesitation in condemning it as detrimental to the public life of the province and injurious to the cause of the Congress. Had the Working Committee found any reason to believe that the election had been influenced by the improper conduct on the part of anybody or that the choice was made under any undue pressure from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel as alleged, it would have certainly ordered a fresh election. There is not the slightest ground, however for doing this. No less than 48 members who were present in Delhi for the Convention have given a signed declaration to the effect that the choice of Mr. Kher was free and unanimous. The Committee, therefore, confirming the said election, earnestly appeals to the press and other persons concerned to stop this agitation against what has been finally decided upon by the party that had to elect its leader after considering the matter from all points of view. We hold that the carrying on of any further agitation would amount to seeking to terrorise the Party and call upon all those who are interested in and are in sympathy with the aims and objects of the Congress to discourage such activities."

15. UTKAL

The Committee considered the letter of Sri Nilkantha Das together with the representation from some members of the Congress Party in Utkal about the election of Sri Biswanath Das as leader of the Congress Party in the Utkal legislature.

The Committee decided that it was neither proper nor advisable to interfere with the decision of the party. It also advised Sri Nilkantha Das to continue as a member of the Central Assembly and not to seek election to the Provincial Assembly.

16. JALLIANWALA BAGH MEMORIAL FUND

The Committee confirmed the resolution of the Jallianwala Bagh Fund Committee, appointing Sri Jawaharlal Nehru as a Trustee to fill up the vacancy caused by the death of the Late Pandit Motilal Nehru.

The Committee also confirmed the appointment of Sri Jarnalal Bajaj as the third Trustee of the Fund.

17. PUBLICATION DEPARTMENT BUDGET

The following budget for the period from November 16, 1936 to September 30, 1937 was sanctioned:

<i>Income</i>		
		Rs.
Sale of books	.. .. .	2,500
Deficit	.. .. .	700
	TOTAL	3,200

<i>Expenditure</i>		
		Rs.
About 8 to 10 publications 2000 copies each		3,000
Postage	.. .. .	200
	TOTAL	3,200

(*Anand Bhawan, Allahabad, April 26-29, 1937*)

The following resolutions were passed:

1. CONGRESS MINISTRIES

The Working Committee approves of and endorses the action that the leaders of the Congress Parliamentary Parties in the provinces took, in pursuance of the resolution of the A. I. C. C. dated March 18, 1937, on being invited by the Governors in their respective provinces to help them in the formation of ministries.

In view of the fact that it is contended by British ministers that it is not competent for the Governors, without amendment of the Act, to give the assurances required by the Congress for enabling the Congress leaders to form ministries, the Committee wishes to make it clear that the resolution of the A. I. C. C. did not contemplate any amendment of the Act for the purpose of the required assurances. The Working Committee moreover is advised by eminent jurists that such assurances can be given strictly within the constitution.

The Working Committee considers that the pronouncements of the policy of the British Government made by Lord Zetland and Mr. Butler are utterly inadequate to meet the requirements of the Congress, are misleading and misinterpret the Congress attitude. Further the manner and the setting in which such pronouncements have been made are discourteous to the Congress. The past record of the British Government as well as its present attitude show that without specific assurances as required by the Congress, popular ministries will be unable to function properly and without irritating interference. The assurances do not contemplate the abrogation of the right of the Governor to dismiss a ministry or dissolve a Provincial Assembly when serious differences of opinion arise between the Governor and his ministers. But this Committee has grave objection to ministers having to submit to interference by Governors with the alternative of themselves having to resign their office instead of the Governors taking the responsibility of dismissing them.

2. WORK OUTSIDE LEGISLATURES

Owing to the dead-lock created by the refusal of Governors to give the assurances asked on behalf of the Congress enabling acceptance of office by Congress members of the legislatures, various questions have been addressed to the Working Committee by the Congress leaders in these provinces as to the attitude, Congressmen should adopt, towards the so-called ministries formed by the Governors in the provinces concerned. The Working Committee is of opinion that the formation of these ministries by the Governors is unconstitutional, repugnant to the conception of autonomy and in total defiance of the overwhelming public opinion in each of those provinces. The Working Committee is further of opinion that those who have accepted minister-ships in these circumstances have by their unpatriotic conduct rendered a disservice to the country. The Committee advises that public meetings be held denouncing the action of these so-called ministers and challenging them to face the legislatures and justify their conduct. But the Committee is of opinion that hostile black flag demonstrations and the like should be avoided.

Congressmen should realise that parliamentary work is but a minor part of the national programme and that the great objective of complete independence can only be secured by sustained efforts by every Congressman and Congresswoman in carrying out the programme outside the legislature as laid down from time to time. In furtherance of this objective, members of the legislatures should establish living touch with the electors in their respective constituencies and carry the message of the Congress and commend to them the constructive programme including the use of khaddar to the exclusion of mill cloth, the local production of khaddar in villages by hand spinning and hand-weaving; creating public opinion in favour of total prohibition; promotion of communal unity by collective and individual effort; and the eradication of the evil of untouchability in every form.

3. CONTACT WITH NON-CONGRESS MINISTRIES

Resolved that no Congress member of the Provincial Legislatures shall have any dealings or interviews with the

so-called ministers who have been unconstitutionally appointed in provinces where Congress commands a majority and the ministries in other provinces, except with the express permission of the Leader of the Congress party.

4. ZANZIBAR

The Working Committee feels deeply concerned over the publication of the recent draft Bills by the Zanzibar Government perpetuating complete internal and external monopoly of dealing in cloves in the hands of a close corporation, practically excluding the Indians therefrom and depriving them of all means of recovering their just and legitimate dues from the clove-growers and inflicting a deathblow upon the vital economic interests of the Indian people in Zanzibar. The passing of these decrees is sure to create a grave situation in Zanzibar and this Committee is informed that the exasperated Indian community may have to resort to passive resistance for the restoration and preservation of their legitimate rights.

In the opinion of this Committee these measures are in direct violation of the just rights of the Indians and of the Zanzibar treaties of 1886 and 1898 which guarantee security of property for Indians and prohibit the establishment of clove monopoly.

It is the further considered opinion of this Committee that this legislation, though ostensibly designed to benefit the Arab clove growers, is really intended to assist the British capitalists denying the just claims of Indians who have raised Zanzibar to its present prosperous, stable, agricultural position.

This Committee assures our countrymen overseas in Zanzibar of its sympathy in their present situation, extends its support in their struggles and is of opinion that retaliatory measures should be taken forthwith by the Indian Government.

5. THE JUTE MILL STRIKE

The Working Committee views with alarm and concern the grave situation of the Jute workers of Calcutta who have been conducting a heroic struggle for the last twelve weeks

for the recognition of their elementary right to form a union and for securing redress of their legitimate grievances. The Jute workers' struggle has assumed a great national importance. The strike has made rapid strides and today something like two hundred thousand workers are involved in it.

The Committee offers its heart-felt sympathy to the strikers and expresses its admiration for the determined and peaceful manner in which they are struggling against the combined forces of employers and the Government.

The Committee puts on record its sense of disappointment at the attitude of the employers who by refusing to satisfy the reasonable demands of the workers are prolonging the strike and deepening the misery of the strikers.

The Committee is of opinion that it is the imperative duty of the Government to intervene in the conflict and to secure speedy settlement of the dispute on the basis of the recognition of Workers' rights and satisfaction of their just demands. The Committee, however, notes with regret that the Government is taking the side of the employers in this dispute and places on record its strong condemnation of the repressive policy of the Government which seeks to suppress the workers' struggle by promulgation of prohibitory orders under Section 144, Cr. P. C., arrest of labour leaders and workers and various acts of police and military violence. The Committee, in particular, records its strongest protest at the reported entry of the police and military into the workers' quarters, the assault on one of the Labour Members of the Bengal Legislative Assembly, the prohibition of these members including the President of the Trade Union Congress from entering their Constituencies and the firing on unarmed workers including little boys.)

6. ITALY AND ABYSSINIA

The Working Committee expresses its abhorrence of the brutal massacre of peaceful masses of Ethiopians by Italian intruders and offers its sympathy to the victims of Fascist imperialism.

The Working Committee takes strong exception to the closing of the Mohamed Ali Stores in Abyssinia and regards

this as an act of grave injustice. The Committee is of opinion that the Italian Government should withdraw this ban and grant adequate compensation to the owners of the stores.

7. ORGANISING SECRETARY

Shri Jairamdas Daulatram was appointed the Organising Secretary for the whole of India in terms of the Faizpur Congress resolution on Mass Contacts.

LABOUR COMMITTEE

The last year's Labour Committee consisting of Shris Jairamdas Daulatram, Shankerlal Banker, V. V. Giri, M. R. Masani and J. B. Kripalani (Conveñer) was reappointed.

Wardha, July 5, 6, 7 and 8, 1937

1. FAIZPUR CONGRESS SURPLUS

Resolved that half of the balance of Rs. 24,689-11-9 left over from the Faizpur session of the Congress be paid to the A. I. C. C. office and the other half be retained by the Maharashtra P. C. C.

2. A. I. C. C. FUNDS

Resolved that out of the balance of Rs. 93,727-3-9 to the credit of the A. I. C. C. office with Messrs. Bachhraj & Co., Rs. 25,000 be kept for current expenses and the rest be invested by the Treasurer, Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, in consultation with Shri Bhulabhai Desai.

3. AUDITORS

As the firm of Messrs. Chotalal and Agarwal, the Congress auditors has been dissolved and the two partners Mr. Chotalal H. Shah and Mr. Narayanlal Agarwal have started separate firms of their own, resolved that both the firms of Messrs. Chotalal H. Shah & Co. and Messrs. Narayanlal Agarwal & Co. be appointed as honorary auditors of the Congress.

4. BY-ELECTION OF DELEGATES

On a reference being made from Bombay, the Committee reiterated its decision that the by-election of delegates is to be regulated by its resolution passed at Wardha, June-July 1936, which runs thus:—

"7. In a constituency where for any reason a by-election of a delegate becomes necessary, the members entitled to vote and be candidates for such a vacancy shall be,

- (a) those included in the list mentioned in Art. (VIa) and
- (b) new members enrolled since the closing of the said list and three months prior to the by-election."

5. ELECTION OF LEADER IN BOMBAY. SHRI NARIMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT

The Committee issued the following press communique:

"Shri K. F. Nariman having made representations to the President in his letters dated May 13, June 23, July 3 and July 5, he was invited to come in person to make matters clear and explain what he desired to be done. Shri Nariman appeared before the Working Committee on July 8 and intimated to them that he had not intended to ask in his letters for the reopening of the subject by the Working Committee and he definitely stated that he did not seek any reopening of the Committee's decision of March 20 and that he accepts it as finally deciding the question. He further stated that he does not want any other matter referred to in the correspondence to be inquired into by the Committee."

6. OFFICE ACCEPTANCE IN PROVINCES WITH CONGRESS MAJORITIES

The following resolution was passed:—

The All India Congress Committee, at its meeting held in Delhi on March 18, 1937, passed a resolution affirming the basic Congress policy in regard to the new Constitution and laying down the programme to be followed inside and

outside the legislatures by Congress members of such legislatures. It further directed that in pursuance of that policy, permission should be given for Congressmen to accept office in provinces where the Congress commanded a majority in the legislature, and the leader of the Congress Party was satisfied and could state publicly that the Governor would not use his special powers of interference, or set aside the advice of ministers in regard to their constitutional activities. In accordance with these directions, the leaders of Congress parties, who were invited by Governors to form ministries, asked for the necessary assurances. These not having been given, the leaders expressed their inability to undertake the formation of ministries. But since the meeting of the Working Committee on April 28, last, Lord Zetland, Lord Stanley and the Viceroy have made declarations on this issue on behalf of the British Government. The Working Committee has carefully considered these declarations and is of opinion that though they exhibit a desire to make an approach to the Congress demand they fall short of the assurances demanded in terms of the A. I. C. C. resolution as interpreted by the Working Committee resolution of April 28. Again the Working Committee is unable to subscribe to the doctrine of partnership propounded in some of the aforesaid declarations. The proper description of the existing relationship between the British Government and the people of India is that of the exploiter and the exploited, and hence they have a different outlook upon almost everything of vital importance. The Committee feels however that the situation created as the result of the circumstances and events that have since occurred, warrants the belief that it will not be easy for the governors to use their special powers. The Committee has moreover considered the views of Congress members of the legislatures and of Congressmen generally.

The Committee has therefore come to the conclusion and resolves that Congressmen be permitted to accept office where they may be invited thereto. But it desires to make it clear that office is to be accepted and utilised for the purpose of working in accordance with the lines laid down in the Congress election manifesto and to further in every

possible way the Congress policy of combating the new Act on the one hand and of prosecuting the constructive programme on the other.

The Working Committee is confident that it has the support and backing of the A. I. C. C. in this decision and that this resolution is in furtherance of the general policy laid down by the Congress and the A. I. C. C. The Committee would have welcomed the opportunity of taking the direction of the A. I. C. C. in this matter but it is of opinion that delay in taking a decision at this stage would be injurious to the country's interests and would create confusion in the public mind at a time when prompt and decisive action is necessary.

ALL INDIA PARLIAMENTARY SUB-COMMITTEE

DIVISION OF WORK

The All India Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee met at Wardha on July 8, 1937, and passed the following resolution:—

Resolved that in cases of emergency, members named below be authorised to deal with matters coming within the purview of this Sub-Committee in the provinces mentioned against their names respectively:

Sri Vallabhbhai Patel:

1. *Bombay Presidency*, comprising the Congress Provinces of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Bombay City and Karnatak.
2. *Madras Presidency*, comprising the Congress Provinces of Andhra, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnatak.
3. *Central Provinces*, comprising the Congress Provinces of Nagpur, Mahakoshal and Berar.
4. *Sindh*.

Sri Abul Kalam Azad:

1. *Bengal*, 2. *United Provinces*, 3. *Punjab* and 4. *North-West Frontier Province*.

Sri Rajendra Prasad:

1. *Bihar*, 2. *Orissa* and 3. *Assam*.
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Wardha, August 14 to 17, 1937

1. HUNGER-STRIKE IN THE ANDAMANS

The situation created by the hunger-strike of the political prisoners in the Andamans was discussed. Shris Shibnath Bannerji and Debendra Sen, who had come to Wardha to represent the prisoners' cause were invited by the Committee to participate in the deliberations. Shri Tulsi Goswami the Deputy Leader of the Congress Assembly Party in Bengal was also present during the discussion. The Committee passed the following resolution:

"The Working Committee has learnt with the deepest concern of the hunger-strike of hundreds of political prisoners in the Andaman Islands. The Committee has long been of opinion that the use of the Islands as a penal settlement, more especially for political prisoners, is barbarous. Official enquiries and reports have already condemned such use and non-official opinion has unanimously demanded that no prisoners be sent there. Repeated hunger-strikes by the political prisoners have demonstrated their desperation at the continuance of conditions which they cannot bear, and the present hunger-strike has brought matters to a head and grave consequences are feared. Public opinion all over India is agitated and strongly in favour of the release of the political prisoners there as they have already undergone many years of imprisonment under conditions which are far worse than those prevailing in Indian prisons. The Committee's attention has been drawn to the public statement issued by some ex-prisoners, who were till recently imprisoned in the Andaman Islands, and have been now released, in which they have stated on their own behalf and on behalf of the other political prisoners there, their dissociation from and disapproval of the policy of terrorism. They have frankly stated that they have come to realise that such a policy is wrong and injurious to the national cause and they propose

to have nothing to do with it. This statement has been confirmed from other sources also.

In view of all these circumstances the Committee is emphatically of opinion that the political prisoners in the Andamans should be discharged. The Committee is further of opinion that the non-political prisoners in the Andamans should be repatriated and the penal settlement in the islands closed. Any delay in taking adequate action is likely to lead to alarming consequences.

The Committee appeals to the prisoners in the Andamans to give up their hunger-strike."

In pursuance of the last paragraph of the resolution the President sent a telegram to the prisoners on hunger-strike, through the Home Secretary to the Government of India, appealing to them, on behalf of the Committee, to give up their hunger-strike.

To this the following reply was received:

"Government of India thank you for your telegram of yesterday's date the text of which is being communicated to Andamans prisoners."

2. BENGAL, PUNJAB AND SINDH REPRESENTATION

The Committee invited Shri Tulshi Goswami (Bengal), Shri Gopichand Bhargava (Punjab) and Dr. Choithram Gidwani (Sindh) to place before it, the Parliamentary situation in and the views of their respective provinces. The subjects discussed were: (1) The formation of Congress ministries in minority provinces. (2) Salaries and allowances of members. (3) Social intercourse. (4) Congress programme and policy in the minority provinces.

About ministries in minority provinces the Committee after discussing the position in Bengal, Assam and North-West Frontier Provinces passed the following resolution:

"The Working Committee, having heard representations from Bengal, desires to make it clear that there is nothing to prevent a minority Congress Party in a Provincial Assembly co-operating with other groups in the Assembly, for general or specific purposes, in connection with the parliamentary work in the legislatures. But such co-operation must

not involve any sacrifice of Congress principles or policy and should aim at strengthening the Congress opposition in such legislatures. It should be borne in mind, however, that such co-operation does not involve commitments regarding the possible formation of a ministry to which the Congress is a party. In regard to the day-to-day work of the Congress Parties the Leaders of the Parties have been given ample latitude subject to the general policy as laid down by the Working Committee."

3. SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES

The following resolution was passed both for the majority and minority provinces:

"The Working Committee is of opinion that, in accordance with Congress policy, salaries and allowances of ministers and others should be reduced to the lowest possible limit consistently with efficiency. The Committee realises however, that the immediate and full application of the principle is not easy, and it may not be possible to introduce the desired changes at this stage. In view of varying circumstances in the different provinces, the Committee does not wish to lay down hard and fast rules and wishes to leave a large measure of discretion in this matter to the Congress Ministries. The Committee trusts that the ministries will keep in mind the basic policy of the Congress in the matter of salaries and allowances and will always endeavour to conform to it to the greatest extent possible.

The Committee, however, lays down the following general rules for the guidance of Congress ministries:

1. Congress Ministers' salaries should in no event exceed Rs. 500 per month. House allowance Rs. 100 a month and motor car allowance Rs. 150 a month. Thus the total allowances for house and car should not exceed Rs. 250. In the event of a minister not requiring a house allowance because he has a house of his own, this allowance should not be drawn. Ministers who do not wish to draw any allowances need not do so.

The State may provide cars for ministers, but no such special provision need be made unless it is considered necessary.

2. The salaries, and allowances if necessary, of parliamentary secretaries are left to the discretion of Congress Ministries.

3. *Members:* The present scale of payment of daily allowances and travelling expenses is heavy and has to be completely overhauled. It may be difficult to bring about this complete overhaul immediately but in any event travelling expenses should be charged at the rate of double third class fare.

If it is desired to keep the present scale of daily allowance for the days of attendance at an Assembly session, no change need be made for the present. But in no event should this exceed Rs. 10 a day, there being no additional payment by way of salary.

If, on the other hand, it is desired to introduce a system of paying salaries to members, this may be done, provided that such salary shall not exceed Rs. 75 a month. In addition to such salary an allowance not exceeding Rs. 2-8 a day may be given to members for the days of attendance at an Assembly session or Committee meeting.

Even if a system of paying salaries to members is introduced, such members as do not require these salaries, should not draw them.

4. In the provinces where these standards cannot be applied as non-Congress ministries have already fixed much higher salaries and allowances, Congress members of those legislatures should only accept payment for themselves in accordance with the above direction. They may however draw the full sums allowed by the rules and hand over the balance to the All India Congress Committee through the Party Leader. This amount should be kept in a special fund earmarked for the province concerned."

4. SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

The Committee's instructions in this behalf for the minority provinces were that invitations for social functions where official business was not the main purpose should be rejected. Where social intercourse was merely an accident and business was the main purpose of a gathering, the func-

tion could be attended. The Committee's previous instructions that the leader of the party be consulted in doubtful cases held good.

The Committee also approved of the following instructions recently issued by the President of the All India Parliamentary Sub-Committee:

"All members of the Congress parties in the Legislatures should avoid as hitherto, official functions like receptions, farewells to incoming and outgoing Governors, etc. The Prime Ministers should make it clear that no discourtesy or disrespect is intended and therefore they need not be invited on these occasions.

"It should be made absolutely clear that while the Ministers will aim at working in a spirit of utmost harmony with the services, they can take no part in social functions like parties or dinners. The very poverty of the land precludes their taking part in amenities of this nature. Strictly official relations should therefore be maintained throughout."

5. CONGRESS POLICY AND PROGRAMME IN MINORITY PROVINCES

The Committee's advice to the minority provinces on this was that as many bills and resolutions embodying the Congress policy and programme as possible should be introduced by their party members. This will educate and familiarise the public with Congress aims and policies.

6. PROHIBITION

The following resolution was passed:

Inasmuch as Prohibition has been one of the chief planks of the Congress since the inauguration of the N. C. O. movement in 1930, and thousands of men and women have had to suffer imprisonment and physical injury in furtherance of this cause, the Working Committee is of opinion that it is incumbent upon the Congress Ministries to work to this end. The Committee expects them to bring about total prohibition in their respective provinces within three years. The Working Committee appeals to the ministries in the other provinces and to the Indian States also to adopt this programme of moral and social uplift of the people.

7. EXPERT COMMITTEES

The Working Committee recommends to the Congress Ministries the appointment of a Committee of Experts to consider urgent and vital problems the solution of which is necessary to any scheme of national reconstruction and social planning. Such solution will require extensive surveys and the collection of data, as well as a clearly defined social objective. Many of these problems cannot be dealt with effectively on a provincial basis and the interests of adjoining provinces are interlinked. Comprehensive river surveys are necessary for the formulation of a policy to prevent disastrous floods, to utilize the water for purposes of irrigation, to consider the problem of soil erosion, to eradicate malaria, and for the development of hydro-electric and other schemes. For this purpose the whole river valley will have to be surveyed and investigated, and large scale state planning resorted to. The development and control of industries require also joint and coordinated action on the part of several provinces. The Working Committee advises therefore that, to begin with, an inter-provincial committee of experts be appointed to consider the general nature of the problems to be faced, and to suggest how, and in what order, these should be tackled. This Expert Committee may suggest the formation of special committees or boards to consider each such problem separately and to advise the provincial governments concerned as to the joint action to be undertaken.

In particular the Working Committee wishes to draw the attention of the Governments of the U. P. and Behar to the urgent necessity of taking immediate action in regard to the sugar industry, in order to prevent a repetition of recent happenings which brought calamity and widespread misery to the cane growers in these two provinces. The two Governments concerned should take immediate steps to appoint a committee, consisting of experts and those concerned with the industry, to investigate the problems and suggest ways and means to control and coordinate the industry and to utilize such bye products as are being wasted today. The minimum price of cane should be fixed and the interests of cane growers protected by encouraging their organisation and in other ways. The attention of other

provinces is also drawn to this problem of the sugar industry.

The question of a moratorium in regard to debt also involves inter-provincial consideration.

The Committee was also of the view that the Congress provinces should appoint committees of their own to deal with their particular and peculiar problems. The ministers dealing with particular departments should also meet in conference to consider the problems arising in their particular departments.

8. NEW DEPARTMENT IN A. I. C. C. OFFICE

The Committee suggested the addition of one more department to the A. I. C. C. Office to keep in touch with the Governments of the six Congress provinces and find out their difficulties and render them help and advice with a view to bring about as much coordination between the provinces and provinces and the A. I. C. C. as possible.

9. SPEAKERS, PRESIDENTS, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES AND MEMBERSHIP OF CONGRESS EXECUTIVES

The Committee's resolution passed at Delhi, March last about Ministerial Offices and Membership of Congress Executives is to apply not only to Ministers but also to Speakers, Presidents of Councils and Parliamentary Secretaries.

(Delhi resolution—In the event of any offices of ministers being accepted by Congressmen, the Working Committee considers it advisable that such ministers should not continue to remain members of Congress Executive Committees. But they may retain membership of general bodies like the A. I. C. C. and the P. C. Cs.).

10. ZANZIBAR

The Committee expresses again its full sympathy with Indians in Zanzibar in their brave struggle against the new decrees which are sure to result in ruining Indian interests in Zanzibar and the internal and export trade of the Indian community which has been settled for so long in the country and which has helped greatly in promoting the prosperity of Zanzibar. The Committee is of opinion that in order to

give adequate help in this struggle and protect Indian interests in Zanzibar it is essential that an embargo be laid on the import of cloves into India. The Committee further calls upon the people to refrain from the use of cloves until the new decrees are rescinded by the Zanzibar Government.

11. MEERUT DISTRICT AND U. P.

The Committee considered the letter of the Meerut District Congress Committee and resolved that in view of the desire of the Meerut D. C. C. to join the U. P., P. C. C. and further because it appears that U. P. is agreeable to this and the Delhi P. C. C. has preferred no objection in spite of opportunity given, this committee is of opinion that the proposed change is desirable and recommends accordingly to the A. I. C. C. This change will necessitate certain consequential changes in the constitution and in the number of delegates and members of the A. I. C. C. allotted to the two provinces. Further the transfer of Meerut to U. P. may make it desirable for Muzaffarnagar also to be transferred to U. P. These matters should be considered in all their bearings and reference made to the parties concerned in regard to them so that the A. I. C. C. may be in a position to decide the matter finally.

12. LABOUR COMMITTEE

Shri Jaiprakash Narain was appointed as an additional member of the Congress Labour Committee.

13. SHRI NARIMAN'S CASE

The President informed the Committee that he had intimated Shri K. F. Nariman that he had full permission to have whatever inquiry he wanted and the Working Committee will not object to this.

14. PRESIDENT'S GIFT TO THE NATION

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru informed the Committee that he had decided formally to transfer to the nation the ownership of all caskets, public addresses and other articles he had received during his various tours in India, Burma, Malaya and

Ceylon. The collection includes caskets etc. received by the late Pandit Motilal Nehru as well as Shrimati Kamala Nehru. The articles at present are kept in the Municipal Museum at Allahabad. The Museum authorities have been given the articles for display and safe custody on the clear understanding that as soon as a national museum is started by Congress the exhibits will be handed over to that museum. The articles include one gold casket received from the Indian community of Singapur, a large number of silver lacquer and other caskets and some personalia belonging to the late Pandit Motilal Nehru.

The Committee gratefully accepted the collection for the nation and recorded its thanks for the valuable gift.

15. BUDHA-GAYA TEMPLE

The Committee was of the opinion that the Budha-Gaya Temple, exclusive of the property attached to it and in possession of the Budha-Gaya Mahant, should be under the management of a committee consisting both of Hindus and Indian, Burmese and Cylonese Buddhists. Babu Rajendra Prasad was requested once again to use his influence with the Budha-Gaya Mahant to accept the arrangement suggested by the Working Committee.

Calcutta, October 26 to November 1, 1937

RESOLUTIONS FOR THE A. I. C. C.

The Committee recommended resolutions on the following subjects for adoption by the A. I. C. C.

(1) Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund, (2) Condolence—Shri Manilal Kothari, (3) Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore's Recovery, (4) Ratification of Working Committee Resolution on Office Acceptance, (5) Federation, (6) Japan's Aggression in China, (7) Midnapore Congress Organisation, (8) Detenus and Andamans Prisoners, (9) Repression in Bengal and Punjab, (10) Indian Exiles Abroad, (11) Indians in Zanzibar, (12) Palestine, (13) Meerut and Muzaffarnagar Districts, (14) Slump in Cotton prices.

NOTE—For the text of the resolutions see the proceedings of the A. I. C. C. given above.

The following further resolutions were passed by the Committee:—

15. MINORITY RIGHTS

The Congress has solemnly and repeatedly declared its policy in regard to the rights of the minorities in India and has stated that it considers it its duty to protect these rights and ensure the widest possible scope for the development of these minorities and their participation in the fullest measure in the political, economic and cultural life of the nation. The objective of the Congress is an independent and united India where no class or group or majority or minority may exploit another to its own advantage, and where all the elements in the nation may co-operate together for the common good and the advancement of the people of India. This objective of unity and mutual co-operation in a common freedom does not mean the suppression in any way of the rich variety and cultural diversity of Indian life, which have to be preserved in order to give freedom and opportunity to the individual as well as to each group to develop unhindered according to its capacity and inclination.

In view, however, of attempts having been made to misinterpret the Congress policy in this regard, the All India Congress Committee desire to reiterate this policy. The Congress has included in its resolution on Fundamental Rights that

- (i) Every citizen of India has the right of free expression of opinion, the right of free association and combination, and the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, for a purpose not opposed to law or morality.
- (ii) Every citizen shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess and practise his religion, subject to public order and morality.
- (iii) The culture, language and script of the minorities and of the different linguistic areas shall be protected.

- (iv) All citizens are equal before the law, irrespective of religion, caste, creed or sex.
- (v) No disability attaches to any citizen by reason of his or her religion, caste, creed or sex, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling.
- (vi) All citizens have equal rights and duties in regard to wells, tanks, roads, schools and places of public resort, maintained out of State, or local funds, or dedicated by private persons for the use of the general public.
- (vii) The State shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions.
- (viii) The franchise shall be on the basis of universal adult suffrage.
- (ix) Every citizen is free to move throughout India and to stay and settle in any part thereof, to acquire property and to follow any trade or calling, and to be treated equally with regard to legal prosecution or protection in all parts of India.

These clauses of the Fundamental Rights resolution make it clear that there should be no interference in matters of conscience, religion, or culture, and a minority is entitled to keep its personal law without any change in this respect being imposed by the majority.

The position of the Congress in regard to the Communal decision has been repeatedly made clear in Congress resolutions and finally in the Election Manifesto issued last year. The Congress is opposed to this decision as it is anti-national, anti-democratic and is a barrier to Indian freedom and the development of Indian unity. Nevertheless the Congress has declared that a change in or supersession of the Communal Decision should only be brought about by the mutual agreement of the parties concerned. The Congress has always welcomed and is prepared to take advantage of any opportunity to bring about such a change by mutual agreement.

In all matters affecting the minorities in India, the Con-

gress wishes to proceed by their co-operation and through their goodwill in a common undertaking and for the realization of a common aim which is the freedom and betterment of all the people of India.

16. DAMODAR CANAL TAX

The Working Committee sympathises with the brave struggle carried on by the agriculturist population of the Damodar Canal area of Burdwan District against the imposition of an unjust and excessive tax for the supply of water from the Damodar Canal.

17. PUNJAB UNITY CONFERENCE

The Working Committee have fully considered the recommendations of the Executive of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee in regard to Congress participation in the provincial Unity Conference and have heard the representatives of the P. C. C. and of the Congress Party in the Punjab Assembly on this subject. The Committee appreciate the weight of the objections advanced by the executive of the Punjab P. C. C. and feel that, in view of the repression of political activity and the arrest of Congressmen by the Punjab Government, and repeated attacks on the Congress by the Punjab ministers, it is difficult to extend any measure of co-operation to that Government. The Committee further realise that the withdrawal of prominent Sikh and other representatives from the Conference make any satisfactory settlement by the Conference difficult of achievement. Nevertheless the Committee are of opinion that the Congress should not withhold its co-operation from any effort to solve the communal problem. Such cooperation should, however, be offered on the basis of Congress principles and an agreement should be sought in accordance with those basic principles. The Working Committee therefore recommends that the Congress representatives on the Conference should remain there until further directions are given.

18. SHRI K. F. NARIMAN

The Working Committee considered the report of Shri

M. K. Gandhi and Shri D. N. Bahadurji regarding the issues raised by Shri K. F. Nariman. The Committee also considered the covering letter of Shri M. K. Gandhi and the two statements issued by Shri K. F. Nariman in regard to the report of the Inquiry Committee. The Committee are of opinion that in view of the findings in this report and his acceptance of them and his subsequent recantation, his conduct has been such as to prove him unworthy of holding any position of trust and responsibility in the Congress organisation.

In view of these facts the Working Committee directs that the report and the letters accompanying it be published in the press.

The Committee gave the following interpretation of Article III Clause (f):—

19. MEMBERSHIP YEAR

A primary member who has enrolled himself in any particular year shall continue to be on the electoral roll till the next annual electoral roll is prepared.

It was also decided that between the period of completion of the electoral roll and the next general elections the enrolment of primary members should stop.

20. ART. VI (g)

Interpreting Article VI (g) the Committee decided that the number of primary members entitled to elect a delegate in any province should be the same and not vary from district to district.

21. N.-W. F. PROVINCE—LAST DATE OF ENROLMENT

As the Congress organisations in the Frontier Province were under ban until recently the Committee as an exceptional case extended the last date of the enrolment of primary members to December 15, 1937.

Following statement was issued by the Working Committee with regard to the controversy about the national song "Bande Mataram":—

THE BANDE MATARAM SONG

A controversy having recently arisen about the Bande Mataram song, the Working Committee desire to explain the significance of this song. This song appears in Bankim Chandra Chatterji's novel "Anandamatha" but, it has been pointed out in his biography, that the song was written independently of, and long before the novel, and was subsequently incorporated in it. The song should thus be considered apart from the book. It was set to music by Rabindranath Tagore in 1896. The song and the words "Bande Mataram" were considered seditious by the British Government and were sought to be suppressed by violence and intimidation. At a famous session of the Bengal Provincial Conference held in Barisal in April 1906, under the presidentship of Shri A. Rasul, a brutal lathi charge was made by the police on the delegates and volunteers and the "Bande Mataram" badges worn by them were violently torn off. Some delegates were beaten so severely as they cried "Bande Mataram" that they fell down senseless. Since then, during the past thirty years, innumerable instances of sacrifice and suffering all over the country have been associated with "Bande Mataram" and men and women have not hesitated to face death even with that cry on their lips. The song and the words thus became symbols of national resistance to British imperialism in Bengal especially, and generally in other parts of India. The words "Bande Mataram" became a slogan of power which inspired our people, and a greeting which ever remind us of our struggle for national freedom.

Gradually the use of the first two stanzas of the song spread to other provinces and a certain national significance began to attach to them. The rest of the song was very seldom used and is even now known by few persons. These two stanzas described in tender language the beauty of the motherland and the abundance of her gifts. There was absolutely nothing in them to which objection could be taken from the religious or any other point of view. The Song was never sung as a challenge to any group or community in India and was never considered as such or as offending the sentiments of any community. Indeed the reference in it to thirty crores of Indians makes it clear that it was meant

to apply to all the people of India. At no time, however, was this song, or any other song, formally adopted by the Congress as the National Anthem of India. But popular usage gave it a special and national importance.

The Working Committee feel that past associations, with their long record of suffering for the cause, as well as popular usage, have made the first two stanzas of this song a living and inseparable part of our national movement and as such they must command our affection and respect. There is nothing in these stanzas to which any one can take exception. The other stanzas of the song are little known and hardly ever sung. They contain certain allusions and a religious ideology which may not be in keeping with the ideology of other religious groups in India.

The Committee recognise the validity of the objection raised by Muslim friends to certain parts of the song. While the Committee have taken note of such objection in so far as it has intrinsic value, the Committee wish to point out that the modern evolution of the use of the song as part of National life is of infinitely greater importance than its setting in a historical novel before the national movement had taken shape. Taking all things into consideration therefore the Committee recommend that wherever the *Bande Mataram* is sung at national gatherings only the first two stanzas should be sung, with perfect freedom to the organisers to sing any other song of an unobjectionable character, in addition to, or in the place of, the *Bande Mataram* song.

But while there can be no question about the place that *Bande Mataram* has come to occupy in the national life, the same cannot be said as to the other songs. People have adopted songs of their choice, irrespective of merit. An authentic collection has long been felt as a desideratum. The Committee therefore appoint a sub-committee consisting of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, Shri Subhas Chandra Bose and Shri Narendra Dev, to examine all the current national songs that may be sent to it and those who are so inclined are invited to send their compositions to this sub-committee. The Committee will, out of the songs so received, submit to the Working Committee the collection that it may choose to recognise as being worthy of finding

a place in a collection of national songs. Only such songs as are composed in simple Hindustani or can be adapted to it, and have a rousing and inspiring tune will be accepted by the sub-committee for examination. The sub-committee shall consult and take the advice of Poet Rabindranath Tagore.

The Working Committee recommends to P. C. Cs. to take similar steps in regard to songs in the provincial languages.

Note—In the above statement attention is drawn to the reference in the Bande Mataram song to thirty crores of Indians. It should be remembered that this figure crept in at a later stage when the song came to have a national significance. As Bankim Chandra Chatterji wrote it, the figure was seven crores. This applied to the then province of Bengal which included Behar. Even then it referred to the entire population of the province without any religious distinction.

Bombay, January 2,

B U D

The Committee sanctioned the following budget

RECEIPTS

Heads of Receipt	Rs.
1. Surplus from Cong. Sessions	25,000 ¹
2. Purse Fund Collections	10,000 ²
3. Provincial Contribution	8,500 ³
4. A. I. C. C. Membership subscription	3,600 ⁴
5. Delegation Fee	9,200 ⁵
6. Interest:	
(a) Our Office	50
(b) Treasurer's Office	850
7. Sale proceeds of old publications	500 ⁶
	57,700

PUBLICATION DEPARTMENT

1. Sale proceeds of publications	4,500
2. Value of stock in hand at the end of the period ..	1,450
	5,950

¹ Includes Rs. 10,000/- from Faizpur received in 1937-38. We expect some surplus from the Haripura Congress. The estimate is necessarily speculative.

² Rs. 5,500 received already. Last year the whole of Burma and Malaya collections came to us. Usually we get only 10% of the Purse Fund Collections.

³ The Arrears of Rs. 2,500 realised in 1937-38 included.

⁴ For 330 members, total being 368. The arrears of Rs. 300 realised in 1937-38 also included.

⁵ For 2,300 delegates, total being 2,882. This year owing to increased membership the number of delegates has increased. One-fifth of the amount is paid to the Province where the Congress holds its session.

⁶ Old publications have since greatly diminished.

⁷ The present salary bill is for Rs. 1,100 per month. The proposal is to add a new department to keep in touch with the provincial governments. About Rs. 400 per month will be needed

3 and 4, 1938

G E T

for the period Oct. 1, 1937 to Sept. 30, 1938

EXPENDITURE

Heads of Expenditure	Rs.
1. Establishment	18,000 ⁷
2. Postage and Telegrams	3,300
3. Stationery and Printing (bulletins and office) ..	2,000
4. Travelling expenses	3,000
5. Rents and taxes (including electricity and phone)	700 ⁸
6. Furniture	1,500
7. Library	2,000 ⁹
8. Repairs to Swaraj Bhawan	1,000
9. Miscellaneous	800
10. Provident Fund contribution	350
11. Membership fee for the World Peace Conference ..	2,000 ¹⁰
12. Lorry fitted with loudspeakers	8,000 ¹¹
13. Excess of Receipts over payments	15,050
	57,700

PUBLICATION DEPARTMENT

1. Printing	5,700 ¹²
2. Postage	250
	5,950

by this department.

⁷ The well is fitted with an electric water pump. This will increase the electricity charges.

⁹ We have appointed a Librarian and are building up a Library.

¹⁰ Resolution of the Working Committee passed in December, 1936 at Bombay. President was authorised to take steps for affiliation with the organisation. It was decided that this amount should be an annual subscription.

¹¹ Resolution of the Working Committee passed in October, 1937 at Calcutta.

¹² Rs. 3,000 for new publications of different departments. Rs. 2,000 for Brochures and Rs. 700 for other publications (constitution, etc.). These publications do not include the bulletin.

1. ASSAM

A recent decision of the Working Committee lays down that during a particular session no primary members be enrolled from the date of the closing of the membership list to the date of the general elections. By this rule during the current session there could be no enrolment of primary members between September 30, 1937 and January 16, 1938. When the President was in Assam, Congress workers there placed before him the hardship that this rule would work in the case of their province where the harvest season is in December and January when alone the Kisans can afford to pay the membership subscription. The President, subject to the sanction of the Working Committee allowed the Assam P. C. C. to continue enrolling primary members, subject to this that the new members enrolled after Sept. 30, 1937 should be entered in a fresh register and they be not mixed up with the members enrolled upto September 30, 1937. The new members will not be entitled to vote in the general elections in December 1937 and Jan. 1938. They may, however, vote at any bye-election which may take place after January 16, 1938 provided they have been on the rolls for 3 months previous to such bye-election.

The Working Committee confirmed this action of the President.

2. BENGAL AND PUNJAB

Some primary members had been enrolled in Bengal and the Punjab before the above rule was made by the Working Committee. The President allowed the members so enrolled in the two provinces to continue to be primary members for the next session subject to the same conditions as in the case of Assam.

This action of the President was confirmed by the Working Committee.

3. INDEPENDENCE DAY

The Independence Pledge drawn up in 1930 described in some detail the moral and material harm done to India by

British imperialism. It was thought that a recital of this was not necessary every year. The old pledge was issued on the eve of the civil disobedience movement. Portions of it were therefore not suited to the present altered circumstances. The Committee therefore decided to issue the following new Pledge for the Independence Day on January 26, 1938.

RESOLUTION FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY

"We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe therefore that India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj or complete independence.

"We recognise that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. India has gained strength and self-reliance and marched a long way to Swaraj following peaceful and legitimate methods, and it is by adhering to these methods that our country will attain independence.

"We pledge ourselves anew to the Independence of India and solemnly resolve to carry on non-violently the struggle for freedom till Purna Swaraj is attained."

4. COTTON COMMITTEE

The Cotton Committee Report was placed before the Committee. The Committee adopted the report and passed the following resolution:

5. COTTON COMMITTEE REPORT

The Report of the Cotton Committee appointed by the All India Congress Committee was placed before the Working Committee. The Working Committee are of opinion that the situation created by the world slump in cotton prices

is one of extreme gravity and fraught with disastrous consequences for the cotton cultivators all over the country and prompt and effective measures are necessary to save the cultivators from the misery that faces them. The Committee generally accept the recommendations made in the Report and direct that the Report be forwarded to the Congress Party in the Central Legislature and the Provincial Governments where Congress ministries are functioning. Further that the Report be issued to the press.

6. DONATION FOR NATURAL CALAMITIES

Shri Uttamchand from Sind offered to the Committee three Government Promissory Notes of the value of Rs. 3,000 bearing $5\frac{1}{2}\%$ interest on condition that the interest be utilised for the relief of the sufferers from natural calamities.

The Committee accepted with thanks the donation earmarked for the purpose indicated by the donor.

7. IMPLEMENTING OF CONGRESS PROGRAMME BY CONGRESS MINISTRIES

Mr. Masani's motion on this subject had been referred by the last A. I. C. C. at Calcutta to the Working Committee. The Committee passed the following resolution.

"The Working Committee have considered the motion relating to the release of political prisoners, the repeal of repressive laws and other allied matters, which was referred to them by the A. I. C. C. at Calcutta. The Committee after full and careful consideration of the situation in the various provinces and the difficulties inherent in the present position, record their approval of the work done so far by the Congress Ministries, and appreciate that further efforts are being made to enlarge the bounds of civil liberty and implement the Congress programme. The Committee are confident that such efforts will be continued by the Ministries and will have the full co-operation of all Congressmen.

The Committee are of opinion that in order to facilitate and expedite progress in this direction, as well as to strengthen the Congress organisation in the struggle for Swaraj, it is necessary to adhere to the Congress policy of non-violence

and to discourage all incitements to violence. The Committee appeal to Congress Committees and individual Congressmen to help to create an atmosphere of peaceful disciplined action in the country and to warn any erring Congressmen against any tendency which militates against our policy of non-violence. Where necessary, Congress Committees should take disciplinary actions against Congressmen who offend against the Congress policy.

Congress Ministries must guide themselves by the principle of civil liberty and the democratic approach by means of persuasion rather than by coercive action. But in spite of every desire to avoid it, coercive action may become necessary, and in such cases Ministries will inevitably have to undertake it. Such coercive action should only be undertaken where there has been violence or incitement to violence or communal strife."

8. KISAN SABHA WORKERS IN BIHAR

The Committee considered the resolution of the Executive of the Bihar P. C. C. regarding the activities of some workers of the Kisan Sabha who were also members of the Congress. A memorandum on behalf of the Kisan Sabha in this connection was also considered. The following resolution was passed.

The Working Committee considered the resolution of the Executive of the Behar P. C. C. regarding the activities of some members of the Kisan Sabha in that province and also considered representations in connection therewith. The Committee desire to make it clear that while the Congress fully recognises the rights of Kisans to organise themselves in Kisan Sabhas, it cannot associate itself with any activities which run counter to the basic principles of the Congress. The Working Committee are in agreement with the executive of the Behar P. C. C. in disapproving of the activities of those Congressmen who as members of the Kisan Sabha help in creating an atmosphere of violence. Such conduct renders them liable to disciplinary action and the Behar P. C. C. should take such action wherever necessary after due notice to the parties concerned.

CONGRESS ELECTIONS IN BIHAR

Reports had appeared in the press and complaints had been received by the Working Committee about unconstitutional methods and violence used in the election of delegates in some places in Bihar. The Committee passed the following resolution in this connection.

The Working Committee has learnt with strong disapproval that in the course of recent Congress delegate elections in some provinces, violence and other objectionable behaviour was resorted to by some candidates or their supporters. Such behaviour on the part of Congressmen cannot be tolerated and the Provincial Congress Committees concerned should institute immediate enquiries and take strongest action whenever called for.

INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

Resolutions passed at the 50th Session of the Congress, held at Faizpur (Maharashtra), December 27 and 28, 1936

1. CONDOLENCE

This Congress expresses its sense of sorrow and loss at the deaths of Dr. M. A. Ansari, Shri Abbas Tyabji, Dr. M. K. Sambasivam, Shri V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, Shri Krishna Kumar Mitra, Dr. B. Subramaniam, Pandit Pyarey Mohan Dattatreya and Shri Waman Rao Naik.

2. WORLD PEACE CONGRESS

The Congress, having considered the report of Shri V. K. Krishna Menon on the World Peace Congress, records its appreciation of the part he took in this Congress as its representative. It supports whole-heartedly the objective of the Peace Congress to ensure world peace by removing the causes of war, and offers its full co-operation to it in this urgent and vital task. The National Congress will willingly associate itself with the organization which the Peace Congress has established in this behalf. The Congress, however, wishes to emphasise that imperialism itself is a continuing cause of war and its elimination is essential in the interests of world peace. The President is authorised and directed to take necessary steps in this behalf.

3. BURMA

The Congress directs the All-India Congress Committee to consider what, if any, changes in the Congress constitution are necessitated by the political separation of Burma from India. The fate of the two countries has been linked together for ages past by strong cultural bonds, and for many years they have struggled together for freedom against British Imperialism. The political separation that is being enforced

now against the wishes of a large body of Burmese opinion and in the interests of British Imperialism, cannot weaken the old bonds and must not be permitted to come in the way of our joint struggle. Any decision about the place of Burma in the Congress constitution must be arrived at after consultation with the people of Burma, and for this purpose the Working Committee should arrange for a representative to visit Burma.

In the event of any changes in the constitution in regard to Burma being considered desirable, the All-India Congress Committee is authorised to incorporate them in the constitution and to give effect to them.

4. SPAIN

The Congress has followed with the deepest sympathy and anxiety the struggle that is going on in Spain between the people of Spain and a military group aided by foreign mercenary troops and Fascist Powers in Europe. The Congress realises that this struggle between democratic progress and Fascist reaction is of great consequence to the future of the world and will affect the future of imperialism and India. The Congress has noted without surprise that in this struggle the policy of non-intervention followed by the British Government has been such as to hamper in many ways the Spanish Government and people in fighting the Fascist rebels, and has thus in effect aided these rebels who are being openly backed and helped by the Fascist Powers.

The Congress, on behalf of the people of India, sends greetings to the Spanish people and the assurance of their solidarity with them in this great struggle for liberty.

5. EXCLUDED AREAS

This Congress is of opinion that the creation of Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas and Chief Commissioners' Provinces, including British Baluchistan, from the 1st January 1937 and covering the area of 207,900 square miles and inhabited by 13 million people is yet another attempt to divide the people of India into different groups with unjustifiable and discriminatory treatment and to obstruct the growth of

uniform democratic institutions in the country.

This Congress is further of opinion that the separation of these Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas is intended to leave a larger control of disposition and exploitation of the mineral and forest wealth in those areas and keep the inhabitants of those areas apart from the rest of India for their easier exploitation and suppression.

This Congress holds that the same level of democratic and self-governing institutions should be applicable to all parts of India without any distinction.

6. NATURAL CALAMITIES

The Congress has noted with deep sorrow that an unprecedented number of natural calamities has ravaged our country during the past year and flood and drought and famine and cyclone have brought intense suffering to vast numbers of our people, whom poverty and unemployment have already reduced to such dire straits. The Congress expresses its deep sympathy with the victims of those calamities and its appreciation of the fortitude displayed by the people in facing them.

It congratulates those individuals and non-official agencies who, by their loving service and assistance, have helped to alleviate distress.

The Congress feels that no sufficient effort has been made so far by the Government to institute scientific inquiries into the causes of the floods, which are becoming more frequent and wide-spread, and that it should certainly be possible to control such floods to a large extent, or prevent waters from accumulating, by measures taken in that behalf, especially by an examination of the effect of building numerous railway embankments without a sufficient number of culverts to allow free passage of water.

The Congress is of opinion that the wide-spread misery caused by the various calamities should be relieved by state action on an adequate scale, in particular, by a total remission of rent and revenue and water and other rates of the current year in the worst affected area; and a substantial reduction in the partly affected area; and by a moratorium of

arrears of rent, revenue and agriculturists' debts. Interest-free loans and other help, free or at reduced rates, should also be given to enable those who have been rendered destitute, to start life afresh.

7. WAR DANGER

The Congress has drawn repeated attention in the past to the danger of imperialist war and has declared that India can be no party to it. Since the last session of the Congress the crisis has deepened and fascist aggression has increased, the fascist powers forming alliances and grouping themselves together for war with the intention of dominating Europe and the world and crushing political and social freedom. The Congress is fully conscious of the necessity of facing this world menace in co-operation with the progressive nations and peoples of the world, and especially with those peoples who are dominated over and exploited by imperialism and fascism. In the event of such a world war taking place there is grave danger of Indian man-power and resources being utilised for the purposes of British imperialism, and it is therefore necessary for the Congress to warn the country again against this and prepare it to resist such exploitation of India and her people. No credits must be voted for such a war and voluntary subscriptions and war loans must not be supported and all other war preparations resisted.

8. FRONTIER POLICY

In the opinion of the Congress the policy pursued by the Government of India on the North-West Frontier has been a total failure and has caused great injury both to the interests of India and the trans-border tribes. This policy has been pursued in the interests of imperialism and mostly with the object of justifying the heavy military expenditure in India and of providing training under semi-war conditions for otherwise idle troops maintained for imperial purposes. Any policy that necessitates inhuman and barbarous methods, like bombing from the air, and which leads to frequent military raids across the Frontier is to be condemned. In addition to this the policy has signally failed in establishing peace on the Frontier and has often resulted in making friendly trans-

border tribes unfriendly and hostile.

. Both the foreign and domestic interests of India require peace on the Frontier and friendship with our neighbours. And the Congress believes that these friendly relations and peace can be established without much difficulty if the trans-border tribes are treated as friends and good neighbours and are not interfered with on the pretext of spreading civilization, or by making military roads under the guise of rendering economic assistance, or otherwise. If such a policy is pursued they will become a valuable source of strength and lessen the burden of military expenditure of India. The Congress believes that the charge laid against the Frontier Pathan tribes as being untamed, fierce, truculent and aggressive is without foundation and appears to be made with the object of justifying unwarranted interference and a heavy permanent military expenditure.

The Congress declares that the people of India desire the friendship of all their neighbours and are willing to co-operate with them in the great tasks which promote peace and human well-being.

The Congress condemns the last punitive measures in the trans-frontier area which seem to be yet another instance of the futile and dangerous experiments of the Government of India on the North-West Frontier which lead only to suffering and leave a trail of ill-will behind them.

In the opinion of the Congress the right way to deal with the Frontier situation is for an inquiry to be made into the economic, political and military situation with a view to settle finally and peacefully the problem of the Frontier in co-operation with the border tribes.

9. DETENUS

The Congress records its emphatic condemnation of the unjust and inhuman policy of the British Government in India in keeping thousands of Indians in detention for indefinite periods without charge or trial and holds that this policy has been resorted to with the object of paralysing the national movement of freedom. The Congress voices the demand of the Indian people that the persons now in detention without charge or trial be released forthwith and the various orders of

restraint withdrawn. The Congress sends its warm greetings and sympathy to the detenus who have been suffering in silence and with brave endurance in the cause of India's freedom.

The Congress has learnt with alarm and concern that three detenus in Bengal have committed suicide within the last four weeks. The Congress considers that the fact that such acts of suicide have taken place is a significant indication that the conditions in which they are kept are intolerable and scandalous. The Congress demands a public enquiry into the causes which led to the said acts of suicide as well as into the conditions in which the detenus are being kept. The Congress sends its condolences to the bereaved families of the three detenus.

The Congress records its condemnation of the action of the Government in preventing any non-official and independent enquiry into the conditions in which the detenus are kept, like the one proposed by the Committee appointed by the Congress Party in the Legislative Assembly.

The Congress condemns the revival of the prison in the Andamans which had been abandoned as a result of its condemnation by a committee appointed by the Government. In the opinion of the Congress the conditions prevailing therein, particularly those relating to interviews with prisoners, segregation and lack of facilities for intellectual entertainment of educated political prisoners, are intolerable, and the transportation of political offenders to the Andamans should be discontinued and those already transported should be brought back to India forthwith.

10. INDIANS OVERSEAS

The Congress sends greetings to our fellow-countrymen overseas and its assurance of sympathy and help in their distressful condition and in the continuing deterioration in their status in the territories in which they have settled. The Congress is ready and willing to take all action within its power to ameliorate their condition, but desires to point out that a radical amelioration in their status must ultimately depend on the attainment by India of independence and the power effectively to protect her nationals abroad.

11. COLLIERY DISASTERS

The Congress notes with sorrow and alarm the frequent occurrence of accidents in the collieries of Bengal and Bihar, resulting in every case in the loss of numerous human lives, wide-spread misery among survivors and irreparable waste of a great deal of India's mineral wealth. In the opinion of the Congress such accidents are preventable and demonstrate the inefficiency of the State, and utter incompetence of the owners and managers of these collieries and their indifference to human suffering. It is necessary that effective measures be immediately undertaken by further legislation and the stricter and more vigilant enforcement of rules and regulations to prevent such accidents. The owners of collieries should be made liable to exemplary damages to be paid to sufferers from such accidents and their heirs.

(12. B. N. RAILWAY STRIKE

The Railway workers on the State-owned Railways, and their organisations supported by the public have been demanding a court of inquiry into the question of Railway retrenchment in general and the question of the reduction of the pay of the lower grades of Railway service in particular. The Government and the Railway Board have persistently ignored this just and legitimate demand. This Congress is of opinion that even now if such a court of inquiry is instituted the present strike on the B. N. Ry. can be amicably settled.

This Congress congratulates the workers on the B. N. Ry. on their solidarity and the brave stand they have made against the repeated invasions on their rights. The Congress hopes that the public will extend to the strikers their full support and sympathy.)

13. THE CONGRESS CONSTITUTION AND MASS CONTACTS

The Congress wishes to stress again the desirability of increasing the association of the masses with the Congress organization and of giving opportunities to the primary members to initiate and consider Congress policies and programme. With a view to bring this about, a Committee consisting of

the President, Shri Rajendra Prasad, Shri Jairamdas Doulatram, Shri Jayaprakash Narayan, and the General Secretary is appointed, with the General Secretary as convener, to consider the introduction of suitable changes in the constitution, and to report to the A. I. C. C. by the 30th April, 1937. This Committee will consider, inter alia, the report of the Mass Contacts Committee of the Lucknow Congress.

The Congress is of opinion that, even pending such re-organization, Provincial Congress Committees should organise their provinces on the following basis:—

1. Primary committees should, as far as possible, be established in villages and in mohallas or wards of towns.

2. Members of primary committees should meet together at least twice a year to review their own work, consider local problems and grievances and further to consider the policy and programme before the Congress, and send their report and recommendations to their higher committees. A specified number of members of primary committees should further have the right to requisition a meeting of the primary committee to consider a specific question.

3. The subscription of four annas per annum may be collected locally in kind.

In order to give effect to the above directions and further to make the Congress organization more efficient and more responsive to the needs and desires of the masses, the Congress directs the Working Committee to appoint an organising secretary, and each Provincial Congress Committee also to appoint such organising secretaries. The Congress trusts that Congressmen in general will co-operate fully in this task of bringing our national organization in close touch with the daily lives and struggle of the people.

14. AUTHORITY TO ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

The A. I. C. C. is authorised, if it so chooses, to make changes in the Congress constitution to enable the next session of the Congress to be held in a month other than December.

15. SUPPRESSION OF CIVIL LIBERTIES

The Congress again draws attention to and condemns the suppression of civil liberties in India, which continues intensively and prevents normal public life, interferes even with personal liberties, and crushes the present generation in India. Hundreds of Congress Committees continue to be banned, as also labour and peasant unions and other organisations; the Ordinance laws function in addition to the widespread and punitive use of the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure to suppress public activities and even the expression of opinion; the press laws and censorship muzzle the newspapers; books and periodicals are banned or stopped under the Sea Customs Act; free movements are restricted by externment and internment; concentration camps of detenus detained without trial continue; the Criminal Tribes Act is a menace to peaceful citizens, and further, this Act as well as the Foreigners Act are applied to political workers; passports are not issued to Indians for the purpose of going abroad, and many Indians in foreign countries are not allowed to return home and have to live in exile. In Bengal and the N.-W. Frontier Province additional restrictions, put an intolerable burden on public work and private activities.

The Congress further deeply regrets to note that many of these, and in some cases additional disabilities and suppression of civil liberties prevail in the Indian states.

The Congress stands for full personal, civil and democratic liberties in the whole of India including the States, and will continue to struggle for the establishment of such liberties. But the Congress realises that political freedom is essential for this purpose and the nation's energies must therefore be directed to the attainment of independence.

16. ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

This Congress reiterates its entire rejection of the Government of India Act of 1935 and the constitution that has been imposed on India against the declared will of the people of the country. In the opinion of the Congress any co-operation with this constitution is a betrayal of India's struggle for freedom and a strengthening of the hold of British Imperialism

and a further exploitation of the Indian masses who have already been reduced to direst poverty under imperialist domination. The Congress therefore repeats its resolve not to submit to this constitution or to co-operate with it, but to combat it, both inside and outside the legislatures, so as to end it. The Congress does not and will not recognise the right of any external power or authority to dictate the political and economic structure of India, and every such attempt will be met by organised and uncompromising opposition of the Indian people. The Indian people can only recognise a constitutional structure which has been framed by them and which is based on the independence of India as a nation and which allows them full scope for development according to their needs and desires.

The Congress stands for a genuine democratic State in India where political power has been transferred to the people as a whole and the Government is under their effective control. Such a State can only come into existence through a Constituent Assembly, elected by adult suffrage, and having the power to determine finally the Constitution of the country. To this end the Congress works in the country and organizes the masses, and this objective must ever be kept in view by the representatives of the Congress in the legislatures.

The Congress endorses the Election Manifesto of the A. I. C. C. and calls upon all candidates, standing on its behalf, to carry on their election campaign strictly on its basis and, after election, to conduct their work in the legislatures in accordance with it. Congress members of the legislatures should take the earliest opportunity to put forward in the new Assemblies the demand for a Constituent Assembly, elected by adult suffrage, and this demand should be supported by a mass agitation outside to enforce the right of the Indian people to self-determination.

The question of acceptance or non-acceptance of office by Congress members elected to the legislatures under the new constitution will be decided by the A. I. C. C. as soon after the provincial assembly elections as is practicable. Immediately after the elections the various Provincial Congress Committees will take steps to consult their district and other

local Committees and send their own recommendations on this subject, so that the A. I. C. C. may be assisted in deciding this issue by the opinion of the mass of Congressmen and the country.

17. CONVENTION

This Congress resolves that after the elections to the provincial legislatures a convention shall be held consisting of Congress members of the various provincial and central legislatures, the members of the All-India Congress Committee, and such other persons as the Working Committee might decide upon. This convention shall put the demand for the Constituent Assembly in the forefront, shall determine all feasible methods for ending the constitution in the provinces and for opposing the introduction of the Federal Structure of the new Act, and will consider what other steps should be taken in the legislatures to give effect to the policy laid down in the Congress Election Manifesto, Congress resolutions, and the decisions of the All-India Congress Committee.

The Working Committee shall take all necessary steps for the calling of this convention and shall lay down the procedure governing it.

18. APPEAL TO VOTERS

The Congress invites the attention of the nation to the general election that will take place soon in all the provinces, and in which over one thousand Congress candidates have been put up to uphold Congress principles and programme in accordance with the policy laid down in the election manifesto. In this contest the Congress has to face the opposition of reactionary and imperialistic forces and groups entrenched in places of power and possessed of vast material resources. The Congress appeals to the millions of voters, men and women, to vote for the candidates standing in its name and for the Independence of India, and trusts that they will stand for this great cause in the elections and in the greater struggle to follow.

19. AGRARIAN PROGRAMME

The Congress, at its last session, being fully conscious of the fact that the most important and urgent problem of the country is the appalling poverty, unemployment and indebtedness of the peasantry called upon the Provincial Congress Committees to make recommendations to enable the All-India Congress Committee to draw up an All-India Agrarian Programme. Many P. C. Cs have not yet submitted their recommendations for such a programme. The Congress regrets this delay but realises that the subject is a vast and intricate one, requiring close study and investigation. It trusts that such P. C. Cs as have not reported so far will take early steps to send in their recommendations.

The Congress is convinced that the final solution of this problem involves the removal of British Imperialistic exploitation and a radical change in the antiquated and repressive land tenure and revenue systems. It feels, however, that the deepening crisis has made the burden on the peasantry an intolerable one and immediate relief is urgently called for. Pending the framing of an All-India Agrarian Programme, therefore, the following steps are necessary.

1. Rent and revenue should be readjusted having regard to present conditions and there should be substantial reduction in both.
2. Uneconomic holdings should be exempted from rent or land tax.
3. Agricultural incomes should be assessed to income tax like all other incomes, on a progressive scale, subject to a prescribed minimum.
4. Canal and other irrigation rates should be substantially lowered.
5. All feudal dues and levies and forced labour should be abolished, and demands other than rent should be made illegal.
6. Fixity of tenure with heritable rights along with the right to build houses and plant trees should be provided for all tenants.
7. An effort should be made to introduce co-operative farming.

8. The crushing burden of rural debt should be removed. Special tribunals should be appointed to inquire into this and all debts, which are unconscionable or beyond the capacity of peasants to pay, should be liquidated. Meanwhile a moratorium should be declared and steps should be taken to provide cheap credit facilities.

9. Arrears of rent for previous years should generally be wiped out.

10. Common pasture lands should be provided, and the rights of the people in tanks, wells, ponds, forests and the like recognised, and no encroachment on these rights should be permitted.

11. Arrears of rents should be recoverable in the same manner as civil debts and not by ejection.

12. There should be statutory provision for securing a living wage and suitable working conditions for agricultural labourers.

13. Peasant unions should be recognised.

20. NON-PARTICIPATION IN THE CORONATION AND OTHER IMPERIALIST FUNCTIONS

The Congress, pledged as it is to the independence of India and the elimination of all imperialist control and exploitation of the Indian people, has for many years consistently followed a policy of not participating in any function or activity which is meant to, or which tends to, strengthen the hold of British Imperialism or add to its prestige. This policy must be adhered to by all Congressmen. In particular the Congress wishes to declare that Congressmen cannot participate in any way in any celebrations or functions that might be held in India in connection with the new King's coronation and trusts that the nation will abstain from participation in all such functions. The Congress, however, desires to make it clear that this is in no way intended to express any ill-will or discourtesy to the King's person.

21. HARTAL ON APRIL 1, 1937

In order to demonstrate effectively the will of the Indian people to resist the imposition of the unwanted Constitution

and as an earnest of their determination to launch a powerful mass-movement for its destruction, the Congress issues a call for a nation-wide hartal or general strike on April 1, the day on which the new Constitution is to be inaugurated.

22. NEXT CONGRESS

Resolved that the next Session of the Congress be held in Gujerat.

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