

Indian Opinion

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THE CONFERENCE

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

THE following is the full text of the presidential address delivered by Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee at the twelfth session of the South African Indian Congress which met in Conference in Johannesburg on August 27 :—

Great Responsibilities

"Kunwar Maharaj Singh, Ladies and Gentlemen, We have all along commenced our Conference with prayers with the sincere hope that the proceedings would have the blessings of the Almighty. Our prayers have never been in vain. Instances after instances could be quoted where the Almighty has answered our prayers. Where our cause is just and righteous we need have no fear that the Almighty will always be with us.

"To-day we have assembled under circumstances which are not at all happy. When we met in Emergency Conference at the end of December, 1931, we had expected much from the Fazl-i-Hussein Delegation which was then on the high seas on its way to attend the Capetown Round Table Conference. The results of the Conference have fallen much short of our expectations. Of that I shall discuss later.

"This Conference, over which it is my privilege to preside, has been urgently convened in order that a decision may be arrived at in regard to the Transvaal question. Realising, therefore, the tremendous responsibilities that rest over my shoulders, I earnestly pray that throughout the proceedings of this most important Conference you and I will have divine guidance.

"In extending my warm welcome to the delegates who have assembled here, I am fully confident that they will give their serious thought to the many questions that will be brought forward for discussion.

The Agent's Task

"Ladies and Gentlemen, we have present here the Agent of the Government of India, Kunwar Maharaj Singh. Not many weeks have passed since he arrived, but he has already endeared himself not only to our people but also to the Europeans. He is accompanied by his wife the Kunwarani who, by her presence in this country, places the Agent at a distinct advantage over his two distinguished predecessors.

"The Agent's task in this country is, I realise, not easy. His task is fraught with many difficulties. He has to deal with a Government which is not in the least sympathetic towards our people. The Agent, however, arrives here with considerable experience on matters pertaining to Indians overseas. He has visited many of the Colonies where he has made a close study of the conditions under which our people live, and the grievances under which they suffer. With his wide experience, I am sure, he will, within a very short time, grasp the "Indian problem" as it is termed by the Europeans.

"In extending a hearty welcome to the Agent, Kunwar Maharaj Singh and the Kunwarani, in the name of this Conference, I sincerely trust that they will have a pleasant stay in South Africa, and that their mission in this country will be a successful one.

The Indian Delegation

"The Fazl-i-Hussein Delegation whose members were representatives of all shades of opinion in India, came out to South Africa to revise the 1927 Capetown Agreement. The Delegation was composed of members with world-wide reputation, but I must say that at the 1932 Capetown Conference they failed to secure for us our legitimate rights.

"The conclusions arrived at by the two Governments at the Round Table Conference are embodied in a statement containing four paragraphs. The first paragraph is the preamble. The second records that it is desirable to maintain the friendly relations between the two Governments. The third has reference to the Colonization Scheme, and the fourth states that there shall be no other modification of the 1926 Agreement. Such, then, is an epitome of the conclusions reached by the Union and the Indian Delegations after a somewhat protracted Conference that commenced on the 19th day of January and concluded on the 4th day of February, 1932.

"The first paragraph of the joint statement *inter alia*, states that "the delegates had a full and frank discussion in the Conference, which was throughout marked by a spirit of cordiality and mutual good-will," and again in the second paragraph it is stated that the two Governments "should continue to co-operate in the common object of harmonising their respective interests in regard to Indians resident in the Union." If the Transvaal Land Tenure Act is an indication of this "spirit of cordiality and mutual goodwill" then I can only conclude that the language employed in the statement is a camouflage and takes the form of a "death warrant" to our people in the Transvaal. No one objects to the continuance of the friendly relations between the two Governments, but we will certainly not stand for the continuance of those relations at the expense of our people in this country.

Last Conference A Failure

"The last Capetown Conference, from our point of view, has been a dismal failure. I have the highest regard for the individual members of the Government of India Delegation. That they arrived in South Africa to do their best for us, there can be no doubt, but I do say that in their efforts to secure for us just rights and to remedy the grave wrongs that have been inflicted upon us, they have failed.

"The Capetown Conference was convened not only to revise the 1927 Agreement but also to discuss the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill, as it was then. We had expected that both the revision of the Agreement and the discussion on the Bill would be treated as one subject, for both were interdependent. Those of you who were at Capetown during the Round Table Conference would remember the attitude taken up by the Union Government Delegation who stated that the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill was beyond the purview of the revision of the Capetown Agreement, and that each subject was to be discussed independently of the other. We had sensed the motive behind this statement and in agreeing to co-operate with the Union and Indian Governments in exploring the possibilities of

a colonisation scheme for settling our countrymen, your Congress submitted the following written statement to the Fazl-i-Husein Delegation :—

“The following is a summary of the points on which the South African Indian Congress Delegates are unanimously agreed :

(1) The Congress agrees to co-operate with the Governments of India and the Union of South Africa in the former's mission to explore outlets for colonisation in regard to her increasing population, provided that such co-operation on the part of the Congress is taken as inspired by patriotic motives, and to ascertain whether there exists any good opportunities for South African Indians in the countries explored, and not on the score of Indians being deemed as undesirables in the Union or that the Indian population is to be reduced; provided also that the assisted emigration scheme, which formed part of the last Agreement, is eliminated and the Congress will be free, as part of its policy, to oppose it.

(2) The Congress also reserves the right to reject the Agreement and to withdraw its co-operation in the above scheme should any points in the Agreement or other subjects dealt with by the Round Table Conference not meet with the approval of the Congress.

“The fear that we had entertained and which permeates clause one of the Congress statement was, you will admit, justified.

“In revising the 1927 Agreement it would appear that the only clause that was discussed was that dealing with the assisted emigration scheme. The colonisation scheme has now taken the place of the assisted emigration scheme. The uplift clause on which our community relied so much for the improvement of their status in this country, was left untouched. The question of the entry of wives and minor children of condonees was never discussed.

“It would be obvious, therefore, that the main purpose of the 1932 Conference was not so much to revise the Gentleman's Agreement but to devise ways and means to further reduce the number of our people in this country.

Land Tenure Act

“The Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act will engage your serious consideration at this Conference.

“At the Emergency Conference held at Johannesburg on the 5th and 6th days of October, 1930, the following resolution was passed without one dissentient :—

That this Emergency Conference of the South African Indian Congress held in Johannesburg on the 5th and 6th October, 1930, at which are represented the Natal Indian Congress, the Transvaal Indian Congress and Cape Indian Congress, representing the Indian community of South Africa, views with grave apprehension and alarm the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill, which it solemnly declares as wholly unacceptible to the Indian community on the following grounds :—

(a) That the Bill is a violation both in letter and spirit of the Capetown Agreement.

(b) That it imposes disabilities upon Indians in regard to their trade, residence and occupation and deprives them of their vested rights in the Transvaal Province, and

(c) that it aims at their compulsory segregation and ultimate ruination in that Province.

This Conference, therefore, respectfully urges upon the Government to withdraw the said Bill, and to introduce necessary legislation giving relief to Indians in that Province.

That in the event of the Government of the Union declining to withdraw the Bill notwithstanding the protests of the community, this Conference earnestly requests the Government of India to press for a Round Table Conference to review the situation that has arisen affecting Indians in

the Transvaal. In the event of the Government of India failing to secure a Round Table Conference aforementioned, this Conference further requests it to intimate to the Union Government that diplomatic relations between the two Governments should be considered to have ceased and to withdraw its agency in South Africa as a protest against the Bill.

“The resolution passed at the annual conference held at Capetown at the end of 1930, and at the Emergency Conference held at Johannesburg, were just as emphatic. In the teeth of our opposition the Union Government has, with certain modifications, passed the Bill.

“It is needless for me to remind you that at the 1930 annual conference we were determined that there should be no compromise on the Bill. We stood for the complete withdrawal of the Bill. And when I say that to-day we are as determined as we were at the last three Conferences I know I am voicing the sentiments of my countrymen not only of this Province, but of South Africa.

“The Act which rings the death knell of our people in the Transvaal has, I have no doubt, been closely studied by every person.

“Briefly, the effect of the Act is that the occupation of proclaimed areas by a coloured person is illegal and constitutes a punishable offence. It repeals Sub-section 1 of Section 131 of the Gold Law which permitted occupation on proclaimed land, thereby prohibiting occupation as well as residence. The Act nullifies the Springs judgment, and deprives our people of their right to occupy and reside in Townships such as Springs. It prohibits Indians from occupying even deproclaimed areas. It fitches away the protection that was afforded to us by Act 37 of 1919. Sections 130 and 131 of the Gold Law were never enforced, and as a result our people have created vested interests with the free knowledge of the authorities.

“Whilst the Act seeks to protect properties acquired before the 15th May, 1930, it prohibits an Indian from dealing with his property except by way of inheritance.

“Shares held by Indians in respect of properties acquired after May, 1930, are to be confiscated by the Government.

“Only those who have been trading continuously from 1919 up to May, 1930, on proclaimed land will be allowed to continue their business. There are hardly 2% of such traders. Those whose licences have been issued after 1919 and before May, 1930, on proclaimed land, and were occupying land in such areas, are deemed to be illegally occupying according to the new Act. These persons are given a lease of life until the end of April, 1935. This prolongation of their death is, in fact, not for their benefit, but for the benefit of those European firms who have large sums of money involved as a result of the trade with such persons, to collect their monies by that date. Such people will have no hope of securing credit and therefore the lease of life given to them is no relief at all. Those who have obtained licences since May, 1930, have to close their businesses at the end of the year. The power given under the Act to the Minister to exempt certain areas from the operation of the Gold Law does not improve the situation.

“A Commission will be appointed by the Minister to investigate into the legality or otherwise of the persons occupying land in proclaimed areas, and take evidence from the people living in the neighbourhood with a view to ascertaining whether they object to the presence of such persons in their midst. And if it is found that it is a locality in which the presence of such persons is objectionable or that it is a locality where other persons of his own race or natives, or coloureds are living, and that his presence there is not objectionable, the Commission will so advise the Minister, and the Minister will exempt such areas where the presence of such persons is

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THE CONFERENCE

THE twelfth session of the South African Indian Congress which sat in Conference in Johannesburg during the last week-end, commenced its deliberations at 3 p.m. on Saturday and concluded at 7 p.m. on Sunday. The Agent, Kunwar Maharaj Singh and his secretaries were present practically the whole of the time. The important discussion took place, naturally, on the Asiatic Land Tenure Act which was really responsible for the Conference being held urgently in Johannesburg. The President spoke in unequivocal terms on that question. There was nothing surprising about it in view of the fact that at three sessions successively, previous to the last one, the legislation, which was in the form of a Bill at the time, was condemned as a whole as it aimed at statutory segregation of the Indian community in the Transvaal and was, therefore, in complete violation of the very spirit of the Capetown Agreement.

The Act

Immediately after the presidential address was delivered the house went into committee. Delegates from all the three Provinces spoke heatedly against the legislation which was condemned without even a single dissentient—not even did the Agent of the Government of India hesitate to declare that even the Government of India condemned the legislation; though, very naturally, he said that neither the Government of India nor the Agent would be able to support us in our resistance against the legislation. The South African Indian Congress had stated to the Government of India Delegation in no uncertain terms that if they could not get a complete withdrawal of the Tenure Bill they should not come to any compromise on it. But they evidently thought they could help us even against our wishes, and even at the risk of losing their own prestige they came to a compromise which is wholly unacceptable to us and does little credit to the Government of India.

Though strong in their condemnation of the legislation not a single delegate, nor even the Agent, was able to suggest a course open to the Indian community to oppose the legislation. Those who did not agree with Passive Resistance merely suggested submitting to the law. The Agent said if we submitted to the law he would *perhaps* be able to help in getting a few more concessions which would be impossible to do if we resisted. Notwithstanding, however, the Conference passed a resolution, after everyone had their say, condemning the Land Tenure Act and supporting in every possible way the action decided upon by the Transvaal Indian Congress to resist the Act. This resolution was not passed lightly. It was passed after the fullest deliberation and with the fullest realisation of the consequences. There was not a single one in the Conference who was unconscious of the fact that they were putting their finger in the fire and that they ran the risk of getting burnt. They deliberately chose to do so for they knew that that was a more honourable course to adopt than to submit to a legislation which no civilised human being worth the name could possibly accept. The concluding portion of the President's speech, in this respect, is significant. "We have met," says he, "to take a definite

decision on the immediate danger before us, and having taken a decision there can be no turning back. . . . The Indian has come to the last road of toleration, for he no longer can bear the indignities, the dishonour and the status of inferiority to which he is gratuitously subjected. Are we going to be suppressed and oppressed, and gradually eliminated from this country or are we going to be allowed to live as decent citizens, and permitted to improve our lot?" The answer to this, the President has very rightly pointed out, lies with us. If we submit to the Act we are doomed. If we bear the Cross we will have the satisfaction to feel, even though the legislation still continues to be a blot on the Union Statute Book, that we have done our duty as men.

Colonisation

The next question that took up a great deal of the time of the Conference was the proposed Colonisation Scheme embodied in the revised Capetown Agreement. There were two distinct divisions of opinion on this question. The majority felt that the motive underlying the scheme was none other than the one underlying the assisted emigration scheme, which was to reduce the Indian population in the Union. Moreover it made our people to sell their birthright in this country in return for a bonus and a free passage to India. Our objection to the assisted emigration scheme was because the scheme was wrong in principle. The structure of our uplift and our increased rights in this country was built upon the foundation that our population should be decreased to a manageable compass. The Union Government insisted upon this foundation and the Indian Government yielded. When the foundation is rotten the structure cannot last. The foundation of the assisted emigration scheme was found to be not too strong and the colonisation scheme has been suggested as another prop. The feeling of the majority was, and is, that the Union is not so overpopulated. Had it been the Government would not encourage European immigration as it does on a large scale. If the Union were overpopulated it would look for outlets not only for Indians but for its general population. That Indians should be singled out and that a comparatively handful of Indians, numbering about a hundred and seventy thousand in the whole of the Union, should be considered a burden is an insult to our community and we cannot be a party to a policy of ousting them. It was for this reason that it was felt by the majority that if our existence in this country was dependent upon our agreeing to a number of our people being thrown out of it, we were not prepared to pay that price for our existence.

The minority, on the other hand, while not disagreeing with the view of the majority as to the motive underlying the scheme, attached more importance to the wording which referred to it. The majority in return realising that the scheme had not yet been formed; that we did not know what the terms of it would be and that the question at present was merely to explore the possibilities of such a scheme, yielded to the minority, and a resolution was passed agreeing to co-operate with the Governments of India and the Union of South Africa in

the former's mission to explore outlets for colonisation in regard to her increasing population with a view to ascertain whether there exist any good opportunities for Indians in South Africa in the countries explored. This resolution was passed with certain important provisions, viz., that this step on the part of the Congress was taken as inspired by patriotic motives and that it refused to subscribe to the view that Indians were undesirable and that the Indian population was to be reduced. This completed the most important work of the Conference.

Other Resolutions

There were seventeen other resolutions passed by the Conference without much discussion, of which eight were in appreciation of the services rendered in the cause of the Indians in South Africa by Indian leaders and bodies, European friends and the Press. Among the rest of them were included one protesting against the Government's White Labour Policy; in another a request was made to the Government to help to relieve unemployment among Indians; in another the Congress protested against the attitude of the Department of the Minister of Justice in refusing to grant permits to hold firearms although sound reasons were shown for the issue of such permits. A request was made to the Department of Posts and Telegraphs to employ Indians as postmen and telegraphic messengers in congested areas and to the Government to extend the benefits of Old Age Pension to Indians as is applicable to Europeans and Coloureds. A request was made to the Minister of the Interior to be pleased to permit the introduction into the country of the wives and minor children of those whose illicit entry had been condoned in order that they may be able to lead a happy family life. The desirability of appointing a Trade Commissioner in South Africa to represent the Government of India was expressed by the Conference so as to bring closer trade relationship between India and South Africa and a request was made for the amendment of the Industrial laws so that their application is not an economic disadvantage to the Indian community.

Election

An important change in the officials of the Congress that has taken place at the Conference is that Mr. Omar Hajee Amod Jhaveri has been elected President, Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee having declined to hold that office any longer. Mr. Rustomjee's enthusiasm in whatever responsibilities he takes upon his shoulders is well known and we can unhesitatingly say that he has served well during his term of office as President of the S.A.I.C. Whilst his relinquishing the office is generally regretted the regret is greatly mitigated by the fact that he has merely exchanged his position with that held by Mr. O. H. A. Jhaveri. Mr. Rustomjee now becomes the Treasurer and Mr. Jhaveri the President. Mr. Jhaveri is a seasoned soldier. He was one of the closest associates of Mr. Gandhi when he was in this country and he had won the confidence of Mr. Gandhi so much that the latter had no hesitation in nominating the former as one of the trustees of the Phoenix Settlement established by him. Mr. Jhaveri's honesty of purpose and his integrity are unsurpassed. He belongs to the mercantile

community which is generally looked at with scorn by anti-Asiatics. But that community need never fear nor feel ashamed of having Mr. Jhaveri as their model. This is the second occasion on which Mr. Jhaveri has been elected as President of the S.A.I.C. and we have not the least doubt that he will adorn that office. The other officials have been re-elected to their respective posts. Messrs. A. I. Kajee and P. R. Pather have proved well their worth as Secretaries and the Conference has done a deserving honour to them by re-electing them. Mr. E. M. Alli is re-elected as Treasurer jointly with Mr. Rustomjee. Mr. E. M. Alli has been a faithful Congressman and in times of need he has never shirked his responsibility. We congratulate the newly elected officials and sincerely trust that they will prove equal to the heavy task that awaits them.

THE CASE OF THE TRANSVAAL INDIANS

THE resolution of the South African Indian Congress passed at its Conference, held in Johannesburg last week-end, against the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act, has brought forth a torrent of criticism from the European Press all over the Union. Some papers are justifying the measure and therefore condemning the step taken by the Indian community to oppose it. Others are condemning the measure and, to use the words of *The Star* (Johannesburg), "are opposed to the policy of piling up disabilities and restrictions upon people who have been allowed to enter the country and to engage in trade or industry or any other kind of occupation." But those who are condemning the measure are, however, not in favour of our resisting it.

An attempt is made in this article to explain very briefly the case of the Transvaal Indians. Let us first take Law 3 of 1885—the Transvaal Republican Law. This law prohibits Asiatics generally from owning land in the Transvaal except in bazaars and locations and such places. It provides residential segregation but it could not be enforced because the law is not compulsory as far as Asiatics are concerned. The law merely empowers the Government to set aside certain areas for occupation by Asiatics but it does not empower it to compel them to go into those areas. The law does not provide trade segregation. An Asiatic could live anywhere he liked,

Thus under the above law the only prohibition against the Asiatic was of owning land. In other respects he had a free movement.

Then came into existence the Transvaal Gold Law of 1908. Under sections 130 and 131 of this law Asiatics and coloured people generally, except *bona fide* servants, were prohibited from residing on proclaimed land, except in bazaars, locations, compounds and such other places as the Mining Commissioner might permit. This law went a step further than Law 3 of 1885. The Indian community very strongly protested against this restriction. The law, however, never attempted to prevent Indians from trading on proclaimed land. There was communication between the British Government and the then Attorney-General of the Transvaal on the subject, from which it was perfectly clear that no existing rights were being interfered with by the

Gold Law, and one existing right was the right of the Asiatic to trade. Thus this law, while it took away the right of the Asiatic to reside on proclaimed land, did not interfere with his right of occupation.

The Indian community was, however, not satisfied with this position and in the correspondence which formed the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement, Mr. Gandhi made it quite clear to General Smuts, the then Minister of the Interior, as to what the Indian community felt. This is what Mr. Gandhi stated in his letter dated 30th June, 1914:—

"As the Minister is aware, some of my countrymen have wished me to go further. They are dissatisfied that the Transvaal Gold Law, the Transvaal Townships Act, the Transvaal Law 3 of 1885 have not been altered so as to give them full rights of residence and ownership of land.....Whilst, therefore, they have not been included in the programme of Passive Resistance, it will not be denied that some day or other these matters will require further and sympathetic consideration by the Government.I shall hope that when the Europeans of South Africa fully appreciate the fact that now, as the importation of indentured labour from India is prohibited and as the Immigrants' Regulation Act of last year has in practice all but stopped further free Indian immigration and that my countrymen do not aspire to any political ambition, they, the Europeans, will see the justice and indeed the necessity of my countrymen being granted the rights I have just referred to."

Far from these rights being granted the Government took steps in the year 1919 to further restrict their rights.

Asiatics, up to that time, while not having the right to own land in their individual capacity did have the right of acquiring land by forming Asiatic companies. When anti-Asiatics found Indians acquiring ownership of land by companies and trading freely they began making themselves busy. The outcome of their agitation was the 1919 Act known as the Asiatic (Land and Trading) Amendment Act which prohibited Asiatic companies from owning land.

Thus the first attempt to deprive Indians of their existing rights was made in 1908 and the second in 1919.

Though there was no question of condoning Indians, who had acted strictly within the law, it is suggested, to prejudice the minds of the public, that those who had acquired rights up to 1919 were condoned by that Act. Nothing of the sort. They were, on the contrary, robbed of their existing rights under that Act and they would have been quite justified in challenging the Government then.

Since the Asiatic (Land and Trading) Amendment Act of 1919 Indians have created property interests by purchasing land which was transferred to a European in name only, or by means of a long leasehold or by forming a company which was not according to the law an Asiatic one, but in which Asiatics had an interest.

In so far as Townships are concerned Indians hitherto enjoyed rights of occupation and residence

in such Townships as Springs for instance. As a result of a judgment of the Supreme Court, Springs not being a Township under the Gold Law, a court of law has held that those restricted clauses cannot apply to it. The legislators, however, now argue that that was merely an oversight. That was not the intention of the law and therefore the necessary amendment prohibiting Asiatics from such Townships has been made. And the action of those who have already entered such Townships have been "condoned" as though they had surreptitiously gone there! This is also an existing right taken away from them.

One right the Indians did enjoy right up to 1930, when the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill was first introduced into Parliament, was the right of occupation in proclaimed land and the right of occupation and residence in deproclaimed land and the free right to trade.

It is true that Indians took advantage of the loopholes in the existing laws. But that was surely not an act of dishonesty as our antagonists would make the people believe. It was a blessing that Indians had at least one place to look to for justice and that was the court which always acted impartially. Had it not been for this one institution Indians in the Transvaal would have been completely lost.

Now we come to the Transvaal Land Tenure Act. This Act is directed against Indians in all its bitterness. The existing laws have been tightened up by this Act in so far as Indians are concerned. The existing right of the Indian to trade, excepting in the so-called exempted areas to be created under the Act, is taken away. The existing right to occupy land in proclaimed as well as deproclaimed ground and to reside in the latter is taken away. The right of ownership of land has been completely taken away. This is in so far as the rights of some of the present generation, who have not yet exercised those rights, and the future generations are concerned. What hope is there for them but to live in segregated areas and to stew in their own juice. Their condition will be no better than the aboriginal natives who cannot move about without passes.

In so far as those holding interests at present are concerned, those who have held a trading licence from 1919 up to May, 1930, continuously will be allowed to continue their trade on proclaimed ground. There is a considerably small percentage of such Indians. Those who have held trading licences subsequent to 1919 and before May, 1930 on proclaimed land have been declared illegal under the present Act and as a matter of grace they will be given time up to April, 1935, provided they have filled in the forms issued in accordance with the Act by the Minister of the Interior, specifying their illegal occupation before the 1st of the present month. Those who have

acquired trading rights since May, 1930, will be allowed to exist only till the end of this year. These people will be penalised because they had no right to acquire such licences knowing full well the Act was to be passed prohibiting them from doing so!

The above facts would go to prove that this Act does impose fresh penalties upon the Asiatic in the Transvaal and deprives him of rights which he had previously possessed and that this position could not in any way be compared with that of those who had illicitly entered South Africa. While the latter had done an illegal act the former had done only what the law allowed him to do.

This is not the only grievance suffered by the Transvaal Indians. They have been deprived of the right they possessed under the registration certificates issued under the Transvaal Registration Act, of entering the Transvaal whenever they liked. This, they very rightly consider, is a flagrant breach of the 1914 Smuts-Gandhi Agreement. It was after untold suffering during the Passive Resistance Campaign that this right was secured to them.

The Transvaal Licences (Control) Ordinance of 1931 is also administered harshly against them by the licensing authorities who are given absolute powers to grant or refuse trading licences.

We can understand our friends advising us not to break the law. We know they are doing so with the best of intentions. It is difficult for them to understand our viewpoint. Our only consolation, however, is that they are with us entirely in condemning the Act which is leading us to launch this movement. It is up to us to prove to our friends by our behaviour that we are not going to be a menace to the public peace.

The law always provides for two things. One is either supposed to obey the law or suffer the penalty provided for the breach of the law. Those who conscientiously object to the law will choose to suffer the penalty rather than submit to the law. Indians will, by their self-imposed sufferings, appeal to the hearts both of the Government and the people and their faith will be in the righteousness of their cause. They will look to divine guidance. Those who have resolved to offer resistance to the law have set before them a very high ideal. If they are cowards they will surely fall but if they rise above it we have implicit faith that those who at present discourage them will in the end be their staunchest supporters.

The Conference has not passed any resolution to the effect that no action will be taken against the Transvaal Land Tenure Act until after the sitting of the Commission. That is a matter entirely left in the hands of the Transvaal Indian Congress.

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not objectionable, from the operation of the Gold Law. Persons residing or occupying land outside those areas will have to move into exempted areas, and apply for Exemption Certificates.

"It will be seen, therefore, that whilst the Act seeks to afford protection to certain individuals it closes the door once for all against any future development of our people in this Province. If the present generation is protected, I ask you with all sincerity, what is to happen to the next generation? Are they to be deprived of the right to acquire interests in property anywhere in the Transvaal and to live as decent citizens of South Africa? Are you going to permit your children to be compulsorily segregated into defined areas? Are you going to sell the birthright of your children? I know your answer to these questions will be an emphatic 'No.' Our people have lived here and carried on with their various vocations without any hindrance and we ask nothing but the rights that they have enjoyed hitherto.

"The Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act has been conceived with the object of getting rid of our people in the Transvaal. If I know my people aright, I say with all the emphasis at my command that we shall not yield to this unjust Law. Come what may, we shall not abide by the Law.

"Under Sub-section 3 of Section 6 of the Act any person who was, on the 1st day of May, 1930, residing upon or occupying any land deemed to be unlawful, by virtue of Sections 130 and 131 of the Gold Law, may continue such residence or occupation up to the 30th April, 1935, provided he has before the 1st day of September, 1932, filled in the necessary form, the nature of which you are already fully acquainted with. A number of our people have already signed these forms, I understand, but I know that many have not filled in the forms. To the latter I will advise: Do not fill in the forms. You have been permitted to reside and occupy uninterruptedly all these years. Why then is this sudden attack on you? Can the authorities advance any reason why you should be removed from the premises that you occupy?

"The issue before us is a grave one and will decide the future of our people in this Province. In making our decision let us not consider our immediate gains. Let us not be actuated by selfish motives. But let us consider what the effect of the Act will be on our children. If you have considered the issue from that angle, I have no doubt that you will arrive at only one decision and that is to refuse to fill in the forms.

"To those of my misguided brethren who have already filled in the forms out of monetary considerations so as to protect themselves, if only for another thirty-two months, I would say, stand by those who are determined to assert their rights.

"I fully realise that the struggle which we are about to commence will be a bitter one, but I am conscious of the fact that in this great struggle our people will prove their mettle.

"I think I have detained you on this question much longer than I expected, but you will readily appreciate that the question warrants a full and frank expression of opinion.

"As I have stated before, the Sir Fazl-i-Hussein Delegation failed in its mission. By compromising on the Transvaal question the Delegation has played into the hands of the Union Government. Our resolution asking for the complete withdrawal of the Bill was before them and one would have thought that the Delegation, on failing to obtain the withdrawal of the Bill, would have returned to India owning defeat honourably. We were no party to the compromise. Until we have a vestige of self-respect left in us we shall not be parties to any compromise which means our virtual degeneration.

Assisted Emigration Scheme

"At the last Round Table Conference we asked for the abandonment of the Assisted Emigration Scheme. Whilst we have been successful in obtaining the elimination of this scheme from the Capetown Agreement it has not been withdrawn from Act 37 of 1927. The result is that hundreds of our countrymen and women are still taking advantage of the scheme. In the months of February, June and August of this year 800, 674 and 500 souls respectively have left these shores for India. As we are free to oppose this scheme we should carry out an intensive propaganda against it. The fate that awaits these unfortunate repatriates in India has been repeated so often that it requires no reminder from me, suffice it to say that immediate action should be taken to check this flow from this country.

Other Matters

"In our statement to the Government of India Delegation we urged for the consideration of the question of the entry of wives and minor children who are affected by Rashid Amod's case, the removal of differential treatment meted out to condonees in regard to Immigration matters, and the granting of permission for the entry of wives and minor children of those who have taken out Protection Certificates.

"All these matters arise out of the Capetown Agreement of 1927, but in its revision none of these has been discussed. It is for us to decide what action should be taken with a view to the obtaining of necessary redress.

White Labour Policy

"Since we last met at Conference the condition of the Indian worker has not improved. The White Labour Policy of the Government is being pursued with all its vigour. The number of Indians on the Railways and Harbours is daily being diminished. Every avenue of employment is closed to him.

"Thousands of our people are out of employment. In Natal the distress amongst the unemployed Indians is very acute. The Government and the Local Authorities, whilst having opened Relief works for the benefit of Europeans and Coloured unemployed, have done nothing to help the Indian unemployed. The Government refuses even to open a Labour Bureau for the Indian unemployed. That at an average 150 adults are being fed at the Food Kitchen conducted by the Sir Kurma Reddi Unemployed Relief Committee at Durban, will give one an idea of the amount of distress amongst our people in Natal. The matter is serious and demands our attention.

Licensing Laws

"The Licensing Clause in the Capetown Agreement seems to me to be a dead letter. The Minister of the Interior has, as I have stated on a previous occasion, placed an entirely different interpretation on the clause. Those of us who were anxiously awaiting the Minister to move for the revision of the Licensing Laws in the various Provinces, have been living in a Fool's Paradise. Any vestige of hope that our community had held had been shattered by the recent Transvaal Licences (Control Ordinance.) The far-reaching effect of this Ordinance is already being felt by our community in the Transvaal.

"In the Natal Province and in some parts of the Cape Province the wide discretionary powers of Licensing Officers are being indiscriminately used against the Indian. In a few years hence every Indian merchant in the Union will be at the mercy of the Licensing Officers. All these acts are being done despite the lofty ideals that are in the Capetown Agreement.

Uplift Clause

"Time after time we have referred to the Uplift Clause. The Union Government has accepted the principle that it is the duty of a civilised Government to uplift every section of its permanent population to the fullest extent of their capacity and opportunities. The uplift of our community can only be attained by providing educational facilities for our children. Since the Capetown Agreement the educational facility in the Natal Province has slightly improved. Whilst I admit that a little over 5,000 children have gained admittance to the Schools there are still over 15,000 children of school-going age who are receiving no education at all. The Natal Provincial Council is spending not a penny from its coffers towards educating the Indian children, though it spends an enormous amount for the education of the European children.

"If the Union Government expects our people to attain Western standards then I submit that proper educational facilities should be provided for our children.

"As an instance of Indian self-help I will quote the work that is being carried on by the Indian Technical Education Committee. This Committee is providing part time education to adults, and also commercial education. Domestic science classes have been opened for Indian women. The Government subsidy, though small, is a source of help.

"I would urge that the Union Government subsidise work of this nature so that the permanent Indian population of this country will take their rightful place in South Africa.

"In our Statement to the Indian Delegation we suggested that the Union Government should base its calculation of the subsidy for primary education on the estimated total attendance for the ensuing year. If this were done, I have no doubt that the considerable number of Indian children now remaining without education would be in schools.

Liquor Act

"The amendment to the Liquor Act has again been postponed. Unless we are successful in obtaining the repeal of Section 102 (2) (a) the Indian Waiters will ever remain at the mercy of the Minister. It is a severe hardship on those engaged in the Liquor and Catering Trades, and it is our duty, therefore, to urge for the repeal of this sinister clause.

Immigration Laws

"I have to again refer to the Indian Immigration Laws. These laws have served their days and should therefore be repealed from the Natal Statutes. Considerable irritation is being caused to our people by these laws. We claim ourselves as South African Indians and as such we want the laws affecting us not to differentiate between one section and another. There is a considerable amount of money in the Indian Immigration Trust Board contributed by employers for the benefit of Indian Immigrants. The Government ought to divert this money towards uplifting our people.

Co-operation In Exploration Scheme

"The letter from the Secretary of the Interior asking the Congress to elect a representative to co-operate with the Union and Indian Governments in the Colonisation Scheme will be placed before you.

"You will observe from the statement which I referred to in the earlier part of my speech, that the Congress has not committed to any scheme. Your delegates at Capetown agreed to co-operate in the investigation of outlets for the settling of our people from this country. And that agreement on our part was subject to the other matters to be discussed at the Round Table Conference being satisfactory. Your Congress has put its foot down to the reduction of our people in this country. It was because of this deter-

mined stand which the Congress took that we were able to obtain the removal of the Assisted Emigration Scheme from the Capetown Agreement.

"In the light of events that have passed since the Capetown Conference you will be asked to give your decision on the Colonisation Scheme.

"Resolutions on the various disabilities that we are subjected to will be brought forward. I hope that these will receive your earnest and serious consideration.

"As I have said on this platform at the last Emergency Conference I repeat that deputations may come and deputations may go. They may act as our advocates but it is for us to say what we want. We have our hopes and aspirations just as much as the Europeans.

"We want to be good South African Nationals, but that is only possible if we are given every opportunity to develop ourselves to the fullest extent of our capacity.

"This Conference is perhaps going to be a turning point in the history of Indians in South Africa. We have met to take a definite decision on the immediate danger before us, and having taken a decision there can be no turning back. Whether Indians make or unmake history in the life of our community in South Africa, this Conference is the best and only judge. I have given you in this speech of mine, the wrongs that are heaped upon us and the injustice that is continually and constantly inflicted upon us. The Indian has come to the last road of toleration, for he no longer can bear the indignities, the dishonour and the status of inferiority to which he is gratuitously subjected. Are we going to be suppressed and oppressed, and gradually eliminated from this country? or are we going to be allowed to live as decent citizens, and permitted to improve our lot? The answer lies with you, and I enjoin you with all the strength I have, to give the whole situation a serious study and come to a decision which is honourable not only to us but to posterity."

Resolutions

The following resolutions were passed unanimously at the twelfth session of the Conference of the South African Indian Congress held in Johannesburg on Aug. 27 and 28.

(1) ASIATIC LAND TENURE ACT.

That the South African Indian Congress in Conference assembled at Johannesburg emphatically condemns the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act which it declares is unacceptable to the Indian community, and further endorses the action of the Transvaal Indian Congress to resist the law as contained in their resolution. This Congress calls upon its affiliated bodies to support the cause of the Transvaal Indians in every possible way.

(2) COLONISATION SCHEME

The S.A.I.C. in answer to the letter of the Secretary for the Interior dated 18th April 1932 and in accordance with the statement submitted to the Government of India Delegation at the last Round Table Conference, agrees to co-operate with the Governments of India and the Union of South Africa in the former's mission to explore outlets for colonisation in regard to her increasing population, provided that such co-operation on the part of the Congress is taken as inspired by patriotic motives; and to ascertain whether there exist any good opportunities for South African Indians in the countries explored and not on the score of Indians being deemed as undesirable or that the Indian population is to be reduced.

(3) THE WHITE LABOUR POLICY

That this Conference views with grave alarm the White Labour Policy of the Government which has thrown a large number of Indians out of employment and respectfully begs to point out to the Minister of Labour that this policy is contrary to the spirit and intention of the Capetown Agreement of 1927.

(4) UNEMPLOYMENT

That this Conference appeals to the Union Government to take into consideration the serious plight of unemployed Indians throughout South Africa, and respectfully requests that a subsidy be given for their benefit and relief works be opened so that the distress may be alleviated.

(5) LABOUR

That this Conference respectfully urges the Government to take into consideration in deciding upon the Industrial Conciliation Agreement and Wage Determinations, the economic disadvantages of Indians, in that they have neither choice of site nor choice of customers owing to legislative or administrative restrictions, and prays that the Government may, in due course, remove the said economic disadvantages.

(6) LIQUOR ACT

That this Conference whilst expressing its appreciation to the Minister of Justice for exempting Indian Waiters and Wine Stewards in the Transvaal from the operation of Section 102 (2) (a) of the Liquor Act, feels that in view of the fact that the Exemption Certificates are of a temporary character, the future of the men hangs in the balance.

This Conference therefore respectfully requests the Government to amend the Liquor Act in order to give relief in this and in other matters affecting Indians.

This Conference requests the officials to make such representations as may be necessary in the matter.

(7) CONDONATION

That this Conference appeals to the Minister of the Interior to reconsider his decision in regard to the introduction into this country of the wives and minor children of condonees and respectfully requests, in view of the small number affected, that condonees be permitted to introduce their wives and minor children into South Africa so that they may lead happy family lives.

(8) POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS

That this Conference respectfully suggests to the Hon. the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs that in congested areas the employment of Indians as postal clerks, postmen and telegraphic messengers, would facilitate the work of the Postal and Telegraphic Department.

(9) OLD AGE PENSIONS

That this Conference appeals to the Union Government for the extension of the benefits of Old Age Pension to Indians as it is applicable to Europeans and Coloureds.

(10) FIREARMS

That this Conference views with great concern the policy of the Department of Defence in refusing, notwithstanding the letter to the Congress from the Chief of the General Staff dated 6th March, 1926, the issue of permits to possess firearms to Indians, despite the showing of good reasons for the issue of such permits.

This Conference further requests the officials of the Congress to prepare a memorandum on the question and forward same to the Minister of Defence.

(11) INDIAN TRADE COMMISSIONER

That in the opinion of the Conference it is highly desirable for the Government of India to give early consideration to the question of appointing a Trade Commissioner to represent it in South Africa, so as to bring closer trade relationship between India and South Africa.

This Conference further requests the Executive of the Congress to arrange for a deputation to wait upon the Agent of the Government of India with a view to early measures being taken in the matter.

(12) Mr. MORRIS ALEXANDER

This Conference expresses its sincere thanks to Mr. Morris Alexander, M.P., for presenting the petition of the South African Indian Congress on the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act to Parliament, and for his outspoken speech in this connection in Parliament.

(13) KUNWAR MAHARAJ SINGH AND STAFF

That this Conference sincerely thanks the Agent of the Government of India Kunwar Maharaj Singh and his staff for their unceasing interest in the cause of the Indians in South Africa.

(14) THE IMPERIAL INDIAN CITIZENSHIP ASSOCIATION

This Conference hereby places on record its sense of appreciation to the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association for the active interest it is taking in all matters affecting the South African Indians.

(15) Mr. H. S. L. POLAK

This Conference expresses its gratitude to Mr. H. S. L. Polak for his unceasing services on behalf of the Indians in South Africa.

(16) THE HON. EVELYN BARING

That this Conference records its deep appreciation and gratitude to the Hon. E. Baring, the late Secretary to the Agent of the Government of India, for his inestimable services to the Indian community in South Africa.

(17) MAHATMA GANDHI

That this Conference expresses its love and gratitude to Mahatma Gandhi for his undying interest in all matters affecting the Indians in South Africa.

(18) Dr. RABINDRANATH TAGORE

That this Conference sends its sincere love and greeting to Dr. Rabindranath Tagore and records its gratitude to him for having permitted the Rev. C. F. Andrews to come out once again to help the Indians in South Africa.

(19) S. A. PRESS

That this Conference thanks the Press for giving publicity to matters pertaining to the Indian question in South Africa and for assisting in other ways, and Mr. D. Bramdaw for recording at every Conference to the local press the proceedings of the Conference.

Election Of Officials

The following officials were elected for the ensuing year:—

President: Mr. O. H. A. Jhavery; Joint Hon. Secretaries: Messrs. A. I. Kajes and P. R. Pather; Joint Hon. Treasurers: Messrs. S. Rustomjee and B. M. Ally;

A Missionary View Of British Rule In India

"A frank statement of opinion regarding British rule in India was made recently at the closing session, in the Central Hall, Birmingham, of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, by the Rev. Magnus C. Ratter, who has recently spent eighteen months in that country," says the *Birmingham Post*.

The Rev. H. J. Rossington (chairman of the Overseas and Foreign Committee), who presided, pointed out that during Mr. Ratter's ministry in India political conditions had been against religious work such as they were trying to envisage and advocate. He had to keep clear of political complications, and the fact that he was there alive and well and not in some Indian prison showed that he had done his duty both well and wisely. It had not been possible owing to the financial aspect to let him remain in India longer than eighteen months, but the work there had not been completed. It had only been suspended.

The Rev. M. G. Ratter, said in India apart from the occasion when he sat as a welcome guest at the dinner or breakfast table he had abstained from public political work, although he was much in sympathy with certain political aspirations in Europe and elsewhere. He did not think he would have landed in prison if he had said to the people in India what he was now saying to that audience. It would only have meant he would have been deported from India, as some English and Americans had been deported. In courtesy to their interests and in defence to the money they had spent he felt it to be his higher duty to remain in India and not to be sent home quickly because of political activity.

He did not think one could separate religious and political work. The two were one, though religion was much higher. At the same time in India he had to separate them because it would not have been fair to those who sent him had he let himself go on the Indian problem and been deported. That would have been the end of their work. He believed that in India our empire was lost. As English people we had rendered to India a very great and estimable service which in modern India was somewhat belittled and minimised because of the present political passion, but he had assured himself that judicial history would give to England the highest praise for her nineteenth century work. We had taken from India a very large reward—sometimes as much as 500%—so that it was not altogether altruistic. Today we did not serve India. We lived upon India, and the Indians realised that we did so. We rendered a little service but no service worthy of the charge we had imposed upon her people. He had travelled many miles over the continent of India and had been the guest in the length and breadth of the land. He had been their friend, and it was saddening to realise that he could travel for eighteen months in India and only come upon one person who defended the British regime. It might be our failure to appreciate it, but it was very sad that this England which we loved should have lost so completely, almost inalienably, the affections of the Indian people. We could not say we had the affections of the people. They were lost, he did not say for ever, but he feared it. Some of the Indians would bitterly tell us that it was not the affection of the Indian people that supported English rule, but the bayonets on which our flag flew, and some of them were bloodstained.

ઇન્ડિઅન ઓપિનિઅન.

પુસ્તક ૩૦ મું.

ફ્રીનીક્ષ, શુક્રવાર, તારીખ ૨ સપ્ટેમ્બર ૧૯૩૨

અંક ૩૫

“ઇન્ડિઅન ઓપિનિઅન”

શુક્રવાર, તા. ૨ સપ્ટેમ્બર ૧૯૩૨

સાઉથ આફ્રિકન ઇન્ડિઅન કોંગ્રેસની બારમી કોન્ફરન્સ જે ગયા અડવાડીયાની આખરીએ જોહાનીસબર્ગમાં મળી કોન્ફરન્સ હતી તેણે જનીવારે બપોરે ત્રણ વાગે પોતાનું કામ આરંભ્યું હતું અને રવીવરે રાતે ૭ વાગે સમાપ્ત કર્યું હતું. હાઈ સરકારના એજન્ટ અને તેમના સેક્રેટરીએ હાજમ આપે વખત હાજર રહ્યા હતા. મુખ્ય ચર્ચા, સ્વાભાવિક રીતે, એશીયાટીક લેન્ડ ટેન્ચર એક્ટ ઉપર થઈ હતી. હકીકતમાં એ કાયદાને લીધે જ કોન્ફરન્સ ખાસ જોહાનીસબર્ગમાં ભરવામાં આવી હતી. પ્રમુખે એ પ્રશ્નપર સાફ વાત કરી દીધી હતી. આગલી ત્રણ કોન્ફરન્સોમાં લાગત એ કાયદો, જે એ વખતે ખરડના રૂપમાં હતો, તે ટ્રાંસવાલની હાઈ કોમને ફરજિયાત ધલાયદા કરનારો અને તેથી કેપટાઉન એગ્રીમેન્ટના બાવાર્થથી ખીલકુલ વિરુદ્ધ હોવા માટે વખોડી કાઢવામાં આવ્યો હતો એ જોતાં આમાં આશ્ચર્ય ખામવા જેવું કંઈ જ નહોતું. પ્રમુખનું ભાષણ પુરું થતાં કોન્ફરન્સ કમીટીમાં બેઠી. ત્રણે પ્રાંતના ડેલીગેટોએ આ કાયદાની વિરુદ્ધ સખ્ત ભાષણો કર્યાં અને એક પછી અપવાદ સિવાય કાયદાને વખોડી કાઢવામાં આવ્યો. હાઈ સરકારના એજન્ટ કુંવર મહારાજ સંગિ પશુ વગર સંકેતે જાહેર કર્યું કે હાઈ સરકાર પશુ આ કાયદાને વખોડે છે. તેમ છતાં, તેમણે જણાવ્યું કે, એ કાયદાની સામે આપણા સલામતમાં હાઈ સરકાર કે એજન્ટ પોતે મદદ કરી શકશે નહિ. સાઉથ આફ્રિકન ઇન્ડિઅન કોંગ્રેસે હાઈ સરકારના ડેલીગેશનને સ્પષ્ટ જણાવ્યું સમજાવ્યું દીધું હતું કે જે તેઓથી ટેન્ચર ખીલ સંદર્ભ પશુ ખેંચાવી લઈ નહિ શકાય તો તેઓએ તેની ઉપર કોઈ પશુ જાતનું સમાધાન કરવું નહિ. પરંતુ તેઓએ દેખીતી રીતે ધારણું જણાવ્યું છે કે, તેઓ આપણી ધુન્ધાં વિરુદ્ધ પશુ આપણને મદદ કરી શકશે અને પોતાની આબરુના ભાગે પશુ તેઓએ સમાધાન કર્યું કે જે આપણે સ્વિકારી શકતા નથી અને હાઈ સરકારને લેશમાત્ર પશુ શોભા આપનારું નથી.

જે કે એ કાયદાને વખોડવામાં સૌ મક્કમ હતા છતાં તેની સામે વિરોધ દર્શાવવાનો રસ્તો એક પશુ ડેલીગેટથી કે એજન્ટથી પશુ સુચવી શકાયો નહિ. જેઓ સલામત કરવાની સાથે મળતા નહોતા થતા તેઓએ કાયદાને તાબે થવાનું જણાવ્યું. એજન્ટે કહ્યું કે જે આપણે કાયદાને તાબે થઈશું તો કદાચ તેઓ આપણને થોડીક વધુ છુટછાટો જોળવવામાં મદદ કરી શકશે કે જે વસ્તુ આપણે લડીશું તો થવી અશક્ય છે. તેમ છતાં કોન્ફરન્સે, સૌએ તેપર બોલી લીધાં માદ, લેન્ડ ટેન્ચર એક્ટને વખોડી કાઢનારો અને તેની

સામે થવાના ટ્રાંસવાલ ઇન્ડિઅન કોંગ્રેસે ઠરાવેલાં પગલાંને બનતી સધળી રીતે ટેકા આપનારો ઠરાવ સર્વાનુમતે પસાર કર્યો. આ ઠરાવ વગર વિચાર્યું પસાર કરવામાં નહોતો આવ્યો. પુરેપુરો વિચાર કર્યા પછી અને તેના ગંભીર પરિણામો સંપૂર્ણપણે સમજીને પસાર કરવામાં આવ્યો હતો. કોન્ફરન્સમાં એક પશુ માણસ એવો નહિ હતો કે જેને પોતાની આંગળી પોતે આગમાં નાખતો હોવાનું અને તે બળી જવાનું જોખમ હોવાનું જાન નહિ હતું. પરંતુ તેઓએ સમજાવ્યું કે તેમ કર્યું હતું કેમકે એક કાયદો, કે જેને કોઈ પશુ સુધરેલો મતુખ, જે તે મતુખ હોય તો કદી પશુ સ્વિકારી નજ શકે, તે કાયદાને તાબે થવા કરતાં એ માર્ગને તેઓ વધારે માન્યરેલો સમજતા હતા. આ બાબતમાં પ્રમુખના ભાષણના અંતના જણાવે અર્થસુચક છે. તેમણે કહ્યું હતું કે: “આજે આપણે આપણી સમક્ષ આવી પડેલાં તાત્કાલિક જોખમને વિશે ચોકશ ઠરાવ કરવાને એક જ થયા છીએ અને એ ઠરાવ કર્યા પછી પાછી પાની કરવાની હોય નહિ.....હાઈની સહન શક્તિની હવે હદ આવી ગઈ છે. તેની ઉપર નાખવામાં આવતાં અપમાનો અને વિના કારણે તેમને આપવામાં આવેલો દલકો દરજ્જો તેનાથી હવે વધુ સહન થઈ શકે તેમ નથી. આપણી ઉપર જુલમો ગુનરી શું આ દેશમાંથી આપણને ધીમે ધીમે હાંકી કાઢવાના છે કે આપણી સ્થિતિ સુધારવાની તક આપી આ દેશમાં સારા નાગરીકો તરીકે રહેવા દેવાનાં છે?” પ્રમુખે વાજબીજી કહ્યું હતું કે, આ પ્રશ્નનો જવાબ આપણે જાતે જ આપવાનો છે. જે આપણે આ કાયદાને તાબે થઈશું તો આપણો વિનાશ થશે. જે આપણે દુ:ખ ઉઠાવીશું તો, કાયદો ભલે યુનીયનની કાયદાપોથીને કલંકીત કરતો રહે છતાં આપણે મરદ તરીકે આપણી ફરજ બજાવેલી હોવાનો આપણને સંતોષ રહેશે.

ખીજો પ્રશ્ન કે જે પર કોન્ફરન્સનો ઘણો વખત રોકાયો હતો તે કોલોનાઇઝેશન સ્કીમનો હતો, કે જેનો સુધારેલા એગ્રીમેન્ટમાં સમાવેશ થયો છે. એ પ્રશ્નપર એ સ્પષ્ટ વિરોધી મત પડ્યા હતા. મોટા ભાગને એમ લાગ્યું કે એસીસ્ટેડ એગ્રી-ગેશન સ્કીમનો હેતુ આ દેશમાંથી હાઈલોની સંખ્યા ઘટાડવાનો હતો અને વધુમાં બહીસની રકમ અને હાઈસ્ટ્રાન સુધીના મધ્ય ભાગના બદલામાં તે આપણા ભાષ્યોનો જન્મસિદ્ધ હક વેચી દેવાવતો હતો; અને આ નવી યોજનાનો હેતુ એ કરનાં કંઈ જુદો નથી. એસીસ્ટેડ એગ્રીગેશનની યોજનાની સામેનો આપણો વાંધો એ હતો કે એ યોજનાનો સિદ્ધાંત ખોટો હતો. આપણી આ દેશમાં ઉર્જાત અને વધુ હકકોની ધમારત આપણી વસ્તી અંકુશમાં રાખી શકાય એટલે દરજ્જો ઘટાડવાના પાયા ઉપર રચાઈ હતી. યુનીયન સરકારે આ પાયાની હક લીધી અને હાઈ સરકારે તેને નમતું આપ્યું. પરંતુ પાયા

