

THE NATIONAL ALTERNATIVE

DRAFT

STATEMENT OF POLICY

C O N T E N T S

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DRAFT STATEMENT OF POLICY OF THE NATIONAL ALTERNATIVE

India is a great country of great people with a great future. In order to achieve its destiny it needs good government, of good men with good intentions and sound policies. But it languishes because of one party rule without a National Alternative.

THE STATE OF THE NATION:

India today stands at the cross roads. The road chosen, for it by the Father of the Nation and the architect of its freedom along with the founding fathers of the Constitution seems to have reached a dead end.

After 27 years of Independence and self-government the lot of the common man has become worse. Poverty is spreading, prices are rising and unemployment has reached epidemic proportions; the pressure on land has become unbearable, rural development is slow, productivity and movement in industry and agriculture are very low, education has deteriorated, cities are ill-planned and over-crowded, slums abound and people sleep on pavements. There is corruption everywhere and maladministration from top to bottom. Everyone everywhere and all sections of society are unhappy, disappointed, dejected and frustrated.

We have arrived at a stage in our history when our prestige is at its lowest ebb; when foreign countries can interfere in our internal affairs with impunity; when disruptive forces within the country are busy dismantling the national fabric; when indiscipline amongst politicians, students, industrial workers and public servants is freely encouraged for petty ends; when almost every section of our people and every part of the country is engaged in furtherance of its own particular interest oblivious of the larger national concern; when almost everyone is clamouring for rights and nobody is conscious of his duties; when moral standards have collapsed; when purity means for attaining political ends has become immaterial; when in the race for economic development we have been left far behind by other nations; when India stands at the bottom of the economic ladder of the world; when unemployment is on the increase and disparities in personal income and expenditure are widening; when people instead of living in hope and dreaming of glory are uncertain and insecure about their future - utter despondency has taken hold of the nation.

While other nations have been making significant strides India's growth rate, which had initially shown some promise, is now steadily on the decline. Our standard of living has dropped along with it. Prices have been rising dangerously and today are increasing at the rate of one per cent a week. There seems to be no remedy to ever increasing unemployment, particularly amongst the educated, and the Fifth Five Year Plan has given up all hope of ever coming to grips with it.

Four Five Year Plans have failed to satisfy even the basic needs of the people nor have they succeeded in bringing about a measure of social or distributive justice. The proportion of urban to rural incomes which was already too high has gone up further. Economic pressure have led to distress sales and forced even marginal farmers to give up their farms and take to labour.

Malnutrition has played havoc with the health of our nation and the per capita calorie intake stands at its lowest since Independence. Even the Food and Agriculture Organisation has expressed concern over the poor nutritional standards of the Indian peasantry. Many poorer countries have overtaken us in their consumption of calories and proteins.

Even our democratic system is in imminent danger through the mutilation of the Constitution by frequent amendments weakening the basic rights of the people, by stifling of public opinion, by subjugating the freedom of the Press, by eroding the independence of the judiciary, by the undermining of the cabinet system, by reducing Parliament itself to irrelevance and by usurping the independence

and functions of the Chief Executives, the Governors of the States, the Attorney General and the Chief Election Commission. Today we stand in mortal fear of becoming a dictatorship ~~donning~~ a parliamentary garb. In short, we are moving towards authoritarian Rule.

Already the State has acquired almost complete control over credit, trade and industry. Our internal weaknesses and the failure of our economy makes us an easy prey to the exploitation of the Super Blocs.

Attempts are being made to instal a "committed" civil service, not committed to the nation but committed to the party in power, subserving Congress interests. At ~~xx~~ times some civil servants have become indifferentiable from party workers.

The entire electoral process has been vitiated by malpractices which begin with gerrymandering of constituencies, playing the communal equations, creating and fanning religious hostilities, injecting massive amounts of money, on which the Ruling Party has a monopoly, and projecting its propaganda through state-owned or controlled media, the intimidation of the electorate and when all else fails, the stuffing of ballot boxes. In spite of this the Ruling Party could not have secured even the meagre success it has, if it had not resorted to the ultimate electoral fraud of actually miscounting the votes and/or the substituting of ballot papers carried out through coincidentally contrived electricity failures during the counting at the appropriate moment.

The most obnoxious practice of the Ruling Party has been to subjugate the Press by threatening the owners who have other business interest, corrupting the staff through inducements and controlling production and publication by a series of regulations regarding newsprint quotas and advertisements. The State-owned radio and television has become the propaganda arm of the Ruling Party. Substantial inroads have been made in the film and book trade and desperate attempts are being made to brainwash the intelligentsia by destroying the autonomy and democratic functioning of universities and other educational institutions.

/is The Congress Party itself/developing dictatorial tendencies where decision-making at all levels has become centralised through the development of a personality-cult which leaves all decisions to be taken only by the leaders. Even the democratic practice of allowing the State legislatures to chose their own Chief Ministers has been circumvented by installing the Prime Minister's own nominees in every State. The inevitable consequence of such a policy would surround the leader with men of straw who are bound to be found wanting in the numerous responsible functions expected to be performed by them.

The entire operation of the Congress Party has, as a consequence of this, become money-based requiring enormous funds only to keep the party together, which are collected through very dubious processes by indiscriminately granting licences, permits and quotas to pliable and "co-operative" businessmen. Another source of collecting funds is by constantly changing and fixing commodity prices, or threatening to do so, and extracting money from manufacturers and dealers. All these funds are collected in the face of the law which prohibits companies from making political donations. The implications of this policy is obvious; that the Congress Party is openly encouraging the creation of black-markets through the use of government machinery so that it can become a partner in the loot.

The only way to arrest this deteriorating situation and to avert the dangers of a totalitarian takeover is to create a viable National Alternative to act as a national corrective to the Ruling Congress Party. Therefore the national alternative must present to the people a distinct and definite alternative programme of action to meet the challenge and stem the rot. Such an alternative has to be rooted in the Indian soil, both physically and spiritually, take note of Indian realities and draw inspirations and guidance from Indian thought, experience and culture, build an Indian ethos embodied in the teachings and inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi. Such a value system and approach to socio-economic problems must necessarily differ fundamentally from the approach of

Marx as interpreted and worked out in practice by Lenin and Mao.

The solutions suggested by Marx, for the problems of Western Europe, to cure an exploitative industrial society in the throes of an industrial revolution cannot bring about the emancipation of the Indian village from medieval poverty to a prosperous rural community. Is it any surprise that we have failed?

The naked reality of India is half a million villages, devoid of all economic viability, supporting 80 per cent of its 500 million population just posed against urban slums where human pressures in the heat and sweat have overrun whatever urban life existed prior to independence.

This ideal is best expressed in the following well-known words of Mahatma Gandhi:

"Self-government means a continuous effort to be Independent of Government whether it is a foreign government or it is national. Swarajya Government will be a sorry affair if the people look up to it for the regulation of every detail of life. A nation that runs its affairs smoothly and effectively without ~~it~~ much ~~such~~ State interference is truly democratic. Where such condition is absent, the form of Government is democratic only in name.

"I look upon increase in the power of the State with the greatest fear because although while apparently doing good by minimising exploitation, it does the greatest harm by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress."

There is need for a viable National Alternative for yet another reason. The ruling party has been in the saddle since 1952 on the basis of a minority vote. The emergence of the New Party will prevent splitting of Opposition votes and ensure a Government and an administration which will truly reflect the wishes of the majority.

It is a grim situation that faces the country. The main problem for the New Party will be how to take the country to the path of spiritual and material regeneration. It proposes, therefore, to tell the people the stark truth and to educate them in the problems that face them and suggest correct solutions.

Political parties that follow different paths, or no path at all, inscribe on their banner abstract principles and socialist cliches like democracy, progressivism and poverty without meaning anything. The Congress Party has been clever enough to beg, borrow and steal these expressions from abroad and pretend to translate them to represent the new urges of the radicals. In their hands these one-time radical principles and programmes of socialism, equality, progress and change, have lost all meaning and content - in fact they have been soiled with blood and dirt. Socialism in Congress hands has become a dirty word.

India's political thought has become a prisoner of meaningless categories like left and right, progressives and reactionaries, kulaks and proletariat and so on. The opposition parties and other intellectuals are also entrapped in these meaningless words which are reflected in their meaningless speeches. We must learn to shed all labels and see the reality around us in order to change it for the better.

THE TASK

The New Party must, therefore, concretise these principles and present guide lines for action: How to end inequalities in status, reduce inequities in income, banish poverty and unemployment, stabilise prices, eliminate corruption, improve morals, encourage growth and build hope and aspiration.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

The New Party takes its stand on the four pillars of democracy, nationalism, secularism better expressed in the aphorism Serve Dharma Sama Bhav and social justice which implies the welfare of the people based on the common man as against loose fraudulent socialist slogans of varying shades.

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I. The New Party's fundamental belief in democracy rises out of its indispensability to a perfect society. Democracy is not merely a word with vague implications of popular or representative government but a positive guide for action based on certain principles and the means and methods which will govern the transformation. First of all, it is government by the consent of the governed and not merely the fabrication of brute majorities. It not only guarantees freedom of thought and action but also permits the right of dissent. The successful functioning of democracy demands vocal public debates reported in a free Press and other means of mass communication, the fearless independence of the judiciary and the assurance of free and fair elections. It is government through participation on the largest possible scale as manifested through adult franchise and it also confers the right to take decisions at all levels of society, which means the decentralisation of power to smaller units of direct democracy, the sharing of economic decisions and resources and the participation of a well-informed, but widely-dispersed citizenry.

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II. Nationalism is the strong emotion and the surest guaranty of the strength and unity of any country in modern times. It is also the most effective instrument to reject foreign models of both capitalist and communist varieties. Needless to say, a belief in nationalism leads to a sound value policy based on true national interest. However, Indian nationalism must not lead to an overbearing centralised State, but has to foster unity in diversity, reflect urges of varied regions and religions and evolve a synthesis in the form of a national ethos.

Is it not strange that during the two and a half decades since Independence the only serious challenge to the ruling Congress has come from within or through regional parties at the state level? Invariably, this challenge has been dissipated with time in the absence of national purpose in the regional parties. However, regional sentiment is fast spreading all over the nation, less due to unhealthy chauvinism than to the understandable frustrations of large sections of people who feel deprived of participation in the political process.

To ignore the possibility of the emergence of regional parties all over to voice the frustration of people denied participation in power is dangerous. The New Party is being formed in recognition of the need to convert this trend into one of healthy co-operation. Without reconciling these urges into a single party, regional upsurge cannot conceivably find national expression. People are not only proud of their regional culture but are also seeking greater participation in the national life. Attempts to stifle such democratic awakening can endanger the nation's unity and integrity. Only with strong states can one expect a strong centre, because regional aspirations and national interest are complementary, not contradictory.

The New Party proposes to become a real alternative to the Congress Party by accepting the democratic principle of decentralised development, power and policy-making, as opposed to the imposition of centralised direction as practiced by the Congress Government in all aspects of political and economic life. It is only by the sincere application of the federal principle, which promises the fastest development, that genuine democracy and national unity based on participation can be enjoyed by the people. This nation can surge with all its rich cultural variety and democratic traditions only if a proper appreciation is made and satisfaction given to the different tiers of our polity.

The New Party genuinely believes that correct democratic procedures lead to the best policy - that means are more significant than ends. Faith in democracy is sustained by the confidence that democratic

procedures throw up the right leadership and produce the correct policies to meet any challenge. This basic democratic faith in the wisdom of the people and in their ability to govern themselves consensibly over a wide sector of public life provides the New Party with its prime motivation and reasons for emergence.

As against the five year plan of the Congress Government, the New Party would make provision for only an infrastructural plan at the Central level, allowing within its flexible framework the freedom to each state and every district to make its own plan, raise its own resources, attract its own investment, and make optimum use of its own revenue.

The burden thus lightened, the national leadership and Central Government could then concentrate on foreign policy, defence, national infrastructural planning, communications and national integration - all of which have been grievously neglected and mismanaged to the detriment of the country by the Congress Governments of the past.

III. SARVA DHARMA SAMA BHAV: stands for equal respect for all religions and ways of life and worship. India is a land of many faiths. Secularism is basically an absence of a state religion and does not stand for the negation of God and religion. But the way secularism has been exploited and misused to encourage casteism and communalism in India since freedom, has made it necessary to define it as Sarva Dharma Sama Bhav.

IV. Any economic policy should promote the welfare of a people as a whole and ensure both an increase in Gross National Product, consistent with social justice, peace and happiness of all.

BASIC POLICIES:

India is passing through an economic crisis today which may last for some years unless immediate action is taken to reverse our policies. We are in the midst of a deep-seated disease, almost entirely man-made. It is the end product of the ill-conceived policies introduced by the ruling party way back in 1956 when the second five year plan was formulated. This was foreseen by many critics whose warnings went unheeded.

The malady cannot be corrected by ad hoc measures, slogans, legislative enactments, administrative reforms, political agitation, amendments to the constitution, or more massive foreign aid. It can be corrected only by a basic policy change. The New Party intends to do just that.

Mahatma Gandhi had said times without number that India cannot, and should not be industrialised in the Western sense. Despite this, the Ruling Party has tried to follow the Soviet pattern of giving preference to industry over agriculture and, as amongst industries, followed the American preference for giving more importance to heavy industry over cottage or small-scale industries. The New Party will reverse these priorities completely, and invest all available resources in the rural economy with a view to restoring economic viability in the rural areas where 80 per cent of our people live.

Since freedom of thought and free institutions, on one hand, and regimented economic life, on the other cannot co-exist, the New Party will work for a system in which the individual has the greatest freedom consistent with social justice. There is no truth in the argument that individual freedom is inconsistent with social justice or that maximum production through private agencies works to the detriment of distributive justice. The welfare of the people cannot possibly be achieved through the extension of State control, which only retards production, curtails productive employment and adds to inefficiency, corruption and the cost of production, the brunt of which has to be borne by the consumer, which is the only scientific definition of the common man.

It has been argued that production through private enterprise is motivated by private profits. That is true. Government can easily

regulate private profits to remain within reasonable limits if it is vigilant and desires to do so. But who can regulate government excesses if it indulges in profiteering topped with inefficiency, irregularities and corruption?

The ruling party has commandeered a great deal of commerce and industry. This just could not yield the expected results. It has not even increased employment proportionate to the capital invested. Public Sector Enterprises, instead of yielding profits to the nation, have burdened the country and thereby the people with huge losses. Many government undertakings are not even working to capacity, resulting in production losses and consequent unemployment. Without competition, state production of goods and their distribution, unless it is managed honestly and efficiently, is definitely worse than private production and distribution of goods.

Inflation is the worst kind of concealed taxation. It does not affect the rich, but imposes a crushing burden on the poor. The economy is now racing towards hyper-inflation at an ever-accelerating pace.

There are several contributory causes to inflation - the most direct and avoidable one being the printing of money at the currency press. This is something that can be stopped with immediate effect. In the long run inflation can be cured by eliminating shortage, by increasing the production of consumer goods which may take a year or two to catch up. Inflation coupled with high taxes also leads to corruption, forcing money underground. This deprives the ~~State~~ State of legitimate revenue, forcing it into further deficit financing. An integrated attack on all three fronts can normalise prices within a very short period of time. A great deal of hoarded money and wealth can also be brought out by inducing its hoarders to undertake projects for public benefits like slum clearance, housing, medical and recreational facilities through recognising agencies like public charitable trusts.

Therefore the New Party is pledged to the eradication of black money and the maintaining of an honest rupee.

The people of India are sick of tedious arguments and obscure policy statements projected by dishonest slogans through controlled media. That is why the New Party has outlined a detailed programme and is sworn to its ~~own~~ performance and wishes to be judged only on results and not only on policies.

THE PROGRAMME

CLEAN AND EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION:

FIRST: The New Party aims at an honest and efficient administration where public servants will not only be fair and impartial but will also apply the necessary skill and labour to the performance of their duty, to create an administration in which there will be no delay, no waste and no corruption. It will take ruthless and swift measures against all public servants and ministers found guilty of corruption, inefficiency or discrimination. Laws, rules and procedures for transacting public business will be made simpler, more precise and otherwise so amended that discretionary powers are reduced to the minimum.

The New Party further proposes to establish an organization of persons specially trained in the functioning of companies, financial institutions and semi-government bodies, which will deal with the 'respectable' offender in trade, commerce, business and finance. The ordinary police is normally trained in the ways of the ordinary criminal - the thief, the murderer and the dacoit - but is unable to cope with those miscreants who are guilty of cheating, forgery, embezzlement, tax-evasion, hoarding, smuggling and the manipulation of shares, stocks and foreign exchange on a large scale. As these people are hand in glove with corrupt public servants, unscrupulous politicians and even hardened criminals, they ~~can~~ unusually succeed in escaping the arm of the law, so that there is a general belief that the law of the land does not apply to these types.

Among measures to be taken in this sphere, the New Party proposes that returns and assessment orders of politicians, businessmen and

gazetted public servants are not kept confidential but made public.

EMOLUMENTS AND DISCIPLINE OF PUBLIC SERVANTS:

SECOND: While every effort will be made to protect and satisfy the public servant from public criticism he cannot answer and give him emoluments which will free him from anxiety and penury, every public servant will be expected to do his job with speed and efficiency and will be judged by his responsive attitude to the public. It is the responsibility of the State as a model employer to ensure that its employees do not go on strike and the responsibility of government servants to be disciplined and to remember that they are there only to serve the people.

The New Party is against gross disparity of incomes as well as the anarchy of taxation on the one hand and doling out dearness allowances on the other, thus creating millions of unproductive files, wasting thousands of tonnes of paper and millions of man-hours, without any benefit accruing to the nation. The New Party would seek to remove these anomalies in the salary structure, whether in Government, industry or trade after fixing a net income ratio and would take steps to ensure that within a decade salary incomes between the lowest and the highest would be pegged to a reasonable ratio by steadily raising the incomes of the lowest paid employees and by regulating a wage and price policy commensurate with national production and productivity.

TAXATION AND ECONOMIES:

THIRD: Prosperity is a function of resource mobilisation or savings and prudent and efficient expenditure of the State. The New Party further aims at creating a just tax structure by first simplifying and then plugging loopholes in the existing tax laws, making the collection machinery clean and efficient. Today, thousands of crores of rupees of tax remain unassessed and hundreds of crores remain uncollected. At the same time the New Party will aim at reducing taxes which hit the comparatively poorer sections of the community in a greater measure than the rich.

One of the chief objects of the New Party is to bring about administrative efficiency through Gandhiji's maxim: "that Government is the best that governs the least" and based on the sound principle that no man is employed who does not have a job of work to do."

CORRUPTION AMONGST POLITICIANS:

FOURTH: Unless there is a high degree of personal integrity at the top level in the public life of our country, corruption in administration cannot possibly be stamped out or even reduced. The New Party, therefore, proposes to devise special procedures and establish special agencies, which will take automatic legal notice of complaints and not depend on government's initiative to enquire into charges of corruption against all those placed in positions of responsibility, particularly ministers, legislators and officials.

GOVERNMENT AID TO POLITICAL PARTIES:

FIFTH: The New Party suggests that national political parties should be financed by government in accordance with suitable criteria. Further, that the parties should be registered under the Societies Registration Act and by law required to get their accounts audited and published annually. While the ban on donations to political parties by companies should continue, donations by tax-payers other than companies should be allowed as a 'deduction' from their gross total income subject to certain restrictions.

The New Party will refrain from accepting funds from anybody for a permit, licence or quota granted, in fact, for any work done or promised to be done.

ELECTORAL REFORM:

SIXTH: The New Party believes that without free and fair elections democracy becomes a farce. To ensure this, the New Party will work for modifications in the electoral system.

It is long being felt that every ruling party enjoys a disproportionate advantage if it continues in power during the elections and therefore the government should resign the moment an election is notified to the Lok Sabha or to the State Assembly.

With a view to avoid duplication of cost and bogus voting the government should take upon itself the responsibility of issuing identity cards.

The present electoral system unduly favours the largest party to the disadvantage and detriment of smaller parties. Therefore, a new system has to be devised which combines the advantages of all three systems: Direct Elections, Proportional Representation and the List System. In every constituency the votes of all those candidates who lost do not find any representation. It is suggested that these votes be totalled and seats allotted to the parties which secured them. The new system would function like the old system of direct elections for 2/3 of the seats in any legislature. The balance 1/3 of the seat would be distributed amongst all parties in the proportion of the losing votes collected by each party and in accordance to a pre-published list of candidates in order of preference.

To ensure that the elections are impartially supervised the Chief Election Commission should consist of at least three members appointed by the President at his discretion. None of the members would be permitted thereafter to accept any job or appointment.

Mass media play an important role during elections. Apart from newspapers, All India Radio and Television, the Films Division and the Press Information Bureaus of the Centre and States must be insulated against taking a partisan attitude in the elections on the principle that they should treat all parties equally.

The present system by which the Prime Minister can indiscriminately use Air Force planes and helicopters at nominal cost, thereby acquiring immense and unfair advantages for the ruling party, should be stopped forthwith.

MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER:

SEVENTH: The New Party would maintain law and order in strict accordance with legal enactments and the Constitution, irrespective of persons, parties or any other consideration whatsoever. Without a sense of security and faith in the fairness and impartiality of the administration in the mind of every individual in regard to his life, property, honour and religion, there can be no real peace and security and therefore no happiness in our society. This is particularly so where minorities are concerned, whose safety and well-being are constantly violated through the non-functioning of the rule of law. In this matter, a government of the New Party will pay particular attention to the protection of minority interests.

A society based on the rule of law has to be extra vigilant to see that those who desire the protection of law do not abuse it with the purpose of sabotaging the very society which affords them these privileges. Therefore the New Party would curb with a strong hand all subversive and disintegrating forces.

PROTECTION OF MINORITIES AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION:

EIGHTH: In a multi-lingual and multi-religious society like ours, it is essential that adequate protection should be given to both religious and social minorities. Mere lip service to secularism can never act as a cover for the non-recognition of minority rights and opportunities. There are vast numbers of our people such as Harijans, Adivasis and other backward classes who are suffering from economic and social handicaps. There are religious minorities like the Muslims, Christians and the Sikhs, amongst others, who require constant attention, care and concern of the government. There are regional imbalances, unequal opportunities and lopsided representation in the services and elsewhere, which have to be rectified. Fair representation in public services and equal opportunities in trade, commerce and industry have to be combined with special facilities for admissions to colleges and other educational institutions, and resources made available for the development of their languages and the nourishing of their cultures and religions.

The success of a society depends upon the happiness and security of its minorities. Nor should the majority feel that such progress is being made at its expense. It is only an open and just society functioning according to the rule of law, based on merit, with equality of opportunities for all and due recognition for work and efficiency, which can strike this balance. Governmental action has invariably upset such a balance and has indeed tried to play one against the other for political benefits. The New Party is determined to restore this balance. It will work for the removal of all discrimination in matters of social, political and economic behaviour between one citizen and another on the ground of his caste, language, region or religion, so that nationalism or the feeling of a common brotherhood may develop day by day.

While every citizen of India is entitled to freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess, practise and propagate his religion, the New Party will not allow any foreign or local missionaries to practice conversion from one religion to another through force, or fraud or for material inducements and no minor will be allowed to be converted at all.

METHODS OF POLITICAL AGITATION:

NINTH: All political action should be aimed at reconstructing national life and the expression and organisation of the people's will. The New Party should continually strive to become the spokesman of the people and the organiser of its will, resisting and fighting injustice at all levels. It must be prepared to take part in constructive action to educate popular opinion and be enlightened by it in turn. While out of office, it must indicate by its example and accomplishment, however slender, what it promises when it forms a government.

Every small and symbolic constructive activity is the life-blood of all genuinely revolutionary action. Revolutionary thought can never restrict itself to parliamentary action alone. While the vote is the supreme expression of the people's will, it is recorded once in several years. Hesitant submission ensues if the vote is not supplemented by recurrent awakening through the invited suffering of civil resistance. Civil resistance is an exercise in power - reducing the power of evil and increasing the power of good. An act of civil resistance must shun expediency and must not make use of lies and violence.

Socialists believe that the ultimate overthrow of the existing order can be carried out only by force. The traditional debate on the use or non-use of violence in a revolution has today become irrelevant particularly since it has been supplemented by the third

choice of civil resistance, as taught to us by Gandhiji. Whereas civil disobedience is justified as an instrument to overthrow a foreign or totalitarian government. When a government can be legally set aside periodically through the democratic process, its use can only be condoned when a government in power, abuses such power and utilizes every means, fair and foul, to perpetuate its rule. It is only in this context that civil resistance becomes a valid instrument of political activity.

DECENTRALISATION OF DEVELOPMENT AND AUTHORITY:

TENTH: While the New Party would like to retain a strong Centre, with residuary powers, to protect the frontiers of the country and the sovereignty and unity of the nation, it does not approve of the present trend which has reduced the States to the position of District Boards or Zila Parishads. The vast financial resources enjoyed by the Centre coupled with centralized planning on the Soviet model and Article 356 of the Constitution which gives the Central cabinet the right to 'advise' the President to impose his rule by suspending or dissolving the Assembly of a State, have virtually sabotaged all autonomy of the States.

The Centre's power to impose President's rule needs to be abolished. The instability of any state government cannot be determined through a subjective report written by a governor who is beholden to the Central leadership, but must be tested on the floor of the legislature. To prevent any Chief Minister from abusing his authority to call an assembly into session, the Governor may be armed with the power of summoning an assembly to test the strength of the government, although an assembly so summoned may not do any legislative business.

In the matter of forming governments, the Governor is duty-bound to call upon the leader of the largest party to do so within a fixed stipulated time, and only if he fails to do so, the leader of the second largest party should be called, and so on, the leaders of the third, fourth, fifth party etc.

To ensure their impartiality, the New Party believes that Governors should be able and honest men of public distinction, who must not be re-employed after retirement.

Thanks to centralised planning, a great many of the legitimate powers of the States have been mis-appropriated by the Centre. For example, the basic scheme of the Constitution is that 'Industries' should remain a State subject except those whose control by the Union is expedient in the public interest and must be regulated by the Centre. Accordingly Parliament passed the industries (Development and Regulation) Act in 1951, specifying these Industries which in the public interest have to be controlled by the Centre. The Act, as originally drafted, was fair and reasonable and rightly gave control to the Centre over only those industries which were vital to national development. Subsequent amendments of the Act have, however, transformed "Industries" into a Union subject. All industries within a fixed capital of Rs 25 lakhs and more have now been brought under the Centre's control.

Similarly, although under the Constitution 'Agriculture', 'Animal Husbandry' and 'Forests' are included in the State list, owing to the financial powers that the Centre possesses and uses as a whip-hand, the States have lost all control on the choice of projects, their size or priority. For better administration and broader participation, the States' financial powers will have to be increased and their rights over resources and decision making will have to be restored.

INTER-STATE DISPUTES:

ELEVENTH: There are several disputes pending between States which are allowed to drag on and finally settled after much bloodshed and violence on an ad hoc basis, keeping in mind only the political benefits that will accrue to the ruling party. This trend to suppress local urges and aspirations vitiates the atmosphere and militates against national integration and unity. The New Party would, therefore, immediately, appoint a permanent commission as envisaged in Article 263 of the Constitution created precisely for the purpose of solving such disputes. All inter-state disputes whether on boundary or the sharing of river waters, electricity etc., will be referred to such a commission whose ruling would not only be final but binding on all parties concerned, including the Central Government. Similarly, all demands for having smaller but well-managed and economically viable States would be referred to such a Commission.

AUTONOMY OF LOCAL BODIES:

TWELFTH: Local self-government, though introduced sometime back, has remained largely ineffective. Panchayats, District Boards, Municipalities and corporations are entirely at the mercy of State Governments which are using them as pawns in a political game. They are expected to perform functions but are not given the necessary powers and resources to do so. With the result that the work supposed to be done by them largely remains undone. The New Party intends to give these bodies statutory powers, and, if necessary, is prepared to amend the Constitution accordingly.

REFORM AND INDEPENDENCE OF JUDICIARY:

THIRTEENTH: There is no better test of the excellence of a Government than the independence, efficiency and impartiality of its judicial system. Justice delayed is justice denied. The existing system which we inherited from the British, needs radical change to make it quick, efficient and easily available to the common man. While retaining the advantages of the present system, the New Party proposes to overhaul the procedural law and, where necessary, the substantive law also, so that justice is not only done but also seems to have been done, and delay, perjury, corruption and undue expenditure are avoided and the guilty punished. Laws which are complicated will be simplified, ambiguities removed, and brought in line with current needs.

The New Party readily concedes the right of the judiciary to interpret the law and the Constitution according to its own lights, untrammelled by the "social philosophy" of the Government in power or any outside authority and will willingly abide by its judgement. It is of the firm belief that judges "committed" to interpret the law and the Constitution in a particular manner will toll the end of democracy in the country.

Frequently cases arise which involve political issues and excite party feeling. It is then that the courage and uprightness of the judges become supremely valuable to the nation. Nothing contributes more to the welfare of the private citizen and conduces to the smooth working of free Government, than a general confidence in the pure and efficient administration of justice between the individual and the State as well as between man and man.

In the appointment and promotion of judges, all considerations other than those of ability, integrity and experience will be excluded. No judge after retirement will be re-employed in any capacity whatsoever, to compensate which his retirement and other benefits will be enhanced.

In the mufasil areas, for public convenience and better administration, the New Party would require that Munsifs and Sub-Divisional Magistrates reside and hold their courts at the Sub-Divisional headquarters, and not only at the headquarters of the districts, as at present.

ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY:

FOURTEENTH: The New Party does not believe in a system under which individuals enjoy an unrestricted freedom to exploit the economic needs of others nor does it stand for the state possessing unlimited power to curb initiative, restrict economic freedom, thereby creating a monopoly for itself known as state capitalism.

Statists think that all that is necessary for the creation of industry and trade is to corner all resources. That is done through crushing taxes and over-bearing controls leading to licences, permits and quotas which can be acquired only through self-defeating procedures resulting in inordinate delays, thus postponing production, prosperity and the creation of jobs. It also leads to corruption and nepotism and ultimately frustration. In the process it ruins the moral fibre of our people. These are the social consequences of State Capitalism.

The New Party believes that the widest possible distribution and dispersal of ownership of property is the only assurance and safeguard of democracy. However, the New Party is opposed to all concentration of economic power, whether it be in the hands of a few capitalists or the State itself.

Both Communism and Capitalism are irrelevant in the context of the social and economic development of India. Therefore the New Party believes in treading the Gandhian path, creating an economy based overwhelmingly on self-employment.

Industry and trade should be left to fend for themselves. It is the poor and the dispossessed in this country who need the protection of the government and not the industrialists and traders who are made to run after licences and thereafter enjoy monopolies which deprive the consumer of a free choice of quality products at reasonable prices.

It is free competitive enterprise based largely on self-employment and not government controls or State-Capitalism which will ultimately serve the consumer. The only scientific definition of the common man is the consumer, every other definition is sentimental slobbery.

It is not difficult to understand that every evil in our society has its origin in State control. It is State control which favours the licensees of the Government of India, to the detriment of more meritorious entrepreneurs. It is nationalisation and State controls which produce State monopolies and private monopolies. It is State controls operated through licences, permits and quotas which lead to bribery and corruption. It is State Control that creates black markets and black money which thereafter, cannot openly be put to productive uses and hence lies or is invested in less productive channels or even used up in non-essential conspicuous consumption. It is State control that instils fear in trade and industry and it is this fear that makes it possible for the ruling party to extort vast sums of black money for political purposes, vitiating the democratic process. Today there is collusion between Government and business to the detriment of the common man. At present trade and industry is not consumer-oriented and, therefore, against the interests of the common man.

It is only healthy competition and the free-functioning consumer-oriented market economy that will make businessmen in trade and industry behave themselves, fiercely competing with each other, subject to a certain measure of social regulation, for their share of the market through improved quality and reduced prices. It is only then that the common man, the consumer, will benefit.

It is the function of government to ensure competition, it is the duty of the State to break monopolies and cartels, and it is the first charge on any administration to protect the consumer.

It is only a New Party in government that can and will do all this and more.

ECONOMIC PRIORITIES AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:

FIFTEENTH: In the sphere of economic production, the New Party's priorities will be agriculture first, cottage and small-scale second and heavy and large-scale industry last.

As is clear, the New Party believes in decentralised production. In pursuance of this belief it will work for the establishment of an economy overwhelmingly based on small property operated through self employed persons, which gives more production and employment per unit of land in the field of agriculture, and more production and employment per unit of capital invested in industry. The new strategy must reduce inequalities in incomes between one man and another, as wide disparities lead to social tensions and exploitation of man by man. Economic exploitation leads to political exploitation which militates against democracy.

The economic strategy of the Party envisages that our abundant labour power is fully utilised, as labour is the principal untapped source in capital formation. It is, therefore, necessary to increase the use and productivity of labour. The total labour force cannot be productively absorbed in agriculture alone. Surplus labour must therefore be shifted to non-agricultural sectors like industry, trade and the professions. This requires special training facilities, based on science and existing technology, and a New Deal in education. Apart from scarcity of capital, India is short on the right type of labour, even though enough hands are available. Therefore, a new technology must be evolved which makes the maximum use of labour with the fullest utilisation of capital.

SIZE OF FARM:

SIXTEENTH: Several reports have been produced to study the land man ratio on the basis of the most prevalent technology of non-mechanised farming by manual and animal labour. These reports indicate that one unit of man power (two workers) can get the maximum yield per acre from a 2.5 acre farm. However, it has been proved that one unit of man-power can produce the maximum yield as the size of his farm increase to 27.5 acres. This means that 2.5 acre farm produces the maximum yield per acre of land and a 27.5 acre farm produces the maximum output per unit of labour. Below 27.5 acres, production per man begins to fall off as the area decreases, although production per acre continues to increase till land per man is reduced to a point in the neighbourhood of 2.5 acres. So that if the area a man possesses, amounts to more than 27.5 acres, land is not fully utilized because of insufficient labour, and, if it is less than 2.5 acres per worker, labour is not fully employed because of lack of sufficient land. Between these two levels the more land a man has the better for him, as his total production will rise with every acre added to his holding, and, the less land he has, the better for the country as the country's total production will rise with every acre taken away from the holding.

In India where land is limited and labour abundant, where the average holding is barely seven acres and constantly going down due to population growth, inheritance and slow industrial off-take, it is in the interest of the country that a minimum holding of 2.5 acres is created and a law relating to transfer and fragmentation of land in future is so amended that the area of land per worker is not reduced below 2.5 acres.

It is also temporarily desirable that present holdings should be ~~restricted~~ restricted to below 27.5 acres, or there about, depending on climate and quality of soil, till what time industrial off-take outstrips the land-man ratio of 27.5:1. At that stage land holdings can increase and higher forms of mechanisation and technology employed.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION:

SEVENTEENTH: The New Party will give first priority to the development of agriculture. Without it there will be no end to food imports which have drained the country not only of its wealth, which at the present value of the rupee would be more than Rs.10,000 crores at today's prices but also its self-respect. If this money had been ploughed into our agriculture, India today would have been surplus in food. Without producing agricultural surplus, there can be no economic development of the country or eradication of its poverty. Only a prosperous agriculture can provide raw materials to feed the wheels of industry; provide markets for non-agricultural goods and services through increased purchasing power in the hands of farmers, and finally, release foreign exchange to finance necessary and unavoidable ~~in~~ imports of non-agricultural goods and machinery.

Agricultural production would go up if even one of the three factors of production, land, labour or capital, is increased or an innovation is affected in farming techniques.

Land is constant and cannot be increased. Labour is surplus and with more modern non-mechanised techniques more labour could currently be employed in agriculture. But there is a limit. On the other hand there is no limiting factor in industry or services which will impede the realisation of increasing returns. Which means that, in the ultimate analysis, more men must find employment in other than agricultural occupations.

Apart from the question of employment, there is good reasons why the rural labour force should be diverted to non-agricultural occupations. More goods and services are produced for mass consumption. What is more, as urban occupations are better paid, it raises the standard of living in the country as a whole.

If our aim is to bring about parity of incomes between agricultural and non-agricultural occupations, this industrial off-take must continue till agricultural workers start earning the same as ~~that~~ their urban counterparts.

The New Party will, therefore, try to reach as much capital in the form of rural credit, improved seeds, fertilizers and irrigation at reasonable rates, along with as much scientific knowledge as may be available with the Government, to the largest number of peasants.

Small irrigation works are preferable to large ones. Steps will be taken to see that all available organic manure is utilised towards increased agricultural production. Alternative fuel in the villages will have to be provided in order that cattle-dung is released from the hearths or choolas for use in the fields. ~~Any~~ In any case, improvements in our existing choolas will have to be effected so that whatever fuel is used, is economised. Today, a large part of the energy that is generated goes waste.

With a view to securing better utilization of land, labour and capital, schemes for the consolidation of scattered fields belonging to a farmer into one compact block will be initiated and pursued with vigour.

In the past, little or no attention has been paid to the prevention of soil erosion which, if it continues at the present rate, will exhaust our soil completely and make it unsuitable for cultivation. This must stop forthwith. Soil conservation is even more important than soil utilisation. Therefore, the New Party will take immediate steps to launch a massive programme of afforestation and soil conservation.

Finally, the New Party proposes to reach electric energy to every village so that with its aid, agricultural production is increased, more and more villagers take to non-agricultural occupations on a whole-time or part time basis and extend modern amenities to village life.

ABOLITION OF LANDLORDISM:

EIGHTEENTH: The New Party believes that, besides capital investment and innovations in farming techniques, there is yet another factor which can raise production; it is the psychology of the man behind the plough. His mind will be yoked in the interest of increased production if he is made proprietor of his patch of land. The feeling that he is his own master, subject to no outside control, and has free, exclusive and untrammelled use of his land, prompts him to greater effort. He receives a psychological fillip which vitalizes his attachment and devotion to the land. The New Party, therefore, stands for the replacement of farm tenancy by peasant-proprietorship and the conservation conversion of 'new' tenure to 'old' tenure, giving him the necessary rights and security. It stands for the abolition of landlordism lock, stock and barrel, wherever it still lingers in the country. Every cultivator of the soil, irrespective of his status under the existing law, will be given permanent rights and brought into direct relationship with the State. No intermediary will be permitted to resume land from tenants for self-cultivation. No farmer will be allowed to lease out land except widows, minors and members of the armed forces of the Union, and those of unsound mind or physically handicapped from carrying on cultivation.

ON FOODGRAINS:

NINETEENTH: As regards the problem of food, the New Party proposes that only in times of scarcity part of the surplus available with the comparatively large farmers may be secured through imposition of a levy, leaving the balance to be handled by the trade. The price paid to the farmer shall be fixed having regard to the price of inputs and shall not ordinarily be lower than the cost of imported foodgrains. The poorer sections of our population shall be fed by Government, if necessary, at subsidized rates out of the foodgrains thus acquired, leaving the rest of the community to be catered to by the trade.

The New Party is strongly opposed to any state trading in foodgrains which is a totalitarian concept, harmful to all the four parties concerned, producer, trader, consumer and government.

PATTERN OF INDUSTRIALISATION AND EMPLOYMENT:

TWENTIETH: Inasmuch as industrialisation involves substitution of machines for human labour and requires raw materials that are converted by machines into finished goods, the pattern of industrialisation in a country must exploit whatever is surplus. In our country, materials and capital are scarce and must be conserved while labour is almost unlimited. As wages are lower than the interest on capital, labour is cheaper than machines. Our economy, therefore, must depend on small-scale enterprises using labour-intensive, capital-saving techniques, dispersed over the countryside, in preference to large-scale industries using costly automatic machines which necessarily need to be located in urban centres.

As the capital-labour ratio improves, the economy will gradually evolve from cottage or small scale industries to medium, and, finally to large scale industries, one stage helping to provide a market for the next.

Naturally, cottage and small-scale industries require protection from machine-made and imported goods. Therefore, the New Party feels that it might be necessary to stratify and categorise industries, as between cottage, small, medium and large, on the sound principle that only what cottage industries cannot produce will be granted to small

scale industries, and what cannot be done on a small scale can be turned over to the medium and large scale sectors. It is only through such stratification, allotting to each strata its own production technique, that optimum employment can be created. It must be borne in mind that the ratio of employment between cottage and small scale industry and large scale industry can be as high as 12:1.

In short the New Party believes in more production by the masses and less mass production by a few.

The pattern of Indian development started going wrong around 1956 when the outline of the Second Five Year Plan was published. Rejecting our indigenous and natural pattern of development, importing an alien system we launched into planning in the belief that once the commanding heights of the economy were captured by a public sector, growth and distribution will follow. Today we are suffering the consequences of this foolish foreign and outdated concept.

The continuous losses made by the Public Sector in India provides ample proof. Yet the Government keeps nationalising more and more industry and trade, not out of concern for production or the consumer, but to acquire absolute power to perpetuate its own rule. Therefore, immediate steps will be taken to improve the working of the public sector, to make it perform and yield profits to the State. The evils of having only one all-powerful master are too obvious - only his favourites will progress with corruption, favouritism, nepotism and inefficiency.

With mounting failures, as a result of its own confused thinking, the Government panicked and launched on a policy of extensive borrowing at home and abroad, of excessive taxation, and even worse, of gross misuse of its currency printing presses. Driven by its foreign mentors, the government has had to expand controls, increase non-productive expenditure.

Every country has a basic choice to make whether it will develop through a regimented system or through a free one. That choice cannot be postponed nor can it be evaded. A collectivised economy cannot coexist for long with political democracy. Therefore this government's slogan of democratic socialism is a fraud on the people.

Totalitarian economies rely on crippling taxation and savings forced out of the people by the ruthless cutting down of the daily necessities of life for increasing capital investment. But leakages through black markets, and waste of savings through inefficient production and uneconomic projects, which are inevitable under non-competitive state management, not only reduce the flow of savings but render them ineffective. The result is that totalitarian economies can never reach the productivity and savings rate of free societies operating under the market mechanism. In a free economy, the State does not usurp total control over raw materials, manufacture, distribution and consumption to impose its will, but allows and assists the people to choose and determine the pattern of production and consumption.

The New Party will take immediate measures to eliminate or minimise the quota-permit-licence system and other controls which inevitably lead to monopoly, corruption, hoarding and black-marketing.

The New Party believes that nationalisation is not the answer. Barring a few inevitable industries which constitute the infrastructure, all-capital-intensive industries, that we will necessarily need, will be allowed to be set up in the private sector, subject of course to regulation and control by the State.

CO-OPERATION:

TWENTY FIRST: While firmly believing in its utility, the New Party does not consider the cooperative movement a fit subject or policy to be executed through a Government department. In order that it may be able to serve its aim, cooperation has to come about through an inner urge as an instrument of satisfaction or fulfilment of a common need and not as a command-performance in pursuance of an official or political whip.

Cooperation is not a synonym for merger. Which means that while the New Party stands for cooperatives in farms, cottage and small industries, it is opposed to cooperative farms and industries where labour and fixed assets, land and machinery, are pooled together.

LABOUR POLICY:

TWENTY SECOND: The New Party recognises that one of the major causes of indiscipline in production and productivity is the existence of multiple politicalised trade unions in different industrial or commercial ventures whether in Government, the public sector or in private industry. Therefore the New Party will introduce legislation to ensure that there is only one union in one industry, the recognition of that union being determined through periodic secret balloting.

In a totalitarian society, people live in fear and are afraid to express opinions which are contrary to official thinking. Everyone works for the government. Trade Unions, if any, exist only in name and the right to strike is non-existent. The Congress Government's handling of labour problems is revealing. In any confrontation between labour and private industry, the government actively woos the workers for its votes. In public sector enterprises, government wields a stick over labour. Government has not even succeeded in associating labour with management in public sector enterprises nor has it been able to persuade private management to accept its desirability. Such double standards cannot co-exist for long. Labour's right to organise, bargain and strike, as also its right to be associated with management in a meaningful manner should remain unfettered in a free society. Every effort should be made to strengthen an independent trade union movement, run and organised, by the workers themselves and the politically motivated exploitation of labour must stop forthwith.

In a controlled society, workers are considered to be the fodder for political movements and used as tools of the ruling party. There cannot be a free labour movement without free competitive enterprise, both committed to individual freedom and Fundamental Rights. Labour must understand that if the freedom of the citizen can be taken away by 1 illegal constitutional amendments, the freedom of labour cannot remain untrampled under Congress Rule.

It is essential for labour to remember that where the freedom of the individual has been abridged, the rights of the working classes have disappeared.

To give a fair deal to labour the New Party will appoint separate wage boards for various industries in the organised sector, set up minimum wage committees to cover the unorganised sector, link dearness allowance with the cost of living and revise the code of conduct rules for Government and semi-Government employees. It will also pass comprehensive legislation providing for the compulsory recognition of unions, the protection from arbitrary suspensions and termination of service and on-the-job training to facilitate increased recruitment to managerial cadres from the ranks of the working class.

QUALITY OF HUMAN FACTOR:

TWENTY THIRD: The success of a society largely depends on its human quality. Prosperity is a combination of human material and natural resources. Only one of the two can be a variable. Though India has not been so happily endowed with per capita natural resources, many countries being more fortunate on this score, India has a great opportunity of making up this deficiency through the size of its large working force, provided it is given the necessary training. The quality of man depends largely on historical and cultural factors, social environment, health and the quality of education and also the kind of leadership provided by the government. These are not mere abstract ideas but something that wise governments must actively pursue in order to redress the deficiency in our per capita natural resources.

NEED OF CHANGE IN MENTAL ATTITUDES:

TWENTY FOURTH: Every society needs to create for itself certain values worth striving for. After 27 years of independence we stand today devoid of all values, constantly demanding our rights without any understanding of corresponding obligation towards society. As Mahatma Gandhi taught us, rights flow out of duties well-performed. One cannot have something for nothing and if we have to develop our society prices will have to be paid, whether we live in a democracy or in a dictatorship. The difference being, that in a democracy costs are willingly borne, whereas in a dictatorship they are ~~extracted~~ extracted. In India the cost will have to be paid through hard work, discipline, integrity and the honest payment of taxes so that the burden is equitably distributed.

In place of fatalistic pre-determination we will have to substitute the work ethic. This transformation requires the creation of hope in every heart. It is only a society based on merit which can give the necessary confidence and impetus to the citizen that the only ceiling on his aspirations are the limitations of his own ability and character. Today, even the most accomplished and intelligent man feels that he cannot succeed unless he is well connected or capable of securing a push or a recommendation.

The only way of curing this disease of nepotism, favouritism and mediocrity is by creating a society based on selection by merit where everyone stands an equal chance without reference to his caste or creed except where it concerns socially backward classes.

A society based on merit is meaningless without equality of opportunity. Education reform, a drastic improvement in educational quality and free education initially at least up to the school leaving certificate and ultimately in all educational institutions must be available to all who are capable, with admission only on merit, and alternate educational facilities available to those who do not qualify, in trade schools and other institutions developing particularised skills.

But even a society based on merit providing equality of opportunities will not eradicate frustration and lead to happiness unless there is recognition of good work and efficiency through promotions and better pay, leading to job satisfaction.

SPIRIT OF SELF-RELIANCE:

TWENTY FIFTH: The spirit of self-reliance is a motivating force for future progress. It does not mean shutting out of the outside world but a greater realisation of indigenous potential. Unfortunately, the Congress Government has sought to make up its inadequacies on this score by indiscriminate borrowing from abroad which stood at Rs.32 crores in 1951 and amount to Rs.8000 crores in 1973. The unfortunate aspect of foreign aid is that it tends to create problems, which have become too large and insoluble due to decades of neglect, instead of creating new opportunities for development. Although foreign capital costs more than foreign aid it comes at its own risk with no obligation of repayment. The tendency in the past has been to encourage foreign aid merely because it flows through government channels giving the rulers greater authority and control.

Barriers to foreign trade, in particular exchange control, are amongst the worst form of economic intervention. The New Party, therefore, will drastically lower the barriers to foreign goods, withdrawing protection from those industries which have been enjoying protection for too long and affording only limited protection to new or difficult industries on a temporary basis. Of course, complete protection will be afforded to cottage and small scale industries.

EDUCATION:

TWENTY SIXTH: A rupee invested in education goes much further than a rupee invested in almost anything else. Therefore education is the central activity of every civilised society. Every system of education requires constant refinement, ever aspiring to higher goals of achievement. The New Party believes that every citizen has the fundamental right to educate his children according to his choice, his own language, in a free atmosphere untrammelled by official directives. It is not important whether educational institutions are governmental or private as long as they are efficiently run and adequate standards are maintained. Even the solution of the problem of the employed educated youth of this country does not lie in reducing him to the dull and unremunerative life of an underworked clerk, but in ensuring that the quality of education he receives facilitates his absorption in industry, trade or the professions, all of which could employ more persons than they do today if allowed to expand and prosper.

Basic to any educational system is the teacher on whose sincerity and dedication depend the values inculcated into students. The teacher in India has become the forgotten factor in our society, grossly underpaid and totally ignored. Therefore, the New Party believes that the status of teachers must be raised to the standard of other professionals. They should be given a special niche in our society. To implement this the Party believes that their salaries should be brought on par with other professionals, almost immediately, and raised even higher as their quality improves.

The New Party with its accent on youth is deeply concerned about the educational standards in this country and strongly condemns the large gaps left in the education of students, particularly in the development of character, morality and humanity on the one hand and professional expertise on the other. The Party also bemoans the absence of any proper education in civics, government and public life. While stoutly maintaining that students within the universities should not be divided into groups by political parties, who only meddle with campus politics, exploiting the students, the New Party welcomes the participation of all youth men in the politics of the country outside college or university premises.

The Party will give top priority to primary education immediately implementing the scheme of neighbourhood schools as envisaged in the national policy on ~~xxx~~ education adopted by Parliament in 1969.

Primary schools are the foundation of all educational activity and the present standards have remained deplorable through sheer lack of interest or coherent policy. The gap between municipal and village schools and some of the private institutions is enough to make a mockery of equality of opportunity for all sections of our people. Therefore the immediate task is to raise the level of primary education in the quickest possible time by standardisation of text books and equipment raising the standard and status of primary teachers, paying higher salaries to attract better people, and also by providing free mid-day meals to take care of nutritional deficiencies.

Similarly, standards of higher secondary education will have to be raised and the qualification made a passport for entry into all services and professions. This is essential to check the craze for college education. Provision will have to be made for part-time study and examinations to provide opportunities for those who are working to improve their educational qualifications.

The constitutional provisions regarding educational facilities to various language groups will be immediately implemented. In particular the Party is concerned about the Urdu language which has suffered due to official neglect. Urdu has not even received protection to the extent envisaged in the Constitution. This has acted as a source of great dissatisfaction to a large section of our people. The New Party is determined to redress this wrong done to Urdu and remove their grievance.

It will stand to the eternal shame of the Congress Party, which has been ruling over us for the last 27 years, that there are today something like 35 crores of people who are totally illiterate, whereas only 15 years ago only 21 crores could not read or write. It is quite obvious from these figures that education has not received the necessary seriousness of attention from this Government, which for long periods of time have put this department under the care of a mere Minister of State instead of a Cabinet Minister. Therefore, the New Party feels that unless a major breakthrough is made in the educational field the prospects of improving the social and economic conditions of the country are indeed grim.

YOUTH AND POLITICS:

TWENTY SEVENTH: The New Party pledges to give a vote to all those over the age of 18. The Party abhors the incursion of politics on campus, universities and other educational institutions. Educational institutions are temples of learning and should serve as centres for independent study, scholarship and dissent or debate but not as battle-grounds for political power. However, political awareness and participation of the youth of any generation in the political life of the country is essential. Therefore, the New Party will foster and encourage youth to participate at every level of political activity through fronts, forums and programmes.

HEALTH:

TWENTY EIGHTH: Disease and ill-health not only result in loss of working hours but also sap the energy and induce lethargy, resulting in lower receptivity to new ideas. This leads to great economic wastage or decrease in output and contributes to our poverty. Besides ensuring production of additional quantities of food which will improve the nutrition level of our people, the New Party will work for more medical facilities, whether Ayurvedic, Unani, Allopathic, Homoeopathic or Naturopathic and for an increase in their efficiency. It will pay particular attention to the training of mid-wives and in establishing maternity homes in rural areas.

Sanitary conditions, particularly in villages, are appalling and the New Party will take preventive and curative measures to remove this blemish on our society at the earliest.

The New Party is acutely aware that large scale adulteration is ruining the health of the nation and will take firm steps to ensure that pure articles of food and pure medicines are available at reasonable prices. What is more, a country which cannot feed its people has no right to sell liquor to the masses.

BIRTH CONTROL:

TWENTY NINTH: Although man can do nothing about the existing size of population, at least, its rate of growth can be checked to improve our economic conditions.

Today our population is increasing at the rate of 2.5 per cent or some 14.5 million persons a year. Barring Ceylon and Bangla Desh the density of population per unit of useable land area, as also the rate of population growth, are the highest in the world. India, therefore, needs to practise birth control. This objective can be best achieved by intensifying our existing Family Planning Programme, giving incentives to those who conform and statutorily enhancing the marriageable age.

ERADICATION OF INJUSTICE - SOCIAL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND REGIONAL:

THIRTY: The first task facing our society is the eradication of injustice. A feeling of injustice leads to a feeling of insecurity, frustration and revengefulness. During 27 years of freedom, this feeling has spread to the remotest corners of our country, vertically and horizontally. Frustration makes a man less productive and deprives him of his potential capabilities. Every man has the right to feel and

know within himself that there are no barriers, social or political, which will deprive him of attaining his full realisation. This can be done only in a just society, free of injustice, where the Rule of Law prevails. The New Party is committed to creating such a society.

Caste based on birth has resulted in a centuries old social system which has divided people into water-tight compartments, giving rise to the problem of untouchability and scheduled or backward classes which plague our society so irretrievably.

This system runs counter to the concept of the dignity of labour and creates an environment where manual work is considered degrading. Further, the caste system, based as it is on the principle of absolute inequality in social relations, militates against the successful functioning of democracy, the first postulate of which is the equality of man. It also restricts their freedom of economic opportunities. What is more, caste is immutable; one can change one's religion, but not one's caste.

The New Party will take steps to gradually loosen the hold of caste on our society till it disappears altogether. With this end in view the New Party proposed to confine recruitment to gazetted services to those young men who have married or are prepared to marry outside their own caste, state or religion or language.

The New Party will pay special attention to the uplift of Harijans or scheduled castes and tribes to whom justice has been denied for long. As atrocities recently committed on the Harijans all over the country have shown mere enactment of legal and constitutional provisions are not adequate. Positive steps will have to be taken to ensure that the law is actually implemented.

So far as their economic welfare is concerned, while all cultivable land found surplus as a result of ceilings, or surplus to the needs of a village community or forests, may be allotted to Harijans, it must not be forgotten that ultimate solution of their economic and social problem will depend on the development of non-agricultural resources and a change in our mental attitudes or a transformation of our national psychology. However, as an interim measure, the New Party proposes that 20 per cent of jobs are reserved in all factories both in the public or private sector.

The New Party stands for the abolition of caste within a stipulated time. This step will restore to the Harijans their rightful status in society, the deprivation of which has rankled so bitterly in their hearts for centuries.

Further, though legislation, propaganda and education the New Party will try to eradicate all customs and practices that go counter to the principles of social equality.

For democracy to be meaningful, rapport has to be established between the rulers and the ruled, between what are referred to as the elite or intelligentsia on the one hand and the masses on the other. Life in India has continued at two levels. The upper class, the educated and articulate sections of the people, who provide the bulk of the political and the administrative leadership of the country, have adopted a life style of their own, and are living far removed from the large masses of people who are illiterate, hungry and living in intolerable misery and squalor. Each is oblivious of the other and unaware of each others problems, resulting in a tremendous communication gap. The policies of the Congress Government have merely enhanced the chasm and accentuated the differences.

In its attempt to abridge these barriers, the New Party is pledged to create a system of reservation of jobs. Although reservation of any kind is a vicious principle and repugnant to democratic practice, in this particular case there seems to be no other way but to reserve for the under-privileged about 25 per cent of government jobs, particularly for

for the young men coming from this class, as recommended by the Backward Classes Commission, 1953. What is more, it is necessary for the substance of power to vest with those deprived sections of the population to eradicate the injustice of centuries. For the same reasons regional imbalances, created through faulty planning at the central level, will be reduced by giving those areas a greater share of decentralised resources as envisaged in our scheme of thing.

FOREIGN POLICY:

THIRTY FIRST:

In the spheres of international relations India finds itself today friendless and its national interests in jeopardy. During the last twenty seven years of its independent existence, its frontiers have shrunk and a large chunk of its territories still remains under foreign occupation. The main purpose of India's foreign policy as pursued by the Congress has been to seek foreign aid, economic and military, particularly from the Super Blocs. The policy of non-alignment, ideally suited to the cold war, has been in reality a policy of alternate alignments with the Super Powers. Of late it has been functioning as the long arm of Soviet foreign policy. This policy has proved disastrous to the country. We have failed to protect even the legitimate interests of persons of Indian origin abroad.

The New Party's foreign policy, therefore, would be truly independent of the Super Powers and oriented to the promotion of national objectives concretely stated, from time to time. India's immediate tasks are to develop close relations with its immediate neighbours and to extend cooperation to the countries of the Southeast Asia, securing just and favourable terms of trade with the developed countries, reducing the technological gap between the developed and the developing world, opposing colonialism and imperialism of all descriptions and propagating universal disarmament and the settlement of disputes by peaceful negotiations.

All forms of colonialism, traditional, communist or neo-colonial are a blemish on mankind and a serious impediment to the growth of a new world order based on equality and fraternity, where there is no exploitation of man by man or one nation by another.

True and effective disarmament can be achieved only when the world becomes economically and politically stable. Gross disparity in productive capacity between the developed one-third and the under-developed two-thirds of mankind produces a serious economic imbalance, giving rise to various forms of conflicts including economic exploitation and a mad race for armaments, the partition of many countries and cultures with constant tension among the power blocs.

Aid to underdeveloped countries must come through a World Development Authority to which every nation contributes according to its ability and from which every nation receives according to its needs.

In the area complex of the Indian Sub-continent, that was Hindustan, the people of India, Pakistan and Bangla Desh would be brought together through a closer understanding of our mutual problems and interests so as to wash away the tragic memories of recent history and gradually erode the corrosive effects of artificial hostility deliberately created. The process could begin with the immediate restoration of diplomatic relations between India and Pakistan, the creation of a common market, a joint communication system, unhindered travel facilities, complimentary foreign and defence policies, an equality of citizenship ultimately leading to firm friendship with collaboration at every level, political, technical and international.

With a vast coastal frontier, it is a matter of deep shame that the Indian ocean remains infested with all kinds of warships and the present government can do nothing more than to complain about the one, at the behest of the other. The New Party shall strive to convert India into a strong maritime power with a large merchantile navy in keeping with its rich history and tradition.

The New Party abhors narrow chauvanistic nationalism and would make all endeavours to create a new world order where the strongest and the weakest of nations would be equal partners in a world Government with a world parliament, elected on the basis of universal adult franchise. Then it might even think of surrendering its territorial sovereignty to such a world order. However, so long as this remains a distant goal, the New Party would zealously protect every bit of its territory and strive for the recovery of all those territories lost by an incompetent Congress Government.

Even while protecting its legitimate interests, India cannot abdicate the unique position that it has acquired through heritage of Gandhi. In the absence of power India's role in world politics must remain a moral force. The mere acquisition of military power would not enable India to solve any of its problems. Nor would unilateral disarmament in the present circumstance be a practical policy for India. But to all into the rut of an arms race, nuclear or otherwise, would amount to the abandonment of India's destined role in history. Atom Bombs are meaningless paper tigers, be they American, Soviet, Chinese or even Indian. The latest nuclear blarney by the Government of India is an attempt to boost up the sagging morale of a discredited Government which has lost all credibility and justification for its existence. The scientists of India are comparable to any in the world. But the latest blast only creates an illusion. A super imposition of nuclear technology on an undeveloped economy, when the technological level remain by and large ancient, would only result in a dichotomy of development needs and methods.

CONCLUSION:

It is to be understood by us and explained to the people that if the above policies are implemented and the Government of India run along the lines described, the nation would surge forward, breaking through the existing status quo, reaching out for new horizons of hope in which ...

... The economically backward third of the population would see a glimpse of hope which makes life tolerable by virtue of assured employment, better education, greater skills and a larger choice of vocations.

... Harijans and other depressed classes could look forward to receiving equal treatment, a ready job and the disappearance of social stigmas.

... The landless labourer would get full employment at higher wages by virtue of the productivity he had acquired.

... All farmers, small and big, would benefit through the development of the rural economy and infra-structure and be assured of receiving higher and better inputs, particularly irrigation. So that the farmer is protected at all times, it is necessary to establish the right of every farmer to sell his produce wherever he likes at the highest possible price. At the same time, to eliminate risk and the vagaries of the weather, a floor price should be determined ahead of the sowing season which would keep in mind the cost of inputs and allow a reasonable profit to the farmer, at which floor price the government would be forced to purchase all agricultural surplus.

... The Industrial worker would be better off because of higher wages for higher productivity and greater job opportunities, giving him a choice of selecting his job or employer.

... The middle class and white collar worker would enjoy a higher standard of living through reduced taxation and stable prices.

... It is man who is capable of infinite achievement. It is man who is capable of accomplishing the most impossible tasks. It is man who is capable of great feats of endurance. It is man who is capable of absorbing and changing. The capacity of a machine can be rated; the capacity of man knows no limitations. It is for these reasons that the New Party believes in individual worth, where man is the central figure and government should be so organised as to give every citizen the fullest opportunity for realising his optimum potential.

Therefore the New Party has faith in the people - in their intelligence, initiative and enterprise. Socialist static planning is an exercise based on rigid assumptions, which are devoid of that positive and inscrutable factor - the achievement of man. It is only by harnessing those attributes and combining them with the aspirations of the people, by encouraging their initiative enlightened self-interest and urge for self-expression, that we can establish those values of a society which will make for a richer and fuller life.

And so, the New Party reaffirms its principles and restates its Policies and solemnly pledges in the name of the **Father** of the Nation, that it will truly and sincerely strive for a society based on the policy of prosperity through justice and freedom.
