

What Next ?

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(Text of speech delivered by Mr.Masani to the Progressive Group
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I must first of all disappoint you. If the title "What Next" means that I am going to tell you how the Lok Sabha will vote on August 20; whether Mr.Charan Singh will or will not get a majority; and if he does not get a majority whether the President will call Mr.Jagjiwan Ram or dissolve Parliament, then you are in for a disappointment. These are really matters for fortune tellers and not for political analysts. In any case I couldn't care less. It won't matter two hoots for the country whether Mr.Charan Singh wins the vote of confidence on the 20th; whether Mr.Jagjiwan Ram takes his place or whether there is dissolution of parliament. None of these three developments will make the slightest difference to the interests of this country. Therefore, I am neither competent to tell you what will happen because nobody knows and even if I did I would say that instead of wasting our time in this kind of idle speculation, I would like to talk about "What Next" a little further. When I say "What Next" I look a little further than the next few weeks or months. What is next after the next two years may be the next five years, that is the perspective that I think that citizens like us could well spend our time on.

What is the prospect that faces India after the government is stabilised or after the next elections if they are going to take place in the next few months. Sometime late in 1976 when most of the leaders of the present government were in prison and the emergency was on, my friend Jayaprakash was in Bombay. He wanted me to participate in the formation of a future party which would bring all the other groups together and defeat Mrs. Gandhi ultimately. His purpose of course was a very good one - to end Mrs. Gandhi's authoritarian rule. And yet I asked to be excused. I knew these people too well. I have dealt with them for twenty years. I have

been double crossed by most of them at one time or another. Why, I asked Jayaprakash, do you want me again to have this horrible experience of dealing with such people. I shall vote for your candidates, but I will not stand for election and I will not join your future party nor will I join the future government, I told JP, and added I promise you that they will let you down in such a way that you will be heartbroken. JP was most disappointed and said that he had hoped that I would help him. That was at the end of 1976. Came the election of March/April and the Janata Government was formed and the people were all very happy and great hopes were aroused. There was a euphoria in the country as if a great liberation had taken place. I was very sceptical even at that time because I knew what was coming.

On August 16 1977 I address the Rotary Club of Bombay at the Taj. I said then that this government was a horrible failure and this was going to get worse and worse. People said why are you so hasty; give them a little chance. They will improve. I said no they won't improve. They will get worse. From 1977 upto today this government has been going down and I promise you it will go down further in the next two years. We probably have not seen the worst yet. So long as these politicians are going to run this show you can take it things will get worse and not better ~~because~~ and it does not matter who's ruling and who is not.

Let us consider what is our position today. I shall quote one or two things from different kinds of newspapers and journals. The first is the London Economist a highly reputable paper and probably the best weekly of its kind in the world. A few days ago the Economist said: "Indian politics has sunk to a new depth from which it will not easily recover." In one sentence we have been written off. The Statesman of Calcutta said "The

country will view the new government born in sin out of crass opportunism with trepidation."That also is fairly accurate.

India Today (August 1-15) wrote:

"By any political standards anywhere Charan Singh's chop-suey coalition, concocted by super-chefs like Raj Narain, is a poisonous mix, designed to choke the throats of those who concocted it....

"Political prostitution has stooped to new levels to conquer. The lurid drama enacted in New Delhi last week, with both the Janata Party and Janata(S) jockeying support at the cost of submitting lists with fake members, with Morarji Desai greedily clinging to his hold of the party, with Raj Narain hurling invective, Indira Gaddhi driving hard bargains and George Fernandes squandering all self-respect, is the sort of scenario played every night among street-walkers.

"Like bands of itinerant eunuchs roaming the streets to celebrate the curse of their social ostracism, Indian politicians too have come to represent the rock-bottom of Indian society. Faithless, fickle and fragmented in their ~~xxxxx~~ chronic quest for power, they have reduced the ethics of the power game to a squalid strip tease....

"Ironnically, politics has become the last refuge of the impotent....

"...does the common man care ? He can see now that they they all belong to the same flock o black sheep, dyed in the same wool, bleating the same dirge of discontent..."

These are very harsh words. I don't write in that style. But I must confess that when I read it I felt this is God's truth. This is the truth in its naked form. It is not exaggerated.

Public opinion in India judging by the press and public I meet is very volatile. About a month ago Mr. Morarji Desai's name was mud. I couldn't hear anyone saying anything good about the ~~ff~~ poor man. Why ? Because he was clinging to office and refusing to resign. You will remember Jayaprakash and many others requested him to step down and let Mr. Jagjiwan Ram lead the party so that a new Janata government could be formed. Morarji at that time played a dog in the manger attitude. If he couldn't be Janata Prime Minister nobody else would. And he delayed long enough to deprive Mr. Jagjiwan Ram of the chance of being called. At that time there was such a disgust with Morarji I ~~xxx~~ couldn't find anyone who had a good word for him. I used to say at that

time that Morarji is not such a bad man.

Now something worse has happened. Today Chowdhury Charan Singh is being sworn at and Morarji is forgotten. I find that the same people who were condemning Morarji one month ago have forgotten all the sins of Janata for the last two and half years and are concentrating on Charan Singh. Of course Charan Singh has behaved badly. There is no question about it. But we cannot go on oscillating wind like this. Let us keep our perspective.

My own suggestion would be that if you consider the record from March 1977 up to date you will find that there is very little to choose between various parties of India. In fact Mr. Palkhiwala when he came to India while he was still ambassador addressed a meeting at the CCI grounds in February this year and spoke about America in very appreciative terms. He said he was not supposed to discuss India but about India he made one remark which covers the whole situation. He said in America there is a thing called Murphy's Law. Murphy's Law is that if anything can go wrong it will. And he said that summarises the whole situation in India today. It is quite true. The ineptitude of the Janata government was hard to imagine. You remember how they bumped off Jayaprakash before he died. Now this could only happen in that kind of ineptitude. Where in the whole of the world will a man be declared dead and tributes paid to him while he is still alive, when there is a telephone is there to find out. This is the kind of Murphy's Law that Mr. Palkhiwala very beautifully described. I think it is time we do not forget what we have suffered for two and half years. Certainly condemn Mr. Charan Singh. I have nothing to say for him but let us not lose our sense of proportion. Now we are told that there are two big crimes that the present Prime Minister has committed. One is defection. Of course he is a well known defector. And secondly that he has taken this immoral support of Mrs Indira Gandhi. Quite right. Both of these things are charges that you can level against him. But let us consider the score.

When Mr. Morarji Desai won the election in 1977 he declared that the Janata Party will not accept ~~any~~ a single defector. He accepted hundreds. If you read the newspapers from ~~the~~ April 1977 upto June or July, Members of Parliament, State legislators, politicians in scores joined the Janata Party and received with open arms. They deserted Mrs Indira Gandhi when she was down and they were accepted. Jagjiwan Ram and Bahuguna two pillars of the Janata Party and now of the Janata(S) who defected from Mrs Indira Gandhi because she lost and they came over to the winning side. Now Jagjiwan Ram is no less a defector than Charan Singh. When he attacks Charan Singh for defecting, I say who is talking. Mr. Jagjiwan Ram moved the 4th Amendment to the Constitution in Parliament and he moved the resolution approving the Emergency. He is the father of the Emergency. So, are we really to rejoice if one is defeated and the other comes in. In ~~any~~ can't find it myself to take the slightest interest in their quarrels. To me they are equally bad. In fact I remember a very amusing remark once. Somebody said why don't we pass the anti-defection bill. He said it was a very good idea. Let us, he said close the stable doors because all the horses are already inside the stable.

What is the position today? They are canvassing supporters of Charan Singh to vote against him. I am told money is ~~passed~~ passing. I don't know. But it is not necessary for money to pass. The fact is that today the Janata Party is trying to obtain defectors from ~~the~~ other camp and I can tell you that ~~if~~ tomorrow George Fernandes or Madhu Limaye want to go back they will be received with open arms. So, on the score of defections I don't think there is much to choose. In fact the person who last accused Jagjiwan Ram of defection was Morarji Desai. Please read his letter to Jayaprakash about two weeks ago. When Jayaprakash suggested to Morarji to step down so that Jagjiwan Ram could become the leader ~~now~~

Morarji got angry and wrote that JP was supporting defectors. This man (Jagjiwan Ram) is threatening to defect and you are supporting him, wrote Morarji to JP. And there is truth in it. I don't deny that Morarji had his case and JP probably did this without knowing what was going on because he is far away and very ill. And tomorrow, as I say, if it becomes possible, the Janata people will certainly encourage defections from Charan Singh to their own camp to form their own government. So on the score of defections both sides have equally dirty hands.

No let us take Mrs. Gandhi's support. Of course it is wrong for Mr. Charan Singh after expressing all the views he has done about Mrs Gandhi to accept the support of her 70 odd people to make a majority. Granted. But in the last eight days first Mr. Chandrashekar, the President of the Janata Party, then Morarji Desai and two or three days ago Mr. Jagjiwan Ram they are also prepared to accept Mrs Gandhi's support. In fact they said why should we not accept her support. What is wrong with it. And one of them said how can we say no to her. We I must, in order to educate them a little, show them how they can say no. You can say now and it has been done in other countries of Europe. In Italy and many Scandinavian countries when very close divisions take place on a motion of confidence for the Prime Minister and the Communist Party has its own little number of voters, the Prime Ministers of liberal and democratic parties have got up before the vote and tell the speaker 'I want to announce that I shall not count the votes of the Communist Party which I do not want in my majority. If I do not get a majority without them I will not rule. Let Mr. Jagjiwan Ram announced that if Mrs Gandhi votes with him he will discount the 70 votes and then make his own majority. So this idea how can we say no to her is nonsense. You do not say no to her. You only tell the Speaker that you will not count her votes on your side and she can vote as she likes. So in this quest for Mrs Gandhi's support ~~the~~ there is nothing to

choose between the two. Both of them are trying to get the support of this person whom they described in most libellous language only a few months ago. They all want to send her to jail but they all want her votes at the same time.

I see that in our press today they are referred to as tweedledum and tweedledee - two indistinguishable gentlemen. It might amuse you to know where these terms came from. These terms were invented by a poet called John Byron (not the famous Lord Byron) at the end of the 17th century. At that time a tremendous battle was going on between the supporters of two musicians. One of them is Handel. The other is called Bonancini. At that time they, like Jagjiwan Ram and Charan Singh ran neck to neck and each had his own camp and his own admirers. So Byron wrote a little poem:

Some say the Signor Bonancini
Compared to Handel a mere ninny.
Others aver to him that Handel
Is scarcely fit to hold the candle
Strange that such high dispute should be
Betwixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

That is exactly the difference between all these gentlemen. I have said enough to make you feel that the outlook is rather bleak.

All the politicians are of course trying to avoid the elections like the plague. I suppose half of them know they will lose their seats. The other half are not sure. Normally it would not matter But I have heard ~~MR~~ Members of Parliament tell me 'Arre Bhai hamne tho do lakh kharcha kiye. Abhi tho ek hi lakh banaya hai !' So they need time to recover their investment. And it is quite understandable why ~~dx~~ they do not want to ~~fx~~ face the people. So you will see now we have raced away from the people each competing with the other on how to avoid a dissolution. Both are giving the impression that voting for them will not lead to a dissolution. If you will read their statement carefully you will find that the bait is dangled before the

politicians 'Don't worry you can vote for me without the danger of having to face the people. But let us suppose they make a miscalculation. In the end the President has to dissolve parliament. Will that solve the problem. I wish ~~it~~ it could. If I could say that, I would be a happy man. But supposing tomorrow Parliament is dissolved and elections come in october, November or December. If these are the only people who are going to stand ~~thex~~ for election then God help India because they would have ~~te~~ no one else to vote for. You can't defeat them without putting someone else in their place. You cannot defeat one horse in a race without another horse winning the race. We can't cast a negative vote and say ~~thex~~ they are bad fellows and should be thrown out. Then what ? We leave a vacuum. Nature and politics abhor a vacuum. So my fear is that an immediate mid-term poll as it is called (may I say here that this is a babu expression. There is nothing like a mid-term poll. It is only in India that they have invented this phrase. Parliament in India, England and in many other countries has a maximum term of five years. But the Constitution says "unless earlier dissolved". In Britain and many other countries parliaments are normally dissolved earlier. Very few last their whole five years. Mr. Callaghan distinguished himself by clinging to office till ~~a~~ the last few months. But most British Prime Ministers dissolve parliament a year or year and half before the elections to get a new mandate. Why we have this babu phrase mid term poll is because Mr. Nehru never dissolved parliament till the end of the five years because nobody challenged him. So right from 1948 to 1970 Parliament lasted the full five years. And we get this funny idea that parliament has to last the five years. So when Mrs Gandhi dissolved parliament in 1970 before the five years people invented this phrase mid-term. There is no mid term poll. Every election is a proper election whether parliament has

lasted for two, five or six years. An election is an election is an electionx). Let us say tomorrow there is an election because Parliament is dissolved. Mr. Devraj Urs who is a very down to earth politician said the other day something very accurate. He said a mid term poll held immediately would not help clear the present political confusion in the country. It might even make things worse. A mid term poll might help if it is properly timed - meaning there should be more time. I think he is right in this sense that if there is an election in October or November the same 500 bad eggs will get back with some difference of votes. Somebody may gain somebody may lose but they will all be there again since there is no one else.

Most people think that Mrs Gandhi will increase her support. I am inclined to agree that out of disgust with what has happened in the last two and half years a backlash will favour Mrs. Gandhi whose sins are being forgotten very quickly. Of course her support, and she has now a balance of power position, is very valuable. She can bring down whoever she likes and she can also persuade the President to dissolve parliament whenever she wants. By pulling the rug from the feet of both Prime Ministers she might force the President to call an election. She is in a strong (not moral) ~~position~~ constitutional position. Her support in fact is not support at all as these two gentlemen who are vying for her support will soon realise.

In 1925 the Communist Party of Great Britain asked Moscow their masters 'can we support Ramsay MacDonald or not'. Ramsay MacDonald was a labour leader who had formed a minority government and the British Communist Party wanted their paymasters in Moscow to tell them whether to support or not just as our communist party gets instructions from Moscow. You can judge from what the Indian Communist party does who Moscow is backing. At the

moment Moscow is backing Charan Singh through the Indian Communist Party. We don't know how long that will last. So when the message went to Moscow a telegram came back: 'yes we shall support Ramsay MacDonald as the rope supports the hanged man.' And that is how the lady will support one or the other side. She may just string them up when it suits her. In spite of that both sides are competing for her favours. I do not know if you read an excellent article in the Indian Express by my friend Mr. Shri Mulgaokar the editor - Mrs Gandhi is back at the Centre of the Stage. He had put it very clearly. There is nothing to choose between the two of them. By their stupidities they have put the lady in the centre of the stage and she is now dictating terms to both of them.

Now that is a pretty bleak picture isn't it? If this goes on on for another year or two as it looks likely and Mrs Gandhi so wills it, then before long people will want her back. Mr. Kuldip Nayar put it very well in the Indian Express of July 25: "many people have begun to believe that the emergency minus the aberrations ~~may~~ (meaning forced vasectomies) was not such a bad thing after all." I think you hear this remark made by everyone of your neighbours now. People are getting nostalgic for the emergency against this is worse. "The incompetence of the Janata Government", says Mr. Nayar, "has set the process of thinking that some kind of disciplined or guided democracy is necessary for a country like India." Intellectuals are hesitant to talk of dictatorship but coin different nomenclatures to convey the same idea. I think this is true whether we like it or not. I fought Mrs Gandhi and the emergency and I would fight any dictatorship. The fact is that people are now getting reconciled to going back to it. Because this is even worse. And the danger is therefore that if this nonsense goes on any longer we shall be in a mood to throw the baby of democracy with the bathwater of the politicians. ~~Now~~ Now, how to throw the politicians out without destroying democracy is our problem.

What India needs is democracy with discipline. Today we have democracy without discipline. Under Indira Gandhi we had discipline without democracy. We want democracy with discipline and discipline without dictatorship. This is the task that faces the Indian people. It is not an easy one for a people like us. Is there a way out. Most of my friends think there is no way out. We are doomed and we must wait to be destroyed. I am a realist I hope and I am a reasonable optimist. I am not a pessimist and I feel there is a way out.

There is no need for this country with its intelligence and patriotism because we have a great reservoir of intelligence and patriotism in this country to just ^{sit} ~~xxxx~~ back and see the country drift into dictatorship and then feel sorry for ourselves.

Next time it may not finish in two years. After all it is a very great stroke of luck that Mrs Gandhi unlike a dictator called a free election and bowed out. How many dictators have called a free election and given in to the verdict. I can't remember any dictator who has ever done it. She is the first one. All honour to her in a way. Whatever it is, whatever her motives or miscalculation she did it. She did not queer the pitch and when she lost she gave it. Now these are two things that dictators do not normally do. So can we count on these bonuses every time that somebody else will do it again? I think next time if it comes it is going to come for life. So I think it is very much time now that we consider how to stop this happening. Can we create in India in the next year or two a government which gives discipline with democracy and without ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ dictatorship. Discipline is necessary. There is no question about it. We can't have a breakdown of law and order and indiscipline in every walk of life. Mr. Walter Lipmann in his great book The Public Philosophy said that when a big country is faced with a choice between a ~~xxxx~~ strong and

but authoritarian government and a weak but democratic government, & it chooses the stronger one. He says that the lesson of history is that people choose strength to democracy. They ~~we~~ want both of course. But if ~~we~~ ^{they} can't have both then they choose dictatorship. There is no reason why the Indian people should be any different. And I think the Indian people will choose fascism if they don't get democracy and discipline. And it is quite clear that neither Mr. Morarji Desai was able to give it nor Mr. Charan Singh or Mr. Jagjiwan Ram will be able to give it. They are all birds of the same feather.

Now how can this be done ? I think this is a very difficult process and is not very easy. It ~~has~~ lies in creating a new climate of opinion, a new character and a new consensus. That new climate would want two things. One is clean government without corruption, a requirement of personal integrity ^{hold} among those who take office and ~~had~~ on. Mr. N.A. Palkhiwala in a very magnificent talk on television which I saw four or five days ago said ~~that~~ that the trouble in India is that we are ruled by paupers and professional politicians who earn money out of politics. If people with private means will go into politics as they do in America and other countries then the tone of our politics will improve. This is quite true because today the majority of our politicians live on politics to make money out of it in a dishonest way, because they need it. They are very poor. Many of them cannot earn Rs. 100 in any other honest way. So if people with private means with incomes of their own, professional people, business people, trades people, go into politics they will be able to maintain a certain standard of public life. In other words we want to end professional politics. We want the amateur in politics in India very badly today. Politics today has become too important today to be left to the politicians. It has been said in the past that war is too important to be left to the

generals. I would say that in India today politics has become too important to leave to the professional politician. The citizen has take his place. How do we get him to do it. I would say that one of the factors that have made for the corruption of our public life is Statism. State capitalism and the controlled economy. Call it what you like. It has meant that the politician has acquired economic power on top of political power. Today the politician and the civil servant can put money into the pockets of a rich man, & crores of rupees by giving a licence or a permit. The man who gives the permit is poor. The man who wants it is very rich. It is a ready made case for corruption. Is it any surprise that politicians and civil servants take bribes. So the Permit Licence Raj as Rajaji called ~~it~~ ^{it or socialism} as others like to call it ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ is the bane of India. Until we give up this pattern which Nehru inflicted on us for thirty years now of making the government all powerful in economic life, in business, in industry, in agriculture, in education, sports, arts - what part of life is left out of the power of government.

We have got to retrieve our territory from the aggressor. Our territory has been occupied by the enemy and the enemy is the government. We have to drive government back to its proper boundries. Government has its ~~xxxxxxxx~~ proper responsibility. We need government. I am not denying it. I want strong government. But we don't have strong government. We have a big flabby government. What we want is limited but strong government. Strong in its own sphere of law and order, protecting the country, providing water, power, roads. None of this is being done. Today we have a weak government which does not fulfil its own ~~xxxx~~ responsibilities but dabbles in ours. Tells us what to produce, what price to charge. People are being punished for producing too much. Today under the law if you produce more than

your quota you are punished. As if it is a crime to produce when the need is for higher production. Its a mad house. This is called socialism. So unless we go back to a limited government - Gandhiji was very wise. He used to say that government is best which governs the ~~least~~ least. Limited government - that is the liberal creed. In India government has become omnipotent and omnipresent but it doesn't do its own work. Law and order is finished but they will dabble in every business which is not theirs, producing all kinds of ridiculous things, interfering. So I would say you cannot have honest politics unless you give up this state capitalism. We go back to a proper limited government where government does its work and people are free to do their jobs and progress.

Mr. Pakhivala in his budget speeches used to call it a U turn. He was absolutely right. And a U turn can be carried out. It has been done. I give you two country in Asia, leave along Germany and Britain. Mrs ~~Tat~~ Thatcher has done it in Britain. Leave these countries alone. In Asia there are two countries that have discarded the ~~baggage~~ legacy of the past. I am talking of Sri Lanka. ~~S~~ Jayawardene has with great courage removed all the socialist nonsense and gone back to a liberal economy. And Egypt where President Sadat who discarded the legacy of Nasserism ~~has~~ and has saved ~~his~~ his country from Nasserism and the legacy of Nasserism. Here are two leaders of Asia who had the patriotism and the courage to find that their country is in the wrong path, to discard it and make a U turn. If Egypt and Sri Lanka can make a U turn why can't we? We can't because we lack leadership.

So this is the second thing that has to be done. We have got to change our economic pattern and make a U turn. Why is it important to make a U turn. There are two very different reasons. Our democracy is very weak. It is a tender plant. It has to be

nursed. You cannot burden it like the way we have been burdening it. From 1950 every possible burden has been put on the back of our democracy. We should lighten the burden so that ^{our young democracy can take} the strain on its shoulders. We have gone and killed it by burdening the tender plant. So the first thing is to take the burden off. And secondly by giving financial and economic power to the politician we have raised the stakes of the race. A man who may not cheat for Rs.1,000/- may cheat for a crore. We have made it possible for politicians to make lakhs and crores. In the old days when the man took bribes he took Rs. 10 or Rs.20 - the railway booking clerk, the police officer when you committed a traffic offence. That was petty corruption that did not affect our lives. Today in one deal the minister or the politician can make ~~xxx~~ lakhs sometimes crores. Therefore by raising the status of power we have made the fight for power very unscrupulous. People who do not cheat or murder for a small amount will do so for a big amount. That's what they are doing today. Take the temptation away from them by giving them no economic power but giving them the right to govern and pay them their salaries and whatever they can get. Immediately you will find that the whole temper of our politics will change. Beverly Nicols a British writer once said humoursly I can resist anything but temptation. Now we are putting temptation in the way of our politicians. Let us remove temptation from them and they will also be able to say how I can resist everything but not temptation. ~~Now~~ Now it is very important what I am saying. ~~Let us~~ Unless we accept this there is no salvation for this country.

As I said earlier we cannot replace something with nothing. We can't say we don't want these 500 people in parliament unless we produce 500 other people. You can't beat a horse with no horse in a race. The challenge therefore is to produce upto 500 good citizens to take their place in the Lok Sabha and

and we have to do it in the next six months. I don't care what label they have or what ideology they have whether they are independents. Let them be honest citizens who will do their duty and not sell themselves. Can we do it. Ex Mr. Palkhivala said the other day on television that this is a task for India and it has to be done. I was very very interested that some lady called Christine D'Costa wrote a letter in the Indian Express today taking Mr. Palkhivala at his word and asking him what he was doing about it. I think it is a very legitimate question. She said:

Mr. Palkhivala suggested that men of high thinking and moral values should enter politics and retrieve it from the "cesspool" it has degenerated into. If he has some concrete steps and proposals to offer to such persons, let him come out with them at an early date. Merely standing on the sidelines may be disastrous. Let action be initiated today. Tomorrow may be too late!"

I would like to echo this appeal to my friend Palkhivala. He is of the right age, he has the right make up. I wish I was his age. I would not ask him to do anything. I would do it myself. You have to take the burden. Mr. Palkhivala happens to the right age. There are other people of his age. I am taking him as part of a generation. What are they doing today. I am sorry to say that when I approach them and try to activate them I don't get much encouragement in spite of all the offers of help that I give. The readiness to act is not there. And I think that this is a challenge to the patriotism of Mr. Palkhivala and people of his generation. After all when I formed the Swatantra Party I was their age. I felt it was needed and I did it. And Rajaji was good enough to say 'come along if you are willing to do it I will back you.' What has happened to our middle aged people today? Why are they such cowards? Why are they so pusillanimous? Why are they such bad citizens looking after themselves. I this young woman is perfectly right. It is no good saying it on television and not practicing it yourself. If India needs men of character, men with means, Mr. Palkhivala is an outstanding example of that kind. I would

put him first in fact. I have great admiration for him. I told him last night that you are letting yourself down by not taking this step. So I would make a public appeal to people like him that there is no time to say let us wait a little and watch. Some people say let us see what happens on the 20th. What does it matter what happens on the 20th. Is that an argument? Alright wait till the 20th. It is coming next week. The what? I can assure you the position will still be the same. India is in great danger. This is how I feel after forty years of public life and I feel very sad that my younger friends do not make it possible for people of my generation to join them and give them all the guidance and support we can. But they must carry the ball. Acharya Kripalani told me 'why don't you and I do something?' He is over 90. I told him 'Dada have a heart. You and I will do something but let some people in the forties and fifties also come along. Where are they?'

My challenge is to people in their thirties, forties and fifties. The challenge is at our doorstep. We can either fail or we can succeed. If we don't succeed I can tell you later on there will be no time. You can't wait for an election to be announced and then start thinking what to do. This is the time to begin, to take steps that will lead to the saving of this country.
