

To Rajaji & Prof. Ranga

2850

31st October, 1963

I returned to Bombay night before last after an interesting tour abroad.

I am a little disappointed to find that no progress has been made with settling the venue of our proposed National Convention. Rajasthan has declined the honour and Bangalore, which was our second preference, has in spite of some encouragement and persuasion from this end failed to bite. In view of this, I fear we shall have to abandon the idea of having a convention in the first half of December and plan it some time in the New Year. Such a postponement may prove to be a blessing in disguise as it will give us some more time for planning and for working out a line of policy to place before the Convention and the country. A great deal has happened since the Chinese invasion a year ago and it appears to me that the country will expect something a little fresh from us in the more fluid circumstances of today, particularly since the Kavaraj Plan and its sequel. Political parties elsewhere take several months to thrash out their programme before they have a convention and certainly we shall need at least one meeting of the CQC before we can call to General Council and the Convention. We may therefore plan the convention some time late in January 1964.

I realise that there is a technical problem involved in that the new basis for enrolment of members which we had worked out at our last meeting of the Central Organising Committee in Madras cannot be implemented as from 1st January as planned. I do not think, however, that any major damage will be done by membership enrolment being suspended as from 1st January 1964 upto 1st February following the convention. The delegates to the convention would be elected on the basis of the 1963 membership in such manner as the State Executive Committees may prescribe. The quota of delegates from each State will be determined by the CQC on the basis of the latest available membership figures, subject to the minimum and maximum allowed under the Constitution.

I have just seen Ranga's letter to me of October 29 in which he mentions that V.P. Menon thinks that the Convention would cost Rs.25,000 in Bangalore and that they would be prepared to give us an invitation provided the Centre bears a substantial part of this amount. I am afraid this does not take us anywhere. First of all, the estimate of Rs.25,000 is a gross underestimate. Nothing less than Rs.50,000 would suffice. Secondly the Central Office and the Treasurer have nothing out of which make any contribution, quite apart from the fact that this would be giving up the principle successfully asserted by us at Raigarh and Agra that the State unit must bear the financial burden except for Rs.1 per delegate which we would pass on. This leaves us with the fact that Bangalore is not in a position to undertake the burden.

Assuming that you agree to the timetable suggested, the problem of finding

a venue will remain. I am wondering whether Madras City or Coimbatore, in the one case with the help of our good friend Sadasivan and in the other with that of G.K/Sundaram, will be possible and would appreciate your comments on this point, and also any other thoughts you may have on this subject.

An early line in reply will be much appreciated so that some decision may be taken and the State Units of the Party informed accordingly.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

(M. R. MASANI)

1. Mr. C. Rajagopalachari;
2. Prof. V. C. Rangar.