

C. RAJAGOPAL CHARI

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NAOROJI ROAD
CHETPUT
MADRAS - 31

8th March 69

My dear Masani,

Paul Joseph Jish

I was glad to read in this morning's papers that you congratulated Dharma Vira. Please read what I wrote yesterday and sent down to the press for Swarajya.

Yours sincerely,

encl: 1

C. Rajagopalchari

Sri M.R.Masani, M.P.,
2, Tughlak Road
New Delhi - 11

DEAR READER—

MUCH TO THE disappointment of a class of newsmen, the crisis threatened by the Communists in West Bengal over the Governor's address ended tamely, even as the crisis threatened by the Communist zone of Germany over the election of the Federal Republic President in West Berlin ended tamely, both on March 6.

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REFERRING TO THE West Bengal affair, I am really unable to find any authority, either in the Constitution or in the accepted conventions relating to the subject, for the position taken up by some that the Governor should adopt as his own the whole of the draft address prepared by his Council of Ministers, whatever it may contain, and read it all out to the joint session of both Houses of the State Assembly. The Governor's address is intended to be a statement of the policy of the new ministry. The new ministers may hold their own opinions on what happened *before* the mid-term poll but such opinions are not a legitimate part of the draft they prepare for the Governor's address to the new Assembly, nor is he to be expected to adopt those opinions as his and express them as such in his address. Governors are bound to act on the advice of their ministries, but this refers to Government *action*. The identification of the Governor with his ministers cannot apply to *opinions* entertained by the ministers on happening before they came into existence.

The portions of the address which formed the subject of dispute in the West Bengal controversy and which the Governor refused to read, were all criticisms of happenings before the mid-term poll. I therefore fail to see any plausible justification for the complaint of the West Bengal Ministry on the ~~error~~ of others over this subject.

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WHAT WAS ALL right when the Union Government and the Governments of the States were all of one political party, need not be a rational or convenient arrangement when the States and the Centre have all gone apart in the political affiliations of ministers and legislators. A State Governor ought not to force himself to read out what is written out by the State ministry when he wholly differs from it. Nor is there anything to be gained by such compulsory ritual being gone through.

The Governor who is appointed by the Centre should be the supreme authority responsible for the protection of the permanent officials against injustice arising

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recruitment and good conduct of the permanent officials should be under the Public Services Commission and the Governor. The Governor should be the supreme authority for preserving law and order irrespective of party policies. The Governor may address the State Assembly and the Council when they sit in joint sessions on matters relating to what would thus be his responsibility. He may make such observations as, in his capacity of a non-party agent of the Central Government, he may consider appropriate in the prevailing circumstances of the State. The outlining of government policy must be left to the Chief Minister of the State.

The present ritual performance of the Governor setting out the ministry's policy must be given up as outdated by changes in the political pattern of India that have now developed.

All these things may mean changes in conventions and perhaps also in the Constitution. But the changes are necessary. Irrational fictions cannot be kept going. It is not good for anybody to be intimidated or otherwise compelled to say things which his heart rebels against. The Governor need not be asked to give up his conscience or self-respect because of his appointment.

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THE CONGRESS FULLY deserved the defeat and disgrace inflicted on it by Bengal. Indeed it made me glad. But apart from this aspect of the battle, it is sad that the land which produced the great big patriots whom all India venerates should turn from wisdom to totalitarian ideology. I hope my fears will prove wrong and that in spite of the necessity to hold on to election promises, the new Government of Bengal will turn out to be something very different from what it looks like now. Let us hope that the Government will give to industry and agriculture firm support and help the maintenance of harmony between those who furnish the capital and those who do the hard work, which only can produce prosperity for all concerned. Then indeed Bengal will prove true to herself and faithful to the great spirits which she produced and of whom she is rightly proud. May the hammer truly represent the progress of industry and the sickle that of agriculture. May the Communist symbol acquire a new meaning in Bengal.

Shri Ranga: Sir, it is quite possible he has consulted our friend here, in Delhi, and as generally happens it is also possible for these people to have said 'yes' or 'no' or kept mum. But it is their secret. Since, mutually, they have sworn each other to secrecy, my hon. friend might think he is justified in giving that answer that he has given to-day. I am not concerned so much with that as with the constitutional and political consequences of this.

What happens here ? Here is a Governor who goes against the general convention and the centre allows him to do it. The country is expected to accept things as they are with the result that, in future, when such things come to be indulged in, by certain sections in the country, the ordinary people would not be able to blame them at all because, as my hon. friend from Bikaner said earlier, Congress Party took the initiative, in Rajasthan and now they take the initiative on a much higher plane in West Bengal. This is likely to do great harm to the country, and to our conventions of parliamentary system of democracy.