

623

Biennial Meeting of ICCF
in Bombay, 28-9-1962.

I

10 years behind us

Time to take stock

*Grateful to J.P. - Treasurer
session.*

Main activity - Seminars and Discussions

Wide ground covered

e.g.

8th May 1960 Seminar in Bombay on "Social Responsibilities of Trade Unions" inaugurated by Mr. Shantilal Shah, then Labour Minister of Maharashtra

13 to 15th

May 1960 Seminar in Bombay on the "Problems of Maharashtra" inaugurated by Chief Minister, Mr. Y.B. Chavan, presided over by Dr. C.D. Deshmukh, Chairman of University Grants Commission.

19th Nov 1960 Seminar in Poona on "Pandit Nehru's Contribution to Indian Democracy"

26th to 28th

Dec 1960 Seminar in Bombay by Quest under joint auspices with Bombay University on the "Place of Science and Humanities in Higher Education."

14th May 1961 Seminar in Calcutta on "Tagore's Political Ideas"

25th & 26th

Nov 1961 Two-day Seminar in Delhi on "Tradition and Modernity in India". Dr. C.D. Deshmukh presided.

17th to 18th

March 1962 Seminar in Poona on "Democratic Decentralisation and Local Leadership in Maharashtra"

- 17th and 18th
March 1962 Seminar in Madras on "The Intellectual and Society"
- 23rd to 25th
March 1962 Seminar in Mysore on "Problems of National Integration" in co-operation with University of Mysore. Prof. M.A.Nikam inaugurated it.
- 10th June '62 Seminar in Bombay on "Panchayati Raj in Maharashtra" in co-operation with Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and the Yusuf Meherally Centre.
- 10th to 15th
Sept '62 Seminar in Bombay on "Problems of the Theatre"

Two international Seminars were held: one in Poona from January 21 to 28, 61, on the "Problems of Economic Growth" and the other in Delhi from 1st to 8th February on the problems of democracy in Asia, both of which were attended by distinguished people from various countries.

The 50th death anniversary of Leo Tolstoy was observed at various places including Delhi where Prime Minister Nehru inaugurated the function.

A discussion group was set up in Bombay in March 1961 to study Jayaprakash Narayan's plan for the Reconstruction of Indian Polity.

In November 1961, the ICCF joined to help in organising the fourth All-India Writers' Conference in Bombay.

Exhibitions:

Exhibition of Tibetan Art in April 1960 in Delhi.

Photographs of Mr. Dhruva Chaudhari were exhibited in Delhi and Calcutta in 1961.

Sketches of leading artists of Calcutta was held in Calcutta in March 1961

Paintings of Mr. Nirode Muzumdar were exhibited in Calcutta in April 1961

The Italian Graphics were exhibited in various places in India in 1961

Local Groups functioning in Delhi, Calcutta, Patna, Madras, Indore, Poona, Satara, Jaipur, Bangalore, Nagpur and Bikaner.

Quest - Increase in subscription by 455 in the past year

Encroachments on Freedom: *Censorship of books & plays - Censorship*
Protest at re-arrest of Djilas and
persecution of Boris Pasternak. *Barin*

August 13, 1962 - Anniversary of Berlin Wall at Sunderbai Hall. J.P. in Chair.

II

Is this not entering field of politics?

No. ICCF non-political and non-partisan

e.g. Asoka Mehta, J.P., Adam Adil and myself

But not indifferent to issue of freedom - This its distinctivity quality

Is this necessary? "Yes."

Why?

Because, to quote the Declaration on Cultural Freedom adopted by the ICCF in Bombay in March 1951:

"Culture can only flourish, find its best expression, and be secure in a free society."

Such freedom threatened from many quarters, e.g. Religious intolerance and bigotry, bureaucratic censoring of ~~books, films~~ press, paintings and other media of expression, but the biggest threat comes from the direction of totalitarianism and the spread of totalitarian ideas in our country.

Quote Declaration on Cultural Freedom, Article VIII

"The new tyranny founded on the theory and practice of totalitarianism is the gravest challenge man has faced in civilised history.

"The defence of cultural freedom is, in the main, the defence of free society against this challenge.

"Indifference or neutrality towards this totalitarian tyranny amounts to a renunciation of the Indian tradition and our human heritage, and a betrayal of all spiritual values."

Has nothing to do with State neutrality ~~of~~ foreign policy.

e.g. Sweden, Switzerland and Austria

Has to do with "thinking neutral" between freedom and tyranny

e.g. Hungary, Tibet, Execution of Nagy, Pasternak,
Berlin Wall

~~JP's initiative~~
Issue of human freedom and the readiness of our intellectuals
to face it and not evade it.

~~JP's initiative - conscience of India~~
Has situation in this regard changed during the past ten years
since we met in Berlin and Bombay to launch the Congress
and the Indian Committee?

Yes and No.

Many changes - e.g. Change from Stalin to Khrushchev, Rise of
Communist China as a threat to freedom in Asia and to
our own Independence, opening of big holes through the
Iron Curtain and the beginning of the possibility of
minds crossing these barriers, etc., but fundamentally
the position still the same, e.g. Berlin of 1951 and
Berlin of 1960 and today. In Asia, if anything, the
situation somewhat more acute. Infiltration into our
Govt. and intellectual life more advanced.

We should review these changes and modify our own activities
and programme accordingly. Hope this will be done tomorrow
in the Business Meeting. But fight for freedom still on.

~~of choice~~
We reject dilemma between neutralism and militarism - False one

~~War of ideas only can we all inherit~~
Intellectual conflict between idea of freedom and that of
totalitarianism must be faced if peace is to be preserved

Therefore, oppose militarism and collectivism whether in South
Africa or Rhodesia on the one hand or ~~Germany~~ Hungary and
Tibet on the other.

Proud of our record

Our stand vindicated by later events

e.g. Characterisation of Stalinism now endorsed by Khrushchev himself

Same with Hungary and Tibet where J.P. acted as the conscience of India

But we do not draw sharp lines

We want all intellectuals from every political creed to come together in a spirit of critical inquiry and free discussion.

Even a communist, should not a flame to the record.

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