

REPUBLICAN PARTY STANDS FOR LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY AND JUSTICE

As per the decision of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar regarding conversion, he proclaimed in May 1956 that he would embrace the Buddhism in October 1956. Simultaneously he was concretely thinking of forming a new political party based on the Principles enshrined in the Constitution of India.

Formation of 'Independent Labour Party' in 1936, 'Scheduled Castes Federation' in 1942 and the decision to establish Republican Party of India, explains his strenuous exertion to bring his vision into reality through an ideal political party.

In order to give shape to his foresight, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar decisively prepared a Blue Print of the Republican Party of India. The Marathi translation of the Blue Print by Mr. D. T. Rupwate was later on published in 'Prabuddha Bharat: Republican Party Establishment issue - 1957' under the title 'Open letter of Parampujya Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar to the Indians regarding formation of Republican Party of India.'

The blue print contains five chapters as under :

Chapter-1 :How a movement becomes a Political Party ?

Chapter-2 :Conditions precedent for the successful working of democracy.

Chapter-3: Why Parliamentary Government needs an opposition Party ?

Chapter-4 :What is a Party ?

Chapter-5 :Aims and Objects of the Party.

Accordingly the news about the formation of 'the Republican Party of India' appeared in the issue of 'Janata' dated 10th

December 1955. In this regard he made a correspondence with his likeminded contemporaries like Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia.

The Executive Committee of the Scheduled Castes Federation was held on 30th September 1956 at the residence of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar at New Delhi. Dr. Ambedkar presided over the meeting. As per resolution No. 2 passed in the meeting, it was unanimously decided that by dissolving the Scheduled Castes Federation, the new political party having name 'Republican Party' be established.¹

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar addressed a Press Conference on 13th October 1956, at Nagpur wherein he categorically stated that he had already drafted Constitution of the Republican Party.²

Editors-R. Chandidas, Ward Morehouse, Leon Clark and Richard Fontera—of the volume 'India Votes' mentioned the distinctive features of the Republican Party as follows :

"REPUBLICAN Party of India is an All India Political Party founded by Late Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar who was the great political thinker, great social revolutionary, and the great Constitutional expert. He dedicated his life to the cause of reconstructing the Indian society based on liberty, equality and fraternity. The Republican Party of India dedicates itself to this great task:

Republican Party of India Stands for Parliamentary Democracy.

1. The Republican Party of India will stand for the Parliamentary system of Government as being the best form of Government both in the interest of the public and in the interest of the individual.

Secularism uphold

2. The Republican Party of India upholds the secular character of the State."³

1. Prabuddha Bharat: 6th and 13th Oct. 1956.

2. Prabuddha Bharat: Dr. Ambedkar : Conversion to Buddhism, Special Number, 27th October 1956.

3. India Votes, P. 85.

Following is the text of Blue Print—

Chapter 1

How a Movement Becomes a Political Party

Indian Congress was established in 1885. Upto 1947 it worked as a movement for the achievement of Indian Freedom. It had no defined goal to start with. It began with the demand for good government. After some time it changed its goal. It defined it as self-government. British Political thinking divided it as self-government into two (1) Dominion Status and (2) Independence. By Dominion Status was meant independence with loyalty to a Common King. By Independence was meant independence without loyalty to the King.

For some time the Indian Congress was agreeable to Dominion Status. But a very short while, the Indian Congress in a very dramatic way passed in 1930 a resolution in favour of Independence which it got in 1947.

Upto this time the Congress was like an army recruited not for the purpose of carrying on Parliamentary Democracy but for the purpose of carrying on political warfare against a foreign government. Seeing this Mr. Gandhi very wisely suggested that the Congress be dissolved and the new political parties on party lines be formed for conducting the Government. But the leaders of the Party were ready in their tents with their clothes to take in their hands the reins of Government. They refused to listen to Mr. Gandhi's advice. Ordinarily after peace the army which has fought the way is dissolved. For the simple reason that during a war standards of recruitment are lowered and everybody good, bad and indifferent is allowed to join. In the case of India the army is not only dissolved but is allowed to capture the Government.

We have had ten years experience of the Congress Government. One can say that it is not very credible. Time has come when Mr. Gandhi's advice be taken seriously and we proceed to form another party which would work as an Opposition Party.

Chapter 2

This Chapter consists of the text of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's address delivered at Pune on Monday, the 22nd December 1952* under the title, "Conditions precedent for the successful working of Democracy.—Editors.

Chapter 3

Why Parliamentary Government needs an opposition Party ?

Parliamentary Democracy cannot work without the people of educated public opinion. Both Government and Parliament to act rightly must know what public opinion is.

To make it clear, it is necessary to make a distinction between education and propaganda. Government by Propaganda is quite a different thing from Government by Education. Propaganda means presentation of the pros of the matter. Education means Government after hearing pros and cons.

If it is necessary to have both pros and cons presented to the people with regard to any matter calling for the decision of Parliament, then it is obvious that there must be two parties, one party presenting the pros and the other cons, with the existence of party there is nothing but dictatorship. To avoid dictatorship there is a necessity for a second party. This is a crucial matter. People are more concerned with good administration than with good laws. Laws may be good but its administration may be bad.

Whatever the administration of laws turns out to be good or bad depends upon the freedom of officer who is appointed to administer it. When there is only one party, the officer is at the mercy of his political chief called the Minister. The Minister's existence depends upon pleasing the voters and often the Minister is required to force the officer to do wrong to benefit the voters. If there was an opposition party, such action of the Minister would be exposed and the mischief stopped.

* Since the speech is published on Pp. 472-486 in Part 3 of this Volume the text is not reproduced here.

Next perhaps to good administration what people want is freedom of speech and the freedom from arrest. When there is an opposition party, there is freedom of speech and freedom of action. They are in danger when there is no opposition. For no one can raise the question why a particular person is stopped from speaking or prevented from not moving to his destiny.

These are the grounds why an opposition party is necessary. In all countries where there is Parliamentary Government the opposition is recognized as a political institution.

In England and Canada the opposition is a legally recognized body, and Parliament in both countries pays the leader of the opposition a salary so that he can carry out his Parliamentary duties without difficulties.

Chapter 4

What is a party ?

Party is like an army. It must have :—

- (1) A Leader who is like a Commander-in-chief.
- (2) An Organisation which includes—
 - (i) Membership (ii) A ground plan (iii) Discipline.
- (3) It must have principles and policy.
- (4) It must have programmes or plan of work.
- (5) It must have tactics and strategy *i.e.* it must plan when to do what and how to reach its goal.

To put in simple terms it is an association of voters with certain objects.

(1) To promote the formation and development of a Party Organisation and foster party through it.

(2) to disseminate party principles through the press and by means of lectures, speeches, literature etc.

(3) to serve as a basis of united political action by the formation of a political party to represent the members of the association in the Legislature to be called the Republican Party.

Chapter-5

Aims and Objects of the Party

1. The Preamble to the Constitution of India says—
WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved
to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens :

JUSTICE, Social, economic and political;

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship.

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote
among all; Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual
and the unity of the Nation :

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY THIS twenty-sixth
day of November 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND
GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.

To realise the aims and objects set out in the Preamble
namely JUSTICE, LIBERTY, EQUALITY and FRATERNITY
WOULD constitute the aims and objects of the REPUBLICAN
PARTY.

These being the aims and objects of the Party, the attitude
of the Party in public affairs will be governed by the following
principles :—

(1) It will treat all Indians not only as being equal before
the law but as being entitled to equality and will accordingly
foster equality where it does not exist and uphold it where
it is denied.

(2) It will regard every Indian as an end in Himself with
a right to his own development in his own way and the State
as only a means to that end.

(3) It will sustain the right of every Indian to freedom,
religious, economic and political-subject to such limitations as
may arise out of the need for the protection of the interest of
other Indians or the State.

(4) It will uphold the right of every Indian to equality of
opportunity subject to the provision that those who have had
none in the past shall have priority over those who had.

(5) It will keep the State ever aware of its obligations to make every Indian free from want and free from fear.

(6) It will insist on the maintenance of liberty, equality and fraternity and will strive for redemption from oppression and exploitation of man by man, of class by class and of nation by nation.

(7) It will stand for the Parliamentary System of Government as being the best form of Government both in the interest of public and in the interest of the individual.”

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