

**BHARATIYA LOKDAL
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CHARAN SINGH

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Presidential address

by

Mr. Charan Singh

on the inauguration

of the

BHARATIYA LOK DAL

on 29th August, 1974

MAVLANKER HALL, NEW DELHI

very bottom of the economic ladder of the world. Even two meals a day, irrespective of their contents, are a luxury to hundreds of millions of our countrymen. Only life somehow persists. Press reports of parents selling their children and whole families committing suicide for want of food, are not uncommon. The proportion of people below the poverty line in the country, that is, those who cannot afford an income even of Rs. 20/- per capita per mensem at 1960-61 prices, is now about two-thirds as compared with two-fifths for 1967-68. The productive apparatus is slowing down. The gross national product has not grown at all during the last three years, while the population increases by about 15 million every year. So the standard of living for the multitude has actually declined and economic conditions get worse and still worse with every day that passes.

The country is hit by shortages of almost all kinds. The unemployed, the landless labourers, the unorganised workers, skilled or unskilled, and at least half the number of the cultivating masses, who hold tiny bits of land, have felt no magic in the story of progress proclaimed in India's five-year plans.

When the Britishers left our shores, India was a creditor country to the extent of thousands of crores of rupees. By 1951 all this amount was eaten up, so that we became a debtor country to the extent of Rs. 32 crores in 1951. By March 1973 the amount of foreign loans & assistance soared to the staggering figure of Rs. 11,885 crores.

As the national crisis has deepened so has disenchantment and frustration grown, not only with the situation but with the very political and economic system we have given ourselves. Instead of living in hope and indulging in dreams of glory that they used to, even in the days of slavery, our

Friends,

Drawn from various parts of the country we are gathered here in New Delhi at a critical moment in our history. When one surveys the national scene, one can not but shudder at the state to which our country has been reduced. Never before had it suffered from such a nation-wide sense of depression, frustration and malaise as it did on the last anniversary of Independence—August 15, 1974. The anguish of all those who love this ancient land, once the pride of its children and the envy of the world, is unfathomable. Nehru's "tryst with destiny" has turned out to be "a date with despair". Instead of an embodiment of our dreams, it is a phantom, the mockery of India that we see passing before our eyes.

After 27 years of independence and self-government the country has arrived at a stage when its prestige is at its lowest ebb; when foreign countries can interfere in our internal affairs with impunity; when indiscipline freely prowls in every office and institution of the land; when disruptive forces within are busy dismantling the national fabric; when almost every section of our people and every part of the country is engaged in furtherance of its own particular interest, oblivious of the larger national interest altogether; and when the gap between the rich and the poor widens and unemployment mounts fast.

In the race for economic development we have been left far behind by other nations; in fact, India to-day stands at the

people have now begun to entertain doubts about the future of their Motherland.

To assume that the crisis is merely economic would, however, be a mistake. It is largely the symptom of a disease that is essentially political. The ruling party and the government at all levels, have functioned in a style which puts a premium on corruption and nepotism in all its forms. These evils have been allowed, rather encouraged to flourish until public life and administration have become a stink.

Public allegations about corruption in the ranks of legislators and ministers go unrefuted. Even the top men are being publicly accused not only of conniving at and shielding corruption amongst their colleagues, but of themselves being corrupt. Indeed, few public men are left whose conduct is above suspicion or regarded above board.

“All those who have ever written on government”. Edmund Burke said long ago, “are unanimous that among a people generally corrupt, liberty cannot long exist. And indeed how is it possible when those who are to make laws, to guard, to enforce, or to obey them are by a tacit confederacy of manners, indisposed to the spirit of noble institutions”?

In his address on the last anniversary of Independence, the President deplored that “money power has come to play a dominant role in elections” and described this as the “root of corruption”. The springs of political life have been so poisoned by the use of black money in elections that ideology of the party and merits of the candidate have become irrelevant. It is largely owing to lust for black money of politicians in seats of power that inflation mounts, black-marketing is connived at, tax-evasion is tolerated, smuggling goes on

unchecked and a parallel economy under the very nose of government is allowed to operate. There is nobody left in the country to whom one can look for redress or purposeful action to arrest the rot. As a consequence, people have become cynical, which poses a danger to democracy.

Democracy in the country is being eroded in various other ways viz., through mutilating the Constitution, weakening the basic rights of the people, by stifling of public opinion, subjugating the freedom of the press, robbing the judiciary of its independence, undermining the cabinet system, reducing Parliament itself to irrelevance and usurping the functions of the President, the Government of the States, the Attorney-General and the Chief Election Commissioner. In short, we are moving towards an authoritarian rule.

Already the State has acquired almost complete control over credit, trade and industry. Our internal weakness and the failure of our economy make us an easy prey to exploitation by the super powers.

Attempts are being made to instal a "committed" civil service, committed not to the nation but to the party in power, subserving its partisan interests. At times some civil servants have become indistinguishable from party workers.

The entire electoral process has been vitiated by malpractices which begin with gerrymandering of constituencies, playing the communal equations, creating and fanning religious hostilities, injecting massive amounts of money on which the present Ruling Party has a monopoly, and projecting its propaganda through State-owned or controlled media,

the intimidation of the electorate and, when all else fails, the stuffing of ballot boxes.

The Congress Party itself is developing dictatorial tendencies where decision-making at all levels has become centralised through the development of personality-cults which leave all decisions to be taken only by the "leader".

Winston Churchill had spoken the following words in the British House of Commons in 1947, while opposing the bill to grant Independence to India introduced by the then Prime Minister, Mr. Clement Attlee :

"Liberty is man's birthright. However, to give the reins of government to Congress at this juncture is to hand over the destiny of hungry millions into the hands of rascals, rogues and freebooters. Not a bottle of water or a loaf of bread shall escape taxation; only the air will be free, and the blood of the hungry millions will be on the head of Mr. Attlee. India will be lost in political squabbles...It will take a thousand years for them to enter the periphery of philosophy or politics. Today we hand over the reins of government to men of straw of whom no trace will be found after a few years' time."

Churchill was no friend of India; so, we need not lament the language he used. His accusation was harsh but the quality of leadership that we have thrown up, the fall in moral standards that India has witnessed during this period, the mess we have made of our beloved country and the fact that two-thirds of our people are not able to get bare bread, prove that he was not far wrong.

The responsibility for the terrible mess in which India finds itself, is clearly traceable to a political leadership, sincere in its professions at least in the early years, which had no rapport with the mud-huts or slums where the country lives and therefore, whose values were different from those of the mass of the Indian people, which had no understanding of the real issues involved, and wanted to apply copy-book maxims borrowed from foreign lands irrespective of our own conditions, which wanted to create a communistic economic set-up within the frame-work of a political democracy and, on top of it all, which believed that a man's life could be divided into compartments, private and public—that it was possible for a man with a bad private life to make a good public man. To make the cup of our misery full, to-day we are blessed with a Prime Minister who believes that ends justify the means.

The economic crisis through which India is passing, cannot be met merely by populist slogans, legislative enactments, administrative reforms, political agitation, amendments to the Constitution or massive foreign aid. It demands a drastic policy change, a new leadership, a sense of mission.

The only way to solve the crisis, to carry out the new policy or policies, to provide the country with a new leadership and to avert the danger of a totalitarian take-over—is to create a strong National Alternative.

The party which is coming into being here today, The Bharatiya Lok Dal or the people's party of India will strive to be such a national alternative. There is need for a National Alternative for yet another reason. The ruling party has been in the saddle since 1952 on the basis of a minority vote. The BLD will prevent splitting of Opposition votes and ensure a Government and an administration which will truly reflect the wishes of the majority.

India's present plight stems from a grievous choice made after Independence to abandon the Gandhian path altogether and go immediately 'industrial'. Gandhi Ji had sought to give first priority to agriculture, followed by light industry (cottage or small-scale) and then heavy industry. But Gandhi's ideas were rejected by his heir who "adopted policies of prestige which did not in the least bit correspond to the internal situation".

Gandhi had sought to build India from the bottom upward, that is with the peasantry and the artisanry or the village as the base ; Nehru wanted to do so from the top down-ward, that is, on the capital-intensive manufacturing factory with the town as the base and treated agriculture and labour-intensive enterprises as evils to be tolerated. He lived to regret his decision, but it was at the fag end of his life when little time was left for him to reverse the gear even if he would.

In fact, it is not only the political leadership, but almost all our intellectuals and economists who have had a fascination for Marxian theories, that are also to blame. We have, as a people, been trying since Independence to make peace with these ideologues—to reconcile Gandhi and Nehru or to hyphenate the two. Whereas like democracy and communism they are unmixable or two opposite poles that cannot meet.

The solutions suggested by Marx for the problems of Western Europe, to cure an exploitative industrial society of its ills, cannot bring about the emancipation of the Indian village from appalling poverty to a prosperous rural community. If the country has to be saved we will have to return to Gandhi's teachings and ask the ideologues to quit the stage. They have occupied it too long now for any good they have been doing to the country.

Mahatma Gandhi had said time and again that India cannot and should not be industrialised in the Western sense. Despite this, the ruling party has tried to follow the Soviet pattern of giving preference to industry over agriculture and amongst industries, followed the American preference for giving more importance to heavy industry over cottage and small-scale industries.

At its Avadi Session in 1955, the Indian National Congress at the instance of Pandit. Nehru decided to change to the Soviet pattern of planning. With the result that the planned share of resources for agriculture was brought down from 37 per cent in the First Plan (1951-56) to 21 per cent in the Second Plan (1956-61), and at that figure the percentage has stood since then. All possible resources were invested in heavy industries and in order to keep the food prices down in urban areas, Nehru entered into an agreement with the USA under Public Law 480 to import foodgrains at concessional rates from that country. It was this blunder of neglecting agriculture that has proved fatal for our economy and is singly more responsible than any other factor for the crisis that has overtaken the country.

Further, what this urban-oriented policy of the Congress Government has meant to the rural areas where 80 per cent of our people reside, will be clear from the proportion that the per capita income in rural areas bears to that in urban areas. It came down from 27 per cent in 1951-56 to 24 per cent in 1956-61, 20 per cent in 1961-66 and 18 per cent in 1966-71. The figure during the last 3 years has gone down still further.

The BLD will reverse the Nehruvian policy and allot first priority to agriculture, second priority to cottage

and small-scale industry and only third priority to heavy industry.

It is uplift of those engaged in agriculture and handicrafts that will automatically lead to the uplift of the town and those engaged in non-agricultural occupations. In our conception of things, there is no conflict between rural and urban interests. We would, however, like to discourage huge cities or megalopolitan complexes where a man loses his identity.

Perhaps our language, our references and our measures may therefore sound strange to ears accustomed to the gargon and slogans of a highly industrialised society of the West.

Economic Philosophy

The Bharatiya Lok Dal does not believe in a system under which individuals enjoy unrestricted freedom to exploit the economic needs of others; nor does it stand for the state possessing unlimited powers to curb initiative, restrict economic freedom or take it away altogether, thereby creating a monopoly for itself.

The BLD believes that the widest dispersion of ownership of property and means of production is the only assurance that democracy is safe and would endure. It is, therefore, opposed to all concentration of economic power, whether it be in the hands of a few capitalists or the state itself. Such concentration gives rise to undue disparities in levels of living and therefore, engenders social and political tensions. It will be avoided or eliminated by imposition of physical limits where feasible, by prescription of techniques or mode and scale of economic operations, and by differential taxation on incomes.

While being friends of the small man and believing in the uplift of the under-dog, we do not believe in communism

which snatches away his dignity and freedom. At the same time, while believing in freedom of enterprise, we do not believe in capitalism which exploits others' labour.

The BLD believes in treading the middle, Gandhian path—in creating a society based mainly on self-employment. Knowing that, in as much as practical ability differs from person to person, inequality in achievements will continue, howsoever freedom may be repressed, it believes in an egalitarian society with narrow income differentials—a system where, subject to exceptions, the citizens will be free in the choice and ordering of their economic life.

In pursuance of the above beliefs the New Party will work for the establishment of an economy which :

- a) i—gives more production per unit of land in the field of agriculture as land is the limiting factor in our conditions and therefore, more valuable than labour or capital, and
ii—gives more production per unit of capital investment in the field of industry, as capital is comparatively scarce and therefore, more valuable than labour ;
- b) gives more employment per unit of land in agriculture and per unit of capital investment in industry, as we have a huge population to support and unemployment is on the increase ;
- c) serves to reduce inequalities in incomes between one man and another which lead to tensions in a society and
- d) serves to avoid exploitation of man by man to the maximum extent possible and thus promotes democracy.

An economy consisting wholly of small independent peasant farms interlinked by service cooperatives, in the field of agriculture, and mainly of cottage and small-scale enterprises, again served by cooperatives in the field of manufacturing industry—will serve our purpose best. It will produce more goods, provide more employment, curb income disparities and promote democratic trends—and this is all that we need.

Role Of Agriculture In Economic Development

Without development of agriculture there is no stopping of food imports which have drained the country (their cost since Independence amounting approximately to Rs 6000 crores by now) not only of its wealth but also its self-respect, and without it there can be no economic development of the country or eradication of its poverty. A prosperous or developing agriculture alone can :

- a) provide raw materials to feed the wheels of manufacturing industry ;
- b) release workers to man the factories, commerce, transport and other services like power and education, and to construct roads, railways, harbours and factories ;
- c) produce food to feed the workers engaged in the various services and industries above ;
- d) provide the market for non-agricultural goods and services inasmuch as increased agricultural production will put more and more purchasing power into the hands of farmers and finally,
- e) provide foreign exchange to finance necessary or unavoidable imports of non-agricultural goods and machinery. Even today agricultural produce forms the largest proportion of our exports.

Apart from the fact that non-agricultural occupations will provide further employment to our increasing millions, there are two simple and good reasons in favour of diversion of the rural labour force to these occupations :

- a) it will lead to an increase in the output of goods and services which are required to meet the varied wants of a civilized people and thus raise their living standards and
- b) in nearly all countries today, agricultural workers earn less—those in the less developed countries markedly so—than non-agricultural workers. In other words, countries with a low proportion of the working population engaged in the primary or agriculture sector and as a corollary, a high proportion engaged in the secondary or industry and the tertiary or service sectors, are found to enjoy a higher average level of income per head than where the contrary is the case, that is, where agricultural workers are more numerous than non-agricultural.

So if both prosperity and parity of incomes between one section of our people and another are to be our aims, workers from agricultural pursuits with lower incomes should shift to non-agricultural pursuits with higher incomes, and go on shifting, till an agricultural worker comes to earn the same return as his countryman in the other two sectors.

Industrial Development

In our country, capital is scarce and must be conserved while labour is almost unlimited. As wages are lower than the interest on capital, labour is cheaper than machines. Our economy, therefore, must depend on small-scale enterprises

using labour-intensive, capital saving techniques, dispersed over the country-side, in preference to large-scale industries using costly automatic machines which necessarily need to be located in urban centres.

As the capital-labour ratio improves, that is, the availability of capital outpaces the increase in the number of workers, the economy will gradually evolve from cottage or small-scale industries to medium and, finally, to large-scale industries, one stage helping to provide a market for the next.

Naturally cottage and small-scale industries require protection from machine-made and imported goods. Therefore the New party holds that it should be necessary to stratify and categorise industries, as between cottage, small medium and large, on the sound principle that only what cottage industries cannot produce, will be granted to small-scale industries and what cannot be done on a small-scale can be turned over to the medium or large scale sectors. It is only through such demarcation, allotting to each stratum its own production technique, that optimum employment can be created. It must be borne in mind that the ratio of employment between cottage and small-scale industry on the one hand and large scale industry on the other can be as high as 12:1.

Cottage and small-scale industrial units will be provided protection against competition from existing large-scale units by progressively diverting the production of the latter to the export market.

In short, the New Party believes in production by masses rather than mass production by a few till full employment is reached.

At the same time there are certain goods and services

which our people need and the country must produce, but which cannot be manufactured on a small or cottage scale. Of the heavy or large-scale industries producing such goods and service, the New Party would reserve for the public sector strategic industries like defence and atomic energy and such others as constitute the infra-structure of an economy or foundations of its growth, for example, roads, power and irrigation, but in which owing to their gestation period being long, investment high and returns low, the private sector might not like to invest. The rest of the minimum heavy or large-scale industry that we must inevitably have, for example, petro-chemicals and heavy engineering, will be assigned to the joint sector or even to the exclusively private sector subject, of course, to regulation or control by the state.

Controls, Black Money And Inflation.

It is the poor and the dispossessed in this country who need the protection of the Government and not the industrialists and traders who are made to run after licenses and thereafter enjoy monopolies which deprive the consumer of a free choice of quality products at reasonable prices.

The present system of nationalisation and State controls produces State monopolies and private monopolies. Licenses, permits and quotas lead to smuggling, bribery and corruption. It is the collusion of the government and big business that creates black money which thereafter cannot openly be put to productive use and hence lies unused or is invested in less productive channels or even used up in non-essential conspicuous consumption.

It is only healthy competition and a free-functioning consumer oriented economy that will make businessmen in trade and industry behave themselves and eliminate black

market, fiercely competing with each other, subject to a certain measure of social regulation, for their share of the market through improved quality and reduced prices. It is only then that the common man, the consumer, will benefit.

As for inflation, there are several contributory causes to this evil, the two most direct and avoidable being (i) the mounting, wasteful and unproductive government expenditure by reckless printing of currency notes and other measures of deficit financing and (ii) the slowing down of the productive apparatus as a result of inefficiency and wrong economic policies. Inflation can, therefore, be cured only by increasing the production of food and consumer goods and stopping of unproductive expenditure. Inflation coupled with high taxes also leads to corruption, driving money underground. This deprives the State of legitimate revenue, forcing it into further deficit financing. A well-coordinated attack on all three fronts can normalise prices within a very short period of time.

Today public sector projects as a whole, are not showing any net return to the exchequer. The Party believes that so far as manufacturing industries, whether producing capital goods or others, are concerned, there is no justification for setting them up in the public sector unless they are able to show a profit.

Logically enough, the New Party is pledged to lifting of unnecessary controls, eradication of smuggling and black money and the maintaining of an honest rupee through fiscal and monetary measures.

Quality Of Human Factor

The total real income of a country is roughly a function of the size and efficiency of its labour or working force relative

to the size and quality of its natural resources. Unhappily, barring very few countries, we do not compare favourably with most others in regard either to the quality of our natural resources per capita and/ or to the quality of our people. Happily, however, while the quantity and quality of natural resources are a gift of God or Nature and almost beyond human control, the quality or degree of excellence of a people (along with its quantity) is very much of its own making. And, as the example of Japan has shown, deficiency in quality and quantity of natural resources can, to a great degree, be made good or compensated by the quality of the working population. This quality depends upon historical and cultural factors, social environment, quality of health and education as also the kind of leadership provided by the Government.

The New Party, therefore, will do all that lies in its power to create conditions which will improve the quality of our people. It will overhaul the educational system and raise the nutritional standards through increased production, provide more medical facilities and improve sanitary conditions. There is nothing it can do about historical causes, but it can do a lot for improving the social and cultural environment, for example, by helping abolish the caste system and propagating the right sort of ideas that will change such values, attitudes and motivations of our people as stand in the way of economic development. Most of our people believe that the world is an illusion and man is governed by an inexorable fate. As a result, large sections of our society lack the urge to improve their economic condition by their own efforts. The New Party will impress upon the people by all possible means and media that the world is very much real and man very largely the captain of his fate.

The people have also to be made to realise that, as

Mahatma Gandhi taught us, rights flow only out of duties well performed. No individual or nation on earth can possibly have something for nothing. We will have to pay the costs for economic development whether we live in a democratic society or are governed by a dictatorship. The only difference is that in a democracy the costs are willingly borne and, in a dictatorship they are extracted. These costs will have to be paid in the form of hard work, discipline, integrity in the widest sense of the term and payment of taxes whose burden, of course, will be equitably distributed.

Decentralisation of Development and Authority

While the BLD would like to retain a strong Centre, with residuary powers, to protect the frontiers of the country and the sovereignty and unity of the nation, it does not approve the present trend which has reduced the States to the position of District Boards or Zila Parishads. The vast financial resources enjoyed by the Centre coupled with centralised planning and Article 356 of the Constitution which gives the Central Cabinet the right to 'advise' the President to impose his rule by suspending or dissolving the Assembly of a State, have virtually sabotaged all autonomy of the States.

The Centre's power to impose President's Rule needs to be abolished. Where the Chief Minister refuses to summon the Assembly to test the strength of the Government, the Governor may be empowered to do so. In case the Governor fails to perform this duty, it should be possible for one-third of the legislators to requisition a special session for the purpose.

The BLD proposes to follow the democratic principle of decentralised development, power and policy-making, in contrast to the imposition of centralised direction as practised by the Congress Government in all aspects of political

and economic life. It is only by the sincere application of the federal principle, which can help preserve the rich variety of our country and promises the fastest development, that genuine democracy and national unity based on participation can be enjoyed by the people. Owing to centralised planning a great many of the legitimate powers of the State have been appropriated by the Centre.

Local self-government, though introduced sometime back, has remained largely ineffective. Panchayats, District Boards, Municipalities and Corporations are entirely at the mercy of State Governments which are using them as pawns in a political game. They are expected to perform functions but are not given the necessary powers and resources to do so. With the result that the work supposed to be done by them largely remains undone. The New Party intends to give these bodies constitutional status, and if necessary, is prepared to amend the Constitution accordingly.

Social System and Social Justice

Man is an indivisible whole. While dealing with or planning for the economic life of its countrymen a political party will, therefore, concern itself with their social life as well. For example, there can be little or no economic advance in our country unless the caste system is abolished.

Caste based on birth has resulted in a centuries old social system which has divided people into watertight compartments, giving rise to the problem of untouchability and scheduled or backward classes which plague our society so irretrievably.

Social justice is not an abstract term indicating good intentions, but is a basic philosophy translated into action, leading to the welfare of the masses based on the equality and

prosperity of men. Equality implies the opportunity and feasibility to move vertically in one's own profession as also horizontally from one profession to another of one's choice. Social stigmas and economic oppression can only be eradicated if the inherently clogged channels are cleansed to permit a meaningful share of power, both economic and social, by offering preferential opportunities to participate in trade, industry and the professions, and by the dismantling of the caste system with accelerated recruitments of young men to government services from the hitherto handicapped sections of our society. The BLD does not believe there is any conflict between economic growth and dictates of social justice.

Minorities and Removal Of Discrimination

The BLD will work for the removal of all discrimination in matter of social, political and economic behaviour between one citizen and another on the ground of his caste, language, region or religion, so that nationalism or the feeling of a common brotherhood may develop day by day.

The New Party realizes that success of a society depends upon the happiness and security of its minorities. At the same time however, the majority should not be made to feel that such progress in being made at its expense.

Foreign Policy

The foreign policy of the New Party would be truly independent of the Super Powers and oriented to the promotion of national objectives precisely stated from time to time. India's urgent task is to develop close relations with its immediate neighbours and to extend cooperation to the countries of South-East Asia, securing just and favourable terms of trade with the developed countries, reducing the technological gap between the developed and the developing

world, opposing colonialism and imperialism of all descriptions, and propagating universal disarmament and the settlement of disputes by peaceful negotiations.

I have taken a considerable time of my friends and colleagues and yet quite a good number of equally important subjects remain untouched. The thinking of the BLD in regard to them all is given in a Draft Policy Statement which will be released to-day, and is open to improvement and modifications.

To conclude : the Bharatiya Lok Dal believes that while economic development cannot be achieved unless right economic policies are pursued, it cannot be achieved on the strength of such policies alone. The country can make no progress unless, at the same time, it is blessed with a clean, efficient and impartial administration and, further, unless the law is strictly enforced and order maintained. Both these requirements, in their turn, cannot be met unless there is an honest, clear-headed and firm political leadership at the top both in the States and at the Centre.

We want a leadership which is committed to right means for achievement of its aims, that is, believes in a moral basis for society. Unless there is a leadership at the top which believes that what is morally wrong, cannot be politically right, the country is not going to recover. The BLD hopes to provide such leadership at all levels.

Perhaps, in order to avert the danger that the country faces, the Congress leadership is banking on the built-in inertia in our society and culture which has made the Indian democracy incapable of producing an alternative to the ruling party or of rejecting an incumbent Chief Minister or Prime Minister, howsoever low his or her performance may be. True,

fatalism or the psychological escape-routes which tradition has inculcated and the proverbial patience of our people or their capacity to suffer which knows no bounds, have so far prevented discontent from exploding into a violent upheaval. But things can not remain static much longer. A point is always reached even for a worm when it will turn.

Nobody wants a violent revolution or a dictatorship today. But unless the non-communist Opposition bands itself together, both are possible tomorrow.

In this connection one is reminded of the treatment that the author of Parkinson's Law has prescribed for an organism which is paralysed owing to appearance, at the top, of an individual who suffers from a disease he calls injealitis, that is, combines in himself a high concentration of incompetence and jealousy. A surgical operation involving the removal of the affected parts and the simultaneous introduction of new blood drawn from a similar organism—blood which may mingle with the blood previously in circulation—offers the only chance of a complete cure.

It is the BLD which will have to play the role of the surgeon and provide pure blood, that is, unaffected democratic blood which will mingle with the blood of the mass of the people set in circulation by the Father of the Nation, the zeit-geist of India's freedom.

I appeal to all those political parties or groups as also public-spirited individuals who think in a like manner with us, but have not yet made up their minds, to join our ranks and do their mite by the Country till there is still time. The perfect moment for which they might be waiting, will never arrive. God himself is not likely to descend upon earth to give us the

right lead. We ourselves can make of this Party what we may. I appeal to youngmen, in particular those whose entire future is bound up with the future of the country so intimately, to flock to its banner and make it a fit instrument for fulfilling Mahatma Gandhi's dream of placing India on the pedestal which it once occupied on the comity of nations.

With these words, friends, I announce the birth of the Bharatiya Lok Dal or the People's Party of India. As inaugurate it, let us all pray to God that He bestow upon us the wisdom, the capacity to work hard and above all, the moral character that will enable us to fulfil the hopes of Mother India at least in some measure.

Let us march, arm in arm together & lead India to its destiny. Shades of our ancestors who reared the mansion of India's freedom, are looking upon us. We can fail only at our peril.

