



***LOK DAL***  
***ELECTION***  
***MANIFESTO***  
***1979***

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# ELECTION MANIFESTO OF THE LOK DAL

The major ills that have affected our great country are corruption, disregard for public interest, the near total absence of discipline, a disdain for ethical and moral values, communal and caste hatreds, abysmal poverty, staggering unemployment and glaring inequalities of wealth and income. The public is fast losing faith in the administration and has grown so cynical that it may even lose its faith in democratic system. If this situation is allowed to continue any more, the light of democracy lit by Mahatma Gandhi will soon be snuffed out.

The Lok Dal has, therefore, decided to adopt a firm, clear and radical strategy which would pull the country out of the morass. It proposes to tell the people the stark truth—to educate them in the problems that face the country and their correct solutions. Many an illusion will have to be shed which various political parties have fostered and the people have entertained for so long. The policies and programmes of the Party may, therefore, mean a blow to vested interests, re-structuring of politico-economic system, a total change in the concept and process of Planning, an overhauling of the legal system and a total assault on social institutions which are not truly traditional but aberrations of our traditions.

Needless to add, the Lok Dal is truly wedded to the preservation and consolidation of national unity, a concept of equal respect for all religions, fostering of democracy and establishment of a socialist society consistent with maintenance of individual freedom as also social and economic equality.

## A Clean and Efficient Administration

1. Above everything else the Lok Dal aims at an honest and efficient administration where public servants and all others entrusted with responsibility in regard to public affairs, will not only be clean and impartial but will also apply the necessary skill and labour to the performance of their duty—an administration in which there will be no delay, no waste and no corruption.

2. While the Lok Dal would like public servants to be well-paid and trusted, it will insist on strict observance of discipline in their ranks. Otherwise, they will not be able to effectively serve the people—the purpose for which they are recruited and maintained.

Subject to a few exceptions, there shall not be a spread of more than 7.5 between the salary (post-tax) of the lowest-paid and the highest-paid in the country. In respect of other incomes also, similar measures will be enforced to the extent possible.

3. Inasmuch as corruption starts at the top and, percolating down, corrupts the whole society, unless there is a high degree of personal integrity at the top level in the public life of our country, corruption in administration cannot possibly be stamped out or even reduced. The Lok Dal, therefore, proposes to devise special procedures and establish special agencies which will take automatic legal notice of complaints and not depend on government's initiative for enquiries into charges of corruption against all non-officials who may be placed in positions of responsibility, particularly ministers and legislators.

The Lok Dal proposes to tackle corruption by cutting at its roots—to eliminate its causes rather than try to plug or punish its after-effects. To that end it proposes to take the following steps :—

- (i) Controls that are not necessary for the guidance of

the economy will be eliminated.

- (ii) Clear guidelines for the exercise of discretionary powers will be laid down to prevent their abuse.
- (iii) Ruthless measures against all public functionaries, whether political or administrative, who are found guilty of corruption, inefficiency or discrimination will be taken.
- (iv) The base of direct taxation will be shifted to the extent possible from income to consumption. Whatever the common people save out of their earnings, will not be taxed, but if they wish to draw down their savings to finance lavish marriages of their sons or daughters or to take foreign trips, they will have to pay a tax to the government for the heavy demands they will be making on the community. Those who work hard and take risks to earn more and those who earn more only in order to expand their business, will thus be rewarded, while be taxed on their expenditure.

Under such a system, shopkeepers, small businessmen and others as also self-employed people will not need to hide their incomes, in order to expand their business or to protect themselves against accidents or for their old age. The temptation to evade taxes will become less and corruption will decline proportionately

As an additional measure, the Lok Dal will plug loopholes in the existing laws of taxation and make the collection machinery more clean and efficient. Today, thousands of crores of rupees of tax remain unassessed and hundreds of crores remain unrealised.

Still further, the Lok Dal will aim at reduction in the incidence of such indirect taxation in particular as hits the comparatively poorer sections of the



community.

- (v) To eliminate the role of unaccounted money, a state fund to finance political activity, particularly expenses of fighting an election, will be established. The funds for party administration will be distributed annually while those for fighting elections will be distributed only when an election is due. The parties shall be required by law to get their accounts audited and published annually. Donations by tax-payers, other than companies, shall be allowed as a 'deduction' from their gross total income subject to certain restrictions.

## **Inflation**

Inflation is the worst kind of concealed taxation. It does not affect the rich, but imposes a crushing burden on the poor.

The Lok Dal will use every instrument at its command to fight the current inflation. We have large budget deficits for the last several years which had or has to be covered. We are importing more and at far higher prices than before. This too has put up costs. The organised industry has indulged in profiteering and given a push to prices. Finally, in the face of a poor monsoon, traders and manufacturers have begun hoarding stocks. The Lok Dal promises that it will minimise the distress caused by inflation even while fighting it with vigour and determination.

## **Economy in Government Expenditure**

- (i) Cutting down unproductive expenditure.

The Lok Dal will also effect all possible economy with a view to saving money which is going waste today and bringing no return. It is the unnecessary and unproductive expenditure which is the main cause of our poverty as also inflation.

It is largely owing to misallocation of funds that India

which compared not unfavorably with Europe only three centuries ago, is an extremely poor, if not the poorest country in the world today. In 1963-64, India occupied the 85th position in regard to per capita income among all the countries (i.e., the developed and developing countries taken together). Ten years later, viz., in 1973, India was relegated to 102nd 104th position (Sri Lanka and Pakistan also having the same income as India). Barely three years later, viz., in 1976, India slid down to the 111th position (out of 125 countries having a population of more than one million each) whereas Sri Lanka and Pakistan continued to hold their positions of 1973.

The Planning Commission's latest estimate (1973) of the number of people living below the poverty line should be a cause for universal concern. The Commission has calculated that the number of people living below the poverty line in rural and urban areas comprise 47.65% and 40.71% respectively of the total population. The estimate is based on the norm of per capita monthly consumption expenditure of Rs. 61.80 and Rs. 71.30 for the two groups at 1976-77 prices. The average of the two percentages works out to 46.33, a figure which indicates an increase in the number of people below the 'floor' compared to estimates made at the beginning of this decade.

Nothing has done so much damage to the hopes of the masses for a rapid improvement in their standard of living as the headlong growth of the bureaucracy in the centre and the States.

It is the Lok Dal's aim to stop this headlong growth of unproductive jobs and to persuade the State Governments to do the same. The money that would have gone into paying more and more government servants will then go into economic development, including building more economic enterprises, canals, tubewells, godowns and cold storages.

## (ii) The Public Sector

There is yet a second prolific source of wastage of the scarce financial resources of the nation, namely, the mismanagement of the public sector. In pursuance of the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956, the Government of India decided to establish large or heavy industries in the public sector and, later on, to nationalise some of the existing private industries. Till 1971-72, however, the public sector corporations continued to show a dead loss year after year. The investment in these corporations rose from Rs. 29 crores at the beginning of the First Five Year Plan to Rs. 5,502 crores in March 1972 and stood approximately at Rs. 14,800 crores in 1978-79.

The poor performance of the public sector can be traced, among other things, to the demoralisation of its cadres resulting from excessive day-to-day interference by the ministerial bureaucracy, failure to build up a strong management service which can resist such pressures and, perhaps, poor emoluments of managers relative to their counterparts in the private sector, which makes it extremely difficult for the public enterprises to attract and hold good people.

The Lok Dal promises to restore and steadily reinforce the autonomy of the public enterprises and, at the same time; to take steps to introduce full accountability for employees, 'and managers' actions and omissions at every level. However, if there is still any enterprise which continuously goes on showing losses, the Lok Dal proposes to shut it down *unless it constitutes or forms part of the very basic structure of the economy.*

In future projects and industries to be set up in the public sector will be only those which constitute the infra-structure, for example, roads, railways, irrigation, atomic research and nuclear energy or which, interests of national security



demand, should be owned only by the state or in which, owing to their gestation period being long, investment high and returns low, the private sector might not like to invest.

### (iii) **Luxury or Non-Essential Items**

Till basic necessities are available to all our people, the Lok Dal will freeze or altogether prohibit both in the private and public sectors, manufacture or construction of, or investment in luxury or non-essential items such as refrigerators, T.V. sets and so on for personal consumption.

To this list may be added construction of sky-scrabers and manufacture of costly passenger automobiles, breweries and distilleries, casinos etc. Such a policy Will create the necessary climate of austerity, simplicity and equality as also release financial resources for economic development.

### **Law and order**

Without a sense of security and faith in the fairness or impartiality of the administration in the mind of every individual in regard to his life, property, honour and his religion, there can be no real peace and, therefore, no happiness in our society. In this regard, the Lok Dal government will pay particular attention to the protection of the interests of the minorities.

Similarly, while the Lok Dal does not propose to maintain law and order or restore order and discipline in the country by suspending the democratic rights of the citizens and to introduce the rule of the policemen's *LATHI* and the early morning knock at the door it would not hesitate, when public or national interest so demands, to promulgate and use extra-ordinary laws like the Special Courts etc. to punish the criminals, economic offenders and other anti-social elements.

The Lok Dal in pursuance of its belief in decentralisation, as an experimental measure, proposes that, in some of the bigger districts, the police should be recruited, maintained

and deployed among the villages by the larger units of local self-government institutions, namely, *Zalia Parishads*. However, with a view to supplementing the local police force, an organisation of the police will be maintained at the level of the State on the lines of the Pradesh Armed Constabulary of today. The justification of the proposal is that centralised police administration cannot provide adequate protection to the villagers. On the contrary, it produces a fear syndrome among the vast masses of people.

In the cities, a new form of violent crime, specifically aimed at the middle classes, has come into being. Only a radical re-organisation of patrolling, communication and crime prevention methods used by the police will check this dangerous growth. The Lok Dal will thoroughly overhaul urban policing and crime prevention practices.

### **Judicial Reform**

The Lok Dal aims at a radical change in the existing judicial system that we borrowed wholesale from the British. While retaining the advantage of the present system in regard to full opportunity being given to both the parties to a legal proceeding to establish their case, the Lok Dal proposes to overhaul procedural law, and, where necessary, substantive law also in order to minimise delay, perjury, corruption and undue expenditure. Over the years many judicial safeguards designed to shield the rights of the individual have gradually been perverted into instruments to frustrate the judicial process itself. In this context, current law and practice will be subjected to expert scrutiny.

To ensure independence of the judiciary, the Lok Dal will amend the law or the rules in regard to appointment and promotion of judges to ensure that all considerations other than those of ability, integrity and experience are excluded. It will, further, lay down a law that no judge will be re-employed in any capacity whatsoever, public or private

political or non-political, after his retirement from the bench. If necessary, salaries and pensionary and other benefits accruing to the judges will be enhanced.

Further, the Lok Dal holds that settlement of all civil disputes and petty criminal offences like thefts, etc. should be the concern of *Nyaya Panchayats*. The elaborate rules prescribed in the civil and criminal procedure codes and the rules of evidence, as of today, which all have been transmitted to us by the British colonial rule, are unsuited to India. The *Nyaya Panchayats* effectively dispensed justice in the olden days by devising their own methods of disposal of cases on the basis of equity, justice and good conscience. The old system, modified in the light of present circumstances should, therefore, be restored and consequently the present hierarchy and the legal system redesigned.

### **Electoral System**

The Lok Dal believes that without free and fair elections democracy becomes a farce. It will, therefore, work for reforms in the electoral system.

### **Freedom of the Press**

A vigilant press is a *sine qua non* for democracy. Freedom of the Press is an article of faith of the Lok Dal. The Lok Dal is committed to ensuring this freedom by incorporating a specific guarantee for this purpose in the chapter on fundamental rights of the Constitution. The Lok Dal will also protect freedom of information.

In order to discourage character assassination and propagation of falsehoods, the party will help the press forge a self-regulatory instrument.

### **Methods of Political Agitation**

The Lok Dal stands for the preservation and strengthening of democracy and the rule of law and will not tolerate anything that injures it. The Lok Dal will educate public opinion by all constitutional means, for example, public meetings,

speeches in the legislature or articles in the press, establishment of daily or weekly journals of its own, pamphleteering, demonstration etc. for the redressal of grievances and removal of injustice.

While the Lok Dal does not believe in resort to Satyagrah or breach of law on all conceivable occasions if dissent is sought to be suppressed or civil liberties which are the very basis of a free society are threatened by any party in power, the Lok Dal will not hesitate to launch a movement of mass civil disobedience in order to bring the Government back to the path of democratic behaviour.

### **Inter-State Disputes**

So far, disputes pending between States have been allowed to drag on indefinitely, and finally settled after much bloodshed and violence, on an *ad hoc* basis, keeping in view only the political benefits that will accrue to the party that happens to be in power. The Lok Dal would, therefore, immediately appoint a permanent Commission as envisaged in article 363 of the Constitution created precisely for the purpose of solving such disputes. All inter-State disputes whether regarding boundary or the sharing of river waters, generation of electricity, etc., will be referred to such a commission whose ruling would be final and would be binding on all parties concerned, including the Central Government.

### **Lok Dal's Economic Philosophy**

The Lok Dal does not believe either in a system under which individuals enjoy an unrestricted freedom to exploit the economic needs of other or under which the state possesses an unlimited and absolute power to curb or take away the economic freedom of an entire people.

### **Gandhian Path**

The Lok Dal believes in the middle, Gandhian path—an economy based overwhelmingly on self-employment. It beli-

eves in such forms of small property as would reduce exploitation to the minimum, if not eliminate it altogether. Indeed, a wide dispersal of property is the only assurance that democracy is safe and would endure.

The Gandhian values of "Antodaya" and austerity must be accepted and implemented if the vicious circle of the poor becoming poorer and the rich, richer, is to be broken. Hence the Lok Dal affirms the right to work. This can become a realisable ideal only if we move towards the establishment of an economy in which agriculture and cottage and other labour-intensive enterprises will have the primary, and are not sacrificed to the big machine and the big city. This is the only way to steer clear of the evils of private capitalism, on one hand, and state capitalism, on the other, and to ensure full employment. Decentralisation of economic power can be secured only by following the Gandhian precept that whatever can be produced efficiently by decentralised industry, should be so produced. It is this spirit that must inform the nation's entire economic policy. In order to prevent concentration of wealth and abuse of economic power, the Lok Dal will also give a trial to the trusteeship idea propounded by Gandhi Ji.

### **Self Employment Economy**

In pursuance of the above beliefs, the Lok Dal will work for the establishment of an economy consisting mainly of self-employed persons – 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 speedily on the increase;
- (c) serves to reduce inequalities in incomes between one man and another, as wide disparities lead to tensions in the society; and
- (d) serves to avoid exploitation of man by man to the maximum extent possible, as economic exploitation leads to political exploitation and militates against democracy.

These tests are eminently met by small farms and handicrafts or small industries of low capital-intensity.

### **Significance of Agriculture**

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 mentioned above, and the people generally;
- (d) provide market for non-agricultural goods and services in as much 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 large proportion of our exports.

Only, if we could produce food which is surplus to our

needs and export a large quantity to other countries, many of which will be facing chronic shortages of food in the near future, most of our economic problems would stand solved.

The Lok Dal will, therefore, give first priority to development of agriculture without which there can be no economic development of the country.

Increase in land area not being possible and, employment of more labour in agriculture not being in the interest of our people individually or as a whole, the limited area of land that Nature or history has given us, has to be made to yield more and more produce which means, in other words, that the effect of the low land-man ratio in the country which is further declining every year owing to massive increases in our population, has to be offset or cancelled by investment of more and more capital and unceasing improvement in farming techniques brought about as a result of ever-advancing scientific knowledge.

The Lok Dal will, therefore, try to reach as much capital (whether in the form of resource facilities such as improved seeds, fertilisers and means of irrigation or otherwise at reasonable rates) and as much scientific knowledge as may be possible or available with the Government, to the largest number of the peasantry, and otherwise bend all its energies towards development of agriculture. Cheap credit will be provided for the small and marginal farmers.

With a view to securing better utilisation of land, labour and capital, schemes for consolidation of scattered fields belonging to a farmer, into one compact block or two, will be initiated and pursued with vigour throughout the country. Till now, this reform has been carried out only in the States of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

Agricultural lands acquired by the Government for public purpose, if not utilised within a specified period, shall be

returned to the original holders or at least leased out to them.

In the past, little or no attention has been paid to prevention of soil erosion which, if it continues at the present rate, will exhaust our soil completely, that is, render it incapable of growing any crops. In the long run, therefore, soil conservation is as important as, if not more important than, soil utilisation. Soil is the very basis of a nation's existence. The Lok Dal will, therefore, take all measures for maintenance of the country's soil.

### **Food Distribution and Pricing**

As regards the problem of food, the Lok Dal proposes that in times of scarcity part of the surplus available with the comparatively large farmers may be secured through imposition of a levy leaving the balance to be handled by the trade. The price paid to the farmers shall be fixed having regard to the price of inputs. In justice the farmer must get remunerative prices based on a principle of parity that balances the prices at which he sells his produce and the price he pays for the goods he buys. The state agencies will intervene in the market to protect the farmer and ensure that he is not compelled to make distress sales. On account of low or infraparity prices that the agriculturists have been getting for their produce, the outflow of resources from the rural sector far exceeds the inflow of public funds into agriculture and allied activities.

### **Extension of Electricity to Villages :**

Finally, the Lok Dal proposes to reach electric energy to every village so that with its aid, agricultural production is increased, more and more farmers and other persons take to non-agricultural occupations either as a whole-time or subsidiary employment and modern amenities become available to the villagers also.

## **Sources of Energy**

The Lok Dal attaches the highest importance to the development of cheap, alternative sources of energy-alternative to the present system based on petroleum and hydel or thermal power. It will particularly pay attention to the development of biogas and solar energy and fabrication of small energy units which will make the people independent of centralised power system.

## **Environment**

Our environment is getting more and more polluted as time passes. In villages, the lack of protected drinking water sources and poor sanitation result in disease and squalor. In many urban areas, industrial pollution has already reached serious proportions and sanitation is still very inadequate in the poorer neighbourhoods. The Lok Dal will pursue a vigorous policy of protecting the environment.

In the Himalayan region and the Western Ghats, a large imaginative programme will be undertaken for afforestation, soil conservation and water management. This programme, apart from protecting the environment against pollution, will yield employment, forest products and hydro-power as also safeguard the soil and water resources of our vast plains.

## **Land Reform**

The Lok Dal believes that, besides capital investment and innovations in farming techniques, there is yet another element or factor which will raise production, namely, the psychology of the man behind the plough. He will be motivated to increase production most strongly if he is made the proprietor of his own patch of land. The Lok Dal, therefore, stands for the replacement of farm tenancy by peasant-proprietorship, which means that it stands for abolition of landlordism lock, stock and barrel, wherever it still lingers in the country. Every cultivator of the soil, irrespective of his status under the existing law, will be given permanent

rights and brought into direct relationship with the state. No intermediary or landlord shall be permitted to resume land from tenants for self-cultivation and no farmer, to lease out his land unless he is a member of the armed forces of the Union, suffers from an unsound mind or is physically handicapped from carrying on cultivation.

Land reform laws shall be placed in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution with a view to protecting them from challenge in courts of law. *Benami* transactions effected by landlords with a view to evading the land reform laws shall be reviewed.

In some of the urban areas within the country, not all persons are owners of the sites on which their houses stand. Consequently, they are subjected to all sorts of exactions and harassments by private landlords. The Lok Dal proposes to make them owners of their sites.

The fact may be sorrowfully recorded here that as a result of (a) the deficiencies of certain land reform policies, for example, non-conferment of permanent rights on tenants of *Sir*, share-croppers, sub-tenants and genuine tenants recorded as trespassers or on those tenants whose names were not recorded in revenue papers at all, coupled with a rights given to Zamindars to resume lands from their tenants for their own cultivation to the extent of 30 to 60 acres and (b) non-implementation of others, for example, the ceilings legislation—that were pursued over a period of thirty years, 1947-77, disparities in land holding (in other words, wealth and incomes in the rural areas) became far wider than what they were during the days of the foreign rule (even making allowance for the few very big landlords that existed at the time). Perhaps, the State of Uttar Pradesh was the lone exception.

While the 17th round of the National Sample Survey had shown that there were 52.9 million (50.8 million urban)



operational holdings in the country in 1960-61, the 26th round of the NSS (reference period 1970-71) revealed that in ten years their number had grown to 59.3 million (57.1 million rural and 2.2 million urban). What is worse, the fragmentation was entirely at the lower end of the scale. Whereas 39 per cent of the holdings were less than one hectare each, in 1960-61, over 46 per cent fell in this category in 1970-71. Not only that : as the statistics given in the population Census Reports of 1961 and 1971 could shows the percentage of cultivators to the total number of workers in the country came down from 51.10 in 1961 to 43.34 in 1971. During the same period, the percentage of agricultural labourers went up from 16.87 to 26.33

The spate of ceilings legislation enacted in 1972 and 1973 did not, and could not improve the situation. According to the official figures, as in the month of February or March, 1979, out of 53,75,000 acres of land that was estimated to be surplus, only 40,66,000 acres was actually declared surplus and only 22,84,000 acres was taken over by Government in its possession. Of this area, 15,89,000 acres had been distributed amongst 10,90,500 persons of whom 4,38,000 belonged to Scheduled Castes and 1,41,000 to Scheduled Tribes who got only 44% of the area between them, the rest 56% going to others. In one of the States, namely, Gujarat, not a single acre out of 50,000 acres that had been declared surplus, was distributed till March 1979.

The State Governments manned by the Lok Dal will try to rectify this situation as far as possible.

### **Public Distribution System**

In order to protect the livelihood of the common people from the ravages of inflation and rise in the prices of essential commodities the Lok Dal believes that an efficient public distribution system covering the urban and rural poor is the best answer. Such an effective public distribution

system will demand creation of agricultural surpluses in the matter of foodgrains, pulses, sugar and oilseeds.

### **Pattern of Industrialisation And Employment**

In as much as industrialisation involves substitution of machines for human labour and requires raw materials that may be processed or converted by these machines into finished goods for use or consumption of man, the pattern or extent of industrialisation in a country depends, first, on the rate and amount of raw materials or farm surpluses that the country can realise and, second, on the ratio these surpluses or capital bears to labour. In our country, of the two factors of production in industry, capital and labour, it is labour which is cheaper than machines. Our policy, therefore, has of necessity, to be such as would be economical in the use of capital resources though it may be wasteful of labour resources—an economy where capital will yield the maximum returns though returns from labour may not be of the same scale. It will be an economy where cottage or small-scale enterprises using labour-intensive, capital-saving techniques, dispersed over the countryside, will or should form the main pattern, and not large-scale industries which use highly automatic, costly machines that require more capital relative to labour, and are usually, and need necessarily be located in urban centres.

In our circumstances, the country's growing population is a liability, not an asset. It is estimated that at the present rate the country will have a population of over 950 million by the year 2000 A.D. One hundred million people will have been added to the labour force in the next 20 years. These new entrants cannot be absorbed in the cities which have already become vast camping sites for migrants from other traditional occupations. Today there are 14 million registered unemployed in the urban areas alone, and last year while the central government employed 2.2 lakh more

people, 27 lakh of people registered themselves with the employment exchanges.

Subject to certain exceptions, therefore, that may have to be made in the long-term interest of the country, large-scale industries shall or should come only, in course of time, as the apex of an industrial structure with cottage or small-scale industries as its base. This sequence is all the more desirable because one stage helps provide a market for the next. Large-scale industry will grow on the basis of cottage or small-scale industries (which will mostly produce consumer goods) responding to their demand and adjusting itself to their needs, while cottage or small-scale industries will, in their turn, grow on the basis of agricultural surpluses (which term here includes food and raw materials derived from land, animals and mines). The progression from labour-intensive techniques to capital-intensive techniques will thus be governed by the rate at which more and more capital becomes available for investment in industry relative to labour that is released from, or no longer required in, agriculture.

The Lok Dal proposes, therefore, that in future no capital intensive enterprises shall be established, or allowed to be established in the country for a purpose which could be carried out, or, for production of goods which could be manufactured on a small or cottage scale.

Cottage industry may be defined as an industry which is carried on by members of a family or household and produces traditional commodities with aid of hand or non-power-driven equipment and techniques. Traditional rural artisans like blacksmiths, carpenters weavers, leather workers and potters constitute a vast repository of skills and potential for increased production and additional employment. Weavers, for instance, are not only a socially backward community but also an economically exploited class. They

are the single largest artisan group in the country. The Lok Dal policy of reservation for and encouragement to cottage industry or handicrafts will go a long way towards resolving their difficulties.

Small industry is an industry which, if carried on by power, employs not more than ten hired workers, and, if carried on without power, employs not more than twenty workers.

With a view to regulating the industrial pattern in the national interest, a law demarcating the sphere of various industries will be placed on the Statute Book—the reason being that, in a free market, benefits of less capital-intensive or more labour-intensive enterprises are insufficient, as a general rule, to offset financially the superior technology of the modern mill. As a corollary, such existing mills or factories as are manufacturing goods which can be produced on a small or cottage scale, will not be allowed to expand and will have gradually or by phases made to export their output. Government will do all that it can to help them compete in foreign markets. If they cannot so compete, they will be phased out so that the internal market shall remain the preserve of small and cottage industry. Once the decision is taken—and taken firmly—small labour-intensive enterprises will fill the vacuum without loss of time.

### **Concentration of Wealth**

There has been a growing concentration of wealth and economic power in the hands of a few business groups. In the ten years of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's rule the total assets of the top twenty business groups increased by 120%, that is, from Rs. 2,335 crores in 1966 to Rs. 5,111 crores in 1976. The Lok Dal is determined to reduce this concentration of wealth. For this purpose, it will adopt a number of measures such as a ban on the establishment of capital intensive industries producing goods which can be manufac-



tured in the small-scale and cottage sectors, use of regulatory powers of the Government for preventing profiteering and protecting users and consumers, plugging of loopholes in corporate and personal taxation, policy of not giving licences to the big business groups and encouraging new entrepreneurs, etc. etc.

### **Spirit of Self Reliance**

The Lok Dal would inculcate in the people a spirit of self-reliance and swadeshi. A grim determination to stand on our own feet and to solve our national problems in accordance with our own genius and economic circumstances alone will entitle us to the respect of the world.

The amount of external loans and other assistance which Government of India received, and had stood at a paltry figure of Rs. 32 crores in March 1951 and Rs. 318 crores in March, 1956, totalled to an amount of Rs. 20,556.4 crores in March, 1978 (of which 8.7 per cent was in the form of grant and 27.7 per cent untied credits). The servicing charges budgetted in 1978-79 alone came to Rs. 899.7 crores (Rs. 609 crores as amortisation and Rs. 290.6 crores as interest payments).

Foreign aid, in whatever form, debasing to our national dignity however. The Lok Dal will, therefore, take steps to obviate the need of foreign aid to the minimum.

### **Multi-National and Foreign Collaboration**

Foreign capital also occupies a dominant position in the private corporate sector of the country. It has been calculated that in the early seventies the share of all foreign companies (having more than 40% equity) in the private corporate sector in India was about 33%. If other foreign companies under indirect foreign control are taken into account, the share rose nearly to 50%. The aggregate inflow of foreign capital nearly doubled from Rs. 890 crores in 1964 to Rs. 1,943 crores in 1974. After draining the



country at the rate of about Rs. 100 crores per year by way of dividends, profits, technical know-how fees, etc., they were still able to build up an aggregate asset of Rs. 2,922 crores in 1974, of which Rs. 1,348 crores were invested in high-profit yielding industries and Rs. 1,134 crores in trade and services.

The importance of large foreign companies as a component of Indian big business can be realised from the fact that the aggregate total assets of the largest 20 foreign companies increased by 138 per cent during the last decade.

Further, some of the foreign companies operating in India take an undue interest in the political life of the country. Two big American multi-nationals and one British multi-national have made disclosures before Courts that separate funds were maintained by them for a variety of purposes including payment in India to political parties, labour leaders and Government Officials.

The Lok Dal will take steps to break the monopolistic stranglehold of foreign companies over our economy, particularly, in areas where we know how to stand on our own feet.

### **Rejuvenation of the Village**

The naked reality of India is that 5,75,000 villages devoid of all economic viability and supporting 80 per cent of its 650 million population are juxtaposed against urban slums where human pressures in heat and sweat have overrun whatever urban life existed prior to Independence.

The paucity of farm incomes and rural employment has led to tardy capital formation in the village sector. While the ratio of Gross Domestic Capital Formation in agriculture to that in the entire economy stood at 21.8 per cent, 23.4 per cent and 30.7 per cent in the years 1950-51, 1951-52 and 1952-53 respectively of the First Five Year Plan, it came down to 13.4 per cent, 15.4 per cent and 16.1 per cent

during the last three years, 1975-76, 1976-77 and 1977-78 respectively.

The disparity between the economic conditions of the village and the town that existed on the departure of the British from our shores, has, instead of being narrowed down wider and wider. At 1970-71 prices the income of an agricultural worker rose from Rs. 960 in 1950-51 to Rs. 1,340 in 1977-78, i.e., by 39.6 per cent whereas during the same period the income of a non-agricultural worker rose from Rs. 1,713 to Rs. 4,630 i.e., by 170.3 per cent. Thus, the ratio between the per capita income of agricultural workers and non-agricultural workers which stood at 1:1.78 in 1950-51 widened to 1:3.46 in 1977-78.

The Lok Dal will not only check the growing disparities between town and village but pledges itself to initiate a comprehensive new village movement and promote rural growth centres.

The new village movement we envisage will bring new life, hope and dignity to rural India seen as viable communities with improved dwellings, clean water and modern sanitation, dependable and convenient energy supplies, adequate transport and communication facilities that link it to the larger world, suitable health and educational services, access to credit and markets, culturally invigorated and no longer compartmentalised by barriers of caste and feudal distinctions based on land-ownership or occupation.

The new village will be the focus of small modern farms and thriving workshops, providing gainful and varied employment for all. Every effort shall be made to attract or locate as many non-agricultural enterprises in rural areas as possible. But primary attention shall be paid to the revival and fostering of cottage industries or handicrafts which alone can lead to the elimination of unemployment and under-employment in our villages. Privation, dirt, drudgery and

dead habit will be no more. Women will emerge into their own. The money-lender and bonded labour will be things of the past.

## **Urban renewal**

Innumerable slums, particularly, in the metropolitan cities, situated in the shadows of sky-scrapers and 5-star hotels, are a shame to any society; they are the gift or product of capital-intensive industries established in an environment of a capital-poor and labour-rich economy. The Lok Dal proposes to improve their lot by providing them with all minimum facilities that a civilised life demands—sanitary conditions, light, clean drinking water and requisite living space, etc.—and, if necessary, to shift them to new sites.

## **Prevention of Growth of Big Cities**

In order that huge aggregations of population in the form of super-metropolitan cities which create so many problems of management—housing, transport, law and order, etc.—may not multiply further, the Lok Dal will prohibit establishment of capital-intensive industries in towns which had a population of half a million in 1971, and also take other necessary steps to that end.

## **Cooperation**

Small Farms and cottage or small-scale industries that the Lok Dal envisages will be linked together by the principle of cooperation. But while firmly believing in its utility, the Lok Dal does not consider the cooperative movement a fit subject or policy to be executed through a Government department. In order that it may be able to serve its aim, cooperation has to come about as a result of an urge from within the people themselves as an instrument of satisfaction or fulfilment of a common need of theirs and not as a command-performance or in pursuance of an official or political whip.

## **Labour Policy**

The Lok Dal will so refashion the labour policy as will promote industrial peace, prevent stoppages of production, increase output and efficiency and put an end to ill-treatment and arbitrary dismissal of workers.

While the Lok Dal recognises the need to organise trade unions for protection of the rights of the workers, it will expect them not to use their strategic power in the economy to the detriment of the society at large.

The Lok Dal will take steps to link wage increase to the growth of productivity.

The Lok Dal recognises that one of the major causes of indiscipline in the apparatus of industrial production is the existence of multiple politicised trade unions in different industrial or commercial ventures, whether in government services, the public sector undertakings or in private industry. Therefore, the Lok Dal will introduce legislation to ensure that in large establishments there is only one union in one establishment for the purposes of bargaining with the management—the recognition of the union being determined through secret ballot periodically.

A total ban on child labour and bonded labour shall be immediately imposed.

## **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. 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 our own making.

The Lok Dal, therefore, will do all that lies in its power

to create conditions which will improve the quality of our people

## **Need of Change in Mental Attitudes**

The Lok Dal will work for a change in such of the values, attitudes and motivations of our people as stand in the way of economic development, for example, that the world is an illusion and man is governed by an inexorable fate—attitudes because of which large sections of our society lack the urge to improve their economic conditions by their own efforts.

The people have also to be made to realise that, as the Mahatma taught us, rights flow only out of the duties well performed. No individual or nation on earth can possibly have something for nothing. There is no substitute for hard work, discipline, integrity in the widest sense of the term and payment of taxes whose burden, of course, will be equitably distributed.

## **Education**

The Lok Dal will concentrate on enforcing free, universal and compulsory primary education which will open the minds of the masses to new ideas and on organising technical education which will produce the necessary personnel for every technical job from the lowest to the highest.

Secondary education will be vocationalised and a large number of professional courses made available to school-leavers

The Lok Dal stands for reasonable government control on all privately-run educational institutions with a view to improving the quality of education and the service conditions of teachers. It will, however, ensure autonomy and academic freedom for universities and institutions of higher learning.

Measures have to be taken to ensure that good men are attracted to the profession of teaching, for unless there are good teachers, there will be no improvement in the character of our young generation.



## **Scientific Research**

Needless to say, the Lok Dal will give every encouragement to scientific research. Agricultural research will receive the utmost due attention. Research will also be oriented towards decentralisation of industrial units, fabrication of small machines, small solar energy units, improvement of traditional implements, bullock-carts and so on. Necessarily, it will further be directed towards making India self-reliant and strong in terms of defence.

## **Students and Politics**

Educational institutions are temples of learning and should as centres for study, scholarship, serve debate and dissent. They should not become a battle ground for politics of power. Special attention will be paid to the problems of students, however. Every encouragement will be given to sport and athletics.

## **Language Problem**

Every language shall be given the maximum opportunity for development. No language shall be imposed on any section of the society against its will.

So far as the question of Urdu is concerned, the Lok Dal holds that Urdu speakers have every right to conserve its script as also to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. The Lok Dal-manned government will provide all possible facilities for instruction in Urdu to all those who want it.

## **Equal Treatment of all Nations**

The Lok Dal will work for the removal of all discrimination in matters of social, political and economic behaviour between one citizen and another, on the ground of one's caste, language region or religion, so that nationalism or the feeling of a common India brotherhood gets strengthened day by day. At the same time, the Lok Dal will take particular care to see that minorities feel fully assured in the

pursuit of their particular faith or way of life. The success of a society depends upon the happiness and security of its minorities. Nor should the majority be made to feel that such progress is being sought at its expense. It is only an open and just society functioning according to the rule of law, based on merit and social justice, with equality of opportunities for all and the due recognition for work and efficiency which can strike this balance.

### **Aligarh Muslim University**

Amendments made to the Legislation governing the University during the days of Smt. Indira Gandhi, shall be annulled.

### **Caste System**

The Lok Dal will take all steps that will gradually loosen the hold of caste on our society till it disappears altogether. With this end in view Lok Dal proposes *inter alia* to give preference in recruitment to gazetted services to those young men who have married outside their own caste.

### **Scheduled Castes and Tribes**

The Lok Dal will pay special attention to the uplift of Harijans or Scheduled Castes and Tribes to whom justice has been denied for long.

So far as their economic welfare is concerned, while all cultivable land that is found surplus, as a result of imposition of ceilings on large holdings or surplus to the needs of the village community or the forest and other needs of the State, may be allotted to Harijans, the ultimate solution of their economic problem (as also of tens of millions of other landless or unemployed and under-employed persons) will depend, by and large, on development of labour-intensive enterprises, agrobased industries and other non-agricultural resources, of the country - which will, in its turn, depend on increased agricultural production and a change in our mental attitudes or a transformation of our national psychology.

The scheduled castes and tribes already enjoy reservation in recruitment to public services proportionate to their population. The Lok Dal proposes that similar reservation may be made in allotment of permits or licences that may lie in the gift of government but do not require any technical skill is exploit.

### **Tribal Interests**

The Lok Dal holds that the land and forest rights of the scheduled Tribes will be safeguarded. Forest policies will not be formulated or implemented at the cost of the adivasis. Nor will forest contractors be permitted to exploit these simple folk. Forest village will be converted into revenue villages.

### **Reservation of Backward Castes in Gazetted Services**

While the socially and educationally backward classes (other than Scheduled Tribes and Castes), both Hindu and Muslim, constitute more than half of our people, they have little place in the administrative map of the country and are, therefore, smarting under a sense of injustice and deprivation.

While the Lok Dal regards that reservation cannot be a permanent feature of our arrangements, in an unequal social order that obtains today, there is no alternative to the policy of preferential opportunities. At least 25 per cent of Groups A and B Group jobs in the Central Government services will, therefore, be reserved for young men and women coming from these classes, as recommended by the Backward Classes Commission appointed in the fifties by the Union Government itself, under Article 340 of the Constitution.

### **Smaller States**

The Lok Dal believes in the need for smaller states with a view to promoting administrative efficiency and rapid economic development.

## **Social Security**

The old, infirm, orphaned, handicapped, retired and other disabled or retired persons who have nobody to lean upon, have a legitimate claim on society. The Lok Dal will seek to build up a comprehensive social insurance scheme covering old age and disability

## **Women**

Our women folk suffer from various social and other disabilities. The Lok Dal shall promote girls' education and take steps to lighten the burdens of women in rural areas through provision of smokeless fuel, improvement in traditional chulhas, provision of Sulabh Sheuchalayas and other facilities. We shall also try to tackle the special problems which confront women in urban areas.

Dowry is the greatest curse and the Lok Dal will take effective steps to abolish this evil by law, education and persuasion.

## **Health**

The Lok Dal will devote special attention to providing health facilities to the rural areas and all vulnerable sections of the population including the urban poor. It will attempt to bring simple medical aid within the reach of every citizen by organising a cadre of medical, para-medical and community health workers, among whom trained practitioners of indigenous systems of medicine will be part. These cadres will form a pyramid with appropriate referral, dispensary, hospital and specialised services at the higher rungs. Adequate emphasis will be placed on preventive health, provision of safe drinking water, programme to ensure sanitation and immunisation in the rural areas and the production of inexpensive drugs and medicines

The Lok Dal will put down adulteration with a strong hand.

## **Prohibition**

The use of alcohol and other intoxicants leads to crime, poverty, breaking up of homes, decline of health and erosion of moral values. All public drinking will, therefore, be prohibited by law. Nor will drink be sold or permitted within three miles of a State or national highway, or on trains or aeroplanes. Outside these the Lok Dal will rely on education and persuasion to curb drinking. Total prohibition by law has, so far, only made multimillionaires out of bootleggers who have then financed political parties.

The residents of a village or locality will, however, be free to demand by a majority that no excise shop shall be established in their area or that an existing one shall be closed. The State Government concerned will be bound to honour the verdict of the majority.

## **Family Planning**

The Lok Dal holds that while it will make all efforts to increase agricultural and industrial production it will take steps to ensure that the rate of our population growth is substantially reduced. Without reduction in our birth rates no amount of economic production will suffice to eradicate our poverty or otherwise improve the quality of life of our people. However, while a law to this end will be enacted no physical force will be applied against individuals to further this national aim.

## **Foreign Policy**

The Lok Dal's foreign policy will reflect the nation's enlightened interest and its aspirations and priorities at home. It will oppose all forms of colonialism, neo-colonialism and racialism. It stands for friendship with all. It is committed to non-alignment. It will strive for the peaceful settlement of all international disputes and will work with other Third World nations to establish a new and just international



economic order.

The Lok Dal will strive to resolve such outstanding issues as remain with some of its neighbours and will consciously promote a good-neighbour policy. It stands for regional cooperation for the common good, abolition of military blocs and spheres of influence and universal and general disarmament.

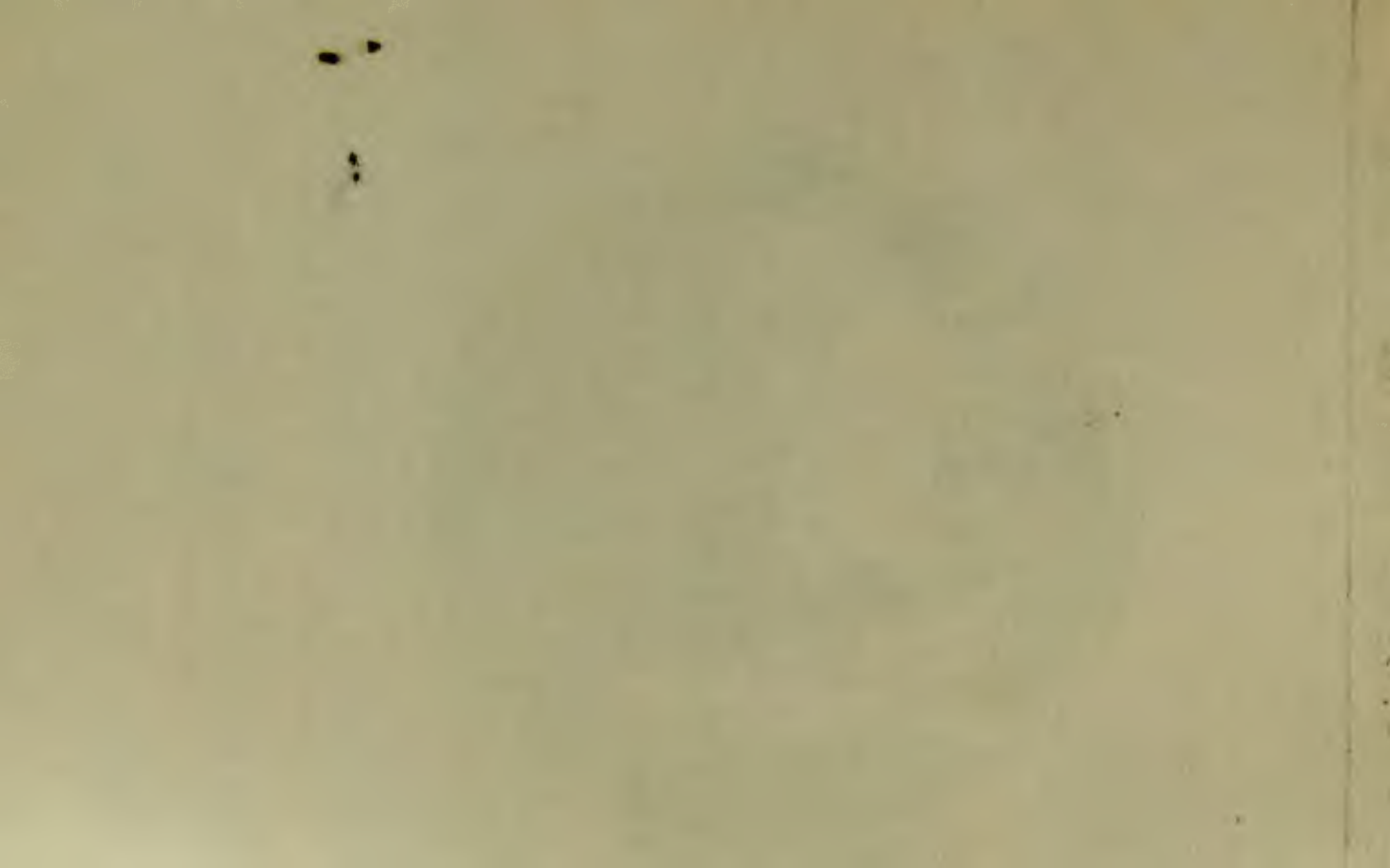
It will uphold human rights all over the world.

## **Defence**

A constructive and imaginative foreign policy is a country's best defence. The Lok Dal will, however, fully maintain defence preparedness and ensure that the superior training and strategy of the armed forces is matched with the best possible weaponry and equipment, indigenously-produced or produced from dependable sources that will not be cut off in a crisis, with due regard to cost-effectiveness.

The Indian armed forces constitute a splendored pool of trained and disciplined manpower which should not be lost to the nation on early retirement. Their administrative structure will, therefore, have to be changed in the light of changed conditions.

Special schemes will also be sought to utilise exservice-men for various constructive purposes including land and water conservation programmes which call for a variety of organisational and technical skills.





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