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**FIGHT BACK
COMMUNALISM**

*Stand of the Communist Party
at the National Integration
Council Meeting*

Srinagar, 20-22 June 1968

COMMUNIST PARTY PUBLICATION

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INTRODUCTION

After a long time the government woke up to the fact that communalism is raising its head again in the country. The massive congress defeat in the last general election, the gains of the communal parties in the assemblies and Parliament, the organisation of various disruptive senas, the corrosion of the ruling party itself by the communal virus, and lastly the spate of communal and caste riots in the four corners of the country rammmed it home to the government that unless something is done, the situation would go out of hand.

The result was the summoning of the meeting of the National Integration Council in Srinagar on 20-22 June 1968 to regain a semblance of secular prestige.

The Communist Party of India has always been in the forefront of the struggle against communalism and all divisive forces. It has been the constant endeavour of the party to mobilise all secular parties, groups and individuals in this struggle. The Eighth Party Congress in February and the Central Executive Committee meeting in March-April this year gave serious consideration to this problem. And it was on the insistence and initiative of the party that the topmost priority was given to the communal question in the NIC meeting.

The representative of the Communist Party, Comrade Bhupesh Gupta, in his speech on 20 June 1968, made certain suggestions for immediately checking the communal menace. While stressing that the long-term solution is the raising the living standards and cultural level of the people, Comrade Bhupesh Gupta suggested a few things that ought

to be done here and now. These suggestions were in the main accepted by the meeting as shown by the Declaration of Objectives and the Recommendations of the Committee on Communal Aspects.

This pamphlet contains Comrade Bhupesh Gupta's speech and the resolution of the Central Executive Committee of the party. In the appendix are given the correspondence between Comrade Bhupesh Gupta and the Prime Minister and the documents adopted by the meeting.

I

BHUPESH GUPTA'S SPEECH

WE HAVE AGREED TO ATTEND this meeting of the National Integration Council in the hope that something bold and concrete will emerge from it. Our past experience with the Integration Council leaves little room for hope or encouragement. The Integration Council was born several years ago to die almost at the moment of its birth. I do not propose to waste my breath in sitting in judgement upon the past because the challenge of the present and the future is a formidable one.

If the frequency of communal riots has woken up the authorities to call this meeting as Shri Vajpayee has suggested, I do not see any harm in it. For one thing it is better late than never. Moreover, the present spate of communal riots does certainly demand of us that we all take counsel with each other and proceed to meet the challenge of the communal monster. The fight against communalism is a matter of our survival as a civilised and forward-looking community. Here is an area of very wide cooperation by all secular forces no matter to which party they may belong. May I say to develop a broad secular anticomunal front would in itself be a major step in the direction of national integration.

National integration is a vast question which touches a very broad spectrum of our socio-economic and indeed national existence. We have no illusion that the final and true national integration can be achieved without radical socio-economic change. But this is a long-term task which encompasses the whole period of our national remaking. At the same time there are certain very immediate threats to

our national integration and these relate to a whole number of subjects such as communalism, language, regional disparities, economic problems, problems of the tribal peoples, adivasis and hill peoples, backward communities, centre-state relations, etc. Essentially, they are problems of democratisation and social progress. But it is not possible here to go into all these problems. We must first settle the priorities.

Madam Chairman, you have rightly named communalism as the greatest menace to national integration. Our party entirely shares this viewpoint. At this conference communalism must receive the topmost priority and our deliberations must lead to the working out of concrete actions. You are quite right when you lay emphasis on evolving guidelines. I agree with you that pious platitudes will not take us anywhere. I would go a step further and say that if this meeting ends in empty and pompous talk it will only demonstrate our incapacity and our lack of courage to face the challenge. It will, I am afraid, in addition, demoralise those who are looking forward with a certain measure of expectation to the results of this meeting. Let us not forget that, as we are meeting here, the embers of fratricidal communal riots are still burning in Aurangabad and Nagpur. Kashmir has been a symbol of communal amity in the days of freedom fight and thereafter and it is but meet and proper that here in Srinagar we, by our deliberations and decisions, hold out new, meaningful assurances that forces of good will and secularism shall now be mobilised into a nationwide action to stamp out communalism. I wish to concentrate on communalism, because life demands it.

Shri Vajpayee has posed a number of questions. I need not go into them. But may I ask this meeting as to whether it thinks that the communal riots are spontaneous, born out of certain god-given evil in men, or whether the meeting thinks that behind these communal outbursts lurk the organised forces of communalism? It is true that very often insignificant incidents spark off riots but it is equally true

that these incidents are immediately seized upon and made a *casus belli* by the instigators and organisers of communalism in this country.

Our party is of the view that communal organisations like the RSS and Jana Sangh are mainly responsible for many of the communal outbursts. A climate of communalism is created by their day-to-day propaganda. One has only to have a glance at the *Organiser* to see with what impunity rabid communal propaganda is being carried on. I am surprised that the Home Ministry's note misses all this. Home Ministry vigilance is never found wanting when it comes to the left movement.

What should cause us the gravest anxiety as citizens of a secular state is that certain organisations are trying to push ahead in the political sphere by rousing communal passions, and even by instigating, in some cases at least, communal riots. This certainly undermines not only the secular foundation of our republic but the very future of this country. It is absolutely essential to find ways and means of stopping this dangerous trend when communalism and politics are getting more and more mixed up, when, in particular, certain political parties are using the positions they have won in order to buttress their stronghold again on a communal basis and, if possible, to ride to real political power.

Here I must also mention the communal organisations of the minority community like Jamaat-i-Islam. We also view with concern Majlis-i-Mushawarat's entry into politics. While communalism of all varieties must be condemned, it must, however, be pointed out that communalism based on the majority community poses the greatest threat, both actual and potential. The responsibility of upholding our secularism rests mainly on the majority community and it is for it to give confidence, by its behaviour, to the minority community.

I would not underestimate the solidarity and integrity we have already achieved. We have had more than one

occasion to see how members of both the majority and minority communities have stood the test of secularism and maintained their amity. But there is no denying the fact that evil forces are at work to disrupt what we have achieved and deliver this great nation to communal disruption.

One noteworthy feature of the present-day communal disturbances is that the vested interests—monopolists, big landlords and the like—as well as political reaction are using communalism as a poisoned weapon to disrupt the mass movements and mass struggles. It seems that the more the left and democratic movement advances, the greater the retrograde elements take recourse to the methods of communal provocation and disruption. This is however nothing new. In their day the British whipped up communalism and used it against our freedom movement. We are having something like a reenactment of the old tragic drama in a new context. In this connection I would be failing in my duty if I do not point that, in some places at least, some disgruntled and discredited congressmen have not hesitated to join hands with avowed communal organisations and forces to create communal provocations. This has happened, I must say in all frankness, while many congressmen have come out in the fight against communalism and communal riots. Apart from other considerations, association of congressmen, however small in number, emboldens the communal elements both in the administration and outside. After all the Congress commands the power at the centre.

In discussing the question of communalism, the acts of commission and omission on the part of the administration need special mention. I must say that the union government and especially the Home Ministry have really no clear ideas nor effective policy to meet the challenge of communalism. The note circulated by the Home Ministry would testify to their lack of comprehension of the problem. The performance at the state level has been hardly any better.

The administration needs a thorough overhauling at all levels and most certainly at the top, if communalism has to be fought. I agree with some of the criticisms Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan has made about the policies and failures of the government.

While offering this criticism to the administration I am not however unaware of the shortcomings and failures on the part of secular political parties. I cannot say they have done all that is expected of them in order to face the challenge of communalism. Yet here is an issue on which they all need to combine and set an example before the country by going into the battle against forces of communalism. I hope the shortcomings will be overcome in the near future. I pledge the fullest cooperation on behalf of our party to all genuine efforts in this direction.

Let me now make some concrete proposals.

The menace of communalism has now already reached a stage when the most vigorous effort is called for to combat it both at the official and at the nonofficial popular level. Of course, the ways and means must be found for maximum coordination of efforts between the two.

Communalism cannot be effectively curbed without use of state power and the resources of the state. In this connection the responsibility of the central government as well as the state governments cannot be exaggerated. The central government must adopt a truly national and secular policy to fight communalism and it is for the central government to set the pace for the state governments. This would obviously require radical orientation in the way the administration is run. The administration must be purged of communal elements and to do so the high authorities must seek the cooperation of the government employees and their unions. Communalists in the administration are very often known to their colleagues and among whom they work. It should not be difficult to find them. There should be a deep look into the government's recruitment policy both at the

union and the state levels. Police officers who display initiative and courage in dealing with communal riots and preventing the occurrence of such riots should be amply rewarded. It must thus be known to all officers that to fight against communalism is a distinction and honour.

The government at the centre and in the states should take immediate steps to form highpowered nonofficial committees consisting of representatives of all parties as well as influential personalities who stand actively against communalism to review from time to time the communal situation and advise the government for dealing with it. I would suggest that the Prime Minister and the Union Home Minister lose no time in taking a step in this direction and I hope the Chief Ministers present here will also follow suit. This is how a permanent machinery for vigilance and action can be created. These committees will be expected to mobilise the people in struggle against communalism. Similar committees can be formed at lower levels but let us begin at the top.

Communal propaganda, whatever the forms or manifestations, must be banned. Even under the existing law as well as powers of the government a great deal could be done to stamp out such communal propaganda. However, if the existing legal and other provisions are found inadequate, there should not be any hesitation in modifying the laws and regulations with a view to silencing communal propaganda. No one has any fundamental right or for that matter any right in a civilised society to preach communal hatred or rouse communal passion. At the same time steps must be taken to single out other forms of communal activities and deal with them firmly.

In this connection we consider it necessary to point out that, apart from the communal journals such as the *Organiser*, some sections of the monopoly press in the country also indulge in provocative communal propaganda. It has been seen, for example, during the riots in West Bengal

and other places how some of the so-called national press spread communal poison. The government can certainly curb their activities.

Apart from taking legal action against them it is open to the government to stop advertisements and other patronage to such papers. The government can refuse, for example, to grant to these papers newsprint or other amenities. The present arrangement of getting such behaviour on the part of the press looked into by the Press Council is not adequate. In fact nothing comes out of these procedures, especially when undesirable elements wield considerable influence on the Press Council. The point is not one of rectifying errors on their part. The communal propaganda in some newspapers and journals is carried on deliberately and in a cold-blooded manner. It has to be ruthlessly suppressed by applying both preventive and other penal measures.

The activities of the RSS and other so-called senas based on preaching communalism or rousing passions over language, region, etc. should be curbed. It is absurd to equate these reactionary and divisive forces with the normal volunteer corps organised by the political parties or social organisations or trade unions. To lump all volunteer organisations together irrespective of whether they are communal or not is to provide an alibi for the organised detachments of aggressive communalism.

There should be adequate arrangements for gathering intelligence about communal activities and the government should take appropriate action on the basis of such intelligence. Preventive actions are undoubtedly an important factor in dealing with communal outbursts or rendering the would-be instigators and organisers of riots ineffective before they act. Communal culprits must be given exemplary punishments. But the present intelligence department, as it is organised today, cannot at all be relied upon. Ways and means must be found to ensure that communal

elements and elements sympathetic to communal forces do not find their place in the CID and other intelligence services. If it is found that authorities do not act in time to prevent communal outbursts, it must be presumed that the intelligence has failed to warn the magistracy and the police or to furnish them the necessary information.

The onus in all such cases must shift to the CID and the intelligence services to prove that they have done their job. The presumption should be that they have failed in their duty and the officers responsible must be penalised for their failure. It will be necessary to modify the existing service conduct rules for this purpose.

When communal disturbances break out in any city, town or place it should be presumed that the officials concerned have been in one degree or another at default. They should be called upon to explain immediately why the disturbances could so break out and what actually they did in order to prevent or stop them.

The lack of confidence on the part of the minority communities in any disturbed area in any official should be regarded as a sufficient *prima facie* ground at least for his immediate transfer. For the breakdown of communal peace in any area the conduct of all officials who are supposed to maintain communal peace and harmony must be at once subjected to the closest scrutiny.

When communal riots and disturbances break out prompt action must be taken not only against the actual miscreants but also against those who are behind them—inspiring, financing or otherwise helping the rioters. In the event of a serious communal outburst there must be no hesitation in requisitioning the services of the army especially when police is found to have proved ineffective. Special care must be taken to ensure that communalism does not penetrate the ranks of armed forces. This point needs special notice because communal elements are trying to infiltrate the armed forces and contaminate them.

There should be proper public enquiry at least into every serious communal disturbance. The present policy of avoiding enquiry lest Pakistan or others use it must be given up. If necessary there should be a statutory provision or otherwise firm commitment by the government for such enquiry. It should not be left to the discretion of the state Chief Ministers whether or not to hold such an enquiry.

It is absolutely essential that education is reoriented not merely in vague terms of secularism but in the spirit of active resistance to all forms of communalism. Anti-communalism must be inculcated into the minds of the students.

The union government should take necessary steps to have the textbooks examined. All textbooks which directly or indirectly cater to communalism, not to speak of encouraging it, must be forthwith withdrawn. The style of teaching in schools and colleges must also be gone into and the University Grants Commission or the government should make it a condition for giving grants that communalism is not spread in the name of teaching in schools and colleges. Communalists should be regarded as disqualified for the teaching profession. It will be necessary for this purpose to make certain rules and regulations, if not legal provisions. No stone should be left unturned to prevent communal poison being injected into young minds no matter under what pretext. The educational authorities should take steps to have textbooks produced in order to instil into the young minds the spirit of amity and friendship between communities. Communalists and communal organisations must not be allowed to distort and vulgarise with impunity the heritage of our civilisation and culture to push their ends. In short, an all-out offensive should be opened in the ideological and cultural fronts, education naturally being one very important sphere.

Propaganda media like the film should be pressed into

service in a vigorous campaign against communalism. The services of secular-minded artists and writers should be mobilised for this purpose. Writers should be encouraged to produce literature to fight communalism. The government should grant adequate grants for this and the meritorious work should be rewarded. It is absolutely essential that the cultural talent is fully mobilised for promoting communal amity, rousing the conscience of our people against communalism and thereby for promoting national integration.

I have other suggestions which I will place when the item on concrete actions come. I have not gone into other political questions such as centre-state relations. I agree with our esteemed Justice Shri Gajendragadkar that our Constitution should be strengthened. I would like to add that its democratic character should be strengthened. In this connection, the states have to be given more powers.

20 June 1968

II

COMMUNAL DISTURBANCES

Resolution adopted by the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India which met in New Delhi from 29 March to 3 April 1968.

The Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India notes with gravest concern the unabating communal disturbances in different parts of the country. The recent outbursts, including the ones in Meerut, Karimganj, Calcutta, Allahabad, Tinsukhia and other places, have again brought to light the organised forces behind these riots.

It is no longer any secret that the Jana Sangh and RSS are spearheading the communal frenzy and spreading the flames of communalism. It is they who are primarily responsible for creating the situation which, as the union Home Minister has rightly assessed, is surcharged with communalism. Active preparations for organising more riots and attacks against the minority community are going on in several states, especially in places where the RSS happens to be strong. Some vested interests and discredited political elements are also seeking to exploit communalism in order to embroil the working people in fratricidal strife and disrupt popular forces and their struggle for a better life and social justice.

Whereas there are many congressmen at different levels who are no doubt secular and anticomunal, there are some others in the Congress who are ganging up with the Jana Sangh and the RSS in spreading communal poison and organising riots.

Aggressive communalism has already become the most serious threat to the very basis of our secularism and, indeed, to the integrity of this nation. If communalism is not fought back and curbed here and now unitedly by all anticomunal and secular parties, by all those who stand for communal amity, the future of this country would be bleak.

The recent disturbances have shown that the communalists are not always able to arouse mass frenzy or draw masses into the orgies of communal violence. But at the same time, it has got to be frankly admitted that the masses have not been organised and moved into action in due measure against the Jana Sangh and the RSS and in active fight against communalism. This undoubtedly is a serious failure on the part of the secular forces which must be overcome in a vigorous, militant fight against communalism.

The Central Executive Committee most earnestly appeals to all secular parties to join hands in this common fight, irrespective of their ideological and political divergences.

To fight back communalism and thus render the organisers and instigators of communal riots ineffective have become a most urgent specific task for the survival of this great nation as a civilised community. Communalism is barbarism.

The Communist Party urges upon the leadership of all secular parties to treat this matter as an overriding national issue and put their heads together for working out a common platform of campaign and action specifically against communal forces. They owe it to themselves and to the country this great task of organising and leading the popular forces in active resistance against communalism and their criminal antinational activities. At all levels there must be organised united committees to resist forces of communalism and maintain communal peace.

The spread of communal disturbances in the recent period has exposed that sizable sections in the police and officialdom connive at the riots and some even directly and indirectly encourage rioters. This has inevitably added to the sense of insecurity among members of the minority community. Strangely enough, the army was not called out in Calcutta even when communal incidents continued for several days and the police failed to promptly deal with the situation.

The failure on the part of the police and other authorities to deal with communal disturbances effectively is the result of pressure of communalism on them. It is no use trying to hide the fact that a large number of high officials and police officers have been contaminated by the communal virus. This has been recently again seen in the Allahabad disturbances.

The Central Executive Committee calls upon the central and state governments to ruthlessly put down communal disturbances. There must be no hesitation in requisitioning the army to deal with such disturbances whenever it is found that the minority community does not feel safe under mere police protection. No mercy or moderation should be shown to those who engage in communal fratricide. Communal incitement and similar other activities must be banned and

those found guilty given exemplary punishment. The RSS must not be allowed to carry on its communal activities and for this purpose, the government, if necessary, may be invested with all needed authority. The police and administration must be purged of communal-minded elements. Policies of the administration, which are coloured by communalism, especially in the matter of recruitment and promotion of members of the minority communities, must be changed.

The lack of confidence on the part of the minority community in any disturbed area in any official should be regarded as sufficient ground at least for his immediate transfer. Police and other officials responsible for protecting the life and property of the minority must be made accountable for communal disturbances within their respective areas. For the breakdown of communal peace, their conduct must in all cases be subjected to thorough probe.

The Central Executive Committee is of the view that the governments at the centre and in the states must immediately form high-power nonofficial committees of representatives of all parties and influential personalities who stand actively against communalism to review from time to time the communal situation and advise the governments for dealing with it. The Central Executive Committee calls upon the Prime Minister and the Union Home Minister to lose no time in forming such a committee at the centre which will help set the tone for the states.

The Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India calls upon all its members and friends to dedicate themselves with ever greater vigilance and courage, as well as initiative, in the task of fighting the communal menace. They must play their rightful part in the common task of organising on the broadest possible scale all secular forces in the struggle against communalism.

APPENDIX A

LETTERS

I

New Delhi
24 May 1968

Dear Shri P. N. Haksar,

We have your letter to our party Chairman, Comrade S. A. Dange, dated 21 May 1968, inviting him to become a member of the National Integration Council.

Comrade Dange and we have considered the invitation.

We do not think it will serve any useful purpose by Comrade Dange joining the National Integration Council. The council has been virtually defunct and its prospects do not leave one with much hope.

We found in your letter no reference whatsoever specifically to the communal menace which has become the greatest threat not only to secularism but also to the very foundation of national integration.

We are most anxious about concrete steps to combat the menace of communalism. Our Central Executive Committee in its March-April meeting adopted a resolution containing certain concrete proposals in this connection. A copy of that resolution was also sent to the Prime Minister. We would again take this opportunity to emphasise the need for a permanent body at the all-India level along the lines suggested in our resolution. The Prime Minister can rely on our firm resolve and our vigorous efforts to fight communalism, even if we are not on the NIC.

Since Comrade Dange is not joining the National Integration Council, the question of his attending the proposed Srinagar meeting does not arise.

Shri P. N. Haksar
Secretary to the Prime Minister
New Delhi

Yours sincerely,
BHUPESH GUPTA

II

No. 142-PMH/68

PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE
New Delhi
1 June 1968

Dear Shri Gupta,

I have seen your letter of 24 May addressed to P. N. Haksar. It is indeed most disappointing. In so far as the decision of your party rests on your apprehension that the National Integration Council may not concentrate its attention on combating communalism, I should like to make it quite clear that fight against communalism will be one of the principal tasks of the council. I hope that you will reconsider the attitude of your party and join in collective efforts to eradicate communalism and its corrosive effects from the political and social life of our country. This can only be done by the cooperative effort rather than by individual and uncoordinated efforts of political parties and groups.

With kind regards,

Shri Bhupesh Gupta, M.P.
Communist Party of India
Central Office
4/7 Asaf Ali Road
New Delhi

Yours sincerely,
INDIRA GANDHI

III

11 June 1968

Dear Prime Minister,

I saw your letter of 1 June only last night after my return here. I am sorry for the delay in replying. I am placing your letter for the consideration of our party leadership.

In the agenda for the meeting of the National Integration Council which your secretariat sent to Comrade S. A. Dange on 21 May it did not even as much as mention the word communalism. In my letter to your secretary Shri P. N. Haksar dated 24 May, I pointed out this omission and said that 'we are most anxious about concrete steps to combat the menace of communalism' which 'has become the greatest threat not only to secularism but also the very foundation of national integration'.

I am glad to note that in your letter to me you have said, 'I should like to make it quite clear that fight against communalism will be one of the principal tasks of the council'. I wish this was said in the invitation as well as in the agenda which your secretariat sent to Comrade S. A. Dange.

I do not wish here to go into the manner in which the National Integra-

tion Council has been managed. There is a lot that one can say about it. However, the emphasis you now lay on combating communalism is certainly welcome. In fact, the communal menace is the biggest challenge today to our national life. And if the National Integration Council seriously takes up this issue not merely for airing one's views but for devising ways and means of fighting communalism, that will be an important step.

We shall be writing to you again on the subject after a final decision is taken in the light of what you say in your letter of 1 June. But I may inform you that the Chairman of our party Comrade S. A. Dange is abroad at the moment. He will not be back before the end of this month.

With kind regards,

Smt. Indira Gandhi
Prime Minister
New Delhi

Yours sincerely,
BHUPESH GUPTA

IV

13 June 1968

Dear Prime Minister,

This is in pursuance of my earlier letter of 11 June. We have decided to participate at the Srinagar meeting of the National Integration Council. The question of Comrade Dange joining as a member of the National Integration Council will, however, be decided later after Comrade Dange returns home.

If this arrangement is acceptable, kindly let us know immediately so that we can nominate our representative for the Srinagar meeting.

Once again I must emphasise that the question of fighting communalism should be given the topmost priority at the forthcoming meeting of the National Integration Council. The recent riots would all the more demand that the National Integration Council not only pays utmost attention to this problem of communalism but also takes a clear decision for concrete action to fight communalism here and now.

Much will depend on what lead you as the Prime Minister and the Chairman of the National Integration Council give at the meeting.

I will be leaving for Calcutta on Sunday, 16 June, to attend the meeting of the Parliamentary Committee on West Bengal.

With kind regards,

Smt. Indira Gandhi
Prime Minister
New Delhi

Yours sincerely,
BHUPESH GUPTA

DOCUMENTS OF NATIONAL INTEGRATION COUNCIL

I

DECLARATION OF OBJECTIVES

1. The foundation of our national life is common citizenship, unity in diversity, freedom of religion, secularism, equality, justice—social, economic and political—and fraternity among all communities. The National Integration Council reiterates its faith in these values and dedicates itself to their achievement.
2. The National Integration Council, however, notes with concern the increase in communal incidents in different parts of the country over the last few years. The council emphasises that, notwithstanding sporadic occurrences of communal and other divisive conflicts, the vast majority of common men and women, irrespective of their religious affiliations, live in peace and harmony and have no interest in violence and disorder.
3. The National Integration Council condemns tendencies that strike at the root of national solidarity and calls upon all political parties, voluntary organisations, other citizen groups, the press, leaders of opinion, and indeed all men of good will to bring them to a halt
 - (a) by discouraging communal ill will and regional animosities and weaning the misguided elements of society from paths of violence;
 - (b) by active and energetic propagation of the principles, especially of tolerance and harmony for which this nation stands;
 - (c) by mobilising constructive forces of society in the cause of national unity and solidarity and giving them leadership, encouragement and articulation; and
 - (d) by devising suitable community activities and programmes for fostering fellow feeling, emphasising the privileges of common citizenship and in general raising the quality of national life.
4. The council wishes to emphasise that this task is not of governments alone although governments have to play a major role in strengthening the forces of integration and in implementing expeditiously and effectively the recommendations that this council makes. This task is the collective responsibility of all citizens—politicians, educationists, artists, writers, teachers, parents and students, intellectuals, businessmen and trade-union leaders.
5. This council most earnestly invites all Indians, regardless of their linguistic, religious, ethnic or cultural affiliations, to join in this great and urgent task of promoting national unity and solidarity.

22 June 1968

I. Preventive Measures

1. As communal disturbances result from building up of communal tensions, it is essential to have prompt and correct intelligence available to the government. For this the following measures should be taken:

- (a) A special Intelligence Unit should be constituted at the state and central levels. The unit should be composed of persons specially trained and possessing aptitude and absolute impartiality needed for this type of work.
 - (b) Intelligence agencies should furnish their reports and assessments to the district magistrates and district superintendents of police regularly and without delay.
 - (c) The district magistrates and district superintendents of police should be charged with personal responsibility for scrutinising these reports and taking preventive action promptly to forestall any communal disturbances.
 - (d) A close watch should be kept on rumour-mongering.
2. Places of worship should not be used to hold meetings which tend to create communal disharmony or ill will. Special measures to prevent and deal with such meetings should be taken.
3. Government should have power to prevent the publication of alarming, incorrect or provocative news or of views likely to promote communal ill will or hatred or to disturb communal harmony. This power can be taken on the lines of provisions of section 2 of the Punjab Special Powers (Press) Act, 1956. The Act provides that the state government, if satisfied that action is necessary in the interest of maintenance of communal harmony, may by order prohibit the printing or publication of any matter for a specified period not exceeding two months.

II. Punitive Measures

1. The district magistrate and superintendent of police should be made personally responsible for prompt action to prevent or stop communal disturbances.
2. Special teams of investigators should be detailed for investigation of offences committed during communal disturbances.
3. Failure to take prompt and effective action should be considered as a dereliction of duty and the officers concerned should be dealt with accordingly. Service Rules should be amended, if necessary.
4. A system of suitable recognition of services rendered in preventing or dealing with communal disturbances should be introduced.

5. Offences should be investigated and the offenders prosecuted promptly. Prosecution once launched should not be withdrawn. Special courts with summary powers to deal with offences connected with communal incidents should be constituted.

III. General

1. (a) Section 153 A of the Indian Penal Code should be amended to provide for punishment of communal activities which term should be defined to mean any activity which promotes or attempts to promote on the grounds of religion, race, caste or community or any other ground whatsoever feelings of enmity or hatred between different religious or racial groups, castes or communities.
The offence should be cognizable and conviction for this offence should constitute disqualification under the Representation of People's Act.
- (b) Rumour-mongering and publication of alarming news and views should be made an offence under section 153 A of the Indian Penal Code.
2. On conviction of an offence under section 153 A of the Indian Penal Code, amended as above, newsprint quota of the newspaper concerned and issue of government advertisements to it should be suspended.
3. A special inquiry should be made immediately after every communal disturbance.
4. Effective measures should be taken to ensure that no discrimination is made in the recruitment to services at all levels.
5. Citizens' committees may be constituted as consultative bodies at the state, district and thana levels to promote and maintain communal harmony. Their function should include the holding of advance consultation with leaders of religious groups to ensure peaceful celebration of festivals. They should endeavour to promote joint participation by all communities in the festivals.
6. The committee has not gone into the educational aspects of national integration which are of paramount importance and the effective use of mass-media of communication to promote communal harmony, as another committee is going into these matters. The committee would, however, draw attention to one important matter in the field of education. Teachers in primary and secondary schools and colleges play a vital role in moulding the minds of young men and women at the formative years of their lives. To discharge this heavy responsibility, the members of the teaching profession should refrain from any activity which is antiseccular or which tends to create communal disharmony. State governments should examine immediately the need to modify service regulations prescribed for teachers in government or government-aided schools and colleges and make provisions which should facilitate the removal from service of teachers who may be

found guilty of such activity. Similar action may be taken by the universities in respect of university and college teachers.

7. The committee recommends that a subcommittee of the National Integration Council be constituted at the national level to review from time to time the communal situation, the progress of implementation of the recommendations of the National Integration Council in regard to communalism and to advise the government.

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III

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL ASPECTS

I. Linguistic Border Issues

Uniform general principles applicable to the country as a whole should be formulated by the Government of India for the solution of linguistic border issues on a well understood basis. There should be a time limit within which this formulation should be completed. The question of language, however, will have to be gone into carefully, giving due weight to the percentages of the different linguistic groups.

The committee in this connection also recommends the setting up of a machinery by the Government of India to which linguistic border issues could be referred for expeditious solution.

II. River Water Disputes

The committee is of the considered view that the provisions of the Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956, should be unhesitatingly pressed into service for resolving disputes over the sharing of the river waters. All issues which have been alive for more than three years should be referred to the tribunal immediately after it is set up under the Act. The committee, however, feels that the tribunal should not be of a single member in view of the complexity of the existing issues and should consist of at least three members who should all be judges. The Act should be amended to this effect.

III. Regional and Economic Imbalances and Employment Opportunities to the Local Population

The role of central financing agencies including banks, the industrial licensing and grant-in-aid policies of the government and location of project should all be so devised as to subserve the goal of doing away with imbalances and disparities. In particular, distribution of aid should not be on the basis of population alone, but on consideration of existing backwardness and the extent of leeway that remains to be made to bring all

the states to a minimum standard of development and living. In inaccessible and far-flung regions special problems posed by higher costs of power, transport, etc. should be taken into account so that due concessions are given in that regard.

The committee in this connection takes note of the existence of discontent in the states arising from the inadequate share of the local people in employment opportunities in both private and public sectors. The Constitution recognises one common citizenship and it is vital for Indian unity that this should be respected and preserved. At the same time, in order that adequate employment opportunities are available to local people and they do not suffer from a sense of injustice, where qualified local persons are available from among the people of the state, they should be given a major share of the employment and employers should be requested to give effect to this objective, as a matter of policy.

IV. Senas

This committee further recommends to the government that it should take stern and effective measures against organisations like senas that are provoking disturbances by appealing to the regional sentiments of the people.

V. Centre-State Relations and Autonomy of Regions

The question of relations between the states and the centre and the question of autonomy of people of hilly and forest areas, especially in border regions, could not be taken up within the short time available.

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IV

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS AND MASS MEDIA

I. Education

The committee is of the view that education from the primary to the postgraduate stage should be reoriented.

- (a) to serve the purpose of creating a sense of Indianness, unity and solidarity,
- (b) to inculcate faith in the basic postulates of Indian democracy, and
- (c) to help the nation to create a modern society out of the present traditional one.

2. Towards this end, the committee would like to make some suggestions for consideration of the National Integration Council:

- (a) State governments should be requested to appoint expert committees to organise the preparation of textbooks for schools.

The union government should set up a national board which will coordinate the efforts of the said state committees in consultation with state governments.

- (b) Positive steps should be taken to correct regional imbalances in the provision of educational facilities in the country.
- (c) Efforts should be made to provide good educational facilities in rural and other backward areas. Efforts should also be made to improve the standard of education in general schools with a view to narrowing the gap between them and other schools providing education of quality. Pending further consideration of the problem, a beginning with the "Common School System" as recommended by the Education Commission should be made in 1969 in all the states.
- (d) A student should not be required to produce a certificate of domicile in a state for the purpose of admission to educational institutions in the state. This should be brought into operation in all the states as early as possible. It would be within the competence of educational institutions in a state to give preference in admission to students passing the school board, university or college examinations of that state.
- (e) Scholarships should be instituted by the University Grants Commission to enable meritorious students to go from one state to another for higher education.
- (f) Efforts should be made by the universities to organise interuniversity meets for various purposes with a view to furthering national integration. Visits by groups of students during vacations to different parts of the country should be encouraged and facilitated.
- (g) University campuses should not be used for any communal or sectarian purposes.

II. Mass Media

The committee recommends that the council may appoint a committee of experts to deal with matters relating to mass media.

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