

Kumararajah Of Chettinad On Repressive Policy

STRONG FEELING IN THE PROVINCE AGAINST CR. L. A. ACT

Genuine Agitation Against Hindi

"REPRESSIVE LAWS MUST CEASE TO APPLY"

Madras, Aug. 18.

The following is the full text of the speech of the Kumararajah of Chettinad delivered on the 18th inst. in the Legislative Assembly in supporting the resolution condemning the repressive policy of the Government:—

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the discussion on this resolution has taken a varied course. The resolution that has been moved and the resolution given notice of by a member of our party, Diwan Bahadur Appadurai Pillai, are both fairly similar in character and relate to the repressive measures of the Government. The discussion that has followed has been to a very large extent on the question of the compulsory introduction of Hindi. At one stage during the debate there was a doubt whether it was proper to discuss more elaborately the question of the introduction of Hindi and whether it was not proper to confine the discussion to the measures adopted by the Government to put down the agitation against Hindi. But in as much as discussion has been allowed on both the points I hope I will be permitted to speak on both the points. I assure you Sir, I will not take up the time of the House as it is already 9 o'clock and there must be some time for the Government to reply after I have finished.

Strong Feeling

Sir, the object of the resolution is to bring to the notice of the House the very strong feeling in the Province that the Criminal Law Amendment Act should not have been invoked in the manner it has been done in the last few months. Many like me, feel very strongly that it was absolutely unnecessary to have introduced Hindi compulsorily. Myself and members of my party have made our views very plain on this question when the demand for grant in this connection came up in the House during the last Budget session. We do not want to repeat the arguments advanced by Hon. Members on this side of the House on this point on that occasion. It should be clearly understood, however much the Government might be anxious to introduce Hindi compulsorily, that has provoked serious opposition in the country. Though some Hon'ble Members may think that the opposition to Hindi is directed by political opponents, I for one am not prepared to accept that statement in toto for I believe strongly that this opposition is being carried on to day not only by political opponents of the Congress Party but by many persons who had never been in politics all their life. I only wish to impress upon the Government the natural apprehensions created in the minds of many persons interested in the welfare of Tamil culture and literature. I do want the Government to appreciate the sincerity of quite a number of persons in the Tamil country in opposing Hindi and to understand that these persons have been actuated by very good motives for the future of Tamil literature and culture.

Unnecessary To Introduce

Hindi Compulsorily

agitation that has

carried on for the last few months is mainly with the object of impressing upon the Government that it is unnecessary to introduce Hindi compulsorily. The opposition would have died down if the Government had conceded their point. I know that they have conceded to a small extent, viz., that boys are not compelled to pass an examination in Hindi. Even that has not allayed the apprehensions for they feel that though it is not compulsory to get a number of marks in Hindi and pass in examination in it now,

Hon. Mr. T. Prakasam: That has been there from the very beginning.

Kumararajah Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad: I stand corrected. I am much obliged to the Hon. Minister for giving me the information. I am happy to think that the Government have to that extent agreed with us. Still why should there be this apprehension on the part of the people? They think that after some time the passing of an examination will be made a qualification for appointments and other things. We should be glad to know from the Government about this. But how can the Government give a guarantee for what will happen in the distant future? Even if they give a guarantee now, who can say who will be in power after five years or seven years? Even assuming that the Congress Party is in power it will not be possible for the present members of the Congress Cabinet to envisage what the members of a future Congress Cabinet would do? If many lovers of Tamil in this country have come forward with this agitation it is due to their real apprehensions in this matter.

New Member's Opposition

Sir, we are now primarily concerned in this resolution with the application of the Criminal Law Amendment Act. On the question of the necessity for a compulsory study of Hindi many Hon. Members have spoken eloquently. My Hon. friend the new addition to this House from North Arcot, the Muslim Member, has very intelligently put forward arguments to show that there is no necessity for compulsion, and that if there is to be a language for all India it should evolve of its own accord and not by compulsion. I heartily agree with most of his arguments to the effect that there is no necessity for compulsion. If I remember rightly, Sir—I would stand corrected if I am wrong—the Government have stated that the people are with them in regard to the compulsory introduction of Hindi. If people are with them why then do they resort to this compulsion? They could easily rely on the strength of their great organisation in the country. If they feel that the majority of the people are with them there should be absolutely no difficulty in introducing Hindi on an optional basis and at the same time seeing to it that most of the boys learn Hindi. Suggestions have been made that indirect help and encouragement may be given to boys who take up Hindi by way of prizes, fee concessions and other things. The Government will realise the volume of objection if they meet some parents who

have real apprehensions in the matter. There has been much agitation in this respect. However much the Government might think that there are only a few persons who carry this agitation. However, if persons are so few as the Government think them to be there is no necessity for Government to worry.

Criminal Law Amendment Act

With regard to the application of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, I do not want to sail the history of that Act as my Hon. friend Diwan Bahadur Appadurai Pillai has already given a learned discourse on the history of the Act and of how Congressmen have been ardently urging the repeal of the enactment. I do not want to repeat those arguments. Sir, it has been a surprise to many people in this Province to find that the Congress Government are still trying to use this Act which they never intended to use. The bitterest critics of the measure have all been Congressmen and that their election pledges was to these repressive Laws as Congressmen came into power. They may say that circumstances have changed. But I say that circumstances have not changed so as to warrant the use of such measures to provoke the Government. I may consider the agitators of the Anti-Hindi movement. What will the public think Sir, particularly after the advent of Provincial autonomy? What will they feel Sir, if they find that the Government run with the aid of repressive laws. I would like the Minister to realise the implications of a popular movement being run with the aid of repressive laws.

Casting To The Winds Election Pledges

Apart from casting to the winds your election pledges are hindering in taking shelter behind the main object of Civil Liberties, the suppression of House? I may remind the Executive Committee of the Civil Liberties Union recently passed a resolution to the effect that while they disapprove of the methods of the Anti-Hindi agitators they were constrained to disapprove also in the application of the Government Law Amendment Act. The whole position reduces itself to this; the present laws are quite enough to deal with the situation without restoring to the Criminal Law Amendment Act. There are many friendly critics of the progress who think that the provisions of the ordinary law are quite enough. I am not off-hand myself and I cannot say I am not. But I cannot say I am not. For the time being I will give the code and the sections. For the time being I do not think I need take the time of the House any further than saying that the ordinary laws of the country are quite enough to deal with the situation. It has been admitted that the Criminal Law Amendment Act was promulgated and used in times of emergency by the then Government. I ask, Sir, whether emergency has arisen today? I do not think the Government will go to the extent of saying that such an emergency has arisen as to make the laws of the country quite inadequate. I have the firm conviction of laws like me that the present situation, even if the Government want to put down this agitation.

Repressive Laws Must Cease

Sir, the Government or the members of the Government in their various speeches have said that it is necessary to implement the resolutions of this Legislature particularly in the matter of Hindi. If the Government realise their allegiance to the Legislature, I ask them, should they not realise the ultimate body to whom they owe their allegiance and to whom they have already given a pledge to that the repressive

ANTI-HINDI

Enthusiastic R The

(Camp) Cuddalore, Aug. 17.

The Anti-Hindi Marchers left Chidambaram on the evening of 14-8-38 and reached Bhuvanagiri at 6 o'clock. On arrival, they were welcomed by the Bhuvanagiri Tamil Sangham and the Tamilian public of that place numbering about well over 1000 persons under the leadership of Swami Singaravelu, and garlanded amidst shouts of "Long live Tamil" and "Down with Hindi". The Marchers were taken round the Bazaar Street to a place in front of the Sub-Registrar's Office, where a public meeting was held. Near the Bazaar Street, Mr. Annamalai Chettiar garlanded the leaders and volunteers of the March.

Some Congressmen from Chidambaram waved black flags in front of some bazaars in the Bazaar Street.

The meeting was attended by about 3,000 persons. Swami Singaravelu presided and Mr. Periaswamy sang some Tamil songs. Mr. Kanchi Paravasthu Achariar and Mr. K. V. Alagiriswamy addressing the gathering dwelt at length on the danger to Tamil by the introduction of compulsory Hindi.

With a few concluding remarks and a vote of thanks by Mr. P. C. Lingam, the meeting terminated at 10 o'clock.

The Marchers were later entertained to supper by Senguntha Mahajana Sangham, Melbhuvanagiri.

The next morning, after breakfast, the Marchers left Bhuvanagiri and proceeded towards the direction of Parangipettai, a distance of ten miles. At Anikaranchatram, a place three miles off Parangipettai, the Marchers were entertained at a tea party given by Mr. Padayachi.

At Parangipettai

On the 15th of August, the Marchers reached Parangipettai at about 11 o'clock in the morning. On the border of the village, the Marchers were received by Muslims consisting of over 1000 persons and garlanded. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon the Marchers had their meals, after which they took rest till 4 in the evening.

Later, the Marchers attended a meeting held in front of the hospital. The meeting was largely attended by Hindus and Muslims. Ali Janab J. Oli Mohamed, Secretary, Muslim League, presided over the meeting, Ali Janab S. T. Ismail Meera welcomed the Marchers. Mr. Paravasthu Achariar addressed the gathering on the need for Hindu-Muslim unity.

Mr. K. V. Alagiriswami explained the objects of the meeting and giving a crushing reply to a notice issued by some Congressmen in the name of Vedarathna Hindi Prachara Mandal, Parangipettai. He drew the attention of the gathering present at the meeting to the name of the Mandal and explained the meaning thereof. He also requested them to find out a suitable meaning in Tamil for that organisation.

After the chairman's concluding remarks, Ali Janab Zainuddin proposed a vote of thanks and the meeting terminated at 10 o'clock in the night. That night they stayed at the Peria Durga. It was raining heavily and the Marchers had them-

laws will be repealed? Sir, my main argument is that the application of the Criminal Law Amendment Act is absolutely unnecessary and is unwarranted by the situation and we expect the head of the Government to recognise that it is absolutely unnecessary to continue the application of the said Act and that repressive laws must cease to apply.