

PROTEST AGAINST COMPULSORY INTRODUCTION OF HINDI

Mass Meeting At Madras High Court Beach

LEADERS DENOUNCE CONGRESS MINISTRY'S MOVE

Madras, June 11.

A public meeting was held on Sunday last at the Madras High Court Beach to protest against the introduction of Hindi as a compulsory subject in schools. Mrs. Meenambal Sivaraj presided.

There was a very large gathering of about 20,000 people. Mr. Stalin Jagadeesh who had been fasting from 1st May was also present.

A procession consisting of 500 to 600 persons with placards such as "Long Live Tamil", "Down with Hindi", and "Stalin Jagadeesh-ki-jai", started from the People's Park earlier in the evening with Mr. Stalin Jagadeesh, (who had been fasting from 1st May) in a coach. The procession, after passing through the General Hospital Road, Rattan Bazar Road and China Bazar Road, terminated at the High Court Beach, and joined the meeting. Mr. Stalin Jagadeesh was garlanded in many places along the route, and the cries of "Down with the Congress Ministry" and "Down with Hindi" rent the air.

In the course of her speech, Mrs. Meenambal Sivaraj said that the introduction of Hindi in schools as a compulsory subject would completely hamper the growth of the mother-tongue. So much so, Tamil, which is an ancient language with rich literature, would suffer. Particularly, people belonging to her caste, namely, the Depressed Classes, would be at a great disadvantage, as they could not learn at a time three languages, viz., English, Tamil and Hindi. Most of the people, she said, were not nowadays talking in their mother-tongue, but in an alien language like English. Whenever they spoke, they mixed Tamil with English. It was stated that in future, Hindi would take the place of Tamil. When it was introduced, people would begin to converse either in Hindi or in English or in a mixed Hindi-English language. She, therefore, said that every Tamilian should fight against the introduction of Hindi to preserve their mother-tongue. She appealed to all lovers of Tamil to join the campaign in large numbers, till Hindi was given up as a compulsory subject. (Cheers).

MR. E. V. RAMASWAMI NAICKER

Mr. E. V. Ramaswami Naicker, who was given a great ovation on rising to speak said that everyone knew why they met there. The need for concerted action to oppose the high-handed action of Mr. Rajagopalachari in foisting a language which was alien to the people of South India did not require further emphasis at his hands. He said that if Mr. Rajagopalachari were to be guided by public opinion he would not have brought forward this measure, because it had met with great opposition from the people. He would have allowed some more time and taken a verdict from the people whether they wanted Hindi or not. Hindi was not made an issue in the last elections. And, therefore, Hindi could not be introduced in schools to-day, when there was such a tremendous opposition from the people. If Mr. Rajagopalachari was so particular Mr. Naicker said, he would invite him (Mr. Achariar) to stand for election on this issue, and if then he had a majority, he was at perfect liberty to introduce the measure. (Cheers) He, as a

constitutionalist should abide by the verdict of the people. But he was intoxicated with power. Mr. Rajagopalachariar was greatly mistaken if he thought that the Tamilians would submit to the compulsory introduction of Hindi. The fight against Hindi, he said, was a fight to the finish. He would advise everyone to abide by constitutional methods, and he was not in favour of direct action, or un-constitutional methods.

The fast of Mr. Stalin Jagadeesh, he said, was a fast undertaken to achieve the object which was dear to the heart of every Tamilian (cheers). In spite of the persuasion of the leaders, Mr. Stalin Jagadeesh refused to give up the fast. Mr. Jagadeesh's fast represented the depth of the feeling of the Tamilians, and Mr. Rajagopalachari would be well-advised to give up his stubbornness.

It was suggested that even if students did not secure a pass in Hindi, they would be promoted. The failure, they said, would not affect the promotion. If that were to be the case, where was the need to make it a compulsory subject? Either Mr. Achariar wanted that all people should learn Hindi and thereby be benefited, or if he thought that it would not matter if a man did not pass in that subject, he could as well give up the move. Mr. Achariar wanted to show the might of his power. Only from that point of view, Mr. Achariar's action could be justified.

Then Mr. Naicker compared the activities of the Justice Ministry with those of the present Ministry and said they proved conclusively that the Congress Ministry was unresponsive to public opinion. The public were feeling that they had made a mistake in having enthroned a Ministry which worked against the interests of the majority of the people.

Leaders' Arrest

Referring to the arrest of the leaders of the Anti-Hindi movement, Mr. Naicker said that the Section under which they were arrested was not applied against those who were, till recently, carrying on the Zanzibar Clove boycott, and said that was the Government of the Congress! They could misuse and abuse laws, and none dare ask them! He warned the public that as they were abusing their powers now so would they be abusing their powers in other matters. Therefore, every one who had the interests of the country should oppose tooth and nail the high-handed action of the Government.

He appealed to the public not to believe in the Congress, not to have any more faith in it, because it obtained the support of the public in the name of nationalism, patriotism, and Gandhi. He was glad to find great enthusiasm at that meeting and wished that that enthusiasm should be kept up till their object was achieved. One thing they should aim at was the dethronement of the Congress from power, and until that was done, there would be no safety for any Non-Brahmin or for any labourer or for anyone working in the real interests of the country. (Cheers). Swaraj, according to Brahmias, was the enthronement of their community in positions of power to the disadvantage of the vast majority

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