

XII. YOU ARE PREJUDICED

AS SOON AS YOU CAME OUT OF JAIL YOU BEGAN CON-
demning the policy and role of our Party. You did not wait to
find out what had happened in the three years that you were away
in prison. You did not care to ask for any of our policy documents
of that period.

Pandit Nehru had no hesitation in declaring that we were
“on the other side,” that we had lined up with the Government.

Dr. Pattabhi asked Andhra Congressmen to use lathis against
us. He too did not care to send for a single Communist and find
out what we had to say. On the other hand when P. Sunda-
rayya, former member of the A.I.C.C. and leader of the Andhra
Communists, went to him in order to discuss Congress-Communist
relations, Dr. Pattabhi refused to discuss with him.

We felt immediately that you had made up your minds, sealed
them up with prejudice and were giving a verdict from your own
heads, not from facts. You thought it enough to damn us by
saying that we called the war “People’s War”.

How could you make up your mind so soon? What was the
information you had except complaints against us by those very
groups whose activities in the name of the Congress you had re-
pudiated from inside the jail?

Did you not know that the Congress Socialists were bound to
blame and abuse us for their failure in what they tried to do?
Had not many of the newly formed Congress Assemblies—moved
by prejudice and on the initiative of the anti-Communists—already
called us traitors and excluded us?

We, however, waited patiently, hoping that when the ques-
tion of our role in the August days came up before you, you
would set aside your prejudices, give us a fair hearing and exa-
mine our role and policy fairly and justly.

The report of the Sub-Committee has belied our hopes. It
pained us deeply to see that you had not cared to study a single
one of our documents, that you never seriously tried to find out
what we said and did.

This is evident from the way you misquote what we said. It

appears that someone has prepared a number of quotations for you and you have merely put them together in the report.

Why did you want to rely on such mutilated extracts? Could you not have asked us to produce our documents? We would have gladly done so. We would have placed before you not only what we said in public but also what we said among ourselves in private. You should know that we Communists have nothing to conceal. You know that when Gandhiji asked us about our finances we were only too ready to let him see our account books. But you did not care to ask us either for our policy documents or for reports of our practical activity.

Your Slanderer Against Us

We never expected that you, the top leaders of the biggest patriotic organisation in our land, would quote against us Tottenham, the arch-slanderer who slandered you.

Were you told, are you aware that when Tottenham's pamphlet against you, *Congress Responsibility for Disturbances*, was published in February 1943, we were the first to expose his lies and defend you?

In an article, *Who Is Responsible?*, by B. T. Ranadive, published in *People's War* of March 14, 1943, we exposed Tottenham's lies far more strongly than any nationalist paper dared to do.

"Full of contradictory statements, assertions without facts and allegations without evidence, it fails to establish any charge against the Congress except the one of being a patriotic organisation and demanding a National Government to defend the country.

"Not only does it fail as a justification of Government policy towards the Mahatma and the Congress, but the appendix reproducing Congress resolutions of May, July and August constitutes the biggest indictment of Government's policy....."

People's War, Vol. I, No. 36, March 14, 1943.

That is how we defended you against his lies; and yet you use that same slanderer against us.

It pains us more when you suppress even what Tottenham said in the same circular and quote only the passages that, torn out of their context, suit your case. Tottenham had sent the circular to Provincial Governments. In this he warned them to be on guard against us, saying that our Party is :

"primarily a Nationalist Party working for Indian independence notwithstanding its *lip service to Internationalism*, and a large portion of its members are attracted to its fold *because it stands for the overthrow of British rule.*"

People's War, Vol. III, No. 42, April 15, 1945.

Why was it that you suppressed this? Is it because it shows too clearly that we had not lined up with the Government?

Tottenham says that we are nationalists *who pay only lip service to internationalism*. You, on the other hand, charge us *with being internationalists, who have thrown nationalism overboard*. Both of you are mistaken and for the same reason.

Tottenham thinks that if we were true internationalists we would not have condemned Government action against you and the Congress.

You think that if we were real nationalists we should not have criticised your wrong policies and the sabotage activities of some groups inside the Congress and outside.

Both of you want our policy to be such as each of you would want it to be.

Our Resolution Misquoted

In your report you quote what purports to be a report made by P. C. Joshi and G. Adhikari to the Central Committee in September 1942.

It is not a quotation at all. It is a dishonest distortion. We give them both side by side. The report in fact was made by G. Adhikari in a meeting of the members of our Central Committee and of leading Provincial cadres. We give exactly what he said :

YOUR QUOTATION.

"One, the anti-fascist group of Azad etc., and other; the group of Gandhiji, Patel, Rajendra Prasad and others who wanted to bring British Imperialism on its knees by creating a standstill in centres of war production and in all means of communications. This group dominated in the Working Committee and so the paralysis of communications, road and bridge traffic and production and other anarchical acts etc. that took place in the disturbances were according to the ideas contemplated by the Second Group."

that they are driven, by the very logic of events and their own policy, into steps that actually aid the Fascists. The whole policy, the crux of it, at every stage results from leaving the initiative in the hands of imperialism. . . ."

Referring to the struggle at that early stage itself we said :

"It is true what happened during the first two days was just planless anarchy. But then elements came into it and gave it definite shape. A definite form had been given, a form which had actually been *thought of* by some of the Congress leaders, by the leaders belonging to the second section referred to before (Rajen Babu, Gandhiji's writings etc.) The present struggle in its main outlines is more or less on lines *visualised* by sections of the Congress leadership."

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REAL REPORT

"Bombay A.I.C.C. The Wardha Resolution is passed. But two distinct sections can be discerned, who approached the same resolution from different angles 1) the anti-fascists, Azad & Co. With them the resolution is a threat, they think struggle can be averted by means of this threat. 2) Another section which honestly believes that a quick blow against the defence measures will bring down the Government. This only marks a new stage in the development of the same old policy. *It is wrong to call this section pro-Fascist,* what actually happens is

You will see for yourself how dishonest is the person who gave you that quotation. Adhikari's report says nothing more than what we have shown from your statements in the section "Zig-Zag Towards August" in this reply. It was to help our Party leaders and Party members to correctly understand what was happening.

Any one who has read our Party organ and listened to our campaign in those days will tell you that we never referred to our differences with you, in regard to the war. Our main slogans were :

"They are all anti-Fascists. They wanted to defend the country and for this, they demanded National Government. Release them and negotiate for settlement."

We regarded our differences with you on the war as differences within the patriotic camp which would have to be thrashed out among ourselves and with you when you eventually came out, if the issues continued to be live ones.

We have already given enough extracts from our writings of that period. We leave it to your conscience to say whether you were right in saying that we anticipated Tottenham and held you responsible for the August disturbances, when in fact we defended you against his lies day in and day out within India and abroad through our brother Communist Parties.

Bhulabhai's Award

You deal with Syt. Bhulabhai's award in a like manner. You attach "considerable significance" to Syt. Bhulabhai's finding that we carried on propaganda contrary to "the views and policy" of the Congress in view of P. C. Joshi having asked for such a reference.

Why do you ignore the fact that he asked for three of our respected leaders, Rajaji, Sarojini Devi and Syt. Bhulabhai Desai to go through the evidence against us. In his letter of September 28, 1944 P.C. Joshi wrote to Gandhiji :

"We are anxiously awaiting the advice that Rajaji, Bhu-

labhai and Sarojini Devi give you on the slanders against our party."

Correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and P. C. Joshi, p. 37.

Why do you slur over the fact that P. C. Joshi insisted on having a copy of the evidence and a chance to explain? How do you react to the fact that both Rajaji and Sarojini Naidu refused to give their opinion because the anti-Communists had already attacked them as being favourable to us?

Why do you omit even to mention the fact that Syt. Bhulabhai had the papers with him for eleven long months but did not send a single document to us?

Syt. Bhulabhai, in fact, condemned us without hearing us. On the question of our *People's War* policy, he says:

"It is candidly admitted by Mr. Joshi that they regarded the European war which has just now ended as the people's war for the reasons he had given."

To this reference to our candidness, you sneeringly remark that "evidently there was no room for prevarication in this matter."

In fact if Syt. Bhulabhai had called on us for an explanation, we would have reminded him that the war was not only *in Europe* but that it was right *at our door*, a peril that greatly influenced you before August and which he had forgotten.

We have at length explained in this reply why we called the war *People's War* and how we applied this policy in practice. We can say with a clear conscience that if there is any prevarication, it is not on *our* part.

You go on to say in your report that we did not seriously contest his findings. This is quite untrue. As soon as Syt. Bhulabhai's award was out we immediately wrote to Gandhiji. P. C. Joshi complained bitterly thus:

"It took him (Syt. Bhulabhai) over a year to give it (the award) but I had thought the 'Judge' would at least call

upon the 'accused' to answer the charges or let him have the 'evidence' against him."

Letter from P. C. Joshi to Gandhiji, September 5, 1945.

Other charges had been referred to Syt. Bhulabhai which were crude and vile slanders against our morality etc. In this connection P. C. Joshi asked for the documents but we were not given them. P. C. Joshi wrote in the above quoted letter:

"But I regret that neither you nor Shri Desai sent me the documents. May I request you to let me have a copy of them even now? I will publish them together with our answers. We were all very keen on it because we know that the very publication of the documents sent against us to you *will be the worst exposure of the anti-Communists themselves.*"

You say in this connection that "Shri Bhulabhai had *virtually exonerated*" us. We only ask you to read the above letter and you will see that if anyone was protected from exposure it was only the anti-Communists themselves.

There is one other point in which your Sub-Committee report grossly misrepresents our policy. You say that during August 1942 and after that, the Communists had:

"thrown their full weight on the side of the Government *advocating unconditional support of the war effort. . . .*"

Every word of this is untrue. We have elsewhere in this reply given you extracts showing that our consistent stand was "unconditional support to the war," but *not* to war efforts.

We said categorically that though the character of the war had changed, the character of the war efforts had not changed nor of the Government that guides and controls them. And that "THE WAR EFFORT IS IMPERIALIST, COERCIVE AND INADEQUATE."

From this we gave our attitude to the war efforts as "We co-operate where it is in the interests of our people, we resist where we must if it is against their interests." And we challenge you to show a single case, in which we co-operated with any war-effort that went against the interests of our people.

We need not go into the other quotations. They are all of a piece, mutilated, torn out of their context and twisted out of shape.

Two Voices

The manner in which you formulate your own position in your report is also astounding.

You charge us with having opposed the policy and programme laid down by the August Resolution and say that we

“carried on ceaseless propaganda against this *people's movement in which nearly all Congressmen were involved in some form or another.*”

But curiously enough you also charge us with having

“accused the Congress and Congressmen as responsible for *all the disturbances which followed the August resolution.*”

This is a strange, self-contradictory and inconsistent charge to make. Was it a people's movement in pursuance of the August Resolution conducted by Congressmen that we opposed? Or were the disturbances, following the August Resolution, for which Congressmen were not responsible, but whom we falsely blamed as responsible for them?

Why is it that you did not see this inconsistency? Because it is inherent in your position today, a dilemma in your own minds. The first is what you tell the people. The second is what you told Wavell. And you charge us for two exactly opposite things because you yourselves both own and disown the struggle!

You say that you have several reports making grave charges against us. We asked for them, you refused to give them. We can only conclude that you do not give them because you know how unworthy they are.

Why do you not ask yourselves what you should think of the mind and morals of people, their patriotic or personal worth if they placed reports in your hands of such a type that you yourselves hesitate to show them to us? **What shall we think of**

people who dare not put honestly and openly their criticism of our policy before the people, as we ourselves have done with those from whom we have differed?

If you think we are stretching the point too far or playing with words, here are your own words and we can supply you any number of such—and worse—quotations:

ON STRUGGLE

TO WAVELL

Working Committee leaders to Linlithgow in 1943:

“You say you have ample information that the campaign of sabotage has been conducted under secret instructions circulated in the name of the All-India Congress Committee. What your information is we do not know. But we do know and can state with authority that the AICC at no time contemplated such a campaign and never issued such instructions secret or other.” (Azad's letter dated February 13, 1943—repudiating the C.S.P. arrogating the Congress name).

TO THE PEOPLE

Nehru at Lahore Railway Station on July 17, 1945:

“I was very proud of what happened in 1942... It is easy for armchair critics to find faults with that rising. May be there were things which cannot be approved or justified. *But they are cowards who criticised those happenings and who tried to mislead the people.*”

Free Press Journal,
July 18, 1945.

Nehru to the people of Delhi on August 30, 1945:

“I am prepared to take all the responsibility for the happenings of 1942 because *I am responsible for creating those conditions in the country.*”

Free Press Journal,
August 31, 1945.

When without giving any facts and only by misrepresenting and misquoting our policy you call upon us to answer charges and

when we find that you are not aware of your own self-contradictory position, we have to draw your attention to that position—not to score a debating point, but to request you not to make us the victim of your own self-contradictory position.

How can you say about the post-August happenings one thing to the Government and another to the people, both with an easy conscience? It is because you yourselves were of two minds on the eve of August, you did not want to start the struggle because you feared it would aid the Japs and might not bring the British down. Yet you saw no other way forward then. After your release you do not quite know first hand and through the experience of life where your contradictory position had led the country and how different groups of Congressmen functioned. You therefore apply the same standards to the 1942 movement as to the movements of 1920 and 1930.

Before the Government you disown what you did not actually start, for in your own mind, it was a *threat* that was likely to work and get National Government through immediate Indo-British settlement.

But reality did not turn out the way you had speculated. You were arrested, the people rose and were brutally suppressed and many more things happened. Those who consciously functioned in the name of the Congress claimed that they were organising the “national struggle” as proposed by you before you were arrested. Gandhiji had the principle of non-violence to guide him and he rapidly came to the conclusion that he could not shoulder the responsibility for what happened. You had no such principles to guide you, you had a dual mind all through and you escape serious thinking even now by finding a formal way out.

You could not own it as a “Congress” struggle because you did not technically start it, the Congress resolution had spoken of a “non-violent struggle” and both you and Gandhiji had repudiated formal responsibility for it in your correspondence with the Viceroy.

But you could not disown it either because you had yourselves threatened to start a struggle, and some Congressmen had taken the initiative to do things in your absence and on their own, the

people had responded, the police had launched a reign of terror, and the rest. Therefore you also could not disown them.

You solve your dilemma by not calling it a “Congress struggle”—though its actual organisers claimed it to be so—but instead by giving it the glory of a “people’s struggle.” You *imagine* that the people spontaneously rose, some Congressmen sought to organise them in answer to the imperialist challenge and to make a bid for power.

You would have been right if this was the *real* picture. Unfortunately this picture of the post-August period that you take for granted and are glorifying among the people is over-simplification, glossing over some parts, glorifying some and totally suppressing others.

When you point to the post-August period up to your release as a spontaneous people’s struggle which was crushed by British terror, you are lumping the glorious and the tragic together.

Jap Peril Suppressed

It is true that the first reaction of the people was a spontaneous upsurge against the British Government but as it began to subside, those persons and elements whom you glorify today sought to give it the form and direction of a sabotage campaign, and the more they failed, the more they reconciled themselves with, and based their future plans on aid from, the Jap Fascist invaders.

In your report, which really concerns our policy and activity immediately before and after August 1942, only one word is missing—the Japs. Was not the threat of the Jap aggressor a *new* and *big* factor, the greatest one that mattered, that loomed the largest in your own mind, that divided you of the Working Committee more sharply than you had ever been before, that again made you reconcile your own differences, that formed the very rock-bottom of your August Resolution itself?

Had you not declared yourselves against Japan and for the camp of the United Nations? Had you not demanded National Government itself to enable India *effectively* to resist Jap aggression and play her own part in the cause of freedom and demo-

cracy to which the Jap militarists were recognised by you to be a menace ?

If you black out from your memory the threat of Jap aggression that hung over India from 1942 to 1944, then your report would read true and logical and your case against us would stand proved.

In 1942 the main problem as seen by you and stated in the August Resolution was : The way to get power from British hands to resist Jap aggression.

In 1944 you charge us with betrayal : The British Government struck, the people rose but you Communists

It was between the years 1942-1944 that the Jap threat not only hung over our motherland but grew more and more menacing and twice the Japs made attempts to over-run India—the Arakan campaign of 1943 and the two-pronged drive in 1944, both from the South-East and North-East borders of our motherland.

Sabotage Meant Slavery

Why don't you face up to the meaning of a country-wide sabotage campaign in such a situation, as it was planned and as far as possible practised by some groups that spoke in the name of the Congress ? Would you yourselves have gone their way or seen it, like us, as aiding the Jap aggressors in reality while only formally hitting our British oppressors ?

To the mass of the common people the British oppressors were real on their heads and the Japs only a threat thousands of miles away. We did not blame the people, to them only living experience is real—but what do you really think of those who fancied themselves in the role of leaders, who thought only of the British but not of the Japs at all ? Before you were arrested, you were trying to balance your course between the two and had proclaimed yourselves decisively against the Japs.

Later on, these very elements began to think that the Japs would be welcome allies because they could not knock off the British by themselves. They were no naive young peasant lads but intellectuals past their youth, in the Congress in quite lead-

ing and responsible positions since the thirties. They thought that the Jap Fascist invaders could be allies in the Indian freedom struggle, they propagandised that the cause represented by the United Nations was imperialist robbery and glorified the Jap Fascists, created the illusion that they had introduced freedom in the Asiatic countries which they had occupied. Their analysis of the world situation, their characterisation of Fascist Japan and its satellites and their own attitude is there in their own words.

Would you have acquiesced in their pro-Jap propaganda or combated it ? We spoke up—not a day too early—when to remain silent would have meant to allow to pass unchallenged the suicidal line of “alliance with Fascism for the sake of Indian freedom”. The course of Indian patriotism as you had yourselves defined it in August 1942 lay in alliance with the free world and against the Fascist world. Was pro-Jap propaganda the degenerate form of suppressed Indian patriotism or was it its true and noble expression ? You will have to give the answer with the August Resolution in your hand.

If you use your own ears enough, you will hear for yourselves the damage already done to national consciousness by their propaganda.

Put their words against ours on all live issues that rose between your arrest in 1942 and your release in 1945.

Tell us what is there that we should not have said, where is it that they were right and we wrong.

Examine their deeds and have a look at ours.

Tell us what is there that you did not want us to do and what more you would have wanted done besides what we ourselves did.

Your charge-sheet would have been proper if you had based it on your deeds and in your report defined, however briefly, what you thought was the duty of all Congressmen in such a contingency as the situation in India during 1942-45.

All that we said and did has been and can be defended by us on the basis of your own earlier statements and resolutions.

You escape your own responsibility as the leadership by not calling it Congress struggle.

You turn round and charge us by calling it "people's struggle."

You make the Japs non-existent and keep silent about sabotage.

You charge us with uttering "people's war" when the British Government ruled over us and ask us to explain ourselves.

Can we not rightly ask you : where will it all end ?

Is This Justice ?

We come now to the end of this painful chapter. You are prejudiced, your charges are vague, general, self-contradictory. You refuse to let us have the evidence against us, your verdict is already in the report.

We have always ridiculed "British justice" and called it Imperialist. Should we adopt even worse methods than they ?

We are a young patriotic party of our people, you are the old respected leaders of the greatest patriotic organisation of our land. If you yourselves set standards such as these, if you do not insist on good democratic standards of fairness and justness towards fellow Congressmen and brother parties who differ from you, how can we hope for a free Indian Democracy ?

If you adopt the ways of the prejudiced how will you judge us ?

You could judge us aright only if you could also judge yourselves aright and had the strength and the will to examine with a cool head and open mind where our country stood today, what our enslavers and exploiters have done to it, what differences had cropped up among Congressmen themselves, and what was the common way out.

In 1942 you gave the battle-cry : "Quit India." You had a mighty national movement behind you.

In 1945 when you came out of jail, it was to the same enslaved India—but in a worse plight in every conceivable way.

Yet such is your understanding and realism, that not one of you has answered the question that immediately arises : Why is it so, why have we not managed to make the British quit India ?

All that you have done is to face us with a charge-sheet.

You take your stand on the August Resolution. So do we. If you read our answer without prejudice and with a view to understand us you will find :

1) that all we said and did after August 8 was in logical continuation of the first part of the August Resolution, our endeavour to live up to it and carry out the tasks that followed from it.

2) that all those who directed the August struggle in your absence, and whose banner today is anti-Communism, carried out the second part of the August Resolution as best as they could.

It is for you to examine the words and deeds of *both*. Only then you will realise how self-contradictory was your own stand on August 8 and how its aftermath after a glorious spontaneous upsurge became a growing agony of the people and gradual disruption of the national mind.

The logical contradiction worked itself out in real life and that is the history of India between 1942 and 1945.

When you charge us today, and from the way in which you charge us, it looks to us that you are charging not only us but also yourselves.

When you rely upon and repeat all that the anti-Communists say against the Communists, we think you are owning up the illegal heirs of the second part of your resolution.

When you charge us, misrepresent our policy, refuse to examine our deeds, we know you are disowning the legal heirs of the first part of the August resolution—national aim, anti-Fascism, world democracy.

The Elders of the Congress, the great national family of the Indian people, should be self-critical about their own leadership, open their ears to all members of the family and trust only the evidence of their eyes. Then alone will they be able to think right, act right and judge right.

Who Was Right, Who Wrong ?

Why don't you ask yourselves seriously enough :

1) How is it that you on behalf of the Congress had defined

the immediate aim of the country to be National Government?

But with what motive and for what purpose did those who claimed to represent the Congress in your enforced absence characterise that aim as "surrender to British Imperialism"?

Is it not because, having lost their heads with British terror, they built their hope on Fascist Japan, as we Communists have said and proved?

2) How is it that those who claimed to lead the August "struggle" in the absence of the Congress leaders first sniffed at and later opposed the campaigns for the release of the Congress leaders?

How is it that the chief campaigners for your release were slandered by them as the agents of your jailors?

Is it not as we Communists have proved that the Congress leaders in jail were suspected by them to be likely to surrender to "British Imperialism," if released, and thus come in the way of their own plan—that of using the name and influence of the Congress for the victory of a "freedom revolution" that was being planned by them in "alliance" with Japan?

3) What understanding of the people, their actual life and real consciousness do those revolutionaries possess who think that revolution will come the quicker, the more their people starve and the faster the famine spreads?

Devoted service of the people, dogged struggles against the food thieves and their Government patrons—or—paper plans of "freedom revolution," based on starvation of the people, riots all round, peasants refusing to sell grain to their town brothers and the townsmen going against rationing—which was true patriotism, which was carrying forward both the letter and spirit of the August Resolution?

What would you have expected a good son of the people to do in such circumstances?

How had those who were once good sons of the people gone so mad?

Was it not as we Communists prove, because they had lost faith in their own people and begun to look to Fascist Japan for freedom?

4) How is it that the anti-Communists start by calling us

Government agents and the only documents they have put out to show our liaison with the Government have been proved by us to be patent forgeries to the satisfaction of any honest man? What must you think of the morale of such Congressmen who seriously write reports to prove that Communists are cheats, lecherous, beastly and blood-thirsty? In what condition must their own state of mind be?

At what stage and who uses slander as a political weapon and against whom has such a weapon always been used not only in the world democratic movement but also in our own freedom movement? Is it not the dirty toady and anti-freedom hooligans that have always done it?

How is it that we whom they slander and misrepresent talk in the language of known facts, on the basis of their own writings and in terms of the life of our people and the freedom of our country?

With what conscience, on the basis of which facts, relying upon which resolution of the Congress can you disown us and own them?

Both based themselves on the August Resolution after your arrest.

They lost faith in the people soon enough because the "people" did not come up to their expectations. As behaved good sons of the people, we stuck to the people as hard as we could, and more, as their sufferings grew.

They put their faith in the Fascist-Imperialists and planned their work accordingly. We pinned our faith in you and worked for your release.

Charging Yourself, Not Us

Yet Pandit Nehru misrepresents our policy in a manner unworthy of him.

At Beawar, he delivered a speech on October 24, in which he said that neither Congress nor its biggest leaders could have organised the national forces against Fascism without the assurance of independence and added:

“The Communist Party was the one party that tried to do what the Congress could not do, namely to organise the national forces without assurance of independence, and it failed.”

Bombay Sentinel, October 25, 1945.

We did not have the illusions of our opponents. They thought they were making Indian revolution. We did not fancy ourselves in their image. Marxism teaches how to *understand* reality correctly and how to *act* like serious revolutionaries.

All the numerous quotations we have already given from our policy documents will show we did not even remotely have the illusion that we, a section of the Congress, could fulfil the role of the whole Congress; that we, a young patriotic party, could do the job of all patriotic parties.

That is why we demanded and worked for your release, of the leaders of the Congress; that is why we expected you to take the lead towards Congress-League unity to embody the unity of our major patriotic organisations and ensure transfer of power into popular hands.

In fact our most insistent slogan in your absence was that only your release, and the establishment of National Government would guarantee the country's defence and the people's food.

When you charge us you are charging yourselves, repudiating your own past.

We firmly believed then and believe still more firmly today, that between 1942 and 1945 we stuck to and popularised the best traditions of the Congress, we said what naturally followed from the freedom demand and the anti-Fascist stand of the Congress, we did what would help to get you out, realise the Congress demand and serve our people.

Your own self-contradictory position in the August Resolution naturally enough led to two contrary courses of action among sections of the Congress—each guided by his own understanding, sense of duty, love of the people.

We have not yet said all that we can about those who went the Jap way from the August Resolution days. The day for that has not yet come.

But we can assure you that between you as the leaders of the Congress and us, your followers and a distinct section within the Congress, we have no troubled conscience, no uneasy mind, nothing to explain out everything to justify, nothing to be ashamed of but everything to be proud of.

The faith of the people should not be played with by the leadership of the people, but must be taken more seriously. Then alone principles remain principles and do not degenerate into demagoguery among the people and diplomacy before the rulers.

We have endeavoured not to answer demagoguery with demagoguery, slander with slander but we have tried to stick to common principles of justice and freedom as they live in the best traditions of the Congress itself. We have taken our opponents at their best and in their own words.

Today you have to judge us and speak for the Congress. Tomorrow or soon after you will be responsible for what you decide today. We have nothing to fear for ourselves but we are fearful of the way you are tackling issues, the way along which you are leading the Congress and our common country.