

The First Human Rights Agitation In India Led by Thanthai Periyar

UNTOUCHABILITY

(History of Vaikom agitation)

(Speech delivered by Periyar in Kanyakumari District, on 25th and 26th Dec.1958)

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Respectful President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I was extended an invitation to come over to the Kanyakumari District many times by your comrades. As I was busily touring in the other districts, I could not come earlier. Wherever I toured, I found a great awakening. People gathered in thousands.

Ten years ago I addressed a meeting here in Marthandam. In those days you were citizens of a State. You were ruled by a Rajah. Whereas we were citizens of the British Government. Yet we are all 'Sudras'. We Dravidians were subjected to humiliation. It was the outcome of the hoax played on us. We continue to be 'Sudras'.

Today, we are citizens of one country. We are Tamilians of Tamilnadu. We are today brought together. Our unity is strengthened. We are today linked as one family because we are all now citizens of one country. We have to work together for achieving our ideals as we are all classified under one caste.

So far as I am concerned, even before 35 years ago, I lead the agitation in Tamilnad to eradicate the social evils particularly the hateful 'untouchability'. For over thousand years we were not allowed to enter some of the public roads. Those who are now aged at least 50 years may recollect those days. Youngsters of this generation may not know these things of the past.

If there had not been the agitation in those days, today many of us would not have the right to pass through many of the roads. In those days conditions were very bad in this country. The Government was in the hands of the orthodox Brahmins. The Varnashrama Darma was in its full sway. In our country, the advent of the Non-brahmin Movement, redeemed a number of

rights to the Non-brahmins. The Non-Brahmin movement successfully combatted the Brahmin domination. That Non-Brahmin Movement was popularly known as the Justice Party; named after its journal 'Justice'.

The Brahmins too had their own organizations as Brahmina Samajam, and Brahmana Mahasabha. They worked against our interests and stood in the way of our attaining many of our legitimate rights. Brahmins were proud of calling themselves as 'High caste'. They insisted on calling themselves as 'Brahmins'. They persisted in calling us all as 'Sudras'. Manu law and other sastras too termed us as 'Sudras' only. What an amount of humiliation and degradation we were subjected to! This state of affairs affected our progress and life. If we are to see a different name for Dravidar Kazhagam or Tamilar Kazhagam, we have to choose only 'Sudra' Kazhagam as the suitable name for our organization.

That is why, we had to change the name of the South Indian Liberal Federation and the Justice Party as the Dravidar Kazhagam, to make ourselves known to the world as to who we are. The Dravidians are a proud nation, known to the world.

On account of the efforts taken by the Non – brahmin Movement (Justice Party) in the years 1919 and 1920 and the agitations in my Tamilnadu the right to make use of all the roads irrespective of castes, was given to all, not only in Tamilnadu but also in Andhra, Karnataka and Kerala.

With the powers vested in the hands of the justice Party the right to make use of all the roads by all castes was brought into practice.

The justice party brought in a legislation even in those days permitting the so called low-caste people to make use of the water from the wells, which were all along been exclusively reserved only for the use of the high caste Brahmins.

These are all things which took place before the days of Gandhiji. It is absurd and fraudulent to say that it is only Gandhi who did all these things.

Not only this much. The Justice Party people were the first people to pave the way for all castes to enter the Panchayats, Municipalities, Taluk boards, District Boards, and Legislative bodies even before the coming of Gandhi. They nominated the representatives of the so called low castes people to all bodies even before Gandhi. It is not right to say that it is Gandhi who

got the rights for the low caste people as 'Pariahs' to enter the legislatures on a par with the so called high caste 'Brahmins'. The fact is, even before Gandhi the so called low caste people as the 'Pariahs', 'Chakkilis' 'Pallars', were members of the legislature. I want you all to clearly understand this truth.

As a matter of fact Gandhi's plans were different. He was not for allowing all the Sudras and untouchables to bale out water from wells and tanks along with the high caste Brahmins. He was not for permitting the untouchables to enter the temples along with the high caste people. Originally he only insisted on the continuance of certain rights exclusively by the high caste. He upheld the Manu code. He was for separate temples, tanks, wells and dwellings for the high caste Brahmins and the low caste Sudras. That was the original plan of Gandhi. I know it. Let anyone deny. Today, false propaganda is carried on about Gandhi. Much, is said about Gandhian way and Gandhian path.

I was the Secretary of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee. A sum of Rs.48,000 was sent to Tamilnadu as grant from the AICC, to construct separate schools and temples for the low caste Sudras as the 'Pariahs', Chakkilis, and Pallars. It was strictly ordered that these untouchables should not go and create trouble at the places exclusively used by the high caste Hindus.

By that time the Justice Party people have passed orders permitting all castes to study in all schools irrespective of their castes. They made all to study together. Caste restrictions were removed in the field of education long ago. This Reform was strictly enforced. There was a law compelling even private institutions to admit a percentage of 'Sudras' in their schools, failing which those schools would not be eligible for any Government grant.

At the time of inspection the officer would put the question, "How many untouchables are studying in this institution". If the reply is in the negative, the officer would ask why? If anyone should say that no untouchable approached seeking admission, the officer would say 'In that case you have to go and get some untouchables to study in your School. "I am telling of the conditions that prevailed in our State even before Gandhi came.

When Tamilians were so much progressive, in your Kanyakumari District things were very bad. The high caste Hindus did not even tolerate the right of the low caste untouchable Hindus. Even his shadow should not fall on the so called high castes. That was the horrible

tragedy in your place. The low caste Sudras were to raise a cry from his hiding place to reveal his presence. It is on account of the laudable services of Mr. Narayana Guruswamy that the low caste Sudras were awakened. The Vaikom Agitation changed the conditions. The untouchables here gained a lot. These things may not be known to the youngsters here.

We waged the battle at Vaikom against untouchability. We were imprisoned many times. We were severely beaten. We were put to disgrace All these sacrifices we had to make to eradicate untouchability.

There were no classes in jail in those days. The treatment was very bad. We had to bear all these to eradicate untouchability and bring in a new change. How did this change come in? What is our present position? If you think over and search for a better position, you will in fact agree that we are very slow in eradicating casteism and its evils. We must muster strength and march on with a greater speed.

You must know the history of the Vaikom agitation. A very small incident lead to the Vaikom agitation.

Com. Madhavan was an advocate. He was to appear before the honourable judge in a case on behalf of his client. The court was in the compound of the Maharaja's palace. At that time arrangements were made to celebrate the birthday of Rajah. The entire surroundings of the palace was thatched with Palmyrah leaves beautifully. Brahmins started chanting mantras. As Com. Madavan belonged to the 'Ezhava' (Nadar) community he was not permitted to enter or pass through the place and reach the court.

It was at this time that the Justice Party was carrying on propaganda in Tamil Nadu for the abolition of castes and untouchability. Inter-caste marriages were encouraged. Schools were thrown open to all. 'Samabandi Bojanam' (Inter dining) was popular Such intensive social reform propoganda was carried on in Tamil Nadu by the Justice Party. When Gandhi came to know of what the Justice Party was doing in Tamilnadu he started including our schemes in his constructive programme. In those days the Justicites boldly exposed the Brahmins who were afraid to move about without company. Non – Brahmin leaders as Dr.T.M. Nair and Sir P.Theagaraya educated the masses by their incessant and extensive propoganda and secured the powers in the State. Brahmins were envious of the Justice Government. They had no

platform in those days. In those days the Brahmins cunningly took shelter under the slogans 'We are not power mongers'. We boycott the elections! With such false slogans they soothed the people and indulged in all sorts of intrigues. Realising the popularity of the Justice Party, Gandhiji concentrated on the problem of untouchability as the only way to bring down the Justice Party rule in Tamil Nadu.

In those days I was very familiar to the leaders of the Justice Party. They had great respect to me, because I held many posts. Mr. Rajagopalachari met me and induced me to become a follower of Gandhi. He said that Gandhi alone is capable of carrying out the much needed social reforms. I resigned the post as chairman of Erode Municipality and joined the Congress. Before my entering the Congress, no Tamilian had the honour of becoming the Secretary or President of the Tamil Nadu Congress. I was the first Tamilian to hold these posts in the history of Tamilnadu Congress.

Com T.V.Kalyanasundaram (Thiru Vi.K.) was a school master. Dr.P.Varadarajulu (Naidu) was the editor of 'Prapancha Mitran'. Yet Brahmins did not trust him. Com. V.O. Chidambaram (Pillai) was at the mercy of Mr.Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, after draining all his resources.

So the Brahmins did not respect them. They could not ignore me like that, as I already held big posts and hailed of a very big business community. For anything and everything Rajagopalachari believed me and reposed much confidence in me. I also believed him and reciprocated the confidence he held in me. We both worked out together and I carried on an intensive propaganda; with the result the Brahmins once again gained the platform. I was very bold in expressing the rationalist views. I openly spoke on god in all my meetings stating "If the idol would get polluted by the touch of the people, such a god is not required and the idol has to be broken to pieces and used for constructing good roads. Otherwise it may be put near the river banks to be used for washing clothes. I was often induced to speak severely by the Brahmins. As I was not for any post or power the Brahmins remained silent.

What all I say now about God, religion and caste I used to say even in those days. Rajagopalachari used to tell me that I have administered a very strong dose, after hearing my speeches. I used to reply that so long as people remain foolish there is no use of our giving a

light dose. On hearing me he simply smiled. In these ways, we made the Brahmins come to power in those days.

Leaders of the Ezhavas community wanted to start an agitation, when Mr. Madhavan was objected from entering the court. Mr. K.P.Kesava Menon, President of the Kerala Congress Committee T.K. Madhavan and others took the lead. They decided to launch the protest on the day of the prayers at the Raja's palace. They chose Vaikom as the fit place for the agitation. It is only in Vaikom you have a temple with four entrances on the four sides, leading to four streets around the temple. That was really convenient for the agitation. So they chose Vaikom as the place for the agitation.

There was a law that the low caste untouchables as 'Avarnasthars' and 'Ayithak Karans' should not enter those roads. If an untouchable has to go to the other side of the temple he has to go two or three furlongs away from the temple and walk about a mile to reach the otherside. Even the 'Asaris' 'Vaniars' and weavers were not allowed to enter the roads around this temple. The same conditions were prevalent in other temples also, particularly at Suchindram it was very strictly enforced.

Important government offices, courts, police station etc. were by the side of the Vaikom temple near the entrance. Even while transferring officials, no untouchable would be transferred to these offices as they were not permitted to enter the roads around the temple. Even the coolies were debarred from entering the roads to reach the shops.

As soon as the Vaikom agitation started the Rajah ordered about 19 leaders including Advocate Madhavan, Barrister Kesava Menon, T K. Madhavan, George Joseph to be arrested. They were treated as special prisoners. At that time there was an European named Mr. Pitt as the I.G. of the Police under the Rajah's government. He ably managed the affairs of the agitators. When all the 19 agitators were put in prison the Vaikom agitation actually fizzled out. At that time I received a letter from Mr. Kesava Menon and Barrister George Joseph.

"You must come and give life to the agitation. Otherwise we will have no other way except to tender apology to the Rajah. In that case we will not lose anything but a noble cause would suffer. That is what actually worries us. So please come immediately and take up the agitation." This was what was written in the letter. They themselves chose me and wrote the letter to me because I was very vociferous in attacking the evil practice of untouchability in those

days. Moreover I have established a good name not only as a fierce propagandist but also as a successful agitator . When they sent the letter I was on tour. The letter was redirected to me from Erode and it reached me at Pannapuram in the Madurai District. On the receipt of the letter I cancelled my tour and rushed up to Erode to proceed to Vaikom. I wrote a letter to Rajagopalachari requesting him to act in my place as the president of Tamilnadu Congress Committee. I pointed out the importance of the Vaikom agitation in my letter. It was a good opportunity for me. So I did not like to miss it. I proceeded to Vaikom with two others.

Somehow the news spread that I am coming to Vaikom agitation to lead. When I reached Vaikom by boat, the Police commissioner and Tahsildar greeted us.

We were informed that the Rajah instructed them to receive us and make all arrangements for our stay. I was really very much surprised. The Rajah was so good to me because, he used to stay in our Bungalow at Erode, while his officials stayed in our choultry on his way to Delhi. The Rajah and his party were afforded a cordial treatment at Erode during their stay before boarding the train for Delhi. That might be the real cause for the unusual treatment given to me at Vaikom. When the people of Vaikom came to know of my relations with the Rajah and the officials, they were all very happy. Even though Rajah treated me as a guest, I participated in a number of meetings supporting the Vaikom agitation. I criticized the evil practice. I said the god does not deserve to be in the temple at Vaikom, if it feels that by the touch of the untouchables, the deity would get polluted Such an idol should be removed to be used for washing clothes. By my propaganda more and more people were eager to join the agitation. More and more people came forward from different places. It became a problem for the Rajah. Yet he remained silent for five or six days. Many complained to him, about my speeches. Rajah could not ignore any further. So, after ten days he permitted the police official to promulgate P.C.26 which is similar to that of Sec. 144here.

There was no other go for me than to defy the ban. Accordingly I defied the ban and addressed a meeting and I was arrested. Mr. Ayyamuthu also defied the ban along with me. He was also arrested. We were all sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for one month. I was put in the Aruvikkutha jail. It is after my imprisonment, my wife Nagammai and my sister S.R. Kannamal and a few others carried on a state wide propaganda. When I was released, I once again resorted to the agitation.

When I was in prison, the agitation gained momentum. Lot of people volunteered to court imprisonment. Intensive propaganda induced the people to encourage the Vaikom agitation. The enemies indulged in hooliganism. Rowdy elements tried their best to create panic and thus quell the agitation. All their evil efforts ended in a failure. Even those who were in foreign countries came to know of the atrocities perpetrated in the name of caste here. They volunteered to send donations. Daily, money orders poured in. A big pandal was raised to house the volunteers. Daily more than 300 people were provided with food. Many planters sent vegetables and coconuts daily. They were pooled together as small hillocks. It looked as like as a marriage house.

At that time Mr.Rajagopalachari wrote a letter to me. Why should you leave our country and create trouble in another country? It is wrong on your part to do so. Please leave it and come over here to take up the charge from me. This was what was contained in the letter. Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar came over from Tamilnad to meet me. He also tendered the same advice as Rajogopalachari. By that time more than 1000 people were ready to participate in the Vaikom agitation. There were big processions and 'Bhajan' daily every where. The agitation gained momentum.

The news reached Punjab. There Sami Sirathananda made an appeal. He sent about thirty Punjabis to Vaikom. They offered 2000 rupees as donation and consented to meet the catering expenses for the volunteers. Seeing this the Brahmins here sent a communication to Gandhi. They accused the Sikhs of provoking a war against Hinduism Gandhi expressed his view. He said that Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and others who are non-Hindus should not partake in the agitation. In response to his appeal Muslims, Christians and Sikhs withdrew from the agitation. Rajagopalachari wrote another letter to Joseph George stating that it is wrong on his part to interfere with matters pertaining to Hinduism. But Joseph George did not pay heed to Rajagopalachari's advice. He replied that he was prepared to face expulsion from Congress. He strongly stated that he would not lose self-respect. Mr.Sen, Dr.M.E. Naidu and other leaders stood strongly in support of the agitation. But some people were afraid that Gandhi would write condemning the agitation and stop the donations. But at that time Sami Siratha Nanda came to Vaikom and assured of financial support.

The Vaikom agitation was launched inspite of the opposition by Gandhi. I was once again arrested and sentenced for 6 months imprisonment. Some Namboodri Brahmins and

orthodox hindus joined together and planned to counter the Vaikom agitation through what is called as 'Satru Samhara Yagmam' (Bonfire prayers for killing the enemies). They spent money like water and performed this pooja. I heard about this in prison. All in a sudden one night. I heard the sound of gunshots. I enquired the warden, whether there was any festival going on near the prison. He told me that the Raja passed away and the gun shots are fired to indicate the loss. When I learnt that the Rajah is dead, I had melancholy feeling. Later I was glad, because the prayers by the Brahmins and orthodox, Hindus to destroy their enemy has resulted in the death of the Maharaja. Their prayers did not harm the Vaikom agitators. The people were also happy. Subsequently we were all released on the ceremony day of Maharaja. Our enemies also lost their tone and tenor.

Later the Maharani wanted to settle the problem by mutual talks. She wanted to discuss the problem with me. But the Dewan of the State, who was a Brahmin stood in the way of our talks and said that the Maharani should not talk to me directly. So he wrote a letter to Rajagopalachari. Rajaji knew that I would carry the laurels and earn the credit. So he cunningly decided to make the Maharani talk to Gandhi. It is because of this trick played by Rajaji that Gandhi's name was dragged in the history of Vaikom agitation. I did not much mind as to who personally gains the name and fame. I was not for any personal glorification. I only wanted the problem to be solved successfully.

Gandhiji came and had talks with the Maharani. Maharani consented to throw open all the roads for the low caste shudras and untouchables. But she expressed the fear that I would further continue the struggle seeking the rights for untouchables to enter the temple. Gandhi came to the T.B, where I was staying and asked me to express my opinion. I said "it is not a big thing to enable the untouchables make use of the public roads! Even though temple entry is not at present one of the ideals of Congress, so far as I am concerned it is one of my main ideals. But, you may inform the Maharani, that for the present, I have no such idea to launch the campaign for temple entry rights. Let things come to normal before I decide what to do".

Gandhi informed the Rani and she proclaimed the rights for all to make use of all the roads. This is how the low caste. Sudras and untouchables got the rights to use all roads, as like as the high caste Brahmins and orthodox Hindus.

I was for some time as the Chairman of the Devasthanam committee at Erode. When I was away comrades, Gurusamy and Ponnambalam and Eswaran induced two Adi-Dravida workers in my office, to wear the sacred ashes (Vibooti) on their heads and took them inside the temple. Seeing them the Brahmins cried loudly that they have polluted the deity. They were locked up inside and a case was instituted. They were punished in the District court. But on hearing the appeal the High court released them as not guilty. That was in the time of the British rule.

But it was only at Suchindram that the first agitation for temple entry rights was launched publicly. A self respect conference was also conducted under my presidentship. A number of resolutions were passed urging the abolition of castes and ensuring rights for untouchables to enter the temples.

Next, another Conference was held at Ernakulam. In that Conference a resolution was passed condemning castes and urging, Hindus to become Muslims, as there are no castes in Islam. Some others recommended Christianity through amendments. At last the option was given to join any one of the religions.

The same day about 50 Hindus joined in Islam. This trend started even outside and it terrorized the orthodox Hindus and Brahmins.

One day in Allepy one of the converts to Islam (Who was a Pulayar by caste) went to purchase an article in a Nair shop. He was beaten up and it developed into a serious clash between Hindus and Muslims. Such clashes between, Hindus and Muslims spread everywhere. The then dewan, a Brahmin Sir C.P.Ramasamy Iyer put down the agitation with an iron hand. But the Rajah was later informed that most of the low caste untouchables as, 'Ezhawas' and 'Pulayars' are becoming Muslims.

He was also advised that there is no other go than to throw open all the temples for all the untouchables to save Hinduism from the peril. At that time there was 'Yagna' by Brahmins for his long life. More over it was a custom to say something good to the people on his birthday. It is then that the Rajah chose it the right thing to do at the right time. He announced that on his birthday all temples would be thrown open to all, including the low caste Hindus and untouchables. This is the true history of the struggle. This is how untouchables were given the rights to enter the temples.

It is only after all these that Rajagopalachari and Gandhi came forward to speak of temple entry. It is quite absurd to say that these changes took place because of Gandhi. As a matter of fact Gandhi has not done even a molecule of service to the untouchables. This you will understand well by reading 'What congress and Gandhi have done to the untouchables' a book written by Dr.B.R. Ambedkar. When I was the Secretary of the Tamilnadu. Congress Committee, out of party funds a Gurukulam was run at Seranmadevi. As Secretary I consented to give Rs.10,000 and paid a part sum of Rs.5000. One Brahmin named V.V.S. Iyer took up the responsibility to run the institution. In that Gurukulam, Brahmin boys were given special preferential treatment. They were fed separately. The non-brahmin boys in the Gurukula were fed outside. When 'Uppuma' was given to Brahmin boys, only gruel was poured to Non-Brahmin boys. The son of Omandur Ramasamy Reddiar told the matters to me in tears. I complained to Rajagopalachari. When he contacted V.V.S. Iyer, he neither denied the charges nor repented. He stoutly refused to give equal treatment to all. He said that he cannot do anything as it was an orthodox area. Then I said that I can give the balance amount of Rs.5000 only when the Gurukulam is reformed. He got wild. He curtly asked me 'Are you serving the nation? I curtly replied' Is what you are doing nationalism? This serious matter provoked me to start a party for the non-brahmins (Tamils).

Even now you can find only 'Brahmins' preparing food at Congress congregations. Even in those days, we engaged the Virudunagar Nadars to prepare food at the Justice Party Conferences and the Self Respect Conferences.

Why do I recollect all these past things? You should know that unless we go on agitating like this, We cannot make the society progressive.

Moreover you should all know that neither Congress nor Gandhi is responsible for any of the social reforms, we have been able to witness.

Even today, we are the only people who boldly ask 'why should the lazy Brahmins be considered as high caste, while the real tillers and toilers are considered as low caste. Why should we have a god that degrades us as Sudras?

Today they have created all safeguards to casteism in the Constitution. A Brahmin from somewhere has the boldness to come over here, and speak with temerity, tendering serious warnings. Why? Power is vested in his hands.

They tell us to meekly submit as Sudras for ever. They show the prison and terrorise us.

Did any one have the guts to question?

We are the only people who are free, frank and fearless.

If we are termed as Sudras by Hinduism, what else can we do but, destroy that Hindu religion? Our D.K. is not a political organization. We do not contest elections. We do not seek votes. We are not for power. Others may hesitate to call a spade a spade. Power seekers may coax the innocent voters. They may hoodwink you for selfish gains. I am not for dragging in Gandhi's name to dupe you all for getting any post or power. I am not for that disgraceful life.

We have not made public life a profession or business to eke out our livelihood. Think over why? We eat our own food, spend time, bestow our energies to instill in you self – respect?

By of 1938 you find all over the world wisdom having sway. But still here, we are like barbarians. Our god, religion and sastras do not elevate us from the plightful rot. Government is also in the hands of barbarians. No one dares to question except ourselves.

We are made to be sons of prostitutes by Brahmins why should our sons be called sons of prostitutes. No one thinks of this disgrace. Those who survive in politics do not care about it. They implicitly obey and submit to what all Brahmin Says.

When I was leading the Vaikom agitation. Mr. Sathukkutti the son of Nilamban Zamindar used to meet me often and discuss. He used to address me as 'Naicker samy' Not only that he used to talk high of his birth because he was born to a Namboodri Brahmin. He would often tell me that. I should not consider him as one born to a Nayar. Yet he was a graduate B.A. Who is there to condemn this mentality in our people?

Consider for a moment what these 'Azhwars' have done. They attained 'Moksha' by prostituting their wives. This is revealed in the 'Purana' Baktha Vijayam.

One 'Sudra' an Azhwar, gained a place in heaven by allowing his wife to lead the life of a Prostitute. The Nayanmars gave their wives to Brahmins. Even to this day the orthodox people propagate these tings without shame or self-respect. When I point out these things, I am accused of talking damagingly of puranas. Who else talks boldly of these. These puranas ruin our morality. What else can we say?

Added to all these the Brahmins have stuck to the seats of government . Power has been transferred into the hands of Brahmins. I blame Gandhi for that. A big conspiracy was hatched to keep us eternally as ‘Sudras’. Today everything is in their hands. Today the president is a Brahmin. The Vice President is a Brahmin. Premier is a Brahmin. Deputy Premier is also a Brahmin. The speaker of the Parliament is also a Brahmin. Added to all these if we plead for the eradication of castes, they send the accused to be in jail for a period of three years. Who worries about all these? Most of the luminaries in public life want to safeguard the government, casteism, sastras, puranas, religion and god. They think that there is no other go for them to live.

No one who depends on votes and bribe will question the atrocities in the name of caste, god, religion and government.

Britishers at least considered us as men with equal rights. Today the government is in the hands of Brahmins, who call us as sons of prostitutes. That is why they have easily found safeguards in the constitution itself. According to law those who demand castes to be abolished have to be prepared to undergo imprisonment for three years.

This casteism is a chronic disease that has eaten our society for centuries. What medicine we use for scabbies and itches cannot cure cancer. We have to operate the body and remove the portion affected by cancer. Treatment will be different for different diseases. According to Hindu Law we are ‘Sudras’ for more than 3000years. We are sons of prostitutes for over 3000 years. Our constitution gives full protection to this evil.

We must root out this evil. We must be rid of this redicule. It is indeed the most difficult task. Unless you pour boiling water on the roots it will not die. Unless we take severe steps we cannot eradicate castes.

Not only in Tamil Nadu but even in the whole of India there is no force that can raise a bold voice like us. Those who are after power will never dream of raising any protest. It is only those who are dedicated to serve the people sincerely and selflessly. Who can dare to risk their life even for eradicating the castes. What has those who entered the legislature done so far. They cannot do anything? We can get posts by simply sending a telegram. Yet we are not prepared.

A few days ago Nehru made a sickening note about the legislatures and other elected bodies. He even threatened that he would retire and seek renunciation. What happened? He silently gulped all his remarks and stuck to power. It is all mere display of the old Gandhian tactics to gain popularity. The D M.K. people who were with us, condemned the entry into the legislature, so long as they were here. They even wrote attacking the elected representatives and the bodies. Nay, even Nehru and Rajendraprasad spoke against the legislatures. Because they are now aware of the chances, they are quite eager to enter. They forget their past. By hook or crook they want to adorn the legislatures. They are prepared to sabotage and epose anybody. Somehow everyone wants to come up in life. No one is worried about the age long insults heaped on our nationality.

The entire country is in the clutches of three ghosts and five diseases. To believe in one thing that is not really existing is what is defined as Ghost.

God – Caste – Democracy are the three Ghosts.

Brahmins – Newspaper – Political parties – legislatures – and cinema are the five diseases. These diseases are preying on the human body like the diseases Cancer, leprosy, and Malaria. If the society is to progress these things should be fought tooth and nail and destroyed completely.

Translated by A.S. Venu

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For Further details Please contact:

Periyar Maniammai University , Centre Of Excellence For Periyar Thought

Web: www.pmu.edu