

THE HISTORY  
OF  
THE BHAGALPUR STRUGGLE

[ The 23rd Session of the A. I. H. Mahasabha 1941 ]

हिन्दुस्तान का पुस्तकालय

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**THE HISTORY**  
**OF**  
**THE BHAGALPUR STRUGGLE**

[ The 23rd Session of the A. I. H. Mahasabha ]

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## Publisher's note.

This publication does not need an apology. It is rather late and so that it might not be too late, it has been published now, nearly a year after the events it details. Some mistakes here and there must creep in under such circumstances and we request our generous readers to excuse them in the first publication.

The 23rd session of A.I. Hindu Mahasabha held at Bhagalpur has its own lessons. It was an epoch making event and under its stress the strength and weakness of the Mahasabha organisation came out more clearly than would have been possible otherwise. Therefore we look back to an account of this Hindu Mahasabha Blitz Krieg in the present phase of the struggle of Hindudom to express itself.

This book necessarily in such circumstances does not attempt to give all rosy and complacent picture of a propogandist. It is a history of the session with an intimate personal knowledge of the affairs and men.

But it could not be as comprehensive as it was desired to make it. This book owes its appearance to the inspiration given by Swatantrya Vir V. D. Savarkar, President of the All-India Hindusabha, to publish an account, which, although not the last word on the

subject, might of material help to the workers in the organisation and the future historian of the Mahasabha organisation.

We also feel very much as we could not place before our patriotic and generous reader the Presidential address of our President "Savarkarji" owing to scarcity of paper. We hope that you all will excuse us for the same. We will publish the same in our next edition.

We therefore present this publication to the Hindu Sangathanists, in this present imperfect form.

We request all our Hindu Sabha leaders, workers and Hindu Sangathanists friends to send us such authentic items of informations as have escaped us for incorporation in the next issue.

We must thank very much the management of the Jyotish Prakash Press, who have made the publication possible and that too within incredibly short time.

BHAGALPUR.

( Bihar )

28-12-42

**Basudeva Narayan Sinha**

Prop:—Madhukari  
Publisher,  
&

Secretary, Town Hindu Sabha.



॥ संघे शक्तिः कथौ युगे ॥

The twenty third session of All India Hindu Mahasabha held at Bhagalpur on the holy bank of the Ganges in the province of Behar was a unique session in more respects than one and marked the opening of a new era in the growth and developement of this representative organization of the Hindus.

The surging tide of nationalism which swept the length and breadth of this vast country, the feelings which found expression in this movement, the inner selfconciou-ness which is necessary to give a movement the strength to fight for independence of the country and glorification of the nation, were the special features of this session, which was really an expression of the soul of Hindutva struggling against heavy-odds to express itself. This session gave the necessary self-confidence to the workers in the cause of Hindutva and showed to what depths the soul of the Hindus had been stirred by the movement launched by the Hindu Maha Sabha under the able leadership of veer, V. D. Savarkar, the prince among revolutionariess and light of the patriotic Indians. We

are still so close to the event that it is not possible for us to assess the effect of this momentous session, but this much is clear, and anyone who runs may read on the wall of times that the Hindu Nation has a virility which defies old age and is not a nation which is going to die and be wiped out of existence and that it has still strength, the same strength which enabled it in the times of yore to successfully overcome the forces of destruction in the shape of invasions of the barbaric tribes and plunderers.

### The Invitation.

In the Calcutta Session of the All India Hindu Maha-Sabha held in the year 1939, Bihar invited the next session, but that invitation was not accepted and preference was given to Madras. At the Madura Session of 1940, Bihar repeated the invitation and Pandit Bharat Misra, General Secretary of the Behar Provincial Hindu Sabha, with his friends Pt. Vishwanath Shastri, Babu Ganga Prasad Gupta, Pandit Asarfi Sukul, Mahanth Gyan Prakash and other members pressed for its acceptance on the ground that for more than a decade no session of the All India Hindu Mahasabha had been held in Behar. There was voting and Doctor B. S. Munje, Dr. Shyama Pd. Mukherji and other respected leaders supported the claims of Bihar against the Punjab. Bihar was given the honour of holding the session of the All India Hindu

Mahasabha for 1941. Pandit Bharat Misra was careful to request and obtain the assurances of full support and help from Dr. Munje, Dr. Shyama Pd. Mukherji and other leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha.

### The provisional reception committee.

On his return from Madura Pandit Bharat Misra convened a meeting of the working committee of the Provincial Hindu Sabha, and a Provisional Reception committee was formed with Babu Ganga Pd. Gupta as the convenor. Babu Ganga Prasad Gupta proceeded to organise the Reception Committee with the help of the members of the Provisional Reception Committee, prominent among whom were :—Pt. Raghvacharya Shastri, Sj. Gaurishankar Prasad, Pt. Bajaranga Dutta Sharma, Sj. Surya Narayan Prasad, Pt. Bharat Misra and Rai Bahadur Gurusevak Upadhyaya.

There were differences of opinion unfortunately from the very beginning and what apparently seemed wrong, approach to the constitutional side of the question whether the General Secretary of the Behar Provincial Hindu Sabha had any right or authority to invite the All India Session on behalf of the province was taken up in the very beginning. Rai Bahadur Gurusevak Upadhyay, the then Working President of the Behar Provincial Hindu Sabha, issued a statement that the session had not been

invited by Provincial Hindu Sabha, and the authority of Pandit Bharat Misra to invite the session was questioned. But this issue was clinched at once by the Provincial Hindu Sabha and the formation of the Provisional Reception Committee by the Provincial Hindu Sabha clearly demonstrated that the invitation had been ratified if there was ever anything wrong in it, by the Provincial Sabha.

But misfortune and difficulty dogged the organisers of the session at every step in spite of this clarification. The Provincial Hindu Sabha by a circular letter issued to all the Districts of Bihar requested the local District Sabhas to inform the Provincial Hindu Sabha the feasibility of holding the All India Session in the local limits of their respective Districts. Bhagalpur District Hindu conference was being held at that time at Singheshwar Sthan, a holy, ancient place of pilgrimage in North Bhagalpur. Pt. Bajrang Dutt Sharma, the veteran Hindu Sabha leader of the province and Secretary of the Provincial Hindu Sabha, attended this conference, and under his inspiration and guidance Babu Gouri Shanker Prasad M. A., B. L., with the concurrence and support of his friends Pt. Raghavacharya Shastri, Bhishwanath Shastri, Babu Surya Narain Pd. and Babu Ganga Pd. Gupt and others tabled a resolution inviting the Provincial Hindu Sabha to hold All India session at Bhagalpur. This

resolution was passed by the conference with great enthusiasm, some of the members of the District Hindu Sabha of Bhagalpur however, honestly believed that Bhagalpur ought not to be the venue of the All India Hindu Mahasabha, and they voiced their opposition very soon after the conference of Singheshwar Sthan. The ground of their opposition was not that they did not want to have the All India Session at all, but that they believed that Bhagalpur which had to pass through almost famine condition at that time and was subjected to the imposition of Additional Police Force for the ostensible purpose of maintaining peace between the Hindus and Muslims was not a fit place for holding the session, and they were very careful in presenting their views to the Provincial body. The Provincial Hindu conference was held at Daltanganj and the claims of the various districts for being selected as the venue for the forthcoming session was considered in this conference and it was finally decided to appoint a committee consisting of Pt. Bharat Misra, Babu Nand Kishore Pd. and Sj. Padmraj Jain to report regarding the suitability of the various districts for selection of the site and report the matter to the Provincial Working Committee for final selection. The committee visited Bhagalpur and met with the almost all the workers of Hindu Sabha and finally came to the conclusion that Bhagalpur was an

ideal place for being selected. The working committee of the Provincial Hindu Sabha accepted this recommendation and Bhagalpur finally came to know that the honour of holding the session as also the great responsibility attending to it must be borne by it.

### Personal Rivalry

Unseemly personal rivalry marred the initial stages of the activities of the Reception Committee that had only been provisionally formed for organizing the Reception Committee. The name of Rai Sahib Surendra Nath Basu the president of the District Hindu Sabha was mentioned for the General Secretaryship of the Reception Committee, as against Babu Ganga Pd. Gupt who was then working as the Secretary of that provisional reception committee. There was much bitterness of mud throwing and the interference of Sj. Padamraj Jain for clearing up the matter only complicated it further and it seemed that much valuable time was being wasted on this personal wrangle of trusted workers, which could not but impair the smooth working and efficiency of the Reception Committee. The matter came to such a pass that in the meeting held in the spacious hall of the Marwari Pathshala, the group led by Rai Sahib Surendra Nath Basu, retired and on behalf of the young workers Babu Gouri Shanker Prasad undertook the responsibility of forming the Rece-

ption committee and shoulder the burden of organising the next session. Further attempts were made to bring the harmony and restore concord among the workers. While this effort was going on, the Provincial Working Committee of the Hindu Sabha met at Darbhanga and dissolved the Provisional Reception Committee on the ground of acrimony among the members and workers of the Reception Committee. Divisional committee were formed to carry on the work which ordinarily falls to a Reception Committee, but it was soon found impracticable.

### Mr. Lahiri's helpful Intervention.

The Working Committee of the Bihar Provincial Hindu Sabha met at Bhagalpur on 17. 8. 41 in the Marwari Pathshala Hall. Mr. Ashutosh Lahiri, Secretary, All India Hindu Maha Sabha had been deputed to see that the Reception Committee was properly formed. Mr. Lahiri met bading citizens and prominent Hindu Sabha workers of the town and in his presence and with his advice the Bihar Provincial Hindusabha working committee resolved that "The venue of the All India Hindu Sabha conference be fixed at Bhagalpur" and a provisional Reception Committee was again formed with Rai Bahadur Sukh Raj Roy as the General Secretary and Rai Sahib Surendra Nath Basu, Advocate and Mr. Gouri Shanker Prasad M. A., B. L. as Joint Secretaries. This committee was dire-



cted to call a general meeting of the Reception Committee members to finally form the working committee and elect office bearers. In the meantime Sjt. Gouri Shanker Prasad wrote to President Savarkar Ji, explaining the situation and requested a direction. The President wrote the following letter in reply, which is set out in extense as giving the guiding principle for workers in 'public life.'

### Letter.

To

Syt. Gauri Shanker Prasad, M. A., B. L., Pleader,

Jt. Secretary Hindu Mahasabha Reception Committee  
of the 23rd Session,

Parsonage Road.

BHAGALPUR.

Mahashay,

Your letter of the 22-8-1941 to hand.

I was glad to note that inspite of a lot of fratting and fuming here and there, our Hindu Sanghatanist comrades in Bihar have at last decided to discharge the responsibility that has devolved on their shoulders of holding the Hindu Mahasabha Session in Bihar in a way befitting to the great traditions with which Hindudom all over India cherishes the name of Bihar. This Session of the Hindu Mahasabha

must more magnificent than any in the past and must also prove both to the Government, to the moslems as well to our own Hindus, the fact that the Hindu Mahasabha has risen to the position of the pre-dominant party which is bound in near future to be so powerful as to dictate its terms as the only representative of Hindudom to all concerned and that it can no longer be dominated or neglected or browbeaten by any anti-Hindu forces whether they be Governmental (that is British) or moslem or by the non-Hindu Pseudo-Nationality now raging rampant in our land.

This is the objective before us. This is the crucial question especially before my brethren in Behar and consequently it goes without saying that all other questions of party-clicks or provincial injustice or misunderstanding or personal controversies must be sub-ordinated to this in the best intrest of Hindudom as a whole. Consequently, although it is so difficult for me from such a distance to adjudge correctly the party claims and complaints, I exhort you to refrain from cutting off your connection with the Provincial Reception Committee and to lend the weight of your influence and active co-operation to all those who will form the formal Reception Committee at your meeting on the 31st inst. You all should make it convenient anyhow to work on the Reception Committee no matter in whatever capacity you are called

upon to do so by circumstances there. It is in such cases that the spirit of accommodation and surrender in the interest of the great ideal testifies to the real greatness of man and we win our point in substance by losing it in detail.

2. I would have surely gone into the details you referred to and given instructions to all our friends concerned or sent Dr. Moonje or some other notable leader as you suggested but then it is impossible to do so now as it is only a couple of days that intervene between the meeting to be held on the 31st instant, when the final decision must be taken. Therefore, all I can say now to all of you there is to put an end to all disputes, frame a Reception Committee and whether any one of you happens to be on it or outside it extend full and whole-hearted co-operation to it, to make the Session a magnificent success. It is not now the provincial Reception Committee put the Pan-Hindu cause, the Hindu Mahasabha itself which is concerned. Let no Hindu in Behar spare himself in rendering the session a great success.

Yours sincerely,

V. D. Savarkar.

The meeting of the Provisional Reception Committee was held on 31. 8. 42 and the resolution fixing Bhagalpur as the venue of the next session of the All India

Hindu Maha sabha was reaffirmed. The following office bearers and members were elected to the working committee of the Reception committee.

1. Kumer Ganga Nand Singh — Working President.
2. Rai Bahadur Sukhraj Roy — General Secretary.
3. Sjt. Gouri Shanker Prasad } Secretary incharge of  
M. A. B. L. } General Office,
4. Sjt. Ganga Prasad Gupta } Propaganda and vol-  
unteers organisation.
5. Sjt. Rai sahib S.N. Basu }  
Advocate, } — Finance Secretary.
6. „ Rai Bahadur Sudhanshu }  
Bhushan Roy, } — Secretaries incharge of  
Advocate, } Pandal decoration and  
7. „ Bindeshwari Prasad } accomodation.  
Singh B. L. }
8. „ Surya Narayan Prasad — Exhibition Secretary.  
B. L. .
9. Dr. Kanhai Lal — Provisions and stores.
10. Rai B. Bansidhar Dhandhanian — Treasurer.

With this election of the office bearers the differences among the workers of the various groups were eventually obliterated and with a commendable team spirit the working Committee bent all its energies to the stupendous task of holding the session,

The Reception Committee had planned to carry the message of the Mahasabha to the works and corner of the province and also in the territory of the only independent Hindu Kingdom of Nepal which lies close to the north of Bhagalpur District. In fact Bhagalpur had been selected as a venue for the reasons that it lies on the borders of Nepal, Santhal Parganas and Bengal. But this programme of intensive and extensive propoganda and Sangathan had to be given up due to want of time. And the Reception Committee busied itself with selecting the site and drawing up the plan for the erection of the Pandal and the accomodation of the delegates and visitors.

### The planning.

The Reception Committee had decided to erect a "Nagar" for the the accomodation of the delegates and visitors, with "Leaders Camp" close by. It wss expected that the delegates would thus have the opportunity of giving their full attention to the problems facisly the mot ion and an atmosphere of happy commaradiere would prevail among them hailing from distant parts of our common motherland. Special lighting, watering and sanitary arrangements were carefully thoughtout and planned closely was to be erected the spacious pandal to accomodate 50,000 delegates and visitors, with a Rostrum artistically drawn up to represent Lord Krishna leading the

chariot of Arjun to the epic battle of the Kurukshetra.

Kumar Krishna Nanda Singh, a worthy seion of the Banaili Raj family famed for its generosity and support of public institutions, granted permission for the use of his lands for the erection of Mahasabhas Nagar in "Gouri Ganj". Other inhabitants of the locality also very gladly put the use of their lands. The ground had been measured and mapped out and construction was to be taken up when the Reception Committee was called upon to face an entirely new threat to its activiities this time from the Bihar Government.

### Commissioner's Suggestions.

On 18.9.41 the Commissioner of Bhagalpur Division repuested the secretaries of the Reception Committee to meet him the next day. The secretaries met him accordingly. It was then for the first time that the Commissioner told the secretaries that the Bihar Government in consultation with the Govt. of India had directed him to Persuade the local organisers in view of the communal tesnsion at Bhagalpur to give up the attempt to hold the session at Bhagalpur and in case they did not yield to this "persuasion" the Bihar Govt. had decided to ban the session if it was held in Bhagalpur, Monghyr, Patna or Gaya and "such other places", because communal relations were not happy in South Bihar. Ranchi was mentioned as a

proper venue but the commissioner admitted that that town also had recently experienced an out break of communal passion.

The Secretaries of the Reception Committee insisted on a written communication but the Commissioner refused to commit himself in writing. How well-advised the Secretaries were in this insistence will be clear from the fact that from a personal request of the local officer in June to remove the venue outside, Bhagalpur Division ( consisting of the districts of Bhagalpur, Monghyr, Purnea and the Santhal pargana ) it grew in September to a threat of ban on the session if held in places like Bhagalpur, Monghyr, Patna and Gaya and finally on 26th September the Govt. issued a communique banning the holding of the session in the district of Bhagalpur, Monghyr, Patna, Gaya, Shahabad, Muzaffarpur Darbhanga.

The office secretary of the Reception Committee however took immediate steps to inform Rashtrapati. Vir. Savarkar, the working president Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji, the President of the Bengal Provincial Hinbu Sabha and the "Karyadhyaksha" of the Reception Committee, Sjt. Kumar Gangananda Singh, the developments. It was expected that the Bihar Government would not act in such hot haste as to preclude all chances of an honourable settlement. But for once the proverbially slow machinery of the Govt. seemed to be aroused to vigorous activity

and the "information" was officially published on 27th September. That the Govt. had decided to ban the holding of the 23rd Session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha in seven districts of Bihar and that the Govt. Communique to effect would be published formally soon thereafter.

### The Circular Letter.

Sjt. Gauri Shanker Prasad Office Secretary of R. C. had issued a circular letter on 19-9-41 asking the opinion of the members of the R. C. working committee regarding the Govt. Ban. Sjt. Krishna Ballav Narayan Singh, proprietor of Ramibigha Estate, wrote in reply that he was laid down with fever and would not be able to attend the meeting of the Reception Committee, but in his opinion "the matter was" so-serious that we should resist strongly and see that the just cause of the Hindus should in no way suffer or be retarded.

Sjt. Kumar Gangananda Singh ji had written previously that his "personal opinion is that the Mahasabha be held in North Bhagalpur, preferably at Saharsa. Of course the matter had to be finally decided by the Provincial working committee and our Reception Committee". Later on, he again wrote on 3-10-41. "Now that Swatantrya Veer Barrister Savarkar, President of the A. I. H. Mahasabha has taken up the matter, we should

await developments. I have refrained from commenting on the Govt. Communique, because I am not sure what view the Hindu Mahasabha will take of it and what it will do in this connection. We must speak with one voice." He had also drawn up a programme of extensive tour in Purnea District, which he could not however undertake for various reasons and he expressed his own difficulty that his "programme largely depended upon the movements of and instructions from the Maharaja Dhiraj of Darbhanga and so was unable to attend the meeting of the Reception Committee called to meet on the 9th October to make its recommendation to the All-India Hindu Mahasabha.

### The Correspondence.

In the meantime, Rashtrapati Veer Savarkar had written to the Governor of Bihar on 25th September, 1941 the following letters :—

#### Sjt. Savarkar's Letter to Bihar Governor.

Copy of letter, dated 25th September 1941, from Mr. V. D. Savarkar, President, Hindu Mahasabha, Savarkar Sadan, Keluskar Road, Bombay 14, to His Excellency the Governor of Bihar :—

I hope Your Excellency would not mind this hurried note written to you rather informally. Urgency compels me to do so.

I have just received a report from the Secretary of the Reception Committee of the next session of the Hindu Mahasabha to be held at Bhagalpur ( Bihar ) to the effect that the Commissioner of Bhagalpur informed the Reception Committee orally that the Session should not be held anywhere in the North Bihar and that they should abandon the idea of holding it at Bhagalpur in particular on the ground that the communal tension in that part is keen. I have also read to-day in the press a report to the same effect. That is the reason why I hasten to approach Your Excellency to request you that the Government need not be anxious at all, so far as the Hindu Mahasabha side is concerned, that the session, even if it is held in Bhagalpur, would give any cause to inflame communal feelings. It is not only now that Bhagalpur has been decided as a venue all of a sudden. The question of choosing Bhagalpur had been publicly thrashed out in the press and on the platform for months together and then it was decided on grounds which were well known and which had absolutely nothing to do with any communal bias. Had the Government suggested any change at the very beginning, there would have been some chance of taking that factor also into consideration in making the choice of Bhagalpur. But now the preparations have advanced to such a stage and the Hindu Mahasabha organization has got itself committed so defi-

nately to hold the session at Bhagalpur that it would be nearly impossible, and certainly humiliating, to the Hindus, to change the venue simply because some other community may grow so intolerant at the sight of the Hindus exercising their legitimate right of free speech and association. If any such doubt is entertained by the police, the Government should prohibit that community which threatens to disturb peace and order and seeks to stop the law-abiding and legitimate activities of the Hindus to hold a session at a place they think fit in exercise of their fundamental rights of citizenship.

In this connection, I refer to the case regarding the last session of the Moslem League which was held at Madras. In order to allow the League to hold the session there last year without any disturbance, the Government there prohibited the Hindus from holding any conference or assembling in numbers or making any demonstrations etc. in that restricted area. That was unjust enough. But apart from that question, once that it has happened it may serve as a good precedent which the Government of Bihar may follow in the case of Hindus too and should prohibit the Moslem community from disturbing the Hindu Maha Sabha session by criminal means or criminal intimidations in case the police suspect any of them to mean to do so. There is enough time now for the Government to make every arrangement for affording police pro-

tection to the Reception Committee in the exercise of their legitimate activities. I need not emphasise the point that the duty of the Government is to prohibit the criminals from stopping law-abiding citizens in the exercise of their legitimate rights and not to stop the law-abiding citizens themselves from doing it so as to placate the criminals and put a premium thus on Goondaism, blackmail, intimidation and criminal aggression.

Of course, if the Government has any reason to doubt the sincere desire of the Hindu Mahasabha as to their solemn affirmation that they mean to conduct the session fairly and squarely within the legitimate bounds and mean to do nothing that might be justly calculated to offend other communities,—I shall be glad to know the proof of the reasons which lead the Government to entertain such doubts. The Mahasabha it leaders work out every thing in an accomodating spirit provided no deliberate attempt to humiliate the Hindus is made or their fundamental rights are not trampled down to placate to the aggressive demands and even whim of non Hindu sections.

In this connection your Excellency will remember that the Hindu Mahasabha has extended a responsive co-operation to the Government to help the common cause of Indian defence ever since the breaking of the war and has proved to be an effective force in encouraging the Hindus to join the Military forces of all arms in thousands. Some of its outsta-

nding leaders are already working on the National Defence Council, the Advisory War Council, the Provincial War Committees, because the Hindu Mahasabha is convinced that in the interest of the Hindus themselves, they must ally themselves with the British in the common cause of defending India from alien aggression or from internal anarchy. How can an All-India organization which is wholeheartedly and publicly committed to this policy can deliberately do anything in its session which may embarrass the Government in their war efforts in so far as Indian defence is concerned or encourage anarchy within the country by inviting deliberately any communal disturbances and civil feuds.

I urge your Excellency, for all these reasons, to withdraw any proposals or orders intended to prohibit the session at Bhagalpur, so that no avoidable cause may be given to undermine the sympathy and good will which all Hindu Sabhais have been feeling in pressing on the cause of Indian militarisation with a view to defeat any prospective alien aggression which Great Britain also means to fight out in her own defence.

Fortunately, no written orders are as yet given by the Commissioner and therefore the Government is not committed publicly to ban the Session. This is just the time, therefore, for your Excellency, to withdraw the oral suggestions or advice or orders the Commissioner might have

given. If the only difficulty is about the Bakrid a change of dates may be amicably fixed on.

Hoping to receive a favourable and re-assuring reply at your Excellency's earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. V. D. Savarkar,

President, Hindu Mahasabha.

30th September 1941.

To this the secretary to the Governor of Bihar gave the following reply on 30th september, 1941.

#### Governors secretary's reply

Dear Mr. Savarkar,

I am desired by His Excellency the Governor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 25th September, 1941. The order under Rule 56 of the Defence of India Rules prohibiting the holding of the Conference in Bhagalpur and six other districts between the 1st December 1941 and the 10th January 1942, and the Press Communique giving the reasons for this steps, had already issued when your letter was received.

His Excellency regrets that it should have become necessary to issue a formal order. He should have preferred to seek a solution in the same spirit of accommodation which marks your letter had not the loc

representatives of the Sabha refused to refer the question at issue to the All India Committee of the Maha Sabha until the Provincial Government had issued an authoritative order. His Excellency would also make it clear that the action which has been taken can have come as no surprise to the local executive of the Sabha in Bhagalpur since as early as June of this year they were made aware of the views of the Provincial Government as to the danger inherent in the situation.

His Excellency is interested to note the suggestion in the penultimate paragraph of your letter that a change of the date of the meeting of the Maha-Sabha might be arranged. This is a possibility which he has always had in mind, though it was rejected by the local organisers in Bhagalpur. He asks me therefore to say that if the Maha-Sabha could find it convenient to hold its meeting between the 10th and 20th January, the Provincial Government would raise no objection. His Excellency of course assumes that there will be in the interval no unforeseen deterioration in the communal situation,

Yours sincerely,

Sd. W. G. Lacey.

To

V. D. Savarkar, Esqr.

It was suggested in this letter that the action taken

the Government was due to the refusal of representatives of the Sabha to refer the matter to the All India Committee until the Provincial Government had issued an authoritative order and that the views of the Provincial Government had been made known to the local executive of the Sabha in June last.

Both these contentions are wrong and misleading. The Reception Committee did not invite an adverse order to refer it there after to the All India Committee of the Mahasabha. They asked simply for a written communication of the Government views, which the commissioner had orally conveyed to them; so that the All India Committee might have something definite to consider. And then again the oral suggestion and communications had shown a grave tendency to change and embrace larger and larger area each time. Hence this reluctance and caution of the Reception Committee. The Government therefore, if they really wished "to seek a solution in the spirit of accommodation", should not have hesitated to convey their Message and views in writing and in any case should not have participated matters by the publication of a press communique in advance of the issue of the prohibitory order itself.

The Government of Bihar then again betrayed their determination to ban the session even after Bakrid was over if there was a deterioration in the communal situation



and we know how much mischief is wrought by a mere suggestion of this kind.

It meant that the Bihar Government was unwilling to take any steps to keep in check the element which they suspected to be unruly, that they would let things shape themselves out and that if any thing went wrong woe betide the Hindus. This was a situation which was wholly unacceptable to the Reception Committee.

On 3rd October, 1941, Rashtrapati Savarkar wrote back emphasising 'again the point that it is humiliating to the Government itself to confess its inability to suppress and chastise a certain section in a town like Bhagalpur, which seeks to intimidate and stop an All India Organization like the Hindu Mahasabha from exercising its legitimate rights of free association and free speech, without the least intention of encroaching upon the limits of law. Instead of prohibiting the session, the government should have prohibited that suspected section from intimidation and held it back from standing in the way of others who mean to exercise their legitimate civic rights in a law abiding manner. It is this policy which puts a premium on goondaism and criminal aggression on one hand and alienates the sympathy and confidence of the law-abiding on the other. He suggested that some way be found out for "an understanding which could honourably be accepted by both the parties, the government as well as the

Mahasabha, in an accommodating spirit." And expressing his opinion that it would be an irony of fate that the Defence of India Act itself should give cause to weaken in any degree the cause of Indian defence itself "he hoped that nothing would be done which was avoidable by the Government to alienate the sympathy of that body by inflicting any unnecessary humiliation."

### Reply

Mr. W. G. Lacey, the Secretary to the Governor of Bihar replied on 7th Oct:—

Bihar Governor's Camp,  
The 7th October, 1941,

Dear Mr. Savarkar,

I am desired to acknowledge with thanks your letter of October 3rd which having been addressed to Patna reached His Excellency only to day. In these circumstances my reply could not possibly reach you in Bombay before you leave for Delhi, I am therefore addressing this letter to your care of the Secretary, Delhi Provincial Hindu Sabha, and have informed you by telegram to that effect.

2. His Excellency has given his fullest consideration to your suggestion that the Session of the Mahasabha should be held in Bhagalpur during the week commencing 1st January 1942, and if he finds himself unable to accept

that suggestion he is confident that you will give equal consideration to the reasons for his decision which are set out hereafter.

3. The issue which arises from the proposal to hold a Session of the Mahasabha at Bhagalpur at about the time of the Bakrid cannot be viewed in relation to conditions in that place only. How serious the problem of communal conflict may be in Bihar is a matter of history. The Bakrid has always been regarded as an occasion on which communal tension is particularly acute and on which communal trouble is most likely to occur. It is therefore necessary on the occasion of this festival so to dispose the forces available for the maintenance of law and order as to ensure in the event of trouble adequate protection as much for the villagers in remote localities as for the residents of the larger towns. More over, recent experience has shown that communal discord in the village tracts may entail a much more severe strain on our resources than a disturbance in purely urban areas. The Provincial Government are therefore of opinion that regard being had to the forces at their disposal, it would be unwise in the extreme to permit, during the period of danger, a meeting of the Mahasabha in Bhagalpur where communal disharmony has been so marked in the past few years and where despite the goodwill of all well intentioned persons, there may arise a serious conflagration.

4. The question naturally arises as to when the danger period will be over. The Bakrid celebrations may—according to the appearance of the moon—take place on 29th, 30th and 31st December or on 30th, 31st December and 1st January. It is desirable to allow a reasonable interval not only for any feeling of excitement which may have been aroused to die down but to permit also of a redistribution of police forces to be carried out in the light of events arising out of the Id festival. For this reason His Excellency, after consultation with the officers mainly concerned with the maintenance of law and order considers that January 5th is the earliest possible date on which the Session can commence and that prior to that date there should be no connected ceremonies, formal or informal, involving demonstrations of a public nature.

5. His Excellency assumes again that there will be no such serious disturbances in Bhagalpur during the Id as would make it necessary to prohibit public meeting of any nature for some time thereafter. In such an event, however, he has no doubt that the Committee of the Mahasabha would themselves consider it desirable to postpone the Session.

Yours Sincerely,

Sd. W. G. Lacey.

### The Background.

In the meantime S. J. Gauri Shanker Prasad, office and Propaganda Secretary of the Reception Committee, had issued a statement and invited a special meeting of the members of the Reception Committee to discuss on the situation arising out of the ban and make their recommendations to the working Committee of the All India Hindu Mahasabha which was meeting at Delhi on 11th and 12th Oct. The statements of the Reception Committee set out the back ground and history of the communal tension which had been made the basis for the prohibitory order :

#### Text of the statement dated 1/10/41 issued from the office of R. C.

"The Reception Committee is facing a grave situation. In the issue of "the Indian Nation" dated 27. 9. 41 a Govt. communique has been published informing that the holding of the 23rd session of the All India Hindu Mahasabha in any of the districts named below between 1st Dec. 1941 to 10th Jan. 1942 was to be prohibited under section 56 of India Defence Act and necessary orders will follow soon ;

Bhagalpur, Monghyr, Patna, Gaya, Shahabad, Muzffarpur and Darbhanga.

As it will not be proper for the working committee to decide this very important question, it has become necessary to call a general meeting of the Reception Committee.

To assist the members of the Reception Committee in their decision, the events referred to be properly made known to them.

In 1924 the Mohamadans had suddenly attacked a religious procession of the Hindus. This caused some commotion, but soon it settled down and till 1937 there was no trouble. In 1938 the Rath-Jatra procession of the Hindus was taken out with a proper license. But the return of one of them was prevented by the Police. This interference in religious ceremony caused a great sensation and it was Government alone which was responsible for it. At least, when the procession was allowed to return adequate arrangements for the protection of the processionists had not been made. The Muslims made a concerted attack on the Hindus returning after the procession. This was the occasion of the second riot. In 1939, again the Govt. obstructed the Ratha jatra procession. The Hindus this time resorted to Satyagraha. The Govt. recognised the inherent right of the Hindus and declared that the Hindus could take out any procession and they only should inform the Govt. of their intension, allowing the Govt. sufficient time to make arrangements for its safety.

But in 1940 the Government again prevented the taking out of a Kali immersion procession even after taking out license, only on the ground that some Muslims chose to make objections. Thus the religious sentiments were

wounded. When high tension had been created, the procession was allowed to be taken out, but proper arrangements for its protection had not been made. A riot broke out and continued for three days. A Peace was restored thereafter and a Peace committee is functioning at present and trying to solve the problems likely to exercise the minds of the inhabitants here. In this way, again and again the religious ceremonies of Hindus had been obstructed by the Govt and cause for riot arose out of it.

Two incidents of the neighbouring places also should be mentioned. In Pirpainti, the Moharram procession was taken out under police protection through the private compound of Kali temple and inspite of the protests of the local Hindus who were gagged by prohibitive orders under section 144 Cr. P. C. A civil suit was preferred by the Hindus and the Muslims entered it to a compromise, declaring that they would not do so hereafter. The other incident is of this year of village Nayachak. The Government paper also showed that cow-slaughter was not customary in the Village, so that it could not be held there. The Sub-Divisional Officer decided accordingly, but inspite of this the Mohammadans slaughtered a cow. The local Hindus applied the Govt. to prosecute the culprits on behalf of the Crown. But although the Govt. could legally do so, they rejected this prayer. The Hindus then filed the criminal case and the accused had been

convicted by the trial court. The matter is pending before the High Court.

The incident of Bihar Sharif is a matter of near past and need not be mentioned in details. The two sides of the picture given above are made clearer still by the mention of one more incident. Last year in December, a session of the A. I. Muslim League was to be held in Madras. Communal relations were not happy in that city. The Government there prohibited the Hindus from collecting at any place or taking out any procession. But at Bhagalpur instead of banning the muslims, the session of the A.I. Hindu Mahasabha itself is banned.

In the Govt. communique it is also stated that they had banned similarly all meetings and processions which were sought to be taken out by the Muslims in connection with the Bihar Sherif riot. And they sought to make it a precedent on which A.I.H. Mahasabha is being banned. It is absolutely clear that the dying embers of communal bitterness would have leapt into flames by these meetings and processions in connection with a communal riot. But the annual session of the A.I.H. Mahasabha is not connected with any riot or any incident of that nature. These sessions are held to lay down the future course of action for the Hindu Nation. It is therefore wholly unfair to compare it with Processions and meetings directly connected with riots.

The Govt. communique also makes out that through the Commissioner of Bhagalpur Division and by other means the local workers were persuaded to give up Bhagalpur as the venue. But it was not mentioned when these attempts were made. The real fact is that it was decided in the Madura session of A. I. H. Mahasabha in December 1940 to hold the next session in Bihar. In the open meeting of the Bhagalpur District Hindu Conference, held in the Mela of Singheshwar Sthan, the Bihar Prov. Hindu Sabha was requested to arrange for holding the session in Bhagalpur. The Bihar prov. Hindu Conference in its meeting at Daltonganj on 11-4-41 formed a committee to select a venue and in accordance with its report the B. P. H. S. Working Committee in its meeting on 26.4.41 selected Bhagalpur for the purpose. In the first week of May the work was taken up. The Commissioner called the Provisional Secretary to meet him in June and expressed his personal opinion that in case any place other than Bhagalpur were selected he would have no objection. He suggested Patna for it. The Secretary made it perfectly plain to him that the fixing of the venue and the dates for the session were within the competence of the B. P. H. Sabha and the A. I. H. Mahasabha. Therefore they ought to be approached for it. Again in the middle of June, the Commissioner was informed that in case he gave his opinion in writing the matter would be referred to the Hindu Sabha High command, but not other-

wise. The Commissioner never informed us that this was a decision of the Govt. and that the Government considered any place other than Bhagalpur also as "unsafe" on the other hand, he told us that the local District Magistrate had no objection if the session was held shortly before the Bakrid so that it may be finished by, say, 27th Dec. But the Commissioner was not willing to accept even this. It gave the impression that the Commissioner had personal objection to the holding of the session within his local jurisdiction.

The Govt. Communique mentions "Several other attempts". The Reception Committee is not aware of any of these.

The final decision to hold the session at Bhagalpur was taken on 17th August. When the arrangements had much advanced, the Commissioner called the office-bearers of the Reception\* Committee on 18.9.41 to meet him. They met him the next day and then for the first time the Commissioner informed them of the decision of the Government to prevent the holding of the session in Bhagalpur, Monghyr, Patna and Gaya, on the ground that communal relations there were not as they ought to be in South Bihar. He also said that there might be objections to other places also. At that time the possibility of holding the session at Darbhanga or Sonepur was considered. The Commissioner then did not object to these, but they are now included in the list of banned districts.

The office-bearers have considered all these and have informed the B. P. H. Sabha and the A. I. H. Mahasabha. The Prov. H. Sabha has decided to refer the matter to Swatantrya Veer Savarkarji for his final decision. He has sent a letter to the Bihar Governor and has directed the Reception Committee to proceed with its preparation as before.

The real issue is : Are the Hindus to enjoy freedom of speech and freedom of association or not ?

We should not be guilty of doing anything which may cast reflection on the Hindu flag or on the Hindu Nation. Please carefully note the feeling and opinion of your locality and place them before the Reception Committee meeting as the representative of your locality and place your recommendations before the B. P. H. Sabha and A. I. H. Maha Sabha.

We therefore request you to make it a point to attend personally and enrol other members and bring them also to the meeting. The meeting will be held on 9th October in the local Theosophical Hall at 3 P. M.

Sd. Gauri Shankar Prasad,  
Secretary.

1-10-41.

### The Final Resolve.

The Working Committee of the Reception Committee met on 9.10.41 at the residence of its General Secretary, Rai Bahadur Sukhraj Rai under his presidentship, in the absence

of the President, Kumar Gangananda Singh, and later on the member of the Reception Committee met the same day in the local Theosophical Hall under the Presidentship of Rai Saheb Surendra Nath Basu and passed a recommendation for fixing Bhagalpur as the venue and some date during X'mas for holding the session. By another resolution S. Gauri Shanker Prasad and S. Ganga Prasad Gupta were sent as its representatives to the A.I.H. Mahasabha working Committee. They along with Pt. Bharat Misra, placed this recommendation before the Working Committee on 11th Oct. After a long deliberation on every aspect of the question, the Working Committee passed the following resolution amidst great enthusiasm.

This meeting of Working Committee of the All India Hindu Mahasabha records its emphatic protest against the action of the Government of Bihar imposing an unjust and illegal ban under the Defence of India Act and rules on the forthcoming session of the All India Mahasabha which was announced in April last to be held during the ensuing X'mas vacation at Bhagalpur (Bihar).

This Working Committee is of opinion that such unwarranted restrictions on the exercise of the legitimate civic rights of the Hindus inevitably put a premium on goondaism and tends to encourage the re-actionary elements which are anxious to create trouble.

This Working Committee is further of opinion that the

resources of the state should be exercised against potential mischief makers and not against citizens who went to exercise their fundamental, civic and constitutional rights in a lawful manner.

This Working Committee consequently urges upon the Government of Bihar to reconsider and withdraw the ban so as to enable the Hindu Mahasabha to exercise its legitimate rights of free association undisturbed.

This Working Committee after taking into consideration all facts and also the correspondence that passed between President Veer Savarkarji and the Government of Bihar hereby resolves that the all India Hindu Mahasabha session be irrevocably held on the 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th December 1941, at Bhagalpur.

This Working Committee hereby directs the Reception Committee of the forthcoming all India session and the Bihar Provincial Hindusabha that they are to proceed in right earnest with adequate arrangements for holding the said session on the above appointed dates and place for making the session a success worthy of Hindudam.

This Working Committee appeals to all section and classes of Hindus and to all other freedom loving citizens of India to extend their whole hearted co-operation to the Reception Committee and to attend the session and to make it a success.

Rashtrapati Vir Savarkar sent a telegram on 13th Oct. to the Governor of Bihar, which was confirmed by the following letter on 15th October :

### Mr. Savarkar's Letter to Governor.

Hindu Mahasabha ( Presidential Office ) 'Savarkar' 'Sadan' Keluskar Road, Dadar, Bombay, 15th October, 1941.

To

His Excellency the Governor of Bihar, Patna.  
Your Excellency.

Your Excellency must have received by this time my telegram of the 13th instant sent from Delhi after the Working Committee was over requesting you to wait for a letter explaining the real significance and spirit of the resolution of Committee regarding the Bhagalpur session. Accordingly, this letter, accompanied with a copy of the original resolution is being forwarded to you for Your Excellency's kind consideration and needed action.

You will kindly note the redmarked portions in the resolution with special emphasis as they imply the explanation I am detailing out below.

(2) I assure Your Excellency that not withstanding the provocative comments in a certain section of the Indian

press which is almost always inclined more to misrepresent than represent the Hindu Mahasabha, the Working Committee was as considerate in dealing with the question as the letters which I received from Your Excellency in reply to mine. There were in fact three points at issue apart from the question of the policy underlying such orders.

The first point was regarding the venue. The Bihar Government had already intimated in the letter sent to me under your instructions that under certain conditions the Government would allow the session to meet at Bhagalpur and thus this point was amicably settled so far as the venue was concerned.

The second point regarding these conditions concerned the Bakrid days running from 29th December, 1941 up to 1st January 1942. The Bihar Government wished the Committee not to hold the session on these dates in any case. The Committee too never wished to give any avoidable excuse to those who might be sent on intensifying communal tension or bringing about a clash. Consequently, the Committee decided, a spirit of accommodation, to meet the wishes of the Government in this respect and fix its session so as to leave these dates with along a margin for the Government to redistribute the forces. So on this point also an amicable understanding has been arrived at in consideration of your letter.

The third point referred to the question whether the dates

of the session should follow the Bakrid or precede it. The Bihar Government had made it clear in their letters to me that if during the Bakrid the communal tension worsens or breaks out in a clash, the Government would be compelled to prohibit the holding of the session even in January. The Committee in considering this point came to the very reasonable and inevitable conclusion that if the session was fixed after the Bakrid in the first week of January, it would be so easy for any suspected sections which were bent upon creating troubles with a view to stop the session to stage some communal clash somewhere at Bhagalpur or in its surroundings during the Bakrid so as to provide an excuse for promulgation of a new order prohibiting the session. To avoid this risk which is more likely to come in the way of the session if it was held after the Bakrid than before it, the Committee came to conclusion that on the whole there would be less risk involved in this connection, if the session was held before the Bakrid.

Because, the Hindus, eager to see that the session passes off without a hitch will be the last party to give any cause for communal clash apart from the fact that as a general rule the Hindus are scarcely if ever observed to take the aggressive. On the other hand, what is more important to be borne in mind, the Moslems also would be far less inclined to stage a clash before the Bakrid as that would imperil the possibility of celebrating peacefully their Bakrid festival too,



unhampered by any general prohibition against public processions etc. In addition to this the Mahasabha also would be able to utilise the Christmas holidays for the session.

For these reasons the Working committee in a considerate mood and with a sincere wish to remove the difficulty from the path of the Government of prohibiting the session again in January as your Excellency's letter indicated have fixed the 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th of December, 1941.

It will leave two clear days for the Government to redistribute their forces if the Bakrid falls on the 30th December. If the Government wishes to have still more time, we shall try our best to finish the session so as to leave the 27th date also free from any programme in connection with the session.

(3) I trust that in view of all this explanation Your Excellency will allow the Reception Committee to hold the session of the Hindu Mahasabha on the above dates at Bhagalpur. I may assure the Government that if this session is allowed to pass off well, its chief resolutions regarding the Hindu Militarization movement are bound to give a great filling in encouraging Hindus all over India to join the military forces of all arms in their hundreds and thousands and to strengthen the hands of those Hindu Sabhait leaders who have already joined the National Defence Council, the Advisory Committee, the Provincial War Committees and Councils in their task of extending a responsive co-opera-

tion to the Government in the cause of Indian Defence. Secondly, the Government will be able to enlist the sympathy of millions of Hindus inside and outside the Mahasabha who stand for civic liberty and the exercise of their legitimate rights alone; while on the other hand it will shake the unwarranted belief which makes the fanatical goondaism feel that intimidation of using criminal force does always pay them and browbeat the Government in placating them and thus enables them to deprive the Hindus of their legitimate rights so as to strengthen Moslem aggrandizement and aggression.

Taking into consideration all these benefits that are sure to accrue by allowing the session on the above dates and bearing in mind the fact that any how whether before or after the Bakrid the Government will have to bring on the spot sufficient forces to keep peace and order, I have no doubt that your Excellency will find that time fixed by the Resolution constitutes on the whole the most considerate, compromising and amicable solution of this vexed question and will issue order as soon as possible allowing the Reception Committee to hold the session accordingly.

Hoping to receive a re-assuring reply from Your Excellency at your earliest convenience.

Yours Sincerely

Sd. V. D. Savarker.

President, Hindu Mahasabha.

### The Governor's Threat.

On 28th October, the Secretary to His Excellency the Governor of Bihar wrote "While appreciating the spirit of accomodation which has actuated your committee in making their alternative suggestion, he feels that they have not sufficiently appreciated the nature of these other considerations the essentials of which are as follows. In this Province the Bakrid is invariably a time of anxiety by reason of the possibility of communal outbreaks. In Bhagalpur the Communal tension is at present time acute and it is obviously in the highest degree inadvisable to permit on the eve of the Id any occurrence which may accentuate the existing feeling of tension. While he recognises that you yourself and your committee and the organisers of the session are no less desirous than himself that there should be no disturbance of the peace, at the same time he cannot ignore the fact in the course of the session there will come under public discussion matter which, whatever their merits, are highly controversial. Such discussion can not fail to have an effect on the less responsible members of the public whom feelings are already inflamed and thus would constitute a further and very serious danger to the public peace. For this reason His Excellency regrets that he is unable to acquiesce in the proposal that the session be held in Bhagalpur on 24th, 25th and 26th December, or on any previous date which is not considerably in advance of the

Id. His Excellency has throughout realised that the holding of the session outside the period of the Christmas holidays involves no little inconvenience to those attending. It was in order to obviate that inconvenience that the suggestion of an alternative venue was made. In conclusion I am to point out that the wording of paragraph 5 of the Resolution enclosed with your letter might possibly bear the interpretation that your committee is determined, regardless of any orders, which have been or may be passed in that respect to hold their session at Bhagalpur 24th—27th December. Should this indeed be the case His Excellency wishes to make it clear beyond any possibility of misunderstanding that such a challenge to authorities will be met by all the resources at the command of Government."

### The Presidents dignified clarification

On 27th Oct. Rashtrapati Savarkar Ji wrote back that the Bihar Government had given an "emphatic warning" to the effect "that in case there was any trouble during the Bakrid festival and the communal situation deteriorated for the worse, the Bihar Government would be compelled to have the session once again, even in the first week of January. In this connection Your Excellency would readily admit that with a full knowledge of this attitude of the Government, the aggressive section among the Moslems could never fail to stage some communal clash during the

Bakrid with a deliberate intention of compelling the Govt. to Prohibit the session again and the Mahasabha would find itself even after the Bakrid in January in the same fix. Was it not therefore more politic and less likely to involve any risk of this nature that the Maha Sabha Committee should have decided to hold the session before the Bakrid instead of after it ? For, who does not know that as matters stand, it is the celebration of the Bakrid which is almost always associated throughout India with riotous orgies indulged in by intoxicated Muslim fanaticism. But on the other hand even the most enthusiastic session of the Mahasabha attended by millions of Hindus have never resulted in any such riotous communal orgies on the part of the Hindus. Consequently of these alternatives even the very reason which Your Excellency so correctly points out goes to support all the more forcibly the decision of the Committee that the session be held on the dates preceding the Bakrid in the very interest of peace and order. The Committee never meant the fixing of the dates before Bakrid as a challenge for reasons I have explained at length in the foregoing paragraphs ; and secondly, if the Government of Bihar is so powerful and I have no doubt is so, to hold the All India session of the Hindu Mahasabha in check wherein at least half a million Hindus are likely to participate and with which crores of Hindus all over India do sympathise—then the Government can certainly prove a dozen times more overwhelmingly powerful to keep a few hundred of aggressive Moslem in

a single town of Bhagalpur within the limits of Law and Order and prevent them from encroaching on or endangering the legitimate rights of the Hindu Mahasabha of free association.

“At Madras, only last April, the Moslem League held its session. Resolutions seething with anti-Hindu sentiments were passed. But instead of banning that All India session of the Muslim League, the Government there prohibited the Hindus under section 144 Cr. P. C. from holding any meeting or carrying lathis or weapons or gathering in more than five persons, and here at Bhagalpur if the Govt. leaves the few hundred of Moslems along and in order to placate them, bans the session of an organization like the Hindu Mahasabha which occupies the outstanding position of an All-India representative body from exercising its legitimate and law-abiding rights,—does not Your Excellency feel it quite natural and justifiable if the Hindus all over India take it as an unendurable and national humiliation flung in their face ?”

“Peace and order every Govt. must safeguard and maintain, but only with a view to render protection to the legitimate exercise by law-abiding citizens of their civic rights. This duty on the part of the Govt. can never imply to maintain that peace and that order which could only be secured by surrendering to the intimidation of aggressive Goondaism and prohibiting, to placate it, the law-abiding

classes from exercising their legitimate activities. These are truisms but I had to emphasise them only because the Hindus all over India are being subjected to humiliation as a result of a set policy based on this perverse interpretation of the duty of the Govt. to maintain peace and order."..... My only request is, let this Govt. strength be used to protect civic and legitimate rights and not to ban them.

"The prestige of the Govt. too will immeasurably be more enhanced than otherwise by raising the ban and thus enlisting the sympathies of millions of lovers of civil liberty throughout India."

### The Governor's determined "No"

Mr. W. G. Lacey, Secretary to the Governor of Bihar wrote in reply on 31st October that His Excellency regretted that he could not agree with Rashtrapati Savarkarji's conclusion that the holding of the session on 24th-27th December involved the least possible risk to peace and order in this province and His Excellency found support for his view in Rashtrapati Savarkar Ji's "acceptance of the proposition ( a ) that the Bakrid is not oriously liable to be attended by communal disorder and ( b ) that under the influence of any large communal gathering and mass movement the least responsible section of the public may even unwillingly, bring about an exacerbation of communal feelings. It is for precisely these reasons and in

view of the communal tension now subsisting at Bhagalpur that the Provincial Govt. - whose responsibility it is to maintain law and order - are convinced that the holding of the session on the dates proposed would be attended with very serious danger to public tranquility. In these circumstances, the duty of Government, as His Excellency sees it, is plain; and he regrets that he is unable to modify the decision communicated to you in my letter of the 20th October.

### The correspondence closed.

Taking this letter to be the final reply of the Govt. of Bihar in this connection, Rashtrapati Savarkar wrote on 8th Nov. "In closing this correspondence on the Hindu Mahasabha too, for the time being at any rate, it is my duty to acquaint Your Excellency with the view point of the Hindu Mahasabha in connection with this fidal decision of the Govt. of Bihar to the following effect :-

"( a ) The great National festivals of the Hindus like the Dasara and Divali, etc., or of the Christians like the X'mas or of the Parsees pass off throughout India so peacefully as to cause no inconvenience to the other communities or compel them to forego the exercise of their civic rights. But on the contrary, the Moslem festivals continue to be a source of disorder and danger to the public peace. Your Excellency also in your letter, refers to the fact that "The Bakrid is notoriously liable to be attended by communal

disorder." The least responsible section of the Moslem public does generally indulge on these occasions in riotous anti-Hindu Orgies. Under those circumstances the Hindu Mahasabha maintains that the Govt. should see to it that 'all the resources at its command' are used to compel the Moslems to restrict themselves within the limits of law and order and to suppress ruthlessly their riotous anti. Hindu orgies, instead of prohibiting such a highly responsible body as the All-India Hindu Mahasabha from exercising its legitimate rights of the holding its sessions which throughout its history have been noted for their dignified, peaceful and orderly conduct. The contrary course would clearly amount to punishing the law abiding to please and placate the lawless to preventing the unoffending citizens to bar and bolt their houses simply because it may irritate the thieves.

(b) It is the fundamental and unchallengeably established principle on which alone law and good Government can ever securely rest that a man or an association can not be convicted for or prevented from doing a lawful act even if it seems likely that it may cause a ruffian or a fanatic to commit an unlawful act. The duty of the Government in such a case is to hold in check and chastise the lawless one and not to flourish the bludgeon in the face of the law-abiding to stop them from exercising their legitimate rights.

(c) From this point of view it is really extremely humiliating to the Government itself to acknowledge its inability to check and chastise the suspected Moslem section at a single town like Bhagalpur if they threaten to have recourse to lawlessness and riots and to find no other means to maintain peace and order than putting a premium on such Moslem goondaism and compelling the Hindu to forgo their fundamental civic and religious rights to please and placate Moslem fanaticism.

(d) The Government correspondence makes it clear that the Government of Bihar has forces sufficient enough to force their ban on the thousand of Hindus and hundreds of most responsible Hindu leaders who are likely to gather at Bhagalpur for the Session and yet the Government maintains that it would be very difficult to check and chastise the fanatical section of Moslem population at a single town like Bhagalpur. This paradoxical line of argument and action shows clearly that the underlying idea why the Government thinks it cheaper and more convenient to prohibit the Hindus from their lawabiding activities rather than restrain the Moslems for their lawlessness must be the usual presumption that the Hindus as rule are more amenable as gentlemen to law and order. If it be so, it is a compliment to the Hindus but it is positively humiliating to the Government to take such an unjust and undue advantage of it.

(e) And yet this perverse policy of maintaining peace and order not by suppressing the lawless Moslem fanaticism but by placating it at the cost of the civic, religious and political rights of the Hindus continues to be the order of the day throughout India.

(f) Consequently, the Hindu Mahasabha as the most outstanding representative body of the Hindus feel it its duty to protest against its National humiliation and to assert its civic rights with all legitimate means within its reach.

(II) Your Excellency will please note that owing to the final decision of the Bihar Government to ban the Session, the question has ceased to be a local or provincial one and has assumed an All-India importance. In order to maintain peace and order at a single town like Bhagalpur the Bihar Government has unwittingly chosen a course under the Defence of India Act which is likely to do harm to the cause of peace and order on an All-India scale by disturbing and agitating the minds of Peaceful and orderly citizens not only Hindus but all lovers of civic liberty throughout India who never had or have any the least intention of harming the cause of India defence, but on the contrary were actually extending responsive co-operation to the war-efforts in the Councils, Committees, Legislatures and in campaigns to exhort the Hindus to join the Military Forces in so far as the cause of Indian Defence was concerned. I

therefore going to appeal to the Viceroy to intervene in this case and I hope Your Excellency will also wait till the Central Government sends formally their final reply and decision regarding this question.

(III) In closing this correspondence I once again assure Your Excellency that the Hindu Mahasabha does not entertain any the least idea of throwing any challenge to the Government but means only to assert its civic rights as regards this particular question. Your warning that Session may be banned even if it was held after the Bakrid in case there was some trouble during the Bakrid—a contingency which was almost certain to take place as the knowledge of this attitude of the Government was quite likely to encourage the Moslems to stage some trouble,—the Hindu Mahasaba had no alternative left but to choose dates earlier before the Bakr-Id as they were less likely to provide any justifiable cause to the Moslems to complain that the Hindus holding the session during the Bakrid days wanted to disturb them and as those dates before the Bakrid were more convenient to the Hindu Mahasabha on account of the Xmas. On all other points the Hindu Mahasabha wishes to be as accommodating possible and will try its best to cause no bitterness of feeling towards the Government in so far as it lies in its power. I hope the Government of Bihar too will note this fact in an appreciative spirit and in response to it will deal as considerately

as possible in dealing with the situation in connection with this question.

Yours sincerely,  
Sd. V. D. Savarkar.  
President Hindu Mahasabha,

We have given the correspondence between Rashtrapati Savarkar and the Governor of Bihar in extenso as the Government of Bihar published these letters with comments, to white wash its imposition of the unjust and unjustifiable ban. We leave it to the readers to draw their own conclusions and turn to the narration of the activities of the Reception committee for the historic session.

### Arrangements proceed apace.

The representative of the Reception committee were given necessary instructions by the Mahasabha High Command and in view of the extraordinary circumstances it was not considered advisable to make arrangements on the scale as planned by the Reception Committee originally. An outline was redrawn and accordingly Gauri Shankar Prasad met the contractors in Allahabad and Patna and place before the R. C. their estimates for erection and furnishing the Pandal for the session, which was to be a spacious one capable of accomodating 50,000 visitors. Of course the decorations were left out as the situation was full of too serious portents to allow of these. The Reception Commi-

tee after full consideration of the circumstances came to the conclusion that it was not advisable to erect the Pandal in Gouriganj as originally decided and selected the Lajpat Park, named after the well-known "Lion of the Panjab" as the suitable site, within the heart of the town.

### Propaganda.

The Reception Committee decided to carry on a whirlwind propaganda into the whole of the province to rouse the Hindus to the full understanding of the situation facing them. Pt. Chandra Gupta Vedalankar, the young orator and bader who holds out a great promise, was the first to respond to the call of the Reception Committee. Pt. Ram Krishna Pandey, a General Secretary of Mahakoshal Prov. Hindusabha and member of the A. I. Working Committee, who for a long time has been carrying the message of Hindu Mahasabha to Bihar, also joined. Pt. Bajaranga Dutta Sharma, Pt. Raghava Charya Shastri, who eventually became the first Dictator of the Reception Committee and Pt. Vishwanath Shastri, an erudite research scholar, made a extensive tours. These five leader went round the whole province and were heard with rapt attention by enthusiastic audience of thousands of sangathanist Hindus.

### Our Critic.

While the organisers were thus going on quietly, per-

fecting their arrangement for the session and calmly waiting for the development, the local press; the searchlight, expressed much concern that the Reception Committee did not make any demonstration of its intension to fight against the encroachment on the civic rights of the Hindus. It felt that only the Congress could so calmly face the situation and the Hindu Mahasabha, which according to it, was not a body with a fighting programme, ought not to emulate that example. It forgot that the Mahasabha High Command as also those in charge of the Reception Committee had full confidence in their strength and the potential strength of the Hinduism, and were no believers in mistaking noise for strength. They also made it plain that while on one hand they were not itching for a fight, on the other hand they will not seek to shirk it if it was forced on them. And the Reception Committee produced with its programme with calm resolution and refused to be stampeded into "action" by hostile criticism or brow-beaten into silence by the threats of the Bihar government.

### President's Instructions.

Rashtrapati Savarkarji came to Calcutta in the third week of November, 1941, enroute to Assam. He called upon the Reception Committee and Bihar Provincial Hindusabha to send their representatives to meet him there.

Accordingly R. B. Shukhraj Roy, Sjt. Gauri Shankar Prasad and Pt. Raghava Charya Shastri on behalf of the Reception Committee and Pt. Bharat Misra as General Secretary of Bihar Provincial Hindu Sabha were deputed to meet the Rashtrapati to discuss future plans. Pt. Ravaneshwar Misra was good enough to come of his own accord to join them. In the discussions which followed he presented the dark side of it and pointed the shoals and reefs which must be guard against. He was afraid of communal riots and our own weakness to carry the struggle to successful conclusion. But the Rashtrapati with his usual clarity of vision and vigour brushed aside these cofwebs and gave detailed instruction regarding the course of action to be adopted, in either case, whether the ban was lifted or not.

Pt. Ravaneshwar Misra made one more suggestion which need be mentioned. Probably with some well-founded reasons, which he knew best, he suggested to the president that he should personally meet the Governor when everything would be settled amicably. The President refused to consider this in view of his correspondence with the Governor. Mr. Misra then suggested that Dr. Mukherji might be sent for the purpose. The President refused to do so, as he did not propose to place the Working President in the position which he himself did not like to take.



During his stay there, President Saverkarji addressed the students in Calcutta University Institute and another meeting was held on 20-11-42 in Bara Bazar area of Calcutta where the representatives of Bihar exhorted the people to attend the forth-coming session of the A. I. H. M. Sabha at Bhagalpur.

The deputationists also held long consultations with Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherji at his residence, as also in palatial building of Rai Bahadur Gnnindra Krishna Roy where President Savarkarji was staying.

But even then the President did not give up all hopes of a last-minute settlement and carried on negotiations. He instructed the deputationists that in case of a final break up, he would inform them.

The deputationists returned with full instructions from the President and the Working President, ready to carry them out. After a short stay at Bhagalpur for rearranging propoganda, office and the volunteer departments according to the exigencies of the changed circumstances Sjt. G. S. Prasad and pt. R. Acharya left for Patna. There they were met by Pandit Bajarangdutt Sharma. Special attention was given to raising volunteers from different Parts of the province, so that in case of arrests in one locality, sufficient numbers may be available from other places.

### Kumar Gangananda Singh.

Kumar Gangananda Singh, President of the Reception Committee, was elected President of the Bihar Prov. Hindu Sabha to ensure complete coordination between both these bodies. The resolution for his election as such had been moved by Sjt. G. S. Prasad himself. He now arrived with Maharaja Dhiraj of Darbhanga. He held long consultations with Sjt. G. S. Prasad and it was arranged that Maharajadhiraj would be approached on the next day for his donation to the Reception committee. But after his return from the Government House, suddenly the Maharajadhiraj changed his programme of staying in Patna and left for Delhi by the evening train. Kumar Gangananda Singh made a suggestion to Sjt. G. S. Prasad to send Pt. Bharat Miara to Delhi to him at once as soon as he returned from Calcutta and that he should not do any thing new until he heard from Kumar Sahib.

### The Dictatorship.

The next day information was received that all arrangements had been completed by the Government to take the Reception Committee by surprise. The same day it became known that the negotiation carried on by President Savarkarji did not hold any promise for settlement. The situation moved to a crisis.

Earlier the Reception Committee had passed a resolution that in case any emergency arose, all Powers of the Reception Committee would be vested in S. G. S. Prasad. S. Prasad understood the situation to be clearly the emergency contemplated by the aforesaid resolution. He therefore hurried back to Bhagalpur with Pandit R. Acharya.

He had in the meantime made over the running of the Reception Committee office to Babu Surya Narayan Prasad because he had been left without any office since the giving up of the proposed exhibition. Under his advice S. S. N. Prasad called an emergency meeting of the Reception Committee and this committee dissolved the Reception committee, after nominating Pandit Raghav Charya Shastri as the first Dictator. It may be noted that the dissolution of the Reception Committee and the appointment of a dictator were done under the instructions of president Savarkarji.

### The Darbhanga move.

Pt. Bharat Misra had left Bhagalpur for Delhi only the previous night. His statement alongwith that of Kumar Gangananda Singh's appeared in the local press two days after it. And this gave an unexpected turn to that events.

It transpired that the Maharajadhiraj of Darbhanga

on returning from Viceregal Lodge informed Kumar Gangananda Singh, who is also his private secretary, and Pandit Bharat Misra that he was willing to bear the whole expenses of the session in case the venue was shifted from Bhagalpur to Darbhanga. Assurance was given that although Darbhanga also was one of the banned districts, the Government would not interfere and allow the session to be held on the dates fixed by the Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha.

Kumar sahib later on informed the Reception Committee that he had tried to consult President Savarkarji on the phone, but he was not available. And Maharajadhiraj would not allow time to consider the proposal he had made and wanted answer immediately. So Kumar sahib and Pandit Bharat Misra had no option and they accepted the proposal in good faith, believing it to be in the best interest of the Mahasabha. They accepted the proposal, Kumar sahib as the President of both the Bihar Provincial Hindu Sabha and the Reception Committee and Pt. Bharat Misra as the General secretary of the Bihar Provincial Hindu Sabha. And they issued their statements to the press also, without waiting for President Savarkarji approval.

When a wrong position had thus been irretrievably taken up by these two esteemable gentlemen, they phoned to President Savarkarji some hours there after and recei-

ved the reply that he wholly disapproved it. When they informed him that they had already issued their statements to the press, he asked them to recall them. And they then told him that these statements had already been printed and could not be recalled. President Savarkar then told them that he would contradict these statements through the press.

It may be mentioned that the working Committee of the A. I. H. Mahasabha had delegated all its powers to the President to deal with the whole question of holding the session of the Mahasabha. Therefore it was plain to all concerned that it was President Savarkarji alone who could deal with the question. The Bihar Provincial Hindusabha and the Reception Committee also had submitted the matter to the A. I. H. Mahasabha and therefore could not deal again with the matter at their pleasure. And the President and the General Secretary by no stretch of their constitutional position were rested with the necessary authority to do so on their own initiative. It made the position worse still that these gentlemen took this all-important decision without consulting their respective committees.

### The Game.

And one connected with these affairs also knew full well that the Bihar Government had by this time found

out its mistake in judging the Hindusabhaites as a set of cowards and was anxious for a settlement. But its false notion of prestige would not allow it to take advantage of the hair of friendship stretched out by the President of the Mahasabha. It sought to take recourse to underhand means and backdoor methods. It conveyed suggestions through its confidants. When these failed to create any impression, it was sought to find out some persons who would oblige it out of the impasse. And the method actually employed was that as President Savarkarji refused to sacrifice the principle involved the settlement was made with his lieutenants over his head and without his consultation, thus undermining his authority as the accredited representative of Hindudom, on the basis that the government gave up objection to the holding of the session on the dates fixed and the Mahasabha gave up its right to hold the session at any place it chose and changed the venue.

There was nothing new in the method employed. The viceroy had used it with some success against the President of the Muslim League in the formation of his Execution Council when he settled with Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and Mr. Fazlul Haq in spite of the objections of Mr. Jinnah. It at least created a deep schism and Mr. Jinnah had to take recourse to the threat of disciplinary action to set his house in order.

Sjt. G. S. Prasad was functioning as before, under the Dictator of the Reception committee. He read statements of Kumar G. N. Singh and Pt. Bharat Misra and at once issued a statement contradicting it and challenging the authority of these gentlemen to make the change as the matter was in the hands of President Savarkarji. He also sent telegram to President Savarkarji requesting his decision. He was all the more troubled because these statements had appeared at the psychological moment when the spirit of resistance to the wanton encroachment on the elementary civic rights had been begun in earnest. These statements had the effect of destroying the necessary atmosphere and created doubts and suspicions which were fatal for the fight for civic rights. They could not be left unchallenged and therefore Sjt. Prasad published this contradiction throughout India, as the fight was of All-India importance.

### Presidents' moving appeal.

President Savarkar wrote to Kumar G. N. Singh on 6. 12. 41 "we are indeed thankful to the Maharaja of Darbhanga for his kind and patriotic invitation, but you should note that in as much as the Reception committee had already handed over the question of the venue and dates for final sanction to the working committee and as the working committee has already and irrevocably

decided that the session should be held at Bhagalpur on the 24th to 27th of December, it is not now in the hands of the Reception Committee to override the decision of the Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha and to effect any change, without the previous sanction of the working committee. It is to be noted in this connection that the members who represented the Reception Committee were all unanimously trying to bring the greatest pressure possible on the Working Committee to stick to the venue at Bhagalpur and the dates. They wanted almost a moral guarantee from the Working Committee for not affecting any change on those two crucial questions. Pt. Bharat Misraji himself was the most insistent amongst them and sincerely and rightly maintained that this constituted an All India point of Honour.

"Now that the Hindu Sangthanista would all over India have stood up to maintain the prestige of the Reception Committee in Bihar and go to Bhagalpur it will be extremely humiliating to the Reception Committee to back out apart from the constitutional discrepancy. This spirit of shirking itself will not reflect credit on the Reception Committee. Consequently I request all my comrades in the Reception Committee to stick to their guns and refuse to change the venue.

"I hear that the Provincial Committee of Bihar Hindu sabha meets on the 7th instant at Patna. You will

kindly place this letter before them also, intimating that no change so far as the venue and the dates of the session can be effected without the sanction of the Hindu Mahasabha."

### The war of Nerves.

But before the members of the Reception Committee now dissolved could meet in the Provincial Hindusabha meeting called for the 7th Dec., they were invited by the District Magistrate, under instructions from the commissioner, to meet the latter in his chamber on the 6th Dec. The members accordingly met the commissioner and heard from the commissioner the stringent measures which would follow the refusal to accept the orders of the Government. This however failed to shake the morale of the members.

The Working Committee of the Bihar Provincial Hindusabha met on 7.12.41 at Patna. It was rather a stormy session. Members freely expressed themselves and a large number of them opposed vehemently the proposed change of venue. It was due to the tactful handling of the extremely delicate situation by Rai Bahadur Shyam Nandan Sahay that the following resolutions were passed.

2. The Working Committee of the Bihar Provincial Hindusabha expresses its deep gratitude for the great generosity and expression of Hindu feelings by Mithila

Naresh Maharajadhiraj of Darbhanga and hopes that his support and patronage will for all time be available to the Hindu Sabha.

3. The Working committee of the Bihar Provincial Hindusabha having considered the statements of its President and General Secretary is of opinion that the president has accepted the invitation of the Maharajadhiraj of Darbhanga to serve the best interest of the Hindus and this committee while leaving the final decision of the venue of the Hindu Mahasabha conference on Savarkarji expresses full confidence in the President and the General Secretary of the Provincial Hindu Sabha. This committee deputed Pt. Bharat Misra and B. Surya Narayan Prasad to meet Savarkarji and get the final decision about venue decided as soon as possible.

4. The Working Committee of the Bihar Provincial Hindusabha regrets that misunderstanding had been created regarding the venue of the Hindu Mahasabha and makes it clear that the President of the Provincial Hindusabha's action is not to be construed as request to the Government or any official to remove the ban on the ground of the change of the venue."

### The Reception Committee viewpoint.

While returning from this meeting, the four prominent workers of the Reception Committee (1) Pt.

Raghavacharya Shastri, ( 2 ) S. G. S. Prasad, ( 3 ) S. S. N. Prasad and ( 4 ) Hakim Ganga Prasad Gupta sent a long telegram to President Savarkarji disclosing the real sense of the Working Committee as a clear and unequivocal support to the stand taken up by him and equally strong opposition to Kumar G. N. Singh and Pt. Bharat Misra policy of change, and requested him to give his decision. The President in reply wired on 8th Dec., "Venue must remain fixed at Bhagalpur. No change". In reply to S. S. N. Prasad's telegram, he again wired "your wire. Bhagalpur fixed irrevocably meet me at Indore.

### The Back slide continued

All these ought to have set the matter at rest and the Reception Committee and the Bihar Provincial Hindusabha should have been allowed to give their undivided attention to the struggle ahead. But this was not to be so. Pt. Ravaneshwar Misra busied himself in collecting opinions in Bhagalpur itself favouring the change and succeeded in getting some. An editorial comment in the Indian Nation on the Provincial Hindusabhas' meeting of the 7th Dec., throws a lurid light on the working of the mind of these gentlemen. It stated that some socialists had entered into the Hindusabha and wanted to drive it into wilderness of fight with the government so that

rich people might not continue to be in the organisation. Let it be noted that this paper is owned by the Maharaja of Darbhanga and Kumar Ganga Nanda Singh had then and still has a large hand in its management. And similar statements were made elsewhere.

It was all the more deplorable that such right in the lute should have then appeared. Much of the energy and time of the Reception Committee had to be diverted to counteract this new internal menace.

The Bhagalpur correspondent of the Indian Nation published a report that the Reception Committee had neither funds nor sufficient men to carry the struggle. It conveyed the suggestion that we should not be able to get sufficient support of the public and that the people lacked enthusiasm. There was a curious coincidence both in tone and temper as also the time selected for their appearance between the efforts of Pandit Ravaneshwar Misra to collect opinions regarding the unsuitability of Bhagalpur as the venue, and the misleading reports in the Indian Nation, throwing cold water on the growing enthusiasm of the Bihar Hindus.

### The Bhagalpur Day.

In the meantime President Savarkar had announced that the All-India Bhagalpur Day be observed on 14th December throughout the country. Bihar had arranged

to hold protest meetings everywhere and to Bhagalpur itself all eyes were turned. Pandit Raghavacharya Shastri and Sj. Gauri Shankar Prasad carried on vigorous propaganda. Kaviraj Manmatha Nath Banerji helped materially in this and the response was splendid. The entire city observed complete Hartal. No shop, either big or small was open anywhere in the city, spreading out about 14 miles in length.

The pandal was every day rising higher, as the construction went on under the supervision of Sj. Ganga Prasad Gupta. Within this enclosure in the Lajpat Park a mammoth meeting was held on "Bhagalpur Day on 14th Dec. Thousands upon thousands joined to protest against the wanton attack on the Civic rights of the Hindus. Hindu Sabha leaders like Pandit Raghavacharya Shastri, Sj. Shyam Sundar Lal, Pt. Shiva Dulare Misra, Gauri Shanker Prasad, Rai Bahadur Sukhraj Rai, Babu Anant Prasad, as also prominent Hindu Sangathanists like Sj. Kailash Bihari Lal M. L. A. (central) and Sardar Jamaiat Singh joined together on a common platform. This meeting showed clearly the popular mind and strength behind it. It ought to have served as an eye-opener to the Bihar Government.

And it ought similarly to have opened the eyes of those of the Hindusabhaits also who kept on the struggle for changing the venue to Darbhanga. Sardar Jamaiat

Singh, in the course of a vigorous speech, called the correspondent of the Indian Nation to see for himself the surging tide of Hindu feelings and correctly state them. Pandit Raghavacharya, the First Dictator, appealed to the citizens to keep themselves ready to make the greatest sacrifice and now that the flag of Hindudom had been placed in their hands, they must prove worthy of the trust reposed in them. The people responded enthusiastically.

The same evening Pandit Raghavacharya, Sj Gauri Shankar Prasad, and Sj Ganga Prasad Gupta left for Rosra in the district of Darbhanga, where the Bihar Provincial Hindu Conference was being held.

In a most stirring speech, Pt. Raghavacharya invited the people there to the struggle now ahead in Bhagalpur. Hundreds of hands shot up, signifying their enthusiastic resolve to fight to the finish. The enemies of Hindudom trembled.

### The Divided Counsel.

But on the next day when the Bihar Prov. Hindu Sabha Committee met there, it presented just a different picture, a sorry spectacle of divided counsel. Sj. Gauri Shankar Prasad was accused of having made the Reception Committee one man's affair and the Dictatorship was sought to be abolished. In reality the charge against Sj.

Prasad was entirely wrong. He was giving his full time and attention to the work in hand since the final formation of the Reception Committee, as he had publicly taken up the responsibility of organising it. Naturally the responsibility of it and the power attending it gradually slipped more and more on him. But he was anxious to share them with his co-workers. Pandit Raghavacharya was taking a very large part of the onerous duties including propaganda and organising volunteers. When the struggle became inevitable, the department for exhibition was closed down and S. S. N. Prasad was left without any office. S. G. S. Prasad then handed over the central office to him. But in one sense the charge was right also. It was this that when he found people even within Hindusabha fold anxious to follow a lead other than that of President Savarkar, he refused to allow such people to undo the working of whole Hindudom and bring shame to it.

But whatever his faults, the dictatorship was formed under the advice of both the President and the Working President of the All India Hindu Mahasabha. And the person who occupied that position was an erudite, young, orthodox Sanatani of a unique personality and persuasive eloquence.

### The Council of Action.

All this was however of no consideration to these gentlemen who sought to upset this arrangement on the eve of actual conflict. When he found that S. Prasad was unyielding, Kumar Ganga Nanda Singh said that the Bihar Prov. Hindusabha had invited the All-India Hindu Mahasabha to Bihar and if S. Prasad persisted in maintaining this arrangement, he would recall that invitation to the Mahasabha, so that no session could be held at all. This showed clearly that these gentlemen were willing to go to the utmost length and they were determined not to stop at anything. It was then that S. Prasad surrendered and the dictatorship was abolished, substituting in its place a committee of ten, called the council of Action. Commenting editorially on these the Search Light wrote in its issue dated 18. 12. 41.

### The Bhagalpore Session of Maha-Sabha.

"At the Russrah session of the Hindu Conference the mover of the resolution about the Bhagalpore session of the All India Hindu Mahasabha waxed eloquent over the enormity of the Government's ban on the holding of the session at Bhagalpore. The mover was no other than Pandit Bharat Misra. He accused the Government of interference with elementary Hindu rights and partisanship



of Moslems. Since when, however, has Sjt. Misra awakened to the realization of the nature and character of the Government? Was it after his intrigue to oblige the Government by changing the venue to Darbhanga, put down by Mr. Savarkar? Surely, it ill-becomes, of all persons, Mr. Misra to twit Government with various enormities after he had swallowed them all by accepting, with the mannerism of a pinch-beck Feuherer, the proposed change of venue. Mr. Misra is not yet without hopes from the Government he denounces. He pleaded that the Moslems were seceding from the Defence Council and the Government should not miss the opportunity of making friends with the Hindus of his brand, of course, who will get them recruits for the army in the name of Hindu militarisation and will be ready at hand to draw the chest-nuts out of the fire for the Government, whenever the latter are in difficulties as they have been in respect of the forthcoming session of the Mahasabha at Bhagalpore. Government, however, know, that such men are neither fish, nor flesh nor good red herring and that they no more represent the Hindus, for whom they claim to speak, than they represent the inhabitants of Mars. We donot know what is going to happen about the Bhagalpur session. The personel of the Council of Action formed at Russrah is much too guilded to promise much action. We repeat that

the ban was, is and remains a wanton trifling with the rights of the people".

The formation of the council of Action consisting of person known to be longing for a change of venue even then and also scattered all over the province and therefore unable to take the prompt action which the situation demanded, was a sad blow to Sj. G. S. Prasad and Pandit R. Acharya. Sj. Sarat Chandra Guha, who had been deputed by Dr. S. P. Mukherji, our working President, to serve as a liaison officer between Calcutta and Bhagalpur, was present in the meeting and witnessed the Stages by which the Council of Action was formed. But he was himself considered with ill-favour by Kumar Gangananda Singh and he did not participate in the discussions. He is a seasoned worker, considering national work as religious duties. And he in his own way tried to interpret religiously these steps in our movement to these young workers and infuse new spirit in them.

### The Government takes Action.

This was all for the good, because while returning to Bhagalpur, Pt. Raghavacharya Shastri, the First Dictator of the Reception Committee, was arrested in the early morning of the 17 th December on the holy banks of the Ganges. Babu Tulsi Misra, Sub-Inspector of Police, was deputed to arrest him. The Dictator humourously said

that the "Yagnya" has commenced with "Raghava" and "Tulsi" on the banks of the Ganges and was therefore bound to succeed magnificently.

Inside the town a storm was already raging. On the previous day the Government started taking action in connection with the prevention of holding the session. Simultaneous searches of the offices of the Reception Committee, of the Provincial Hindusabha and the residences of Sjt. Gauri Shankar Prasad, Suryanarayan Prasad, Ganga Prasad Gupta and their personal friend Babu Mahesh Narayan B. L. were carried out in their absence in the evening and some papers in connection with the Mahasabha session were seized. Worst of all, the Police took possession of the Lajpat Park and demolished the Pandal under construction.

### Peoples Response.

None of the prominent office-bearers were present in the town. But such was the spirit of the local residents of Bhagalpur that they observed complete and spontaneous hartal and at every street corner people held congregations impatiently waiting for the word of their leaders to take immediate action in reply to this wanton outrage and insult to the national pride of the Hindus in which the demolition of Pandal necessarily ment.

As soon as they knew of the arrival on 17th Dec. of Sj.

Gauri Shankar Prasad and Sj. Ganga Parsad Gupta, they thronged to the Reception Committee office, where Sj. Prasad was incharge. He took stock of the situation and was to decide upon immediate launching of Satyagraha, so insistent was the public demand.

### Prof. Deshpande and Mr. Godse.

But Prof. Deshpande of Nagpur and Sj. N. V. Godse from Poona had arrived on 16th December and saw things for themselves. They had been deputed by President Savarkar as his personal representatives to have a first hand and impartial appraisal of the situation, because conflicting informations had been conveyed to him about the suitability of Bhagalpur as the venue and the support of the local people. These gentlemen studied the situation with the practised eyes of a public worker. They met Sj. Prasad on 17th December. That day in the evening protest meetings were held at several places in the town and these gentlemen saw them all.

### The Dictatorship Restored.

After taking note of the situation, they attended in the evening a meeting of the Council of Action at the residence of Rai Saheb Surendra Nath Basu, called by Pt. R. Acharya before his arrest. There under the directions of these gentlemen and with the concurrence of Sj. Sarat Guha,

the Council of action was again abolished and Sj. Gauri Shankar Prasad was given charge of conducting the affairs. But he did not appropriate to himself the honour of being the dictator and placed Sj. Ganga Prasad Gupta in that position. His successor was to be Sj. Surya Narayan Prasad and Sj. Gauri Shankar Prasad himself was to follow them last of all.

After making arrangements for smooth running of the Reception Committee, the representatives of the President left Bhagalpur the same night. Before they left, they gave a distinct direction to Sj. Prasad not to precipitate Satyagraha before 24th Dec. and keep situation well under control. Therefore the proposed Satyagraha for reconstruction of the Pandal was given up.

### Hasty Final Touch.

Sj. Prasad did not expect to remain out of the jail till the commencement of the session, so he held a secret meeting of all available workers and leaders, such as Sj. Shyam Sundar Lal, Pleader, Sj. Charu Chandra Chowdhry, Advocate, Sj. Manmatha Nath Vandyopadhyaya, Sj. Banarasi Lal Khemka, Sj. Bihari Lal Shah, Sj. Kripanath Singh Advocate and Sj. Madhusudan Sharma. He told them of the resources and arrangements already completed. He told them the plain of action and explained to them the instructions given by President Savarkar. All these

leaders and workers at once took up the work entrusted to them.

His next step was to arrange for the stay of the civil resisters and their boarding. Several Dharmasalas, Hotels and Private houses were engaged to accomodate on a rough estimate nearly two thousand people. And for their boarding three separate arrangements were made, to work in co-ordination if all went well with them and failing that to supplement what was left undone by the other due to circumstances beyond their control. The first was the most generous offer of Srimati Amrit Kuar, wife of Sardar Jameit Singh and General Secretary of the A. I. women's Cow Protection Conference, to hold Shri Guru Gobind Singh's Langar (free kitchen) on 24th and 25th Dec. and she formally invited to all the leaders and delegates to the A. I. Hindu Mahasabha session. It was well arranged and well conducted. The second line was the kitchen maintained on 26th and 27th December by the local traders who contributed generously. It was arranged by local Hindusangathanists Sj. Mahendra Narayan Pleader, Sj. Shubb Karan Churiwala and others. The third was the Reception Committee's own arrangement. Various hotels, preparing different kinds of plates to suit provincial tastes of the different parts of our country, as far as locally available, were engaged on basis of coupon

system. They were paid in advance and Sj. Madhu-Sudan Sharma and Sj. Banarasi Lal Khemka were put in charge of these.

The most troublesome question however was how to avoid the vigilance of the police and slip into Bhagalpur for civil resistance. It was already known that all railways, roads and ferries leading to Bhagalpur would be closely guarded from some time before the commencement of the session. The issue of railway tickets to Bhagalpur from some places was stopped. President Savarkar had directed that roughly three-fourths of the civil resisters from each place should silently come as near to Bhagalpur as possible and then pass into the town in batches of ten, under its own captain, by various routes. So Sj. G. S. Prasad with the help of Sj. B. L. Khemka and Sj. M. Sharma chalked out the routes for the different provincial delegates and civil resisters and also for those coming from the different parts of Bihar. Detailed informations of these routes were given. A camp for northern and western India delegates was organised in Gaya under Sj. Damle and another for eastern and southern India delegates at Nalhati in Bengal under Sj. Ketkar. From there bifurcate various routes leading to Bhagalpur. A secret service was organised by the local association of volunteers known as the Shivaji Sangha to keep in touch with such civil resisters as were on their way to Bhagalpur of needed help. Code

words for the different camps were given. And arrangement was finally made with householders in the town to accommodate such of the civil resisters as may be found in the town in any difficulty.

### Prohibitory orders.

Kumar Gangananda Singh had been prohibited by the Government from going to Bhagalpur. This prohibitory order was communicated to him by the Superintendent of Police on 19th Dec. and policemen were posted to watch his movement.

The Government of Bihar by a notification declared forfeited all copies of the Hindu Mahasabha circular detailing the plan of action for defiance of the ban. This action was taken under the Defence of India Rules and further publication of the circular had been prohibited.

### Report of the Search Light.

On 22nd Dec., The Search Light published the news that the precautionary steps by the Government to deal with the enforcement of the ban had been completed and a force of nearly 1000 police, both ordinary and armed had been posted in the town. A troop of mounted police also had been sent there from Patna. The D. I. G. of Police Northern Range, was placed in charge of this police arrangement.

The town wore a normal appearance with the ordinary

police guarding the roads. Preparations for holding the sessions were being made "with calm determination". Some volunteers were reported to have already arrived there while many were on their way". The reporter added "If the Mahasabha had changed the venue of the session to Darbhanga, I gather, the Government might have lifted the ban, so far as that district was concerned".

### The Appeals.

Pandit Vishwaropp Misra, General Secretary of the Bihar Provincial Hindu Youth Conference issued an appeal to youth of the province to rise to the occasion and hasten to Bhagalpur with batches of volunteers.

Before leaving Lucknow for attending the session, Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth of Kotra in an interview to the press said "The attitude of the British Government towards the only political organisation cooperating with it at present is clear from what is happening at Bhagalpur. I refuse to believe that the Government of Bihar alone is responsible for it. The policy is the same whether it is Lucknow, Bhagalpur or Nellore. Those who are opposed must be appeased and humoured and to please their friends must be humiliated and kicked because they are friends and are expected to remain such inspite of all kinds of insulting treatment. This is the policy of the British Government, which we, the landlords, learnt to our cost three years ago." He appealed to the Hindus in

general to offer civil resistance in a united front and defend Hindu honour.

Delegates and civil resisters from different parts of India reached Bhagalpur in a considerable number by 23rd December and were mainly accomdated in the Debi Prasad Dharmasala.

### Searches and Prohibitory Orders.

Meanwhile, the Bihar Government were issuing their prohibitory orders and carrying out searches. On 21st Dec., the houses of S/- Krishna Ballav Prasad Narayan Singh, President of Gaya District Hindu Sabha, and Pt. Bajrang Dutt Sharma, Secretary of the Bihar Prov. Hindusabha were searched at Gaya. The Patna Office of the Provincial Sabha also was searched. The Government prohibited the holding of or taking part in the procession, meetings or assemblies organised by or on behalf of the A. L. Hindu Mahasabha in the seven banned districts of Bihar. The ban was to be in force till the 4th Jan., 1942.

It was further understood that instructions had been issued for the arrest of those who distributed leaflets regarding the Mahasabha session or took prominent part in the meetings organised to canvass support for it.

The Bihar Printing Press of Bhagalpur was raided on 21st by the police. There the printing work of the Reception Committee was done. Several notices with

manuscripts were seized, and the manager of the press was taken to the thana, but later on was released on bail. The premises of all printing presses were guarded by police.

### Dr. Tripathi's Prophetic words.

Dr. N. P. Tripathi, Secretary, Bihar Provincial Hindusabha in the course of a vigorous protest against the policy pursued by the Government said "this act of highhandedness and action in pursuance of Anti Hindu Policy of the Government is bound to have repercussion over the disorganised and disunited Hindus.....the Government have done their worst to the Hindus. It is now for the Hindus in general and Hindusabha workers in particular to show to the world their intrinsic worth and face bravely the situation in which they are thrown... ..In the name of God and in the name of humanity let me proclaim that the results that will come out will bring life in the Hindu community and I prophesy to day that the government will have to repent for their act". Prophetic words, which came out only too true for the government.

### Mass Arrests.

Dr. Tripathi left Patna for Bhagalpur with a Medical unit composed of one nurse, two compounders and two dressers to render medical aid to the Civil resisters

for injuries likely to be sustained by them incourse of those "Miled lathi charges" which we only too well know. As the train carrying them steamed in on 23rd December a large number of the crowd who had gathered from before to receive them, shouted slogans. Dr. Tripathi, S. Mahadeo Saran Pandey, Pleader of Siwan, six volunteers of the Bihar Youth Conference and some volunteers from Bombay and Ratnagiri Districts also were arrested.

Messrs V. G. Desh Pande and Ashutosh Lahiri, were detained at Colgong and brought to Bhagalpur. Later on 7 delegates from Dinajpore (Bengal) were arrested at Mahadeo Pur Ghat. 16 volunteers coming from Bankura and 18 from Poona and other places were also arrested.

Messrs Bharat Misra, Surya Narayan Prasad and three others were arrested in the town.

Thus began the long expected action of the Government after a lull since the arrest of the First Dictator on the 17th Dec. An order under Sec. 144 Cr. P. C. also was promulgated in town banning all public meetings, processions and assembly of five or more persons. A general round-up of workers was carried out. The D. I. G. of police, Northern Range, took up his quarters in the town on 21st Dec. for supervision of police arrangements. Villagers were prohibited from entering the town, except on

urgent piece of business, from 24th to 27th Dec. There was strict press censorship.

### Civil Reisters Pour In.

But eluding all police vigilance came in nearly 1200 delegates and civil resisers into the town by the night of 23rd December. S.J. Ramkrishna Pandya, Member A. I. H. M. Working Committee from C. P. Hindi, S.J. Bajaranga Dutt Sharma of Gaya, S.J. Medhabrata Singh, Pleader of Patna were among them.

The correspondent of the searchlight reported on 22nd Dec.,

“From my talks with several responsible and distinguished Muslim citizens, I gathered that the responsible Muslim opinion is that the ban on the ensuing Hindu Mahasabha session is uncalled for.

Mr. Qasim Hussain, B. L., Vice-Chairman, Bhagalpur Municipality, has issued a statement to this effect.

### Mr. Qasim Hussain's Statement.

“The attitude taken by the Government of Bihar, so far as the holding of Hindu Mahasabha at Bhagalpur is concerned, is one of grave concern and anxiety for every Indian. The leader of the Hindu Mahasabha, Mr. Savarkar, has all along been exhorting the Indians to help in the war effort and to get themselves enrolled

in the Army and the Navy and the Air Force in order to help the powers who are fighting on the side of democracy. And at a time when the war is at the very gate of India, in my humble opinion the Provincial Government would have done better to find out a peaceful solution instead of taking recourse to drastic steps. This has acted as a spark which set ablaze the whole of India. It has become an all India question. I believe the local authorities were not inclined to take any such step but were finding out ways and means for a smooth sailing of the whole situation. Although I am not definite but this is what I believe. However, the authorities are the best judges and I hoped to be pardoned but because I feel it, I think it my duty as an humble citizen and as son of the soil to give vent to my feelings which frankly speaking, I cannot suppress. I think it is the duty of every human being to express what he feels honestly and sincerely.”

It is also understood some correspondence in this connection has passed between Mr. Anant Prasad, B. L., and Mr. Abul Hassan ( Bar at-Law ).

### Statement of Liberal Leaders.

The Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivas Shastri, Sir. P. S. Sivaswami Iyer and Mr. T.R. Venkataramana Shstri (Liberal Leaders) issued the following joint statement;—As

members of Liberal Party we are interested in the scales being held between all communities. The ban on Hindu Mahasabha's meeting at Bhagalpur, so far as we can judge, is without justification and seem to give undue importance to possible Muslim opposition. The clear right of one community ought not to be placed at the mercy of another community. The Viceroy and the local Governo rwill at the present juncture be promoting the lasting interest of those communities by giving proper protection to the forth coming meeting of the Mahasabha and avoiding the suspicion of partiality."

Raja Narendranath, President of the Punjab Provincial Hindu Sabha, and Dr. Sir Gokal Chand Narang had addressed a joint telegram to His Excellency the Viceroy.

"Bihar Government's order banning Mahasbha session has created wave of deep resentment throughout India. It is considered and rightly considered great insult to Hindu community that Hindus forming over 90 per cent. population in Bihar should not be allowed to hold Mahasabha session. In Madras Muslim League session was allowed and Hindus were asked to keep indoors although forming 95 per cent. of the population. This apparently savours of invidious distinction and partiality. We do not believe there was any danger of breach of peace but even if there was any danger control should have been exercised over those from whom any attempts to cause disturbance were

expected. If Bihar Government can collect 1000 policemen to disperse Hindu Sabha delegates much smaller number would have been sufficient to maintain peace and order. Bihar Government's order, unless reversed, is sure to create serious repercussions. Earnestly request Your Excellency to advise Bihar Governor to remove ban."

### President Savarkar triumphal jorney.

The President elect, Swatantry Veer V. D. Savarkar had left Bombay on 22nd by the Calcutta Mail for Bhagalpur. He was accompanied by over 400 delegates and volunteers from Bombay and Poona.

Large crowd had gathered at the Bombay Station and received him with shouts of "Hindu Dharma Ki Jai" and "Hindusthan Hinduon Ka." The crowd was so large that the issue of the platform tickets had to be suspended half an hour before the train left.

All along the way it was a triumphal maret of a victor. Every where large crowds gathered and waited to have a "Darshan" of their leader. At Mogul Sarai the crowd squatted to hear him. And he addressed them for a time.

When he reached Gaya Station at about 2 O'clock in the morning of December 24th he was arrested under section 26 of the Defence of India Rules. He was taken to the Gaya Central Jail, where he was to be detained. A large crowd has gathered at the platform to



receive him and shouted slogans as the President was taken away by the police.

### Respected leaders arrested.

Dr. B. S. Moonje, Mr. N. C. Chatterji, Mr. Khaparde, ex-minister of C. P., Rai Bahadur Harish Chandra, Advocate Federal Court, Delhi and many others were arrested on 24th at Bhagalpur. The same day Dr. P. Varadarajulu Naidu and six lady volunteers were arrested.

The Civic guards were utilised to crush this political organisation. And their acts roused the bitterest feelings.

### Bhagalpur Town Hindusabha.

The Bhagalpur Town Hindusabha had been formed this year only for the purpose of facilitating the holding of the session. Its secretaries Babu Basudeva Narayan Sinha and Lalji Saha were entrusted with holding of the meetings all over the town, carrying out processions and decorating the town with flags etc. All Hindu shops were decorated with flags and festoons on this Procession Day ( 24th Dec. ) and as a protest against the arrest of the leaders of the town observed complete hartal. This Hartal was the longest in the History of the town.

The special representative of the Searchlight gave the report of the day and we let him speak. It may be noted

that it is congress paper and none too friendly to the Hindu Mahasabha.

### ( From our Special Representative )

Bhagalpur, Dec. 24.

In spite of the order under Section 144 of Criminal Procedure Code and the posting of mounted and armed police all over the City and lightning arrests of leaders, the programme of the Procession Day was gone through amid scenes of tumultuous enthusiasm and excitement. News of Mr. Savarkar's arrest at Gaya, though not officially confirmed, had spread like wild fire and aggravated public excitement. The procession paraded the streets followed by large crowds. Two huge meetings were held at Shoojaganj under the presidentship of Pandit Shiva Parvati of Hazaribagh and another at the gate of Lajpat Park under the presidentship of Mr. Harekrishna Verma of the Central Provinces. Resolutions were passed condemning the Government ban on the holding of the session, the arrest of leaders and urging Hindus to assert civil rights.

Volunteers of a procession towards the Lajpat Park are said to have been subjected to caning and dispersed. Mr. Harekrishna Verma and another were arrested at the Lajpat Park meeting.

### Mounted Police make baton charge.

The Mounted police had to make a baton charge to

disperse the huge crowd that had gathered at the railway station this morning to receive the leaders in spite of section 144 promulgated by the Government. Thousands and thousands rushed to the station and broke through the police cordons. The D.I.G. (Northern Range), the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police were present to control the situation. The crowd would not turn back and as a result of baton charge several received injuries, including bleeding injuries in some cases.

### 65 Taken in custody.

In all over 65 have been taken in custody till midday today including Dr. Moonje, Mr. Khaparde, Mr. N. C. Chatterji, Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu, and others to be detained at Colgong and taken away. Others arrested include Rai Bahadur Harishchandra, Hakim Ganga Prasad Gupta, Babu Gauri Shankar Pd, Babu Bhagwan Das of Benares, Dr. Pramod Biswas, Dr. Shailaja Sanyal, Mr. B. C. Dutt, Mr. S. K. Chakravarti and Mr. Ingle of Nagpur. So far as can be gathered persons arrested comprise 10 from Madras, 8 from Naokhali, 8 from Allahabad and Moradabad, 12 from Comilla, 1 from Chapra and several local men. Five ladies were also arrested while marching in procession. As the arrested leaders were taken away men, women and children lined the streets cheering them to the echo and rending the sky with shouts of 'Savarkar-ki-jai.' As police re-inforcement pour in, delegates are also trooping from all parts of the

country. Over 400 have arrived from Bombay and C. P. Arrests on a mass scale have started and are proceeding.

Mr. K. Ganesham from Kodambakam, Madras, presided over the meeting near the gate of the Lajpat Park at 1 P.M. on the first day, when he was arrested.

### Country wide Protests.

Allahabad also observed hartal as a protest against President Savarkar's arrest on 25th Dec., similar protest meetings were held at Madras, Madura, Ajmer, Calcutta, Wardha, Ratnagiri, Lucknow and other places throughout the country.

On 27th Dec. in the open session of the National Liberal Federation the Rt. Hon'ble S. Srinivas Shastri moved the resolution on the Bhagalpur Ban.

The resolution held that the Bihar Government's action is a denial of one of the fundamental rights of citizens for which there was no justification in the circumstances. The Federation holds that it was the duty of the Bihar Administration to afford protection to a lawful meeting of citizens from any apprehended molestation or disturbance. The Federation condemns emphatically the arbitrary action of the Government that has driven the President of the Hindu Mahasabha and many distinguished members of it into an exceedingly difficult situation in which they have by their conduct earned the sympathy and respect of their countrymen.

### Sir Cowasjee Jehangir.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir who seconded the resolution referred to the critical war situation and said it was inconceivable that the Government should at this time go out of their way and arrest a large number of their countrymen who supported the war efforts. Whatever might be the circumstances, the arrest of such men, said Sir Cowasjee, must be a catastrophe more to the Government than to the country. Proceeding the speaker referred to the views expressed in England by a action of British politicians that everything should be done to appease public opinion in India. When that was the case, the speaker regretted that a provincial Government had taken upon itself the responsibility of bringing about a state of affairs in this country which caused resentment even amongst men who held the most moderate views.

Concluding he urged that the Government should support the right of every Indian to meet where he liked provided he did not make a nuisance of himself and to say what he liked provided it was within the four-corners of law.

### Dr. R. P. Paranjpe.

Dr. R. P. Paranjpe supporting the resolution desired to make it plain that in this resolution not concerned with a communal organisation but with the very wide question of individual liberty the right of every citizen of expressing his views and of association. He felt that the Hindu Maha-

sabha was perfectly right in the course it had taken. Mr. Savarkar had on this occasion, he said, behaved as a self respecting patriotic citizen.

The speaker characterised the action of the Bihar Government as one of "muddle-headedness". He added that "The Government should not follow a policy of such undiluted appeasement of one community and alienating a very much larger community". He hoped that the Government would become wise and retrace "the wrong-headed step they had taken". The resolution was then put to vote and carried unanimously.

### Further arrests and detention.

Bhai Parmananda, Dr. Sir Gokul Chand Narang and Captain Keshab Chandra with a large contingent of volunteers and delegates from the "Land of Five Rivers", were arrested on 24th Dec., Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji, Finance Minister of Bengal was detained at Colgong, a way side station near Bhagalpur. When he declined to return to Calcutta as requested by the police, the bogey in which he was travelling was detached from the main train and he was transferred to the Dak Bunglow. An executive Officer and the Deputy Superintendent of Police were deputed to look after his comforts.

The Bihar Government passed the following order of externment:—

"Whereas the Governor of Bihar is satisfied that with

respect to the person known as Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji that with a view to preventing him from acting in a manner prejudicial to the public order it is necessary to make the following order :—

Now therefore in exercise of the power conferred by clause C of subsection 1 of Rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules the Governor of Bihar is pleased that the said Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee shall not be within the province of Bihar from the 24th Dec. to 28th December, 1941 both days inclusive."

But inspite of this order, Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee continued to remain in Bihar till 27th Dec. when this order was withdrawn and he left Colgong for Calcutta. He was received by a huge crowd at the Bhagalpur Railway Station. In the course of his statement to the press he said :—

I shall have to issue later larger statement making many disclosure which will be of no credit at all to any civilized Government "Today I offer my heart felt gratitude for the bold and resolute stand the Hindus of India took on this momentous occasion."

"The Bhagalpur session of the Hindu Mahasabha has been held inspite of the ban imposed by the local Government and held in a manner which will electrify the entire Hindu population in India. There is no power in Bihar or anywhere in India which can arrest the progress of the gigantic Hindu Mahasabha movement which is based

on sound national principles which are now shaping from one part of the country to another. The greater the resistance the greater the movement will be. All that we need is calmness, courage, unity and determination so that the goal of national freedom may be reached much earlier than what our enemies and detractors dream of.

"As regards our future course of action no decision would be taken by any of us individually. As soon as the leaders are set at liberty a meeting of the Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha should be called and should be attended by all the leaders now under detention. The meeting of the working Committee of the Bihar Hindu Sabha should also be held simultaneously and decision should be finally arrived at. The meeting of the working committee should be held "somewhere" in Bihar as decided by Veer Savarkar".

### Civil Resisters in Action.

Under the directions of President Savarkar one party proceeded to the Lajpat Park, the site selected for the Session and another batch of delegates congregated in Debi Prasad's Dharmasala, to hold the opens session meeting on 24th December. The Lajpat Park meeting was declared to be the annual Session of the Mahasabha. S. Krishna Ballav Prasad Narayan Singh, Vice-President of the Bihar Prov. Hindusabha, presided over this meeting.

President Savarkar's address was taken as read. All the resolutions tabled for the session were passed. The President of the meeting along with Pandit Ramchandra Sharma another prominent member of Bihar Prov. Working Committee and many others were arrested.

### The Press report ran:—

"Bhagalpur, the banned venue of the A. I. H. Mahasabha Session, had been blokadged by the police. Its approaches by road, rail and rivers were all guarded by the police, who cross-examined all passangers bound for Bhagalpur and who looked like delegates or volunteers for the session.

The town itself was patrolled by police parties and mounted police also passed riding through the streets.

The Government precautions against a violation of the ban gave the impresslon of being thorough."

But the Mahasabha leaders had a better organisation to deal with the "thoroughness" of the Bihar Government keeping every move of theirs as a guarded secret, they held another big meeting the same day (25 th Dec.) at 1 P. M., simultaneously with the "open session" at Lajpat Park mentioned above. It was presided over by Lala Narayan Dutt, Treasurer of the A. I. H. Mahasabha. About 2000 delegates, from all provinces of India and a large number of visitors and Volunteers attended the session.

The president moved the condolence resolution recording profound sorrow at the demise of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, Dr. Ganganath Jha and several others.

The second resolution was moved by Sj. Manoranjan Chowdhry, of Bengal Prov. Hindusabha and seconded by Sj. Ganpat Rai, Advocate, of Delhi, condemning the ban on the session. By another resolution the immediate release of all political prisoners and detenues all over India was demanded.

The last resolution ran as follows:—

"This session of the A. I. H. Mahasabha offers its hearty felicitations to the Hindus of Bihar and all other provinces throughout India who have given a splendid and spontaneous response by coming in large numbers to Bhagalpur and making the session a success inspite of all difficulties created by the Government."

The deliberations continued for two and a half hours in a peaceful atmosphere, not because of any indulgence by the police, but because they had been kept engaged by the elusive meetings held in thousands of places all over the town, at every street corner, open spaces and all conceivable places. They dispersed and then again congregated at moment's notice, sorely trying the capacity of the police to deal with them. The Presidential address of Sj. V. D. Savarkar was read out in these meetings as far as practicable. And they were held throughout the day and

for the most part of the night. The whole town of Bhagalpur was the meeting place of the session of the Mahasabha. Never had a banned meeting was held in a better style and thoroughness. Never had an order of ban been more thoroughly trampled, torn to pieces and scattered to the winds. Nearly 1000 delegates and leaders were arrested by the night of the second day of the session.

So peentfully did people offer themselves for arrest that the Government were forced to abandon the method of arrest on the third day. The intensity of lathi charges also was less.

Some volunteers were taken in police vans and forced to get down several miles away from Bhagalpur. Others clambered on the roof of the vans and were persuaded to get down only at the request of those arrested delegates inside the van whose lives were endangered due to the load on its roof.

On the third day many "Prabhat Feries" and big processions were taken out.

Arrests had been going on all the while at Ranchi, Arrah, Monghyr, Champaran and Samastipur within Bihar. At Samastipur Pandit Baleshwar Jha, Pleader and member of the Bihar Prov. H. Sabha working committee was badly treated and this drew a spirited protest from the delegates assembled at Bhagalpur.

The special representative of the Amrit Bazar Patrika wrote on Dec. 27:—

"Bhagalpur has now fought to the last and won. The instructions of S. J. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, President of the A. I. H. Mahasabha, to the effect that the session must be held at all costs and against all oppositions have been thoroughly carried out. The Government, despite all advice and suggestions from far and near, remained adamant and stuck to their false vanity. But these four days at Bhagalpur have made it clear that to the will of the mass, bureaucracy has to bow down. The most moderate and loyal section of the Hindus who happened to witness the four-day session, which was held amidst frequent lathi and baton charges, said that now Mahasabha had been infused with a new life..... Though Hindu leaders, delegates and volunteers, who defied the ban, are in prison, yet great satisfaction is in evidence among the Hindus who realise that the great task has been accomplished and they have done their duty.

"Bhagalpur, the second city of Bihar, has called off the hartal. The wayside shops, which were closed for four days have now opened and sales and purchases are being transacted with vengeance. Many a Hindu home had to carry on with their daily needs and domestic requirements with much restraint. Hindu ladies and children had also shared equally with their menfolks in a struggle against sensitive

unreasonableness.....Thousands of Hindus assembled at the Debi Babu's Dharmashala and in its neighbourhood to watch the deliberations of the last day's session of the Mahasabha."

The last days session was brought to its successful conclusion by Sj. G. V. Ketkar, Secretary A. I. H. Mahasabha and last dictator. Incourse of his concluding speech at Debi Babu's Dharmashala at 4 P. M. on Dec. 27, he said:-

As the last dictator I stand here to conclude the momentous and memorable session in the history of the Hindu Sabha. Not only in the annals of the Hindu Sabha but even in those of any other political organisations in this country the circumstances and events of the present Bhagalpur session are unique and unprecedented. The unreasonableness of the ban imposed by the Bihar Governor on this session has been condemned all over India not only by Hindu Sabhaites and Hindu Sangathanists but also by leaders of other political parties like the congress and the liberals. The reply given by the Bhagalpur district Muslim League expresident to Mr. Anant Prasad deprives the Governor of the last vestige of reason to his most arbitrary and unjust order. Those in the know of internal happenings in Governmental quarters tell us that the Bihar Government refused to be guided by the wise counsels of the Viceroys, and persisted in their folly. If the Bihar Government hoped by their unwise action to suppress and cow down

the Hindu Sabhaites they were living in a fool's paradise. The spirit of resurgent Hindudom has during the last 5 years under the leadership of Swatantrya Veer V. D. Savarker grown from strength to strength and the whimsical pranks of any provincial satarap cannot in the least affect its progress. On the contrary this senseless and absurd ban has given a powerful impetus to the Hindu movement which would not have been normally expected. The Bihar Government's folly has proved to be a blessing in disguise. The whole of the city of Bhagalpur is enthusiastically participating these four days in our proceedings and throughout the province of Bihar Hartals and meetings have carried the message of Hindu Sabha to every home. The Hindu Sabha session pandal is thus extended to the whole of the province. The same is the case of other provinces where Hartals and meeting have demonstrated that the whole of Hindudom is stirred to its depths by the Bihar Government's wanton on injustice in banning the session and arresting our most revered leaders like Veer Savarkar, Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukherji, Dr. Moonje, Bhai Parmanand, Mr. Khaperde, Lala Narayan Dutta, Mr. Ashutosh Lahiri, Mr. Deshpande and others. Remember that the mission of Hindudom is not merely that of removing the ills of the foreign Raj but to repair mistakes and set aside difficulties which have clogged its legitimats and logical progress during several centuries past and requires an alertness and vigilance

from every individual Hindu men, women and child. The appeal of Hindu Sangthan is thus intended to reach every individual Hindu. The Hindu Mahasabha organisation is only a means to that end. If the entire Hindudom lives and moves with one aim and purpose, no power on earth will be able to hinder its progress. I am sure all the delegates and visitors will go to their homes with renewed enthusiasm. The shorter speeches of this session will thus prove longer in their effect than any of those of the past session. On behalf of the Working Committee and all the delegates I sincerely thank the Reception Committee its workers and volunteers for their excellent arrangements they have made in spite of tremendous difficulties in the way. I must also thank Sardar Jamiat Singh, organiser of the Guru Govinda Singha Birth-day ceremony, and other organisations for the kind hospitality which they extended to the Hindu Sabha delegates. I also express my grateful appreciation for the entire Bhagalpur public for their whole hearted co-operation and participation in the processions and meetings during these four days. I now declare this most succesful session as closed exactly according to plan.

He then declared the session closed amidst shouts of vande Mataram.

Similar formal declarations were made formally at shujaganj Bazar and near Lajpat Park.

Police did not interfere with this last day's proceedings and no arrests were made.

Throughout these tumultuous scenes and mild lathi charges, the people remained perfectly calm and non-violent.

Babu shyam sundar Lal, the old Hindu Sabha leader along with his friends, carried on the administrative side of the struggle and therefore were requested to keep out of jail. Nevertheless their sacrifice was greater, in that they did not go in for "the Jail Martyrdom."

### Inside Jail.

Inside the jail, series of meetings of the leaders, the deligates and various Hindu sangathanist organisations kept the inmates busy throughout the day. Rai Bahadur Mehar Chand Khanna, ex-Minister of N. W. F. Province, explained the deplorable condition of the Hindus in his province. Dr. Sir Gokul Chand Narang and Mr. N. C. Chatterji spoke about the Panjab and Bengal. And all tried to make close personal approach. Rai Bahadur M. C. Khanna said "We had a grand time in jail. The Government gave us an opportunity to be together for over 10 days and has allowed us to forge the links of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha stronger."

The Mahasabha session was held on 25th Dec. in the jail under the presidentship of Dr. Moonje. On his



instruction, Mr. N. C. Chatterji read out the Presidential address of Sjt. Savarkar.

Early in the morning the Arya Samaj prayer and Vedic recitations created a serene atmosphere of devotion. It was followed by Havan. The Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangha members unfurled their flag in all solemnity in their usual way, Sanatan Dharma meetings also were held.

And so this jail life, resembling more a camp life than anything else, was spent in enlivened talks, national songs and devotional prayers and slipped away soon.

### President Savarkar's reviewed of Mahasabha 23rd Annual Session:—

Now that the curtain is rung down on the furious struggle raging at Bhagalpur to assert the legitimate rights of Hindudom, the time has come to review the whole episode in its proper proportions.

After going through the various reports, statements and communiques on both sides received up-to-date regarding the happenings during those eventful days which the Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha at Delhi, had fixed as the irrevocable dates on which the Annual Session of the Hindu Mahasabha was to held at Bhagalpur—I feel it no exaggeration to proclaim that the 23rd Session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha held at Bhagalpur, despite the

Government ban, has proved to be the most momentous and the most successful one of all annual sessions ever held by any All-India organisation including the Congress in the modern history of India.

I congratulate, consequently, all leaders, delegates, volunteers and the Hindu Sanghatanist, public all over India, who directly or indirectly, contributed to this momentous success in vindicating the Pan—Hindu Flag at Bhagalpur.

### Indelible Mark of Honour

To these Hindu Martyrs who laid down their lives in the Struggle and to those hundreds of Hindu Civil Resisters who carried their wounds home inflicted during the lathi—charges of the armed and mounted forces of the British Government—the Hindu Mahasabha, has, under the present circumstances, nothing else to offer to mark its grateful recognition of their services but the crown of thorns of Martyrdom to those heroes who fell and their very wounds as the Iron—Crosses to those Civil Resisters who were wounded.

The Government of Bihar smashed down the small sessional mandap, ( pandal ) meant to accommodate a few hundreds of Hindusabhais. But the result was that the Hindu Mahasabha raised a Mahamandap instead, so extensive as to cover all the six districts placed under the ban, which could accommodate millions on millions of

Hindu Sanghatanists and which all the armed forces let lose by the Bihar Government, found it impossible to pull down.

When the prestige of the Government which took its last stand in that corner of the Lajpat Park on the ruins of the small smashed mandap of the Mahasabha and frowning Moloch-like presided over the bloody scenes, while the armed mounted forces of the Government charged thousands of men, women and children under the hoofs of their horses, that prestige was pulled down ever from that haughty pedestal there and lay grovelling in the dust, trampled down under the feet of those heroic Hindu Civil Resisters who managed to rush in the Park, in spite of the armed military guards, and at the imminent risk to their lives, raised all of a sudden the Pan-Hindu Flag on the very spot with the thunderous shout of 'Hindu Dharmaki Jay'!

### Sympathy From All Quarters.

During the three days of the Session they thrice hoisted the Pan-Hindu flag in this wise in the Lajpat Park itself and bearded the lion in the very den it had chosen as its citadel.

The Hindu Mahasabha appreciates highly the sympathy and even approbation it received at the hands of the various Indian leaders and organisations that were not directly connected with the Hindu Mahasabha,—such as the Liberal Federation, the leaders of the Christian

community and especially the leaders of the Moslem League and the Moslem public at Bhagalpur and other places in Bihar, who joined the Hindus in observing the hartals in sympathy with the Hindus in this their struggle to defend the fundamental civic liberties of all Indians alike.

### Knocked Out!

The unambiguous statements issued by the Moslem leaders in Bihar and outside, that they never wanted this ban and resented that their Bakr-Id should have been trotted out as an excuse of it, were indeed the last fatal stab in the back of the Government of Bihar which must have made it exclaim; "Ettu, Brute! This was the most unkindest cut of all!"

On the other hand, I draw the pointed attention of the Hindus to the fact that the Working Committee of that organisation which calls itself the 'Indian National Congress' and which is dominated by some of the blatant leaders of the All-India Civil Liberties Union, persisted in maintaining a guilty silence as regards the Hindu movement at Bhagalpur.

Kind souls! They had to shed so many tears over the sufferings of the far-off Chinese, the Russians and even the British people that they could not spare a single tear or a word of approbation for the Hindu men, women and chil-

dren getting trampled under the hoofs of the mounted military of the British, and the noble fight the Hindus carried on under their very nose at Bhagalpur in defence of the fundamental civic rights. Or, it may be that just as the British people are fighting for the Independence of all Nations in the world but India, even so these advocates of civic liberty mean to fight for the fundamental civic rights of all humanity but the Hindus !

### Anti-Hindu Attitude of The Congress

When I call that this silence on the part of the Working Committee of the Congress was a guilty one, I do so deliberately because the Hindus must not forget the fact that the ban proclaimed by the Bihar Government on the Hindu Mahasabha Session, was not so humiliating to the Hindus as several anti-Hindu bans, prohibitions and orders issued by the Congress Governments had been in those provinces, over which they happened to rule only a couple of years ago.

Witness, for example, Rajaji's ban on the Hindu Mahasabha activities against the anti-Hindu tyrannies of the Nizam which he styled as our 'Sister State'. Or, how Govind Vallabh Pant out-Heroded Herod in U. P. by prohibiting the Hindus not to play music even in their houses at several localities throughout Moharrum week, because the latter constituted the mourning days to the Moslems !

Hundreds of other cases humiliating and detrimental to the Hindu interests can be cited at a stretch.

Apart from all these incidental points, the two most abiding aspects of this Civil Resistance fight waged and won by the Hindu Mahasabhaites must be mentioned in this closing statement regarding the Bhagalpur episode, with a special emphasis.

### In Defence of Honour.

The first of them is the fact that the Struggle was fought out in defence of Hindu Rights as Hindu Rights, and under the unalloyed Hindu Colours. The Mahasabha did not sail under false colours nor did it mince matters. The millions of Hindu Sanghatanists who gathered under the Hindu Flag in defence of Hindu Honour drove the last nail in the coffin of that pseudo-Nationalism which had penalised any agitation to uphold the special rights of the Hindus as a 'National' sin.

"Get stabbed but don't shriek" was the order of the day which throttled the Hindu movement, while this pseudo-Nationalism held its sway on the public mind and consequently the Hindus continued to be the political orphans in this land. But at Bhagalpur it was proved to demonstration that Hindudom had recognised their saviour in the Hindu Mahasabha, and acknowledged it as its real representative. The Hindu cause can no longer, go undefended. To the

Hindus the Hindu Cause shall in itself, be the National cause.

### **Crescendo Of Hindu Sanghatan**

The second aspect does in reality constitute the most abiding factor of this struggle, and is bound to have far reaching consequences on events to come. It is the moral victory which we, Hindus, have won by demonstrating beyond cavil or criticism that, in spite of castes and creeds sects and sections, Hindudom as a whole does still pulsate with a common National Being. The Pan—Hindu consciousness that the Hindu Mahasbha has so long been striving to create, has at last become a living reality, forceful and organised enough to resist and at times even to cow down the anti—Hindu forces which held their sway unchallenged upto this time.

The thousands and thousands of Hindu Sanghatani-  
sts, Rajas and Rishis, Millionaires and Millhands, Ex-Min-  
isters and M. L. A. s., Princes and Peasants, the Touchables  
and untouchables, Pnnjabis, Mahrattas, Bangalis and Mad-  
rasis, Sanatanists, Jains, Sikhs, Arya Samajists, Santhals and  
Sadhus, who rushed to Bhagalpur animated by the comm-  
on urge to defend the Honour of the Pan—Hindu flag and  
faced unflinchingly the armed forces of the angry British  
Satrap's did actualise through the struggle, as never

before, our Racial, Cultural and Political homogeneity.  
We, Hindus, have truly recovered our National Self.

But after all this is said and done, let us not forget  
that these struggles and successes are but only test cases,  
mere rehearsal, to the grand Epic which shall have to be  
staged on political battle field in days to come ;

### **Dr. B. S. Moonje's Statement**

On the eve of my release from the jail and the rigours  
jail life. I must first of all pay my tribute of thankful-  
ness to the people of Bhagalpur and particularly the  
members of the Reception Committee for the most splen-  
did and bold response that they gave to the call of the  
Hindu Mahasabha for maintaining the prestige, honour of  
the Hindus of India. in fact their response has been such  
as has been completely reversive of the Government attempt  
at inflicting gravest humiliation of the Hindus of the whole  
of India by trying to ban the annual session of the Hindu  
Mahasabha which is the only organisation of the Hindus  
of India.

Regarding the jail authorities, Bhagalpur, I must put  
on record my appreciation of their good sense and respon-  
sibility in dealing with us in a most fair and gentlemanly  
way, though they are bound to give effect to their rules of  
discipline.

### Remarkable Session.

This session of the Hindu Mahasabha is remarkable from one particular point of view and that is that Hindus from all grades of life, i. e., from the Rajas, Zamindars, Talukdar, Ex-Ministers, Ministers, Knights, Rai Bahadurs, middle class people, peasantry and labour class—all vied with one another in repudiating the ban and disobeying all orders of the Government incidental there to and in courting imprisonment for it. It must bring to the Government that the Hindu Mahasabha is not an organisation to be trifled with or ignored or humiliated, though its leaders and members are brought up in traditions of gentlemanliness and respect for Law and order. Though they have exhibited the noble trait in their character for peace and non-violence, they have not hesitated to stand for asserting their civil rights and even to strike back as the situation demanded.

### A word to League.

In contrast to the Congress, the Muslim League must understand and it has been vividly demonstrated that the Congress is not the true representative for the pride and passion for the Hindu religion, culture and for Hindu nationality. The Muslim League, if it really wants a communal agreement, must understand now that the Congress can not deliver the goods and it must make up its

mind to approach the Hindu Mahasabha for the settlement of the constitutional problem.

The musalmans must now know that if they really want peace and prosperity of India, they must regard themselves as a part and parcel of the Indian nation which is really the Hindu Nation.

It is a matter of the great satisfaction to find that the Press of India both English as well as Indian have instinctively felt the justice of the stand taken by the Hindu Mahasabha in defying the ban and the Government of Bihar are in the most unenviable position of isolation from all sense of justice and equity. I have so far not yet come across with any newspaper which has a word of support to the conduct of the Bihar Government.

The Bihar Government must take a lesson from their blunders and I can not find fault with the most vocal demand for the recall of the present Governor.

In the end I trust the people recovering the proper perspective of the political situation in India will not be carried away in their anger to do acts suicidal to their own cause, because the self-axiomatic truth is that those, who have Armies can aspire for swarajya and those who have Armies can maintain India as Hindusthan and similarly on the contrary, it will be those who will have the Army will be able to establish Pakisthan.

**Mr. N. C. Chatterji's Statement.**

( Mr. N. C. Chatterji, Bar-at-law. Calcutta issued the following statement:— )

Bhagalpur has fought a brave battle and has won.

I am happy that both the Biharees and the Bengalees could sink all their unessential differences in order to make All-India Hindu Mahasabha session at Bhagalpur a complete success in spite of the official ban.

The new Hindu movement is obliterating all provincial cleavages. It is now the duty of the Hindu Mahashavaits not to rest on their laurels, not to waste their energies by futile criticism of Congress leaders.

It is now their duty to chalk out the real constructive programme for the economic uplift of the masses. I want the Hindu youths of Bihar to take up the triple task of winning national freedom of mitigating social and political injustice, and of establishing real contact with the masses in the countryside. Discipline and organisation should be one motto.

**Devata Swaroop Bhai Parmanand's Statement.**

( Bhai Parmanand has issued the following statement :— )

"The Hindu Mahasabha session at Bhagalpur will be virtually a landmark in the history of the Hindu Sangathan movement. Personally I had of late become somewhat

pessimistic about the future of the movement but this session has so extraordinary in its nature has brought to my mind the line of the Shakespeare which says that there are more things in Heaven, Horatio, than one can dream of". Quite unexpected things have happened and it was this ban placed on the Hindu Mahasabha session."

### Shri Padmaraj Jain's Statement.

हिन्दू महासभा का २२ वीं अधिवेशन कई दृष्टि से विशेष महत्वपूर्ण हुआ है। इस अधिवेशन ने हिन्दू महासभा के संगठनमंदिर पर कलश चढ़ा दिया है। बिहार सरकार ने हिन्दू महासभा के अधिवेशन पर प्रतिबंध लगा कर जहाँ एक तरफ राजनैतिक बुद्धिमत्ता का अंत कर दिया, वहीं दूसरी ओर महासभा के संगठन आंदोलन को जितना बल इस प्रतिबंध ने पहुँचाया, संभवतः आज तक के २२ अधिवेशनों में उतना न पहुँचा सके थे। बिहार प्रांत के छोटे-बड़े, सरीस-धनाढ्य, विद्वान्-निरक्षर, सभी हिन्दुओं ने आज हिन्दू महासभा पर लगाए गए प्रतिबंध की चर्चा की। भागलपुर में जिन्होंने अधिवेशन का दृश्य देखा वे ही इसकी साक्षिता दे सकते हैं कि केवल भागलपुर शहर ही नहीं, परन्तु सारे भागलपुर जिले, अथवा यों कहिए सारे बिहार प्रांत से हजारों और लाखों की संख्या में लोग उलट पड़े। जहाँ देखो वहाँ यही मुनाई पड़ता था कि आज हिन्दू धर्म पर आपत्ति है, हिन्दुओं को चुनौती दी गई है। विशेषता यह रही कि पुलिस के अधिकारी सिपाहियों ने अपनी बर्दियों फेंक दीं और कहा कि वे हिन्दुओं पर लाठी प्रहार करने को तैयार नहीं। इस अधिवेशन की अन्य विशेषताओं में डा० इयामा प्रसाद मुखर्जी, बंगाल के अर्थ सचिव का, बिहार सरकार के प्रतिबंध को तोड़कर बंदी हो जाना एक विशेष महत्व रखता है। साथ ही अधिवेशन को भागलपुर से हटाकर

सरकारी अधिकारियों की वीणा ध्वनि पर नृत्य करने वाले कुछ लोगों का प्रयत्न कोरे घड़े की आवाज की तरह असफल रहा। देश की सभी राजनैतिक संस्थाओं ने हिन्दू जनता के इस आत्मत्याग, धर्म और जातीय प्रेम की एक स्वर से प्रशंसा की। संसार के अविच्छिन्न नियमानुसार हिन्दू कार्यकर्ताओं में शक्ति का संचार होते देख कर सावरमती के संत की धुनी भी हिल गई और हिन्दू महासभा के इस महायज्ञ पर उन्हें भी स्वस्तिवाचन पढ़ना पड़ा।

इस उत्साह के प्रवाह को धार्यरूप में परिणत करना देश के हिन्दू कार्यकर्ताओं और विशेष कर बिहार के कार्यकर्ताओं का अनिवार्य कर्तव्य हो जाता है। प्रत्येक छोटे से छोटे ग्राम में जहाँ हिन्दू रहते हैं एक शाखा-सभा—चाहे वह कितनी ही छोटी क्यों न हो—अवश्य स्थापित होनी चाहिए। ग्राम में जहाँ मन्दिर हो, वहाँ मन्दिर में, जहाँ मन्दिर न हो वहाँ बट वृक्ष के नीचे नित्य रामायण, महाभारत, गीता और महिषासुर-मर्दिनी जगज्जननी दुर्गा सप्तशती का पाठ हो। जहाँ हमारे सिख भाई अथवा अन्य सम्प्रदाय के भक्त लोग निवास करते हैं वे अपने अपने अनुसार नित्य रणदेवता और वीर देवता का आवाहन किया करें। घरों घरों में शस्त्रपूजन हो। कानून की मर्यादा के भीतर रह कर जो भी अस्त्रशस्त्र हम रख सकते हैं वे रखें और उनका उपयोग सीखा जाय।

इस समय अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय परिस्थिति बहुत शोचनीय हो रही है। अस्तु, हिन्दू मात्र का कर्तव्य है कि वह अपने निर्बल पड़ोसियों की सहायता के लिये सदैव उद्यत रहे। भागलपुर के इस आन्दोलन में मुझे सर्वशक्तिमान परमात्मा का प्रच्छन्न हाथ दिखाई देता है जिसके बिना ऐसी अपूर्व सफलता

सम्भव नहीं । अस्तु, हम हिन्दुओं को भगवान की उस लीलामयी शक्ति के आद्धान को सदा तैयार रहना चाहिए और सदा स्मरण रखना चाहिए ।

“यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ।”

सेन्ट्रल जेल, भागलपुर

२-१-४२

पद्मराज जैन ।

Letter of Dr. S. K. Mukherji, President,  
A. I. H. Youth Conference

My dear Gouri Sankar Babu,

Allow me to congratulate the Hindus of Bhagalpur and specially you for the bold stand taken during the Mahasabha session. Your name will live in the history of Hindu Mahasabha.

Your and Mr. Krishna Ballabha's arrest were a great handicap to the Hindu Youth Conference. Our conference was held under circumstance which you can well imagine.

Our friends wish to held another regular special session during this year. Can it be arranged sometimes during the Easter holiday ? Hope this finds you all right.

Yours sincerely

Santosh Kumar Mukherji

Conclusion.

The stage for the struggle had been set by those in charge of the Reception Committee. They also kept it intact and carried out the propaganda necessary for its success. The journalists and newspapers gave their unstinted support and they deserve all thanks for the same. The name of S. Mahesh Narayan, B. L. of Bhagalpur needs special mention for rendering help in this propoganda through the press.



But the greatest factor which ensured the success was the leadership of the Mahasabha we mean Swatantrya Veer V. D. Savarkar, President of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha. It was his strong personality which enabled the Reception Committee to hold on against enormous odds. His planning, differing from the methods adopted by all other political organisations under similar circumstances, was solely responsible for converting the whole of Bhagalpur for four days and nights into a huge pandal with continuous session going on. His personality drew the cream of Hindudom to this struggle.

Let us not rest on our oars and allow chances to slip by. Let the Mahasabha organisation live, grow and expand, so that it may effectively restore the glory that was Hind.

हरिः ॐ सहनाववतु सह नौ भुनक्तु सह वीर्यं करवावहे ।

तेजस्विनावधोतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहे ॐ शान्तिः ३ ॥