

PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU 90

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

NOT TO BE PUBLISHED OR BROADCAST BEFORE JUNE 23, 1952.

VOLUNTARY SERVICE FOR COMMUNITY'S WELFARE

BHARAT SEVAK SAMAJ TO BE FORMED

DRAFT CONSTITUTION ANNOUNCED BY PLANNING COMMISSION

A NON-POLITICAL VOLUNTEER BODY

MEMBERSHIP OPEN TO ALL EXCEPT BELIEVERS IN VIOLENCE

New Delhi, June 22, 1952.

Citizens all over the country will soon be provided with a forum for rendering service to the country through a broad-based, non-political, voluntary social service agency, the establishment of which has been proposed in the near future by the Planning Commission. Named the "Bharat Sevak Samaj", the membership of this body will be open to all adults irrespective of caste, creed, sex, religion and party affiliations. Only those who profess faith in violent or subversive activities or communal hatred cannot have any place in this organisation.

Details of the organisation are given in a pamphlet just published by the Planning Commission with a foreword from the Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. The functions of the Samaj, Prime Minister says, would be to approach the people "in humility of spirit and with the intense desire to bring about, with our common labour, that joint effort which can shake and break up a mountain of inertia."

THE GENESIS

The idea of Bharat Sevak Samaj has its genesis in the Draft Outline of the Five-year Plan which emphasises the need for willing, intelligent and effective public cooperation if the Plan is to succeed. The concept of planning, the Commission observes in the Draft Outline, has been associated largely with the totalitarian regime in which a group has gathered in its hands all the power to control

and regiment the life of the community and to command and direct ... its material

its material and resources. In a democracy this unified direction is provided by a common social outlook which interprets progress in terms of social justice and the economic and social well-being of the masses. "The fulfilment of a plan of economic development" the Commission observes, "rests very much on the capacity of the community to transmute this common social outlook and the deep aspirations of the people for progress into a living force and its use for constructive purposes." To provide an organised body through which this living force could be canalised into constructive effort the Commission had suggested the setting up of a volunteer body under the name of the Bharat Seva Sangh. The Bharat Sevak Samaj is a development of that idea in more concrete shape.

INADEQUACY OF GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, the Minister for Planning and River Valley Schemes, in several notes which form part of the pamphlet explains the fundamental objectives of the proposed Samaj, its functions, its relationship with the existing volunteer organisations in the country and with the State.

Referring to the need for such an organisation Shri Nanda says that to give the people a standard of living which may satisfy the most modest requirements of health and efficiency, the national income may have to be more than three times than the present level in the next few years. The resources of the Government both at the Centre and in the States, on the other hand, are so meagre that any investment programme based on them could yield relatively only a very small annual increment in the national income and it would not be feasible for years to meet even a fraction of the demand in respect of the range of the services which a Welfare State is called upon to perform. While the Government's resources are thus limited there is, Shri Nanda says, the untapped resources and the spare energy of the nation which if properly canalised can help very substantially towards supplementing Government's efforts. The task before the Nation, is, therefore, to organise the utilisation of these resources in such a manner that the community gains by the collective endeavour of the people themselves.

AGE-LONG INERTIA

92

Analysing peoples' attitude towards the Government Shri Nanda says that there is among the active elements of society a largely negative, non-cooperative and destructive mood, while among the masses their age-long ignorance and inertial prevail. This "social stalemate", as he calls it, has got to be cleared and that can be done if the peoples' energy is directed towards constructive activities through organised and willing effort. Already, useful work by voluntary organisations in various parts of the country are being done. With the formation of an All-India body, with the avowed objective of enlisting peoples' voluntary effort for the community's welfare, "the little deeds and toil of obscure individuals and groups in all parts of the country will rise in significance and yield far greater satisfaction if they become events in a national drive and parts of an inspiring picture of national reconstruction."

A NON-POLITICAL BODY

The proposed organisation will be a non-political body and will not be tied to the Party in power. But, since whatever it can accomplish should strengthen the foundations of the State and further the fulfilment of its obligations to the community, the organisation, Shri Nanda says, "will be found worthy of the fullest recognition and support by the Union as well as by the State Governments." It may eventually become for them an important contact and channel of communication with voluntary agencies. While to that extent its association with the State is justified, Shri Nanda warns: "It should not lean on the State, and must be prepared to collect its sinews of action from the people whose confidence it will have to earn."

FOOD PROBLEM - HIGHEST PRIORITY

The range of activities of the Samaj will no doubt comprehend all aspects of community welfare. But initially, Shri Nanda says, it will not be wise to attempt too much or diffuse energy in too many directions. Only urgent tasks may be

... taken in

taken in the earlier stages and, in view of its importance to the community, the food problem must be given the highest priority. Other activities may include organisation of public opinion against anti-social practices, formation of community centres, organising the youth for the service of the community, improvement of relations between the people and the Government by striving for quicker redress of public grievances, social education, prevention of disease, anti-malarial campaign, etc..

DECENTRALISATION OF FUNCTIONS

Utmost decentralisation will be a cardinal feature of the work of the Samaj, observes Shri Nanda. The basic unit will be the village and the subsequent tiers will be identical with the administrative divisions in the country. The Samaj will offer a general scheme and framework into which spontaneous activity springing up all over the country may fit itself. "No regional unit", Shri Nanda says, "need wait direction to form a branch. The aid and impulse from the Central and provincial organisations may proceed side by side."

The activities of the Samaj have to be carried out mainly by free services of the members of the Samaj. A small nucleus of the workers may, however, be paid wholetime workers which would mainly be in the interest of stable administration and continuity of service. This, apart from the costs incurred on specific projects, will entail a certain scale of expenditure and funds for this purpose will have to be collected from private and public sources.

MEMBERSHIP

According to the Draft Constitution of the Samaj any person who has attained the age of 18 may become a member of this body if he agrees to volunteer his service as a part-time or a wholetime worker for a period which may normally be five years and shall not be less than 12 months. The other types of members will be founder members, honorary members, life members and associate members. Organisations engaged in

... social welfare

social welfare or constructive work which agree to associate themselves with the work of the Samaj may also be admitted as members.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

No person or organisation shall be admitted as or continue to remain a member who engages or professes faith in violent or subversive activities or communal hatred or has connection with any organisation countenancing such activities.

Any member who uses or attempts to use the platform or organisation of the Samaj for political advantage or personal gain shall be removed from the list of members.

The functions of the Samaj shall be discharged at the top level by a Central Board elected by a General Council which will consist of 75 members elected by the founder-members, the affiliated organisations and the other members. The Central Board will consist of 12 persons and shall lay down the rules of business for the efficient conduct of the affairs of the Samaj and all its branches and define the responsibilities and powers of the office bearers.

PRINCIPLES OF WORK

The organisation and the activities of the Samaj shall conform to the following principles:

- i) A common platform for the service of the nation will be provided irrespective of caste, creed, or political belief or affiliation.
- ii) Any use of the organisation or its activities for political or communal purposes will be strictly forbidden.
- iii) The principle of decentralisation will be applied to the utmost extent, the basic unit for the purpose of administration being a village or a compact locality in a town. Care will be taken to secure full play for the initiative and enthusiasm of the people in each local area. Control and direction of the work of the branches

will be exercised only for the purpose of co-ordination, efficiency and economy.

- iv) Every endeavour will be made to secure the fullest coordination and collaboration between the Samaj and the official or non-official agencies working in the same field.
- v) Funds required for activities in any particular areas will be collected in that area, as far as possible.
- vi) The principle of cooperation will be applied and developed as fully as possible in the activities organised by the Samaj. Community centres will be established wherever possible and organisations of producers as well as consumers will be encouraged to give expression to this principle in every aspect of group life.

THE ABOVE IS NOT TO BE PUBLISHED OR BROADCAST
BEFORE JUNE 23, 1952.

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PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU 96

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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BREAK THE "MOUNTAIN OF INERTIA"

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S CALL TO THE NATION

New Delhi, June 22.

"Unless we can produce that temper in our people which laughs at difficulties and get things done, sometimes in spite of facts, we cannot achieve anything really big", observes Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, in a foreword to the pamphlet entitled "Bharat Sevak Samaj" issued by the Planning Commission to-day.

The Prime Minister says:

* "We have talked about planning for a long time and we *
* have produced a draft Five-year Plan. That Plan will presum- *
* ably be finalised in the course of some weeks. Everyone *
* recognises now the necessity for planning and tries to *
* utilise our resources to the best advantage. *

* "We can, to some extent, measure our resources, or *
* most of them. But it is very difficult to measure the big- *
* gest of these resources that we have, that is, man-power, *
* and that psychology which makes people work for great ends. *
* Unless we utilise this manpower and unless we can produce *
* that temper in our people which laughs at difficulties and *
* get things done, sometimes in spite of facts, we cannot *
* achieve anything really big. *

* "Therefore we have to look to our people, go to them, *
* talk and discuss with them and work with them. We must *
* function as comrades in a common task, as partners in a joint *
* undertaking. We may have to teach them something but we have *
* much to learn from them also. So we should go to them not *
* with the pride of knowledge but in humility of spirit and *
* with the intense desire to bring about, with our common la- *
* bour that joint effort which can shake and break up a *

* "The proposal to start an organisation, to be called *
* the Bharat Sevak Samaj, has this in view. It is an ambitious *
* task and we want men and women with high ambition for it - *
* not the ambition for the little and personal things of life *
* but the ambition to serve great causes, forgetting oneself, *
* and achieve great ends. *

* "This is not a political organisation, even though I, *
* a politician, commend it. It is meant for every able bodied *
* man and woman, whatever his or her views might be on other *
* topics." *
* *****

The above is not to be published or broadcast
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PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU 187

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

PUBLIC COOPERATION FOR FIVE -YEAR PLAN

PRIME MINISTER'S ADDRESS TO NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PARTY LEADERS MEET TO HELP IN NATIONAL TASK

New Delhi, August 12, 1952.

"While governmental activity is important, it is the public activity which, in the final analysis, is more important, as government's action without the people behind it cannot bring any substantial achievement. It is possible to do odd jobs here and there by the government on its own, but the activity which can bring sustained and lasting benefit to the people must be one which strikes a correct balance between the governmental effort and public endeavour," observed Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister, addressing the first meeting, this morning at New Delhi of the National Advisory Committee for Public Cooperation. The Committee which is a body set up, at the instance of the Planning Commission, primarily with the object of advising and guiding the Commission in all matters bearing ~~z~~ on public cooperation in national development consists of leaders of various political parties.

Among those who attended today's meeting were: Acharya J.B. Kriplani, Dr. S.P. Mukherjee, Shri Satishchandra Das Gupta, Shri Ashok Mehta, Prof. N.G. Ranga, Shri Hardiker, Rev. D'souza, Shri Harekrushna Mehtab, Giani, Gurmukh Singh Mussafir, Jathedar Udam Singh Nagoke, Shri G.D. Birla, Shri Sri Ram, Shri P.A. Nairrelwalla, and Mrs. Mathai, Ministers of the Central Cabinet including Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Shri Jagjivan Ram, Dr. K.N. Katju and Rajkumari Amrit ~~Kaur~~ were present. Members of the Planning Commission including Shri V.T. Krishnamachari, Shri R.K. Patil, and Shrimati Durgabai also attended.

NATIONAL TASK

At the outset, the Prime Minister expressed his pleasure ~~at the presence of~~ at the presence of leaders who represented different political

.....and

and economic approaches to the national problem but who were, nonetheless, prepared to cooperate in the national task. There may be difficulties, he said, as public approach of political parties was conditioned very largely by the school of thought and ideology that they represented and an ideological approach was associated with a certain amount of rigidity which gave rise to conflict. On the other hand, when the job to be done was discussed, and not theories and ideologies, the area of difficulty minimised. The Draft Outline of the Five-year Plan published last year, Shri Nehru said, would soon be replaced by the Final Report. While many will agree with its recommendations there will be others who will criticise. Speaking personally, the Prime Minister said, he did not like rigid approaches to solution of any problems particularly when the problem before the country was so stupendous. Any rigidity led to a certain amount of mental rut and he thought that if circumstances so warranted all of us should be prepared to change our point of view.

FUNDAMENTALS OF PUBLIC COOPERATION

The National Advisory Committee, the Prime Minister said, will have to devote special attention to the fundamentals of public cooperation in the sphere of implementation of the Five-year Plan as a whole, in the implementation of the Community Development Programme, and helping in the organisation of a body through which such implementation could be effectively done. In the sphere of governmental activity

There are certain factors, the Prime Minister said, which have to be balanced. For example, he said, in the modern world there was, inevitably, a tendency of greater Centralisation which in a way meant lessening of individual freedom. Decentralisation, on the other hand, meant, perhaps, less efficiency but greater individual freedom. It was a question of proper balancing of the two with a view to retaining adequate individual freedom, at the same time promoting efficiency.

SPONTANEITY OF RESPONSE

Another factor which had to be properly balanced was how to dovetail governmental activity and public cooperation into one organised effort. It will be seen, Shri Nehru said, that in China and elsewhere large numbers of people associated themselves with governmental activity. Whatever be the means through which such association was obtained, it was important to bear in mind that the progress made by these countries had been possible because of large-scale public cooperation. In India, we have to function in a democratic way and therefore the means must be different. In this connection, he emphasised that public cooperation must not be so much of direction from above. There should be a spontaneity of response, a joy for the work, a willingness to render service to the people and a spirit of cooperative endeavour emanating from the people themselves. If that is not done, introduction of official machinery means a certain amount of rigidity which affects spontaneity. The Committee has to consider how the two could be balanced, he said.

BHARAT SEWAK SAMAJ

In regard to the Bharat Sewak Samaj the Prime Minister said that the idea took shape more than a year ago and during

...the last

the last two months enough indication had been received in the Planning Commission that the idea was welcome to the people. He hoped that the Advisory Committee would give a push to this idea.

✓ The Planning Minister, Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, referring to the Bharat Sovak Samaj said that since publication of the Pamphlet on the Samaj a great deal of interest had been evinced by the people on the idea of the Samaj and the Planning Commission had received hundreds of enquiries from the public and offers of joining the Samaj had come from many people. Before the organisation took shape officially, already in some parts of the country work of the organisation had started informally. He had seen reports from several places where people ~~had~~ combined on their own and ~~had~~ informed the Planning Commission of such organisations which they would like to form part of the All-India Bharat Sovak Samaj.

✓ The meeting will continue today.

RKC/

470/12.8.52.

PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

191

BHARAT SEWAK SAMAJ GETS A START

**SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU ASKED TO CONDUCT ACTIVITIES
PARTY LEADERS' UNANIMOUS REQUEST TO PRIME MINISTER
PROVISIONAL CENTRAL BOARD TO BE FORMED
IMMEDIATE NATIONAL PROGRAMME APPROVED**

STEPS TO ENSURE PEOPLE'S CO-OPERATION FOR FIVE-YEAR PLAN

New Delhi, August 13, 1952.

The National Advisory Committee for Public Co-operation which concluded its meeting yesterday at New Delhi unanimously requested Shri Jawaharlal Nehru to be the President of the Bharat Sewak Samaj and to conduct its activities till the Constitution of the Samaj came into operation.

The Committee further authorised the President to set up a provisional Central Board for the Samaj in accordance with its draft Constitution and unanimously approved the "Immediate National Programme" that the Samaj, under the direction of the Board, should undertake forthwith. This Programme covers eight distinct categories in the sphere of economic and social development of the country and comprises of the following activities:

I. Economic Development -

- (A) Construction - buildings, roads, wells, bunds, houses for community purposes, etc.;
- (B) Assisting the development of Cooperatives and Panchayats;
- (C) Assisting the development of cottage and village industries;
- (D) Austerity and savings drive.
- (E) Protection of crops
- (F) Cattle improvement

...II.

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II. Social Health -

(A) Anti-corruption campaign -

- (i) Pledge - "I will not give or accept a bribe";
- (ii) To help those who suffer on account of the pledge,

(B) Anti-adulteration campaign - (Food and drugs)

- (i) Pledge - "I will not adulterate or sell any adulterated food or drug".
- (ii) Assistance to the public in preventing adulteration.

III. Social Education

(A) Training in Citizenship and Health Education

(B) The Economic Situation and the Five Year Plan;

IV. Community Recreation and National Fitness:

Programmes for youth, women and children.

V. Health:

- (A) Anti-malaria work;
- (B) Slum clearance;
- (C) 'Keep the streets clean' campaign.

VI. Studies:

- (i) Corruption;
- (ii) Adulteration of food and drugs;
- (iii) Waste;
- (iv) Other social problems.

VII. Relief and Assistance

VIII. Resources -

National Welfare Fund.

(Note - Items may be added to or varied according to local conditions)

LEADERS' VIEWS

The various Party leaders who are members of the Advisory Committee took part in the discussions. While there was general approval of the conception of the Bharat Sevak Samaj, it was emphasised that the non-political character of the organisation must be preserved at all costs.

...Dr.

that
Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee said he was convinced that the Bharat Sevak Samaj had great potentialities and deserved enthusiastic co-operation from the people. He said it should be possible for all political parties to unite when there was a programme to deal with major social and economic problems. It was for the biggest ruling party to take the initiative or assume responsibility to create the necessary atmosphere for public co-operation. He, however, stressed that the Bharat Sevak Samaj must not be used as a platform by any party, at any level, for political propaganda.

Dr. Mookerjee expressed himself against too much regimentation. He said it was imperative for the success of the Samaj that while the Government officials lent their fullest co-operation, bureaucratic approach was avoided.

Shri Asoke Mehta observed that so long as the plan of the people's sector was not treated as a plan of any single political party, there would be no difficulty in securing co-operation. It should be made clear that the credit of whatever was done by the Samaj should belong to the people as a whole. It was for the ruling party to state clearly that the credit for achievements in the people's sector would go only to the people.

Shri G. D. Birla thought that private organisations should come forward in increasing numbers to promote educational and other welfare activities and the success of the Bharat Sevak Samaj would depend on the extent to which such organisations were supported by the Government.

Shri Kasturbhai Lalbhai said that as work had to be done in the villages, there was need for some form of enforcement which could compel people to provide labour and money. He suggested that some kind of legislation should be introduced for the purpose.

Shri Satish Chandra Das-Gupta said that a dynamic quality was needed to speed up the work of the

and pointed out that when Mahatma Gandhi made schemes he took personal responsibility for them. Likewise, Shri Nehru should do the same. If the spirit of sacrifice and service could be applied to the attainment of a single objective, then there was hope to achieve some results.

Jathedar Udham Singh Nagoke desired that the work of the Bharat Sevak Samaj should be started immediately and difficulties such as were experienced could be dealt with when they cropped up.

Prof. N. G. Ranga said that the Bharat Sevak Samaj should aim at securing the support of all sections of the people. The Planning Commission, the Central Government and the State Governments should be anxious to enlist the co-operation of private agencies and other organisations.

Acharya Kripalani laid emphasis on the importance of a concrete programme.

Mrs. Matthai emphasised that the maximum help should be given to those who were already doing a good deal of work for the country. She urged that organisations and individuals working in their humble capacity to serve the country in different ways should be recognised.

Rev. De'Souza said that the fears expressed by Dr. Mookerjee should be allayed, if the schemes of the Bharat Sevak Samaj were carried out without endangering the membership of persons in their respective political organisations. In activities of the Samaj they should aim at obtaining the greatest common factor in which all parties would agree.

Shri Jagjiwan Ram felt that it should be the duty of the Government officials to secure the co-operation of the people and was of opinion that this was not always done. In regard to the suggestion made by one of the speakers for introducing an element of compulsion to the villagers, Shri Ram pointed out the danger of forced labour, particularly from the standpoint of depressed classes.

NO POLITICAL BIAS

Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, Minister for Planning, referring to the views expressed by some of the Party leaders that the Bharat Sewak Samaj must not be a political organisation observed that the best guarantee against the risk of the Samaj being a political organisation was to specify that only those persons would be accepted as members whose major pre-occupation was constructive work. Secondly, although members of the Samaj may belong to some political parties, while functioning as a member of the Samaj they must act without any political distinction or label.

The Committee authorised the President to take certain further steps in regard to the formation of the Samaj, including the following:

- (a) Appointment of special conveners for forming branches of the Samaj in the States;
- (b) Enrolment of founder-members of the Samaj. These should be persons of standing in social and constructive work and their names will be suggested by leaders in various fields and by institutions engaged in social welfare work;
- (c) Enrolment of ordinary and associate members;
- (d) Arrangements for training of members to be made at the Centre and in the States.

A special sub-committee of the National Advisory Committee was formed to recommend means of raising the funds for the Samaj. While subscriptions or donations would be welcome from all, the principal resources of the Samaj, as the Minister of Planning, Shri Nanda explained, would be the maximum utilisation of the spare time and resources of the people.

BASIC STRUCTURE LAID

Yesterday's meeting, which was the first meeting of the National Committee aimed to provide the basic structure on which the edifice of peoples' cooperation for implementation of the Five Year Plan could be based. This Committee is a body set up at the instance....

instance of the Planning Commission, primarily with the object of advising and guiding it in all important matters bearing on public cooperation in national development, is also the National Advisory Committee for the Bharat Sevak Samaj. It is expected to meet at least twice a year and its functions will include:

- (a) to review and assess the progress of public cooperation in relation to national development;
- (b) to advise the Planning Commission from time to time regarding the progress of public cooperation in relation to the fulfilment of the National Plan;
- (c) to receive reports from the Central Board of the Bharat Sevak Samaj and to consider such specific matters as may be referred to it for advice by the Central Board; and
- (d) to make recommendations and suggestions to the Central Board of the Bharat Sevak Samaj on matters of policy and on programmes relating to public cooperation.

LIST OF MEMBERS

Below is a complete list of the members of the National Advisory Committee for Public Cooperation:

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Shri C.D. Birla, Shri Satish Chandra Das Gupta, Khadi Parthisthan, Sodepur, Calcutta, Shri Khandubhai Desai, Textile Labour Association Ahmedabad, Rev. Father De' Souza, Institute of Social Order, St. Vincent Street, Poona, Shri C.D. Deshmukh, Mrs. G. Durgabai, Dr. N.S. Hardikar, Shri Jagjiwan Ram, Seth Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Dr. K.N. Katju, Acharya J.B. Kripalani, Shri Harekrushna Mahtab, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukerji, Shri V.T. Krishnamachari, Mrs. A. John Matthai, Shri G.V. Mavlankar, Shri Asoka Mehta, Shri G.L. Mehta, Jathedar Udharn Singh Nagoke, Shri Jai Prakash Narain, Shri P.A. Narialwala, Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru, Gyani Gurmukh Singh Musafir, Prof. N. G. Ranga, Shri R. K. Patil and Shri Sri Ram.

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PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU

200

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

PRESS NOTE

NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PUBLIC COOPERATION

SHRIMATI DURGABAI APPOINTED SECRETARY

Shrimati Durgabai, Member, Planning Commission, has been appointed Secretary of the National Advisory Committee for Public Cooperation of which Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister, is the Chairman.

The National Advisory Committee has been set up at the instance of the Planning Commission, primarily with the object of advising and guiding it in all important matters bearing on public cooperation in national development. It is also the National Advisory Committee for the Bharat Sevak Samaj.

Planning Commission
New Delhi, August 15, 1952

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PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

240

BHARAT SEVAK SAMAJ

CONVENORS FOR MADRAS

Madras, August 25, 1952.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, the Chairman of the National Advisory Committee for Public Cooperation (Planning Commission), acting as the provisional President of the Bharat Sevak Samaj, has appointed the following as convenors of the Bharat Sevak Samaj in the state of Madras:-

Shri M. Bhakthavatsalam for Tamil Nad and

Sri M. Satyanarayana for Andhradesa.

They will form their provisional Committees, and the names of their executives will be announced shortly.

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PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

258

IMPLEMENTATION FOR SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES
PLEA FOR SETTING UP INDEPENDENT CENTRAL AGENCY
WOMEN SOCIAL WORKERS' SUGGESTIONS TO PLANNING COMMISSION

New Delhi, November 7, 1952.

Several important suggestions were made at to-day's session of the Planning Commission's meeting with leading women social workers which began in New Delhi since yesterday. These covered the need for setting up an independent Social Welfare Board to guide the implementation of the programmes of social welfare, protection of village industries and encouragement of private organisations to do voluntary social welfare work in spheres where State was not in a position to undertake such work because of lack of resources.

Today's meeting which was attended by all the leading women workers present yesterday and the members of the Planning Commission except the Prime Minister discussed several other problems besides the three mentioned above and these included

public co-operation for the Five Year Plan, education and health programmes in the Plan and family planning. The representatives of the women's organisations present in the Conference offered their whole-hearted co-operation to the suggestions made in the Five-Year Plan on social welfare programmes for which their advice was particularly sought.

With a view to providing the motivating force and the necessary initiative for carrying on social welfare work on a co-ordinated and organised scale all over the country, the Conference suggested the establishment of an independent Social Welfare Board with adequate number of non-official members and having executive powers. It was felt that for administrative purposes and for reasons of Parliamentary control, the Board should be attached to some Ministry of the Government of India.

Several

VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

Several women workers present at the Conference pleaded for greater attention to be paid to cottage industries and other village industries in which women participated to a considerable extent. It was suggested that competition between mills and cottage industries should be eliminated and certain spheres of production, for example, food processing should be made a special preserve of home industries which would provide greater employment to a large number of women.

Opinions were expressed about the inadequacy of funds provided for education and health programmes and several women workers thought that allotment for these two subjects should be further increased. It was pointed out on behalf of the Planning Commission that subject to the Priorities that the Commission has set before itself, it has gone to the maximum extent possible in providing funds for ^{these} development programmes. Secondly, it is important to bear in mind that programmes of general development intended to raise the standard of living are bound to have an indirect effect on the health programmes also because to the extent the standard of living improved, the health conditions would also improve.

BHARAT SEWAK SAMAJ

The idea of the formation of the Bharat Sewak Samaj as a non-official and non-political body to enlist people's co-operation with the Five-Year Plan was generally approved at the Conference. Asked as to what extent the functions of the Bharat Sewak Samaj and of the existing social service organisations in the country were identical, it was explained on behalf of the Planning Commission that there could be no overlapping of functions as the existing organisations covered a very small portion of the total Indian population. The Samaj could spread itself out in the vast country-side that still remained to be approached. Secondly, the whole basis of the

of the conception of the ^{Samaj} was that an individual member must pledge himself to do a certain amount of labour for the benefit of the community. It might be road-making, or digging of canals or building a school, but the Samaj is not out to compete with any other organisation. Its whole conception was to raise the dignity of manual work and through co-operative endeavour help in the implementation of the Five-Year Plan.

FAMILY PLANNING

In matters concerning family planning, several ~~women workers emphasised the need for a bold approach~~ and called for extension of family planning activities throughout the country. It was suggested by several members that family planning advice should be available freely not only on grounds of health, but on economic grounds as well.

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PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

FIRST FIVE YEAR PLAN
A SUMMARY

PUBLIC COOPERATION IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Public cooperation and public opinion constitute the principal force and sanction behind planning. It is vital to the success of the Plan that action by the agencies of the Government should be inspired by an understanding of the role of the people and supported by practical steps to enlist their enthusiastic participation.

Public cooperation as envisaged in the Plan transcends differences of party. What makes democratic planning real is confidence in the community that the national plan aims at achieving a social order in which economic disparities will be greatly reduced and an equal opportunity afforded to all. The interests of parties are thus relegated to the background and the common objectives of the nation regarded as a unity are the sole consideration.

A widespread understanding of the Plan is an essential stage in its fulfilment. This has to be achieved with the cooperation of the press and the assistance of creative writers and artists and through radio, film, song and drama. It will be necessary to express the Plan in terms of the common needs and problems of the people and to provide literature and information in simple language. The process of breaking up the National and State plans into local units based on district, town and village, which has been already begun, should be completed speedily. It is only in terms of local programmes that local leadership and enthusiasm can play their part. The Plan can then become a medium and a focus of constructive activity in every part of the country and can be further strengthened and developed by the effort of the people themselves. Thus, the people become partners in the Plan and are associated closely with its formulation as well as its implementation from stage to stage.

The role of the administration in seeking public cooperation has already been stressed. Those engaged in administration can make an immense contribution towards creating the conditions in which public cooperation can grow if they approach the people as comrades in the same cause and with eagerness to learn and to help. There must also be the desire to take the utmost advantage of

... the assistance

~~the assistance of the people and to provide for voluntary community~~
action over as large a field as may be possible.

For each project in progress the arrangements which now ~~exist for securing~~ public cooperation and participation should be reviewed by the administrative authorities concerned and the people brought closer to it. For other projects in the Plan, adequate arrangements for enlisting such cooperation and association should be made from the very beginning. Careful consideration of how best public cooperation can be secured should be regarded as much a part of a scheme as the estimate of expenditure or the schedule of work or the statement of benefits which are anticipated. In almost every sphere participation of the people in framing and fulfilling programmes and targets constitute the crux of development. Indeed, the field of public cooperation is co-terminous with that of national development.

Voluntary Organisations

The Commission indicates the field in which various agencies of public co-operation can help in the implementation of the Plan. In this sphere, voluntary organisations engaged in social work can greatly help. In particular, they may attempt to develop fields of constructive work for women, youth and teachers in schools. These three groups have a vital part to play and their potential for creative activity still remains far from realised. The Plan provides Rs.4 crores for assistance by the Central Government for voluntary organisations and Rs.1 crore for youth camps and labour service for students. As voluntary action develops, an increasing number of functions can be entrusted to voluntary agencies. Extension of voluntary work would not only make for economy but would also enable State personnel to give greater attention to other tasks.

National Committee For Public Co-operation

Two important agencies have arisen in recent months for organising public cooperation on a nationwide basis, namely, the ~~National Advisory Committee for Public Cooperation~~ and the Bharat Sevak Samaj.

..... The National

The National Advisory Committee, which is representative of different sections of opinion in the country, is expected to:

- (1) review and assess the programmes of public cooperation in relation to national development;
- (2) advise the Planning Commission from time to time regarding the progress of public cooperation in relation to the fulfilment of the National Plan;
- (3) receive reports from the Central Board of the Bharat Sevak Samaj and consider such specific matters as may be referred to it for advice by the Central Board; and
- (4) make suggestions and recommendations to the Central Board of the Bharat Sevak Samaj on matters of policy and on programme relating to the public cooperation.

Bharat Sevak Samaj

The Bharat Sevak Samaj has been conceived as a non-political and non-official national platform for constructive work. The primary objects of the Samaj are:

- (1) to find and develop avenues of voluntary service for the citizens of India to -
 - (a) promote national sufficiency and build up the economic strength of the country,
 - (b) to promote the social well-being of the community and to mitigate the privations and hardships of its less favoured sections; and
- (2) to draw out the available unused time, energy and other resources of the people and direct them into various fields of social and economic activity.

The Bharat Sevak Samaj provides a common platform for all who wish to give their share of time and energy to develop peoples' own effort in relation to national Plan and, at the same time, it is intended to assist in the development of existing voluntary organisations.

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