

(C.M. Kamalapati Tripathi, Cong(N)
4 April '71 to 12 June '73)

1.8.71

Speaking in the Assembly on the demand for Home and General Administration on July 27, I pointed out that, while there have been complaints of political corruption right from the days of Pant Ji, the situation under the present Government had deteriorated greatly and almost touched the nadir or the lowest point. That, the reputation of Government was mud. In this connection I wanted to read out an open letter addressed to the Chief Minister by an ex-Minister of our State, at present a member of the Lok Sabha elected with the active support of New Congress, viz., Shri Jharkhande Rai, which had already been published in a section of the press. After I had read out a portion, the Speaker advised me not to proceed further. I agreed.

Next day, instead of meeting the points I had raised, the New Congress mounted an organised attack against me to which I wanted to make a reply on July 29, but was denied an opportunity of doing so. I want to say categorically that every single allegation made against me either by the New Congress MLA's, or their leader in his reply to the debate was nothing short of suppression of truth or suggestion of falsehood. I would refer here only to the more important of them.

It was alleged that I was the father of defections. Nothing of the kind, however. The honour goes to the Congress all over the country, not either to me or anybody else. During the period 1957-62, 120 MLAs and 8 MPs and, during the period 1962-1967, 299 MLAs and 17 MPs elected on the non-Congress ticket, were received in the Congress fold. After the General Elections of 1967, however, defections ceased to be a one-way traffic, and it is to this that the Congressmen object. This time, while Congress received 139 MLAs, it lost 175 to other parties. Out of 95 defectors in the four States of Bihar, Punjab, Rajasthan and West Bengal alone, Congress appointed 64 as Ministers.

A charge was also made that my bank balance in 1968 had swollen from Rs 200 to Rs 14 lacs or so. It did, But the money was not collected by any abuse of political power. It was money openly subscribed by villagers in public meetings for purposes of BKD. Whereas the source of the election chest of New Congress which, during the last mid-term poll, is said to have reached a figure of Rs 15 to Rs 20 crores, is shrouded in mystery. One does not know if this money was openly deposited in bank and also whether the petty amount of 60 lakhs of the famous Nagarwala case formed a part of it.

During the course of his reply in which Shri Kamalapati Tripathi left most of my criticism unanswered, he questioned my political integrity in holding talks with old Congress leadership of the State prior to the formation of a coalition Government with his party, the New Congress, in 1970. These talks were held because of the failure of the New Congress to spell out the terms of their proposed coalition with BKD. Nor was BKD in any way stopped from holding such talks : It did not owe any obligation to New Congress at all. Rather it was, partly, owing to the prospects of its forming a coalition Government with BKD that the strength of New Congress which stood in the neighbourhood of 80 on November 22, 1969, shot up to 132 or so on February 11, 1970.

I may also, in reply to this charge, point out that to accuse another requires that one's own hands are clean. Would Shri Tripathi kindly recollect his own conduct and that of his All-India leadership in the matter of election of President of the Union only a few months before ? The major details are still fresh in public memory.

As regards a letter which I wrote to the Chief ~~Min~~ Justice, well, there was nothing wrong or underhand in it. Names of persons for Judgeship of the High Court are usually forwarded to the Government of India after a mutual consultation between the Chief Minister and the Chief Justice. If the consultation cannot be held by word of mounth, there can possibly be no objection if it is hold through correspondence. The Chief Minister usually agrees with the proposals made by the Chief Justice in this regard, but is not bound to do so.

Shri Kamalapati Tripathi also told the House that I had superseded Shri Islam Ahmad for the office of IGP in 1967 because he was a Musalman. Now, there cannot be a bigger lie than this. I had superseded him on merits and for reasons which those who knew facts, have appreciated : Whereas the order of supersession was set aside four years later because Shri Islam Ahmad happened to be a Musalman -- a reason which may bring a personal or political advantage to New Congress leadership but will damage national interest as also the long-term interest of Musalmans themselves, permanently. It will, perhaps, not be out of place here for me to point out that out of 20 BKD Ministers, 4 were Muslims, the highest percentage of any party or any Government since 1937. Also, that I appointed a Muslim as Addl. IG and another as Consolidation Commissioner in 1970. I will not go into further details.

The Chief Minister's reply to my objection against re-employment of dismissed Government servants which was unprecedented in history viz., that he wanted to trail a new course, was, to say the least, childish. Those alone who do not carry any sense of responsibility towards the people for good administration, could take such a step.

I would conclude with an appeal to the Chief Minister, viz. that he should prosecute Shri Jharkhande Rai for making allegations against him or those connected with him in the press, which, as the Chief Minister led the House to believe, had no basis in fact, but which have nevertheless brought him and the State Government into disrepute. Failure to take action in this regard will lead to all sorts of speculations. The accuser in this particular case, Shri Jharkhande Rai, is not a nonentity but aman with a status in public life. And, as I said on the floor of the House, it is not the Chief Minister alone or his party that is interested in the good name of Government, but the Opposition and the people in general also.

Sd/-

Lucknow :
1st, August, 1971

Charan Singh
President, B.K.D.