

## RESPONSES TO REVOLT

We have excerpted from the available numbers of the journal ‘Revolt’, some responses from within and outside the country, as these would give some idea about the links the Self-respect movement tried to build up to advance its causes – *Prof.S.V.Rajadurai, Head, Centre for Periyar Studies, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirapalli*)

### 1.LONG LIVE “REVOLT”

*The Truthseeker* of the 16<sup>th</sup> March published from New York writes:

We have received some sample copies of “Revolt” a radical weekly coming from the Unmai Vilakkam Press, Erode, S. India and printed in English. It is anti-religious, reproducing articles from the *Truthseeker*, the *London Freethinker*, and the Rationalist Press Association of England. Some of its original matter also, often presented in the form of dialogue, is openly atheistic. It reviews some of the most modern books, such as those of Bertrand Russell. Long live the “Revolt” It will doubtless do much good in India.

**- *Revolt*, 17<sup>th</sup> April 1929**

1) Dear Sir,

Please accept our thanks for the copies of Vol.I Nos.9 and 10(1929) of the “Revolt”, which you so kindly sent us a short time ago. We are very glad indeed to have this issue and appreciate your courtesy in forwarding it. We have received here Vol.I Nos.1 to 8, of “Revolt”, published in New York by the Revolt Publishing Association, 1916. Has this publication any connection with the present one of which you have just sent us Nos.9 and 10? Will you let us hear from you with regard to this query?

New York, 15<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1929.

(Sd.) E.H. Anderson, Director,  
*The New York Public Library.*

Ans: Received your kind letter. We are all glad to hear of an association of the same name. But our journal has nothing to do with that association. We are sending you the back numbers of "the Revolt" also. We are anxious to have copies of the paper, mentioned in your letter.

2) Dear Sir,

I have been informed by the Secretary, Self-Respect League, Madras that the "Revolt" is a weekly journal which is the vehicle of the League. Our Jat Pat Todak Mandal (society for breaking caste among Hindus) is carrying on exactly the same propaganda for which your League has been established. Our society has been working for about 5 years and during this period we have been eminently successful in getting a large number of inter caste marriages performed. We have more than 600 members on our rolls, and all of them have taken the pledge given on the margin of this letter.

In view of the fact that our aim at breaking caste is the same as yours, we shall be pleased if you will send us your paper "the Revolt" in exchange for the "Kranti." ( a monthly magazine published in Urdu by our society) Being a sister organization and having the same object I hope you will accept our proposal for the mutual exchange of the papers. If, however, it is not possible for you to do so, will you kindly let me have the issue of the "Revolt", in which a somewhat detailed account of your League is given.

Hoping to hear from you at an early date,

Yours faithfully,  
(Sd.) Har Bhagwan, for Secretary.  
*Jat Pat Todak Mandal.*

Every Hindu who, in case of being unmarried, pledges to marry himself or herself and in case of being married, has or her sons and daughters out of his or her caste can be a member of this Mandal on paying Rs. 2 or more per annum as subscription.

Ans: Very glad to receive your letter. It is a matter of great pleasure to us to know the purpose for which your organization stands and we are sure you will fall in with the views of the Self- respect League when you are acquainted with the full detail of its aims and objects. Though we regret we cannot make the best use of your Urdu journal, we shall be glad to receive them in exchange, we are sending you the back numbers of the “Revolt” and other pamphlets where detailed account of our League is given.

Wishing your League all success, (Ed.)

(3) Dear Sir,

You have been sending me for some time copies of your paper for which I heartily thank you. If you will inform me of the correct English subscription, I will remit the amount owing. The number containing resolutions of the Self- respect Conference interested me particularly; *but why; oh why no resolution in favour of Birth Control?* Surely such obviously farseeing reformers and intelligent leaders are not averse to or unaware of the tremendous regenerating powers of Birth Control?

I have just lately read Miss Mayo’s book “Mother India”. Did she exaggerate, I wonder? But your resolutions make me think she did not. Every good wish in your splendid fight and hearty congratulations, in your fight against superstitions, priest- craft and the accompanying evils of religion.

Danedin,  
N.Zealand.

Sincerely Yours,  
(Sd.) E.W. Flint.

Ans: Thanks for your letter. The Self- respect movement is only five years old. We can with some amount of confidence say that during this short period it has made rapid strides in an orthodox country like India. In the Second Self- respect Conference which will be held in the next year, we shall try our best to pass a resolution with reference to Birth Control also, which had to be purposely put off this year owing to the insufficient preparation of the soil. (Ed.)

**-Revolt,8<sup>th</sup> May 1929**

## **2.WHAT OTHERS SAY**

*The Light*, an English Weekly published from Lahore writes:-

Of all our mail bag there is one thing which arrests our attention the moment it catches our eye. It is a brilliant little Weekly, vigorously edited from Madras, bearing the significant title of *Revolt*. The name itself is loud enough to command a hearing even from the deaf. To make it louder still, however, it is most appropriately printed in red, the recognized danger signal in the symbolic language of the day. As the name indicates, the paper stands for the highest mission that any man could put before himself. Man's inhumanity to man, man's exploitation of man, man's brutality to man, man's lording it over man, has been the curse of human society all down the ages and what could be a higher and nobler mission than to raise a standard of revolt against it? Or again what could be a greater danger to society than this oppression of man by man? The name as well as the colour is well chosen indeed, combining at once the highest call of duty and the most threatening danger to society.

**-Revolt,27<sup>th</sup> October 1929**

### 3. What Others Say

We give below the extracts of opinions on "Revolt" from some of our contemporaries:

*The Young Liberator*, Bombay:

"...The paper is not only carrying on a vigorous propaganda in favour of Atheism but also against priesthood and mullaism. As an ardent social reformer the journal is doing very good work in South India and we wish journal all success in this noble task."

*The Primate*, Ottawa:

"Though little in size, our "red lettered" contemporary from Madras is not only shaking the foundation of Brahmin supremacy in South India, but like a valiant votary of reason, is fighting furiously against all the time-honoured but unreasonable customs and "ungodly revels." We wish our fearless contemporary who fights also for the emancipation of women in South India, all success."

*The Guardian*, Chencotah:

"As the name itself suggests, it revolts against all social customs and evils existing in Hinduism and paves a way for reasoning. It is one of the organs of the Self-respect League and has entered the 2nd year of its existence. It ventilates the cause of Non-brahmins in its social aspects, of women in their enfranchisement from slavery and advocates abolition of widowhood. It paves a way for unity by preaching equality of sexes and caste. We commend our contemporary to the public who, we hope will give due response."

**-Revolt, 19<sup>th</sup> January 1930**

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**-Revolt, 27<sup>th</sup> October 1929**

***(These articles were selected from the weekly 'Revolt' and compiled by Prof.S.V.Rajadurai, Head, Centre for Periyar Studies, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirapalli-600 0024, Tamil Nadu)***