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Bhagat Singh

On the slogan of 'Long Live Revolution'

December 24, 1929

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Shri Ramanand Chaterji the editor of Modern Review, ridiculed the slogan of 'Long Live Revolution' through an editorial note and gave an entirely wrong interpretation. Bhagat Singh wrote a reply and handed it over to the trying magistrate to be sent to Modern Review. This was published in The Tribune of December 24, 1929.

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On the slogan of 'Long Live Revolution'

Bhagat Singh

December 24, 1929

To

THE EDITOR MODERN REVIEW

You have in the December (1929) issue of your esteemed magazine, written a note under the caption "Long Live Revolution" and have pointed out the meaninglessness of this phrase. It would be impertinent on our part to try to refute or contradict the statement of such an old, experienced and renowned journalist as your noble self, for whom every enlightened Indian has profound admiration. Still we feel it our duty to explain what we desire to convey by the said phrase, as in a way it fell to our lot to give these "cries" a publicity in this country at this stage.

We are not the originators of this cry. The same cry had been used in Russian revolutionary movement. Upton Sinclair, the well known socialist writer, has, in his recent novels Boston and Oil, used this cry through some of the anarchist revolutionary characters. The phrase never means that the sanguinary strife should ever continue, or that nothing should ever be stationary even for a short while. By long usage this cry achieves

a significance which may not be quite justifiable from the grammatical or the etymological point of view, but nevertheless we cannot abstract from that the association of ideas connected with that. All such shouts denote a general sense which is partly acquired and partly inherent in them. For instance, when we shout "Long Live Jatin Das", we cannot and do not mean thereby that Das should Physically be alive. What we mean by that shout is that the noble ideal of his life, the indomitable spirit which enabled that great martyr to bear such untold suffering and to make the extreme sacrifice for that we may show the same unflinching courage in pursuance of our ideal. It is that spirit that we allude to.

Similarly, one should not interpret the word "Revolution" in its literal sense. Various meanings and significances are attributed to this word, according to the interests of those who use or misuse it. For the established agencies of exploitation it conjures up a feeling of blood stained horror. To the revolutionaries it is a sacred phrase. We tried to clear in our statement before the Session Judge, Delhi, in our trial in the Assembly Bomb Case, what we mean by the word "Revolution"

We stated therein that Revolution did not necessarily involve sanguinary strife. It was not a cult of bomb and pistol. They may sometimes be mere means for its achievement. No doubt they play a prominent part in some movements, but they do not — for that very reason -become one and the same thing. A rebellion is not a revolution. It may ultimately lead to that end.

The sense in which the word Revolution is used in that phrase, is the spirit, the longing for a change for the better. The people generally get accustomed to the established order of things and begin to tremble at the very idea of a change. It is this lethargical spirit that needs be replaced by the revolutionary spirit. Otherwise degeneration gains the upper hand and the whole humanity is led astray by the reactionary forces. Such a state of affairs leads to stagnation and paralysis

in human progress. The spirit of Revolution should always permeate the soul of humanity, so that the reactionary forces may not accumulate (strength) to check its eternal onward march. Old order should change, always and ever, yielding place to new, so that one "good" order may not corrupt the world. It is in this sense that we raise the shout "Long Live Revolution"

Yours sincerely

(Sd/-.)

Bhagat Singh

B. K. Dutt