

New Delhi
20 Dec 1966

Dear Mr. Poage,

The following para has direct relevance with your visit to India:

Mr. VIVEK in his book titled "INDIA WITHOUT ILLUSIONS" published by New Book Co Ltd., Hornley Rd, Bombay wrote date lined 2 May 1951 about the Food situation under the caption: "Rhetoric and cruel Facts" – Page 181:

'It is difficult to restrain indignation when one reads that the Prime Minister (then Jouwahar Lal) has stated recently that he proposes to beat the problem of food 'Threatening the country's freedom and future on a war basis.' Time and again have we been assured that food production was improving, the economic situation was in hand, conditions were getting better; prices would be reduced. These assurances have proved entirely unfounded. In their light it would not be unfair to regard the Prime Minister's statement as more rhetoric. The politician speaks; the applause is thunderous; he already feels the flush of achievement; is it necessary to do anything more? And so we live from speech to speech, while the food situation deteriorates and economic conditions grow worse.'

Mr. Poage, this was written nearly 16 years ago and since then the country has fed on the Ministers' promises. Thus the people, we, find ourselves helpless & in the grip of a going of power hungry rascals who have entrenched themselves firmly in power and still call it a Democratic govt. They boast of universal franchise. Did somebody not say the other day that "Universal franchise without universal education is a shame and nothing to boast of?"

Mr. Poage, I hope even through the conducted tour as if you were in a Communist country, you will see the quality of India's govt. and leadership. What they need is a kick to wake them out of slumber & complacency. God has placed you in a unique role to recommend this action to the President of the USA on your return to the States. Who else can be [??] friend of Indian PEOPLE?

God bless and wishing you well[?].

Yours
a disillusioned Indian.

May there be more **grain** for India
And **gratitude** for the USA! **More of both.**

9A/36, WEA, K'bagh 9A/36,
New Delhi 5: 21st Dec 66

Dear Mr. Poage,

This is from the **common** man of India to the **Congressman** of the USA! May yours be a happier Christmas than the **happiest** so far! **Happier**, too, than the **happiest** the world over! The American Congress feeds a great part of the globe, a greater part than America itself! Often in return for little gratitude!

Mr. Chester Bowles and his team must have been round India several times. Don't they feel there can be more of **fruit** (e.g. mango, banana, citrus etc.) and **nut** (e.g. cocconut) trees in India and more of **vegetables** on vacant plots? And don't they feel **officialdom** in the Capital, in **New Delhi**, can set an **example** for the rest of country by getting more out of their residential compounds? Need these be as **bald** and **barren** as their own heads! Don't you think greater **frankness** from Mr. Bowles and his team to **Indian politicians and bureaucrats** can help? Mr. Bowles represents the country, the **democracy** that feeds India **MOST**. In other words, the **most friendly** country. If **he** can't be frank, who can? Frankness **helps**.

The latest **WORLD BANK & IDA** Report on p. 76 shows that of a **grand total of** nearly \$11,000 million, only \$1,000 have been spent so far on **agriculture, forestry and fishing**. Is this rational?

Has the World Bank Group the right impact on developing and **needy** nations in terms of more and more food? Not on India **anway!**

Why? Because Mr. Woods and his are too **soft**. Too **polite!**

Is the FAO's record any better? I wish I **could** say 'yes'!

Don't you think the FAO ought to be headed by a man who has been a farmer himself? Can't you think of an American, Australian, Canadian, New Zealander or Englishman with an **exemplary** record in vegetable-, fruit-, poultry- and dairy-farming? He ought to head FAO.

If I were an American Congressman, what would I do? I would continually urge the American Administration, the **White House in particular**, to be more and more frank with the needy nations and with international organisations like the FAO and the World Bank Group. **Frankness is the CORE of friendliness**. Any nation that takes offence at frankness of another, is not the latter's friend, **or indeed its own!** If I were an American, I would certainly be critical – as in fact I am, as an Indian – of my country's culpable extravagance in wasting foreign exchange on a cricket visit from the West Indies. India needs to **emulate** the good points of the West, not **ape** the unhelpful (in Indian conditions) ways of its life. If the USA and Russia and possibly Canada can get on without cricket, can't India? If that money had been spent on the import of foodgrains, some lives in drought-stricken areas could have been saved. Here American frankness can help; also World Bank's.

I wish there were more publicity for the variety and vastness of America's contribution to the prosperity and peace of mankind. That would have made the democracies more appreciative of the role America has played in this century, especially after the last war. And if American rupee funds could be

used to promote a wider knowledge of English and, through it, democratic values in this country, America and India would get closer.

[On side of letter] People often talk of eliminating useless **cattle**, but it offends religious sentiment. Isn't it much easier to eliminate useless **tress** and replace them by **useful** ones? How about a beginning with the President's Estate and the Prime and Food Ministers' Houses in the Capital? The common man in India is like the common crow – treated with uncommon derision. So a suggestion from me will be contemptuously ignored. But not from you, the World Bank and/or FAO.

Yours v. sincerely,
(C. Balan)

PS **You are welcome to circulate this letter, if you so wish.**