

RESOLUTION OF SWARAJ (1906)

The Extremist leaders were Lala Lajpat Rai, Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal. These three were also known as Lal-Bal-Pal. The movement that these leaders started alarmed the British. Tilak coined the famous slogan, 'Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it'. In all the other movements before, the participants were the well educated in the middle class. However, in this movement, started by Lal-Bal-Pal, the whole of India moved as one. In this movement, they stressed on swadeshi and boycott.

The moderate Viewpoint

In December 1906, at the Kolkata Congress Session, the Congress under the leadership of Dadabhai Naoroji adopted swaraj as the goal of the Indian people. In his presidential address, Naoroji declared that the goal of the Indian National Congress was 'Self-government or swaraj like that of the United Kingdom'. The session passed the resolution on boycott, Swadeshi and national education. The differences between the moderates and the extremists became apparent. Especially regarding the pace of the movement and the techniques to be adopted for the struggle, and the reluctance of the moderates to launch any agitation for the attainment of Swaraj. The differences came to a head in 1907, at the Surat session of the Congress, where the party split with serious consequences for the swadeshi movement.

Change of Venue of the 1907 Congress Session

The site of the 1907 Congress session was originally Nagpur—a Tilak stronghold, where the local delegates would have swung the issue in favour of the 'extremists'. However, the Mehla-Wacha-Gokhale combine, with its greater control over the actual machinery of the Congress, got the location transferred to Surat—a stronghold of the 'moderates'.

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