

LOK SABHA

JOINT COMMITTEE

ON

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY BILL, 1972

EVIDENCE



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

April, 1974/Vaisakha, 1896

Price : Rs. 4.75

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

Corrigenda

to

Evidence tendered before Joint Committee
on the National Library Bill, 1972.

- Page 2, col. 2, line 11, for 'is' read 'it'
- Page 16, col.2, (i) line 21 from bottom for 'giveng'
read 'giving'
- (ii) line 18 from bottom, for 'mnaged'
read 'managed'
- Page 17, col. 2, (i) line 14, for 'shold''
read 'should'
- (ii) line 26, for 'sitness'
read 'witness'
- Page 20, shift last two lines of col.1 to the top
of col.2.
- Page 27, col.1, (i) line 14, for 'aready'
read 'already'
- (ii) line 28, for 'feling'
read 'feeling'
- (iii) line 29, for 'remdy '
read 'remedy'
- col. 2, line 5 from bottom for 'improveri'
read 'impoveri-'
- Page 30, col. 1, line 30 for 'biography'
read 'bibliography'
- Page 32, col.1, line 16 from bottom, for 'Kant'
read 'want'
- Page 44, col.2, (i) line 24, for 'is' read 'as'
- (ii) line 39, for 'fo' read 'of'
- Page 46, col. 1, line 8, for 'it' read 'in'
- Page 88, col.2, line 26, for 'dialotory'
read 'dialatory'
- Page 97, col.1, line 3 from bottom, for 'live'
read 'like'
- Page 101, col. 1, line 7, for 'though' read 'thought'
- Page 108, col. 2, line 8 from bottom for 'alright'
read 'a right'
- Page 110, col. 2, line 30, after 'repute' add 'and'

...2/-

- Page 124, col.2, line 15, for 'services' read 'serves'
- Page 127, col.2, line 27, for 'their' read 'there'
- Page 140, col. 2, line 7, for 'consideration'
read 'considered view'
- Page 146, col. 2, last line for 'specified'
read 'specialised'
- Page 165, col. 2, line 16 from bottom, for 'powers'
read 'powers'
- Page 176, col. 1 line 6, for 'it' read 'if'
- Page 178, col. 1, line 17, for 'Dr. V.R. Singh' read
'Dr. V.D. Singh'
- Page 186, col. 2, line 12 from bottom, for 'had'
read 'bad'
- Page 196, col. 2, line 19, for 'autunomous' read
'autonomous'
- Page 197, (i), col.1, line 13 from bottom, for
'automonous' read 'autonomous'
- (ii) col. 2, line 30 for 'whie' read 'when'
- (iii) col. 2, line 4 from bottom 'for'
'furnisring' read 'furnishing'
- Page 198, col. 2 line 13, for 'convisaged'
read 'envisaged'
- Page 202, (i), col. 1, line 6, from bottom, for
'automonous' read 'autonomous'
- (ii) col. 2, line 5 from bottom, for 'intial'
read 'initial'
- Page 205, col. 1, line 27, for 'mircro' read 'micro'
-

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE NATIONAL LIBRARY BILL, 1972.

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

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MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

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33. Dr. Rajat Kumar Chakrabarti

*Appointed on the 6th December, 1973 vice Shri Dharamrao Sharanappa Afzalpurkar died.

34. Smt. Maragatham Chandrasekhar
- *35. Shri Mahabir Dass
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38. Prof. S. Nurul Hasan
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40. Prof. Rasheeduddin Khan
- *41. Shri Shyam Dhar Misra
- *42. Shri Patil Puttappa
43. Shri A. K. Refaye
44. Shri Sanat Kumar Raha
45. Dr. V. B. Singh

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

1. Shri S. Harihara Iyer—*Joint Secretary and Legislative Counsel.*
2. Shri R. N. Shinghal—*Assistant Legislative Counsel.*

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SECRETARIAT

1. Shri P. K. Patnaik—*Joint Secretary.*
2. Shri H. G. Paranjpe—*Deputy Secretary.*

*Retired from membership of Rajya Sabha w.e.f. 2-4-1974.

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JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE NATIONAL LIBRARY BILL, 1972.

**RECORD OF EVIDENCE TENDERED BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON
THE NATIONAL LIBRARY BILL, 1972**

*Wednesday, the 6th June, 1973 in Council Chamber, Assembly House, Calcutta
from 10.00 to 13.00 hours and again from 15.00 to 17.00 hours.*

PRESENT

Shri H. N. Mukerjee—(In the Chair)

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Achal Singh
3. Shri Dharamrao Sharanappa Afzalpurkar
4. Shri Virendra Agarwal
5. Shri S. C. Besra
6. Shri Biren Engti
7. Shri E. R. Krishnan
8. Shri Kumar Majhi
9. Shri Saroj Mukherjee
10. Shri Tuna Oraon
11. Shri Narain Chand Parashar
12. Shri Natwarlal Patel
13. Shri P. Antony Reddi
14. Shri D. P. Yadav

Rajya Sabha

15. Shrimati Sushila Shankar Adivarekar
16. Shri Pramatha Nath Bisi
17. Dr. Rajat Kumar Chakrabarti
18. Shri Mahabir Dass
19. Shri Niren Ghosh
20. Shri N. G. Goray
21. Prof. S. Nurul Hasan
22. Shri Rattan Lal Jain
23. Prof. Rasheeduddin Khan
24. Shri Shyam Dhar Misra
25. Shri Patil Puttappa
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(DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE)

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2. Shri P. Somasekharan—*Deputy Secretary*
3. Shri A. S. Talwar—*Under Secretary*
4. Shri A. B. Sen Gupta—*Acting Librarian, National Library, Calcutta.*

SECRETARIAT

Shri H. G. Paranjpe—*Deputy Secretary.*

WITNESSES EXAMINED

I. *National Library Employees' Association, Calcutta*

Spokesmen:

1. Shri Anil Chatterjee
2. Shri Asis Niyogi
3. Shri Ajit Ghosh
4. Shri Byomkesh Maiti

II. *Shri Durlabh Chandra Bhattacharyya, Research Student, Department of Comperative Philology, Calcutta University, Calcutta.*

III. *Central Reference Library Gazetted Officers' Association, Calcutta.*

Spokesmen:

1. Shri S. B. Ghosh—*President*
2. Shri P. N. Venkatachari—*Secretary*
3. Shri K. M. Govi—*Member*
4. Shri N. B. Marathe—*Member*

IV. *Shri Mahadeva Saha and Syed Shahedullah, Calcutta.*

V. *Shri H. K. De Chaudhuri, Calcutta.*

VI. *Departmental Council (Staff Side) of the Ministry of Education, Government of India*

Spokesmen:

1. Shri Anil Chatterjee—*Member*
2. Shri Sital Adhikari—*Member*
3. Shri B. C. Dey—*Member*

VII. *Shri Sisir Kumar Das, Lecturer in English, Calcutta University.*

VIII. *Shri C. R. Banerjee, C/o Central Reference Library, Calcutta.*

IX. *Shri Gopal Halder, Calcutta.*

X. *Shri Rathindra Nath Ganguly, Research Scholar, Hooghly.*

XI. *Shri Ashoke Kumar Ghosh, Reader, Metallurgical Engineering Department, Jadavpur University, Calcutta.*

Spokesmen:

1. Shri Anil Chatterjee
2. Shri Assis Niyogi
3. Shri Ajit Ghosh
4. Shri Byomkesh Maiti

[The witnesses were called in and they took their seats].

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform you that when witnesses appear before a Committee to give evidence, they should understand very clearly that their evidence shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless they specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by them is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence will have to be made available to Members of Parliament. This is an information which you will please bear in mind.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Sir, we want to know what is their official position in the Association.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You please explain to the Committee the nature of your Association. We have received your memorandum and after having explained the nature of your Association, if you think fit, give us in very short a statement of what you want before the members individually go on asking you questions which you will have to answer.

SHRI BYOMKESH MAITI: I am a technical assistant of the National Library. I was an Executive Member of the Employees Association in 1971. Now I am an active member of the Association and one of the representatives of the 700 employees.

SHRI ASIS NIYOGI: I am Secretary of the National Library Employees' Association. This is a service association under the rules framed by the Government of India.

SHRI ANIL CHATTERJEE: I am the President of the National Library Employees' Association, representing 700 members.

SHRI AJIT GHOSH: I am one of the technical assistants of the National Library.

CHAIRMAN: If you wish, any one of you may say in a few words something to supplement what you have already stated in your memorandum.

SHRI BYOMKESH MAITI: Sir, before I proceed I would like to express my heart felt thanks to the members of the Committee for allowing us an interview and I would like to appeal to the Committee that if any of our replies or comments hurt the sentiment of any of the members in any manner we may be excused. I also beg to state that if any of us sidetracks any point, other members may be permitted to speak in favour of our representation.

Sir, we have sent our original memorandum and also a supplementary memorandum which are already with you. We have detailed our view points therein and in a nut-shell I would submit that the main feature of the Bill, i.e the autonomous administration, the Board will not be at all suitable for the administration of the National Library. We, the employees, feel specially perturbed because it will curtail our rights and privileges. Firstly, we entered National Library as Government servants. We are now civil servants. We enjoy privileges under the Constitution and there are other privileges allowed by the Govern-

ment. As Government employees we are in common to enjoy those privileges. Under an autonomous Board we feel that those privileges will be curtailed and we shall be under a narrow administration under the local Board. We would, therefore, like to be continued under the Government's direct administration, i.e. under the Ministry. That is all in a nutshell that I would like to submit.

SHRI AJIT GHOSH: What Mr. Maiti has said will suffice. If any hon. member of the Committee would ask any question, we would reply to that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before the members ask questions I just want to put a few questions. Is it your main fear that if the administration of the National Library is changed in accordance with the terms proposed in the Bill, then, your conditions of service and other similar things would be endangered?

SHRI BYOMKESH MAITI: Yes, Sir. Moreover, as employees we are concerned with the Library itself and the readers. At the same time, we feel that the functioning of the National Library will be lowered and it will lose the image it is holding at present in public eyes. As a Government institution it holds a unique position. It is needless to point out that Government institutions are held very high in public eyes. From our day to day experience in the functioning of different autonomous bodies we can say that public and international bodies pay great respect to the Government institutions of India. We have elaborated these things in our memorandum and we do not want to take the time of the Committee by repeating them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can the Committee also take it that you are more or less content with the administration of the National Library as it is today?

SHRI BYOMKESH MAITI: Yes, surely, Sir.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZAL-PURKAR: Regarding introduction of this National Library Bill you have mentioned in your memorandum that it has shocked you and has also injured your feeling. Why are you injured like that? Would you please give the reasons why an autonomous body has come to you as a great surprise? You have also stated that it has injured the feelings of the employees because the employees were not taken into confidence before bringing such a Bill of drastic nature.

SHRI BYOMKESH MAITI: There were several Committees on the National Library and we expected that Government would take certain measures according to the recommendations of those Committees. There were certain grievances of the employees which were communicated to the Government of India from time to time, but we are surprised to find that no action, or very little action was taken on those points. We had no information that a Bill of this nature is coming. We heard very faintly that Government would be doing something. When the recommendations of the Jha Committee were accepted, so far as we remember, in the floor of the Parliament, it was stated that Government would be taking some action very soon. We failed to find out what other actions were taken, but suddenly, at the Silver Jubilee celebration of the National Library Employees' Association we came to know that a Bill had come before Parliament. We wanted that we should be given a hearing and we felt that our view points would be considered, but Government did not consider our views. That is why we are shocked, and our feelings are injured.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZAL-PURKAR: I want to put a question to you. A news has appeared in today's *Statesman* that years ago a group of scholars came from Patna and other universities to study different subjects but the employees were so irresponsible that they never came

to supply those books. What have you got to say in regard to this?

SHRI BYOMKESH MAITI: To this point I shall answer that I do not understand whether the sense of irresponsibility is collective or individual. If the individual employee is irresponsible then there are governmental machinery viz. conduct rules, etc., to take disciplinary action against that particular individual employee. But if it means collective irresponsibility then surely it is vested with the top administration and not with the ordinary employees. Suppose, books in the National Library are lying unbound. In that case one book binder cannot take the books from shelf and get them bound. That is a policy matter, that is an administrative matter. He or some employees are surely to be ordered that books are to be bound.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is a matter of detail in the Administration. If the honourable member has any other question regarding the provisions of the Bill he can do so.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: I want to put some questions to the witness. First, most of the educational and cultural institutions in the world prefer to be governed by autonomous bodies. This is a hard fact of life. I repeat this is a hard fact of life. So, why this particular National Library or its employees do not want to have an autonomous body and in what way they expect that this would infringe their rights and privileges of service, etc.? The autonomous body suggested will have 9 Government employees out of 10 and it will virtually be a Government body. It will be, of course, autonomous in the sense that it will not interfere with the day to day administration of the National Library. Do you expect that this will infringe the rights and privileges of service, etc.? My second question is that Government institutions are more respected than others. In what way this autonomous body will alter the situation from being a Government institution

because, in some cases, Government govern the institutions through autonomous bodies. Instead of governing it departmentally it will be governed by an autonomous body. My third question is, your association affiliated to any political party and, if so, what is the policy of that political party in respect of the National Library?

SHRI BYOMKESH MAITI: I will answer to the third question first. Our association does not belong to any political party. So, how this question comes in is not understandable to us. Why general politics or other things enter in the depositions I fail to understand. Coming to the first question, if there are maximum number of Government nominees in the body, why this is being made an autonomous body is beyond my imagination. As regards the second question, surely Government institutions are more respected than others—autonomous boards. We have mentioned that in detail in our memorandum. Because it is under the Government the receipts under Delivery of Books Act are much larger than the other two recipient libraries.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTY: I would like you to let us know the difference between a delegated autonomy and simple autonomy and is it possible under the Constitution to have a Government Department and at the same time having a delegated autonomy. What is your opinion if it becomes simply regional. To retain its national character, do you think it should remain under the Government department? If that is so, how do you propose to remedy all those defects which are coming up for the last ten years?

SHRI AJIT GHOSH: As regards the point that how autonomy can be delegated, we should stress on the power and not on autonomy. We think that the spirit of the Jha Committee was to have more freedom of work vested in the local authority. That power can be delegated to the head of the local authority by raising the status of the National Library to an

'Attached Office' of the Ministry. The other way, i.e. by declaring the National Library as a Department of Government, in that case also same thing will be done. That is how power can be delegated. Regarding the second point viz., the status of the National Library vis-a-vis the autonomous body we think that status of a Government department is more in the public eye than the autonomous Body.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You need not explain in detail all these because you have done it in your memorandum.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: The witness appears to have some misapprehension about the employees. Suppose we ensure in the Bills or in the Rules that whatever advantages the employees have to-day they will enjoy the same hereafter either under the Government or under the autonomous Board will they have any objection. That is my first point. Second point is this. They say autonomous Board has no status but Government has more—it is a question of opinion, I am not saying whether they are right or they are wrong—I would like to put a specific question to them. Arising out of the answer which was given to one of my friend's question that this autonomous Board will be composed mostly of Government nominees—9 out of 10—and to that they took the cue that in that case what is the use of autonomy and why not the Government itself if out of 10 Government nominees are 9. I put this in a different light. Suppose the Select Committee decides to take away the right of nomination of Government nominee but give it to the libraries of autonomous institutions and universities and professors who are really eminent scholars will that satisfy you? Will not that enhance the status? What is your opinion?

SHRI AJIT GHOSH: Regarding the first point, that is the privileges of the employees, we like to say that as soon as the library would be shifted to

autonomous Body the rights or protection given under Article 311 of the Constitution will be inoperative. In an autonomous Body that protection cannot be given because Article 311 is applicable to civil servants only and under the Board our status will be that of public servant only. Secondly, as central Government employees we have the privilege of negotiating and settling matters through Joint Consultative Machinery and Compulsory Arbitration constituted by the Government to look into employer—employees relation—that privilege will be withdrawn from us. Thirdly, at present if any injustice is done by the local authority we can approach the higher authorities, the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Home or even the Prime Minister or the President. But under the Autonomous Board which will be the supreme authority we will have no scope of approaching any higher authority for redress of the injustice done to an employee. Regarding the Bill itself we are not suggesting any amendment because we are opposed to the Bill and we think that autonomous administration for the National Library will not be for the interest or for the good of the Library itself, for the readers and for the employees. For this reason we are totally opposed to the Bill and we have made it clear in our memorandum. Now coming to the point raised by one honourable member that as proposed in the Bill the composition of the Board will be that out of 10, 9 will be nominated or ex-officio members of the Government. In that case, one of the members said that indirect control is there. But one of my colleagues said that then what is the need of shifting the administration of the Library to an autonomous Body and why Government should not control it directly. Now, the Jha Committee recommended the total representation of different quarters interested in the library affairs and that Committee has made it clear in their recommendation that from which quarter representation will be made. But here in this case

total deviation has been made in this Bill. We can suggest that this is not a real autonomy when Government keeps indirect control by allowing 9 out of 10 nominees from the Government and the other one from the UGC.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: In your memorandum, you have given your objection regarding appointment of librarian. Do you want that Government should have the control of the library and then the librarian with high academic and professional qualification be appointed? Secondly, at the end of your memorandum you have said that a comprehensive Act for the total library system and library service in the country be enacted. My point is, if the Parliament desires to bring forward a Bill for a particular institution then that shows that Parliament is more concerned with the status and importance of the particular institution. But if you want that the entire system will be changed by a comprehensive legislation how do you think that the prestige and status of the National Library will be enhanced by such suggestion of yours?

SHRI AJIT GHOSH: For the first point, our answer is that we do not think that the autonomous administration will be suitable for the National Library and the Librarian will be a librarian-scholar. We think that a Librarian or Director of the Library or the head of the Library will have to guide, control and co-ordinate a team of technical experts in library science of course and also the National Librarian or the head of the National Library has the responsibility of directing, controlling, co-ordinating and planning the total library system of the country as also the profession itself, and, we think that the man who is not in the profession or who is not qualified in the profession will not be suitable to render the services. That is why we have asked that the head of the National Library should be a librarian first and then a scholar. Of course, the National Librarian must possess

high academic qualifications as well as he must be a qualified librarian also.

Now, I come to the next question regarding a comprehensive Act. Sir, a comprehensive Act is necessary and the hon. Member has said, Parliament is thinking of giving more status to the National Library. Now, we can put it in other way. What are the actual duties and functions of a National Library? The UNESCO Seminars held in 1958 and at Manila in 1964 have already expressed their opinions in the reports which have already been published and they have already specified the duties, functions etc. of a National Library. I think that the Committee might have also gone into these reports. In our memorandum also we have specified the duties, functions etc. of the National Library. Now, the question as to why a comprehensive act is necessary is related with the position, importance, role etc. of the National Library itself and the total library system in the country. We should get experience from other countries too. In other countries, the National Library itself controls the total library system of the country and it has a significant role and importance in this field and that is why we have said that the National Library should be placed in its proper perspective, in its proper place, and for that a comprehensive Library Act for the whole country should be enacted by the Central Parliament That is our contention, Sir.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: As far as I know, in different countries, the status of National Library as regards control etc. differ to some extent. There are some Libraries which are controlled by autonomous bodies and there are some countries where these are direct Government Institutions. I would like to put certain questions. Is it a fact that the National Library is a sub-office under the Education Ministry? Is it a fact that reference books and research books are not being kept or that they are being kept in such a fashion that they become brittle or non-useable and that proper biblio-

graphy is not there? So it is vital to know whether the functions could not be properly discharged. Is it the lack of finance from the Government or supervision from the Government or because of inadequacy of staff? This is most important and unless we provide for that there could not be any tangible improvement. The Jha Committee recommended only Rs. 20 lakhs to be spent on those items. I want to know whether those grants were made for the last three years and how much grant was made and how it affected the functioning of the Library? How did it contribute to the improvement of the functions of the Library? Or how did it contribute to the deterioration of the functions of the Library? What are the steps to be taken in that respect?

SHRI AJIT GHOSH: Sir, it requires time to answer the question of the honourable member. I am starting from the very beginning i.e. the Imperial Library was established in 1903 and in 1948 by an Act of Parliament, the then Constituent Assembly, it was re-named as National Library. Since then the actual functions of the National Library has not been assessed and it has not been properly directed as to what are its actual functions. There was no written plan or objective of the National Library. What should be functions, duties of the National Library have not been enumerated or nomenclatured. In our opinion that was a defect in the administration. Now, the whole thing depends on the Government planning and the funds made available by the Government for the institution. There was no general policy for the Library. After independence never it was supplied with adequate fund for this purpose. The book budget will show this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can give the details in your supplementary memorandum

SHRI BYOMKESH MAITI: Sir, we would like to impress upon the Committee that the National Library should be thought in the proper pers-

pective and that the National Library should control the entire Library system of India. If it is in that position then only the National Library will be able to function properly. Sir, there is also the question of shortage of staff. You know, Sir, there are only 25 book binders and number of books per year to be bound is 70,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: These are matters of detail. Kindly send us a supplementary memorandum and we shall consider it.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: Do you think that under the Constitution it would be possible for the Parliament to enact a legislation which would control the entire library system of the country?

SHRI BYOMKESH MAITI: Surely, Sir, why not. The people demand such a Bill. Sir, Dr. Ranganathan drafted a Bill and submitted that Bill to the Government twice. The Government will be doing good if they give a look to this Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So, leave it to Parliament and if you want to expand your idea in greater details, kindly send us a supplementary memorandum and we will be glad to consider that.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: I want to know—suppose no comprehensive Bill comes or no autonomous Body is framed—do you think that the present status quo of the National Library under the Department of the Government will satisfy you?

SHRI ANIL CHATTERJEE: The present status of the National Library is like a subordinate office of the Government of India, and being a subordinate office it has some difficulties in functioning. The authorities have got limited powers to execute their things. That is why we have suggested in our memorandum that the National Library should be raised to the status of the attached office of the Ministry of Education of the Government of India, and the Librarian of the National Library should

be given the status of the Joint Secretary.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Since you are talking about your status, I may raise a point that the Calcutta University is an autonomous body, do you mean to say that the status of the Librarian of Calcutta University is lower than that of yours?

SHRI ANIL CHATTERJEE: We have never said that for the sake of only staff. We have said about the status of the institution, i.e., the National Library.

SHRI ASIS NIYOGI: Sir, let me clear by citing some instances here. Once there was a request from the Ananda Bhawan Library' i.e., Late Prime Minister Shri Nehru's Library to the National Library for its reorganisation. The request was made only to the staff of the National Library, Calcutta, and not to any other library, or that of U.P. The National Library people went there, they stayed there for 4 months and organised the library properly. The authorities of Ananda Bhawan were immensely satisfied. Even the Bangladesh Government requested the National Library authorities to organise their libraries.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: You have to clear your own back gear.

SHRI ASIS NIYOGI: Yes, Sir. We must clear our back gear. If adequate fund is provided and adequate training is given, it will be easier for us. The National Library personnel have to attend the library half-an-hour earlier and have to leave half-an-hour earlier for the Library training classes. There are many posts which are remaining vacant. I think if these problems are solved then the National Library can function better.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: If your grievances are solved then you have got nothing to say against this Bill— is it your opinion?

SHRI ASIS NIYOGI: I do not mean to say like this. The Library is composed of workers and readers. Our grievances include the grievances of our readers. If the readers are not satisfied for want of better functioning that is also our grievance.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: The total number of employees in your Library is more than 700. What is the ratio between the staff and the readers?

SHRI ASIS NIYOGI: About 900 readers visit the National Library every-day. 450 books are issued from each of the 2 counters—one is lending counter and the other is reading room counter.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: It means that the ratio is one reader for one staff. Can you tell us what is the ratio between the employees and readers of Delhi Public Library?

SHRI BYOMKESH MAITI: Actually the idea of a National Library should not be related to the ratio of readers only. Actually the policy of the National Library should be to run in a different way. It is alleged that some scholars from Patna University and Delhi University had come sometime ago and wanted some books but nothing was found. There should be a system of indexing and documentation. There are various periodicals published in India. Even after the recommendation of the Reviewing Committee Report, Rs. 20 lakhs book bought per year had to be granted but in four years nothing has been forthcoming. The readers should be satisfied first and the staff should also be satisfied in the system of their works and then the National Library will run well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your assistance. As I have said earlier, if you give us your supplementary memorandum that will be very useful to us.

(The witnesses then withdrew)

II. Shri Durlabh Chandra Bhatta charyya, Research Student, Department of comparative philology Calcutta University.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bhatta-charyya, your evidence shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by you is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

Would you like to add anything more to your memorandum?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: No Sir, I have nothing more to add to my memorandum.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: As a reader attending the library everyday, have you found any difficulty in having books from the library?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: There are some difficulties such as rare books are not generally issued. The main difficulty is that special permission is to be taken from the authorities in respect of the rare books. This system takes about two hours. First we have to fill up a prescribed form. After that we have to deposit this form to the counter for having the book which takes 2 hours.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: From a report we find that the percentage of research scholars are declining in the National Library. Can you give us an idea about that?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: First of all we have to find out as to who are the research workers and who are the readers or professors or lecturers.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: As a reader you must go through the Bill. There is a contro-

versy going on as to whether the National Library should be an autonomous body or it should be run by the Government of India—what is your opinion? Do you think that the National Library can serve its readers if it becomes an autonomous body like I.I.T. or Calcutta University or any other University?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: Some reorganisation will have to be done. If the hon. members feel that the autonomous body will be a fit body to carry out the recommendation or fulfil the desire of the readers as well as the research workers then I think, the autonomous body will be preferable because it is a dynamic one.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: What are the present bottlenecks?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: We have no access in the Book Museum. In an autonomous body, the rules will be easier. The research workers can have easy access in the Book Museum and can get the books of his choice.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: In the proposed Bill, there will be 9 or 10 Government nominees. Do you suggest that the representatives of Research workers from Government institutions and universities should also be there? If so, to what extent?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: Yes, Sir. Certainly there should be representatives from the universities and Government institutions. As regards the number of representatives, I have already mentioned in my memorandum. It may be seven or nine members.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: You have mentioned that some reorganisation is necessary. Do you mean it in terms of more finance and more staff?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: I have explained this aspect in my memorandum that the whole liability will have to be borne by the Government as this is a national institution as mentioned in our Constitution. Regarding the finance, the library authorities should not bother. Regarding other difficulties, such as books, if a reader wants a book he will have to waste time for about 2 to 3 hours. In case of rare books, these are not issued.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Do you think that the rare books should be micro-filmed so that the copies may be readily available?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: Yes Sir. The readers should not be charged for micro-filmed books....

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: Are you referring to books being issued to be taken home or being issued for the purpose of reading in the library? If you are referring that the books being issued may be taken home then can you cite any example where rare books are issued for taking home?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: Yes, Sir. In Calcutta University.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you suggest as a serious scholar that the national collection of rare books with the National Library should be taken home by our readers?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: No, Sir. I do not actually suggest that. My suggestion is that there should be a Book Museum where the research workers can have easy access.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: Out of about 2 lakhs of books, many States have not sent books, many publishers are not sending books. So, in such a big country of so many States and so much population will he think it desirable or proper that instead of

having one National Library we may have 2 or 3 or 4 National Libraries and we may have 4 or 5 regional big libraries, thus forming the National Library as an apex library of the regional libraries. These regional libraries will feed all these national libraries.

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: I submit that the present library should not be disturbed or bifurcated. If you wish that more libraries should be opened, I think there is no objection, and at the same time that is desirable too because libraries are more than universities. In my opinion the reader is trained in libraries and not in universities. In the university he hears the lectures but in actual practice in libraries he prepares his thesis or writes articles on many important matters. In my opinion more libraries are desirable but the present National Library has a tradition of its own and it should not be bifurcated or transferred.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: Do you think that with autonomy efficiency will increase? Have you heard the name of an institution known as the Corporation of Calcutta?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: Sir, I submit that we should not be afraid of taking new ideas because India is now a dynamic country. It has its own force but an autonomous body does not mean a messacre.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: We have found a large number of people going there largely for text books. Text books are required by students of schools and colleges, and 54 per cent of the readers who go there go for text books. Do you think that the National Library would really be effective institution if the text book section of the library is separated from the real National Library?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: I think there is no such need.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: Text books are there also in school and college libraries. The National Library is not meant for text books. The National Library has got a different function. Every college has a library, the university has got a library for text books. Similarly there can be a separate section altogether for text books and it should be separated from the National Library. Whoever would control or manage it is a different question. But do you think it would be worthwhile proposition to have a separate text book section so that the research scholars or those who are pursuing higher studies can find it really more congenial and convenient to have the use of the National Library?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: It is very difficult to differentiate between a text book and a book for research work. I have a book with me entitled "Directions in Socio Linguistics". This may be used as a text book or a book for research material. Therefore, how will you differentiate this?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you find as a research student any difficulty in

utilising the library because many graduates or undergraduates just crowd in that place with the result that the requirements of research and similar students are not looked after properly? What is your experience?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: The present authorities are cooperating with research students although I have felt certain difficulties for some books. They have not taken any special interest for-research materials.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So you do not find any difficulty in this respect?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: Some difficulties are there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But not for the reason that the Hon'ble Member has suggested?

SHRI DURLABH CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much Mr. Bhattacharyya.

(The witness then withdrew)

III. Central Reference Library Gazetted Officers' Association Calcutta.

Spokesman:

1. Shri S. B. Ghosh—President.
2. Shri P. N. Venkatachari—Secretary.
3. Shri K. M. Govi—Member.
4. Shri N. B. Marathe—Member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The witnesses may please note that the evidence they give would be treated as public and is liable to be published unless they specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by them is to be treated as confidential. Even though they may desire their evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

Now, your memorandum has been received and studied by this Committee to the extent possible but if you wish to say something beyond that, you can do so after which Members will ask you questions which you will have to answer.

SHRI S. B. GHOSH: The Central Reference Library was established in 1955 and up to 1970 it was under the direct control of the librarian of the National Library as its librarian in charge. After August 1970 the Cent-

ral Reference Library has been declared as a subordinate office and its main function is the compilation of the Indian National Bibliography. Now, Sir, in the Review Committee report, it has been stated in para 105 that the National Library, Calcutta, should publish the Indian National Bibliography. That is the only function which is being discharged by the Central Reference Library and if National Library becomes autonomous and if autonomous board wishes to publish the Indian National Bibliography, then what will be the future of the Central Reference Library. We are more worried about this thing. Once from the Central Reference Library we requested our Hon'ble Minister and he assured us that the C.R.L. will only publish the Indian National Bibliography but if suitable provision is not made in the Act, then there is no guarantee that the C.R.L. should publish the Indian National Bibliography. Only for this reason we have come here to place our worries before the honourable Members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you anxious about the set up in the National Library as envisaged in the Bill? Do you fear that the Central Reference Library would be outside the ambit of the National Library system? Or, would you suggest that in the legislation there should be a provision so that the Central Reference Library may remain a part of the National Library complex and, therefore, all the misgivings that you have in your mind will be overcome?

SHRI S. B. GHOSH: What we want exactly is that there should be a provision in the Act itself, so that the Central Reference Library can discharge the work of compilation of Indian National Bibliography. About index of periodical literature, the Hon'ble Minister assured that the Central Reference Library should be publishing it, but the Central Reference Library cannot do this because the books are deposited in the National Library. So, there should be some

provision in the Act itself, so that the CRL can have the books.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: As I have understood you, I think, you have not answered the main question. Do you suppose that if the National Library becomes an autonomous body the Central Reference Library will remain still under Government, or it will be a part of the National Library—whether you would like to stay under the Government and let the National Library become an autonomous body?

SHRI S. B. GHOSH: We would like to be under direct control of the Government of India. Only thing is that our interest should be safeguarded. We feel that Library may be may to kept under the Government and compilation should not be jeopardised.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: You correctly referred to the assurance that I have given. The question that I would like to ask is, supposing this Bill is approved by the Parliament, would you like the Central Reference Library also to be transferred to the control of the National Library Board, or you would like the present status to continue, which would be more in the interest, (a) of the work, and (b) of your terms and conditions of service?

SHRI K. M. GOVI: In the interest of the work, e.g., the same dispensation will be helpful. In fact the functions are interdependent.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: I could not understand what you mean by 'same dispensation'. Would you like the Central Reference Library to be merged into the National Library, or would you like it to remain a separate organisation directly under the control of the Ministry even if the National Library is placed under the autonomous Board?

SHRI K. M. GOVI: So far as work is concerned, merger will be better. So far as our service conditions are concerned, there is some apprehension.

SHRI N. G. GORAY: As the Bill stands today, it visualises an autonomous National Library Board. Whether it will be passed in this form or not is another point. As the Minister asked you, supposing, this Bill is passed, i.e. the National Library becomes an autonomous Board, would you like to continue under the Central Government directly, or would you like to get yourself merged with National Library even if it becomes autonomous? Would you like yourself to be merged or that the Bill should be dropped?

SHRI S. B. GHOSH: About dropping of the Bill, we have not said anything.

SHRI P. N. VENKATACHARI: The general consensus of our Association is that our organization should be under Government and should continue to evolve as the National Bibliographic Centre, doing bibliographical work which the National Library will not be doing, by making us of the rich collections of the National Library. So a provision may be made in the Bill so that the Central Reference Library may get necessary facilities.

DR RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Your point is that whatever happens to the National Library does not concern you. You want to remain under the Central Government and get the facilities from the National Library as far as your work is concerned.

SHRI S. B. GHOSH: Yes, Sir.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: Under the Central Government the figure of students has gone down. May I know why the figure has gone down? We hope that under the autonomous Board this figure may go up and the people may get more advantages.

SHRI S. B. GHOSH: Sir, we belong to the Central Reference Library. We are sorry, we cannot give any answer to this question.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: It seems your apprehension is in regard to your service conditions. Supposing, the au-

tonomous body assures you that it will not do anything prejudicial to your interest, what objection do you have about this Bill?

SHRI S. B. GHOSH: We have nothing to comment on the Bill itself. Functioning of the National Library is our only consideration.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: We can take it that you have no objection if there is an autonomous body in case your interest is safeguarded.

SHRI S. B. GHOSH: That is almost correct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are representing a Gazetted Officers' association. We expect of you very serious thought on the objectives of the legislation. They have asked you that here in this Bill Parliament, subject to, amendments later on, have formulated certain ideas and the Central Reference Library at the present point of time is outside the ambit of the technical organisation of the National Library. They have repeatedly asked you questions as to the set-up of the National Library which in your opinion is desirable. So, please give us some idea about this.

SHRI K. M. GOVI: As librarians we have the impression that if it becomes an autonomous organisation then collection of books—one of the basic functions of the National Library—might be affected. As it is under the Government it holds certain prestige and it is able to collect larger materials as well as gifts. As librarians we feel that.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: Whether the National Library remains under direct control of Government or it becomes an autonomous body, when you can complete the works of publication if bibliography from 1968 up to date. You have stated that due to administrative reasons you could not publish them.

SHRI S. B. GHOSH: No, Sir. We have published all the volumes but

due to administrative reasons we could not publish 1968, 1969 and 1970 works. Previously we used to print at Nasik but when the printing was transferred to the Government of India Press, Calcutta, they could not cope with the work. We are now printing the INB in the private press. Only three years backlog is there.

SHRI N. B. MARATHE: Our point is that once it becomes an autonomous body we apprehend that it is quite possible that the sort of link we now have may not be there. Our submission is that present link should continue.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Apart from preparation of INB, what are the main items of work the Central Reference Library is engaged in?

SHRI S. B. GHOSH: We have started one book exchange unit. But due to some administrative reasons that unit is not functioning. Then there is indexing of periodical literature in English and Indian languages. A proposal is being sent to the Ministry for indexing literature in Indian languages. Then we have started a project called publication of retrospective bibliography. You know Sahitya Academy published volumes from 1901 to 1953 and INB started publishing them from 1958. So, three years' publication is lacking i.e. from 1954 to 1957. We have proposed to the Ministry for publication of the same. Then, since Independence many books have been published in English and we can compile them in Indian languages. So, these are the some projects which we have already stated and we are waiting for Ministry's sanction.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For the preparation of bibliography and index of publications in English and Indian languages you require day to day co-operation and assistance of the National Library? That is to say, your existence and the existence of the National Library should be as near to each other as possible.

SHRI S. B. GHOSH: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before separation of the Central Reference Library from the apparatus of the National Library, is it in your view that the operation in the earlier stage was more efficient or less.

SHRI S. B. GHOSH: After separation we have one full-time librarian who can devote all his time for the Reference Library. Previously there was one common librarians whose attention was more diverted to National Library. We can also say that within the last 2 years we have published 3 annual volumes and about 27 monthly issues. Now we are regular about annual volumes and bibliographies. Our sale has also increased now. Previously foreign exchange by sale was only Rs. 10 thousand but now it is about 61 thousand. Our working has gone up. But we want close co-operation of the National Library so that we can have access to the National Library but the existing facilities which we are enjoying should not be hampered.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In your view the comparative efficiency of the Central Reference Library is due to the fact of administrative re-arrangement that is allocation of a full time Director. But there is nothing to suggest dissociation of the Central Reference Library from the National Library.

SHRI K. M. GOVI: We do not suggest that. Actually it should be as near to us as possible. Our working is inter-linked with that of the National Library and so it should be intimate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it your view that the Central Reference Library's association with the National Library should be as intimate and co-ordinated as possible?

SHRI K. M. GOVI: Correct, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And it is also your view that if in the legislation a provision is made to incorporate the Central Reference Library in the

complex of the National Library, that will be proper.

SHRI K. M. GOVI: That is exactly what we want.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: I want to know whether in a vast country like India one National Library in Calcutta is sufficient or you

desire that there should be such library in every zone.

SHRI K. M. GOVI: A country should have only one National Library. You can have regional libraries e.g., as we have in Madras or in Bombay, but National Library should be one.

(The witnesses then withdrew)

IV Sarvashri Mahadeva Saha and Syed Shahedullah, Calcutta

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before you give your evidence I have to make it clear to you that your evidence shall be treated as public and liable to be published unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by you be treated as confidential. Even though you may desire your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to Members of the Parliament.

Now, we have got your memorandum. If you have anything more to say in addition to the memorandum you are welcome.

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: We have already submitted our view points. Our main point is about autonomy. Before we come to that we would like to know what particular facilities are wanting now, and how the entire working is going down with regard to management. This has come to happen lately—only during the last 6|7 years. For instance, books are lying unbound, books are not indexed. These are simple things and the executive authorities are expected to look into these things. Lot of money is spent but these things are remaining unattended, but it cannot be said that this is due to the absence of an autonomous Body. What are the executives paid for? Even during British administration things were not so badly administered as now. Executives are not giving attention in the matter of administration of the National

Library. In the 7th Schedule of the Constitution Library has been given a national status but in reality has it been given that status? Proposal now is to reduce the status. Previously the administration was function-wise but now it is not so.

So, it happens in language-wise arrangement of books. Even acquisition of books and ordering purchase thereof has become language-wise. Orders are placed thus and every department has an ordering machinery. Now-a-days, instead of one ordering machinery and one acquisition department as in the past there are lots of acquisition departments. There are different subjects, there are different languages and so what happens is that orders in certain languages go unattended to. This is what is happening. What happens is that somebody takes the chair for some years and some new innovations crop up, and everybody wants to give something new during his tenure of office. So, we must know where the Government stands so far as these ailments are concerned. So, instead of bringing this Bill we want that the Government should gather experience to enable it to come before the people with a Bill through actual management. The actual management was not attended to. The Government should attend to it not only by mere executive management but by providing finance and other things. Now, so far as status is concerned how should we conceive of this status? If we conceive the National Library to be the apex of things then we must pay due regard to the Constitution. In

my opinion the Constitution envisages that we ought to have our plans regarding the National Library according to the Constitution. If that is so it goes against the Constitution directly in spirit if the National Library is converted into an autonomous body. The Constitution has to be amended if it is made an autonomous body. If it is converted into an autonomous body then what will be position of those who have contributed books to it. Take the case of the Bihar Section. We have given over many books to it. The Bihar Library was handed over to the Government of India under an agreement in 1904. They gave it to the Government of India on the supposition that it will be taken care of by the Government. Other peoples have also contributed in that manner. Sir, the family of Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee have also contributed many books to the National Library. Would they give those books if they knew that the National Library would be an autonomous body? From England also, a younger brother of comrade Abdulla Rasul—our Chairman knows him—sent all his books to the National Library. He was advised by us to send all these books. Would he send those books if he knew that the National Library would be an autonomous body. Sir, the Ministry may go and the Ministry may come but the National Library will continue. If it is to continue then it must accord to and inspire the imagination of entire nation so that the people feel that the Government is going to attend to it in a manner that it will be a great creation of the nation itself. Now, if it becomes an autonomous body then it will plug the entire inspiration and co-operation which are needed by the Government in building this National Library. That is what has happened.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are very much interested in your ideas. If in regard to the general approach to the Library system in our country you have some detailed thinking in your mind you can let us know in your

supplementary memorandum which we shall consider. Now, one of the main points which the Committee Members were asking is that do you think that in the present circumstances the Library should continue to be run as a subordinate office of the Government of India or do you think that autonomy, properly formulated and safeguarded, would be better for the smooth working of the Library in the national interest?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: We have got a specific picture of autonomy in this Bill. What is the nature of autonomy? Nine members are being nominated, practically all are nominated. It means that Government or the individual Minister will control or will have the power to appoint the clerks etc. or whatever they want to do. The Government cannot go directly into the affairs of an autonomous body. The workings of this autonomous body can only be raised in the Parliament by the Members in the course of their budget speech or something like that. That also will have to be done in a round about way. As it is in the United States the Librarian is responsible to the President and is appointed by him. The Librarian there enjoys the status like to though not exactly as that of Chief Justice of Supreme Court. Here also he must have some national importance like that. It depends on the nature of autonomy you are speaking of. If you say that an Under Secretary of the Government will handle the files then it is different. What we mean is that there should be greater attention given to the Library.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: I would like to ask the witness whether the composition of the autonomy as suggested in the Bill is to be changed to suit his requirement? Out of 10 members 9 are nominated by the Government. Would you have any objection to it?

SHRI SAYED SHAHEDULLA: I suppose there have been two points.

in my statement—one, in the nature of this particular committee. I have got exact picture in the Bill. So, as regards autonomy as such we have written here in our statement. Secondly, since the autonomy is taking away the Library from the public view, that point is also clarified here in the statement. The character of autonomy—whatever autonomy you can imagine—is going to separate the institution from the public view and is making it a separate body. We have seen that there is a suggestion that in the 5th Plan this Library is ought to be made a Regional Library of the eastern region. There was some proposal made to our late Prime Minister Shri Nehru that the National Library is to be built up there but he is reported to have rejected it. I have no objection so far as the Library is concerned being built here or there. My point in this that this National Library should be given a national status as stated in the Constitution.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Do you think that with greater power an autonomous body will be able to improve the condition of the Library?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: Government can better form an Advisory Body which can be manned by the experts in this line.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZAL-PURKAR: Regarding the mismanagement in the Library such as acquisition of books, stock verifications etc., are you not satisfied as to the powers given in Chapter III, Clauses 17, 18 and 19?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: I understand that the honourable member has mentioned only the provisions of the Act. The Committee has already visited the Library and has seen its functioning personally.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: What is your opinion about the building up of a good library? i.e., supervision and maintenance, if it comes under the autonomous body?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: Finance may stand in the way of the autonomous body. This can be met by the Government itself. In that event they can take the help of the Advisory Body.

SHRI SAROJ MUKHERJEE: What is your experience about other countries? Can you tell us, if you have any knowledge, how the National Libraries are managed in other countries?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: In United States, the Librarian is responsible to the President because he is appointed by the President. The Government has got nothing to do with the Librarian of the National Library. There is a proposal that the British Museum should be taken over by the Government.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZAL-PURKAR: Do you think that the present status-quo should be maintained?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: Yes. I want that this should be maintained by the Government, and the requisite finance should be provided by the Government.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA SHANKAR ADIVAREKA: Mr. Chairman, the witness says that all over the world the libraries are managed by the Government. He also advocates for giving international status to the National Library. May I ask does he fear that the image of the library will go down if it is managed by an autonomous body?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: This should be directly managed by the Government, with all its ailments and liabilities. If it is handed over to an autonomous body, that body cannot cure its ailments and manage properly.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: I feel that the public opinion in Calcutta is being mobilised that this Bill is inimical to the growth of the National Library. Of course the present witness has expressed certain misapprehension and fears that the status of the National Library would be reduced if it is made auto-

nomous. Another set of people feel that if it is made autonomous the rights and privileges of the staff will go down. If these inconveniences are properly met by the Govt., do you think that there is any objection to make the National Library an autonomous body?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: If the National Library remains under the control of the Government, there is some likelihood of its gaining international status.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWALA: You have insisted that the National Library should be maintained by a Department of the Government. I would like to know, do they expect that the Government control on this library would maintain national character of it?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: There is a lot to be done. Firstly, there comes the question of financing. The entire thing is to be seen from the financial point of view as to how the requisite fund can be provided and secondly, it is to be estimated properly.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: At present the Government have provided Rs. 40 lakhs.

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: I have not got the exact figure of the amount against the books but so far as my knowledge goes there are only Rs. 5 lakhs have been allotted for books.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I may like to make some correction. The provision for the books etc. is Rs. 5 lakhs and the administration and other expenditure—total Rs. 40 lakhs.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: The witness has said about mismanagement in the National Library. Does he really believe that the Departmental control on the Library can get rid of all these mis-management and corrupt practices?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLA: Yes, I do.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: There is a misapprehension that the National Library staff want more finance and more staff for its improvement. Do you really think that if these are provided the present ailments will be cured?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: Just now I cannot tell you, how much staff is necessary and how much finance is necessary. I want that finance should be given for books. The first thing is books and then comes the management.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRAVARTI: I think the honourable witness is aware of the fact that with the present educational set up in the whole country the educationists always clamour for autonomous bodies just like universities and I.I.Ts. They always say that if education is controlled by Government then there will be no education at all as the witness is already in the knowledge that by introducing several Acts, University Acts in the Parliament, there is so much hue and cry going on that autonomy is being taken away. Does the witness feel that if it becomes an autonomous body, the importance of the National Library will go down and will be treated as a regional library just like any other regional library in the country? Is that the only criterion?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: That is only a fact because there was a note in the Fifth Plan like that. That apprehension is there also. My central point is that if it is taken away into an autonomous body it will not get the requisite attention. The second point is that the status of the National Library as envisaged in the Constitution will not be conformed to. Various educationists may have given different opinions and I

do not know what they have said. This is a political question, it is an administrative question. How the thing is to be looked into from those points of view. It is to be judged on that account. I am not a big educationist, but I think that so far as this matter is concerned, their idea is not correct in this sense that they have not pointed to the particular ailments from which the Library is suffering. One of the ailments of the Library is want of books purchase of books. Does an autonomous library necessarily make purchases very efficiently instead of the Government purchase?

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTY: But already you have seen the condition of the books lying there.

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: But how did it come to happen? It came to happen within a space of a few years. It has not been continuing externally. The Government owes an explanation to the people, to the Parliament to say how did it happen. It did happen within a few years. I have been a reader of that library since 1931—perhaps long before many of you were born.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTY: Is it your apprehension that by making it an autonomous body the National Library of Calcutta, they are going to make it a regional library and they are going to establish the National Library at Delhi?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: I have repeatedly told you that that is not so. My apprehension is about the character of the autonomous body. Then my second serious objection is to the Calcutta Library being reduced to a regional library. It has come to our knowledge that there is a proposal in the fifth plan to reduce the National Library into an Eastern Regional Library. There was a cyclostyled note submitted to Government—the Minister can say that—to that effect.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: I would like to refer to one of the remarks made by the witness earlier. He has said that the language purchase policy of the National Library is suffering from certain lacunae and one of them is that the languages which are not represented in the library staff do not get justice or do not get any representation in the purchases. Now, I would bring to his notice one or two important facts. The first is that the languages recognised by the Constitution of India as per the 8th Schedule are only 16. The number of languages recognised by the Sahitya Academy is only 20 and there are a large number of languages in the country in which literature of all types is being produced and published which is neither recognised by the Sahitya Academy nor by the Government of India but it is recognised by the people of India who constitute the nation. As such the National Library should be the repository of all the literature and it is worth while that such literature should be produced and published in this country. In that view of the matter would the honourable witness like specific provision in the present Bill that the literature produced and published in this country, in whatever language it may be, should be purchased and kept in the National Library?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: Yes: The Manipuri language and several other languages should be represented and collection and preservation of such literature should be done in the National Library. My regret is that it has not been done. All the languages are not being attended to in the manner they ought to be attended to. For instance, in some meeting Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee said the other day that 11 crores of rupees had been sanctioned for Hindi Literature and only Rupees one crore for rest of the languages of India but nothing is said about how much the Manipuri language, the Bengali language, the Oriya language and other languages will get. 11 crores

is going to the Hindi language in the Sahitya Academy .Dr. Chatterjee gave out an explanation why he could not sanction money for other languages. Do you think that the Sahitya Academy as an autonomous body has helped much in this matter?

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: I would like to ask the honourable witness two points which are more on questions of clarification of a certain thing and information on the other. The first point is that so far as books published in India are concerned, we want all these books to be delivered to the Library free of cost. Therefore, the question of rate of collection in different languages of India is not related to the allocation of money for the purchase of books in the various Indian languages because these are all supposed to be delivered free unless you want more copies. The clarification that I would like the honourable witness to give is, in such a situation would it be possible for the National Library to have functional division in respect of the various Indian languages? For example, books published in Manipuri—you gave that example—would they be processed by cataloguing section? In that case, in each of the sections there should be men with knowledge of each of the Indian languages. That will be come more cumbersome. Secondly, in view of the interest taken by the witness—I am equally interested—in Buhari collection—would the honourable witness say whether he is satisfied with the manner in which Buhari collection has been preserved in the National Library?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: We ought to have within the staff, men, as many as possible, knowing different languages of India. Secondly, if the entire thing is done and distributed and work of the Library organised on a functional basis through division of labour, then, one man can attend to several things. You can introduce knowledge of other languages. There may be a condition in the employment that a man is expected to have

working knowledge in other languages. It is not necessary to have erudition in that language.

So far as the records are concerned, I understand that they are kept properly, but Arabic, Persian and Urdu books are not being acquired and collected up to expectation. I go there occasionally and I understand, it is difficult to obtain the latest publications.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Have you gone there and have you seen in what stages the collections are kept?

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: I cannot possibly answer that question. Government is in a better position to enquire into that. I am told that the manuscripts are in safe custody. They should be kept separately.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: I can personally vouchsafe that they are in safe custody.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: Sir, so far as allocation of fund for the development of languages in India is concerned, he has said that Rs. 11 crores has been allocated for Hindi and Rs. 1 crore for rest of the regional languages. So far as allocation of fund is concerned, Government of India is very serious about development of all the languages. We have allocated Rs. 1 crore for the development of Bengali language but we have not been able to see that they have been able to spend one-fourth of the amount. So, it is not the allocation of funds. It all depends on how Bengali writers come forward and act for the development of books in Bengali language. So, the question should not be brought in that manner. Government of India is interested in the development of languages. For that money will never be a blockade. Supposing, we give you Rs. 20 crores. will you be in a position to spend it within the next five years? I say it categorically that for the development of languages we are bound to

help all regional languages, whether it is Hindi, Urdu or Bengali. For this purpose fund will never stand in the way.

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: I told you that it was not my statement. It was a statement made in a meeting which I was invited to attend.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Deputy Minister wanted you to go back with the impression that Government will not be close-fisted in so far as allocation of money for cultural development is concerned. I am only explaining the information which the Deputy Minister has already imparted. This information may please be communicated to other fellow writers and intellectuals that Government is ready to give money which West Bengal may require.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You must have read the report of the Review Committee.

SHRI SYED SHAHIDULLA: I have not read it. I have only heard about it. I was only surprised to hear the statement from Government that the Bill conforms to the proposal of the Review Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do I take it that your opposition to the idea of having an autonomous body for the National Library is based more or less on the complete ignorance or the lack of complete acquaintance with what the Jha Committee had actually suggested in this regard?

SHRI SYED SHAHIDULLA: I did not say it was based on ignorance. I heard the contents from a member. Shri Saibal Gupta addressing a public meeting.

V. Dr. H. K. De Chaudhuri, Dharma-tattvacharya, Calcutta

MR. CHAIRMAN: Witness may please note that his evidence shall be

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you opposed to the autonomous board on principle

or you support National Library continuing to be run as a subordinate department of Government?

SHRI SYED SHAHIDULLAH: It all depends on the meaning. What I mean is that National Library should receive proper attention and vigilance from the Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your main objection is not so much to autonomy as such?

SHRI SYED SHAHIDULLA: I have objected to autonomy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If, therefore, the autonomy of the National Library can be formulated in a manner which would make for the better administration of the National Library, you might reconsider your position.

SHRI SYED SHAHIDULLA: No, my apprehension is that an autonomous body will not be able to capture the imagination of the people in a manner that an organisation properly managed and administered by Government does.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would like you to go through a copy of the Review Committee, which has been laid on the Table of the Parliament and is now a public document. Cyclostyled copies would be available on request from the National Library. If you ask for a copy from the National Library you will have it. And after going through the report if you feel that you will have to supplement your idea you may furnish the same.

SHRI SYED SHAHIDULLA: Thank you very much.

(The witnesses then withdrew).

treated as public and is liable to be published, unless he specifically desires that all or any part of the evidence given by him is to be treated as con-

fidential. He may further note that even though he might desire his evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

Now, honourable members of the Committee would like to put some question to the witness.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPURKAR: What is your opinion regarding the autonomous body.

DR. H. K. DE CHAUDHURI: I have stated in the memorandum that I am not in favour of it because even then there will be many points which will have to be referred to the Ministry. I have been a reader member for more than a decade and I think the Library is functioning quite well.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: There has been a steady decline in the number of readers, in the number of research scholars and still how do you maintain that the position is still satisfactory?

DR. H. K. DE CHAUDHURI: There is hardly any decline of genuine scholars. Among ordinary readers there may have been a decline because many libraries have sprung up in the city.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You specialise in philosophy and Indology and you are a regular user of the library?

DR. H. K. DE CHAUDHURI: Yes, but previously I had been in service.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have suggested that autonomy for the library is not desirable.

DR. H. K. DE CHAUDHURI: I think the condition of the Library is quite sound.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You think the administration of the Library as it is now is quite efficient.

DR. H. K. DE CHAUDHURI: Yes, I think so. Of course there is certainly room for improvement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the *status quo* is improved then it is alright?

DR. H. K. DE CHAUDHURI: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And no basic change in the administration is necessary?

DR. H. K. DE CHAUDHURI: That is my humble opinion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have suggested some change in the composition of the Board and you have recommended inclusion of educationists and scholars of standing to be members of the Board. Now, at the moment, is the library administered in a way which satisfy the requirements of scholars and educationists? What is your view?

DR. H. K. DE CHAUDHURI: I think it does not because there is dearth of books in languages other than English, for instance, in German and French.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Apart from your memorandum have you got anything to say?

DR. H. K. DE CHAUDHURI: No, Sir, except that Library should collect books of other languages especially in German and French.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you Dr. De Chaudhuri for your assistance to the Committee.

(The Committee adjourned at 13.00 hours to meet again at 15.00 hours).

(The Committee reassembled at 15.00 hours).

VI. Department Council (Staff Side) of the Ministry of Education, Government of India.

Spokesmen:

1. Shri Anil Chatterjee—Member.
2. Shri Sital Adhikari—Member.
3. Shri B. C. Dey— Member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your memorandum has been received by us. If you have anything to add to it, very concisely, please do so. If you do not have anything to add then the hon. members will put questions to you. Now, before you proceed I have to intimate that the evidence which you give shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by you is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Bill has been introduced in the Parliament on the basis of the recommendations of the Jha Committee but our observation in this connection is that the Report of the Jha Committee has not been made public. Consequently, when we have come to tender our evidence it is difficult for us to say here something as to what the report actually contains and what was the recommendation. This is our first point. Then coming to our next point we do not feel that by declaring the National Library as an autonomous body the over-all functioning and development will be improved and an autonomous body is not the panacea for the ills and maladies the National Library has been suffering from for the last few years. If the National Library is declared as an autonomous body then the staff-members will be in difficulty as the provision of Article 311 of the Constitution will not be made applicable to the staff-members. The existing employees will lose the

status of civil servants and they will be only public servants. Sir, the Joint Consultative Machinery scheme and the Compulsory Arbitration Scheme are only restricted to the Civil Servants viz., the Central Government employees. As soon as the National Library will be declared to be an autonomous body those negotiating machinery will not be applicable and will not be extended to the existing employees. Those facilities as are enjoyed now by the employees of the National Library will be denied. Another point is that an individual staff member, under the existing procedure, can go up to the highest level, even up to the President, for redressing grievances. But if the National Library becomes an autonomous body then the employees will be denied this privilege to redress their grievances by going upto to the highest level also. This is so far as the staff members are concerned. We consider that for proper development and efficient functioning of the National Library if the existing ills and maladies are removed by the Government then the National Library can function up to the mark the Government desire and over-all development can be there. We do not consider that without rooting out the ills the autonomous body can be the only panacea for over-all development and better functioning. Sir, if the proposed autonomy is declared in respect of the National Library then the national importance which is attached to the National Library and which has been accepted in the Constitution will go because of the existing social outlook that Government Institutions are considered more prestigious than any autonomous or private institutions. In this connection we beg to point out, Sir, that the history of autonomous

administration in India has not a very laudable tradition because the existing autonomous organisations are sometimes considered inferior to other Government Department administration.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This point has been laboured by many honourable witnesses. Have you got any other points?

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: No, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So, can I take it that you prefer that the present set up in the Library ought to continue and no change in the form of an autonomous board should be made?

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: Yes, Sir.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: The name of this Library was Calcutta Library previously and then it was changed to Imperial Library and then it became the National Library.

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: Yes, Sir.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: In 1947-48 the readership number per day was 8590 whereas in 1971-72 the figure is 1018. Why is it, can you clarify?

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: I cannot correctly say what is the reason for this but I can safely say that by declaring autonomy the position cannot be improved.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Do you feel that by shifting the establishment to a new place from Esplanade the place has become inaccessible and so the number of readership has declined?

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: This particular question may be answerable by the authority—they will be in a position to give the correct figure as to why the readership has gone down.

SHRI TUNA ORAON: So far as the autonomous body is concerned. I think, you have got bitter experience in their administration. I think, it is upto you to come to a conclusion, so far as the

matter is concerned, and so far as the autonomous body is concerned, whether it will be better to run the National Library by the Government as it is today or by an autonomous body. Everywhere, i.e. in Gujarat and in so many other States there are so many autonomous bodies which are functioning satisfactorily, but I do not mean to say that all the bodies are functioning satisfactorily. In that case I cannot understand your anxiety. I only request you just to think over the matter and come to a final conclusion regarding the matter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Oraon, it is not a question. It is your opinion. So, how can the witness answer this?

SHRI P. ANTONY REDDI: The Jha Committee and the Khosla Committee were appointed mainly because the working of the National Library was not satisfactory. What is your opinion?

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: Actually the Jha Committee's report and the Khosla Committee's report were not public as I have mentioned in the beginning. They were appointed to find out the ills and maladies in the department and to suggest remedial measures for better functioning.

SHRI P. ANTONY REDDI: We accept your point that there have been maladies. In various criticisms, we have found, most answers were in the line that the workings of the National Library was not upto mark specially in the cases of readers and teachers. So, in that event do you not feel that the autonomous body will cure all these ailments?

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: We are also anxious for it. We consider that under the overall direct control of the Government these defects can be removed.

SHRI P. ANTONY REDDI: Do you not feel that if the staff did work efficiently then there would not have been any difficulty?

SHRI ANIL CHATTERJEE: I cannot accept your views. When the

Reviewing Committee report was placed before the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha in August, 1970, it was found that the Committee had mentioned that some of the recommendations to be implemented immediately. But, I am sorry to say that those recommendations have not been implemented even now. The amount that was recommended by the Reviewing Committee, i.e. about Rs. 20 lakhs book budget per year has not yet been sanctioned. So, the question of efficiency or inefficiency may not come where the question of policy remains.

SHRI P. ANTONY REDDI: The employees of the National Library should not have any grudge in discharging their regular duties. It is a fact that they have not been able to work efficiently but they have been paid their regular salaries, then I think, there is no reason why the staff of the Library did not work efficiently and maintained the status of the National Library at its required level? Of course I do not want to blame the staff.

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: If any individual employee or any individual officer of the National Library is responsible for not supplying the books to the readers thus causing inconvenience to the reader then the act of that particular officer or employee can be dealt with in terms of the Conduct Rules and other rules framed by the Government of India. If any individual officer or employee is found responsible for non-supply of books to the readers and if you give stress on the point of declaring the Library as an autonomous one, I do not subscribe to that view.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPURKAR: The Jha Committee's report has been cyclostyled and is available in the National Library. In that report it has been recommended that a high power committee or a Governing Council may be appointed and more power may be delegated to them. So, in what angle you are condemning the Jha Committee's report?

SHRI ANIL CHATTERJEE: The Jha Committee's Report has not been made public. If anybody goes to the National Library and give a requisition for the Jha Committee's Report, he is informed that it is not for the public.

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: In this connection I may mention here that the Jha Committee recommended for delegated autonomy for the National Library. They have clearly stated that the nature of the autonomy should be that a Governing Council should be delegated powers to function in the autonomous body, but not as a statutory one. We think that they wanted to remove the ills and maladies of the National Library with the very perspective of better functioning and development of the National Library.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the Jha Committee's recommendation, as you have quoted, is properly implemented would you support the idea of the Jha Committee's recommendation.

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: No, Sir. We cannot give our opinion in that line, I can say here that we are representing the staff side of the entire Education Ministry as well as the Department of Science and Technology. Our feeling is that this thing should not be judged in a partial manner, but in totality. It is to be considered whether the whole educational system is under the Government control or not, whether a particular institution should be an autonomous body or not—this should be viewed in the proper perspective.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We do not want any philosophical discussion on this point. I have only picked up from your statement that you are against the autonomous body.

SHRI SAROJ MUKHERJEE: We have got an experience about the functioning of the National Library while it was under the foreign rule before independence. It is now under the control of the National Govern-

ment. So we have got 2 parallel experiences. Now we suggest if the present statusquo of the National Library is maintained what is your concrete suggestion for better administration and efficiency and to have the administration more befitting to the National Library.?

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: Our suggestion is that in the administration of the National Library more powers should be delegated or it should be declared as an attached office.

SHRI SAROJ MUKHERJEE: To whom you suggest delegation of more powers—to the Government or to the autonomous body?

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: More power should be delegated to the administration of the National Library to be controlled by the Government.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Under item 7 of your memorandum you have stated "under the autonomous administration, the Library, the readers, the workers—none will be benefited. The image and prestige of the National institution will be undervalued. It is apprehended that monetary involvement of the users for the use of the library will be greater under the autonomous administration that as at present and the strength of the enrolment of readers will be curtailed. Now would you agree to this remark? If so, why?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can supplement your remarks in this respect afterwards in a supplementary memorandum.

PROF. RASHEEDUDDIN KHAN: Is it your position that the service condition might be lower than what it is at the moment and the status will also not be that which is at present?

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: Yes Sir.

PROF. RASHEEDUDDIN KHAN: In your memorandum you have not indicated these factors that you are proposing to it for these reasons. You

have only mentioned only two things apprehending the service conditions and scale of pay to the Govt departments, and therefore you are opposing it. You are afraid that your service condition would not be equivalent with that of what it may be in the autonomous body.

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: Sir, it is our apprehension that the service conditions will be altered. At the same time we are also anxious for efficient functioning and proper development of the National Library and we consider that the Central Government can alone do that keeping the library under its direct control. We consider that if the existing ills and maladies are removed from the National Library the Library can function up to mark. But when we say that the service conditions will be changed, that alone does not constitute the reason for which we oppose the autonomous board. That is one of the reasons.

PROF. RASHEEDUDDIN KHAN: Mr. Chairman, no reason has been given by the witnesses in their memorandum how an autonomous body can make the functioning of the National Library weaker. They are concerned with only two points, namely, that they feel that their service conditions will be changed and that the status of the National Library will not be the same as it is now. I would like our members to ask them to advance some arguments to say how an autonomous body will not function.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Professor Rasheeduddin Khan it may be better when we sit together we discuss all the implications of these problems because these friends do not seem to know more than what they have communicated in their memorandum

SHRI N. G. GORAY: I can understand your anxiety about service conditions under an autonomous institution. But usually what happens is that whenever any private industry is taken over by Government or

a Government institution is made autonomous there is always an understanding or a clause which says that the present service conditions will not be altered to the prejudice of the present employees. Supposing this saving clause was there, one of your major objections against this autonomous body will be knocked out.

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: There is already one such clause in the Bill that without the approval of the Central Government no service condition can be changed which is adverse to the employees. But may I put this observation like this? It can be changed adversely with the approval of the Central Government and in fact, our anxiety is that this protection can be given up to that time to the staff of the National Library so as long as they are not appointed to higher posts or given an upgradation in the Board itself. As soon as their services are considered under the Board by way of promotion or upgradation they should be under the rules and regulations. They will lose the status of civil servants which is being protected by the Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What you want to be sure of is protection—protection as envisaged in article 311. You can count on this Committee to look after that.

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: May I be given one minute more? Sir, when it is the policy of the Government to take over all sick industries...

MR. CHAIRMAN: This Committee is not the Government of India and so we cannot tell you what the policy of the Government is. We are a Committee of Parliament and we cannot propound the policy of the Govern-

ment. You need not, however have any anxiety regarding the service conditions. The Committee represents the Parliament and Parliament would not like to take away the rights of the present employees. Your views will be kept in mind.

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: Our view is that we oppose this autonomous board.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Government has already given an assurance that so far as the present employees of the Central Government are concerned, their position is not going to be changed by any provision of the Bill. I hope that will satisfy you as far as your apprehension is concerned.

SHRI SITAL ADHIKARI: This protection can be up to that time so long as the staff are not under the Board. Supposing I am a L.D. clerk now. I am transferred to the Board. So long as I remain a L.D. clerk my position will not be changed. But as soon as I am promoted to a higher post, I do not have that protection that was being given to me by the Government.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: Well after all the assurance has been given by the Chairman himself.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Subject to your understanding to which we are trying to respond. I can say without any fear that as far as the present service conditions of the Government of India employees are concerned, they are not going to be jeopardised by any piece of legislation. So you need not have any apprehension.

Now, thank you very much for your assistance.

(The witnesses then withdrew)

VII. Shri Sisir Kumar Das, Lecturer in English, Calcutta University

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may please note that the evidence you give would be treated as public and is

liable to be published unless you specifically desire that all or any part of your evidence should be treated as

confidential. But even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the members of the Parliament.

Now you have already given a memorandum which is being considered by the Committee. But if you wish to say something more than what you have said in your memorandum you may do so.

SHRI SISIR KUMAR DAS: I have nothing more to add to what I have already said in my memorandum but I shall be prepared to answer the questions that you may ask me. I have got a copy of the memorandum with me. I have been using this library for the last 27 years and I have seen several changes taking place in the administration during the last 27 years but I do not think that administrative changes always have brought about an improvement in the working of the library. My feeling is this—I have no solid ground for this feeling, to substantiate this feeling—that administrative changes might not remedy the ills that the library is at present suffering from. It is partly a crisis of character and if we simply change the head, the administrative head and have a new administrative set up, I have a feeling that it is not going to solve the problems that we as readers face everyday. Moreover, the autonomous structure that has been envisaged in the proposed Bill is likely to give rise to certain other problems which we have not come across during the last few years. Whatever little I have read from the draft Bill I feel that some of the clauses in that Bill where the functions of the Director, the Board and the Council have been defined are not explicit enough. There is not that kind of proper definition or full definition of the powers or of the activities of the members of the Board or the Council and the Director. If I remember correctly, the Director is a person who may be a

non-technical or non-professional person and probably a very qualified person, but I have feeling that professional equipment also may be a very important part of his equipments and a person who is at the same time a great scholar as well as a person who is professionally skilled in his subject may be a more welcome choice. All this I say from the point of view of a reader. Other things, of course, are too obvious for me to mention. If you have any questions I shall be glad to answer them.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: You are using this library for the last 27 years. How old are you?

SHRI SISIR KUMAR DAS: I am 46 years old.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: So, right from the age of 20 you have been using this library. Suppose we make you the Director of this Library. What will you do to improve the lot of this Library?

SHRI SISIR KUMAR DAS: I have no administrative experience and I shall not be prepared to accept the position of the Director. I do not have the professional equipment.

PROF S. NURUL HASAN: You have raised the question that the Director should be professionally qualified and a person of academic standing. If we could have both these qualifications, there would be nothing like that. But supposing, we are unable to find a person who is a person of both academic stature and a person with technical qualification in library science, whom would you choose? A person of academic eminence, or a person without academic eminence who is qualified in library science?

SHRI SISIR KUMAR DAS: I have no knowledge of persons who are professionally qualified because I do not know many people who are associated with library science. But, I do not think that India is so impoverished at the moment to offer a person who is both academically qualified and professionally skilled. I think it is possible

to find somebody. It is a pity that we have lost Prof. Raganathan. We sincerely feel the loss of a person of his eminence. He was both academically eminent and professionally skilled.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: Do you have any name to suggest?

SHRI SISIR KUMAR DAS: Really I have not given any serious thought to this point.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: I refer you to an article in the news-paper and as a student of English may I ask you what is the difference between a 'delegated power' or 'autonomy' and a 'statutory autonomy', and after defining these two—delegated autonomy and statutory autonomy—can you give us some idea how the Government can give delegated autonomy instead of statutory autonomy?

SHRI SISIR KUMAR DAS: I do not understand it.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: In this article it has appeared that they function more or less independently. In a powerful governing council headed by a Director whose status would be equivalent to that of the Vice-Chancellor of a Central University. So, it wanted delegated and not statutory autonomy. What is the difference between delegated autonomy and statutory autonomy and, secondly, how a Government can give to an institution a delegated autonomy and not statutory autonomy?

SHRI SISIR KUMAR DAS: Perhaps the writer of this article would be the best man to give the answer.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: My question is, when the budget was Rs. 1 lakh 37 thousand 300 in 1947-48 the number of readers was 8,590. Now the budget is Rs. 39 lakh 95 thousand 700 and the figure of the readers is 1018. Why? Can you clarify?

SHRI SISIR KUMAR DAS: First of all, the figures given may be questioned. I do not know the source.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: That is the National Library source.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Witness is naturally not in a position to answer that kind of question.

SHRI N. G. GORAY: Are you basically opposed to the idea of autonomous National Library because there have been people here who are opposed to the very idea of it. The idea of an autonomous National Library militates against their concept. Are you one of those?

SHRI SISIR KUMAR DAS: Perhaps this feeling has been generated from the institutions which are autonomous now. In fact, I worked in the library of the University of Calcutta and I do not want that the National Library should become another Calcutta University Library.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: It is suggesting in an improved form that it should not become another Calcutta Corporation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are an intellectual working at a university and also a reader of the National Library. You have got some conception about the National Library. Whether it is run as a subordinate office of the Govt., efficiently or inefficiently—it is another matter. Now, do you not envisage that at some point of time having intellectuals of such calibre in our country that self-respecting intellectuals with administrative experience would run an institution like the National Library? If you have any envisagement for the better future of our country are you in a position to suggest anything so that the National Library can be made to develop or do we say that let it be run as subordinate office of the Govt.?

SHRI SISIR KUMAR DAS: I feel that at the present moment things can be improved even within the present set up. If we change the administrative set up it does not really always ensure any improvement, and improvement is a thing which can be

brought about even within the existing set up. This is my feeling.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are anticipating improvement of the basis on the present administrative set up and not on any experimental or hypothe-

VIII. Shri C. R. Banerjee

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may please note that the evidence you will tender shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by you is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Can you suggest anything for the improvement of the National Library under the present administrative set up?

SHRI C. R. BANERJEE: I support autonomy on principal but I want to say that the opposition to it by the staff and some readers of the Library based on some apprehensions. There is a sense of insecurity of service amongst the staff. Clause 15 says that staff services may be terminated by the Board after take over. That causes some misunderstanding. Then staff apprehends that in case of any injustice done to him he will not have enough avenues for redress. They fear that their services would depend on the personal relations with the Director. Then, it is mentioned that all vacancies are to be filled by direct recruitment. Here again they fear that privileges of promotion will be denied to them if the Bill is passed. Then, gazetted officers of the Library are reluctant to lose their prestigious status. It is felt that as soon as the Library is transferred to an autonomous Board, Govt. will gradually reduce the amount of financial assistance to the Library. Then, during the past few years there had been many complaints and no effec-

tical idea of an autonomy?

SHRI SISIR KUMAR DAS: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

(The witness then withdrew)

tive steps have been taken to remedy them. So, public feel that even this Bill is not going to improve matters. Many people point out that after attaining autonomy, irregularities, injustices and instances of maladministration can be taken up in the Parliament and maladies can be remedied by discussions now. They feel that advantages of Parliament's vigilance will be lost. If you think that these are somewhat real you can make some provision in the Act. I have also suggested that the annual report of the National Library may please be placed before the Parliament.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: What is your idea about the point, as many people are saying this, that by making it autonomous gradually it will be converted into a regional library and it will lose its national prestige.

SHRI C. R. BANERJEE: This point has been raised for one thing. The Department of Culture had issued a report of the working group on Fifth Five-Year Plan on Library Development. It is stated therein that it will be a regional library for the Eastern Region. It should be clearly stated in the Bill what would be the position of this Library in the hierarchy of library system in our country whether it should be like the British Museum where books are preserved for future generations of scholars or like Central Reference Library of England. So, before we decide we should come into some conclusion what should be the status of this Library in the hierarchy of the Library system of our country. If it is a regional Library then there should

be some representation from the eastern region. That should be mentioned specifically.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: Mr. Banerjee, since you are referring to Reference Library what is your opinion regarding the role and administrative adjustment and other things with the National Library.

SHRI C. R. BANERJEE: I am not representing the Central Reference Library. I have come here as an individual because you have not asked me to come as a representative of the Central Reference Library.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: Even then, since you have experience of Central Reference Library what is your suggestion. Both the libraries have separate identity. Have you got anything to say even as an individual having experience of the Central Reference Library about the role, mutual understanding, administration and all these things?

SHRI C. R. BANERJEE: What was the idea of the Government about this Reference Library? This is not a library at present. It only compiles the national biography. The idea of the Govt. of India was that National Library at Calcutta will be a copy-right Library and the Central Reference Library will be in Delhi and act as an apex of the country's library system. Only the bibliographical wing of the Central Reference Library was established in Calcutta in the premises of the National Library pending construction of a building in Delhi. Site was selected, date for laying the foundation stone was fixed but then Mr. Nehru said that he did not agree to have another national library in Delhi.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: The apprehension that Govt. is trying to revive the idea of a separate Reference Library is agitating the minds of the people here.

SHRI C. R. BANERJEE: In this vast country only one library may not suffice.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: The question of reducing this into the status of regional library and setting up a new library in Delhi—these things are agitating the people.

SHRI C. R. BANERJEE: There may be 4 or 5 National Libraries.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: As the National Library is here for more than 100 years there is apprehension in the minds of the people that by making it an autonomous library you are trying to shift a part of the library to Delhi.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Chakrabarti, that is not the kind of question he is expected to answer. You can ask him as to what is the relationship between the two libraries; he cannot give you answers as to the apprehensions of the people. Hypothetical questions he cannot answer.

SHRI C. R. BANERJEE: Central Reference Library which was proposed at Delhi was not planned to be a library like the National Library in Calcutta. In Great Britain also there are two libraries, one is British Museum which serves the scholars of the country but then there is another National Central Library which is at the apex of the library system of the country which guides other libraries and there is no clash between the two because their roles are different.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Since the Central Reference Library's main work is bibliographical and since the National Library at Calcutta is a copy-right library where maximum number of books are received the work of the Central Reference Library and of the National Library seems to be closely linked. Therefore, is it not absolutely essential that both work in co-ordination, perhaps in close association, even some kind of amalgamation or does with the Central

Reference Library require to be operated as an entirely independent apparatus?

SHRI C. R. BANERJEE: As I have told the genesis of the Central Reference library, only a section of that library has been set up and other wings are not working. Now, no institution can achieve success or recognition only by bringing out one bibliography. If it is to survive it will have to be amalgamated with the National Library or it will have to be developed in another way. For example, it may be a National Bibliographical Centre—all bibliographies will be compiled here, not only national bibliography but others also. In

Italy and other countries there are centres like this. In that way this library can be developed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Therefore, the site of the two Libraries logically should be the same.

SHRI C. R. BANERJEE: Yes, Sir, otherwise where can you get the books to work with? Besides, the staff of the Central Reference Library are frustrated because of the absence of avenue of promotion—in future they have nothing to hope for.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you Mr. Banerjee. We have got your memorandum and you have given many valuable points.

(The witness then withdrew).

IX Shri Gopal Halidar, Calcutta

MR. CHAIRMAN: I welcome you, Mr. Halidar. Before you proceed I would inform you that the evidence that you give here shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by you is to be treated as confidential. Even if you desire your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

Now, we have got your memorandum. If you wish to say a few words as a pretext on the general observation you can do so but please make it very short.

SHRI GOPAL HALDAR: Sir, the first thing which I cannot understand even after reading the objects of the Bill, is that how the provisions of the Bill will serve the purpose of the Bill. Sir, the Department of Culture wants to divest itself of its responsibilities but wants to retain all the powers at the same time. I fail to understand this. Then I come to the

three tier arrangement of Councils or statutory boards, etc. and there again the Department is the head in all respects. This will give rise to more friction instead of smooth working, if it works at all. These are the things that strike me. There is practically nothing in the Bill as to how the Library should be run, and what the policy of the Government is regarding its improvement. There are only certain proposals for structural arrangements and that is all. Will that improve the working of the Library?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Halidar, the Bill is in a tentative stage and the Committee's object is to improve upon it and report to Parliament. The Bill is directed towards a new orientation in the administrations of the National Library and for that purpose there is the concept of autonomy for running of the Library. The autonomous organisation will be composed of people intellectually respectable and at the same time professionally capable. What is your view in regard to the concept of qualitative change in the administration if it becomes an autonomous organisation?

SHRI GOPAL HALDAR: First of all, it is not autonomy which is being desired or being attempted to. The Board formally may be autonomous but not in power. The Council as chosen is certainly something which cannot be called autonomous in that respect because all the authority will be practically in the hands of the Department which will run it. There I do not know what is the actual desire of the Jha Committee as I have not seen it. There is a mention that on the basis of the recommendations of the Jha Committee it is being converted into an autonomous board or council. Those recommendations of the Jha Committee have not been made public. So we do not know as to what was their actual recommendation and what did they mean by an autonomous board or autonomous council? These things are to be made clear and the report of the Jha Committee should have been published or at least extracts or the relevant portions should have been published.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In practical terms you would like some kind of improvement in the administration of the Library and not any hypothetical experimentation of any idea. Is it so?

SHRI GOPAL HALDAR: Yes, Sir. I always like some improvement in the administration.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPURKAR: You have stated that you want some improvement in the administration of the National Library. How do you want to improve the administration?

SHRI GOPAL HALDAR: For that purpose, of course, I have to go far deeper than you expect me to go. I am more or less a man from outside the Library; and I do not know how to run it. Only by experience as a student and as a reader I can help you and put in certain suggestions. Sir, there are some matters in the Library which should be looked after by the specialists who have also the ex-

perience of this Library Science. This is my first point. Then I say that in practice if you want a particular book here it is often delayed; sometimes the books are not there, sometimes we are told we do not possess that book. The library grant is not sufficient or has not been sufficient for some years. The prices of books are going up and the amounts of grants are not keeping pace with that.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Do you agree that if it becomes an autonomous body there would be more viability in it and decision taking would be very smooth. There would not be any delay and it would consequently add to its efficiency.

SHRI GOPAL HALDAR: So far as the question of autonomy is concerned, in this case it will be the Department of Culture which will dominate the picture.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: So, you are not in favour of autonomous bodies. You want that whatever autonomy is given to other Boards or such institutions should be withdrawn in the better interest of the country.

SHRI GOPAL HALDAR: You mean the wider aspect of it. But I could not answer this question of yours unless I specifically know the institution referred to by you. I have complaints against many autonomous bodies but I cannot make such sweeping remarks about them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you been able to read the Jha Committee's Report?

SHRI GOPAL HALDAR: No, it was never placed before us. We do not know anything except that there is some sort of talk about autonomy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Apart from that you have no knowledge whatsoever about the report or the recommendations of the Jha Committee?

SHRI GOPAL HALDAR: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What I would like to know from you in this. Having been a member of the Jha Committee myself we had an impression that the intellectual atmosphere of the National Library would improve qualitatively a very great deal if it was run by a body of independent-minded, self-respecting scholar-cum-administrators and that this place could become a genuine centre of research and other allied activities. That is why the concept of autonomy was brought into the picture—autonomy which would be co-existent with the maintenance of the good things in the present administration, autonomy which means the injection of a new spirit. Therefore, the idea was that instead of keeping this National Library merely as a subordinate office of the Government of India we can develop it into a genuine, live, intellectual institution. Now, is it your feeling—a feeling which has been expressed by many of our witnesses—that in our country we are unable to run the autonomous bodies properly unless the Government or some such authorities help us. Is it your feeling also that intellectuals should come into the picture in the proper way along with the administrators to give a new tone to the National Library? From that angle could the experimentation of autonomy be given a trial or would you say that you would not favour any hypothetical experimentation for merely trying to improve the administration of the National Library. Which would be your point of view?

SHRI GOPAL HALDAR: I like to put it like that also. There is something to be said in favour of the autonomous body, put in the Bill I do not find any real autonomy being granted there. Secondly, it depends on the point as to how the autonomous body will work in co-operation with the Department of Culture. After all the Department of Culture is a body which has taken interest in the National Library and the National Library

is a part and parcel of the Government. What the Jha Committee has recommended, I do not know.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it your apprehension that if autonomy is implemented in some way or other, then the Government or Parliament will intend to wash their hands off the National Library? If Government and Parliament continued to be in the picture and if the autonomous organisation is set up only in order to help and develop properly intellectual atmosphere in the institution, then I would ask your feeling about it?

SHRI GOPAL HALDAR: I do not mean that every bit of work should be done by the Department of Culture. They can also set up an Advisory Body. The people in general appreciate the prestige of the Government Service—Central Government service. They expect better pay and better service condition and in that event the Government would get better employees for the National Library.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: I hope you have gone through the Bill where it is mentioned that in the Governing Body there should be 9 out of 10 members from the Department of Culture. Do you feel that the National Library should be made an autonomous Body or else the National Library will function in a better and efficient manner if it is not made an autonomous body? My another question is whether the autonomous bodies like Calcutta University and I.I.T. should be kept under the Government control instead of autonomy.

SHRI GOPAL HALDAR: It is not merely the composition of the bodies as proposed. I have my quarrels on that point. But first of all, I would like to be convinced as to whether that the Department of Education by itself, is not capable of looking after the National Library.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: That is not the direct answer.

My point is this whether it is desirable to put the National Library under an autonomous Body or to keep it under the Government as it is now for efficient and better functioning. The basic question is "autonomy."

SHRI GOPAL HALDAR: The basic question is improvement of working system and the improvement of the National Library. I cannot understand as to why the Ministry of Culture cannot improve it.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Then it shows that you do

X. Shri Rathindra Nath Ganguly,

(The witness was called in and he took his seat).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ganguly, your evidence shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless they specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by them is to be treated as confidential. It shall, however, be explained to the witnesses that even though they might desire their evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: Do you stand for autonomy or oppose it?

SHRI RATHINDRA NATH GANGULY: I do oppose the proposed autonomy for the National Library.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: If you are in favour of autonomy I welcome you, but if you oppose it we shall hear you.

SHRI RATHINDRA NATH GANGULY: While the Government is trying to bring under its control some big libraries then what is the harm of keeping the National Library under Government control.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Can you mention as to which libraries are being taken over by the Government?

not think in terms of autonomy.—Is not it?

SHRI GOPAL HALDAR: I think, that even without autonomy it can run well. I have never said that an autonomous body cannot do anything towards development. My point is this that if the Government can run an organisation properly, then why the question of autonomy should come in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you Mr. Haldar.

(The witness then withdrew).

Research Scholar. Hooghly.

SHRI RATHINDRA NATH GANGULY: Khudabax Library at Patna and Raja Library, etc.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: The Khudabax Public Library is governed by an autonomous Board under the Khudabax Public Library Act passed by Parliament. So, it is not that the Khudabax Library is being brought under the direct control of the Government. The T. N. S. S. Mahal Library is at the moment, under the control of Tamil Nadu Government. We have offered to the Tamil Nadu Government our assistance for maintenance of this library, but it is under the control of the State Government of Tamil Nadu. Raja Library is at the moment under the Board in which the former ruler of Rampur is the Chairman. He himself wants that it should be brought under the over all control of the Central Government, but to be governed by an autonomous board and the board of trustees of Raja Library have passed a resolution which is under the consideration of the Government of U.P. After the Government of U.P. have taken their views, the Central Government will also take its views. If necessary, it can be placed before the Parliament. There is no intention in the case either of T. N. S. S. Mahal Library or Raja Library to administer them directly under the Department of Culture.

SHRI RATHINDRA NATH GANGULY: There are other points too. The Bill has not considered the aspect that the National Library stands as an apex library in the system of public and special libraries in the country. Lending facilities should be improved in the University Libraries. Central libraries, Commercial Libraries, etc. This should have been the duty of the National Library Bill to consider seriously the possibility of relaxation of copy right law by inserting proper provisions in the Bill so as to enable the library to get a copy of the graphic record by using micro-films facilities. I mean to say that the graphic records would be very useful in respect of the rare documents.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you a reader in the National Library?

SHRI RATHINDRA NATH GANGULY: Yes Sir. For the last 10 years I have been a reader.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I take it that you are a post-graduate scholar. If so, you must have some idea—what is your feeling as to how the National Library can be improved? Can it be run by the Government of India by issuing some orders or by injecting better personnel in the top ranks of the administration?

SHRI RATHINDRA NATH GANGULY: There should be some reform committee in the library to bring the **XI. Shri Ashoke Kumar Ghosh, Department, Jadavpur University,**

(The witness was called in and he took his seat).

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may please note that the evidence you give would be treated as public and is liable to be published unless you specifically desire that all or any part of your evidence should be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire the evidence tendered by you to be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

library under the direct and strict control of the Government. There is indiscipline in the main building and in the annexe. The employees of the annedure loiter and gossip and they do not take seriously their duties.

MR. CHAIRMAN: These are matters of very detailed grievances which you have to pass on the authorities and if you have made a list of those grievances, you can pass them on to the Committee as a supplementary memorandum. But you have not made any detailed study in regard to any particular provision of the Bill which you would like to change in any direction?

SHRI RATHINDRA NATH GANGULY: The Bill has sought to lower the position of the library.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What do you suggest in regard to the post of librarian?

SHRI RATHINDRA NATH GANGULY: The librarian should be chief authority of the National Library. There should not be any Director or some other person taking the top-most position.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There should be a professionally qualified librarian?

SHRI RATHINDRA NATH GANGULY: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for your assistance.

(The witness then withdrew).

Reader, Metallurgical Engineering Calcutta

If you have sent a memorandum, that has been taken into consideration by the Committee. But if you want to add a few words in regard to your ideas about the Bill, you can do so. But if you do not wish to say anything, members will ask you some questions.

SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR GHOSH: Regarding the Bill, I have already given a statement. But if I am permitted, I can add a few more points.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR GHOSH: It has been found from the annual reports of the National Library, Calcutta and the Ministry of Education that for the last few years the book procurement under the D.B. Act is going down and I feel that one of the reasons is that the publishers in the country want to evade the provisions of the Act. Though there are three recipient libraries in the country, the number collected by the National Library, Calcutta, is maximum. This shows that due to the National Library of Calcutta being held in highest esteem in the country, its collection is the maximum though all the three recipient libraries should have the same collection each year. This shows that if the National Library comes under an autonomous body, then the publishers of the country may not like to send their books. Naturally collection will suffer. This is one thing which according to my view is against the interest of the National Library and against the interest of the nation.

Another thing is that from the last ten years' report it has been found that the annual budget of the Library is going down. For example, from 1969—1972 the total budget (both plan and non-plan) is going down from about Rs. 39 lakhs to 37 lakhs. This shows the lack of seriousness on the part of the Government to provide the Library with adequate funds, and since up till now the Government is not so much serious about providing the Library with adequate funds, naturally after the autonomous board comes into operation, how the Government will provide it with adequate amount of funds necessary for the functioning of the Library? This shows that without proper seriousness on the part of the Government the Library cannot function properly and the Bill shows that the Government wants to part with the responsibility in managing the affairs of the Library. Naturally we see from the Bill that there is no clear cut responsibility of the Government—the Govern-

ment is not directly responsible though it controls the Library but nowhere in the Bill it has been put on the Government. It has clearly put down its responsibility upon the Library. So in the absence of such a responsibility I feel and I fear that the interest of the Library will be hampered.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: I would like to understand from the distinguished witness who is himself a member of a well known university which we had the privilege of visiting this afternoon at a very sumptuous meal, whether if the Government of West Bengal wants to come up before the Legislative Assembly in order to abrogate the Jadavpur University Act and bring the Jadavpur University directly under the control of the Education Department, the financial grant given by the Government of West Bengal to the University will definitely increase?

SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR GHOSH: Sir, the grant may not increase but in the absence of adequate amount of funds, the students, teachers and other employees of the University may bring pressure on the Government to increase the fund. The State Government has got some responsibility in properly managing the affairs of education.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: So you would prefer the University to be brought directly under the administration of the Government?

SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR GHOSH: I shall prefer the University to be brought not under the State Government administration but under the administration of the Union Government.

SHRI PATIL PUTAPPA: You have said in your memorandum that this is a retrograde Bill. Why do you call this retrograde?

SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR GHOSH: At present there is a tendency on the part of the Government to bring in

stitutions of national importance under its direct control to give effect to its socialistic principles. Now, in the case of the National Library we hope that the available resources of the country in the form of printed materials should be used to the optimum extent for the benefit of the maximum number of people. At present we see that there is no coordination between the different libraries, university or public. So a step towards autonomy will mean moving away from a coordinated approach to the development of library service. In that sense it is a retrograde step.

SHRI N. G. GORAY: Between an institution managed by the people themselves and an institution managed by Government, I suppose the latter is more retrograde than the former.

SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR GHOSH: In the case of an autonomous board, it is not being run by the people. It is being managed by a board, i.e. by a few persons who do not represent the people. But the Government is made by the people's representatives. The National Library Board does not represent the people. Nor are they directly answerable to the public. So in that respect it is a retrograde step.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: Mr. Ghosh, you have said that there is inadequacy of fund. From the record and from my small memory I remember that we are spending today about Rs. 40 lakhs over National Library per year. Out of this we are purchasing books worth Rs. 5 lakhs from outside the country. It means for a purchase of Re. 1]- we are spending Rs. 7 for its maintenance. How much more money do you need to maintain the books in the National Library?

SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR GHOSH: This idea can be obtained from figures available for 1966-67.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: Let us talk of today.

SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR GHOSH: I am coming to that. At that time the Council suggested that book grant to be adequate should be Rs. 6 lakhs. That was a pre-devaluation period. So, the National Library suggested 3 times the money before devaluation. That was in 1967 and with that Rs. 2 lakh the total number of volumes purchased was about 1591. Previously, in 1963-64 the total number of books purchased was 20,000. If, at least, we have to attend 1963-64 figure and with the increase price of books, I suppose, I cannot give you the exact figure, I think, it will be not less than a sum of Rs. 15 lakh.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: Government will not mind that amount, but I have got a very pointed question. Having spent Rs. 7 on a book of Re. 1 how much more you want so that this Re. 1 book may be maintained properly in the Library? If you read today's *Statesman* you will see that the books which are there, are lying in a neglected condition, not even stacked in a proper way.

SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR GHOSH: As an outsider I want service from the National Library. It is for the Government to decide what is the best way of maintaining the books. It may be due to inefficiency in running the affairs of the National Library. How can an outsider say? In the words of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru "National Library should possess all the printed materials in this country". If we have to achieve this motto, I can say that it should utilise as much fund as is necessary. I do not know what should be the cost or the ratio.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: You have mentioned that book grant was only Rs. 2 lakh. The question is, how do you propose that simply by increased book grant they are going to handle the books properly that are coming? You have read the condition of the books. The cost ratio is 1:7 today. How do you propose to improve the condition of the library simply by increased book grant?

SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR GHOSH: It is not a question of money alone. The books are not properly maintained. I can cite one example. Up to 1970 there was not proper verification of the books. It is not due to money. There was no proper policy regarding the running of the Library. There should be an advisory body which should advise the library to take suitable measures. They can employ two or three persons for stock verification. Yesterday, I saw in the journal section big volumes were kept in the open, not in a bound condition. They are bound to be damaged. It requires a strong will on the part of the management to manage the affairs properly.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Now, I would put this question to you, what do you think if we put this National Library as an autonomous body? Is it going to function in a better manner to take care of those points that you have mentioned than to keep it as a minor section under a department of the Central Government? What is your discreet opinion about it?

SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR GHOSH: I want it to function as an attached office of the Government. Otherwise, the administration cannot have the responsibility.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: You maintain that under the present condition there is scope for lot of improvement and the Bill precisely points to that direction. If the Parliament were providing a definite power with a specific task, scope and function to improve the condition of the library with autonomy, what is it that stands in the way of your maintaining still that the proposed Board or autonomy will not do the miracle and the existing staff with adjustments here and there and a new room here or a new room there will improve matters?

SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR GHOSH: It is not the question of existing staff. It

is a question of strong will on the part of the Government which so long did not exert itself properly. Now it should exert itself. If it is an autonomous body I feel that there will be no clear responsibility on any one because it will be composed of members who will not be directly answerable to the public. The Minister will take active interest in the affairs of the National Library because he will have to answer questions on the floor of the Parliament. The Director will not be required to do that.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Even then the report of the annual working has to be presented before the Parliament and the members can ask question and the members of the Board are directly responsible. You say, the Minister will be able to pass orders directly, but the Minister has his limitations and the department has to look after the affairs of the country. So, it is in the interest of the National Library itself that it has a number of people who are in this Board to look after the affairs of the National Library. You kindly see this point. I would also like to know whether it would improve matters if certain specific task is assigned to an autonomous body. At present you have no body. You have the Minister at the Centre and he is not the person to look after National Library affairs. He has to look after various things. But when you have a board it will directly look after your affairs.

SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR GHOSH: At present also there is a National Library Council and there is not much fundamental difference between the existing Council and the proposed Board. If the record of performance of the National Library Council is not very good then how the Government is sure that an autonomous body will improve matters.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for your assistance.

(The Committee then adjourned).

**RECORD OF EVIDENCE TENDERED BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON
THE NATIONAL LIBRARY BILL, 1972.**

*Thursday, the 7th June, 1973 in Council Chamber, Assembly House, Calcutta from
09.00 to 13.00 hours and again from 15.00 to 17.00 hours.*

PRESENT

Shri H. N. Mukerjee—(In the Chair)

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Achal Singh
3. Shri Dharamrao Sharanappa Atzalpurkar
4. Shri Virendra Agarwal
5. Shri S. C. Besra
6. Shri Biren Engti
7. Shri Samar Guha
8. Shri E. R. Krishnan
9. Shri Kumar Majhi
10. Shri Saroj Mukherjee
11. Shri Tuna Oraon
12. Shri Narain Chand Parashar
13. Shri P. Antony Reddi
14. Shri S. A. Shamim
15. Shri D. P. Yadav

Rajya Sabha

16. Smt. Sushila Shankar Adivarekar
17. Shri Pramatha Nath Bisi
18. Dr. Rajat Kumar Chakrabarti
19. Shri Mahabir Dass
20. Shri Niren Ghosh
21. Prof. S. Nurul Hasan
22. Shri Rattan Lal Jain
23. Shri Patil Puttappa
24. Shri Sanat Kumar Raha

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

Shri S. Harihara Iyer—Joint Secretary and Legislative Counsel.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE

(DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE)

1. Shri Mohan Mukerji—*Additional Secretary.*
2. Shri P. Somasekharan—*Deputy Secretary.*
3. Shri A. S. Talwar—*Under Secretary.*
4. Shri A. B. Sen Gupta—*Acting Librarian, National Library, Calcutta.*

SECRETARIAT

Shri H. G. Paranjpe—*Deputy Secretary.*

WITNESSES EXAMINED

- I. *Shri Ramaprasad Mookerjee, Calcutta.*
- II. *National Library Gazetted Officers' Association, Calcutta*

Spokesmen:

1. Shri M. N. Nagaraj
 2. Shrimati Mira Pakrasi
 3. Shri G. L. Ray
 4. Shri S. Balasubramanyan
- III. *Bengal Library Association, Calcutta.*

Spokesmen:

1. Shri B. P. Mookerjee
 2. Shri P. Roychaudhury
 3. Shri S. Banerjee
 4. Shri B. Banerjee
- IV. *Shri Niharranjan Ray, Calcutta.*
 - V. *Shri Karun Krishna Brahmachari, Calcutta.*
 - VI. *Shri Gajendrakumar Mitra, Editor, Katha Sahitya, Calcutta.*
 - VII. *Shri Amalendu Kishore Chakraborty, Calcutta.*
 - VIII. *Shri Soncu Moharaj, Calcutta.*
 - IX. *Shri Gurapada Sen Gupta, Calcutta.*
- I. *Shri Ramaprasad Mookerjee, Calcutta.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are welcome Mr. Mukerjee not only as a distinguished citizen of Calcutta and a participant in its cultural life but also as one of the donors of perhaps the largest single individual collection of books that the National Library has had. So, we want to hear from you some important ideas in regard to how the structure of the National Library

and its administration could be re-organised. But before we proceed I would like you please to note that the evidence you give would be treated as public and is liable to be published unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. Even though you may desire your evidence to be treated as confi-

dential such evidence is liable to be made available to Members of Parliament. This is an intimation which I have to make to you. Now, would you like to say a few words explaining your ideas about the subject of the Bill before Members ask questions?

SHRI RAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: I had been connected with the National Library for decades together and I have an experience of the old Imperial Library from the days when it was in the Metcalfe House and subsequently also and know something about the management or mismanagement during different periods because in the earlier days my father Ashutosh Mukerjee was on the Imperial Library Committee for some time and after that I had also been for some time on the Advisory Committee. Therefore I know something of the strong points and the weak points of the administration as it was in the past and I am sure the Bill has been introduced for the purpose of making it better than what it was. Before I go into the other points there is one question which has been labouring me. I think you were on the Jha Committee and you will be able to point out where my ignorance comes in. In the Objects and Reasons of the Bill it is stated that it will be an autonomous institution after this. But in the Bill itself I do not find any reference to the word 'autonomous'. On the other hand, I have had an opportunity of looking into the Jha Committee's Report that is not published but I have a copy of that and I have studied that. The Jha Committee had recommended that the administration and the functioning of the National Library should be improved. The Ministry has come forward with the Bill for an autonomous institution but in the Jha Committee's report there is no reference to the autonomous nature. On the other hand, you will find that in the body

of the Report as also in the summary of the recommendations it is specifically stated that the future constitution should be varying and modified according to their recommendation, not by a statute but by a resolution. I have not been able to find out from the Objects and Reasons of this Bill any reason given why the specific recommendation of the Jha Committee's Report has been by passed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr Mukherjee, if I may interrupt you at this moment. I find from the record that the Jha Committee had recommended that the Advisory Council should be replaced by a Governing Council exercising real authority. This Governing Council, according to the Jha Committee, should be the final authority on promotion, selection, initiation of projects etc. It should have the fullest liberty to function within the budget allotted for the National Library. This Council should be appointed by a resolution of the Government and fullest powers will be delegated to it for running the organisation. The proposal for staff or initiation of project should be sent to the Ministry of Education for their approval. These proposals are within the framework of the fund allotted to the National Library. The going should be smooth. The nature of autonomy invested to the Governing Council should be delegate autonomy and not a statutory one. On this the legal experts came to be off the opinion that delegated autonomy is something which can hardly be defined in legal terms, and, therefore, they considered several alternatives as to how to give substantial effect to the Jha Committee's recommendations and in their effort they have evolved a formula which you will find stated in the Bill. Now, if you agree to some extent or entirely with the Jha Committee's idea then you could suggest to us also as to how, first in conformity with

the provisions of the Bill or as amended in the direction, it is necessary, we can accomplish the objective what the Jha Committee recommended. This is the position which I find from the records.

SHRI RAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: I was referring to the summary of recommendations as appearing at page 100 No. 5. The Advisory Council of the National Library should be replaced by a Governing Council. The Council should be constituted instituted by a resolution of the Government and not by a statute i.e. to make it not a high-bound thing but something which may be modified or may be adapted as the occasion arises. I was analysing yesterday as to what actually was in the Bill after I received notice for appearing before this Committee. Is it really autonomous body as suggested in the Bill? It is not in my humble submission. I have categorised the various items from the Bill to show that the Government of India, in the Ministry, have retained the powers at different stages. So far as the functioning of the three tier system is concerned it has been made for evolving the rules or the regulations, modifications to be made, changes to be made, consultations with the board or with the Executive Body—all these have been provided but the final authority is left in the hands of the Ministry. As a member of the Advisory Committee, as it was then, we had noticed that powers, which were being exercised by the Ministry were being really exercised by some subordinate officer or officers. The officers in the Ministry who are in the Committee or was in the Committee or are now proposed to be in the Governing Council or Board will exercise much greater power and final voice will be theirs and not of other people who are experts or who have come from various

categories. What I feel is that the Constitution as drawn up is wholly non-workable and the ideal with which the sponsors have come up can not be achieved by the Bill as it is drafted. The Bill has to be redrafted altogether. Certain powers have to be kept, have to be given to certain persons—power of revision by higher authorities. But knowing as I do about the Government red-tapism the files begin to move and go on from one person to another and unless the head of the administration can be approached it is very difficult to get things done. We are now concerned with an academic and cultural body like this. Here the final powers are to be given in certain domain not subject to revision by any other higher authority. We had on more than one occasions difficulties to get our recommendations from the Council at that stage implemented by the Ministry and not only that if the Librarian was not in favour of the majority view and even of the unanimous view then it was very difficult for the other members to get the unanimous recommendation of the Council to be accepted or to be favourably considered by the Ministry. Therefore, Sir, the final authority in academic matters and in cultural matters ought to be left to the academic and cultural persons concerned. The delegation has to be there—not delegation in that form but the final authority is to be given to certain persons who are actually administering the National Library. The defects in the administration of the National Library have been partly due to the different persons who had been at some time or to her in charge of the Library here as Librarian or because of the difficulties created from Delhi. Therefore, that has to be avoided. In my humble submission, the Constitution as drawn up has to be changed in such radical form that it will be very difficult for you. Members of Parliament to pass that. Sir, I had been in the Council of States

in the twenties and that time and this occasion are quite different. It is very difficult to make fundamental changes and get that passed by the Parliament. So, it is for you to devise ways and means as to whether this should be gone into in making fundamental changes in the principle underlying the Bill or whether a new Bill is to be drafted by a competent authority or competent experts. There is another thing which has struck me. Many of the recommendations the Jha Committee are very substantial and very well-meaning and they ought to be implemented. But this will not be implemented according to the Constitution, in my humble view. While going through the Report of the Jha Committee though I was not a member of the Committee I had gone through it. I found that it was difficult for that Committee function because one ex-member and one present member of the Library were in the Committee. These two members being on a different looking had viewed things from different angles and personal things have come in here which does not enhance the reputation of the National Library. There have been difficulties in that way. If you read the principal report and the dissent and the subsequent enquiry had has been made you will find that these are the things responsible for the present form of the Bill and we have to rise above all those things if it is to be a National Library that has been recognised from the days in the last part of the last century. The Imperial Library was established before Lord Curzon came. When Lord Curzon came and took over the public library which had been started and the ideals which had been laid down there—I have been comparing it some time ago but I do not have a copy just now—were similar to that of the National Library. When Lord Curzon and later Late Jawaharlal Nehru entered the Belvedere building, I was present there on the last occasion not on the previous occasion, he said that many of these ideals of the National Library were similar.

Many of these ideals are similar. If you look to the National Library—in those days it was the Imperial Library,—it is not a State Library, it is not a regional library, but at the apex as the Jha Committee has stated at one place, I remember as apex on the entire Constitution—it should be guiding line of other libraries. There are no difficulties. It is no use overlooking the fact that there have been attempts and there are even now in the dissent note of the Jha Committee, reference made—as to whether in a State Capital the National Library should be located. I was present in Delhi as a Member of the Constituent Assembly at the time when the Imperial Library i.e., Christian National Library was made an all India Institution—a National Library.

There is no difficulty in State libraries or even libraries in the capital being subscribed to and made very big libraries. Take for instance in Delhi you can make National Archive. Recently, Nehru Library and Museum has been stated and the functions of this Nehru Library and Museum for collecting materials—historical materials—concerning the country are very good and encouraging. I myself had given some documents belonging to my brother, Dr. Shyamaprasad Mookerjee and my father for the purpose of keeping them there. National Archive also has been keeping those documents and other things properly.

There is no difficulty in having such institution in Delhi. National Archive remains as national archive. I cannot understand. What is the difficulty now in keeping the National Library here in Calcutta which had been the seat of culture when the British people came, and after that it had been the place where the National Library has grown. In the Bill it is stated that it will remain in Calcutta, but there is some reference by other people that why it should not be in Delhi. If we keep this above that the National Library will remain as a National Library and

will not be denigrated then we have to draw the constitution in a different way.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I suggest that you send some supplementary materials. Now without wasting your valuable time, I think, the honourable members may put their questions for having much ideas from you.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: May I ask Mr. Justic Mukherjee, while your father late Sir Asutosh Mukherjee, builder of the Calcutta University in the remote days, behaved that a very big library should go to the Calcutta University, then why you and your brother donated the books to the National Library? Is it because that you thought that a institution directly under the Government is a safer custody than under an autonomous institution?

SHRI RAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Sir, before I say something I humbly submit that I am not a justice now. I have retired long ago. I am simply Shri Ramaprasada Mookerjee.

With regard to the donation, I did not refer to my father's library in the opening words which I have spoken for obvious reasons. So far as my father's library is concerned, the general public did not know that my grand father had started a library and my father continued it. He invested a considerable part of his month after month—sometimes even more than he earned. He referred one day "a miser amasses fortune which he does not use for himself or make it available for the public or even members of his family." Books are to be collected not merely for the purpose of merely for the sake of collection but for using them. He loved books more than his sons and members of the family. We the four brothers thought that the National Library would be the appropriate place of keeping books which would be in due course a national asset. It

was for this purpose that we donated. I do not know whether the letter which we had addressed to the then Education Minister, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, had come to your notice.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This brochure has been supplied to the members and they must have noticed the letter of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. He assured you and your brothers including Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee that the Government of India have no intention to remove the National Library from Calcutta and I am personally of the opinion that there is no likelihood of this contingency to be arisen.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: In order that there may not be any misapprehension on this score, and the time of our very distinguished witness is not wasted I should like to state that it is the Government's policy to treat the National Library as the National Library. That the Government of India propose to develop other libraries is a clear policy of the Government because quite obviously it is not possible to cater all the needs of the country from only one centre. But that does not mean that the pre-eminence of the National Library will not be preserved and maintained fully as a National Library.

That by putting it in the Act that the central library shall continue to be located in Calcutta. Any misapprehension that there may be in the minds of any individual that the Government may, by an executive decision, remove this library from Calcutta is sought to be removed and therefore, on these two points, I would submit that there need not be any apprehension and I would be making, if necessary, further statement in the Parliament when the report of this Committee will be discussed. The Policy of the Government is very clear.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In clause 16, it is stated categorically that the Library shall continue to be located at Cal-

cutta. By the word 'Library' it means 'National Library'.

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: I have no doubt that the library is to be located at Calcutta and I am glad that this statement has been made by the Hon'ble Minister here. Last month I wanted to meet him, but I could not.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: In view of the entry 63 of the Constitution and as in the list of the 7th schedule the responsibility for the maintenance of the National Library would continue to vest in the Central Government and therefore the accountability of the Government to Parliament in respect of the National Library would be fully maintained because, as you know better than I do, the Constitutional position where the Parliament has jurisdiction of executive powers of the Union also extends the executive power of accountability to Parliament is fully safeguarded. Therefore, the question of responsibility of the Central Government is something which has been guaranteed by the Constitution itself and anything which the Parliament is contemplating to do is likely in any way to weaken the responsibility of the Central Government.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: Is there any condition attached for the donation of your books to the National Library?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: Yes. With regard to my father's collection, the condition in which the books are now kept is very bad. The books are kept in such a condition that there is no sufficient space—the roof is low causing abnormal temperature—and sufficient steps are not taken for binding the books. We presented at one lot 74 thousand of books. With regard to science and art collection it is one of the ideal things not only in the east, but even in comparison with the western countries, it is an asset to our nation. The collection of scientific journals are

there from the beginning of the 17th century and these were donated by us. You cannot measure it in money alone. A few years ago when Mr. Kalia was there, he said that it is valued to a crore of rupees because there are only two or three copies in the whole world.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The National Library authorities have shown us the floor of the annexe where Sir Asutosh Mukherjee's collections are kept. We were given information in regard to the preparation of separate catalogues of those collections were going on. Whatever you have said in regard to your misgivings, we shall convey to the Library authorities. We shall convey to the library the importance of what you have said and the importance and the urgency of their duty of looking after these collections.

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: I want to be excused, Sir, because my reference is not only to these collections but to other collections also. For instance, the Bohar collection, the Sanskrit manuscripts have not been catalogued all these years. These collections had been given in 1949 and how many catalogues have been published, how many volumes have been processed?

MR. CHAIRMAN: They tell us about three volumes.

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: Out of 75 thousand volumes 52 thousand volumes have been only accessioned, only 43 volumes have been processed and so on and so forth. So far as the other publications are concerned, the public is not being able to get the use of the library because the catalogues are not published. We have to depend upon Government press only. Persons are transferred from one office to another; catalogues are prepared by one and left unfinished. Let the Constitution be, as the Committee or the Board, whatever it may be, such that it can come to a decision and can implement it. Let it not depend on individuals—either the

librarian himself or subordinate officers. The manner in which delegations have been made in the Bill shows that it ceases to be an autonomous board and I have taken the provisions from the Bill to show how the word autonomous which is stated is merely a word which is used but in actual practice it cannot be autonomous.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have said those things in the presence of the whole Committee—the Minister and the Deputy Ministers are here and they will give directions to the National Library authorities but we as a committee have to go into the merits of the Bill as it is.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: I will just read two or three sentences from an editorial of a newspaper and then I will seek your concrete opinion about one thing which is bothering our mind most. These are the lines: "But the need of the hour is a competent head, call him librarian, director or what you will, with the maximum autonomy to take firm decisions unhampered by bureaucracy and the drive to see them implemented." Now, arising out of this I would like to have your opinion. As you have just now mentioned the condition of the books that is going on there for the past few years, do you think that under the direction of the Director or a Librarian, if you make the library an autonomous body, the library will be properly maintained upto the desired standard? If the Centre allocates a certain amount of fund every year and if the Ministry is responsible to the Parliament for the accountability of the whole thing, do you think that under an autonomous body the library is going to function in a better manner or can you suggest any means—the Ministry still remaining in control of the library—how the Ministry can give power to the Librarian or Director so that the efficiency of the library can be effected?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: I have already stated that powers

have to be delegated but the question is the limit of the delegation to the Governing body or the council—by whatever name you call it—or the Librarian. But such powers should be delegated not as to make them the supreme authority over everybody else. The librarian must have certain delegated powers but not to override the Committee. Therefore, delegation should be with the final authority in majority of the matters except in financial matters for which finance has to come. The Committee has to take the final authority and the librarian is to be the final authority for implementing the same and also for the academic and technical matters but for the administration to give the final authority to the Librarian alone personally would create further difficulties because there is very large staff and a very large number of readers and users of the library and if one man is given charge, that would create difficulties.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: That is not my point. I am talking about the power being given to the committee in the form of a statutory body just like any university or national laboratory. There the whole power lies with the committee which is the only administrative head. Do you prefer that sort of statutory body or you prefer some sort of modification that some powers are delegated to the Director or the Librarian and the Government still retaining control of the whole library?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: There must be some provisions made without going to the Parliament to modify some of those provisions as occasions may arise. Take for instance the question of modernisation of a library. I have seen various things in libraries in other parts of Europe. Those things ought to be introduced here. If it is to be provided with technical assistance that has to be given and for that to have a statutory body on a democratic basis is not approved of. For the Central body like this to have a democracy,

to have the readers' representatives by elections and others by elections—please keep away from those things.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: But how do you propose to get rid of the bureaucracy, of the red tapism of Government because the files will still move from one table to another and take indefinite time to come to a decision.

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKER-JEE: Final powers are to be given to the governing body. There the files will not go to Delhi. Only in financial matters and on questions of policies the files will be going to Delhi. The Ministry must have the authority to say whether it would be 10 lakhs or 15 lakhs or 20 lakhs. The Jha Committee made certain recommendations that certain minimum steps to be taken and money is to be spent for those purposes. That has not been implemented. The constitution has been drawn up without money without improving the deficiencies which have occurred and had been noticed and had been recommended to be made good.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: You have yourself stated that the final authority would be the governing body. Do I take it that you have certain suggestions regarding the nature and the composition of this governing body and you approve of the governing body being the final authority?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKER-JEE: Yes. The constitution will have to be a representative one and for a committee to be in session for three years and the entire committee going out—that is wrong. According to me there should be a bigger body and a small body which will be meeting more often. Being connected with some other institutions I have seen that high officers or secretaries of Government are there and dates have to be fixed in consultation with them and if one officer is not able to come he sends his representative. There are provisions like this but such provisions are obnoxious. I use the word

for certain difficulties. I had noticed in other places that the Ministry of Education of the Centre are paying 10 lakhs, 20 lakhs or so but in meetings the Minister cannot come, he just sends one Deputy Secretary or Under Secretary to represent him. Those things ought to be avoided. Therefore, there ought to be a bigger body that would be changing, it may be three years or five years, whatever the term may be, and one-third of them will go out every two years, thereby continuity will be kept.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Do I take it that this should be a broad based Committee with a small executive annex for the library? May I invite your attention to your own remarks. You have stated that some sort of a democratic institution should not be put into this National Library concept. I invite your kind attention to the various library legislations in the various parts of the world. To my mind the most revolutionary legislation has come in Brazil. I quote from Ranganathan's book—'The concept given by the legislation in Brazil is that librarianship is a profession. It should be accepted as such'. Therefore, what we mean by cultural and academic bodies or academic persons in a different context, the library authorities or the legislation in that regard gives greater prominence to the professionals in the library profession rather than to other cultural bodies. If that be the case, in such a body which would mean a national library, there should be a representation given to the library profession and, in one of the countries in Europe I have found that there is a provision whereby public representatives, Members of Parliament and members of local authorities, municipal corporations, are also associated. Is it your idea that they are ipso facto elected and not elected through users associations or library service associations? Do I take it like that?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKER-JEE: If I may give an instance, for

the development of the University Library of Calcutta there was not such a trained librarian. The University sent Dr. Nihar Ranjan Ray to be trained in librarianship to Europe and other places and was appointed as the first trained librarian of the University Library. At the same time, there were Professors and Readers not to be led by the technical things, above technical things, there are academic things which are to be looked after, about the library bibliography, reference, etc. These sections are essential. At the present time you might have noticed, an institution has come up, an international institution, and the original idea of national library or regional Library has been modified even in European countries. I will not trouble you with that. I will send you a copy of that. National Library, originally it was thought that it should be a reference library only. But the readers who are coming here cannot be kept out and are not to be kept out. Therefore, National Library here in Calcutta should have to be managed by technical types of librarians and also by academicians who will be able to assess about drawing up of its academic and cultural matters. Not only that, Sir, I may point out that they pointed out that consciousness among the people now is, in the administration also, people come to the library now, not only in India but in other parts of the world also, to understand the political things and other things. People are much more interested in these things and, therefore, they must be guided, they must be shown where to find them, how to find them. Publication Department of the Library is also a very important function of the Library. Therefore, it ought to be the Governing Body, or the bigger body. Although there will not be bigger elected bodies, it may be that there will be 3 representatives from the University by rotation throughout India. It may be the other cultural bodies throughout India by rotation. There would be nominations by the Government—there will

be nominations by the State Governments by rotation. In this way you might have the representatives of different interests and different functions, but not actually any electoral roll for the purpose of election and election mania going in.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: What you are envisaging is a pattern. We have a similar body and then an executive council, just as you have said, with representatives by rotation. Do I take it that this is your concept?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: It would have been better if Sahitya Academy were not taken. The Minister knows what is going on there.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: This Bill, as you might have noticed, has suggested a Government nominated autonomous body. Are you in favour of this Government nominated body?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: I have made it clear that it should not be wholly nominated.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: In your opinion how many people should constitute the Governing Body?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: I have said that there should be 3 representatives from 3 Universities.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: How many people do you think will constitute a workable Governing Body?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: I am not giving my final opinion, but I think it should be about 30 to 35 for the bigger body and the smaller body should have about 10 to 12 members which should be meeting once a month or once in two months.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: How many members should come from Government as nominated members?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: These are questions of details.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: If there are 30 members in the Govern-

ing Body, do you think only 3 should come from Government?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKER-JEE: It may be one-third or one-fourth.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: Then there will be members from the universities and cultural bodies. Do you think representation should be given to Parliament and other bodies?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKER-JEE: Yes. I do not keep out the names of the Members of Parliament. What I suggest is that the final authority will be the Government of India.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: You have said that books are being kept badly in National Library. From your experience what are the reasons? Is it due to lack of fund, lack of finance, or is it due to incompetence at the top, particularly of the Librarian, or negligence of the staff?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKER-JEE: I would not say all of them. It is not possible to say within a sentence or two a detailed answer.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZAL-PURKAR: You have a rich experience in the judiciary as also in law. Yesterday an article appeared in "The Statesman" wherein the writer stated about delegated autonomy and statutory autonomy. Will you please enlighten what is meant by delegated autonomy and statutory autonomy.

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKER-JEE: These are technical matters. There had been difference of opinion on that point. Delegation may be in different ways. It may be by legislation, by resolution or by a simple letter. There has been some provision in the Acts of different universities, for instance. Delegation has been given in a limited way, and there is a clause regarding emergency power in many of the Acts. Under emergency all the powers are vested in one individual and that has created in some places very good results and in some places autonomy and also mismanagement. Partiality comes in,

and decision—sometimes quick decision—is made not in the interest of the organisation. It depends on the nature of the particular delegation and the object with which delegation is to be given. The question is, are you going to make that body independent, excepting financial matters, of the Ministry? Rules and regulations are all subject to approval of the Government but the responsibility for implementing them lies on the bodies concerned.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZAL-PURKAR: Do you want delegated autonomy for the National Library?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKER-JEE: There is no autonomy because with regard to financial matters it had remained with the Government. Even under this it still remains with the Government. Government has not given away the responsibility of finding funds.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: How do you like to propose that this Library should be truly national in character?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKER-JEE: By rotation. You cannot have every State in it and if you do so every State will try to serve its own interest and then it will become much larger than the Parliament itself.

DR. RAJATA KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: From your concept of delegated autonomy or statutory autonomy whatever it is, what do you think of the fate of the employees. Will you consider them Government employees or employees of the Board?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKER-JEE: According to my humble opinion, the provision is not legal, not constitutional. Employees are all Government servants having certain rights under the Constitution. These rights cannot be taken away without their consent. If there is a new scale of pay or new service rules, according to the Constitution you

have to take their consent. Under this Bill they are to continue as Government servants until the Board decides otherwise. Next clause is that if there is anything done detrimental to their interest or status which they hold now, that will be done subject to the approval of the Ministry. What does it mean? In my humble opinion, Government can take away the rights which they have now got. That would lead to litigation and there will be various difficulties.

DR. RAJATA KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Supposing their privileges as regards pay scales, promotional avenues, allowances, etc., are incorporated in the Bill—they are afraid that they won't be called class II or class I gazetted officers, they won't be called Government employees—in that case do you find any difficulty?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: If the entire structure of the staff is going to be changed under new constitution, you cannot have old people with their existing grades at every place. A particular office may be abolished, a particular office may be created, new rules may be framed—all these are technical questions which would be affecting their interest. Therefore to make it a statutory body, as distinct from a Government institution, that would create difficulty for the staff.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA SHANKAR ADIVAREKAR: Being one of the donors of a very valuable collection of books to the Library I would like to know from the honourable witness that there are a number of apprehensions being expressed in certain memorandum submitted to the Committee that if this becomes an autonomous Board there is a danger that private donations might not come through and people might not be interested to give private collection to a Body which is autonomous. Do you also feel the same thing?

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: I think so. We had given our collection because it was a state thing; if it was a private thing we

would have thought twice before given the collection. As a matter of fact, after our collections were giving one or two other people came with the gift. I was even personally responsible for having the heirs of the deceased to be brought in there saying that we had given our books. Therefore, if it be a private Body then there will be difficulty—donors might not come in—because we have experience of private collection in private libraries in Calcutta during the last century which had gone out of existence.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: The distinguished witness used the word "private". I think the word "private" is perhaps not applicable to an institution which is established by an Act of Parliament and which is under the control of legislative authority and control of Parliament. The second point I would like to clarify is that Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Museum and Library is a registered society under the Societies Registration Act. Nevertheless, because it is a society sponsored by the Central Government, the authority and control of the Parliament remains over this society and I have myself been asked questions in Parliament and have replied the question and have not said that it was a private Body and therefore, I had nothing to do with it. I am very much required by Parliament to keep vigilance over the society, to look into matters, and to answer questions and give report to Parliament and that is the reason why in spite of the fact that it is technically a registered society, very many distinguished people have been coming forward and giving to this society gifts of papers of their families or of their illustrious ancestors that they might have had. I want to make this point clear that if the Parliament in its wisdom chooses to have a particular arrangement made for the administration of an institution it does not mean that it becomes a private rather than a national or State institution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mookerjee, your view appears to me to be that

the administration of the National Library would be better if it becomes truly representative and adequately numerous bodies look after it and there is a smaller body to take decision and becomes responsible and thirdly the operations of the library are always amenable to supervision and control by the Parliament. Now this can be done by restructuring of the administration and the idea of autonomy as the Minister has just explained is by no means contradictory and the overall jurisdiction of Parliament and Government continues to be operative. Now, in order to bring about a change in the structural position of the administration of the National Library there had been an idea and you also had hinted at it that Government by a letter could, perhaps, bring about a change. But it seems however from the advice received from certain other legal sources that it is safer to bring about the changes through legislative processes, that is to say, by enactment whatever modifications are necessary by the Select Committee in the first place and by the Parliament in the later stage so that there can be no question about the position of the new administrative structure that is being put up. Therefore, you are apparently in favour of intellectuals and others being associated with the administration in a manner so that they can function with self respect and not treated as a Government department and they have nothing to do but merely to give advice. You are in favour of a kind of autonomous administration provided the control of

Government and answerability to Government is guaranteed. If that is your view I would like to have that view reiterated so that the Committee may take advantage of your thinking on the point.

SHRI RAMAPROSAD MOOKERJEE: I would suggest that whatever is to be done you cannot say that it will be full-proof or the ideal thing. Therefore, it would be advisable, when the Parliament is coming to the picture, to have that by a letter or by a resolution by Government. See how it works for 2 years or one year or 3 years and then make necessary changes because whatever you want to make improvement has to be done quickly and effectively. The manner in which the librarian had been appointed, the council had been there, the work has deteriorated to such an extent that it should not be delayed in this manner. Therefore I would suggest this can be done effectively to remedy the defects. Some new constitution may be brought in so that you may see how it works and then make necessary changes. Before the Bill is passed, at this stage I would suggest that this may be done in the best interest of the Library as also keeping in view the responsibility of the Central Government and the status of the Institution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Mookerjee, for your very valuable suggestions.

(The witness then withdrew)

II. National Library Gazetted Officers' Association, Calcutta

Spokesmen:

1. Shri M. N. Nagaraj
2. Smt. Mira Pakrasi
3. Shri G. L. Ray
4. Shri Balasubramanian.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we proceed I have to intimate to you that the evidence that you give would be treated as public and is liable to be published unless you specifically desire

that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable

to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

Now, would you like, before questions are asked by honourable Members, to give a statement as to the position you have taken?

SHRI M. N. NAGARAJ: At the outset I would like to say on behalf of the Association that we are in full agreement in so far as the objectives of the Bill which relate to that part which mentions about the functioning of the Library, modern scientific line and its efficient functioning are concerned. But as far as the latter part is concerned which says about the board to manage the institution we have certain observations to make. Sir, it is a point to be considered whether the Library can be managed as envisaged in the objectives of the Bill by the Government itself or by a board controlled by the Government. The Jha Committee has specifically gone into the question of administration of the National Library by a statutory body. This is evident from the fact that the Jha Committee, when they issued a questionnaire to a number of people specifically included the specific question that 'whether you want the National Library to be administered by a statutory body or not and, if so, give reasons?' That is the indication that the Jha Committee specifically touched on this question and after getting the evidence tendered by different persons and members the Jha Committee considered the whole question and struck at a happy compromise by mentioning a new terminology,—as far as we are concerned—i.e. delegated autonomy. Possibly for some valid reasons the Government cannot and has not accepted and implemented this part of the recommendations even though a large number of the recommendations have been accepted by the Government of India. In the meantime a new situation has arisen. Long after the recommendation of delegated autonomy and before its consideration by the Joint Committee, the Central Pay

Commission recommended a pay of Rs. 2,500/- per month for the head of the National Library which the Government had accepted. The person who heads the National Library will enjoy same powers and privileges and status as enjoyed by the heads of Government Departments in the same scale. The autonomy of power has already been given to the heads of the Department, to an individual but not to the body corporate as envisaged in the Jha Committee. At this juncture our appeal would be to give a fair trial to this individual who heads the Department so that he can normalise the existing situation. I specifically use the word 'normalise' because the three committees, the Jha Committee, the Khosla Committee and the Report of the Chief Labour Commissioner recommended various things because of the ills which had temporarily crept into the library can be removed when the situation becomes normal. The other aspect of management can be looked into and then because of the large problems that the Library has faced in the last 10 years so many problems have crept in and actually have snowballed in a very big-looking problem. In this situation, we feel that introduction of an autonomous board might not be a safe solution where delegated autonomy has already been accepted in so far as the individual is concerned. A fair trial can be given so that he can normalise the situation when the library is functioning in a healthy and normal fashion. Change of management can be thought of in so far as the Board itself is concerned once the library gets normal. Fears have been expressed mostly in newspapers and things like that that the receipts under the Delivery of Books Act would be less. It is a fact which can be cleared by figures. The national library being the Government of India Library has been receiving most of the books. It might be that because of various reasons in the past few years the receipt of books has been reduced but still then the number of books in two other recipient libraries, one at Madras and the other at Bom-

bay, is far below the numbers of books received in the National Library. Moreover, the books received in Madras and Bombay are only consequential to the reminders sent to the publishers from the National Library. After the National Library receives the books, at the time of acknowledging the receipts they write to the publishers requesting them to send the copies to Bombay and Madras and very rightly so. Now, how we came to the conclusion that it is consequential in nature is because the three libraries are co-operating in one sense that at the end of the month or quarter the titles received by each library are sent on to other libraries. When checking and cross checking of materials are done it is found that a large number of titles received by Madras and Bombay have already been received by the National Library 2/3 months earlier. It gives the feeling that after the books were received in the National Library the National Library requested the publishers to send those books to these libraries. Now, as far as the individual gifts are concerned when the Library was moved to Belvedere, the donors were sure that their books would be housed in a better fashion. Now, there is fear that the number of gifts will decrease if it is run by an autonomous body and the apprehension in the minds of the donors that once the library is administered by a board such gifts will not be looked after well by them, has some real basis. Sir, if there be an Indian Library Service being established in the country then the persons working in this Library will be completely shut off from that organisation.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: I would like to know as to what is the basis of this observation made by the honourable witness that there is any proposal of an Indian Library Service. At least I am not aware of any such proposal.

SHRI M. N. NAGARAJ: I said in case such a Library service is set up. The apprehension is that in case such

a service is set up then the National Library will be shut off from its advisory capacity about the functioning of almost all the institutions in the country. This happened because in 1957 the Estimates Committee of the Parliament visited the National Library and they made specific recommendation saying that the other libraries of the country should take a lead from the way the National Library is being run. The persons from other Libraries should be sent for training to National Library. As a consequential measure the library authorities have to do the advisory work so far as the planning and other library matters are concerned.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: You mention at the beginning that in the Pay Commission Report it is recommended that the salary of the Librarian should be Rs. 2500 and it should be run as a department of the Government. We have our Chief Engineers who also draw the same salary of Rs. 2500 and they are also the heads of large departments. If you opine that the Librarian should have a salary of Rs. 2500 as he acts as the head of a department, then is there any need of any Advisory Committee for it because no Chief Engineer needs any Advisory Committee to guide him. Now I read a few lines from an editorial of a newspaper-- "bad staff relations, personal backbiting, agitation and other challenges to the authority subsequently led to neglect and pilfering the poor service to the readers..." What is your opinion on this editorial item?

SHRI M. N. NAGARAJ: It is true that there are various problems in the National Library. The Committees already have gone into its problems and suggested some remedial measures.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Do you feel that by simply appointing the Head of the Institution in the form of a Librarian or Director, and keeping it under the direct control of the Central Government, as it is now, these ills can be removed? Or

do you feel that if it is made an autonomous body like University where there is a Governing Body to guide the Vice-Chancellor—where the Vice-Chancellor is the sole authority it will function better?

SHRI M. N. NAGARAJ: When a Head of the Department is appointed he does not work in isolation. In the case of this Library, the Head of the Department is assisted by his staff who function like an Advisory Committee, but at the same time it is not possible on the part of the Head of the Department that he will cure all the ills. We could only want that the Advisory Board function properly towards the selection and acquisition of books etc.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPURKAR: I want to know specifically whether you are in favour of Statutory autonomy or not as it seems that you have got a fear about Clause 15 of this Bill regarding transfer of service of existing employees to the Board? Suppose it is modified and your services will be considered as Government service, then what you have got to say? And the second point is, why the number of readers have been reducing now-a-days?

SHRI M. N. NAGARAJ: In the first place we are not opposed to autonomy in the true sense of the term. But the autonomy as envisaged in the Bill this is not the right time to introduce because the library is undergoing a difficult period. Once the whole system of the library is normalised then we can think of changes. But at present we are against such autonomy as proposed in the Bill. As regards the number of readers, I do not think that the number of readers has reduced in the last few years because of the fact that it is a growing organisation.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: I want to put a simple question. The honourable witness has expressed a lot of fear and misapprehension for transferring the National Library to autonomous administration, but he

wants an Advisory Committee when it is under the Government control. May I suppose that the Hon'ble Education Minister should be stationed in Calcutta with the additional powers of Director of the National Library to manage the day to day affairs of the Library? I cannot understand what is exactly acceptable to him. Perhaps nothing is acceptable to him.

SHRI SAROJ MUKHERJEE: Mr. Chairman, the hon. witness is quite clear in his statement, but putting him this sort of questions is nothing but ridiculing him. This should be stopped.

SHRI M. N. NAGARAJ: I have never mentioned that nothing is acceptable—may be I am not clear in my expression. Perhaps the Government has accepted the appointment of an officer in the rank of a Joint Secretary. If that be the case the power that will be enjoyed by the Librarian will be equivalent to the persons drawing the same salary and holding identical post in the Government machinery.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: You have mentioned that there is a fear psychosis amongst the employees. Do you think that the fear psychosis persists because in our public eyes Class I and Class II Gazetted Officers hold more prestige than people working in the Banks, Schools and Colleges?

SHRI M. N. NAGARAJ: It is partly true. In the present social condition of the country, the people who are already in Government service hold some more prestige than the employees of the other institutions.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: Keeping in view that in 1947-48 the budgeted amount for the National Library (Imperial Library) was Rs. 1,47,300/-, but in 1972-73 the amount was Rs. 39,95,700/-. In 1970-71, the number of out station scholars was 134, but in 1972-73, it was only 117—why the figures have gone down inspite

of the fact that the budgetary allotment went upto more than Rs. 39 lakhs?

SHRI M. N. NAGARAJ: I would like to mention that in 1947-48, this library was housed in a Government building and there was no considerable expenditure towards its accommodation. But at present we have to spend a very large amount for its new building, for the maintenance of gardens and various ancillary works pertaining to our library. So far as the number of out station scholars, I admit that there is a reduction of number from 134 to 117.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: In 1947-48, the book budget of the Library was not a sizeable one, but now in 1972-73, it is Rs. 4 lakhs.

SHRI M. N. NAGARAJ: The correct figures are not with me at present.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps there is some difficulty to supply us correct figure. I suggest that the correct figures can be supplied to us later on by you.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: You represent the gazetted officers and you have got difficulty in functioning your duties in the National Library. My simple question is this, If the Government come forward to take the responsibility of finance for the National Library then there will be no difficulty regarding finance. My second point is this that Government gave an assurance that all privileges will be safeguarded by the Government, if the National Library is handed over to an autonomous body. In this regard what are your concrete suggestions?

SHRI M. N. NAGARAJ: As far as the finance is concerned, I may say that if the Government completely take care of it even then the accountability will be there. We are getting large collection of documents from Government to Government exchange system and from other libraries also.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: I would like to clarify the point. I do not

see any justification for this apprehension which has been expressed by the witnesses. Once the Government enter into a cultural agreement or any other type of agreement with another government, then they specify as to which is the authority to operate which particular part of that agreement. For example, Sir, I may state for the information of hon. members of the Committee as well as for the witnesses that if the government enters into a cultural agreement with another government and there is a component of academic exchange, generally the authority to operate that component would be the University Grants Commission which is also a statutory autonomous body. In the same manner some parts of the agreement are operated upon by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research which is a registered society under the authority of the Government. Therefore, to say if Parliament decides to set up a governing body or an autonomous governing body then the particular function which the National Library has been performing won't be able to perform is conceived.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: The honourable witnesses know that we have got the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Indian Council of Medical Research and then the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and five IITs. Almost all of these bodies have been statutorily composed. Now, take the case of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. Mr. Swaminathan is the Director General cum its office Secretary to the Government but the employees of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research have never apprehended that their status and whatever privileges they have got are lessened than those of anybody in the Government. What has made you apprehensive that this body which we envisage will be lowering down your status or emoluments and other privileges you are enjoying? Why are you so apprehensive of a body made by the Parliament? Do you think

that a small body—a body made up of Professors Nurul Hasan and D. P. Yadav will be more effective?

SHRI M. N. NAGRAJ: From our side it is only an apprehension. This autonomy is being thought of at a time when we are passing through a number of problems.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: That is our look-out to rectify those problems. We are the financing authority, we shall look into the problems but may I know what apprehension you have in your mind?

SHRI PATIL PUTAPPA: Sir, let him spell out what are those problems. What he requires for consolidating the library; whether it is the question of money allotment or staff or staffing pattern. There are now 700 people working on the National Library. Is that staff enough and what is actually being done there and how long would he take to consolidate the functioning of the National Library, the arrears of the work to be brought up to date—what he would require so that he can put matters right.

SHRI M. N. NAGRAJ: The present sanctioned staff of the library is 700 persons but the number of persons actually on the pay roll is nearly 600. Of this 600 persons, at least 150 came in position only in the last few months, i.e. in the recent past and their effectiveness has not been felt yet.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Do you mean to say that up to the end of the last year you worked with only three hundred people against the sanctioned strength of 700?

SHRI M. N. NAGRAJ: The present sanctioned staff is 700. The number of persons on the pay roll is nearly 600. In August 1962 our sanctioned staff was 505.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: How many persons you had last year at the beginning of 1972?

SHRI M. N. NAGRAJ: In the beginning of 1970-71 we had only 529 persons of which less than 500 or near

about 450 were in the pay roll in the beginning of 1971-72. The effectiveness of these individuals who joined after that has not yet been felt in the work of the National Library.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I do not see why we are discussing these things. This is in relation to the internal administration of the National Library.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: But these points should be hammered out. We were under the impression that so long all the 700 people were there and they are not capable of managing the library. Now this statement has come from the witness and if there are 450 men working there up to the beginning of 1972, how can we expect that the Library would be working well?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The sphere of work of this Committee is strictly limited to the Bill itself. I know the members of the Committee might be agitated over certain difficulties of the employees but I do not see how we in this Committee can go into those matters. I know this matter ought to be clarified. The administration of the Library and the Minister and Deputy Minister are here and they can be told to give us a very clear idea as to what exactly is the position.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: My appeal to you, Sir, is to get the information from the authorities of the Library. What was the number of actual staff during the period of 1971-72? If the Committee wishes to do so, after we have disposed of the evidence we can ask for explanation.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: I think it is relevant in the sense that we are discussing that the work of the National Library has deteriorated. So, an autonomous status might improve things. That is what the Bill is for. Now, we would naturally like to know the difficulties about the indexing, cataloging, keeping of books, etc. Are they because Librarian is not there, or funds

or staff are not there? Or, is it the position that everything is there. If it is made autonomous things will improve? It is now stated that 700 men are not there. We should have the details. Why should we discuss autonomy at all unless it improves matters?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ghosh, you have had your say. I wish to remind the members again that this is not the forum, at this moment, particularly for finding out facts which may very well be relevant to the Committee before it makes up its mind in any way and nobody including the witness, as far as I could make out, is authoritatively in a position to answer. The Committee has every right to find facts which are necessary before we make up our mind. The Committee is at liberty to ask the department to give materials. If the Committee so chooses, we can even before we disperse make another visit to the National Library and find out so many other things about which questions and doubts have accumulated in the minds of the members. But this is not a forum where polemic discussion can be brought in the picture. In so far as witnesses are concerned, if they were in full possession of all the facts authoritatively attested, I think that would not help. There will be questions and counter-questions. I would suggest in all humility that the Committee, if it so chooses, may ask the Secretariat to arrange for another visit to the National Library after the evidence is disposed of. If there are questions in regard to the Bill and in regard to the views of the witness about the Bill, then they may be asked.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: Sir, the issue is whether it should have an autonomous status or not. I say, autonomous status would improve thing. We have the witness in the box who is trying to project his argument that autonomy will not improve things.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Though I am a tentative Chairman, I have given a ruling. The honourable members will

please remember that there would be many occasions for the committee to sit down and there will be occasions when from Government and other sources we shall find out more materials to check and counter-check things. This is a stage where we are collecting evidence. This is not a stage where we can enter into a discussion. Later we will have plenty of opportunities. Since we are in Calcutta, the venue of the National Library, we have already paid a hurried visit to the National Library. Since many questions and doubts have accumulated in the minds of the members, if it is possible, Government may arrange another visit for authoritative information being collected. We have to proceed according to the schedule. If the honourable members have any very relevant question to ask, they may do so.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: In all fairness to the witness the feeling should not go home that for all the acts of commission and omission over the years these persons are responsible.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let us draw a veil over this matter.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: May we know the reaction of the witness to the recommendations made by the Jha Committee?

SHRI M. N. NAGARAJ: It was very well received by the library and in early 1970 when the Ministry sanctioned money for a number of projects, we were very happy that Government had taken action, but unfortunately, for various reasons from 1970 onwards we did not have a Librarian. The Ministry sanctioned a certain amount of money, but the recommendations that were included in Jha Committee report could not be processed and sent on to Delhi. But at some stage when we had a Librarian temporarily some of the projects got through. From 1962 till the time the Jha Committee recommendations were actually implemented—during the Third Plan most of the Government departments ex-

panded but we could not do so. There was ban on recruitment of staff. I want to mention, though it is not directly relevant, that few posts were sanctioned after 1964 when the Delivery of Books Act came into effect. At that time Library appointed a few persons knowing the Indian languages. As collections grew, activities of the division had to grow. In 1962 Government sanctioned a few posts but for various reasons we could not fill them up. A person knowing Malayalam had to be recruited on a scale of Rs. 160/- and Government rules are that we have to recruit them from local employment exchanges which could not supply such a person. If the Librarian is given full powers he can appeal to Government that recruitment of people knowing Malayalam is not possible from the Calcutta market.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: What is your reaction to the recommendations made by Government so far as autonomy is concerned?

SHRI M. N. NAGARAJ: We are in favour of that. For some valid reasons it is not possible for Government to accept or implement recommendation of Jha Committee in so far as delegated autonomy is concerned. It is perhaps for this reason the question of statutory autonomy comes in.

III. Bengal Library Association, Calcutta

Spokesmen:

1. Shri B. P. Mookerjee.
2. Shri P. Roychaudhury.
3. Shri S. Banerjee.
4. Shri B. Banerjee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may please note that your evidence shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by you is to be treated as confidential. Even though your evidence is to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: There was a Library Council comprising 12 members and the Jha Committee knew it full well. In spite of that it recommended for governing body having full powers of autonomy. What is your opinion in regard to that?

SHRI M. N. NAGARAJ: Till 1962 we had a Governing Council. When the Library was declared as Head of a Department and delegation of powers came to the Librarian, powers of the Governing Council were taken over by the Librarian and then Advisory Council continued to function. Even then Advisory Council could not meet for various reasons from 1969 to 1973. Very rightly-Advisory Council deposed before the Jha Committee that their functions were superfluous. In the earlier years even staff sanction and budget grants had to be approved by Governing Council till 1962. It is only after 1962 that this Advisory Council came in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. If you want to say anything more or if you want to supplement your statement further, you can send this to us.

(The witnesses then withdrew)

be made available to the Members of Parliament.

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: We have already submitted our memorandum but we would like to add a few words. National Library is an organisation of national importance

and such an organisation of national importance should remain under the control of Government. The main objective is to find national literary wealth. This is also a national centre for bibliographic activities. It is a centre which organises different international cooperative activities. It conducts research, survey on the library activities of our country. Such an organisation of national importance should be under the control of Government. We cannot think of national treasury under an autonomous board. So also we cannot think of national cultural treasury in the hands of an autonomous organisation. It should be under the direct control of the Government. This Bill also contradicts the social policy of the Government. We can say that this de-nationalisation of Government-controlled institution is definitely against the policy of nationalisation of many private organisations and institutions which are suffering from various maladies. Here we find that an organisation which is running for the last twenty-five years under the control of our National Government and which was also running under the control of the British Government since its inception in 1923 is now going to be in the hands of an autonomous body. Government is now thinking of changing the administrative set up. Further, it is stated in the Objects and Reasons of the Bill that it has been drafted in accordance with the recommendation of the Jha Committee. The Report of the Jha Committee is not a public document, but as a professional body we have gone through the recommendations and we find that they have clearly stated that they did not prefer statutory autonomy. They prefer delegated autonomy. Of course there is lot of controversy about delegated autonomy. At the same time we like to tell you that there are two more important recommendations and while drafting this Bill Government had never taken consideration to those recommendations. In 1957 Government of India appointed an Advisory

Committee for Library. Again there is a working Group of Libraries appointed by the Planning Commission. These two Groups categorically recommended that the public library services of our country should be under the control of the Government. When this is the recommendation we find that the top most library of our country, the most important library which preserves nation's cultural wealth, Government is changing its policy regarding that library, they are trying to hand over it to an autonomous Board. At the same time, we like to tell you what actually we mean by delegated autonomy. We have to take the spirit of the Jha Committee's Recommendation in this connection. According to that Committee there is no actual power with the local administration and they have to depend upon the recommendation and approval of the Central Government. They wanted that there should be some autonomy for local administration. We also like to tell you that the status of the national library may be improved. At present the status is that it is subordinate to the department of Culture and as a result whenever a decision is taken by the local administration it has to be forwarded to the Ministry of Education and it takes lot of time for receiving approval of the Ministry. If the status is improved, if it is attached to Government of India or if it is put directly under a newly created department then we will be able to overcome all the problems. Sir, the real roots of present maladies and ills are not properly understood. Actually the National Library which is now functioning in Calcutta, we should say that is the National Library of the entire country, is functioning as a super library and it is not a National Library. If we have a proper perspective, if we consider that we want to develop the National Library, that can be done within Government set up. I would like to give some facts. The National Library spent during the last 6/7 years rupees 4 to 4.5 lakhs for purchase of documents. Sir, we

are attached to some university and we know that even a university library spends more than Rs. 4.5 lakhs for purchase of documents. Is it not lack of proper understanding on the part of the Government about the role, about the importance of the National Library? This attitude has also been reflected by another point. The National Library has been treated as a subordinate office under the department of Culture. It has also been reflected by lack of proper management policy—it has not been properly managed on scientific lines. I give some examples. Some years back the National Library took a project of bibliographic activities, the first volume was published but then Government decided that this bibliographic activity should be handed over to scholars. After 8/10 years nothing has been done and I think Government is now thinking that the project should be given to the Library staff. So, Sir, we find that Government is very inconsistent in their policy about the National Library. Then I quote something about the working of different countries in the world. In almost all the countries of the world except Great Britain where British Museum has a separate tradition these are administered and controlled by the Government. Even in the developing countries, even in the non-socialist countries where private entrepreneurship is not encouraged, these are under the Government. If they can rather better service within the administrative set up of Government, we fail to understand why it is not possible here. At the same time we find that the functioning of the autonomous Bodies in our country is not at all satisfactory and as I don't know why Government is thinking that by making it autonomous functioning will be speedy and smooth. At the same time there will be red-tapism. What is the real picture of the autonomous Boards. Are we satisfied with the CSIR? Are we satisfied with the functioning of I.C.A.R. Are we satisfied with our different universities? No, Sir, Even

in some cases we can say the working of the autonomous Boards is worse than Government organisation. At the same time, we say that autonomy suggested here is not a real one. Government is shirking the responsibilities. After 25 years of malaise for which Government is responsible all on a sudden Government has come to shirk its responsibility and trying to shift it to the autonomous Board. At the same time if we go through the Bill we find that it is an attempt to control the Library indirectly. So, the autonomy is not real. I say, Government is not serious about autonomy also. They are suffering from a confused thinking because we can say it is not consistent. Then by autonomy some other problems also will be created. I would tell you what those problems are.

MR. CHAIRMAN: May I suggest that the hon. witness may submit a supplementary note and give some time to Members to put questions to him? Could you submit a written memorandum by to-morrow when you can come again and when we will ask you questions? If you supply a written memorandum it will be helpful. Suppose I would ask you whether have you been in a position to read fairly carefully the Review Committee's report or the Jha Committee's Report?

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: Yes, Sir

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you noticed there that the Jha Committee's intention has been to see that the National Library is administered under the over-all supervision of the Government and Parliament as an autonomous body so that self-respecting and imaginative scholars and people of that sort could be represented on that kind of body?

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I do not think you will be opposed to the principle of better organisation by the participation in administration of representa-

tives of intellectuals and such persons?

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: No, not at all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have heard you saying that you do not like the idea of the Government treating the National Library as a subordinate organisation of the Education Ministry. That is, you would like to maintain its high level character so that contact with the government could be made at that high level.

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Even then you have said that the Bill subverts the intention of the Jha Committee. Perhaps you have not noticed that properly. I am speaking from the record. The Government has indicated the Jha Committee's concept of autonomy. If it is to be given legal shape it requires several alternative propositions one is the registration of National Library as a separate society as the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research is, or by a statute which is the intention of the present government or by another commission. It is from that angle that the Government has proposed this Bill and it is under the consideration of Parliament. Now, we can improve upon the provisions of the Bill to satisfy the recommendations of the Jha Committee. Now, if the basic recommendation of the Jha Committee regarding the direction of the Library is something which meets with your approval then would it not be appropriate for the Parliament to accept that and come forward with a system in order that we can improve the formulation of this Bill and objectives of the Jha Committee? On that could we count upon your co-operation?

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then I would like you to send us whatever suggestions you have to improve upon this Bill to make it a genuine operative provision.

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: Sir, if we are asked to improve upon the provisions of this Bill then we have to accept the problems in regard to the administration of the Library by an autonomous board. We are also interested in the improvement of the National Library.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For what do you object to an autonomous organisation? Is it due to the fact that you fear that the terms and conditions of the employees will be changed or is it because of your fear which you have indicated that an autonomous body will not be able to work efficiently?

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: We are not much concerned with the problems of the employees because they have got National Library Employees Association. We are interested in the improvement of service of the National Library because the National Library is the property of the entire nation. It should serve the entire country. We want that improvement may be made definitely by the Government administrators. How that can be done? Let there be a Department of libraries under the Government of India. The status of the National Library should be raised to that of an Department of the Government. Let there be proper financial provisions for the improvement of the National Library. Let there be some such schemes by which the National Library can go on with its different activities within country and also can establish relations with other libraries and co-operate with the other libraries of the countries of the world. So, if you ask me to suggest and improve upon the Bill I regret it is not possible for us as the Bill suggest statutory autonomy and that actual improvement will not be possible within the jurisdiction of the Parliament because if it is an autonomous body then the annual report will not be placed in the Parliament.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: No, the report can be placed.

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: Only audited report will be placed not the annual report. We want that the National Library should be under the direct control of the Government so that the entire members of the Parliament can watch the activities of the National Library and if there is any mistake and anything wrong they can easily raise a question in the Parliament.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You see, the University Grants Commission is an autonomous body of a very high distinction and the Government looks on it with great respect. The reports of the U.G.C. also are always discussed in Parliament. So there cannot be any misapprehension about the position of the National Library. The Government has indicated, and the Education Minister is here also, that the National Library would obviously be under the eyes of Parliament. If the U.G.C. which is an autonomous body directly connected with the Government function with a high level of operating efficiency then the National Library might conceivably do so. So far as report to Parliament is concerned there is a clause in the Bill which deals with that viz., clause 24.

SHRI S. A. SHAMIM: I would like to know from the honourable witness as to why they are objecting to this autonomous character being granted to the National Library. Your statement appears to be self-contradictory in as much as that you said that the workings of the National Library deteriorated under the Government control and at the same time unlike me your faith in the Government has not been completely exhausted because you do not want an autonomous body. We want to know precisely the exact reasons why the autonomous body will not be an ideal one?

National Library should be a national asset. How do you say that once it becomes an autonomous body, it is completely devoid of Government

control. This autonomous body should naturally be within the framework of the autonomous character given by the Parliament and the Government.

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: We have to take first what is the objective of the National Library. The objective of the National Library is to collect and preserve the nation's culture and literature which are the most precious wealth of the country. So, in such an organisation, definitely the security of the document is an important factor. The documents should be preserved not only for the present generation, but also for the posterity. Government is the most comprehensive and lasting social institution—so far as in the history of mankind is concerned—for taking the responsibility of this wealth. So, if this responsibility is handed over to an organisation other than the Government then people's mind would be more suspicious about its future. Let us take the National Archive. National Archives is an important organisation because they preserve important archival materials of the country and that is why Government did not consider it to be handed over to an autonomous body. We know that different Government organisations are not functioning well—as in the case of National Library—we know there are maladies and ills. Still I think, it would be appropriate that Government should come forward to rectify these ills instead of handing them over to autonomous body.

MR. CHAIRMAN: From your statement it is evident that you are not in favour of autonomous administration for the National Library because you fear that national assets in the shape of books will not be secured at the hands of autonomous administration. You have greater faith in Government for its supervision and control. As I have already said, you may please submit your supplementary memorandum today if you have got substantial ideas.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: If you can submit your supplementary memorandum by this evening then there will be a chance for the honourable members to meet you again tomorrow and ask further clarifications on any point they like.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: As an academician I would like—because you are also in the teaching profession—to seek your opinion in the academic field, in the sense that when we are talking about the nationalisation of coal and steel industry instead of thinking the nationalisation of academies, whether a national council may be formed by the eminent personalities and technical persons. When the required funds will be provided by the Central Government then what is your actual opposition against autonomy?

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: You have raised a very important point. It is true that in the case of selection of reading materials, definitely, there should be an autonomy, but in the administration side there should be Government control.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Do you suggest that all the universities in the country are to be taken over by the Government.

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: Surely.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Are you not asking for any syndicate or Governing Body?

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: Yes, I do. There should be some liberty. Already there are four universities functioning under the Central Government.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: But there are I.I.Ts. and some other big institutions which are run by the statutory bodies.

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: Though they are run by the statutory bodies still Government have some control over them in respect of the financial matters. I want that all the universities should be taken over by the Government of India, but at the same time, in the academic matters there should be some liberties in the hands of the Syndicate.

SHRI S. A. SHAMIM: You cannot get things both ways.

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: I mean to say that there should be some liberty in the hands of the Syndicate or something like that. It depends upon the attitude.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the witnesses come tomorrow. The members will also have the opportunity of asking questions for further clarification. In the meantime, the witnesses are giving us a supplementary memorandum. Since the witnesses are giving us an opportunity of hearing them again tomorrow we can postpone our discussion with them today. Thank you very much Mr. Roychoudhury.

(The witnesses then withdrew)

IV. Shri Nihar Ranjan Roy, Calcutta.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ray, your evidence shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by you is to be treated as confidential. It shall, however, be explained to the witness that even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members

of Parliament.

Now we would like very much to hear you a few words in regard to the Bill and the objectives of the implementation in the manner as envisaged in the Bill. After you have made initial statement, the Members of the Committee as they desire to ask you questions for your reply.

SHRI NIHARRANJAN RAY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, before I come to the Bill itself, may I say a few words in general. Many words of criticism about the management of the National Library, are being written in the newspapers and voiced in public meetings. I would not go into this question at all, but I would like to point out one thing namely, whatever the faults and failures in the management and administration of the National Library, the main crux of the situation lies in being able to provide the kind of leadership that this National Library calls for. So long as Mr. Kesavan was there he built up this Library and gave it an image. It is from the time of his successors Mr. Muley, that the disintegration of the Library really started. Mr. Muley, unfortunately, could not look after the administration as carefully as necessary, since he was ill most of the time. Mr. Kesavan was not a scholar in the technical sense of the term; what he perhaps lacked in scholarship, he made up in personality. The last Librarian was Mr. Kalia. There was another gentleman, one Mr. C. R. Banerjee, a knowledgeable man who could also look after the Library. Now the Government policy in regard to technical librarianship is governed by the rules of the U.P.S.C. A national library is not a public library, where technical librarianship is a must. The main thing that is necessary, where technical librarianship is a must, is an image of high personality. Now, the Government is so limited in its powers that it cannot groom a national librarian. They cannot ask the U.P.S.C., say, five or six years ahead, to build one up for national librarianship, and this is one of the main reasons why the National Library should be an autonomous body which can, whenever it wants, select a man three or four years ahead, groom him up for four or five years, if necessary by sending him abroad for at least one or two years in a library like the British Museum so that when he

comes back he can take charge of it. But the very nature of government administration cannot do it, but an autonomous body can. That is the point I wanted to make. There is another thing. I have been told there is provision for a Director but not for a Librarian. My point is that the Director himself may not be a technical man. But immediately below him there should be a technical man who should be the librarian with professional qualification and experience. As proposed in the Bill, there would be a very wide gap so that if we do not have a librarian it would be rather difficult. I have seen criticisms in papers that the Government did not take any notice of what is happening in the library. This is not true. The Government was quite aware of it. In 1968 they appointed the Jha Committee which was followed a year later by the Khosla Committee. What was not done was that the recommendations made by the Jha Committee were not given effect to, and the Khosla Committee report was not a constructive report, to my mind. It was a critical report no doubt but not constructive. Kesavan was recalled for a second term, but for a very short time, and he was doing very well, but according to government rules again, his term could not be extended. The Government could not do it but if it were an autonomous body, they could go on keeping Kesavan for another three or four years so that he could effect the kind of reorganisation which he was making so successfully. If Kesavan can still be kept in service, by the Unesco, there is no reason why an autonomous body should not have been able to do it. But Government could not do it, as I said, the Government is bound down by their own rules. This is one of the reasons why I am all in favour of autonomy of the National Library. I cannot help saying that all our lives we have argued in this regard for one objective, namely, that no cultural organisation should be a wing of government. I do not see any reason why institu-

tions like the National Library or the National Museum should not be made into autonomous institutions. That was the policy of Maulana Azad. When I went through his speeches in Parliament on the National Akademi he made this point that no cultural organisation should be a wing of Government, they should all be autonomous and really autonomous. But at the moment the need of the hour is a competent head with full powers. But where are you going to get that kind of man unless it is an autonomous body which can select a man, groom him up slowly and steadily to make a national librarian of the stature that he should have.

So far I have tried to impress upon you, Sir, why we need an autonomous National Library. In the present Bill which I have just cursorily glanced through, the objects of the National Library have not been made manifestly clear. What is this National Library for? What is the nature of clientele this National Library is going to cater for? What is the position of this National Library in the hierarchy of libraries in India. We know that this library is included as a Book Delivery Act library and we have two or three other Delivery Act libraries. But a Delivery Act library is not a copyright library. We have not stated in the Bill whether we want this National Library to be a copyright library or not; we must make it clear whether we want it to be a copyright library. The Delivery Act does not necessarily make it a copyright library and this library possesses books and manuscripts which are not available anywhere else in India and I know of titles in this library which are not available even in the British Museum. Therefore, this National Library must be treated as the peak of the library system in this country and it has to be declared as a copyright library.

The Bill says that the appointment of the Director will be made by Government. So far as I am concerned, I should think that the appointment

should be made by the Board subject to the approval by Government. If it is to be autonomous then the Board should be given the power of selection, but, as I have said, subject to the approval by Government. So far as the three-tier system recommended in the Bill is concerned, I am somewhat critical. According to the Bill there should be a Governing Council consisting of nine persons, 2 secretaries, U.G.C.'s one representative and all others are to be nominated. Then there should be an Executive Council. The function of the Executive Council, and the composition of the Council have not been spelt out. What are the powers of the Executive Council and what is the position of the Director in the Governing Council or in the Executive Council? These have not been made clear. Personally I should think a Governing Council of nine is a very small council. India is a vast country and in this National Library many more interests should be represented. If it is to be autonomous the weight of ex-officio members and nominated members should be less than the members sent by representative bodies. In a vast country like India—even in the British Museum there is a Governing Council consisting of 25 members—in a tiny little country; in this sub-continental country of which this is the National Library, a Council of 9 is a very small Council. To my mind—I can not give you the exact number, but the number should be such as to be able to accommodate certain other important interests. For instance, a representative of the Indian Library Associations, representatives from, at least, a few other States. If we cannot represent all the States, which is impossible, there must be representatives from, at least, half a dozen or more States including that of West Bengal, by rotation if necessary. A doubt has been expressed that once it is autonomous the National Library may suffer from lack of finance. I believe it should be made statutory—there should be a statutory minimum grant stated in the Bill itself. Whenever

necessary it can be enlarged, but there should be a minimum Statutory grant. About the book acquisition budget, I can tell you—that it is very low. It is only 5 lakhs. For a National Library a book budget of 5 lakhs is a very, very low figure. I can tell you that this Library which once used to subscribe to a very large number of foreign journals, these journals are no longer being subscribed because of lack of fund and the files are lacking in recent years. Not only that, Mr. Chairman, you must be knowing that of many journals reprints are now being issued, not only in the United States, but also in Great Britain and West Germany. It is very necessary to acquire those reprints. There, whole series are being reprinted—all journals which are no longer available—and this National Library should be, at least, a place where all these reprints should be made available. For this a 5 lakh budget is a ridiculously low figure. The book budget should be at least 15 lakhs, the book budget alone.

There has been some criticism, I have read in the papers, about the existing employees. They are afraid they may not have the same promotion opportunities as they are enjoying today. On this point, I am not giving out any secret; I have it on public record that promotion should not be automatic. Because a man has put in service for a certain number of years, he should not have a claim to automatic promotion and I adhere to that principle. Therefore, I am not prepared to accept this criticism. They are also afraid, that their services in an autonomous body may be terminated at any time. This word 'termination' mentioned in the Bill has created certain misgivings. I have read that portion very carefully. What is intended is not actually termination. The intention is something else, but it is not just the right word that has been used. This fear can be taken away from the employees by only a slight twist of the word or the phrase. They are also afraid that once it is

autonomous the Parliament will have no right to discuss what is being done in the National Library. This is not just true. There are academies and other autonomous bodies. Since the Government pays the money the Government or any Member of Parliament will always have the right to bring the matter before the Parliament and if it is made explicit in the will have every opportunity to discuss months of any given period the National Library must publish its report and the report must be placed before the Parliament, the Parliament will have every opportunity to discuss the report and go into the details of the administration. Therefore, this fear is also not justified. There has been somewhere some lack of public relations and these things have not been sufficiently explained to the local public here. Excuse my saying so. Mr. Chairman, this is a question of public relations which can easily be done.

Then there is another point in the Bill itself namely that the Government will have the right of vetoing any decision made by the Governing Council. Now, the vetoing power should rest with the Government, I believe but there must be limitations to this vetoing. These limitations have not been spelt out. If the budget for this year is X, the Governing Council may increase it 10 times. Certainly, the Government shall have the power of vetoing. But if it is a general clause of vetoing any decision, then public will have a point of criticism.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Which clause do you refer to?

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN RAY: I have not got a copy of the Bill. There is a clause—veto clause.

I have another suggestion to make. This is about the Chairman of the Governing Council. Certainly, the Government shall have the right to appoint the Chairman of the Govern-

ing Council. There is no doubt about it. But there are other autonomous bodies in this city of Calcutta where Government gives the entire money, but in such bodies the Governor of the State is the ex-officio Chairman. He is also the ex-officio Chancellor of almost all the universities in the State. I do not see any reason why the Governor should not be made the Chairman of the Governing Council. These are the general remarks that I wanted to make.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: I would like to know if it is a fact that almost all the national libraries of other countries are directly controlled by Government. If it is so, what is there to prevent this National Library from being a Government institution. Secondly, if it becomes an autonomous body then why Government have the right to appoint the Chairman of the Council or to nominate anybody. Governing Council can be formed by representatives from different cultural institutions. Seminar representatives are there. Government's obligation should be to provide finance. If it is done then the minimum autonomy can be understood. Otherwise it seems to be quite contradictory and self-defeating. If you say Governor is to be ex-officio Chairman of the National Library then why not the President of India be made ex-officio Chairman of the Governing Body since this is a National Library. Government should have no say in the matter of administration excepting providing finance and describing the general policy of the National Library. Or, Government should run it fully—administratively, financially and otherwise; some sort of Advisory Body might be there to serve different cultural and research interests, to time and again bring this matter before the Parliament so that the country is given the benefit of knowing its activities.

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN RAY: The question is too long. If I cannot reply to them an *ad seriatim* I hope to be excused.

I have some first-hand knowledge of National Libraries almost all over the world. It is not a fact that all National Libraries are administered directly by Government. British Museum is the National Library of the British people. It is an autonomous institution, not run by Government. But Library of the Congress (of USA) is a Government library because it is the Library of their Congress, and as the Library of the Congress it is a National Library. Its National Library status is thus a secondary status—its primary status being that of a Library of the Congress. In West European countries, most National Libraries are autonomous bodies. In East European countries, for obvious reasons these are all National institutions run by Government themselves. I have no knowledge of National Libraries in Latin American countries. But majority of the National Libraries in Europe are autonomous. They are not wings of the Ministry of Education and Culture or of any other Ministry.

Secondly, the reason for suggesting ex-officio chairman is that if he is an ex-officio chairman he is not appointed by Government. It may be built in the Statute that Governor will be the ex-officio Chairman, just as he is ex-officio Chancellor of universities. The President of India should not be dragged in; he is only a visitor in the universities. We should not drag in the exalted position of the President in this manner. As regard nomination by Govt. I am afraid I cannot agree with him that there should be no nomination by Govt. Govt. will be providing the funds and it is only logical that they must have their watch dogs—Financial Adviser of the Ministry of Finance or the Secretary of the Ministry of Culture or the Ministry of Education. These nominations must be there. Where Govt. pays rate-payers money to any institutions, Govt. must retain certain powers to look into the affairs of the organisation, but I must repeat that the weightage ex-officio

members must be less than that of the members from the public.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: According to your proposal if the Governor—by which I hope you mean the Governor of West Bengal—is made ex-officio chairman of the Governing Council, then it will lose its national character. Other States may raise serious objection by saying that their Governors also are equally entitled to be the Chairman by rotation. What have you got to say with regard to this?

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN RAY: I think I did not exactly say Governor of West Bengal. I said, the Governor should be the ex-officio Chairman; which Governor I did not mention. Let me make myself clear. I kept this open for you to judge which Governor should be appointed ex-officio Chairman or whether it should be by rotation or whether he should be from the eastern region—I leave these to you. But I want to make it clear that the Chairman should be ex-officio and for the sake of convenience who can have the ex-officio status? Naturally the Governor. And if it is done by rotation I have not the slightest objection. For the sake of convenience you may confine it to the eastern states so that he can come and attend the meetings. We must take into account that the Governing Council must meet at least once a month if it has to be an active Body and therefore the question of convenience is there. Ex-officio Chairman should be such a Governor who can come to Calcutta as often as necessary.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: The honourable witness mentioned that proper publicity was not given to allay the fears of the employees. What is his opinion regarding the fear if the employees and gazetted officers enjoying higher status in our social life come under the service of the Board? And my second

point is, as the witness has mentioned that a statutory Body or an autonomous Body will function properly if it is given statutory grant. I think he it is given statutory grant. I think he grant for universities, but due to price index jumping like anything it is happening that in almost all the universities the professors and teachers do not know whether they will get their salary on the first day of the month. So, what is your opinion regarding statutory grant and the functions between autonomous Body and Govt. so far as finance is concerned?

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN RAY: I welcome both the questions. Answer to the first question will be a subjective one....

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: It is not subjective but it is objective. In the marriage market if a person holds a class II post under Govt. and draws a salary of Rs. 350/- he is looked to be a prospective groom compared to a person working in a bank drawing thousand rupees. This has also to be taken into account.

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN RAY: Personally I am not prepared to make concession of that kind. that Government servants hold a higher social status than others. That is why I said that my answer would be subjective. I do not accept that position, I have never accepted that position in my life and if our society has this kind of value it should be attacked from right, left, front and back. Then the second question is about finance. I am slightly critical of what is happening in the universities of West Bengal. I have been away for about 9 years but I spent 36 years at the Calcutta University and I am not sure that money is not mis-spent. In many of our universities I have direct knowledge that funds provided by the U. G. C. for instance is being misspent. I have a feeling that if I have pleaded for an increase, 3 or 4 times increase in the book budget, there shall certainly be increase in other heads too.

and this will be taken into account when a statutory grant is built into the statute itself.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: The experience of some of the universities is the main point to be clarified by the honourable witness. The experience in many of the universities has been that when statutory grant is fixed it is considered adequate by all people but then within a few years that grant instead of being an advantage to that institution becomes the maximum which the Govt. does not ordinarily give. Whereas, if no statutory grant is fixed and the responsibility remains with the Govt. that certain objectives have to be fulfilled then the grant keeps on increasing—that is the main fear. We would be grateful if you give example. In Patna university statutory grant was fixed. After that no further increase in the grant was made. Expenditure went on increasing and the university went into debt. Govt. officers said, 'we won't give you more money', UGC. gave them grant and they lifted that grant and ran into debts. Now this fear has been voiced that if there is a statutory grant it may look nice at the moment but Parliament will not be revising that figure regularly—it may become the maximum rather than the minimum.

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN RAY: I spent 9 years in Parliament and I still retain my admiration for our parliamentary system. Our parliamentary system is not so unresponsive to popular demand. But a strong case must be made out. You mentioned the case of Patna University. As Minister of Education you must be knowing that how our Universities play with their money, and who does not know that in every annual budget of every university there are hidden moneys. But I am not going into all that.

Sir, the prices of books and journals have gone up six times or eight times and prices have gone up in

every sphere of life and, therefore, while making minimum statutory grant it should be fixed very very liberally taking at least a perspective plan for 10 years.

SHRI S. A. SHAMIM: Going through a number of memoranda and during our stay here in Calcutta we have felt that in Bengal, the people have shown great resistance against an autonomous board. I would like to know from you as to what could be the reasons for this apart from the lack of the publicity by Education Ministry?

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN RAY: I do not think that it is the business of the Education Ministry; it is somebody else's business.

SHRI S. A. SHAMIM: We find that there is a strong determination on the part of everybody who appeared before this Committee that they must resist this autonomous character of the Library. What can be the reasons? Somebody said that lowering of status is the reason. But the correct thing would be the sense of security. The Government employees might feel insecure if the National Library is given an autonomous status. I think you will agree with me that in the present social set up in which we are living a person who gets two square meals a day is considered to be more respectable than those intellectuals who do not get two square meals a day. For this reason the question of security of service comes in this case. How are you going to allay that fear?

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN RAY: So far as the question of security is concerned, I believe that the kind of security in Government Service which obtains today is a very unhealthy one. Nobody should feel secured for the rest of one's life. This kind of security is an evil, but please leave out my personal social philosophy. In the world that we live today, even in the private sector it is not easy today to fire one

at will. It cannot be done 10 or 15 years ago, perhaps it could be. It is almost impossible to-day. In the public undertakings you cannot touch any officer. Even in the private undertakings it is not so easy unless one is a daily-wage labour. Therefore, the question of security does not come into the picture at all. The Education Minister is here and he knows, I have also been connected with many academic institutions. I do not know of any single individual who if he was found guilty he could just be got rid of at one's will. You have to go to the court and you have to prove it there and to prove something is not very easy. Therefore, this question of security is not just there.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: May I know your opinion on the business of the Indian Statistical Institute as to why the Government went ahead and took over a part of the organisation which has been so laboriously built by one individual Mr. Mahalanobis and made half of its employees Government Employees?

V. Shri Karuna Krishna Brahmachari, Calcutta

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Brahmachari, your evidence shall be treated as public and is liable to be published unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by you is to be treated as confidential. It shall, however, be explained to the witness that even though you might desire that your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the members of Parliament.

Do you want to say anything in regard to the proposed Bill on the National Library?

SHRI KARUNA KRISHNA BRAHMACHARI: I have set forth my views on this issue in my memorandum.

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN RAY: Mr. Chairman. Sir, I must seek your permission before I answer this question. I know perhaps a little more about the Indian Statistical Institute than the Member does. As I have signed the oath paper I cannot say things which will be made public.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: A suggestion was made by the honourable member Shri Niren Ghosh about associating the President. How would you react to the proposal of making the President the visitor of the National Library?

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN RAY: Most welcome.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ray, we thank you very much for your extremely significant evidence.

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN RAY: I am also thankful to Mr. Chairman and the Members of the Joint Committee for giving me a patient hearing.

(The witness then withdrew.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then you do not like to say anything. Now the members will put questions to you for getting further clarification.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: For how many years you are using the National Library as a reader?

SHRI KARUNA KRISHNA BRAHMACHARI: I have been using the help of the National Library, as a reader, for the last five years.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: What are the main difficulties in regard to the requisition of books or what is the time taken between the requisition and actual getting of books or whether it is comfortable or uncomfortable to sit and read other things there or whether

you do other work, between that period—can you give us your views?

SHRI KARUNA KRISHNA BRAH-MACHARI: I have experienced no such difficulties. Every time I received help from different officers and employees in various ways.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: How much time it takes for having a book after placing the requisition?

SHRI KARUNA KRISHNA BRAH-MACHARI: With half an hour's time I generally get my books.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: What do you feel about the condition of the reading room—where do you generally take your seat?

SHRI KARUNA KRISHNA BRAH-MACHARI: I sit in the balcony of the reading room of the Library.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your subject of research?

SHRI KARUNA KRISHNA BRAH-MACHARI: Indian Philosophy.

VI. Shri Gajendra Kumar Mitra, Editor, Katha Sahitya, Calcutta

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mitra, before the members of the Committee ask you questions, you may please note that the evidence you give would be treated as public and is liable to be published unless you specifically desire that all or any part of your evidence is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to the members of Parliament. This is an information which you have to remember.

Now, you have sent a memorandum. If you like you can say a few words to explain your attitude towards the Bill before members ask you questions. If you do not wish to make any statement then members

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you a regular reader of the National Library?

SHRI KARUNA KRISHNA BRAH-MACHARI: Yes Sir. I have completed my Ph.D. thesis.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Did you have any occasion to go to the Librarian or some other high officials of the Library to secure assistance in regard to the kind of books which you had to consult or similar other things? Did you have any reason to secure advice of the officers of the Library to help you in the context of your research you generally need?

SHRI KARUNA KRISHNA BRAH-MACHARI: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

(The Committee adjourned at 13-00 hours to meet again at 15.00 hours).

(The Committee re-assembled at 1500 hours).

would ask you questions.

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: I do not wish to make any statement.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: Mr. Mitra, you certainly know that there is a Bill before the House that the National Library is going to be an autonomous institution. At present it is directly under the Government. What do you think about making this institution which is under the government an autonomous institutions?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: I cannot understand why this question arises at all because we are going headlong for a socialistic State and we are nationalising one industry after another, one institution after another and therefore, why should we denationalise a national institution?

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: Then you think that it is against the present tendency?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: Yes. I do not think that it will bring any good to anybody, particularly to the National Library.

SHRI PATIL PUTAPPA: In what way is it going to affect the functioning of the National Library?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: We have had enough experience of autonomous bodies. Is not the Calcutta Corporation enough?

SHRI PATIL PUTAPPA: You had the National Library under the Government all these years and what is your experience?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: It may be half as bad but not fully bad. I want to keep it at least half bad.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Mr. Mitra, so far after studying the situation of the National Library we find that its working and everything have deteriorated. If we believe that all the academic fields like the Universities or the National Laboratories and other scientific organisations function better under statutory condition or autonomous condition, may I seek your opinion as to what are your specific objections if the Library becomes an autonomous body with a proper governing council like the University Senate or Syndicate so that decisions can be taken very quickly and promptly and the administration may be made efficient instead of putting all the files and decisions to the mercy of Delhi, to the mercy of bureaucracy and red tapism?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: You have mentioned the Calcutta University but is the Calcutta University functioning properly?

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Do you plead that all our

universities should be taken under the Government so that these will become wings of the Government?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: It is not necessary. Take for instance, the Benaras Hindu University and the Viswa Bharati University.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: But they are not the wings of the Central Government. They are statutory bodies and autonomous bodies. Their connection with the Central Government is that the Central Government is simply to place an annual report before the Parliament and to take financial grants. Otherwise the Central Government don't have to do anything with regard to those Universities.

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: I have already mentioned the Calcutta Corporation. It is an autonomous body, but is it functioning properly? Why don't you appoint an administrator on an efficient Librarian who can work as an administrator?

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Administrator on the National Library?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: Yes, under the direct Government control.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: Do you believe that if the Calcutta Corporation is taken over by the Government it will run better?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: Yes.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: Why don't you plead that the Calcutta Corporation should be taken over by the Government of India?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: It has already been taken over.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Mr. Mitra, I think there is a feeling throughout the country that

the National Library belongs to the country and therefore a parallel of the Calcutta Corporation would not be suitable. Now, in the very beginning you made a remark that the Government is going towards socialism and all that. Now there seems to be a lot of confusion over this point because when we in the Parliament or in the administration of the government think of giving an autonomous shape to the National Library, they do not mean to transfer it to private hands. You see, there is very palpable difference between the transport being nationalised and the transport being left to private hands and the parallel of the Calcutta Corporation is not suitable to these cases. Now, when we create an autonomous body, we are not going to dissociate ourselves from the responsibility of running the National Library. On the other hand, there is better awareness of the solutions to the problems with which the Library is faced at present. Wherever we have gone, the D.M.K. and Kerala, they have said that people who have high hopes of the National Library think that persons of eminence should run this for the benefit of the entire country and therefore just paying some attention to this that making an autonomous board is not just de-nationalisation, it is not throwing the whole thing into private hands. We have been listening to these arguments that the prestige of the National Library would be going down and all that. You must be knowing that prestige of the British Museum is higher than any of the other libraries in England and yet it is an autonomous body. Autonomous bodies are better run in the sense that they can frame their own statutes and regulations, extend the term and employ a person beyond certain age. So, this is the key. Keeping these points in view I hope you will try to reconsider the stand that this making of autonomous body for the National Library would be a step in the right direction of denationalisation which is against the current process.

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: You have mentioned about the British Museum, but this is not England and we are not Englishmen. Can you cite one instance in India where the autonomous body is doing better work than what is done under the Government?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I may inform the witness that there are autonomous organisations under the Government of India like the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research which is a very powerful body, or there is, for example, the University Grants Commission, which is a most highly regarded institution. They operate without any detriment and that there is no idea that if an autonomous body is set up under the control of Parliament, its activities being answerable to Parliament through Government, there is denationalisation. These two institutions show how autonomous bodies under Government control function efficiently.

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: But there is no such treasure to squander in those bodies. So, you must think in the context of the National Library.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As far as we can see from the statements made in the Parliament by Government and by the Minister here repeating what he had said in Parliament, there is no intention of Government ever hanging designation, character, importance, etc., of the National Library. It is going to be the National Library of the country. As far as that goes there should not be any misgiving. What happens in future is uncertain. There is no intention of bringing down the importance of the National Library. What I would ask is, have you read the Jha Committee report?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I do not blame you because copies are not easily available. If you have read the report

you would have got a different idea of the National Library. Questions of some of the honourable members suggest that under the Bill there may be some deficiencies which we have to correct with your advice and advice of other friends, but under the Bill it is to make National Library a more genuine and effective instrument of the national task which the National Library is going to perform.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: Mr. Mitra, are you under the apprehension that some how or other this National Library is going to be shifted to some other place outside Calcutta?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am sorry, I have to interrupt only this morning the Minister here made a definite statement and, if you have read the text of the Bill, in clause 16 it is stated categorically, the Library shall continue to be located at Calcutta. The Library means the National Library. So, as far as that goes, there is positive assurance that there is no intention of removing the National Library to anywhere else.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: Have you got any apprehension that they may not shift a single copy of the books. Everything will be here, but the name which is an abstraction may be shifted?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: I do not have that apprehension.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may give expression to your concept, but we are here to collect concrete and substantial information. You may, of course, say that you have some reasons to suspect that the removal of the library or a change in nomenclature of the library is in the offing, but that will be only a subjective statement, as you can very well understand.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Do you apprehend that by making it autonomous, gradually, over the years this will be converted into a regional library and there is a possibility or chance that the autonomous body at their own will may change the name as the Calcutta Corporation is changing the names of the streets?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to add a few words. If this Bill becomes a law, then the autonomous body under its terms will have legal sanction. If the name is changed in some future date by this or any other future Government, it will have to be done by an Act of Parliament. Therefore, let us not spend out time speculating in this manner. Let us proceed on the basis of what we have before us.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Just now you have expressed your apprehension that if it becomes autonomous, the administration may deteriorate. You have cited the example of Calcutta Corporation. On the contrary, it is almost the unanimous opinion, not only of the readers of the National Library, but also of the Government as also the Chairman that it has deteriorated in all its aspects. So long it was under the Central Government. The reasons may be attributed to the bureaucratic control, as you said just now. You mentioned that if capable men were there things would have been managed efficiently. You can attribute the whole responsibility to the direct control of Government, which means bureaucratic control. And this bureaucratic control has led to this situation. Therefore, in the Jha Committee a suggestion was made that it should be converted into an autonomous body. As you say, you have not gone through the Report of the Jha Committee but I think you have gone through clause 16 of the Bill. Now did it strike you that although in name it has been converted into an autonomous body the main control of the body i.e. the composition of the Board will be an-

tirely left with the Central Government?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: Bureaucracy will be there in the autonomous board also. A good librarian or an efficient administrator should be there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You say that whatever may be the Committee or the Board running the Institution, a good librarian is the greatest necessity.

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: Yes.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: I want to ask you a question. Government has allowed—though they say that it is a National Library—this Institution to come to such a ridiculous position that only Rs. 5 lakhs have been allowed as book grant. No sensible Government will do so. So, in that view of the matter Government can further shift way its responsibility and it will just like this Institution die a natural death. Do you have such apprehension?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: Yes.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPURKAR: You have stated you are against autonomous body and, at the same time, you say you are not happy with the present administration and you want to bring certain changes so that the people may get the benefit. Now I want to know what is your concrete suggestion to improve the administration and all other matters so that readers may go and get books and read them comfortably.

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: A good administrator or a good librarian with the power of a Governor directly under control of the Government will serve the purpose.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: You are concerned with the administration of the National Library. I want to know what should be the nature of administration of the National Library. Have you any positive suggestion with regard to this or that should be the scheme for the administration of the National Library which can be fit into the body of the Bill?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: The point you have raised cannot be answered off-hand. It's a question of detail. If you ask me I will send the answer later on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you want to supplement your statement or if you want to say anything in detail about your ideas, please send us the same.

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: Thank you. I am the Editor of a magazine "Katha Sahitya" and generally I write the editorials of that paper and I have written an editorial and I have sent that. However, I will send later on another statement.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: Mr. Mitra, you have stated that our social philosophy is there, socialism is there. Do you think that socialism does not require popular participation of intellectuals, scholars and technologists in academic matters?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: Why under the autonomous Body when it is a socialist state. Government can see to that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you really think that the National Library which you know very well as a reader can improve if it is to be run in a routine manner by administrative order from Delhi?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: No, that is why I suggested an administrator or a Governor.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you like appointment of some capable admini-

trator at the top whatever be the designation?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: Yes, with more powers than a bureaucrat.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You want delegation of authority from Delhi—authority should devolve on some powerful administrator operating in Calcutta in the library itself?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: Yes, that is my view.

VII. Shri Amalendu Kishore Chakraborty, Calcutta

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please note that the evidence you give will be treated as public and is liable to be published unless you specifically desire that all or any part of your evidence is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence or part of it to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. This is what you should note. How, have you any special ideas about this Bill? Please make a statement in short if you wish.

SHRI RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: In what special subject do you research?

SHRI AMALENU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: In History. I am researching from 1961.

SHRI RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: During this period what type of difficulties you have faced? After requisition how much time it takes to get a book and how many times you got refusal? And do you think service is good?

SHRI AMALENU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: Generally I requisition books of old type. Sometimes if I requisition 5 books I get one or two.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In the Bill, however, what Government has proposed and Parliament will decide later on is that there should be an autonomous Board. Now, have you any special recommendation in that regard or you would suggest that one administrator would be enough?

SHRI GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA: Yes, one will be enough.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mitra, thank you very much. You please send your supplementary memorandum.

(The witness then withdrew).

Generally within half an hour to one hour I get book. I do not think that service is good.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: How do you think that service can be improved?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: I think employees should be more active in supplying books.

SHRI RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: In the Bill it has been mentioned that the desire of the Government is to make it an autonomous Body. Now this is a department of the Government, but Government want to convert it to an autonomous Body like universities. What is your opinion regarding that? Do you feel that by making it autonomous service efficiency of the Library will be improved or by keeping it under the Government as it is efficiency can be improved. What is your categorical opinion?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: This means an administrative change on it. I do not think that this will improve matters connected with the National Library. What the National Library requires is a man with bright imagination and planning who can infuse efficiency and spirit of work among its employees. I

wonder that in spite of having about 700 employees, the National Library has not been able to produce a printed catalogue for over a decade. There are five Assistant Librarians and a number of Deputy Librarians in the Library but still things are not improving. If it is changed into an autonomous body then the same staff will be there.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Whether you believe in a system where you are allowed to manage your own affairs or you believe in a system where somebody would do your business?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: I believe in a system where I am allowed to plan my own things.

SHRI RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABORTY: Whether it is government institution or autonomous body you believe in its working.

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: I do not think that even if an autonomous body is created then I shall be given sufficient materials to work on my own things.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: But the autonomous body would afford greater opportunity to you to manage your own affairs.

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: I do not think that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you content with the administration of the National Library as at present? Are you happy with the way the Library is run today?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: I am not happy, I want some improvement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you a regular user of the Library?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: Yes, Sir. I am using it over a decade.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you go there for research work or for general studies? Do you go there every day?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: I go there for research work almost every week and sometimes I go every day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have said that the Library is not being run as satisfactorily as you wish it should be.

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you read the Review Committee's report or the Jha Committee's report on the National Library?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: I have not read it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you had the adequate opportunity to judge as to whether the Library should be administered directly by the Government as a subordinate office or it should be administered by a true autonomous body.

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: I did not consider it, I thought that the Government can run the Library as it is being run at present and things can still be improved.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your suggestion is that instead of autonomous body the Government should run it properly?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: Yes, Sir.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Have you suggested any amendments to the Bill?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: Yes, I did.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Have you sent those amendments?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: Yes.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: What are the broad aspects of your amendment?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: I read the recommendations of the Jha Committee as it came out in the Press a year back and I thought that the provisions of the Bill fell far short of the recommendations of the Jha Committee. For example the Committee suggested that a man of recognised scholarship should be the Director of the National Library.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: It should have comparable status with the Vice-Chancellor.

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: Yes. I do not think that any scholar will agree to accept this post because police report will also be necessary. The Bill imposes certain conditions.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: If you do not want it to be run by an autonomous body then how would you fit into it the comparable status of the Vice-Chancellor?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: If the Library is run by the Central Government then the question of Director getting the status of a Vice-Chancellor does not arise.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: In the report of the Jha Committee there are some ideas by which some autonomy is to be given to the administrator. But you consider that statutory autonomy will not be right. Will it be delegated authority?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: Delegated authority may be right.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: You have told us that you have read the Bill. What improvement would you like to suggest on the Bill if the

National Library is to function properly?

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: I want that the Bill should be dropped because I do not think that autonomous body will improve matters much. There are many autonomous bodies in Calcutta viz., the Board of Secondary Education. But they are not functioning well.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: That means you have no faith on the management by the Indian people.

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: No, the Government is also Indian.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You think that the Library should be improved to perform the orders which come from Delhi rather than through an autonomous body working under the supervision of a responsible Government Department.

SHRI AMALENDU KISHORE CHAKRABORTY: I want that a cell be there in the Education Ministry which will deal with the library affairs and that there will be a very capable Director here and efficient staff. The Director's scholarship and personality should be such that he can infuse efficiency among the workers. That is what is necessary.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: But there are not many men in the Government who can energise those cells.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Chakraborty, thank you very much for your evidence.

The witness then withdrew.

VII. Shri Soneu Moharaj, Calcutta

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Moharaj, your evidence shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, un-

less you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by you is to be treated as confidential. It shall, however, be explained to the witness.

that even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the members of Parliament.

SHRI SONCU MOHARAJ: I may clarify my views, which I have expressed in my memorandum dated the 24th April 1973. I do not like to add anything beyond what I have said in my memorandum.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, you may clarify your views.

SHRI SONCU MOHARAJ: Regarding the para 3 of my Memorandum I would say that the proposed Bill does not say specifically about the ways and means towards the development of the Library. Even it does not say anything about the Librarian. The duties and function of the National Library have not been clearly spelled out in the Bill. Red-tapism and corruption will be increased. The employees will be further dissatisfied, the efficiency will be further deteriorated. The status of the National Library will be lowered. The autonomy will add new problems. Membership may be restricted. Receipts, (Gifts, Exchange and Delivery of Book Act,) will be diminished. Lending facilities may be curtailed.

In a poor country like India, education through Free Public Library is essential. As such libraries in every villages, every Blocks and every State capital may be established. The village Libraries will be controlled by the Block Libraries, the Blocks by the State Libraries and the State by the National Library. As such the present Bill may kindly be withdrawn and the Government of India may kindly introduce a fresh comprehensive Union Library Bill specifying the role of the National Library in the library system of India.

Regarding para 4 of my memorandum, I like to state that in my view

the administration as proposed in the Bill will be practically a four-tier one, instead of 3-tier, as has been stated therein i.e., Director Executive Council and the National Library Board. The fourth tier will be the Government who will nominate 9 members out of 10 members of the Board and they will be the final authority for financial sanction. So, it will be seen that the proposed Bill will only increase the administrative complicity and will further deteriorate the efficiency of the National Library.

Regarding para 5 of my memorandum, I like to give my personal views that Para 2 of the 'Statement of Objects and Reasons' of the Bill is clearly against the recommendations of the Jha Committee. The Committee recommended that the nature of the autonomy invested in the Governing Council should be a delegated autonomy and not a statutory one. Thus the Committee practically warned against the statutory autonomy.

The proposed National Library Bill also violates all the principal recommendations of the Jha Committee so far as the administrative set up of the Library is concerned. Of these the important ones are—

The Bill provides for a 4-tier system of administration, i.e. National Library Board, Executive Council, Director, and the Government in place of the two-tier system as recommended by the Jha Committee.

Constitution of the Board, as per Jha Committee's Governing Council, the Bill provides for almost full representation of the Government and its nominees i.e. 9 out of 10 members which is contrary to the Jha Committee's suggestion. Before bringing this Bill the Government should have published the Jha Committee's Report and obtained public opinion in the matter as recommended by the Jha Committee.

Now, Sir I would like to say that the history of the autonomous administration in India is not satisfactory.

In fact it has failed in many cases and in all cases it is inferior to Government administration. Sarkar Committee's Report will support my views. It is really surprising that the Government is refusing to patronise libraries and library profession, and thus stands in the way of the library movement in India.

Regarding para 7, it is not understood that when the Government is taking over management of different organisations which are mal-administered, but showing indifferent attitude to the National Library. Government cannot give up responsibility of management and control of education and educational institutions.

National Sample Survey which was under an autonomous body has been recently taken over by the Government. I have already stated that shifting the administration of National Library to an autonomous board will stop the donors to gift books to National Library in future will be like that of Bangiya Sahita Parishad.

I understand that excepting British Museum and a few other very old organisations, the National Libraries of almost all the countries are under the direct control of their Governments. None of the Governments are thinking to hand over the administration to any Autonomous Board as has been suggested in the present Bill. Now I would submit some of my suggestions.

The National Library may kindly be kept under the direct administrative control of Government of India. More care and attention be devoted by the Government of India to the National Library.

A scholar in Library Science should be appointed as the Librarian of National Library.

National Library may kindly be made a separate Department directly under the Ministry of Education, Social Welfare and Culture. It should be an attached office of the Government of India instead of a subordinate department as at present.

National Library should be as the head of all libraries in the library system in India.

More powers may kindly be delegated to the Librarian of the National Library.

The book budget may kindly be increased as per recommendation of the Jha Committee.

Arrangement may kindly be made to implement the Delivery of Book Act more effectively. The publishers must consider the said supply of books as their statutory obligation.

The present reading and lending facilities may kindly be extended according to the need of the nation.

The strength of the Binding Section and the Newspapers and periodical sections may kindly be increased.

The present Bill may kindly be withdrawn.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: You have said many things in your suggestions that the National Libraries in all over the world are maintained by the Government of the respective country, about red-tapism in the Government machinery in our country and the staff working in the National Library are not efficient to the extent that the people want their services, and about the mismanagement in the National Library, Calcutta. But it seems that you oppose the autonomous system of administration in the National Library. While Government will provide requisite finance, will nominate 9 members out of 10, then may I ask why are you opposing the Bill.

SHRI SONCU MOHARAJ: As I have already said that so far my knowledge goes the autonomous administration in India has not proved its success to the desired level. I cannot understand when the Government is taking all the responsibilities such as providing finance, nominating all the members excepting one, then why

it is proposed in the Bill that the National Library would go into hands of an autonomous board.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: You have said that in the Jha Committee's recommendation the red-tapism and mal-administration are the main defects in the National Library, then why do you like to suggest against autonomy?

SHRI SONCU MOHARAJ: Because I know that an autonomous body cannot rectify those defects. Moreover Jha Committee recommended delegated autonomy not a statutory one. I am referring to the Jha Committee's report as we are told that this bill has been brought as per recommendation of the Jha Committee. But this does not mean that I am supporting the said recommendations. I would only say, that if the Jha Committee recommended delegation of power then why that power cannot be given to the Librarian? What is the use of bringing this Bill?

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Can you suggest in that way more power can be given to the Librarian. In West Bengal there is a Chief Engineer and under him there are a thousand subordinate officers. He draws a salary more than the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University but he does not have the same status as that of the Vice-Chancellor. Any project that he has to pass has to come to him through the lowest clerk to the highest officer and then he has to go to the Minister for final decision.

Do you prefer with your ideas or an administrator over the library and the the library still remaining under the

Government, the maladies can be removed?

SHRI SONCU MOHARAJ: I think so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So you believe that the National Library can improve only by having a better administrator at the top?

SHRI SONCU MOHARAJ: Yes, and under the direct control of the Government of India.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And in spite of certain things you are against the idea of autonomy on principle in regard to an organisation like the National Library?

SHRI SONCU MOHARAJ: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is to say, even if autonomy can be amplified and substance can be given to autonomy as explained by Professor Guha, autonomy different from that indicated in the Bill, you are against autonomy in any case and you want a strong, strident and tough administrator.

SHRI SONCU MOHARAJ: Yes, under a defined Policy Resolution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And that administrator operating under the orders of Delhi or Timbue too?

SHRI SONCU MOHARAJ: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for your evidence.

(The witness then withdrew)

IX Shri Gurupada Sen Gupta,

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sen Gupta, I find no description in regard to the work you do. However, before you give evidence I have to make clear to you that your evidence shall be treated as public and is liable to be published unless you specifically

desire that all or any part of your evidence is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

Now to begin with, please tell us what do you do and what is your interest in the National Library, whether you have studied the Bill and if you wish to make any statement. Please give us an idea about yourself first and then you can make any statement.

SHRI SEN GUPTA: I work as a medical representative in a private firm, i.e. Ciba (India) Ltd. I am a regular reader in the National Library. I have seen something of the National Library Bill in the newspapers. I have not gone through the Bill very minutely.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you submitted any memorandum?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: No. But I have submitted a letter in which I have written that a comprehensive union library Bill should be introduced through which free public library system should be introduced by the Government for the whole country instead of bringing one National Library Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You had conveyed to the Secretary that you wished to give evidence before this Committee?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you say a few words to begin with or would you answer questions?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: You may ask questions which I will answer.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Mr. Sen Gupta, for how many years you have been going in this library?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: For the last one year.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Is it in connection with some of your work or just for your interest?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: For my interest.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Once you make a requisition, how long does it take to supply the book?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: Generally it takes 30 to 45 minutes but often I get it quicker than that.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: And how many rejections you get often?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: I have not yet received any rejection.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: So during the last year you are happy with the institution?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: Yes.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Have you gone through the Bill?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: No.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Have you any idea about what is a statutory body and what is a body working under a Government system—the difference between the two types of institutions?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: I have some general idea.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Mr. Sen Gupta, we are facing a problem. You see, some people think that because of the bureaucracy and red tapism the efficiency in the running of the National Library is going down day after day and the whole thing is going from bad to worst and they think that if we make it an autonomous body so that we do not have to go through all this red tapism and other procedures, then all the decisions can be taken quickly at Calcutta at the headquarters under the guidance of a governing council, just like the Syndicate and the Senate of the Calcutta University with the help of an administrator or librarian

or director equivalent to the Vice-Chancellor of a University. Do you prefer that system of work provided, of course, there is enough financial guarantee from the Government of you prefer that the National Library should be under the direct control of the Government? You may also suggest some of the ways of improving the conditions in the Library?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: I personally think that it should be under the direct control of the Government.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: What are the reasons for your thinking so?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: I have some experience of the autonomous bodies like the Life Insurance Corporation. I am a policy holder but I seldom get a premium Notice.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZAL-PURKAR: I would like to know the subjects in which you are interested and, secondly, you have said in your letter, instead of handing over the administration and control of the National Library to the autonomous body the Union Government should retain the institution in its own hands. If you have not gone through the Bill, how do you know that autonomous body will not do any good to the library?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: In regard to your first question, I am interested in history and mountaineering. I am satisfied with the reception I get there and with the conditions prevailing there. An autonomous body, as I have said earlier, I am not satisfied with the working of many of the autonomous bodies.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZAL-PURKAR: In your opinion the present set up and the present administration is quite sufficient and there is no need for change.

SHRI SEN GUPTA: There is need for changes. We should get books quickly. There should be more books and more facilities for reading.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: You have said, you are interested in mountaineering. Do you

feel satisfied with mountaineering books?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: Yes, there is quite large number of books.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Are there some books on mountaineering in India also?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: Yes.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Do you feel all the publishers of mountaineering send their books to the Library?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: Yes.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Do you think if it is an autonomous body controlling the Library, there will be any decrease in the sending of books?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: Yes, under the autonomous body they are not compelled to send their books.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: If it is an obligatory duty on the part of publishers to send the books, whether it is under the Ministry of autonomous body, what does it matter to him?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: I am sorry, Sir, I have no answer to that.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: In your letter you have mentioned two reasons why you do not like that this Bill should be passed. You have stated that if this Bill is passed as it is, it will create administrative complications. Secondly, you have mentioned that it will deteriorate the efficiency of the National Library. Would you kindly explain the administrative complications that will be created if the Bill is passed and how will it deteriorate the efficiency of the Library?

SHRI SEN GUPTA: It will be run by an autonomous board, i.e. by the members of the Board. Members may have differences among themselves which may lead to conditions that will deteriorate the efficiency—there will be no smooth functioning of the board.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Sen Gupta.

(The Committee then adjourned)

**RECORD OF EVIDENCE TENDERED BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON
THE NATIONAL LIBRARY BILL, 1972.**

*Friday, the 8th June, 1973, in Council Chamber, Assembly House, Calcutta from
09.00 to 13.00 hours and again from 15.00 to 17.45 hours.*

PRESENT

Shri H. N. Mukerjee—(In the Chair)

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Achal Singh
3. Shri Dharamrao Sharanappa Afzalpurkar
4. Shri Virendra Agarwal
5. Shri S. C. Besra
6. Shri Samar Guha
7. Shri B. R. Kavade
8. Shri E. R. Krishnan
9. Shri Kumar Majhi
10. Shri Saroj Mukherjee
11. Shri Narain Chand Parashar
12. Shri Natwarlal Patel
13. Shri P. Antony Reddi
14. Shri S. A. Shamim

Rajya Sabha

15. Shri Pramatha Nath Bisi
16. Dr. Rajat Kumar Chakrabarti
17. Shri Mahabir Dass
18. Shri Niren Ghosh
19. Shri Rattan Lal Jain
20. Shri Patil Puttappa
21. Shri Sanat Kumar Raha

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

Shri S. Harihara Iyer—Joint Secretary and Legislative Counsel

**REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE
(DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE)**

1. Shri Mohan Mukerji—Additional Secretary.
2. Shri P. Somasekharam—Deputy Secretary.
3. Shri A. S. Talwar—Under Secretary.
4. Shri A. B. Sen Gupta—Acting Librarian, National Library, Calcutta.

SECRETARIAT

Shri H. G. Paranjpe—Deputy Secretary.

WITNESSES EXAMINED

I. Indian Association of Special Libraries and Information Centres, Calcutta.**Spokesmen:**

1. Dr. B. Mukerji
2. Shri P. B. Roy
3. Shri C. V. Subba Rao
4. Shri Souren Ganguli

II. Shri B. K. Daw, Advocate, Calcutta.

III. Shri Biman Basu, Students' Federation of India, Calcutta.

IV. Shri N. K. Sinha. Retd. Professor of History, Calcutta.

V. Shri S. K. Gupta, I.C.S. (Retd.), Calcutta.

VI. Shri Chinmohan Sehanavis, Calcutta.

VII. Shri Narahari Kaviraj, Calcutta.

VIII. Shri Nirmalaya Bagchi, Calcutta.

IX. Shri Satyapriya Roy. President, All Bengal Teachers' Association, Calcutta.

X. Prof. Jyoti Bhattacharya, Calcutta.

XI. Bengal Library Association, Calcutta (Further evidence).

Spokesmen:

1. Shri B. P. Mookerjee
 2. Shri P. Roychaudhury
 3. Shri S. Banerjee
 4. Shri B. Banerjee.
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**1. Indian Association of Special Libraries and Information Centres,
Calcutta**

Spokesmen:

1. Dr. B. Mukerji.
2. Shri P. B. Roy.
3. Shri C. V. Subba Rao.
4. Shri Souren Ganguli.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Witnesses may please note that their evidence shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless they specifically desire that all or any part of their evidence is to be treated as confidential, though such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

DR. B. MUKERJEE: I do not like to add further, I only like to emphasise on one point i.e. with regard to item 3 of our memorandum we strongly feel that the steps that are being anticipated by Government is a retrograde step, and it is not likely to improve matters. We have discussed this in the Council and this is our consensus of opinion.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: Are you in favour of a delegated autonomy or not?

DR. B. MUKERJI: I had been a member of Government departments for a long time. I am a retired scientist. I have also served under different autonomous organisations and I feel that this not going to solve the problems. Our suggestion is to maintain the *status quo*.

SHRI P. B. ROY: I want to add that the problem of the National Library should be looked into in a proper perspective. As the top library it is expected to give leadership to the library system of our country. Simply a piecemeal solution won't do. The Advisory Committee on Libraries under the chairmanship of Mr. Sing, ex-DPI, Bihar, submitted a report in which it is stated that the entire

responsibility of the National Library and the public library system in the country should rest on the Government Planning Commission's working Group also suggested that the entire library system should remain under the control of the Government. I do not know how the problem will be solved if the entire library system remains under the control of the Government and the apex library goes out of Government's control. It should be solved by looking into the problems more intensively. Causes of dissatisfaction should be looked into, and dissatisfaction arises in many ways e.g. there was dissatisfaction when the lending system of the National Library was very much restricted. Of course, we do not agree that National Library should lend books to other people. It is only meant for the preservation of books, documents, for research and for the future generation. But the causes of dissatisfaction can be remedied by looking into them more intensively. If we look into them in the proper perspective there is a possibility of making a solution. We think autonomy will not solve this problem. If we have to run to Delhi for getting sanction of something, naturally the problem will become complicated. People will be dissatisfied and for this National Library cannot be blamed.

It will be wiser to delegate more power at the local level so that they can quickly decide things and implement them and in that case immediately some causes of complaints will go away. Besides, experts and specialists should be encouraged for looking into other problems, there

should be more involvement of staff and professional experts for looking into the problems and then we can solve the problems to a large extent.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: What are your suggestion for improving the administration of the National Library?

SHRI P. B. ROY: I have already stated that more power should be given at the local level to enable them to decide things and implement their decisions.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: You are opposed to any kind of autonomy, either delegated or statutory. And if you are opposed then why do you want more power at the local level?

SHRI P. B. ROY: I think there has been some confusion about delegated autonomy and statutory autonomy. Jha Committee recommended delegated autonomy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Autonomy as envisaged in the Bill does not mean diffuse control. There are autonomous organisation under the Government of India, e.g., Council of Scientific and Industrial Research which conducts their work more or less adequately. Now, autonomy, as you fear, excludes Government control altogether and whatever technical difference is there between delegated autonomy and statutory autonomy, from what you have told us, can I conclude that you are not against autonomy as such but you are in favour of giving more power to local administration and you are only apprehensive that Government supervision and control might be taken away which you do not like.

SHRI P. B. ROY: Not only supervision and control but direct responsibility of the Government for the whole thing should exist. Government should be fully responsible for its functioning, i.e., preservation of docu-

ments, making better use of documents, finance and everything.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: Are you in favour of delegated autonomy or not? Delegated autonomy presupposes Government control, advisory control, it presupposes total responsibility of the Government.

SHRI P. B. ROY: Then we do not have much to object.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: In the Bill although statutory autonomy is envisaged but in effect the control will be practically in the hands of the Government. This will be evident from the manner of composition of the Board where 9 out of 10 members will be nominated by Government and one will be by the UGC. So, what are the difficulties that you visualise if the Bill in its present form is adopted?

SHRI P. B. ROY: The entire responsibility is shifted on the Board and Government's responsibility will be indirect. So from that angle we cannot agree to such autonomy.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Not only the Board but with regard to the Executive Council it will be seen that the Council will have the control. Do you think here also Government control will be indirect? Don't you think that the provisions of this Executive Council may obviate this complication?

SHRI P. B. ROY: We feel that here also Government will not directly come into the picture particularly when the treasury is concerned, national wealth is concerned, and so we do not like to take such risk.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: National Library should be national in character and so benefits from the national scholars and readers should be equal. So, don't you think that in the administration of the Library representatives from different parts of the country, advice of university scholars should be there and that some provisions for that should be there in the Bill?

SHRI P. B. ROY: It is necessary. We also feel that one National Library for the entire country is too inadequate. This problem was looked into by the Advisory Committee on the Libraries and they recommended more libraries. There has been some professional opinion expressed, in the Seminar held at Bangalore in 1972 and they recommended some subject specialist libraries as in the case of U.S.A. where Agricultural National Library and other such Libraries function. From that angle in the National Library representatives from experts or from different Bodies will be surely helpful and that is very much desirable.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: So, you have said that there should be four National Library. Now if there are four National Libraries what your idea would be for the governance of those libraries. Would the units of it should be centrally administered or would those libraries be absolutely independent or co-related bodies?

SHRI P. B. ROY: One should be the National Library at Calcutta and the other three libraries would be under the control of the National Library. They would be termed as National Library in different regions.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: But don't you find that the scope, privileges and facilities for the scholars for research works in the different parts of the country are very inadequate here. There is no accommodation, there is no rent-free facilities etc. etc. Don't you think that there should be some provisions in this Bill, if it is adopted, so that the scholars, readers and researcher from other parts of the country may get equal advantages as the local scholars, readers and researchers get?

SHRI P. B. ROY: Our opinion would be to develop the public library system so scientifically throughout the country as it caters to the needs of

everybody throughout the country. If there is an inter-library lending procedure then even a reader from a remote village of Maharashtra will get the same facility and same books as are enjoyed by the local readers, and he need not take the trouble of coming over to Calcutta. But so far as increase of facilities for the readers of other parts of the country is concerned we always agree to that.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: In one part of your statement you have mentioned that even to-day for a little piece work one is to go to the Central Secretariat in New Delhi and hence everything is delayed. Now, if you look into the figures you will find that so many posts are lying vacant there. It includes 43 posts which have lapsed as they remained vacant for more than six months. Now, if you are going to recruit the Class III staff or Gazetted officers you know what the usual procedure is. The process of recruitment is dilatory and sometimes it takes long long time, one year or even two years to get the staff recruited through the U.P.S.C. in contrast to the time taken for such recruitment in the autonomous bodies. In the autonomous bodies all these things viz., recruitment, running of the organisation and other administrative matters are done in a better and efficient way. So, what would be your exact objection to make the organisation an autonomous body like the Universities? Now, so far as the Universities are concerned, in the matter of recruitment of staff, posting, purchasing and everything so to say, these are done very quickly unlike the government Departments where there are red-tapism and beaurocratism. So, what are your specific objections to make the National Library a statutory autonomous body? What are the advantages if the Library is kept under the Central Government and what are the disadvantages if it becomes a statutory autonomous body?

DR. B. MUKERJEE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to answer the question myself. I have served many autonomous organisations of repute for long years. For more than 13 years I was the Director of the Central Research Institute, at Lucknow. I was also the president of the Asiatic Society. I feel the advantage you claim in the matter of recruitment of staff does not exist in practice. Even sometimes it takes longer period to make recruitment than that taken in the Government Departments. I am speaking from my own experience and on the basis of that experience I say that status quo should be maintained in the case of the National Library. You are nationalising a number of autonomous bodies but how is it that you are going back from this policy in regard to the National Library.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Then do you, as an academician, want that the academic institutions like National Library and other institutions should be directly under the Government control where the Director or the Vice-Chancellor will simply be at the mercy of a few clerks of the Central Secretariat in New Delhi?

SHRI P. B. ROY: I have not stated anything like that.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: We are a little bit confused by your statement. You want to keep it under the Government control and at the same time you are saying it is not functioning properly under the Government control. You want that it should be a Government Department on the other hand you want that more powers should be given to the Librarian or the Advisory Council so that it can be run properly.

DR. B. MUKERJI: I was in the Government in the Ministry of Health as a Deputy Director. I have also served in the autonomous body my-

self. So far as the Government Department is concerned it is somewhat a satisfactory system. But in autonomous bodies the power of delegation actually comes through the various committees and consequently it takes much longer time. This is my own experience. I have served the Government for 20 years and I have served various autonomous bodies for 22 years. So I am of definite opinion that the Government Department should remain and defects should be rectified by the Government.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: I think you are aware of the fact that in a large organisation like the G.S.I. the Director is as powerless as he cannot do a single thing for the improvement of his department so far as purchase or recruitment of staff are concerned. There they are claiming for more powers. How the Director could be given these powers? Under what article of the Constitution or under what system these Directors could be given the rank and power of the Secretaries or Joint Secretaries of the Government?

DR. B. MUKERJEE: I will give you few examples. While I was the Director of the Central Drug Laboratories, Ministry of Health from 1941 to 1951, there was no difficulty in discharging my duties. We had adequate powers. Now the powers have reduced. 500 scientists were working under an autonomous organisation in Lucknow in Central Drug Research. I was there for 13 years. I was the General Secretary in the Indian Science Congress. In my personal city I could spend Rs. 1 lakh.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: The honourable witnesses have said that the Government has recently nationalised a number of autonomous bodies. May I have a few instances from them?

SHRI P. B. ROY: Actually we meant to say the autonomous bodies

which were created by the Act of Parliament are being taken over by Government. The Indian statistical Institute which was created by an Act of Parliament because of so many maladies were there the Government took it over. So our contention is this, the sick organisations like M/s. Jessop, which was not functioning properly and ultimate was taken over by Government is a good example. In this case the National Library is claimed to be a sick organisation so it should remain under the Government control.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: I understand from your answer that the Government should rectify some of the maladies that have cropped up in the workings of few organisations. There was a big uproar recently in the Parliament about the Fertilizer Corporation of India. Now the F.C.I. is a statutory autonomous body created by an Act of Parliament. Do you mean to say that the direct control of Government is better than that what it is now? Or do you subscribe the idea that more power should be delegated to the local administrator or the persons who manage these affairs?

SHRI P. B. ROY: One of the members of the Jha Committee, Shri Saibal Gupta said in a public meeting that there was scope for delegating more powers without giving them directly to the statutory body. The honourable member expressed his thinking on the workings of the F.C.I. I would say that if some 5 or 6 tons of materials are stolen from the F.C.I., that would not cause a great harm to the nation, but if some 5 or 6 of rare books are stolen or mislaid that incident would be a great loss to the nation. Rare books are treated as national wealth, so it should be preserved carefully. For instance, we have seen in the paper that the 'Natarajan murti' has been stolen from India and has since been sold in America. This is a great loss for our

country. Government are taking steps to get that 'murti' back. There are also some valuable manuscripts that are going out of the country. So, in that angle I can say that if the National Library is handed over to an autonomous body then the chances of such missing would increase and there will be no or very little chance of getting them back.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: You have said that books or valuable manuscripts may be lost. I think, you might have read a day before an article in the 'Statesman' "National Library should remain as national." It has referred to the workings of the National Library which is under strict Government control as you would like to continue. In that article as it is mentioned, I hope it is correct, that the books were taken away from the Library and were sold in the open market. Then the Librarian ordered that the bags of every employee, specially the lady employees, should be searched. At this, there was a big demonstration. Do you not feel that had it been under the autonomous administration such demonstration could not have taken place?

SHRI P. B. ROY: Generally when 4 books are stolen, it becomes 400 in the publicity. From that angle I do not want to support the autonomous administration.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPURKAR: The honourable witness stated about the establishment of three regional libraries by converting the National Library because in their opinion three regional libraries are essential. Why do you want three more libraries in other parts of the country? My second point is that why you are deadly against the word autonomous where there is no apprehension of shifting the library at some other place in India and where—as you have said—about 619 employees are working efficiently without any complaint of missing?

SHRI P. B. ROY: We do not have any apprehension in that point. We are afraid that if it goes out of the hand of Government then the Government will have no control over the national assets that are kept in the Library.

DR. B. MUKERJI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, if you permit me I can say that this is a recent problem. When Mr. Keshavan was in charge of the Library there was no problem. When Mr. Muley was there, there was no problem. This is a recent problem. So, the whole structure need not be changed. This Library, at the time of Lord Curzon, was under autonomous body. It was brought under the Government control and again it was changed into an autonomous body. I do not understand, while under Government for long years it functioned efficiently, only for some minor difficulties why it should go again under an autonomous board.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPURKAR: Books are stolen from the National Library and there is mismanagement. Readers are not getting books properly. The strength of attendance is reducing. So the Government wants to improve it by converting it into an autonomous body—why do you oppose to it?

SHRI C. V. SUBBA RAO: I like to stress on three National Libraries in India of which one is already existing in Calcutta. This Calcutta Library will work as a central library. Three Libraries should be under the control of the Education Ministry so that in case of national emergency like war, etc. all books and manuscripts will not be destroyed. As regards autonomy, the Jha Committee has gone into this problem. To remedy the ills how can the autonomous body function at this stage. There is some apprehension in the minds of the Calcutta people that the Central Secretariat Library is being uplifted. There was no promotion for the last 10 years if not more. The staff have got frustrated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Rao, if you like to give a broad picture, you may please submit your supplementary memorandum. This will help this Committee to have a clear idea.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: There are certain posts which are lying vacant. Autonomy would help in filling up these posts. My question is whether it depends upon the attitude of the Government that the institution should be developed in the institutional line? I have heard that the previous librarian Mr. Kalia was an incompetent person. Through nepotism he came in the Library from high circle. He could not discharge his responsibility efficiently. Shri C. R. Chatterjee, as per National Professor, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, was an efficient person to perform the duties as a Librarian. But he was deliberately kept out of the functioning of the National Library. Since you are an expert in this aspect I would like to point out two things—one is that in West European countries barring British Museum all other National Libraries are under Government control, the another information as we have been told by some person whose name I do not like to mention, that except the Library Congress in America the other libraries are under autonomous administration. Can you give some idea about it?

SHRI P. B. ROY: First of all, I do not like to say that Government attitude is different. Actually, the red tapism is there which is creating the problems. Government's mere sympathy will not set the matter in the right path. I suggest that some powers should be delegated to the person who is in charge of the National Library. Autonomy, at present, is not the solution.

DR. B. MUKERJI: I am not making any remark against Mr. Kalia or Mr. Banerjee. I would like to emphasise on the point in our country Government is trying to convert several organisations into autonomous ones. I think, this is not necessary. If the

efficiency at the Secretariat level can be improved then the functioning of Government controlled institutions can be developed as it has been run for a long time.

SHRI P. B. ROY: Another question has been asked about other National Libraries of the world. On that subject I have here a book entitled "National Libraries of the World" written by Esdale who was formerly the Secretary of the British Museum. From this book I find that in Austria there is a national library which is under Government control. I may restrict only to West European countries. I find that in Greece, Italy, Luxemburg, Sweden, Scotland, Ireland and Belgium all the National Libraries are under Government control. This book published in 1957 and I don't think the situation since then has changed much.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: Is there any country in the world where the National Library is an autonomous body?

SHRI P. B. ROY: Only the British Museum. Perhaps in Ceylon I think they are going to develop the National Library on an autonomous basis. But I am not sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is a matter of detail which we shall find out. This matter would be investigated and we need not bother our witness with that. Luckily the witness had some information and he has quoted from a book.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: Sir, the witness may be requested to give us the name of the book in writing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The name of the book as well as what the witness has said and you have said have been recorded. We shall investigate the matter to the extent of our powers and possibilities and so you need not have any apprehension on that score.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: Sir, the witness has said that the present system of Government control should

be continued. Perhaps he knows that there was an advisory council for this National Library and also he must be knowing that in the years 1972-73 the total attendance of readers was on the average 17 to 16 per cent and the total figure was 6441. Keeping in view all these things and also the present number of employees at present, i.e. 621, do you think that all the employees are incompetent to run the National Library efficiently except only for one librarian? Will you clarify this point?

DR. B. MUKERJI: I am not quite clear on the point but I would like to say that the difficulties that have been observed in 1972 are purely temporary because of factors which are probably much better known to yourselves than to me and these temporary difficulties can be rectified by keeping the same machinery continuing with better management under Government control. Merely for the reason of a temporary difficulty I don't think we have to pass over from Government control to an autonomous institution.

SHRI PATIL PUTAPPA: Sir, it seems there is an apprehension in the minds of the witnesses that Government institutions are run better and not autonomous institutions. You see the Government itself is creating more holding companies. Thinking that centralisation is not the only solution and that decentralisation is the solution, the current thinking is to give more operational freedom to public institutions. Whereas it is very strange to hear from the witnesses that under government control system an institution can function better. This is rather a travesty. I would like to know how under government control an institution can be run better rather under conditions of more freedom.

DR. B. MUKERJI: It is a case which you know better than myself. We feel that the government need not go in for an autonomous board for an institution which is already under government control. We feel very strongly that the National Library is a national asset and in my opinion there

is no reason whatsoever, administrative or otherwise, to change the present programme. The Library was being quite efficiently managed from the time of Keshavan and also Muley but if now certain temporary difficulties have arisen, those need not make you worried so as to shift the library from government control to autonomous control.

SHRI PATIL PUTAPPA: So you have lost faith on the innate ability of people to run an institution?

DR. B. MUKERJI: I have given my own opinion. I have served in Government for ten years, in autonomous bodies for ten years, in governing councils and other bodies for another 20 years and with my forty years' experience which is perhaps longer than that of yours I can say and I am strongly of the opinion that Government control is always better than autonomous control.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I think you have gone through the report of the Review Committee that was set up by the Government of India. They have made certain suggestions about the functions and working of the National Library. Do you more or less in general agree with the recommendations of the Review Committee?

SHRI P. B. ROY: We have gone through the Review Committee's report. Previously it was a confidential document. We wrote to the Education Minister also for this. Ultimately when the question of submitting a memorandum came up, we had to secure one copy but we have not thoroughly gone through it. However, we agree more or less with many of the recommendations but not with all.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Would you please after having gone through the recommendations of the Committee give us your considered views?

DR. B. MUKERJI: We shall give our views in a supplementary note.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Now, about the administrative structure the Review Committee says this, and I quote: "The Advisory Council of the National Library should be replaced by a governing council. Eminent persons from universities, that is, educationists, administrators of good work and academic bent of mind, scientists of repute and achievement should be the members. The Council should be instituted by a resolution of the Government and not by a statute." Do you consider that this Bill is either a complete repudiation or at least it is completely contrary to the recommendation that was made by the Review Committee which was set up by the Government itself and yet the Government itself ignoring the recommendation that has been made by the Committee set up by itself?

SHRI P. B. ROY: We think it is contradictory and going against the recommendations of the Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you satisfied with the working of the National Library, at least in recent years?

SHRI P. B. ROY: There have been complaints.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are not satisfied.

SHRI P. B. ROY: We are not fully satisfied.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you think that merely by a tightening of the present administrative pattern improvements which are adequate can be made?

SHRI P. B. ROY: Yes, and the local authority should also take opinions of specialists and experts and involve them into the work both inside and outside the organisation. If they can do that we do think that there is ample scope of improvement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So, by improving the composition of the personnel who run the Library, by including representatives of different cultural interests as well as by vesting the local authority with more administrative

powers you hope to improve the situation.

SHRI P. B. ROY: Yes

MR. CHAIRMAN: The problem, therefore, according to you is to vest the local authority, the administration of the National Library with more powers and to extend the representative character of the personnel who run it.

SHRI P. B. ROY: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In that case you substantially agree with the opinion that the National Library should be run not as a routine department of the Government of India, but in a special fashion because special interests have to be represented and special rights have to vest in the local administration. If that is so, it would require some kind of structural change in the National Library. Therefore, you would certainly expect Government to come forward with a legislation. In view of your desire to improve the operation of the National Library, in view of your desire that the local administration of the National Library should be invested with more authority, in view of your desire that it should not be run as a mere department of the Government of India, you want a fresh look at the National Library, you wish the Parliament to give a law. In that light you would like to invest the National Library with more powers. Perhaps you wish this because the National Library is a cultural institution where learned people can carry on their work in the manner that would be helpful. Do you not think, since you have some acquaintance with the Review Committee's report—the Review Committee suggested an autonomous organisation—without an autonomous, self-respecting organisation of people who could be associated with the National Library we cannot improve it? The Review Committee suggested it. You agree with me there.

SHRI P. B. ROY: We do not agree with autonomy in that sense because Review Committee's recommendation was that for everything one has to go to Delhi for sanction. For this reason they suggested autonomy for local authority, so that they can take quick decision.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Main fear is that the word 'autonomy' raises a number of spectres of ghosts. We either welcome it or reject it. Let us forget that for the time being. Substantially we want improvement. For that purpose the administration has to be vested with more authority and there should be better, wider representation of interests, in so far as the National Library is concerned. For that it is necessary to have a changed pattern in the operation of the Library. Your objection is on account of your thought that Government may give up responsibility for the promotion of the Library and that Parliament may not be able to look after the work of the National Library.

SHRI P. B. ROY: We are getting a little confused. We feel that it is possible within the structure already existing, by changing and modifying it, without going in for autonomy. The word 'autonomy' is a kind of parliamentary word which we do not understand easily. We want to improve things. It can be done by changing the infra-structure instead of created another body.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are interested in eliciting your opinion, whatever it is. Whether it is in favour of my opinion or not is a different matter. We have got your memorandum. Strict attention will be paid to your views. What I want to make sure, is the fear of the very word 'autonomy', the fear of the experience of what is autonomy, is uppermost in your mind, or, you do not want any kind of change in the organisation

which is run as a subordinate department of Government?

SHRI P. B. ROY: We want change within the Government control, so that our interest are looked into properly. We feel that with some change in the infra-structure it is possible to improve things.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

(The witnesses then withdrew.)

II. Shri B. K. Daw, Advocate, Calcutta.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Daw, before you give your evidence I would like to tell you that your evidence shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence that you give should be treated as confidential. Even though you may desire the evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

I expect that you have sent a memorandum, but if you would like to say a very few words, either in clarification or amplification, you may do so.

SHRI B. K. DAW: First of all, the Bill is mentioned as the National Library Bill and not as the Indian National Library. In the Statement of Objects and Reasons, in paragraph 2, it is written: "Having regard to the importance and value of the collection in the Library and to the need for reorganising and developing the Library on modern scientific lines on the basis of the recommendations of the Jha Committee which was appointed by the Government of India in 1968 to suggest measures for the improved functioning and future development of this Library, it is considered necessary that it should be run and administered by an autonomous Board under an Act of Parliament. The Bill seeks to give effect to this proposal and makes provision *inter alia* for the following:—

Now, the Jha Committee recommendations, which were made in 1968 and are long over due, which should

SHRI P. B. ROY: I would like to thank you, Sir, for giving was this opportunity to place our view points before the Committee. Before leaving I would like to emphasise that we feel, all the improvements can be made within the Government control by improving the infra-structure and we need not going in for an autonomous body.

have been published in the meantime, were never published. We have been kept in the dark. Regarding the creation of an autonomous board, I do not think it can be called as such; it is a puppet board. "Autonomy" is derived from the Greek word "autonomos" meaning an independent body having the right and power of self-governance, but this is a puppet board of the Central Government. Most of the Members i.e. 9 of them will be nominated by Government and only one by the UGC which is also under the control of Government of India. So this cannot be called an autonomous board but a puppet board of the Government of India. By constituting this puppet board Government of India is only shirking its responsibility to impart education in the country. But the control is retained by them. This reminds me of the position of the East India Company which invested all the Kingdom to the Nawab Mirkasim but all the powers remained with the East India Company. Nawab was made responsible for the governance of the Kingdom but the full power was with the East India Company. So also this Bill is drafted on the same lines. The full control lies with the Government of India—only the Board is made responsible for the governance of the administration without full autonomy, without any autonomy at all. It is a puppet board controlled by the Government of India. No responsibility lies with the Government in case of inefficiency and mismanagement. As we are criticising for mismanagement of the Library that is why to shirk the responsibility

they have created this board—a puppet board. Education is the birth-right of the Indian people which should have been included in the fundamental rights of the Constitution under Article 19, Government is nationalising coal, steel, banks, wheat, etc. on the ground of mismanagement but Government in this case is shirking its responsibility. It can be expected that education matter should be nationalised. This should not be given to a board, wrongly named as autonomous board. This must remain under the control of Government. In my opinion in order to shirk its responsibility Government has brought forward this Bill.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: If the Government feel that all the necessary changes as you have suggested should be made in the Bill to make it perfectly autonomous with minimum Government nominees, what will be your opinion then. If all these points are taken care of, what are of the specific objections for not making it statutory autonomy and leaving it under the direct control of the Government?

SHRI B. K. DAW: There should have been a para in the Bill re. role and responsibilities of the National Library. We do not think it as a depository library. We expect it should guide and coordinate all bibliographical and documentation activities of the country and the total library system by sitting at its apex. That has been clearly avoided in the Bill. What are the functions have not been stated. So how can I express my opinion on that point. Regarding public libraries I can express my opinion but regarding the National Library I cannot express any opinion unless the functions of the National Library are not clearly defined in the Bill.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPUR-KAR: You have referred to the Board as a puppet Board. Supposing that puppet is removed what objection you have on the Bill.

SHRI B. K. DAW: There should be Government control because it is a matter of education. Education and health cannot but be managed by Government. Education and health are the primary functions of the Government of India and these should not be left to any autonomous Board.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPUR-KAR: You are opposing the Bill because certain lacunae are there, because of the autonomy, and so I want to know from you what is the difference between statutory autonomy and delegated autonomy.

SHRI B. K. DAW: There cannot be any autonomy without statutory. But in this matter of education there should not be any autonomy because it is the primary function of the Government of India. It is the birth right of the people, it is the fundamental right of the people and so here there should not be any autonomy.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: You have stated that this Board is a puppet Board of the Government. Can you suggest how this Board can be a strong Board. You have not suggested anything about that in your memorandum. Secondly, you are always saying that health and education should be central responsibility. You know very well that local Bodies are looking after health and education. So, you will agree that local Bodies are working for the education and health and they are running efficiently. Then why are you disagreeing with the autonomous Board for the National Library?

SHRI B. K. DAW: Because that is a part of the Government, I say it is the responsibility of the Government of the country. Government of West Bengal is also a part and parcel of the Government of India. When I say it is the responsibility of the Government of the country it does not mean that Government of West Bengal will not be responsible in the matter of education or health.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: But Government can discharge their responsibility in the matter of proper functioning through a powerful Body sponsored by Government.

SHRI B. K. DAW: Government can form any Advisory Committee or Council or take representation from different sections of the people but responsibility should not be given to any other Board or authority, responsibility must be with the Government because it is an all-India matter.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: So, instead of an autonomous Body you want that authority should be with the Government and you do not like any change.

SHRI B. K. DAW: I do not like any change. Government can take steps to improve the working of the library on scientific methods. No Board can substitute the Government in this respect.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I quite understand your disapproval of the clauses of the Bill where the composition of the Board has been envisaged and the suggested composition appears to you to be very bad for which you say that it is a puppet Board. But at the present moment you are aware that National Library is directly under the control of the Central Government operated as a subordinate office and you might also know that whatever Advisory Council may be there in the National Library has not shown any improvement in the working of the Library in recent years and I think it is your view also that the working has gone from bad to worse.

SHRI B. K. DAW: Yes, that is also my opinion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you, therefore, prefer direct government control immediately and directly through their own usual accustomed method or would you like the administration of National Library on a different basis in which case what

III. Shri Bima Basu, Students' Federation of India, Calcutta

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Basu, before you proceed I would like to intimate to you that the evidence that you give shall be treated as public and is

would be that basis? You need not answer it if you have not given thought to this matter.

SHRI B. K. DAW: Sir, on this point I say that the responsibility of the Government must be there. Regarding controlling and administration there may be delegated powers i.e. the Government may delegate their powers and control but regarding the control and management the responsibility must be with the Central Government and that should not be divested in any case.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Therefore, in regard to over-all control of the Government and the responsibility of the Government and the Parliament for running the National Library you want to have some assurance.

SHRI B. K. DAW: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, in Parliament the Ministers have assured that the responsibility of the Government continues, the answerability of the Government in so far as the administration of the National Library is concerned, the answerability to the Parliament continues. It is only a matter of administrative re-arrangement by vesting some authority in the jurisdiction of the National Library by introducing people who can serve the Library more efficiently. Now, I can understand your objection to the composition of the board as suggested which you called a puppet board. Would you like the Bill to be so drastically changed that a properly representative autonomous organisation can be set up provided at the same time Government control and parliamentary responsibility continue?

SHRI B. K. DAW: Yes, I would like that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Daw, thank you very much for your evidence.
(The witness then withdraws).

liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by you is to be treated as confidential. Even if you

might desire that your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

Now would you like to make a brief statement about your views in regard to the Bill?

SHRI BIMAN BASU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I submitted a memorandum opposing the introduction of the Bill that National Library should not be governed by an autonomous body and I have noted this thing in my observation that the National Library should be governed by the Government and not by any autonomous body for the development of the library. There are some lacunae in the Library services and that is due to the absence of a librarian who is absent for a pretty long time and it is my view that if the National Library gets an effective Librarian to look after the day to day administration of the library then the development of the library could be made. Moreover my proposition is to develop the library services in the country maintaining the National Library under whose control there would be so many regional libraries in Orissa, in Assam, in Bihar, in Tamil Nadu, in Uttar Pradesh etc. etc. That is in every corner of this country there should be a library controlled by the Government and for that a comprehensive Library Bill can be enacted for the development of library service in the country. That is my first contention. My second point is that the library should be controlled by the Government because in that case the students, scholars, the research workers and the reading public and all those who use the library can think that this is a national property. I would like to mention in this connection that Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee donated more than 75,000 books but he did not know that this would be turned into an autonomous body. So many individuals have donated books and collections to the National Library and are still donating because the

Library is being run by the Government. If it is turned into an autonomous body then this will not be a national property and the students, the scholars and the research workers would seriously object to it. My third point is regarding the grants to the National Library. But if the Library becomes an autonomous body then the monetary grants which are received for over-all development of this Library might be seriously neglected. So these are the three contentions which I have to make and I think that the Library should be controlled by the Government instead of an autonomous body.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: You have said that a comprehensive library legislation should be enacted by the Government for governing libraries in Tamil Nadu and other states. I would like to remind you that under the Constitution the maintenance of libraries set up in the States are the responsibilities of the State Governments whereas the National Library, Library of India is the responsibility of the Central Government of India. It is accepted in the Constitution of India. So how does he envisage to overcome this difficulty? Secondly, regarding the donation of books and collection by Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee, if you read the original letter written by the sons of Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee, the four brothers, to Shri Maulana Azad and Maulana Azad's reply to them you would find that no reference is made about either Government controlled National Library or an autonomous National Library. What is written there is if at any time the National Library is sought to be shifted to Calcutta to any other place outside West Bengal then collection that has been made by them may be handed over to the Calcutta University and if the Calcutta University for some reasons does not take that then the collection will be handed over to the West Bengal Government. So, nowhere did the sons of Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee viz., Shri Rama Prasad

Mookerjee and others did mention about the Government controlled National Library or an autonomous National Library. So, under these two conditions, may I come to the conclusion that for the sake of the National Library it is to be managed under an autonomous body?

SHRI BIMAN BASU: Unless the letter of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad visualizes the eventuality that some day the National Library may be shifted outside Calcutta, the question of converting the administrative system may not perhaps arise.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: This matter is quite clear. Simply it was in the letter of the four sons of Sir Asutosh Mukherjee, addressed to the then Education Minister, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad that if there was any likelihood of transferring the books, which were donated by Shri Ramaprosad Mukherjee and his brothers, or in other words if there was any likelihood of transferring the National Library in other part of India then the books should be retained in Calcutta. In reply to that letter late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad stated that there was no likelihood of transferring the National Library.

SHRI BIMAN BASU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am fully conscious about the special position of the National Library. I know that the National Library is included in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. My proposition is that there may so many regional libraries be opened under the Government control in various parts of the country and the library services can be developed to cater to the needs of the reading people and for the purpose the Government of India can enact a comprehensive Library Bill to make co-ordination and to go further for the development of library service in the country. My second point is that I do not know the details of the letter written by Shri Ramaprosada Mukherjee and his brothers to late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, but I know the sentiment of

not only the reading people but also the observation of the students community, research scholars and workers and those who are getting facilities from the National Library that the National Library, in future, would not get collections and donations from the individuals.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: How many years you are using the facilities of the National Library?

SHRI BIMAN BASU: I am using the National Library for more than three years.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: During this 3 years have you faced any difficulty? If so, I want to know that in order to alliviate the difficulties do you think this is to be handed over to a statutory autonomous body for better performance. Or do you feel that the *status quo* should be maintained by delegating some more power to the authorities?

SHRI BIMAN BASU: About the first question I have not faced with such troubles, but I have heard from my friends that sometimes they do not get proper response from the authorities. As regards the second point, I suggest that one separate department should be attached with the Ministry of Education & Culture to look after the development of the library services in the country and more particularly to look after the administration of the National Library. So my contention is, National Library should remain under Government control.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: The students community in India are demanding their participation in the autonomous body such as Senate and University Body which are already autonomous. Now, it seems rather strange that you are opposing that the National Library should not go under autonomous administration. In that case how the students' representatives would enter into its Board. Is it not

better to run the administration of National Library by some 10, 15 or 20 people where the students' representative can take part when it would come under autonomous body?

SHRI BIMAN BASU: I do not consider that these two things are similar. In the Universities or in any educational institutions the students demand to participate in the body to fill up the gap between the students and teachers.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: 50.8 per cent of the students are benefitted by the lending section of the National Library and 55.8 per cent are benefitted by the reading room section. I want to know from my friend whether the students have experienced any difficulties in using the National Library? If so, what are your suggestion to remove these difficulties? Whether you have got any idea that the largest quantum of the beneficiaries of the National Library can have any effective say in the control and administration of the Library?

SHRI BIMAN BASU: In the reading room the students face little problem, but in respect of the lending section they face some problems. I have seen that some copies have become rare. If publications and pamphlets from other Governments i.e. Soviet Government or Chinese Government, are required by the students, sometimes the students are informed that only five copies are lying with the Library. But, after searching they inform the students that only one copy is lying with them, so the authorities refuse to issue these publications. So, my suggestion is this, while the teachers take books for their reference work and at the same time the students also require a copy of the same books, Mr. Chairman Sir, you were also a teacher at one time, you know better about this problem—more money should be allotted for having more copies of the rare and costly books in every library.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you think that the rare and valuable books should

remain in the Library premises and should not be lent out. This is not in relation to this Bill. Have you thought about this point?

SHRI BIMAN BASU: I am sorry to state that how will you determine the barometer that which book is very valuable. Sometimes the books which are available in the market, the authorities give notification that these books are very valuable and rare. Sometimes they purchase one copy and sometimes they purchase two copies of the costly books but these are not made available to the research workers.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Mr. Basu, I am referring to Regional Seminar on Library Development of National Libraries held at Manila in which Mr. Keshavan participated who is also the Chief Librarian here for many years. Mr. Keshavan suggested a very interesting thing, stating his own experience that one of the causes of frustration and failure in these National Libraries are that they combined the functioning of both the National Library and Public Library. Would you think that this possibility of delinking this process of National Library and Public Library so that it can become truly a National Library and the depositor of national culture?

SHRI BIMAN BASU: I do not like to emphasise on the side of public library but on the side of the National Library. I would like to emphasise on the first but not on the second point. I think that there should be more and more lending facilities.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: So you think that delinking would be one suggestion?

SHRI BIMAN BASU: Yes.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: That National Library and public libraries should be delinked in the healthy growth of the institution?

SHRI BIMAN BASU: That can be settled. This is related to the mecha-

nisation as to how the library can be controlled by Government effectively. But maintaining the character mechanism should be looked after accordingly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Br. Basu, you and your co-workers have thought over the problems of a national system of libraries in our country and the place of the National Library in Calcutta. In the Bill unfortunately there is nothing to indicate anything in regard to the role of the National Library. Have you thought over this matter and are you in a position later on.

IV. Shri N. K. Sinha, Retired Professor of History, Calcutta.

MR. CHIRMAN: You are very welcome Professor Sinha. I have to make it clear to you that your evidence shall be treated as public and is liable to be published unless you specifically desire that all or any part of your evidence is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

As I was saying, you are very welcome not only as one of the oldest users of the National Library but also as one whom I know very well as one of our leading historian. That is why we are happy to have you here. Now, members would be asking you some questions. But if you prefer, you may say a few words either in amplification or clarification of the points that you have made. If you wish you can make a statement first.

SHRI N. K. SINHA: I can make a statement if necessary at the end.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very well, members might ask questions.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: Professor Sinha, you have read the Bill. There will be a committee of 10 of whom 9 will be appointed by the

to send us a sort of supplementary memorandum. Your ideas in regard to how the library system in India should be organised can be at the disposal of the Committee and then if possible, the committee might try to incorporate some provisions in that regard in the Bill. If you do that later, it would be helpful.

SHRI BIMAN BASU: I shall do that later on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for your evidence.

(The witness then withdrew).

Government. For these 9 persons, there are no qualifications written and there is no age limit as in the case of government-servants. So we can surmise that a superannuated man can be appointed. We are superannuated and so we have just a ray of hope that we can be appointed. So with these qualifications of these persons I want to ascertain from you whether the future governance of the library will be better than at present?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: I would first point out to you that if you do not have any objection to my using the word—so many nominations make the entire organisation a benami government organisations. Then I would also like to point out that I would like elections in place of nominations but who would elect? There are universities, cultural organisations, scientific bodies, library associations. I would like that these associations should elect. Nomination from my long experience is a highly personalised affair and I would therefore suggest that so far as qualifications are concerned, the best thing would be that at least six persons instead of being nominated by the Government should be elected by these bodies.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: Do you prefer any age limit, say, not above 70?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: I am not going to prefer any age limit.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: So you have got a chance to go there.

SHRI N. K. SINHA: I am just 70 minus. I do not want to be there and I am at my best as a user of the library, not as an administrator.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWALA: Are you happy with the working of the library as it is governed today? What are the problems you feel, what difficulties are being faced by the readers?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: So far as I am concerned, I have personally no complaint because I am well looked after. But my students, my old students say that they have to wait for, say, three hours after which they are told that the book is not in its place, or it is brittle or it is missing. This means that service has to a large extent deteriorated. Moreover, I should say there has been a greater demand for text books. It has become practically to a certain extent text book library. Students flock to this library in such large numbers that it has become difficult for the people to cope with the increased demand. What I feel is that it should not be a text book library.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWALA: Do you mean to say that there should be a separate text book section altogether from the National Library or that it should be a part of it?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: The colleges and the universities should have libraries of their own. I can just point out to you that in the Presidency College Library Professor Tarak Nath Sen was placed in charge of the library and it has become a model college library—the best reference media I could find out, and he was such a devoted worker that when I go to the Presidency college library, there is no difficulty in spotting out the reference at once.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: Is not the Presidency College a government institution?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: It is but government is so niggardly in its grants that students do not find books there. But then Professor Sen was responsible for making the library as upto date as possible. So it will be better if the college and university libraries specialise in text books. Of course, for rare books, the students should go to the National Library but they should go there with chits from their professors that these books are necessary. That would to a certain extent minimise pressure.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWALA: Prof. Sinha, do you think, if the financial grant to the National Library is raised, then all the problems will be solved automatically?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: Provided the money is well spent. The book grant must be increased.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWALA: To what level?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: To what level is difficult for me to say, but with the rise in prices of books, I think it is necessary to double the amount. Otherwise, it is difficult to make it a National Library.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWALA: What are your suggestions for the improvement of the Library?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: I would suggest that there should be no Director for the Library. The Librarian is at the top of the Library, of the profession. Why should he be called a Director? It has a bureaucratic connotation and, it seems, he will be doing only administrative work. He should take loving care of books.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Librarian of a National Library is an important enough designation.

SHRI N. K. SINHA: Yes, it should not be changed. I have stated this

in my memorandum. You have said in the Bill—he should have academic qualification or librarianship qualification. I should prefer both. I would even say that even if a good scholar has not the qualification of a librarian, he may do the work.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWALA: This Bill is being opposed by a large section of people here. What are the reasons, according to you?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: I think the main reason is that it would perhaps sink to the position of a regional library. They may be right or wrong, but they have a feeling that it will be sinking to that position.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Prof Sinha, if I may say so, because you are a very distinguished man, you meet many other people in this region, so far as the status of the National Library is concerned, there have been repeated Government assurances and the assurances have been repeated in the Committee by the Minister himself that this will remain the National Library of India and will continue to be located at Calcutta, at least, in so far as the present envisagement of the Government is concerned

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWALA: Prof Sinha, Government has given repeated assurances in Parliament and it has been said that the national character of the Library will never be disturbed. Still there are certain misapprehensions in the minds of the people in Calcutta. What would you suggest to do, so that this misapprehension may be removed?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: There was a growing feeling of neglect and the ground was that such a small grant was made and so few books were purchased that we felt that the Library ceased to be up to date. Sufficient grant was not received—it must be an up to date library, collection of books must be up to date. Moreover, certain appointments were made in recent years and we felt that the Secretariat was negligent. That is the main thing.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWALA: On the one hand there is a charge that the Secretariat is neglecting and, on the other hand, there is a demand that the Government should control the Library directly. How do you expect us to resolve it?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: I have suggested that the Librarian of the National Library should have the status of a Joint Secretary and he should have the direct access to the Minister so that secretariat mal-function does not affect the National Library.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWALA: You do not think that the provisions made in the Bill will solve the problem.

SHRI N. K. SINHA: I do not think they can solve the problem.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Tracing the history of the birth of the National Library—it is almost one and half a century now—could you kindly tell us what is the justification for the location of the Library in Calcutta. People from Trivandrum, Tamil Nadu complain that it should be located at some central place. So what are the historical and other justification you can put forth in favour of its location in Calcutta?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: I have seen students coming from all parts of India. National Archives (previously named Imperial Archives) was once located in Calcutta. It has since been transferred to Delhi. Many persons in Calcutta have made gifts of books to National Library. I have seen Sir Ashutosh Library where 77 thousand books were collected so carefully and so meaningfully. Dr. Radha Binode Pal made over the entire proceedings of the Tokyo Trial. All those files are there. Very few people could do this. Any body who wants to assess the part played by Japan during the last war can go to that place and collect all the evidence I have seen many rare books. I have seen the collections in the India Office but at least four-fifth collection is here in the National Library. So many persons, composed to a large extent of the collections from the citizens of

Calcutta, have presented their gifts to the National Library and their condition was that the National Library should remain in Calcutta.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: How you can disabuse the mind of others that the benefits, privileges, scopes, etc. should be equally extended to other scholars also?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: By making scholarship grant, meeting travelling expenses, making reservation of accommodation for them in the premises of National Library.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: As regards control, out of 10, 9 members will be nominated by Govt. in the General Council and there will be a small executive body. It will be a Govt. controlled body but in legal shape it will be a statutory body. Govt. have full control without any responsibility. What is your opinion with regard to that.

SHRI N. K. SINHA: Power divorced from responsibility is always bad. As I suggested, six persons can be elected by library associations, scientific institutions, universities and by different cultural associations. In that case it will be really a democratic body and at the same time Govt. can play a beneficent role.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: But if it becomes an autonomous body by statute, in meeting the necessary funds whether you feel that for the autonomous body it will be difficult to get funds from the Central Government. After all, as you see, it is not a productive body. It is an institution of intellectuals. So, do you feel that in that case National Library will find any difficulty in getting necessary financial grants from Govt.

SHRI N. K. SINHA: Of course, I do not know the ways of Govt. I cannot say how this happen but my opinion is that it is neglected.

SHRI DHARAM RAO AFZALPURKAR: You want an elected representative Body on the one hand to govern the library but on the other hand you want it to remain under the Govt. control.

SHRI N. K. SINHA: In place of nomination I suggest election. I have already said that the status of Librarian should be that of a joint Secretary who should have direct access to Minister. In that way I meant departmental control. In that sense it is not contradictory, I think.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: What would you consider about suitable fund for the Library to come from? We find that in the year 1958 the budget of the National Library of USA was 10 million dollars with a strength of staff of 2,500. In view of that, what is your estimate for our Library here?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: It should be consistent with our resources.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: There is a great resistance coming from every corner about the question whether the status of the National Library will be statutory autonomous Body like the universities or it should function as a department of the Government. If you think that it should function as a department of Government with a good and efficient librarian then what would be the purpose of the elected governing council because they will have no power—librarian himself will be directly responsible to Government. Then what would be the role of the elected governing Council which you propose if the Library remains under the control of the Government? The main purpose of the Bill is to make it a statutory autonomous Body. What is your view about this?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: I do not approve of the word 'statutory'. All that I can say that it should be delegated autonomy.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Then how do you reconcile the function of the governing Council vis-a-vis the Librarian and the Government?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: Librarian cannot be *subjanta*, he must take advice of other persons, viz., the representatives of the cultural associations, of librarians, representatives of universities. Besides, instead of this Body meeting once a year as now it should

meet 3/4 times a year. So, it should be an advisory Body.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: You suggest that Advisory Body may be reconstituted in such a manner that they should meet frequently and advise the Librarian. But should they frame any rules and regulations for running of the library?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: If necessary they can. I agree to delegated autonomy. Rules and regulations framed by them are to be approved by Government.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPURKAR: I welcome your idea that National Library should be located in Calcutta. But India is a very big country—it is a sub-continent—and it is not also a rich country, rather it is a poor country, and so the financial aspect must also be considered at all levels. So, what is your idea that instead of having one National Library located in Calcutta, in the eastern India, if we have 3 more, one in the west, one in the south and the third must be in the north because almost all the scholars and students must get the benefits out of the National Library. Otherwise, scholars of south might not be so rich as to come to Calcutta and stay here to study. What is your opinion about this.

SHRI N. K. SINHA: My opinion is that if you want to improve the status of the regional library to National Library I have no objection but don't demote the status of the present one because the present National Library has got a collection which other libraries have not got. Those rare things you cannot find anywhere else and at the same time you cannot transfer them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sinha, I perceive, Shri S. K. Gupta I.C.S (Rtd. Calcutta)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gupta, before you proceed I would like to intimate to you that the evidence you give here shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless

sonally feel your memorandum to be very useful and there are a number of suggestions in it which, to my mind are extremely valuable. Now, I would only ask you that in view of the difficulty of finding an ideal librarian who can satisfy all the requirements viz., intellectual, administrative, personal and other, is it not desirable that there should be a body of people, the majority of whom, would be intellectuals, self-respecting scholars who are not accustomed to deal with Government Departments but who will be very effective for the administration of the National Library to look after the management of the National Library? Is it not better if the Library is run by them?

SHRI N. K. SINHA: That would be ideal from my point of view but ideals are not always attainable.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it desirable to run the library with the assistance of other people who are intellectually eminent and administratively capable so that they can form a good team? I ask this question because the Advisory Committee of the National Library has not met even once since 1967 and being an Advisory Committee its powers are extremely limited. So in order to have a better administration of the Library we should have some sort of a body of people with the Librarian or 'Director' or whatever you call him, and that body should be vested with some real authority so that they are not called upon to wait for orders from Delhi. They will carry on their own business make their own projects, recruit staff and to some extent they will have the independent authority. Would it not be an experiment which you would like.

SHRI N. K. SINHA: Yes, with delegated authority.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Sinha.

[The witness then withdrew]

you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by you is to be treated as confidential. Even if you might desire that your evidence to be treated as confidential such evi-

dence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

Now, Mr. Gupta, we have got your memorandum which is fairly explanatory and I hope the Members would have had time to go through it. If you want to make a short statement on it you can do so. If you do not want to make any statement then the Members will put questions to you.

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: Mr. Chairman, Sir. I am not going to make any statement on the note that I have already submitted. There I have stated that the Bill does not represent the recommendations of the Review Committee and suggested that the Bill be dropped. But in case it is decided that the Bill should be proceeded with, I have got certain further observations to make because in the Bill I find that certain inconsistencies and blemishes which have got to be corrected before it goes to Parliament. I have not dealt with these matters in my note for the simple reason that I argued that there was no need for a Statutory Board. Now, I am prepared to answer any question which the Honourable Members may be pleased to ask.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise on point of clarification. The honourable witness has put a very difficult question. He had said if the Bill is not withdrawn and if there is the provision for a statutory board then he will make certain observations. We do not know whether the Bill would be withdrawn or it would be passed by the Parliament. We do not know whether we have the right to ask such question. We are here in a Joint Committee and we should discuss on the merits and demerits of Bill and on the fundamental principles of the Bill as it has been introduced in the Parliament. We can improve upon the Bill. So, we want to know as to what are the necessary changes that the honourable witness visualises, should be enlightened so that we can put questions to him.

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: In my note I have already dealt with that. If the honourable Members want I can re-read that. But it would be superfluous.

SHRI SAROJ MUKHERJEE: He is referring to the Jha Committee, As he was one of the members of that Committee and he has got some definite conclusion and opinion regarding the Bill, his evidence is very important. Hence he may state in brief his main points.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gupta has stated in a public meeting that he was ready to do whatever he could do help in this matter. He has now come here to help us. We have now to find out the deficiencies in the structure of the Bill, if any. Necessary improvement may be made so that it can accommodate the Jha Committee's recommendation. I think, we should not put any kind of complicated and legalistic question as to how it is to be formulated.

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: I have drawn up my points in summary from last night. I am prepared to read it out. I do not like you to bother you with a detailed scrutiny of the Bill. First, I would deal with the administrative machinery.

In clauses 4, 5, 6, 8 and 13 of the Bill there are references to the composition of the Board of the National Library. My first objection is to the appointment of two Secretaries of the Central Government Ministry as *ex-officio* members of the Board. I have no objection to the other members being nominated or hand picked by the Government because in this matter there is no scope for election. Moreover election is not always the best method of setting up such specialised and learned bodies.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Then do you mean to say that we should dissolve the Parliament? You know Parliament is an elected body of members then how do you apprehend that fair election will not be done in the Board?

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: I mean to say that 9 members out of 10 may be nominated by the Government because there are no conceivable constituencies from which they may be elected.

As regards Clause 4(1)(C) I suggest that it may be considered whether the word 'Educationist' should be retained or be substituted by some other word. Surely 'educationist' is something more than mere 'educated'. Does it mean one who is or was engaged in teaching? If so, should you exclude scholars who enrich our stock of knowledge but do not do any teaching themselves men like John Stuart Mill, for example? As regards Clause 5, I have already said that it should be deleted. The Director should be Chairman *ex-officio* and his salary fixed by statute instead of by rules. There is some ambiguity about the tenure of the Chairman and the nominated member. Clause 6(1), says that their tenures will be 3 years from the date on which they assume office but clause 4(2) says that a nomination take effect as soon as it is notified on the official gazette. Similarly a clause 13(2) says that the Director's tenure will be for 5 years from the date on which he assumes office, which is in flat contradiction to what had been stated in clause 6(1) if my suggestion that the Director should be Chairman is accepted. The ambiguity between the date of publication in the official gazette and the date of actual assumption of office should be cleared in respect of all nominated members. My suggestion is that the Director should be the Chairman and therefore, the word 'Chairman' should be deleted from Clause 6(1) because the Chairman's tenure has been later fixed by clause 13(2). Clause 6(3) provides for filling up casual vacancies due to resignation or any other reason'. 'Other reasons' can only be death or removal. There is no substantive provision for 'removal' in the main body of the Bill though clause 29(2)(c) empowers Government to frame rules for prescribing disqualifications and lay-

ing down the procedure for 'removal' of a member. Since rules can be made only to give effect to the provisions of the Act [See clause 29(1)]. This seems somewhat anomalous.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gupta, the suggestions are very important. If you place your suggestions Clause by Clause, with due regard to you I may say it will be only wastage of time. If you be very kind enough to send us your valued suggestion in a supplementary memorandum then it will be a valuable asset to our Committee. I think you will not.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: I think this clause by clause discussion will take much time. So, if the honourable witness so desires he may kindly place his supplementary memorandum and that will be very helpful to us.

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: If you will accept my supplementary note I will do that. May I know when it can be placed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can place it by the middle of July.

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: As regards the staff, while retaining their status and staff, while retaining their status and right as Central Government employees, may be deemed to be on deputation to the National library because it is one of their grievances that their status is being reduced overnight from that of a Central Government employees to a local Authority employees. As regards finance, I have already given my suggestions at the end of my memorandum. There are certain words in different parts of the Bill which emphasise the strict control which Central Government wants to keep over the apparently autonomous Library. They should be softened. My specific suggestion, in addition to giving greater liberty to the National Library is that if you really want to have a statutory National Library, there should be a provision in the Act so that in time it may develop into a something like a constellation with the

present National Library being the Centre and with branches in different parts of India working under the general supervision. That is, if the apex library is in Calcutta, there might be branch libraries in Bombay, Delhi, Madras and other places. No rival national library should be set up.

I was initially in favour of a statutory body but in course of discussion among members of the Review Committee, I perceived that a statutory body would be worse than a body set up by Government resolution. The moment you set up a statutory body it will stand apart from the main stream of governmental activity and lose direct touch with government. It will receive step-motherly treatment in matters of finance. Now that can be partly remedied if by statute a minimum grant is set apart for it every year, say 20 or 30 lakhs, which must not be reduced in any case. It may be increased if more work is taken in hand but a minimum sum must be guaranteed by statute.

The bill provides that Government may, during the financial year, provide funds for the National Library by way of grant or loan or 'otherwise'. I do not understand how the National Library will repay a loan when it has no independent source of income. Why introduce the word loan at all? And What is the meaning of 'otherwise' even if we overlook the grammatical solecism.

Elaborate provisions have been made as regards disposal of funds and their investments, which, I think rather disregards the actual conditions of the Board will have to face in the course of its administration. There will hardly be any scope for such investments as have been envisaged in this Bill as after meeting its book budget and the recurring and capital costs there will hardly be any surplus left which can be used for short or long term investment.

Clause 24 provides for an annual report which is a very good thing. But the annual report, it says should not only cover the work of the year under report but also deal with the work to be covered next year. This seems to me to be rather funny if not absurd. A report always deals with a particular year but it does not foreshadow the work of the next year which is generally reflected only in the Budget. My suggestion is that the last portion of clause 24 (2) should be deleted.

Now I come to the last part of my evidence which deals broadly with certain legal points that I want to raise. It seems to me that clause 28 is misconceived. It says that no suit or prosecution or other legal proceedings shall lie against any member or officer of the Board for acts done in 'good faith'. What is 'good faith' has not been defined in the Bill. Now there are generally two definitions of good faith which lawyers refer to. One is in the Indian Penal Code and the other is in the General Clauses Act. (Here the witness quotes the definition as far as possible from memory). My contention is this that 'good faith' may protect you from punishment in a criminal proceeding but does not save you from damages against any person in a civil suit. Yet, the words 'suit or legal proceedings, are wide enough to cover both civil suits and criminal proceedings. This point has to be looked into.

Clause 17(2) says that from the date the Act comes into operation all liabilities of the Central Government due on account of the National Library will be shifted to the statutory Board of the National Library and the Central Government will no longer be liable for them. My point is that what is a liability to the Central Government is 'alright' of some part or parties to whom such liability is owed such a right is a right to 'property' and cannot under the Constitution be unilaterally extinguished by a mere Parliamentary enactment without payment of compensation. This will have to be looked into.

These are all my points. I am sorry I have taken too much of your time.

MR. CHAIRMAN Mr. Gupta, we will consider your suggestions and try to make the Act as good as possible.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Mr. Gupta you have suggested that the present employees of the Library may be treated as on deputation to the Board while retaining their status as employees of the Central Government. That solves the problem of the existing employees. But that does not solve the problem of future recruitment or rather future recruits.

SHRI S. K. GUPTA. Assuming that the National Library will in future be under a statutory Board, the future recruits will be employees only of the Board and will not enjoy the same status as are enjoyed now by the existing employees. That contingency has to be faced.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: What will be the constitutional position of the government? Whether the Government will not be able to force any employee of the National Library to be in service of the new body which will be under statutory provision?

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: That is a constitutional point and you should ask a Constitutional lawyers? According to English law, a Government employee used to hold office during the pleasure of the Crown and had no remedy but I think it is changed now. Here, in India the right is based on a sort of contract between the Government and the employee and, therefore, as long as he is not doing anything which makes him liable to removal or other punishment, he is entitled as long as his term does not express to continue to be in the Government service and, Government cannot just show him on to another body without his consent. An employee can be deputed but he retains the right of an employee of the Central Government.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Mr. Gupta, the provision to clause 15 appears to me to be a little contradictory. It has been stated that the tenure remuneration and terms and conditions of service of any such person shall not be altered. Second it creates further apprehension—it says, shall not be altered to his disadvantage without the previous approval of the Central Government.

SHRI S. K. GUPTA. You are giving by one hand what you are taking away by another. Once you say, these things cannot be done and, then, you add you can do it with the approval of the Government.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I would like to know whether this provision would create a genuine apprehension in the minds of the employees of the National Library that they may be deprived of the benefits they are enjoying now, if the Bill is passed.

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: The thing is perfectly clear Change in service conditions cannot be done without the previous approval of the Central Government, but if the Government approves it can be done. In such circumstances, a genuine apprehension can reasonably be entertained.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: This Bill deals only with skeleton structure of the administrative machinery, but functioning and working of different branches and day to day activities, financial control, everything will be done by the rules framed under the Act—99.9 per cent of functionings and workings will be done by the rules framed under the Act. They want to make it a statutory, autonomous Board, but according to the clause, the Central Government may by notification in official gazette make rules to give effect to the provisions of the Act. Even though they give power to the Board that they visualise to constitute a Board, the Board will not frame the rules. The Board

is constituted as an autonomous Body, but all the rules, 99.9 per cent of them, will be framed by the Government. Do you think it will negate the whole concept?

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: In my written memorandum I have given point by point replies to what you are suggesting by referring to the different clause of the Bill. While proposing to give autonomy the government retains its stranglehold at every stage. I have also made it clear that the function of the National Library has nowhere been defined. All that it says is that it should be run on modern, scientific lines and the blessed word scientific is a cover for loose thinking. Whether a question is one policy or not will be decided by the Government. Even if it is not really a question of policy, the decision of the Central Government that it is so according to subsection (2) of clause 25,—shall be final.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gupta, there is a provision in clause 25(2). "The decision of the Central Government shall be final." So, the Board is being vested with certain powers within the ambit of the rules made by the Central Government which are laid before the Parliament. So, we shall go into this and. I do not think there is any purpose in going into it now.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: You have said, certain minimum fund or a minimum limit to expenditure should be fixed somewhere in this Bill. As you know, this kind of institutions will not be productive type of institutions and in the intellectual sphere there is no optimum limit of expenditure. If we increase expenditure, it will increase national talents and national power. If it is converted into a statutory body and a minimum limit is set, do you think that it will cripple future growth of the nation?

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: We may give credit to Government for good intentions. If the Government does not realise the importance of the National Library it will only limit the growth

of the nation's intellectual advancement.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Clause 4 relates to the composition of the Board. Government is getting control of it and at the same time neglecting the responsibilities. That means by the backdoor Government is keeping control with the help of nominated members. If today we provide a statutory grant of Rs. 40 lakhs do you not think that after 10 years when the price will rise with the help of a committed body Government may not try to throttle this Institution and make it a regional library?

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: As regards the composition of the Board; all will depend on the type of nomination. If Government nominates people of the right sort who do not want promotions or other jobs, men who are real scholars, and interested in the advancement of learning you may have a very good board even by nomination. You can pick people from different spheres—from universities and academies from scholars of repute even from among good administrators.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Nomination is generally done by bureaucrats. Even from educationists they will try to pick up such persons who will follow their dictum. On the other hand if you ask the universities, associations to nominate persons, the control will not be entirely left in the hands of Government.

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: It is not unlikely that nominations will in the first instance come from the bureaucracy but it is also possible that Ministers and others for example even the chairman of today may make a suggestion that such and such person is a very fit person and this should receive respectful consideration. In the case of the National Library I think that suggestions from the academic world to the Minister directly should carry greater weight than suggestions from the bureaucracy—I do not accept your suggestion that

nomination is always made by the bureaucracy. It is made partly by the Minister. It is also made in consultation with the Minister's own partymen.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Please look at page 3, item 5 of your memorandum regarding selection of staff etc. would you like to subscribe to this?

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: Yes, this is the recommendation of the Jha Committee, not mine.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Would you also like to suggest that this principle should be adhered to in the case of staff representation?

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: No staff appointment should be made on merit, on the basis of the quantities necessary for the job. For a vacancy in the Tamil section you cannot appoint a non-Tamil-knowing Maharastrian. There are certainly many different branches in the Library where automatically people of linguistic regions have got to be appointed but in the matter of general administration I do

not advocate the doctrine of different linguistic representation.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: What would you suggest to make the National Library broadbased.

SHRI S. K. GUPTA: I have already given two suggestions. First, the Jha Committee suggested that the Board should, as far as possible, have members coming from different regions and they may retire by rotation. And my own suggestion that the National Library should be an apex round which there should grow a number of regional libraries in different parts of India. We are in fact very far behind the western and other countries in the matter of learning and therefore a lot of leeway has to be made for its expansion. That can be done by setting a large number of regional libraries in different parts of India under the aegis of the National Library in Calcutta at the top.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

(The Committee adjourned at 13.00 hours to meet again at 15.00 hours)

(The Committee re-assembled at 15.00 hours)

VI. Shri Chinmohan Sehanavis, Calcutta

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please note that the evidence you give here would be treated as public and would be liable to be punished unless you specifically desire that all or any part of your evidence should be treated as confidential. But even though you may desire that all or part of your evidence is to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to Members of Parliament. This is an intimation which I have to give.

Now, we have got your memorandum and personally have found it very helpful. Before Members ask you questions to which you are to answer I would like you to say, if you think it necessary, in a few words your ideas about the functions of the National Library and also about the

pattern of the Library administration.

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: I have already tried to make a few points in my previous letter to the Lok Sabha Secretariat and what I submit now would be in addition to that. Any attempt to regularise and improve the work of the National Library and to set it on a firm foundation is welcome. However, since the Bill has been brought after so many years it was expected that it would be a comprehensive Bill covering at least the basic aspects of the question involved consequent upon the recognition of the National Library as the apex of the library system in this country. At the moment it is not such a Bill as it itself says that its aim is 'to provide for

an administration of the National Library and certain other connected matters'. A really comprehensive Bill of course will require a previous survey undertaken with the aim of working out a proper working model in place of the present system, and naturally it will take some time before such a Bill can be brought before the Parliament. If, however, the Government feel that things are so bad that something has to be done right now, it must be ensured subsequently a really comprehensive Bill based on the recognition of the National Library as the apex of the library system in our country will be brought before the Parliament. The Bill as it stands today needs modification in some important respects. Over and above, the ones I had suggested in my previous letter, it must be clearly mentioned in Section 2(a) of Chapter I that Library means the National Library located at Calcutta including the Central Reference Library because the task of compiling the national bibliography at present being handled by the latter, actually in the fitness of the things, it belongs to the National Library as such and this thing has now to be regularised. Under Section 5 of Chapter 2, the Chairman of the Board is to be appointed by the Central Government. This may be done for the first year but subsequently he should be elected by the Board itself from amongst its members. Section 9(3) of Chapter II should be deleted. Section 10 of Chapter II should also be deleted and the Board itself should be built up as the real authority enjoying wide powers. After Section 14(2) it should be added, "provided that the condition of service of officers and employees in service prior to the commencement of the Act shall not be less advantageous or favourable than the existing ones". Much of the misapprehension on the part of the employees about the autonomous Board is on that score and a clear assurance in this regard will go a long way to remove such misgivings. A provision in the Bill itself of the ultimate account-

ability of the Board to the Parliament both in regard to its work, its performance as also its handling of finance will be helpful. Clause 26 under Chapter V should be deleted as it provides for the abdication of power by the Board. This is all that I have got to submit before you now.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARAS-HAR: It seems that you are in favour of an Autonomous Board. Do you think that the Board in order to be truly representative must have representation from all over India and the States being represented simultaneously at least by rotation and that major societies or Universities should represent in the Board?

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: I think it can be helpful if we use the system of rotation periodically. And naturally the learned societies, the universities or such Bodies should find a place in the Board periodically by rotation.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARAS-HAR: You have suggested that the Chairman in the first instance should be appointed by Government but subsequently he should be elected by the Board. Don't you think that the process of election does not always favour the right type of person to be at the right place and for that purpose would it not be better keeping in view the high status it enjoys, if the Vice-President of India or some such dignitary should be *ex-officio* Chairman of this Board? Yesterday some one suggested that the Governor should be the Chairman of the Board as is the case with the Salarejung Museum.

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: I feel that the composition of the Board is the basic thing. If we can ensure that then the proper chairman would be elected. I do not like the idea of the Governor or any other dignitary being put at the head of the Board.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: When you support the idea of elected

board does it mean that you support the idea of statutory autonomy?

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: What actually I have said in my previous letter about the board is that the Governing Council of the Board, exercising real authority, shall consist of say 21 distinguished educationists, eminent professors, men of letters and science and a few administrators with an academic bent of mind. The selection has to be made in such a manner that various regions and interests are represented, as far as possible, in the Council.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: But who will appoint the Board? Will it be by an Act of Parliament?

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: It should be by an Act of Parliament.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: That means you support the idea of statutory autonomy. Is it correct?

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: Yes.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Your idea is that there should be a comprehensive Bill. Before that you suggested certain steps. May I know what is your idea about the comprehensive Bill as stated by you? Would you give some of the points?

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: This is bound up with the question of the spread of education in this country and actually what I feel is that in this regard the libraries of this country have a great role to play, and at the apex of such libraries the National Library should function. This is what I find both in the socialist and in the capitalist countries of the world. This National Library should be feeding the other libraries and provide materials for scholars in regard to the spread of education and culture. There are some provisions in this Bill defining its functions but I have pointed out in my previous letter that they are very very inadequate and there must be clearer statement in that regard in the Bill

itself. I have tried to elaborate there what I feel about the future status of the National Library as the apex of the library system in our country.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: The Jha Committee suggested that instead of making it an autonomous body on statutory basis it should be done by adopting a resolution that it should not be an statutory autonomous body but with an autonomous body with delegated power. What are your views in this regard?

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: I am not a lawyer and am not competent to go into the intricacies of this matter. I have read about this only during the debate in the Parliament. Besides the report of the Jha Committee has not been published and we have not been able to see as to what actually it recommended. But what I want is that the final authority because of that the ultimate accountability of the National Library to Parliament for its performance and handling of finance must reside in the Parliament itself. But except for that it should be guided by a board which is supreme in the own sphere. It should therefore, be composed from amongst the right people for this job, that is, the intellectual luminaries of the country.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Some apprehensions have been expressed by some witnesses that if it becomes autonomous body by a statute then there would be some administrative difficulties particularly in the matter of getting financial grants etc. What is your opinion?

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: I have not thought on this point. Anyway I feel that there should not be a sort of diarchy in this regard but a proper partnership arrangement between the National Library Board and the Government. I want that the Board should consist of the right people and enjoy wide powers and at the same time is final accountability to the Parliament must be there.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: But according to your statement they will be part-time personnel and for proper functioning of the National Library it would require whole-timers.

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: We will have to have a whole-time Director.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: You have said that there would be some misgivings and apprehensions in the minds of the employees if the Library is run by an autonomous body. Do you think that just by mere stating it in the body of the Bill, if it becomes an Act, it will provide the necessary security, benefits, privileges to the employees of the National Library as they are now enjoying as the employees of the Central Government?

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: No but a provision to that effect should be there in the Bill itself.

SHRI SAROJ MUKHERJEE: May I take it that in your opinion an autonomous board would function better than any Government Board in the case of National Library?

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: For a National Library, unlike in other spheres, we should even risk an experiment. We should have autonomous body guiding the Library consisting of proper people as I said earlier. But if it is ultimate accountability to the Parliament remains, we can well afford to make an experiment with such autonomy.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: In your note you have suggested that there should be a board of 21 members instead of 10, as in view of the fact that this, going to be a national institution there should be a larger board. We would like to know whether there should be represented from the institutions like Universities or from State Governments, etc.?

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: I think, there must be some nomination of persons by the Government but the learned societies may be ask-

ed to suggest names of their representatives.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have worked for your research purposes in the National Library here. Has your experience been satisfactory in relation to whatever rare materials you wanted to find? What is your experience as regards the National Archives in Delhi?

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: I have got some experience of similar bodies abroad, and also in Delhi. I think, the servicing here is not upto the mark. However the comparison, I feel, is not fair, as there is also some lack of system in our case. I would like to give two examples. At the Esplanade wing of the National Library, one day I wanted a copy of the 'Times of India' of 1890. Actually they gave me a file which on opening was found to be absolutely reduced to dust so much that it cannot be microfilmed even. Another instance; one of my friends from Tamilnadu wrote to me saying that he wanted to get, in connection with his Research, some material on Sumbramanya Bharati which are in the National Library. He asked me whether there is any system of accommodating outside scholars working at the National Library. I do not think there is any. In this connection, I feel, that since it is the privilege of our city to house the National Library and enjoy its facilities, the State Government here must also bear a corresponding responsibility towards it, for instance, in regard to proper accommodation for the scholars or students who wish to stay here for their research work say for 10 or 15 days, of course on payment of reasonable charges.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Do you think that the text book section and children section of the National Library should be separated because of the reason—they do not serve the purpose of the objective of the National Library as far as the scholars work is concerned?

SHRI CHINMOHAN SEHANAVIS: The difficulty in this country is that there is a great dearth of text book libraries. That is why I hesitate to suggest that measure right now though I feel inclined towards the idea.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

(The witness then withdrew)

VII. Shri Narahari Kaviraj, Calcutta

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Kaviraj, your evidence shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by you is to be treated as confidential. It shall, however, be explained to the witness that even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the member of Parliament.

You have sent your first memorandum dealing with only on the point of autonomy. If you wish to clarify your points, you may do it in short.

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: I would like to develop some of my points. The Bill is just before us and I am not opposed to Bill, but I am in favour of certain very important modifications. I feel that there should be no relaxation of the responsibility of the Government in the matter of the administration of the Library. At the same time I do not like that there should be a large bureaucratic control over the administration. I am in favour of the recommendation made by the Jha Committee i.e. delegated autonomy. Now as for the composition of the board, it is not sufficiently broad based nor is it sufficiently democratic. There is too much of the representation of the Government representatives in the Committee. And I think there is no necessity of an executive council in the Board. The functioning of the board and the functioning of the council would be overlapping to some extent. Finally I wish that the status of the National Library should be raised. It should be in the nature of an apex library having its branches in different States.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: You have said that you prefer delegated autonomy. Can you give us an idea what do you mean by the delegated autonomy and the statutory autonomy?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: The Government should pay its due attention to the affairs of the institution, If it remains a department of the Government and at the same time if the Government empowers a board or council consisting of the representatives of different walks of life particularly consisting of educationists then this sort of provision can meet the requirement of the situation.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: At present there are 76 National Libraries in the whole world, but the concept of all these libraries is one, i.e. these Libraries are regarded as the repository of the historical heritage of the country. There are 26 National Libraries in Asia. Two international seminars were held-one at Manila in 1964 and the other at Vienna in 1958. This concept of the National Libraries that it should be regarded as a single unit was accepted there. Do you think that this will be a healthy idea?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: I think, if you can establish few branches or regional libraries it will rather solve our problems.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: As regular user of the National Library do you feel that the three-tire functioning i.e. one for reference library for the scholars and research workers and the workers for higher studies, one type of books to be kept in that library, and for the other one i.e. for the children books, there should be another Library and thirdly for the text books, there should be a Library also?

Do you think that the Libraries should be separated in the above way from the main library?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: Yes I think so. I also think that the annexe of the National Library which is meant mainly for the scholars should be kept open till 8 p.m. on each working day and on all Sundays particularly between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. as is the practice in the National Archives of India. We scholars find it very difficult to work in the annexe because of our preoccupations with other work during the period 10 a.m. and 5 a.m.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: As a historian I want to know from you from the historical perspective as well as from the standpoint of utility why the National Library should continue to be located in Calcutta which is the easternmost side of the country and why also the central or national character of the Library should be maintained instead of dividing it into regional libraries?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: So far as the site is concerned, I think the library should be located in Calcutta because Calcutta has certain traditions and the library here is doing a very good service at least for the last 25 years, and I think there is one readers' hostel and the scholars from other States come and reside in the hostel. So I don't think there is any ground for shifting the site of library from Calcutta to any other place.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Just now you have mentioned that scholars from other parts of the country are also taking advantage of this library but there have been complaints that scholars coming from, say, as far as Kerala or Tamil Nadu or Mysore or Kashmir find it difficult in regard to accommodation. Now, suppose the scholars are getting Rs. 250 or Rs. 300 as government scholarships all over the country. One who is resident of West Bengal or Calcutta has certain advantages, he may manage with that amount of money but others who stay out of the State may find it very difficult to stay in the hostel for the

purposes of his research and study. Can you suggest some measures so that the facilities can be equally given to all the scholars of other parts of the country?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: I do agree that facilities should be equal but I have not thought over the details of this proposal.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: You have said that you want delegated autonomy and not statutory autonomy. Now, if there has to be delegated autonomy, there is no necessity of a Bill, it can be done by a resolution of the government as has been suggested by the Jha Committee. Now, if you feel that delegated autonomy is enough to improve the condition of the functioning and working of the National Library, then is it your conclusion that this Bill should be withdrawn or should be kept in abeyance?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: No, I want that the Bill which has certain good and positive features should have some very important modifications in the provisions so that we can accommodate as far as possible the principle of delegated autonomy as suggested by the Jha Committee.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: The principle of delegated autonomy does not require any Act of the Parliament. It can be done by an executive resolution. This Bill more or less deals with the administrative structure of the National Library. Can you give us your ideas of modifications so that instead of a resolution in the form of an Act, those modifications should be embodied. If they are very vital modifications they cannot be introduced through resolutions. Can you give us an idea as to what are the modifications that you have in mind?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: In the first place I would suggest that the composition of the Board should be changed—I mean that just at present the composition of the Board has a big weightage in favour of the representations of the government. I

am in favour of democratising the composition of the Board in the sense that more representation should be given to the representatives of the universities, academic bodies and scholars' organisations or something like that. Further democratisation of the Board—that is my first suggestion. My second suggestion is this that in the Bill there is a provision for one Board and another Executive Council. As for myself, I do not find any necessity of having an executive council separate from the Board. The Board can also function as the executive council. I think if there is one Board and another executive council, there would be much overlapping of functions and it would obstruct the smooth functioning of administration. These are the two main suggestions that I have to make towards changing the composition of the Board.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: There is a body of opinion that an institution like the National Library should be the direct responsibility of the Government of India so that it can be developed, nourished, grown and made to fulfil the role for which it is intended. Now, if statutory autonomy is there, they apprehend that it will suffer—suffer in prestige, suffer in resources, and suffer from various other angles. But there is another body of opinion that if a statutory autonomous body is there, in whatever form it might be, in that case it will not grow and properly administer. These are two definite sets of views for various reasons. What is your opinion about it?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: In my opinion the National Library has remained in charge of the government for such a long time and so far as I could gather it was under the care of a subordinate department of Government or something like that—I do not know exactly the terms—and because of that the library has suffered and the ills of the library are so many that some sort of a change is necessary. A change means a change

from the direct control of the government. This is what I mean to say and that is why I suggest that on the one hand the government should retain its responsibility particularly the financial responsibility, on the other the better administration of the library can be ensured only if it is controlled by some sort of an autonomous body, particularly a body in which the educationists will have a say. In the present set up the educationists have little to say, or very little to suggest. I, therefore, think that a *status quo* should not be maintained. The present position should be changed and changed by all means. I think the best type of autonomy would be to combine the two things, just now I said, retention of Government responsibility and, at the same time, the exercise of the administration of the library by an autonomous body representative of educationists.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Instead of two tiers, the executive council and the Board, you would like to have both combined in one. I would like to ask you, in the University there is a Senate and also a Syndicate. Senate is a large body and the Syndicate is smaller body. So, would it not be better to have a smaller body instead of a bigger council?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: The Board is not a big body. The Board has, I think, a membership of only 10. In that case, at least, I do not think that a comparison with the Senate and the Syndicate is valid.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Since this is a National Library, an all India institution, and in view of the fact that it must maintain all India character, occasion may arise when the composition of the Council may be enlarged. So, instead of a bigger body, don't you think that a smaller body will be better?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: I am discussing just on the basis of the Bill and in the Bill there is no provision

for a future thing in that direction, I would suggest just now.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: You were contemplating changes. If in future any such modification is made and the Council is enlarged—suppose, the membership is raised to 25 or 30—persons of the universities and other bodies in the country are to be brought in—don't you think that a small executive board would be better for proper functioning?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: I do not think so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In case the number is increased substantially and in view of the possibility that many of the members would be from outside West Bengal, would you agree to this idea that a small body may be branched off?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: If it becomes unwieldy, I would agree. My suggestion is that the composition of the Board should not be unwieldy. I think 10 or 12 will be sufficient.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Since it is a National Library, it should quite adequately represent the different interests all over the country who have an interest in the National Library.

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: If it is taken for granted that the Board will be enlarged to a size of, say, 40 or 51, in that case we must have a smaller body.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPURKAR: When we are speaking of a National Library we must have a broader outlook. We must give representation to all the States so that no one should have any grievance because it is a wealth of the nation. So, if the number is increased and, then, there is an executive council, what is the harm?

SHRI NARHARI KAVIRAJ: If it is increased I am not opposed to it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: My impression is that perhaps you prefer that without resorting to legislation Government might by internal arrangement secure a kind of improvement in the administration of the National Library which will be adequate for its requirements. Is that correct?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: Yes, broadly it is correct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Since the Government has already come forward with this Bill and it is under consideration in the Parliament and we are visiting different places in the country eliciting information, do you consider that this Bill is such that it can be sufficiently improved upon, so that what you want can be achieved more or less, or is it such that it had better be put away and a more comprehensive Bill, if possible, in future may be brought up. Is that your impression?

SHRI NARAHARI KAVIRAJ: I am not at the present stage opposed to the moving of the Bill. I think it would help us as it would focus the attention of the public upon the state of affairs existing in the National Library.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It seems you have more ideas in your mind which you have not included in your memorandum. It is a very short memorandum. So, if you have any other suggestions to make on the subject, relating to reformation of the Bill, you can send them to our Secretariat in Delhi in a supplementary memorandum. It will be very helpful.

Thank you very much.

(The witness then withdrew)

VIII Shri Nirmalya, Calcutta.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Bagchi, before you give evidence you should note that the evidence you give would

be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of your

evidence is to be treated as confidential. Even though you may desire such evidence to be treated as confidential it is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. This is what I have to tell you in the first place.

We have had no memorandum from you, but if you like, you can make a very short statement in regard to your views on the Bill and suggest amendments.

SHRI NIRMALYA BAGCHI: At the very outset I should tell you that I am not regular visitor, regular user of the National Library. The difficulty is the distance of its location which is experienced by a large number of scholars and students of this city. So, first thing should be put first and my submission is that the National Library should be housed in the present Raj Bhavan and Raj Bhavan should be shifted to Belvedere because the original Imperial Library, as it was called then, was situated at Esplanade. It is very near to the educational institutions in Calcutta. In your younger days you must have visited the Library very often. It is very difficult for a serious student or a scholar to travel to such a long distance and when the rush hour comes they have to try their utmost to come to their residence. Raj Bhavan is ideally suited for the purpose. Secondly, I do not know much of the Jha Committee report except the one relating to Central Reference Library. They recommended that CRL should be included in, should be part and parcel of, the National Library. That is a very good suggestion and I think while submitting its report the Joint Select Committee will make a reference to this. Thirdly, the status of the National Library should be elevated to the status of The National Library of India. An institution like this should be placed on a statutory basis. Fourthly, I am not very happy with the phrasing and wording of the Bill. I am in favour of a Bill which shall govern the activities of the National Library but I am not in favour of

the present Bill. I hope the Select Committee will draft a better Bill incorporating the ideas they gather from different parts of the country. First, the administration should be a one-tier system. I find there is provision for a two-tier system in the Bill. But the wording is so bad that you never get as to know to what are the functions of the executive or of the board, what are the lines of demarcation between the two.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In regard to details if you send detailed statement clause by clause that will be very good.

SHRI NIRMALYA BAGCHI: I take note of your suggestion. Now, with regard to sub-section (3) of section 9 *re. proxy*, there will be never-ending system of such proxy. I had been a member of West Bengal Legislative Council for 9 years and I had to go through many draft legislations but I never found such an astounding piece of legislation in my life time. More astounding is section 26 *re. delegation of power*. There you will find that the board itself can delegate power. The idea is board will surrender all powers. The board will issue a death warrant. Section 26 negates all the principles enunciated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill. Again, if you go through the composition of the board and the executive committee you will find there are many nominated members and officers of the Ministry concerned. There is a clause saying that meeting of the board may be held at any place in India. The idea is that those officers belong to Indian Ministries and they will not find any time to come down to Calcutta and to see things with their own eyes. This they have recognised from the very beginning and that is why in certain sections they have laid it down that the meeting can be held anywhere in India.

The result is they have no ample time or leisure or opportunity to come frequently to Calcutta to see

with their own eyes the affairs of the Library. So, I feel the Board should be democratised. But how? My idea is, why should not the Members of Parliament find a place in the Board. I find there is no mention about them. Similarly, so far as I know, West Bengal Government also allocate some fund for the maintenance of the Library. So why should not the Members of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly find a place in the Board or in the Council whatever you might call it? Then representatives of Calcutta University or Bangiya Sahitya Parishad may also be taken. The Board, in order to function properly, must be less officialised and must be democratised with popular representation. My next idea is about the qualification of the Director about which there is nothing in the Bill. My personal idea is that the Director should be a man of wide culture, must be familiar with the working of class I libraries all over the world and above all he should be a technical person. He must be familiar with the latest scientific methods about preservation I have heard that computer system is going to be introduced in the Library. If that be so then the Director must be familiar with the use of computer system. My next submission is that the Director or the Chairman of the Board should not be made an autocrat. But how? I have with me a piece of legislation called "The Bengal (Rural) Primary Education Act, 1930. There it has been specifically laid down in Section 18(2)— "The President shall not exercise any power which by this Act is expressly declared to be exercisable by the Board." This was in the hoary days of the British rule. Even then they felt that President should not be made an autocrat. So the Chairman or the Director should be responsible for all their actions to the Board and they should not have any emergency power by which they can over-ride the Board itself. I have experience about the Calcutta University being a Member of its Academic Council and we cried hoarse about the autonomy of

the University and against Government interference. Now the Vice-Chancellor has been given so much power that he can over-ride the entire Act and can do things himself. And that is, we feel, not at all desirable for the functioning of the National Library. Then, my last submission is about the service condition of the existing staff. They have an apprehension in their mind about this that after passing of this Act they will lose the prestigious character of their service. I hope their service condition must not be in any way diminished from that of the Government service.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Since you are very anxious to preserve the status of the National Library you suggest that the Library should be characterised as the National Library of India and not of Calcutta. May I ask you whether there are other ways of preserving this national character as also of enhancing the status one of them being that the Board may be so enlarged as to have the representation from all the States of India at least by rotation and secondly by the fact that the Chairman of the Board may be a man of eminence as for example the Vice-President is the Chancellor of all the Central Universities wherever they might be located. Here I may quote the comments of Mr. Kalia, a Member of the Jha Committee, which was incorporated in the Report also. He suggested that immediately Government should come forward with a legislation for setting up of regional national libraries in the rest of the country, otherwise various languages of India cannot be adequately catered to by the National Library alone and therefore to do justice to the people of India as well as to all the languages and all the literatures of India these libraries should be spread over to the country and therefore a legislation for a regional national library should be immediately brought in the Parliament.

SHRI NIRMALYA BAGCHI: I agree with the view—a comprehensive

legislation for bringing in other libraries located in Madras, Bombay or Delhi. I also feel that there should be representation from eminent intellectuals from all over India. But about Vice-President becoming the Chairman I apprehend whether he will have sufficient time to preside over meetings.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Would you suggest Governor?

SHRI NIRMALYA BAGCHI: I am not sure—I prefer non-official.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: In Salarejung Museum the Governor of the State is the Chairman of the autonomous Board.

SHRI NIRMALYA BAGCHI: There is no dearth of non-officials of eminence. They should become Chairman.

SHRI RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: We heard you saying about decline in the readership of the National Library and also about difficulties of the scholars of other parts of the country to come over here and do research work. Regarding the first point you have suggested that so long it was in the Esplanade East the number of readers was very large but by shifting it to the present site the number has declined. What is your opinion do you feel that because it is an out of the way place and because there is so much of transport difficulty the number of readers has declined? And secondly because there is no provision for the people from other states to come over here and stay comfortably at cheaper price the scholars cannot come from other states to utilise the National Library?

SHRI NIRMALYA BAGCHI: I told you that I am not a regular user of the National Library. I rarely go to the National Library. We have the Calcutta University Library the Secretariat Library in the Writers' Buildings and the Assembly Library. If I get the materials from these libraries then I do not go to the National

Library. So far as the statistics are concerned regarding the decline in the number of readers I have no idea about that and you can ascertain those from the authorities. Generally speaking, I feel that it may be due to the inconvenient place where the Library is located. After the independence the scholars are coming over from different parts of India and certainly there is a gulf of difference between the old Imperial Library and the present National Library. Had the National Library been situated in the present Raj Bhavan then it would have been a real centre of learning which may attract a large number of scholar.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Mr. Bagchi, you said just now that the Library is situated at such a place that it would be difficult for the scholars to go to that place and consequently the number of readers has fallen down. If I say that Calcutta being at a corner of the country and the National Library being situated there it would be difficult for the scholars from the other parts of the country to come to Calcutta, then what would you say?

SHRI NIRMALYA BAGCHI: If National Libraries are set up in other parts of the country I would never be jealous but rather I would welcome that.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Fifty per cent of those who go to the National Library are students, mostly under-graduate students. But the National Library should be a place for eminent scholars. Would it not be better if the text book section for the students is taken away from the National Library and the National Library is allowed to function only for serious studies?

SHRI NIRMALYA BAGCHI: Sir, I am not a big scholar as you think me to be. I think, there is a restriction in the National Library for the admission of our young scholars. This age bar of 25 is an anachronism in my opinion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would it not be better if a separate text book library is set up for the students considering the large number of the student population in Calcutta. It can be set up under the auspices of the Government. Would not that be better for the scholars and research workers to have a more congenial atmosphere?

SHRI NIRMALYA BAGCHI: May be. But an annexe of the National Library may be used as the text book library.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The National Library having its national character must cater to the national requirement. That is why it should be placed predominantly for the use of scholars and research workers and not be crowded by the undergraduate students. It is no reflection on anybody else. So if text book libraries are set up in different parts of the State then the National Library can remain in its congenial atmosphere and can cater to the requirements of the research scholars.

SHRI NIRMALYA BAGCHI: I agree with you.

SHRI RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Sir, the question has arisen as the National Library has got no easy access from any part of the city. The place where it is situated is so inaccessible from any residential quarters that many persons do not feel like going to the National Library. Our main difficulty is the location of the building. The National Library should be located at such part of the city that there should be access from any corner of the city.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: If the Library is, good persons will go there even from a distance of 10 miles.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPURKAR: Mr. Professor, I welcome the

IX. Shri Satyapriya Roy, President, All India Teachers' Association Calcutta

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Roy, your evidence shall be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless

idea which you have stated regarding the statutory body that it must be one tier. But suppose if the National Library is to get represented from the Library Association, from the Universities and from the Legislators then what will be the number of members of the body or the Governing Council or the Board whatever you may call it. If it is one tier it will be unwieldy and it will not be possible for them to meet monthly or quarterly. Another thing you have suggested that the Central Reference Library should be merged with the National Library. But I say that the Central Reference Library as it is today should be located in Delhi.

SHRI NIRMALYA BAGCHI: If you make the number of members of the Committee 25 or 30 I do not think that it will be unwieldy because in that case you will have to make some proportional representation from the officers, the Universities, the general public, legislators. This will satisfy all and one tier system will serve our purpose. Though I could not go through all the details of the Jha Committee on the activities of the National Library, I have it from Annual Report placed in the Lok Sabha that the Government accepted, all their recommendations, excepting one that this Central Reference Library which is preparing the National Bibliography, should remain a part of the National Library. They can do that job only with the help of the National Library and so the C.R.L. should be merged with the National Library.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much Prof. Bagchi. Your evidence will be very helpful to the Committee.

(The witness then withdrew)

you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence given by you is to be treated as confidential. It

It shall, however, be explained to the witness that even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

SHRI SATYAPRIYA ROY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I do not like to say anything more beyond the memorandum which I have submitted. I further assert that there is nothing confidential in my statement.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Mr. Roy, since you were in-charge of Education Department of your State Ministry and you are also the President of the All India Teachers' Association, we would be very much benefited by your advice. May I ask a particular question? In one of the regional seminars for the development of National Libraries in Asia held in Manila in 1964, Mr. Keshavan who was in-charge of this Library made observation that most of the problems and frustration at the National Library, Calcutta where because of the fact that it was functioning as a combined public library. Now the concept of the National Library in India and all over the world should be one of repository of national heritage of the country.—what is your opinion?

SHRI SATYAPRIYA ROY: My opinion of this question definitely is the National Library should be controlled by the Government. It should not be transferred to an autonomous body. Under the Central Government it can possess the national character and so there should be no transfer of control from the Central Government to the autonomous board as envisaged in the Bill because the board which is likely to be formed under this Act will not be a national body at all. While 9 members out of 10 will be nominated by the Government itself then why should the Government wash its responsibility of management of this Library to autonomous

body? Government may frame rules for its efficient administration. It is not by transferring the administration to autonomous body the ills be cured.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: I think, you have not answered the question as put forward by my friend Mr. Parashar. What is your suggestion—is it possible to divide the National Library into different sections or regional libraries for catering the undergraduate students the other one with a pure character of National Library as repository of national heritage?

SHRI SATYAPRIYA ROY: I have not really thought over this issue. If you could inform us about this point beforehand, then I might have given my opinion.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPURKAR: What is your opinion i.e. whether the present management of National Library is functioning and efficiently and whether it requires any improvement?

SHRI SATYAPRIYA ROY: Our experience all over India particularly in West Bengal is that these autonomous bodies are really mismanaging all educational institutions. So I want improvement. The best way of removing the mismanagement, in my opinion, is framing the educated rules for the efficient administration of the National Library.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPURKAR: The present administration of the National Library is under the direct control of the Central Government, but you have already that there are mismanagement in it. Do you mean to say that in such an abnormal situation as at present the present statusquo should be maintained.

SHRI SATYAPRIYA ROY: The Central Government have not been giving due importance and attention to this Library since a long time past. It has neglected it altogether. That is why there has been

mismanagement and inefficiency—there is no doubt about it. I want to press the Central Government should take greater care on the National Library which is a proud asset all over India.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: You have said that if it becomes a statutory autonomous body, it will lose its national character. What do you mean by it? What would be the difficulties if it becomes a statutory autonomous body?

SHRI SATYAPRIYA ROY: I want to make it clear. If it is under the Central Ministry, it will be under the direct responsibility of the Parliament. The Parliament is the supreme authority in our country. If it is transferred from the control of the Central Government, the Parliament will have very little to do over the management of the National Library. That is why it will lose national character.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: The scholars and research workers from different parts of the country who want to effectively utilise the National Library may put different criticisms that the National Library is situated in one corner of the country and that although it is National Library it cannot adequately serve the national purpose and national utility. Can you suggest any measure that how the national objective and national purpose of the purposes of the scholars at different parts of the country can be served or how the national utility can be extended to all over the country?

SHRI SATYAPRIYA ROY: Unfortunately, in the Bill as I have read, but there is no mention about how

the National Library can serve of these purposes. Only a statutory board is to be set up in a very restricted way. They will have to take all their directions from the Central Government. First of all, the National Library will have to take their decision and then they will refer it to the Central Government.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: The objective of the National Library is mostly for the scholars and research workers and other persons who want to have their higher studies. But now the National Library services three purposes. Do you think that the text book section and the children section should be separated?

SHRI SATYAPRIYA ROY: As I have already said, we like to think over the question and then give our opinion on it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you think that this Bill as formulated might be sufficiently and suitably amended so that the substantial objectives that you have might be achieved?

SHRI SATYAPRIYA ROY: Our definite objection is that basically and fundamentally it is wrong and so this Bill should be withdrawn and scrapped.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for your assistance.

SHRI SATYAPRIYA ROY: If the Chairman permits me I may hand over to the Committee a written statement which is not confidential and which may be made public. We have every confidence in public opinion.

(The witness then withdrew)

X. Shri Jyoti Bhattacharya, Calcutta

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bhattacharya, before you give your evidence I have to tell you that the evidence that you give shall be treated as public

and is liable to be published unless you specifically desire that all or any part of your evidence is to be treated as confidential. Even though you

might desire that your evidence is to be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

Now, we have had no memorandum from you but we are expecting a good deal of assistance from you though I am afraid the time is very short. So if you like you can give a short statement on the Bill and suggest measures for the improvement of the National Library and thereafter members ask you certain questions.

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: Sir, as I understand it, this Bill is a proposal to denationalise the National Library here in Calcutta. I think this is a very dangerous proposal and is likely to cause very serious harm to education and the pursuit of knowledge in this part of the country. I also find in the statement of objects and reasons to the Bill that the idea behind this is to set up an autonomous board under an Act of Parliament and so on. The little experience that I have with autonomous boards is positively repulsive. Autonomous boards running college libraries or public libraries or public institutions in Calcutta, institutions such as polytechnics and technical institutions and so on, have fared very badly here in West Bengal at least and there is a continuous clamour in these autonomous boards that the Government should take them over. Now here is a proposal which is exactly in a contrary direction. I also think that we should keep in mind the question of the convenience of the readers. Quite a large number of readers go to the National Library. There is some difficulty about transport here and that is one of the reasons why many readers who want to make use of the National Library cannot do so. But still a great deal of inconvenience will be caused to the large number of readers in Calcutta and elsewhere in West Bengal. Lastly, I think that whenever Government proposes to hand over this institution to an autonomous board

the idea is certainly that the government will also pay at least a part of the money needed for running it. Now, this money will come from the public exchequer and I believe that the people have a definite right to know everything regarding how this money is spent. The idea of an autonomous board, as I see it, is merely to shirk Government's responsibility of answering questions on these matters to the people. For all these reasons, Sir, I am very firmly opposed to the proposal to denationalise the National Library. Thank you, Sir.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Professor Bhattacharya, as an educationist you are aware that in many States people are clamouring for more autonomy for educational system. As a matter of fact, all the States are crying to get more autonomy for the educational institutions so that they can function better than under Government control. What prompted you to say that an educational institution like the National Library is going to function better under Government control than under the control of an autonomous board?

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: If you would permit me to say so, Sir, this honourable member of the Committee is, I believe, a little confused on the question of autonomy of various kinds. Here is a question of an autonomous board for a National library. But the question of an autonomous board for an educational institution like the University is altogether different, because in the university there are the teachers who are to be represented. Now, if there is a proposal to provide that it is the people who should have freedom to run the National Library then that is a different thing. But the proposal here simply is to hand over the Library to an autonomous board—which autonomy will largely be for members nominated by Government—that is the way of Government—and that government will thereafter say that

this is not our responsibility. This is simply shirking the responsibility of the Government. That is what I feel. I think the question of autonomy should be put in concrete instances and not in vague terms.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Suppose the Committee after going through all shades of opinion made certain changes in the Bill that there should be no Government nominee or there should be minimum number of government nominee and that the board should include people who are working in the library and who are educationists, then what will be your objection?

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: Sir, you are thinking of a hypothetical question which is not before us. This Bill definite terms provides the setting up of an autonomous board and how this autonomous board can be improved a little more here and there is altogether a matter of detail. I am objecting to the very object of the Bill and I firmly say that the government should take full responsibility for this treasure of the nation. I consider the National Library as a treasure, as a property of the nation and the government should take full responsibility for the representation of the people in it and the Government should be answerable to the people who make enquiries into the running of this institution through their elected representatives.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it your point Mr. Bhattacharji that it is not autonomy as such to which you object because substantial autonomy in adequate manner would be satisfactory but in the name of autonomy something other than real autonomy has been incorporated in the Bill and therefore you oppose it?

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: Sir, you are very near to what I was saying. My question is—an autonomous board has been proposed here—whose autonomy, for what purpose?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is what I want to get clear from you. You might consider and you may have your reasons for so considering that autonomy as explained in this Bill is a fake autonomy, it is not real autonomy. But if there was real autonomy, if that provision can be altered in the Bill by some definite terms, then you are not against autonomy as such but you are against the autonomy as envisaged by the formulators of this Bill? My point is that the term 'autonomy' is irrelevant here. It does not apply to an institution like the National Library. Whose autonomy, who is being autonomous? In the University we know who are being autonomous—an academic community is being autonomous.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Since this institution should occupy a prominent position in the country and should continue to be so and that all the States in the Indian Union should continue to associate with this body—the National Library—don't you think that it would be better to have representation composed of members prominent in their own fields, educationists and others? Don't you think that these people should be pooled together to manage this institution?

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: If the proposal is to have a sort of a supervisory committee on which educationists all over the country are to be represented, students who are likely to use the library, the teachers and men of public importance are to be represented, that is a separate thing altogether. You don't call it autonomy. It is better arrangement for management—an advisory body with large powers. That is a separate thing altogether. But the point here is to set up an autonomous board. I do not see any other point and, I should say, Government is practically disowning its responsibility to run the institution. Quite clearly, the present Central Government employees will be transferred and will become

employees of the Board. This shows that the Government is disowning the financial responsibility. The larger part of the expenditure which is likely to increase, or to increase manifold, that is being shirked by Government. That is how I understand the whole thing. What the honourable member is suggesting is a different thing. Everybody would agree that there should be representatives of the people who use the library, better representation of the people—some sort of an advisory committee—I fully agree, but it is not under the Act.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: In that case the advisory committee would be under the direct control of the Government.

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: Advisory Committee give advice if that is sought for.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Is it your apprehension that if it becomes an autonomous body the Government will wash its hands?

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: It depends upon the Government. You may very well have a Government—the position is that whenever you raise a question—I have a little experience of legislature—whenever a question is raised about certain autonomous Board the Government always have a certain way of escape—this is an autonomous body, we cannot say much. That is, at least, my experience.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: I would like to know whether the purpose of this institution—the National Library—can be served if there is an effective Librarian which the institution lacks—there is no Librarian at all for a year or two, or three years—I do not know—and Government delegates by executive resolution sufficient power for local management and the Librarian has the status of a Joint Secretary with direct access to the Minister and the institution is properly financed. It is called National Lib-

rary but it is being treated just like any other library. If it is the intention of Government to develop it, whether by toning up the local administration the purpose can be served.

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: If you do not have a Librarian it cannot be run. You ought to have more money to buy books. An autonomous Board may not have a Librarian at all.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I find from your statement that you object to assign any autonomous authority to National Library for the basic reason, as you have stated, that the objective and function of a National Library or any other library of similar dimension is completely different even from that of a university library. I can understand this. But we find that for the present state of affairs in the National Library, one of the reasons is too much bureaucratic interference from the Centre. As it has been rightly pointed out, there is no Librarian. There should have been many officers who are not there. You have said that it should be under direct control of Government. Would you suggest, whether for adequate initiative and freedom certain powers should be delegated to the administration of the National Library?

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: The problem of bureaucracy is a very large problem and I do not think it is the remedy—to denationalise the National Library. You can have even worse bureaucracy in a so-called autonomous Board. Nothing prevents it. The remedy is to improve the administration, to change the bureaucratic atmosphere all over the country.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I used the words 'delegated powers'. You may call it delegated autonomy. It can be done by a resolution. As recommended in the Jha Committee report, for proper functioning of the National Library certain powers as at the present

moment are being executed by the Central bureaucracy—instead of retaining those powers. for proper work certain powers may be delegated.

It seems certain powers would be delegated without actually making delegation of powers as envisaged under the Statute.

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: I fully agree that that ought to have been done. The man on the spot should have power to act.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: The basic purpose of the National Librry is to meet the needs of research workers, scholars, etc. But we find from record that more than 50 per cent of the users are students who come to take notes from the text books. Do you think that for improving the working as also to meet the basic purpose of the National Library, these text book section as also the children section should be separated from the National Library, and that certain provision should be made so that it cannot be converted into a regional library?

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: I do not quite agree that the text book section and the children section should be separated from it. I would like to have more liberal arrangement for making use of the lending section, which is at present causing great difficulty. Text book section and the children's section should be enlarged. Regarding the second question, I think we will agree that there should be much bigger arrangements for having national representation in the book shelves.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Instead of extending the circulation facilities of the text books is it not more effective and proper if there are regional text book libraries because lending of books to J. & K. or to Kerala creates lot of difficulties.

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: You can always have regional text book banks and so on in addition to what you have at present in the

National Library. I would request you not to say that the present arrangement in the National Library should be disturbed.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: I feel that you have not yet lost faith in the intellectuals of the country to run the institutions. For instance, Museum is an autonomous body. So, why can't you have such thing for the National Library? As you know, we have copied many things from Britain.

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: There are many things in Britain which have not been copied in this country. I think this is not the place where I should start a discussion on that. But I have not lost faith in the intellectuals of the country. I have great regards for and great expectations of them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have told us that we have to change the bureaucracy but the trouble is that one has to take concrete steps, whatever the difficulties, when one is in the Government as you had been. Now, with regard to the administration of the National Library what has come into the picture is that to run it purely as an administrative unit, as a subordinate office of the Government of India by officers who are dependent upon the good pleasure of under-secretaries and other people is a proposition which makes no satisfactory impact on the cultural life either of Calcutta or of the rest of the country which the National Library is supposed to do. The idea is very definitely promulgated that we should have an autonomous body consisting largely of scholars, intellectuals, not all of whom associated with the Government but who can function in a very organised manner. Therefore if the Bill contains such a provision that autonomy means that it should contain all the rightful ingredients, would you agree to that?

SHRI JYOTI BHATTACHARYA: My difficulty is that you are asking me to give an opinion on a hypothetical Bill which is not there. I can give my opinion only on the Bill as

it has come before us. Of course, I would heartily agree that there should be some arrangement by which the intellectuals can play a better role in running the administration of the

National Library. If the officers are so poor that they cannot do anything, well, they ought to be improved.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

(The witness then withdrew).

XI. Bengal Library Association, Calcutta

(Further evidence)

Spokesmen:

1. Shri B. P. Mookerjee
2. Shri P. Roychaudhury
3. Shri S. Banerjee
4. Shri B. Banerjee

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have supplied a supplementary memorandum copies of which have been circulated to our Members. Members will now ask you certain questions.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: What are the basic objections you feel you will find if it is converted into a statutory body?

SHRI P. ROYCHOU DHURY: This is a library of national importance the purpose of which is to acquire and preserve all printed materials not only for the present generation but for the posterity. The purpose of the National Archives is also the same. So, we feel that security of documents will be much assured if they are run by Government. We do not find any reason why it should be transferred to an autonomous board. Those who support this say that if it is converted into an autonomous board efficiency will increase and, secondly, there is greater amount of academic and intellectual freedom. So far as the first point is concerned, if we survey the activities of different autonomous boards and bodies we see that they never attain the standard of efficiency like Government institutions. Only we can say that in case of non-Government organisations which are privately managed having profit motive

they have efficiency compared to Government organisations. Take the case of CSI, Indian Council of Agricultural Research or our Universities. Are they efficiently run than Government? We don't think. Another point is, some of the honourable Members raised objection yesterday that in autonomous organisation we get more intellectuals because academic freedom is more. Here the position of the National Library is different—it is not understood properly. In the case of academic institutions i.e., schools, colleges or universities the main objective is to impart education, organising research activity etc. and so definitely some sort of autonomy is required there. But the National Library is not an academic institution in that sense of university or colleges. Here we are storing informations not only for this generation but also for future generation. If we do not preserve or conserve documents here even the future generation will not get any documents and they will not be satisfied. Here security of documents is an important factor and that security is assured in Government organisation and not in the case of non-Government or autonomous organisations.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: As at present it is not autonomous, it is directly controlled by the Government but yet it is the result of investigation by all the committees that the present state of affairs of the National Library is not at all commendable. What are the reasons?

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: If you kindly go through our memorandum you will find that we have mentioned

categorically that there are 2/3 reasons for that. Firstly we think that there is no proper perspective on the part of the Government about the National Library. We know, National Library is an important organisation but unfortunately for the last 25 years there is no proper perspective about the National Library. It has been treated just like a super Public Library. National Library of a country has to organise so many activities viz., bibliography, documentation activity, service to the scholars but it has not been treated in that manner by the Government. Another factor which I mentioned yesterday is that those are reflected by different Government decisions and activities. In the case of National Library Government give poor financial assistance. Annually they get Rs. 4.5 lakhs for purchase of documents, much less than which a university gets. Again we say that it has been treated as a subordinate office under the Ministry of Education. There is also a department of Culture and the Library is subordinate to that department. When the authorities want to take a decision it has to go through so many paraphernalia and as a result lot of red tapism stands on the way and decisions are not taken quickly. As a result the Library has not progressed to the extent desirable. These are the reasons.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Now for improvement of the functioning of the National Library what are your concrete suggestions? What should be done? Should certain powers be delegated so that local initiative and freedoms of the library can be expanded?

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: With your permission I would like to read some of the points from our memorandum.

(i) Uplift the status of the National Library and arrange for delegation of greater power to enable taking of quick decisions and their immediate implementation at the local level.

(ii) Provide more fund for more comprehensive acquisition of documents and for adopting more efficient preservation methods and for rendering efficient services on modern scientific lines.

(iii) Make subject specialists inside and outside the organisation involved with the policy of acquisition of documents for betterment of the stock.

(iv) Similarly utilise the services of the professional experts inside and outside the organisation for improvement and expansion of services to meet modern needs.

(v) Implement important recommendations of the Jha Committee after publishing the document and after obtaining professional opinion on the recommendations.

These are the five points that we have suggested. We want that more power should be given to local authorities, status should be enhanced, more financial assistance should be given and subject specialists, scholars should be associated with it who will help in acquisition work of the Library.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: You said that in West European countries barring U.K. all the National Libraries are Government institutions. Is it so? Are they under the direct responsibility of the Government or under autonomous Board, Government having indirect responsibility, that is, whether the staff of the Library are civil servants and whether Government renders help to develop the National Library in the matter of management, resources etc. that is to say, how Government discharge the functions. Please enlighten us if you know.

SHRI P. ROYCHAUDHURY: If you permit, we have prepared a list of National Libraries and we quote the documents from where we have prepared it. You know there is a comprehensive Book by Shri Esdail. Then

there are Encyclopaedia Britanica, Encyclopaedia Americana, and different hand-books of European countries. We can say that Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Italy, France—in all those countries you will find Library services are under the control of the Government as also the National Library. In England—there is a little exception—and in Scotland the National Library is controlled by Government. Only exception is in England where the British Museum has got a long tradition. For your information I would like to tell you that even they are bringing it within the integrated system—recently Government has enacted a law and have drawn all the Libraries under one uniform law i.e., the British Libraries Act. It is not a fact that some Libraries in the Western Europe are run by autonomous Board. If you like we will handover the documents which we have collected in this regard.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Just now you have suggested some names of countries and you have also said in those countries the national libraries are run by the Government.

SHRI P. ROYCHOUDHURY: Yes.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: But are you about the fact that they are actually government controlled libraries and whether their employees are employees of the civil government there? Are the staff of those libraries treated as civil servants?

SHRI P. ROYCHOUDHURY: In some cases it is mentioned there that these libraries are state libraries, then it is stated that these libraries are under the Ministry of Education or Ministry of Science or Ministry of Culture. Sometimes also it is written that they are under the direct control of the Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The point really is what exactly is the method of control by the Government. For example institutions like the C.S.I.R.,

the U.G.C. are all government controlled bodies their performances are discussed in the Parliament. Your proposition may be true. But so far as the government control of the institutions like the National Library is concerned that should be gone into in depth. One has to examine the method of control of the Government. I say this because a Bill is necessary to regularise the constitution of the National Library since the National Library continues to be subsidised by the Government and the constitution of whatever agencies are proposed here they are also dependent on the Government with parliamentary control. Even after the legislation the National Library would remain under the Government control. I would take it that you do not want any relaxation so far as Government control on the National Library is concerned and that you want that that control should continue.

SHRI P. ROYCHOUDHURY: Yes, Sir.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: How they finance the National Libraries. They are big countries but ours is a far bigger country. What is amount of finance that is spent on the National Library there annually?

SHRI P. ROYCHOUDHURY: We are just not ready at the present moment with those figures. If necessary we can collect those figures and send that to the Committee.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Yes, Please do that.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: There are other government controlled libraries like the C.S.I.R. library etc. Whether these libraries are run by the government or by the autonomous bodies the scope, privileges and functions of these libraries are totally different from the objective of the National Library which is to function as a public library for the whole of the country.

SHRI P. ROYCHOUDHURY: Yes, the National Library is and has to be different from other libraries. Sir,

there is another point. Let there not be any misunderstanding among the Members of Parliament that we are raising all these points simply because of an parochial outlook. We are raising these points as we belong to the profession. We have suggested that the problem of the libraries of the entire country has to be taken into consideration. This was also envisaged by the Advisory Council for Libraries in 1937. It was also recommended by the Working Group of Libraries of the Planning Commission. The system of integrated library system was in the mind of the Ex-Education Minister Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and he expressed his feeling at the UNESCO Conference in 1955. We want that there should be 4/5 National Libraries in a vast country like India. In U.K. there are four or five National Libraries. We recommend that library in other regions of the country should also be developed. There should be more libraries of national status.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you suggesting at the same time—Members from outside West Bengal would like to know it—that it is time to re-open the issue whether the venue of the National Library would be in Calcutta?

SHRI P. ROYCHOU DHURY: No, no. We suggested that National libraries should be situated in other regions also with the Central National Library at Calcutta.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please give us a careful statement on this point and do not complicate matters. Please send a note to us as to whether you want the National Library site to be transferred to any other part of India.

SHRI P. ROYCHOU DHURY: No, the National Library should be in Calcutta as the Central Library. We would send a separate note on this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

(The Committee then adjourned).

RECORD OF EVIDENCE TENDERED BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON
THE NATIONAL LIBRARY BILL, 1972.

Monday, the 16th July, 1973 from 15.00 to 17.45 hours.

PRESENT

Shri Amarnath Vidyalankar—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Acha! Singh
3. Shri Virendra Agarwal
4. Shri Shrikrishna Agarwal
5. Shri S. C. Besra
6. Shri K. Gopal
7. Shri B. R. Kavade
8. Shri E. R. Krishnan
9. Shri Y. S. Mahajan
10. Shri Narain Chand Parashar
11. Shri Natwarlal Patel
12. Shri P. Antony Reddi
13. Shri S. A. Shamim
14. Shri Rajaram Shastri

Rajya Sabha

15. Shri Pramatha Nath Bisi
16. Shri Mahabir Dass
17. Shri Niren Ghosh
18. Shri N. G. Goray
19. Prof. S. Nurul Hasan
20. Shri Sanat Kumar Raha

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

1. Shri S. Harihara Iyer—*Joint Secretary and Legislative Counsel.*
2. Shri R. N. Shinghal—*Assistant Legislative Counsel.*

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE
(DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE)

1. Shri Mohan Mukerji—*Additional Secretary.*
2. Shri P. Somasekharan—*Deputy Secretary.*
3. Shri A. S. Talwar—*Under Secretary.*

SECRETARIAT

Shri H. G. Paranjpe—Deputy Secretary.

WITNESSES EXAMINED

I. Dr. S. N. Prasad, Director of Archives, Government of India, Janpath, New Delhi.

II. Indian Library Association, Delhi

Spokesmen:

1. Shri B. L. Bharadwaja
2. Shri Gurnam Singh
3. Shri O. P. Trikha

III. Shri Hakam Singh, Librarian, Punjabi University, Patiala.

I. Dr. S. N. Prasad, Director of Archives—Government of India,
Janpath New Delhi

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Prasad, I welcome you. We have received your note and before proceeding, I would like to tell you one thing. You may please note that the evidence you give would be treated as public and is liable to be published unless you specifically desire that all or any part of your evidence tendered should be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. You have the experience of Government Archives. I would like you to express your views on this Bill. Then, Members would put questions to you. You are working since.....?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: I am working as Director of National Archives since September, 1969.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may just briefly present your views and thereafter Members will be given an opportunity to put questions and you may answer the questions then.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: I have only a small submission to make. I feel that that in many respects, the duties or functions of the National Library

would be common to the National Archives also. For example, the National Library and the National Archives, both, are interested in the acquisition, survey and preservation of valuable manuscripts, old newspapers records of historical interest etc. We are engaged for many years in micro-filming such records. The National Library is also engaged in this same sort of task. It might, therefore, be desirable to have some institutional links or coordination between these two national institutions. This is the main submission that I had made in my written note on this matter. In the National Archives, we have been engaged in surveying, listing, acquiring and micro-filming and preserving these records for the last several decades. We have a very well developed laboratory and facilities for micro-filming, and we have men who are considered highly proficient in India and abroad in these fields. In the 5th Plan, we have proposals for micro-filming, for example, old newspapers and for intensifying our efforts in listing and surveying records which are in private custody throughout the country. It was my humble opinion that due to these reasons, you may like to have some coordination between these two institutions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For this kind of coordination that you have suggested, would you like something to be inserted in the Bill itself? Or, this is just a suggestion that some way should be found out to coordinate the activities of these two institutions? Would you suggest any amendment or anything to be inserted in the Bill?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: Sir, my own feeling is that in the Executive Council of the Board, you may like to mention specifically that the Director of National Archives shall be an ex-officio Member. He may be a member either of the board or of the executive council, which is there in Section 10. Perhaps it should be inserted in Section 10, which talks about the executive council and the board, may be as a separate sub-section, so that this remains a fixed policy and is statutorily provided.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So far as the working of your institution is concerned, Hon. Members would like to visit it and get more information as to how you select, get and preserve things.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: I want to know whether the National Archives is being administered as an autonomous body, or it is directly under the Government. Secondly, what is the total annual budget of the National Archives? I agree that there should be some liaison between the National Library and the National Archives.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: Our Archives is directly under Government. The annual budget of the National Archives on the non-Plan side, is roughly of the order of Rs. 17 lakhs. On the Plan side, during the IV Plan, we had a total allocation of Rs. 139 lakhs which included the construction of an Annex building also. As regards the question of how much money I would like to have for all this work of collection of private records and acquiring them on payment where necessary, I feel that the amount which I would require to do the job

really efficiently, would appear astronomical or unreasonable to some people. We want to cover the four corners of our huge country. Our history and cultural heritage are so rich that there is a vast amount of material which needs to be collected and preserved. From that point of view, several crores of rupees per year may be required to do this job well. This might appear fantastic from the view-point of what we have been spending so far; but it is equal only to the cost of a single major bridge over one of our big rivers, or of a passenger-aeroplane; and for that order of expenditure, if our country can ensure the preservation and proper utilization of our unique cultural heritage, in my opinion, it would be money well spent.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: What would you like the budget of your National Library to be, not only on the establishment side, but also on books preservation, micro-filming etc.?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: It is difficult for me to answer for the National Library. My submission is that you might like to do this work, not separately in different institutions, but in a coordinated manner covering the whole country; and from this overall requirement of expenditure, which I just indicated, allotment between different institutions will depend on various matters, e.g. how much each institution has, what facilities they already have, how much they can absorb simultaneously or immediately, etc.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: The National Archives is being administered directly by the Government. We would like to know whether you wish that an autonomous board should be constituted.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: Now, it is not under any autonomous body; but is a subordinate office of the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare. I have not given much thought to the question, whether it should be made or

placed under an autonomous board. I feel that it would be very difficult to do so, and may not be quite proper as well; because, the material we keep in the National Archives is Government of India's property. It is the records of all the Ministries and subordinate and attached offices of the Government of India throughout the country; and I would not like to adopt any procedure or pattern which would reduce the confidence which the Ministries now place in the National Archives and which might make anybody hesitant to transfer his confidential or very valuable files and papers to the National Archives.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It has been represented to us in this connection that since it functions under the Department, various difficulties arise in its day-to-day functioning. Have you felt any difficulties in regard to the administrative control by the Government, as a result of which you might feel that Government control should be loosened or removed, or that there should be an autonomous body to control your unit?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: I would be less than truthful if I said that we have no difficulties or problems. I would only submit that these difficulties and problems are a matter of every-day dealings between any two closely-associated bodies of men; and we have not felt at any stage that the case is so hopeless that we must sever the connection. We feel that we are receiving the attention. But, there is scope for being more receptive.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You mean that there is scope of improvement and not for despair.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: There is scope for some degree of autonomy—for devolution of some powers and functions. Certainly, it is not necessary to have an autonomous board. As an Institution, I feel that some degree of autonomy would certainly facilitate our work.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That you already possess. There is some degree of autonomy.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: Yes, Sir. I mean, more than what we have already possessed. In this connection, I may mention one thing. As I said, the National Archives to-day is a subordinate office of the Ministry. It is already under consideration that it should be raised to the status of an attached office.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: You say that there is some sort of coordination between the National Archives and National Library—one is now in Calcutta and the other is in Delhi. How is that coordination being maintained? Do you mean to say that both should come to Delhi or both should go to Calcutta?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: I do not think that I have anything of this sort in mind. I do not mean either bringing in the National Library to Delhi or taking the National Archives to Calcutta.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: What you mean is only theoretical coordination.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: There should be coordination in policies—not in the day-to-day working. But, all this, to my mind, is possible even without physically moving these two institutions.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: What do you mean by policies?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: For example, both these institutions are engaged in preserving and micro-filming the old newspapers. Let us say that there should be a coordination so that both of them do not micro-film the same newspapers for the same year simultaneously. We may decide as to what may be the newspapers that may be covered by the National Library and what may be the newspapers which may be taken up by the National Archives.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: Are they doing it now?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: The National Archives has done some very small micro-filming of newspapers. This was not because of any lack of awareness of the value of it but it was because of lack of resources. In the Fifth Plan, we have proposed to do this work on a much bigger scale.

SHRI N. G. GORAY: I would like to ask one question. You must have read this Bill. The scheme envisaged under this Bill is that the National Library should be made into an autonomous organisation. When this Committee went to Calcutta, we found that there was a lot of resistance to this idea. They insisted that the National Library should continue to be directly under Government.

Now, have you given any thought to it? The resistance was because they feared that once it was made autonomous, Government will lose interest and it will suffer financially and it will become one of the many libraries in the country and it will lose this sort of status.

Do you think that giving an autonomous status to an institution like the National Library will necessarily detract from its status or do you think that it will have a freer scope and more autonomy to manage its own affairs and it will gain in status?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: My opinion, for whatever its worth may be, is that an institution of the stature of the National Library would not suffer in diminution or from lack of resources if we make it an autonomous body. My feeling is that by putting it under an autonomous board it would be easier to get things done quickly than it is or it would perhaps be possible to do.

SHRI N. G. GORAY: You suggested that the National Archives and the National Library should be in some way or the other coordinated. You suggested, for example, that the

Director of the National Archives should be on the Board or on the Executive Council. I do not think that by simply putting him on the board of the National Library or Executive Council, it will be possible to coordinate these two works. But, don't you think that some thing in these matters should be done so that the same thing may not be duplicated. Let there not be micro-filming of the same subject in Calcutta as is done in Delhi. Is that your idea? Should there be a division of labour so that whatever you are doing in your sphere need not be repeated there and whatever they are doing in Calcutta should not be repeated here. Is that the sole idea of what you mean by coordination and all that?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: Yes, Sir. That should not be repeated or duplicated. Also the two efforts should be coordinated so as to be more effective. If the National Library is able to do something and the National Archives has done something which is parallel and which is not exactly the same and if the coordination is there, then it would be possible to achieve better results instead of each one pursuing a separate path so that they do not tread on each other's toes.

Shri Y. S. MAHAJAN: What is the extent to which there is duplication between the work done by you and the National Library at the moment?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: I did not say that there was any duplication at the moment. There is a possibility of duplication of the work all the time. The sort of work which is done both in the National Archives and in the National Library is such that it—would not come under the heading of private papers but, in a broad sense, non-Government papers. That would include even the newspapers. We now collect in the National Archives private papers of eminent Indians in

any walk of life. We have more than thirtythree major collections of very eminent Indians. We have also the micro-film of the papers of Mahatma Gandhi. Also we have acquired Dr. Rajendra Prasad's private papers for this purpose. We have a long list of such things. We have the papers of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in the National Library. Here is something which both of us are doing. Similarly, in micro-filming of these things, both of us are engaged in this effort. So far, to my mind, there has not been much duplication or waste of our effort simply because the field to be covered is so vast that there is plenty of scope for a number of agencies' working to do this and each one doing its best. But, the possibility of duplication is always there. Because of lack of any coordination machinery to coordinate these things or because of lack of any institutional links. My feeling is that we are not deriving as such benefit as we would like to or could if there was a co-ordination.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: In the particular instance which you have given I think we will be increasing the resources available for scholars. As regards the co-ordination which you have been emphasizing, do you think it will ensure better working?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: My feeling is it will be more efficient to co-ordinate in the sense as I said. At the moment it is very much a matter of chance.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: We can divide the area.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: That would be one way of co-ordinating it, although I, personally, would prefer another way. It may be that the papers of people—who are of national stature, of all India importance—are collected by one institution and the papers of people of regional importance, which again is very valuable for history, are collected by another institution. The division does not imply any reduction in

the importance of their work but it is only a working formula. Something like that could be done. We have to ultimately think of 15 other agencies engaged in similar work—private institutions, some universities, some State Record Officers, are also doing the same thing. It would be more advantageous from the national point of view if an over-all policy is decided upon and clear guidelines issued and the institutions engaged in this important activity in a co-ordinated manner and there may be well chalked out programme and progress.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: Do you not think, it will be better to provide in the Act itself? Or do you think the instructions may be got issued by the Education Ministry?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has already answered this question.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: You have a varied experience as an Administrator. Do you apprehend, if your Archives are put under an autonomous body, that will lower the prestige?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: My own feeling is the prestige of the Institution cannot be lowered by keeping it as an autonomous body. Possibly, it can be lowered if the institution does not function. If I do my job well and am able to convince my country-men, that I am doing my job, my institutions will have more prestige. My feeling, therefore, is that this matter is not tied up with the question of its organisational set up so much as it is tied up with the performance of the institution.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: Do you think that the Institution should be run by an autonomous body which may be made by the Government comprising of eminent persons of Research, knowledge and experience?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: This is not a subject on which I can say with any degree of authority or expertise. In

my opinion it would be good to have an autonomous body.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: As a Director do you feel that the autonomous body should be there as per recommendations of the Jha Committee? Do you think the Director should necessarily be the Chairman of the Board?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it might be rather unfair to put this question as he has not asked for the autonomy of his Institution.

Dr. Prasad, if you want to express your opinion, you may express your views, otherwise not.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: I do not claim any expertise in this. My initial reaction to this would be that the Director of the National Library should not be the Chairman of the Board. He should certainly be one of the important members and, perhaps, the Member Secretary of the Board.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BISI: You said just now that the autonomous bodies are more effective and are run smoothly. Looking at our universities which are all autonomous bodies, do you still hold that view?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: I shall be thankful if you permit me not to answer.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: You have made only one point in your memorandum and that is about coordination between the various institutions. If these national institutions are located at one particular point, this coordination could be achieved in a better way as against if they are located at different points.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: Sir, my sincere opinion is that it would not make any difference to the coordination in terms of policies as to where these institutions are located and on several other grounds, which will be fairly obvious, my feeling would be not to concentrate all our national institutions at one place.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: There is other type of coordination as you just mentioned about certain machines which will be used by various institutions. That sort of coordination could be achieved in a better way. In that respect, the Government can save some finances also. If they are located at one point.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: I have doubts about saving in finances. Take for example repair facilities. We have a laminating press which will repair a page which is crumbling to dust and make it indestructible for many decades. If you do not want to duplicate that facility elsewhere in the country and you put fifty machines here, you will have to bring tons and tons of documents to Delhi to be laminated and sent back to their respective places. In case you locate the machines in different regions and parts of the country, you do not have to move the documents. Therefore, this might be cheaper.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: On the one hand, you said that duplication of work should be avoided. Now you argue that if there is duplication of this nature, there would be no harm.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What he is saying is decentralization, he is not saying about duplication.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: The same thing can be put in different words.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: What I had in mind when I used the word 'duplication' was that both of us or several of the institution may be filming the same thing; that would be duplication. You have a micro film in one place, if you want to place it in other places, you can make copies of the micro film and distribute them. That would be duplication, if you have machines at various places. The provision of setting up repairing facilities in a number of places is, to my mind,

no duplication because they are not repairing something which has already been done by somebody else or which can better be done or more cheaply be done by some other institutions. They are repairing things, which they have to do individually. On the other hand, it is cheaper and better. What I would like is that these facilities should be within the reach of each document in our vast country, should be available in each corner of the country so that all the documents can be given treatment.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: I am interested to know, if both the institutions are located at one point, to what extent, the Government can save the finances. That is the basic question. I really feel that a number of departments are doing the same type of work in these institutions.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: As I submitted, the centralising of facilities like micro-filming and repairing in either institution, to my mind, would not be the cheaper solution. It would be a more expensive solution. This is because the material will have to be transported to and back. The avoiding of duplication which I had in mind was only in respect of acquisition and policies for microfilming rather than for setting up of facilities which have to be multiplied manifold throughout the vast country.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PRASHAR: Coming to the point of management and administration of the National Library, as you know, what is envisaged in the Bill, is some sort of an autonomous body. Have you checked up, what is the practice in other countries with regard to National Libraries? Many countries have National Libraries; what is the practice there? Do they have autonomous bodies to administer them, or are they under Governmental control?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: I would be unable to answer this question, as I am not sufficiently familiar with the facts.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PRASHAR: We interviewed a number of people in Calcutta. Somehow they

felt that it would bring some sort of deterioration if we have an autonomous board for the National Library. Since yours as a national institution, though it is a subordinate office, what is your experience and what would be your consideration about this. If both these bodies are autonomous with a coordination? Would it help, or if both these bodies are governmental bodies, coordination is implied, because they are under the same Ministry. That would be better?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has already answered that question.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: I have nothing else to add.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PRASHAR: You are of the view that autonomous body would be better. Are you satisfied with the present representation of various types of interests as in the Bill, or you would suggest some change like, one body at the apex and the other at the base.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: I have an impression that there are already two different bodies visualised, one is the Board at the apex and the other is executive committee. This, to my mind, is right. That is what is required.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PRASHAR: The number of members envisaged is something like ten. Is that right? Some witnesses were of the view that it should be fairly representative and therefore the number should be enlarged. What is your opinion about this?

DR. S. N. PRASAD: Again, this is not my special sphere but . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: He may not be able to answer in detail. You may seek his general view but in regard to details, it will be difficult for him to answer.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PRASHAR: I do not envisage any difficulty in this because, when we talk of the representative character of a Board, I think even a layman's opinion should be broad-based as to whether there should be an apex body

and Executive Council, etc. Therefore, there is no point in evading this; you can say straightway whether you would like this to be enlarged or not.

DR. S. N. PRASAD: As a layman, I can give a perfect layman's opinion without any competence or knowledge about it. My own reaction would be not to have an Advisory Board which is substantially larger because it would become unwieldy and it would not be able to take decisions which affect the day to day working of the Institution as efficiently as it would be able to if it were smaller in size.

II. Indian Library Association, Delhi.

Spokesmen:

1. Shri B. L. Bhardwaja
2. Shri Gurnam Singh
3. SHRI O. P. Trikha

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we proceed, I would like to inform you that the evidence that you give here will be treated as public and is liable to be published unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. Even if you might desire that your evidence be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to Members of Parliament. This is for your information.

Now, your memorandum has been received and it has been circulated to the Members. You may state briefly your views and thereafter Members may like to put certain question in order to elucidate certain points.

SHRI O. P. TRIKHA: As it has been National Library Bill has been limited just to the National Library as such. There should be a well-knit development of Libraries to be proposed in the country.

At the same time, in order to give representation to the various categories of persons or groups of persons interested in the National Library. I might like to have some advisory body where everybody would be given representation and we can have a purely advisory body as against an executive one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much; we are very thankful to you; you have enlightened us to a great extent.

(The witness then withdrew)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will you first enlighten us regarding your Association in a few words?

SHRI O. P. TRIKHA: The Indian Library Association was established in 1933 as an All India Library body and it is a national organisation comprising about 1200 Members all over the country. In addition to individual Members, there are institutions and other bodies who are also our Members and who are interested in the Library development. The State Library Association and also our members. Recently, we had a meeting at Hyderabad where representatives from all the corners were present.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: Who are the office bearers of the All India body?

SHRI O. P. TRIKHA: I am the Secretary of the All India body; Shri Bashiruddin is our President and Shri Gurnam Singh is the Assistant Secretary. We have an executive body of about 11 Members.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: You are representing the Indian Library Association or a Branch of it?

SHRI O. P. TRIKHA: Our headquarters are in Delhi; there is no branch as such.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: Then you are representing the All India body?

SHRI O. P. TRIKHA: That's right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may proceed.

SHRI O. P. TRIKHA: As I have said, the proposed Bill is of a very limited scope dealing with only the National Library presently at Calcutta; we would request that a well-knit development plan for the whole country should be taken into account in the Bill.

Then, coming to the Board, it should be autonomous and should enjoy all the privilege of autonomous Boards because it is clear that always the autonomous bodies conduct their work in a much better way in day to day routine matters of the institution and their decisions are also very quick. I would suggest that the autonomy should be there in the National Library Board. For example, in the Delhi Public Library, we have got the experience that it has been working very efficiently and there has been, I think, an enormous development to extend its services to the citizens of Delhi. Similarly, once the Board is there and it enjoys full autonomy, it will be the easy for the members of the Board and the institution itself to flourish.

When we come to the constitution of the Board. It is said that the vacancies should be filled up for the remaining period of tenure of the outgoing person. In that case, I would say that it would not be in the interest of the Board to have a person for six months or three months or two months. We should fill up the vacancy for a longer period and the incoming person should be for the next tenure.

As far as Director's qualification is concerned, we would request that the main qualification for the Director

should be that he should have worked as a Librarian and then the academic qualification should come in. Preference should be given to the Librarian rather than to the educationist.

MR. CHAIRMAN: These are two contradictory things.

SHRI B. L. BHARDWAJA: Just as an economist or a philosopher is an educationist, in the same way, a Librarian can also claim to be an educationist and he should not be excluded from the category of the educationist.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: I am trying to elaborate what the Chairman said. The distinguished Librarian is one who is not only a distinguished scholar but he should also be a distinguished librarian.

SHRI B. L. BHARDWAJA: But, situated as we are, if you want that the Librarianship should be a growing profession, then we think Librarian should be in that category.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: A Librarian should be a scholar.

SHRI B. L. BHARDWAJA: Yes, Sir.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: And a man of wide learning.

SHRI B. L. BHARDWAJA: Our Ex-Presidents include Prof. Keshavan, Mr. Nihar Ranjan and Dr. Ranganathan.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: These are well-known scholars.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In addition to that, they should have that qualification also.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: At the same time, I am sure, you are not meaning that a person who is merely an academician should be selected even though he may not have distinguished himself as a man of learning.

SHRI B. L. BHARDWAJA: A person who has the knowledge of

books is a scholarly person and at the same time knows the art of managing.

SHRI O. P. TRIKHA: As far as appointment of a person is concerned, it should be for a longer period, supposing, a person is therefor five years, how can he plan for a longer period if it is based into different programmes. If we have to reach at such and such place in Delhi and put our Library in each nook and corner of Delhi, then it cannot be done in five years. For this, at least, 15 or 20 years' planning should be there. Secondly, if a person comes on deputation, he will be towards the end of his career. I would suggest that he should be on a regular basis. With regard to the employees, we have suggested in our memorandum that the existing employees of the National Library, Calcutta, should be given an option other to retain their status as Govt. employees, if they so desire, or, if they like, to come under the new regulations as they would be in autonomous bodies. All the librarians who are working in that way should be given the option to do so. Others may come under the new administration. And then in the Board, there was no representation of the National Library Association which I request should be there for proper planning and development.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: I appreciate this point of view. I am aware of two international conferences—one in Manila and the other in Paris—regarding the development of national Library movement in the underdeveloped countries. I also see the point that a mere scholar is not the Librarian and he need not be a Librarian, but for a Library, it is the librarianship-cum-scholarship that should matter rather than scholarship-cum librarian. What would you think if it is decided to have a representative of the library profession in the Board of Management, or whatever it is for the national library? How such person should be selected? I am not talking of the person who heads the Board, but the person who represents

a library as such in the Board of Management.

SHRI B. L. BHARDAWAJA: You give representation to the national association. The President of the Indian Library Association will be a member of the Board. Since our President is elected every two years, according to the Constitution, the association as such has got the representation. The other method is that you nominate some leading librarian from such and such University by rotation. There may be a panel of five or six Universities and out of that panel, one may serve for a fixed term. Election is not a very sure and suitable method of finding a suitable man for such type of assignment. They should be sent either by nomination or be *ex-officio*.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Since it concerns your profession for which you will agree with me that there are, at present, more than 90 Universities in the country and all of them are having libraries. Then there are other State Government Libraries; then there are libraries which are being run by trusts and so on and so forth. If there is a question of rotation, I don't think there will be a chance for anybody.

SHRI B. L. BHARDAWAJA: The intention is not that each one of them should get a chance to serve on the University Board. The intention is that professional people should get representation so that they may adequately put the professional point of view in the Board. We can have one from amongst the distinguished persons of the senior most among them should be nominated.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: You have said that there should be some sort of scope for the library movement in the country and this should be incorporated in this Bill itself. Have you any concrete suggestions to make in this regard?

SHRI B. L. BHARAD WAJA: Actually. I do not want to take much of your time. As far as the National Library, Calcutta, is concerned, the word 'national', here, has a historical background. Previously, it was called Imperial Library. Soon after Independence, the word 'Imperial' had to be given a go-by and the word 'National' had been substituted. At that time, it was a National Library in the real sense of the term. Later on, since the word 'National Library' was given, an attempt was made to give it a national character. But, over the last 25 years, this has not met with much success. The Library, in its selection and in its personnel, still has not got a national outlook. What we have suggested in our memorandum is that, like other National Libraries in various countries, the National Library, besides being a library in itself, should be the nerve-centre of the entire library movement in the country, so that new ideas and new experiences shoot off from that centre and pervade throughout the length and breadth of the country. It is in that sense that we have said that the National Library Bill, as drafted, restricts itself only to institutions. But, it does not say anything as to how the idea of library development should be pursued by the National Library. Our submission was that suitable clauses should be added in the Bill to see that the functions of spreading the library movement and improving library science are also included in the functions of the National Library. This is our idea.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: I would like to ask a very specific question. Mr. Kesavan who was a National Librarian some time back, read a paper at the Manila Seminar and referring to this National Library, Calcutta, he made a specific statement in the general context. He said that the time has come when the public aspect or the public service aspect of the library should be de-linked from the national aspect of the National Library, because, it has to be

a repository of the cultural heritage of the nation. The Public Library may be a big library or something like that because of its service aspect. For this purpose, there may be some other libraries. But, this particular library should be preserved as such as a monument which can embrace the rich cultural heritage of the country and save it from annihilation.

SHRI B. L. BHARADAWAJA: I would like to say here one thing. The Baroda Central Library was established by Shri Fatesinh Rao Gaikewad. He had a curator of library, who was also the Librarian of the Central Library, Baroda. In his capacity as curator, he was in-charge of so many library department. This Library extended its services to various provincial towns and rural areas. Mr. Kesavan is welcome to have his views. There can be different views on this subject. But, the Association, for the purpose of this particular situation, is still of the opinion that the Library if it also takes upon itself the duty to see that library development takes place in the country and it plays a very important role therein, then, our...

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: I would like to raise one point before you. Libraries are in the State in our Constitution, and therefore, Parliament does not have the competence to legislate on a national library movement. It can legislate in respect of those institutions which have been declared as institutions of national importance and National Library, is one of those, which has been declared as an institution of national importance. Therefore, Parliament has the legislative competence to legislate in respect of the National Library. Now, you have made a suggestion and I was wondering, whether you have given any thought to this matter that libraries fall squarely within the State list and they are beyond Parliament's competence to legislate.

SHRI B. L. BHARADWAJA: My submission is this. I know that libraries are in the State list and they are not on the Concurrent list. But, by consensus, a lot of things can be achieved, and I will appeal to the Minister to evolve a sort of consensus, because, it is a question in which all sections of the community are interested and it is closely related to our national development. Your predecessor, Dr. Rao happened to preside over one of our Conferences in Mysore and there, he said that although it was a State subject and the Central Government had no authority legally to interfere, he would consult the Education Ministers and he will try to bring home the point to them that there should be some sort of uniform legislation in the States as well as guidance from the Centre in respect of library development. Legally, it is perfectly clear that the Central Government cannot interfere. But, at your level, you can have a word with your counter-parts in the State and if possible, some sort of consensus can be brought about so that there is uniform development of library movement in the country.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: Even that does not give Parliament the authority to legislate. It is possible that the various State Government may have similar policy and similar legislations, if you so desire. But, how does Parliament get the authority to legislate?

SHRI B. L. BHARDWAJA: In cultural matters, we cannot work in watertight compartments and those who hold the strings of the purse, can get things done.

PROF. N. G. GORAY: We have understood the spirit behind your remarks. But, the point is that, as far as legislation is concerned, Parliament cannot pass any law. That is the point.

SHRI B. L. BHARADWAJA: I perfectly agree with the view. But, if the functions...

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has expressed his views. So far as the constitutional position is concerned, he says that some way should be found out.

SHRI PRAMATHA NATH BASI: You just said that the National Library at Calcutta has no national outlook. Which library in India has got national outlook? You also said that the Imperial library automatically became the National Library. Similarly, British Empire in India became the National Government of India. So, do you mean to say that we are not a nation?

SHRI B. L. BHARADWAJA: I only submitted that the National Library has not developed on national lines. I never said that it has no national outlook. Whatever development has taken place, is not enough, in my view.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: I take it that you use it in the historical sense.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Actually, the proposed bill is altogether silent on the functions of the library. If those are taken into account, you will definitely see that it has a national outlook. It has maintained it so far and will continue to maintain it.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: In the memo. submitted by the National Library Association, there are some observations. One proposes that the 3-tier administrative set-up in the proposed bill should be simplified, to avoid unintended difficulties. Do you want it to be a broad-based body representing all regions? Will this be a small body? If it is to be a small body, how can expect that it can serve national purposes? If you think that it should be broad-based, how can you suggest that there should not be any executive committee? So, I think you should clarify your proposition regarding the structure of the National Library Authority.

SHRI GURNAM SINGH: There should be one post. The Secretary will be the executive officer of the

board. He will first go to the executive council. Then the council will put it up before the board. If we keep an one-tier board, it will be easy to conduct business.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: How?

SHRI GURNAM SINGH: We have it in the Delhi Public Library. The Secretary puts up the difficulties before the board and then he works according to their decision. It was initiated as an UNESCO pilot project. Now, it has been taken up by the Ministry and it is working very well.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: There is a provision in the bill that there should be a 12-member council. Do you suggest that there should be no council?

SHRI GURNAM SINGH: The Executive Council shall have the director of the National Library as its *ex-officio* Secretary.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: What should be the size necessary for the representation of so many regions?

SHRI GURNAM SINGH: We have given the size of the board; and we have included two members therein, who should be professional librarians. We do not object to the regional composition of the board.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: Mr. Bhavadwaja, you have talked about the development of library movement in India. It is a State subject. I believe some States have passed Library Acts; and tried to develop the library movement. Do you think that it will be sufficient and will meet the requirements of the people in this respect?

SHRI B. L. BHARADWAJA: The library has two facts. One is the public library for encouraging adult literacy and the general level of education among masses. The other aspect of the library movement is to collect material for research scholars etc. The concept of national library is

to cater both to the public library movement as well as collecting material for those who want to make scholarly use of it.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: Here a difficulty arises, i.e. of parliamentary competence. I am sorry I am coming back to it. Parliament's competence over the national library exists because it has been declared to be of national importance. A public library is not an institution of national importance. I am not saying that the public library is less important; it is extremely important. It has a different function. Here, the National library is an institution of national importance and, therefore, it has to be rather different even from the best of public libraries.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: We have, in India, a number of general public libraries and we have a large number of specialized libraries like those in the national science laboratories. They are a very important part of the chain. Don't you think that those specialized libraries should have representation in the board?

SHRI O. P. TRIKHA: In our memo, we have requested that the membership of the board be increased so as to include one representative each of Indian Association of Special Librarians and Information Centre.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: We have a large number of universities in India; and as pointed out by Mr. Parashar, their number will go up further. Do you think it would be sufficient to have one representative from all of them, because the idea of representation is to have different types of experience pooled together?

SHRI B. L. BHARADWAJA: The idea is not to give representation to the librarians, but to make available the best talent, in the matter of running the national library.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: We have, for example, agricultural and other technical universities. It would be difficult for one man to represent different specified universities.

SHRI B. L. BHARDWAJA: So far as the librarian is concerned, he has love for all branches of knowledge. He will look after and do justice to all branches of science. The librarian of an agricultural university will not necessarily look after the interests of such universities alone.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: I want to make a correction. According to my Secretary, the Association of Delhi Public Libraries is administered by a board which has set up a small committee, called the executive committee.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: I would like to know how many associations there are. Are there several of them?

SHRI B. L. BHARADWAJA: There are only two bodies. The Indian Library Association was set up in 1933 and it was the spokesman of the library movement in India. In 1956, the Indian Association of Special Libraries and Information Centres, with its headquarters at Calcutta, was established, to take stock of what is happening in the field of special libraries. These are the two all-India bodies; others are State organisations.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: It is being asserted that except the British Museum, all national libraries all over the world are directly under the Government and administered by the Government at the national level. Are you content with having it at the state level? At the same time, what benefits, do you think, would accrue to the library by having it under an autonomous board?

III. Shri Hakam Singh, Librarian Punjabi University, Patiala

MR. CHAIRMAN: I welcome you, Mr. Hakam Singh, on behalf of the Committee. Before we proceed further, I would like to inform you that the evidence that you will give here will be treated as public and is liable

SHRI B. L. BHARADWAJA : What you say is correct; but we have our own particular problems in this country, and the way we are functioning. An autonomous body has a little more autonomy and freedom to function than a body functioning like a government department. Secondly we feel that all educational institutions should be a little away from the day-to-day control of the Government and if an autonomous body takes charge of the national library, we will be having some freedom. In its day-to-day working, it will not be tied down by the rigidity of functioning of various Government departments. As it happens, there are certain matters on which in order to fulfil the strict requirements of accounts, audit and other procedural matters, it takes a very long time to decide on a particular question. But if the body is autonomous, it has a little more freedom and the work is done speedily. There are occasions when even the Minister is helpless because of the procedural difficulties.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: But certain conditions can be waived specially and still it can remain as a Governmental organisation.

SHRI B. L. BHARADWAJA: I know that the conditions can be modified in the public interest. What we mean is that it should be given sufficient autonomy so that it can function smoothly and in the interest of the library development.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Committee, I thank you for enlightening the Committee with your views. Thank you very much.

(The witnesses then withdrew)

to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential, such evidence

is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

We have received your Memorandum and it has already been circulated to the Members. You may, however, briefly explain your views and thereafter the Members might like to put some questions in order to enlighten them with your views.

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: Thank you, Sir. I have suggested certain modifications in the Bill. That part of the suggestions, I have given in the first part of my letter. In the second part, I have suggested that the Bill should have been more comprehensive and the present Bill does not really tackle the entire problem of the national Library in the country. In my view, the second part, that is, comprehensive legislation is more important. I would first proceed with the amendments that I have suggested in the draft Bill.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: I would request you to kindly enlighten the Committee on the constitutional difficulty with which this Committee is faced. It is a Committee of Parliament. Parliament does not have the competence to legislate on Library which is in the State List and is not in the Union List. Therefore, what is that you mean when you say that you want a comprehensive national Library Bill.

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: I shall elaborate the point.

The Library Service is a State subject but the National Library Service has to be provided by the Union Government.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: Under which entry of the Union List?

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: Kindly see Sec. 12 Seventh Schedule List I of the Constitution of India. It says—'those declared by Parliament by law to be of national importance'.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: Please be very clear.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Unless they are declared 'institution of national importance'.

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: National Library will have to be declared as an institution of national importance. Take the case of United States, USSR, U.K., European Continental countries. It will be appropriate to take the United States which is federal in structure, there the National Library Services are provided by the Federal or the Union Government.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: Is it your suggestion that the Constitution be amended? As it is to-day the National Library Service cannot be legislated upon by Parliament.

MR. CHAIRMAN: His idea is that it should be declared an institution of national importance. That will require another Bill. At present we are discussing National Library Bill and not any other Bill which you might be having in mind.

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: National Library Service constitute:

1. Copy right work
2. Bringing out national bibliography
3. Co-ordination of Library service in the country
4. Providing Library services outside the country; and
5. Services to special groups of people within the country, e.g. blind people or seaman, for whom services cannot be provided by State Governments.

Those types of services can only be provided by the National Library systems. In the United States, the Constitution provides that Library Service is a State service. State Government, there are very particular that their rights are not taken away by the Union or the Central Government. But here, we have a permissive provision in our Constitution, and National Service means service of national importance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have made your point clear. You proceed further.

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: In this regard I shall like to say something more and then proceed further. I feel that the National Library is a very important institution of the nation and for the type of functions that it is required to perform its Administration has to be strong, and for that reason the Head of the Administration must have enough power to exercise in view of the enormous responsibility that he will have to discharge I feel it will be very difficult for him to discharge his responsibilities if he is not having full authority. In the draft Bill it has been suggested that there will be two bodies—one will be the Board. Policy making and direction will be in the hands of the Board where the Government will have its voice. The other body will be an Executive Council of which Director of the National Library will be the Chairman. The Executive Council will also have members who may not be Members of the Board. There will also be Members who will be subordinates—for instance Finance Secretary may send his Deputy, Education Secretary may send his Deputy and from the Cultural Ministry a Deputy may be sent. The Executive Council is there in a way to assist or help the Director in discharge his responsibility.

It means, as far as I can see, that somehow there is less trust being placed in the capacity of the Director to discharge his responsibility which the Board has decided upon or which the Board has framed, as its policy for the Director to carry out. And yet, there is an Executive Council to assist him in this type of work. I feel that the Executive Council can only obstruct his work and it can only weaken him and not help him at all in the discharge of his responsibility effectively. For that matter, I would even go to the length of saying that just as in the university the Vice-Chancellor is Chairman of the

Senate or the Vice-Chancellor is the Chairman of the Syndicate or the Executive Council and the Vice-Chancellor is the overall authority, similarly, either the Director should have been the Chairman of the Board or if that is not possible, at least his power should not have been curtailed by bringing in another body whose functions are not actually defined very well.

My second point which I have suggested in my note is this. It is a small point. There is a provision in the draft Bill saying that an officer of the Government may send his deputy to sit in the Board. It is all right, if he is an *ex-officio* Member. But, there would be other nominated members who may be officers of the Government. Since they would be nominated in their personal capacity, they may be very great educationists or they may be officers of the Government. They may be nominated but they must not be required to send their deputies because they are required to sit in the board to give advice of a nature which is personal to them which their subordinates cannot give. So, I feel that in this provision it should have been specially mentioned that only *ex-officio* nominated members may send their subordinates and not others.

My other point is this. The Director should not only be strong enough but his hands must not also be weakened. He should essentially be a professional librarian. The assumption behind that, as far as I can see from the draft Bill, is this that handling or managing a library is a job which no one can possibly do. Therefore, I very humbly request that this view point is contrary to what we Librarians throughout the world have been saying and believing. Library, from the viewpoint of the librarians, is a technical institution—a specialised one—and it has certain skills which only librarians learn either by training or by experience. They may be very good educationists or administrators and yet they are not libra-

rians. Librarian is something more and something less than an administrator and an educationist. So, the technical nature of a librarian's work has to be recognised. The National Library should be termed as the only professional library.

The other point that I have suggested is this. There is a small provision which says that the National Library may undertake instruction and do research in Library Science. This work is very adequately and efficiently being done by our universities and it is done properly and so this work should not be duplicated at the National Library as it has no means nor the necessary equipment to carry out such a responsibility. So, it should restrict itself to those tasks which really belong to the National Library.

The other point that I have made is that the National Library Bill should be more comprehensive in its scope. There are actually four or five things which I feel the National Library set-up or the National Library system should do. One is that it should be the repository for the cultural welfare of the nation. We are at present not having any such institution.

PROF. S. NURUL HASAN: May I know what sort of cultural heritage does the hon. Member have in mind?

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: Cultural heritage is needed in graphic record—printed and other kinds of records. These are not alone within the province of the National Library. Let us come to the provision. Firstly, under the Deliveries of Books Act, the National Library is getting all the printed material that is available in the country which is unregistered and which is unknown but which has much value. This is the sort of cultural heritage which no institution presently possesses although a little bit of effort is being made by the Archaeological Department and probably also by Archives. Also such material is either not deposited in the National Library

or National Library should have access to it and it should have a record of it. Throughout the country a lot of material is produced relating to our own country and relating to social sciences. But, there is no agency which to-day coordinates and tries to see that important materials for our National Library are being received properly. Some agency must be there. Some university or some research institutions should order these things because they go in for research—specific research—programme. But, there is no organised effort that is being made to equip our country with all the knowledge that our country may need either to-day or tomorrow. I feel that this one agency should be entrusted with that type of responsibility. There is Deliveries of Books Act but that Act is not functioning in the sense that all publishers see to it that whatever books are printed by them are made available to the Library. There is a provision in that Act which says that an officer may go and make a complaint in this regard. Then, the case will go to the court. Then that man is fined. As far as I can see this provision is inadequate. There must be some effective method of at least getting one copy of the publication for the National Library under the said Act. That work can only be done by the National Library if that is properly organised to do this type of work.

My other suggestion is that the National Library has to inform the whole country as to what is being produced in the country as also possibly of what is the value of it that is being received from outside. That means it should provide an adequate bibliographical service so that the country knows what is the wealth of printed material we receive in our country presently and for whom it is useful.

As you know, Sir, in the past four or five years, we have not been able to bring out the Indian National Bibliography. This is a very sad state of affairs. I am not in the know of actual things. All that I can say is that in the whole country. We the

Librarians, are being put to series of losses because of non-availability of material that is being produced in our country. This service must be provided for by the National Library. Of course, the National Library is the only agency which can do it and it should do it. The other type of work which the National Library can do is this. There are books available in the country in one Library and they may be required in another Library; and not only this, but there are documents outside the country which the country has not purchased...

MR. CHAIRMAN: All these points are included in the memorandum which the Members have read. You need not mention all the points but only those which you think are important, because Members would like to put questions later and there may not be enough of time.

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: The most important thing which I should like to say is that the National Library services which our Union Government can provide can be provided through these two structures. I feel there should be at the Central level a Union Library Advisory Committee and it should be the responsibility of that committee to look after the National Library services and to suggest programmes for the development of Libraries. On this Committee there should be representatives of Parliament, representatives of the Administration—particularly the Finance Secretary and the Education Secretary—and also Librarians, Educationists etc., and I feel that the Union Minister for Education and Culture must be the Chairman of this Committee.

The National Library in our country should be of two types. One is a copyright holding library which should get all the copyright books and the second National Library should be in particular areas like a National Library of Technology, National Library of Medicine National Library of Agriculture, Social Sciences and other subjects. All

these Libraries should be headed by a National Librarian and there should be a Department of Library in the Department of Education which would be headed by a Director.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: If you want subject-wise National Libraries it will run into hundreds. There are so many subjects—Humanities, Agriculture, Science, Chemistry, Physics etc. How will it be possible to have one National Library for each subject.

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: In our Libraries—particularly the academic libraries—and also in the academic libraries throughout the world, there is a system. The system is that each Library is divided into three; and the three parts of the Library are a Library collection in Science, a Library collection in Social Sciences and a Library collection in Humanities. The qualifications required for working as Reference Librarians for each section are different. One is an expert in Humanities to look after the Humanities collection one is an expert in Social Sciences and one is an expert in Science. You will kindly concede that natural scientists are not social scientists and social scientists are not men of humanities. There are distinctions to be made. Medicine and Agriculture form part of Science but I have made a suggestion that they should be separate because of the number of volumes and the professional nature of the material.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Don't you think that the various University Libraries and other Libraries affiliated to various specialised institutions perform these specialised functions?

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: It is true that the Academic Libraries and other professional Libraries are doing this kind of job, but their functions are a sort of specific and limited ones. For instance, a Medical Library will cater

only to doctors. There is no institution which looks after the interests of the public, both general and specific.

SHRI P. ANTONY REDDI: In your memorandum you have suggested two methods of constructing the National Library authority. One is with the Director as Chairman of the Board as well as an Executive Council and the other is that the Secretary should be responsible to the Chairman of the Board and there should be no Executive Council. I would like to draw on your valued experience as to what method you would suggest for constructing the authority of the National Library, Calcutta under the present circumstances.

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: I have already pointed out that I have no first-hand knowledge about the National Library. But from whatever little experience I have in the management of a Library I have suggested my view point that the best method will be to have only a Board—and not an Executive Council—with the Director as Secretary and the Director will be directly responsible to the Chairman of the Board for the efficient discharge of his responsibilities. But since I felt that there may be different views, I have suggested that in case this is not possible then let there be an Executive Council with the membership of the Executive Council being entirely drawn from the Board.

SHRI P. ANTONY REDDI: My question is this: in the absence of the Executive Council, what should be the size of the Board? Will a Board of 12 or 20 members be unwieldy?

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: The present Board consists of about 12 to 13 people. Normally, a Syndicate of the University consists of 15 to 20 members. When 15 to 20 men can meet every month and decide about the management of the University, I think it should be possible to have a Board of about 15 members without it being unwieldy. In USSR they have a Board of 70

people and they say that 130 scientists and other educationists are also invited. They feel very much honoured to be invited. So, there, about 200 people meet every year. The Board here is a very small body consisting of 12 people. It should be possible for the Board to meet regularly and conduct the affairs of the National Library.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Do you think that this sort of institution should be run under the control of the Government direct or it should be run by an autonomous body fully delegated with the powers?

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: As far as I am concerned, I feel, an autonomous body is not a fit agency to govern the affairs of the National Library for the simple reason that they want an environment of freedom. Now, that freedom is granted by the Act. But the National Library does not need any such thing. A National Library is purely a functional body; it has to perform certain specific functions. There is no freedom to have this way or that way. It is only the University which requires that type of freedom. Why should we not go in for the constitution of a Board for managing a type of institution which can be very effectively handled directly by the Department of Library in the Ministry of Education with a Director as the Head? I think this is the best method of administering the library.

As far as budget is concerned, this is not sufficient for a National Library. Even a University's Library has a budget of 30—50 lakhs. For instance, the Delhi University's Library has a budget of somewhere near 90 lakhs to build up its collection. As far as National Libraries are concerned, they have got a budget of Rs. 30 lakhs—both for books as well as staff—and it is very very difficult for them to manage with this budget. If we have to discharge our responsibility efficiently, it is necessary that adequate provision should be made in the budget.

SHRI P. ANTONY REDDI: According to the Draft Bill, you said that usually the Chairman of the National Library Board or the Council should be a man of high academic qualification. You said that the Minister of Education should be the Chairman of the Board. What special advantages will be there by having an Education Minister on the Board?

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: I used to read in the National Library, USSR. They used to say that whenever the National Library Committee used to meet and whatever decisions they used to take, although they were advisory in nature, they were considered as laws, because the Minister used to sit over there and he was as big as the Chairman. There is no person greater than the Education Minister in the country to head the biggest institution. So, if the biggest man in the nation heads an institution, it is the biggest institution. I must say that our National Libraries are as a matter of fact a matter of our prestige outside and we will be judged best by the outsiders only if they are headed by the Union Minister of Education. There is another difficulty, if it is headed by a person other than the Education Minister, then he may have his own view point; he may not be a man of the masses and so on and so forth.

SHRI P. ANTONY REDDI: You also suggested that there should be a National Library for all the important subjects and so on and so forth. In that case, the Minister of Education, for that matter should be the Chairman of all the National Libraries?

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: Actually, there should be a department of library and then there should be a National Library Committee or Council which should have the representatives of the various libraries, National Libraries and other interests whose Chairman will be the Minister. So, this Council will be the highest policy framing body in this particular function.

SHRI P. ANTONY REDDI: Do you think that in a vast country like ours, one National Library in the country would be enough?

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: I don't think so. Recently, in one of the seminars, it was suggested that we should have two regional centres for each region which will be directly under the control of the National Libraries. So, that type of organisation will have to be worked out and it is a difficult matter to say that later on we will have two regional library centres which will be part of the National Library system. At present our problem is to set up National Libraries themselves. But later on, we may, feel the need of setting up regional centres also.

SHRI RAJA RAM SHASTRI: It seems that you are coming near the point that a National Library should not be a language library, but it should be an organisation of libraries or a system of libraries of a chain of libraries, whatever it is called. Now, we are just coming to the idea and you are suggesting on the threshold of the idea that these regional libraries should concern themselves more with regional languages and regional privileges. For instance, I happened to know certain Hindi Libraries and certain Urdu Libraries which have been organised on the same pattern as the National Libraries are. They are legally recognised and are receiving almost all the publications in that particular regional languages. Such libraries have been functioning in Urdu as well as in Hindi, may be some other languages also. These libraries have developed to a very high level and they are functioning very comprehensively. Why not make these libraries part of the national system, because we have already recognised the national languages and national literature of the regional languages and all the regional literature as national language and national literature. In this way, we can get over the problems of States also, as the Education Minister seems to be very much troubled about the problems

obtaining in the states. These libraries that have developed in certain regions and that may be developing in certain other regions, are not State libraries at all. They are just public libraries functioning by public will. Why not shape them as libraries or institutions of public importance and thereby bring them under your ourview. This way, I think the system of National Library will be perfect and will serve the needs of our culture at this juncture? I would like to know the views of the learned witness on this point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In the very beginning, he has expressed his views. If he wants to say anything more, he can do so.

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: Well, from the professional librarians' point of view in this country, we have been having discussions on this problem as to what should be the structure and system of National Library, Regional Library and the State Libraries. Professional librarians in the country have been discussing about this and we agree that after the National Library system comes into being, there should be a Regional Library system. There is a third system which is in the States. Each State will have a public library system and at the apex of the public library system, we have suggested State Central Libraries. Most of the States are having State Central Libraries. They are intended to function like the National Central Library as a repository of the culture of the region and also to provide documentation and other technical advice. If and when these State Central Libraries begin to function adequately, we will feel the need for grouping the Central and Regional Libraries. The whole of the Hindi region will require a library which should be able to meet the requirements of all the Hindi speaking areas. That system will be required. But, at this stage.....

SHRI RAJA RAM SHASTRI: I am concentrating on the regional langua-

ges and literature as the basis of the system.

SHRI HAKAM SINGH: As I had already said, the research institutions or Universities have to meet a specific requirement of a specific group of people. Naturally, their activities are limited and their funds and resources are also limited to the extent of the functions they will be performing. They cannot be self-sufficient. They cannot adequately cover all the publications which are of value to our country. That function will have to be performed by the National Library, whether it is one or a group. I am all the time saying that it is convenient for management purposes to split it into these particular groups. We are already having the Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre. We are also trying to set up a National Library for Science and a National Library for Medicine. This is being done. This has to be given legislative support and has to be made more elaborate and more competent to discharge the responsibilities which modern days require.

PROF. N. G. GORAY: I would like to ask one question. This is again and again coming up. It has been said that this Bill is restricted in its scope and it should really cover a sort of a system of library movement. Is the Government ready to modify this Bill?

MR. CHAIRMAN: So far as we are concerned, our scope is limited. As for the question whether the Government would like to bring in a new Bill, it is for the Minister to answer. The scope of the Committee is very limited in this respect.

PROF. N. G. GORAY: We are discussing this Bill....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Naturally, Members may desire that the scope of the Bill should be made more wide and a comprehensive Bill covering all as-

pects of library movement should be brought forward. But, that is beyond the scope of our functioning. The Minister may take up that question separately also.

Mr. Hakam Singh, the Committee is grateful to you for enlightening us with your ideas. Thank you very much.

(The Committee then adjourned).

RECORD OF EVIDENCE TENDERED BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON
THE NATIONAL LIBRARY BILL, 1972.

Tuesday, the 17th July, 1973 from 15.00 to 16.30 hours.

PRESENT

Shri Amarnath Vidyalankar—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Achal Singh
3. Shri Virendra Agarwal
4. Shri Shrikrishna Agarwal
5. Shri S. C. Besra
6. Shri Biren Engti
7. Shri E. R. Krishnan
8. Shri Y. S. Mahajan
9. Shri Kumar Majhi
10. Shri H. N. Mukerjee
11. Shri Narain Chand Parashar
12. Shri P. Antony Reddi
13. Shri Sakti Kumar Sarkar
14. Shri S. A. Shamim
15. Shri Rajaram Shastri

Rajya Sabha

16. Shri Pramatha Nath Bisi
17. Shri Mahabir Dass
18. Shri Niren Ghosh
19. Prof. S. Nurul Hasan
20. Shri Shyam Dhar Misra
21. Shri Sanat Kumar Raha
22. Dr. V. B. Singh

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

1. Shri S. Harihara Iyer—*Joint Secretary and Legislative Counsel.*
2. Shri R. N. Shinghal—*Assistant Legislative Counsel.*

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE
(DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE)

1. Shri Mohan Mukerji—*Additional Secretary.*
2. Shri P. Somasekharan—*Deputy Secretary.*
3. Shri A. S. Talwar—*Under Secretary.*

SECRETARIAT

Shri H. G. Paranjpe—Deputy Secretary.

WITNESSES EXAMINED

- I. Shri Sadhan Mukherji C/o New Age Printing Press, New Delhi.
 II. Shri S. R. Bharatya, Organising Secretary & Director, Chintamani Memorial Library, Allahabad-3.

I. Shri Sadhan Mukherji, C/o New Age Printing Press, New Delhi

MR. CHAIRMAN: We welcome you, Mr. Sadhan Mukherji. Before you proceed further, I would like to inform you that the evidence that you give, would be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. I think that you have not sent any memo. Are you the Editor of the "New Age", Mr. Sadhan Mukherji?

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: No, Sir; I am working in that Weekly; I am looking after its foreign desk.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would request you to enlighten us with your views; thereafter, Hon. Members would like to put certain questions. You can briefly state your views.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: Sir, I would just like to point out here that the Bill, as I have seen it, requires to be extended a little more in scope because, this is perhaps, the first Bill of its nature concerning the National Library. In this Bill, the scope of the National Library has not been properly defined. That is, how the National Library should function; what will be its model; what will be its system? Should there be one National Library or should there be more? What will be the working procedure?

Another point that I would like to add is this. The Jha Committee re-

commended about the autonomous character of the Governing Council. The way the Bill has been drafted I feel that this purpose may not be served because it will, more or less, be another departmental functioning. In the Bill it is mentioned that when certain decisions are to be taken or when certain rules etc. are to be framed, prior approval of the Central Government will be taken. That is, the Board as such really will not function as an autonomous body. All that has to be defined clearly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are not against the principle of giving autonomy to this. But, you want the autonomous status to be defined more clearly.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: That is correct. My feeling is that when it is an autonomous body, it should have every right and every authority to decide what is good for the job entrusted to it. If you are to run the National Library, then it should take the decision pertaining to all aspects of the National Library. Its connection with Government is through Finance. And Government is responsible to Parliament. So, this organic link has to be clarified. That is my idea of an autonomous body. The persons should really know the subject and they should be competent to take decisions in all matters. And when they take a decision, that decision should prevail. Otherwise there is no sense in making it autonomous. When we say that it is an autonomous

body, it should also have its autonomous functioning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You say that there should be a complete autonomy. Suppose the Government only finances it. Should it not have any financial control?

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: It should have the financial control.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Except for the financial control you mean there should be no other control.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: There should be no other control in the day-to-day functioning of this autonomous body. You have entrusted to this body the responsibility of running this particular library. So, it should consist of people who really know the things. When you have put in different persons in the composition of this body, then it should be competent to take broad decisions.

Another thing I would like to mention is this. One thing is not very clear in this Bill. What really happens to the employees who are now working in the National Library? Will the continuity of their service be maintained? Will they be entitled to pension? These points have not been clarified. There is a mention that the Central Government will make the necessary changes. None of the conditions of service should be changed to the detriment of the employees. No change should be effected without the prior approval of the Central Government. That is the position which, I think, should be clarified so that the employees do not have any misapprehension on that score.

Lastly, I would like to point out another thing. Perhaps the aims and objects of the Bill as mentioned by the hon. Minister in the Bill should be elaborated a little more. What does he really want to achieve? What should really be its functioning and how the working of the library system in our country can be developed better?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will you kindly elaborate it a little more? Do you want any elaboration in regard to certain specified matters? What are the points about which you want to have more elaboration that should come in the aims and objects of the Bill?

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: As I understood from the Jha Committee's Report, this National Library has developed its status to-day from the British period. Even after Independence, through collection of materials, this, that and the other this has grown to its present position. Then, the Government took a certain step making it a receiving Library for all the manuscripts and of the published books etc. What the National Library should do for the readers and what it should do for the collection of books from India and from abroad? What are the other things which it should deal with? Should it cover all types of books? These aims should be more clearly defined in the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other point which you would like to mention?

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: No, Sir.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: He said that he accepted Jha Committee's recommendations. I presume that it was gone through by him. Jha Committee's recommendations dealt with delegated autonomy and not statutory autonomy. Do you accept that point? The Bill is for the statutory autonomy. That is one point. Secondly, what exactly do you mean to say with regard to autonomy? With regard to the National Library, apart from the establishment and other functions for which the National Libraries are there, should the Bill make provision for finances also? Or should it limit itself to this institution only?

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: As regards the first question, I do not think I will be competent to answer it. I personally feel that the Bill as prepared now is by an Act of Parliament. You are constituting an autonomous body. I think that is a pro-

per thing to do. In the Jha Committee Report what is mentioned is about the delegated authority which I do not agree with. The second question is about the aims and objects of the Bill. For the first time, this Bill has come up before us. You must very clearly enunciate as to what is intended to be done by this Bill. It is not merely developing the Library from what is existing to-day. One should look a little ahead. What should be our pattern of library and what is the purpose that this National Library should serve so that the existing operation of the Calcutta Library can be extended further? I am not suggesting that this National Library should be entrusted with the collection of every single thing available in various parts of the country or even abroad which some other libraries do. I know the example of German Democratic Republic. They have an institution. All the books, journals published in German Language, wherever they may be, are collected and compiled by that. That is not the intention of our library. What books it should collect and what subjects it should cover, all this should be clearly stated. The publication and survey part should be there with the National Library.

SHRI SAKTI KUMAR SARKAR: You expressed that there is no model of National Library.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: It is not just developing the present library by additions and subtractions. Whether it should be just one library or it should be several libraries spread out in the country—that is a different matter, but the National Library objectives have to be very clearly explained.

SHRI SAKTI KUMAR SARKAR: What kind of autonomy do you suggest—delegated or statutory. Have you any experience on the basis of which you can say that the statutory autonomy would be better than the

delegated autonomy or you are for delegated autonomy. Most of the witnesses in Calcutta opposed it and they apprehend and say that we will not improve the condition of the present National Library; rather it will deteriorate in various ways. Myself as a Member of the National Library, I, to some extent share their view, though I am in support of the autonomy. Being a man with a reputed journal I think you can throw some light on this matter.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: The question that you have asked me is really a debateable issue. The point is how do you really make this autonomous, through an Act of Parliament or the Government delegate authority to run it independently in an autonomous manner. As I have explained earlier, I would personally prefer that by an Act of Parliament the authority may be assigned to a particular body. Even in a well constituted body, the result of this may be extremely bad. That depends upon the personnel chosen and how it operates, but on principle I would say that instead of delegated authority, the authority established by an Act of Parliament is far superior.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: It is very obvious that you are for statutory autonomy and opposed to delegated autonomy. But you wish autonomy to be defined and while defining it excepting financial matters, in all other respects the Board or the statutory body should have full powers. Suppose a Director has to be appointed in the Library. Of course, the Board will appoint him. It is an administrative matter and not the financial matter. Does the Board need sanction of the Ministry in this regard?

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: I want to distinguish it with things of this nature—whether at the first stage itself expert decision has been made. If so, that decision normally should not be tempered with by the

existing machinery in the Government. When the National Library has taken a decision to appoint somebody on merit, a proper choice that has been made should not be questioned by a Section Officer.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: You mean to say that the total function of the Government will be just to finance the body according to the suggestions and proposals made by the autonomous Board and nothing else.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: It will remain under the Government. It is Government property.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: It is not a Government property. It will be autonomous Board completely independent, sovereign in rights and with no interference from anybody. This clause has been put in this Bill—that every decision of the Board will be ratified by the Government. Do you wish this to be deleted? Should it be left to financial matters? Have you run any organisation so far?

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: No, Sir.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: Since you have no experience, you are saying so. If all this is left to the governing body and not got ratified by the Ministry, how will you make the Government responsible for financing it?

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: When you make an autonomous body as visualised here, my idea is it should be a little more broadened. You constitute a Board, entrust it with all the responsibility and allow it to run the Library. If it does not run the Library properly, the Ministry, the Parliament can always question it and it can dispense with its services.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: In such a major question like the appointment of a Director or personnel of National Library, it cannot be left to

the statutory body, if it is to be financed by the Government.

I am happy, Mr. Chairman, he is not for delegated autonomy but is for statutory autonomy, as in such a way the decision of the Board needs to be confirmed and ratified by the Ministry.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: In the Jha Committee there is already a certain broad line suggested like the appointment of Librarian—what type of a person he should be. Similarly, these points are naturally to be gone into in detail. These may be clarified when you extend the ambit of the Bill. It needs to be expanded and these questions can be clarified further. I do not consider myself to be competent to answer all these questions.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: This point of yours has no relevance to the whole question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mukherji, Shri Agarwal wanted to point out the implications that come out of your views. He wants clarification on the points mentioned by him. Please do so, if you can.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: That is what I am trying to explain. As a very specific instance he has taken the appointment of a Director. I may say that in the Bill itself you may include a clause which will explain what type of persons should be appointed as a Director. In that case, it will not be subject to further study, revision, decision etc. by the Government. It is unnecessary. What I am trying to say is that in making it autonomous, the process of duplication should be avoided. Once you take a decision, you allow it to be operated in practice. If a wrong decision has been taken, you can mend it.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: Even if the decision of the Board entails certain financial implications.

you hold this view. Suppose the Board may decide to purchase 5000 books, that would mean a tremendous financial implications. Should it not be approved by the Ministry.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: In that case, we need not call it an autonomous body.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: You have gone through the Bill. The provisions made in the Bill at page 9 indicate the power of the Board to make regulations. The various clauses, i, j, l, n etc. are quite clear about the functions how to make regulations, how to preserve the books, manuscripts etc. The Board will in the regulations make more things clear. That is the power.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: That is precisely what I was trying to explain, that here you have said that the Board may with the previous approval of the Central Government by notification etc. may do these things, as part of its functions. The conditions have been laid down. The point is that this is not the whole thing. This deals only with part of the things. This has to be extended further.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: Regulations will explain all these things.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: I will have no objection to that.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: The Statement of objects and Reasons is quite clear.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: If the limited purpose of the Bill is only to improve the present conditions of the Calcutta Library, then it is a different thing. But if you are aiming to cover the whole system of national library, then perhaps this Bill will serve its purpose better, if the whole thing is explained fully, for example, what will be its main functions etc. This is for the first time that a Bill on National Library has come.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: According to the provisions of the Bill, Section 27, all officers and employees of the Board including Director of the Library will be public servants within the meaning of the Indian Penal Code. It is clear.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: That is the status of the officers. That is perfectly all right.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: But will they appoint matriculates?

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: The point is that the aim of the National Library should be elaborated further in the sense....

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: It is clear in the Statement of Objects and Reasons.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: What I am suggesting is that this should be elaborated further.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: Regulations will elaborate that. Rules will be there to take care of these things.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: Rules will explain duties and other things. If it is done by regulations, that should be all right.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: You have certain types of institutions in your mind, when you think of autonomy. Can you give us an institution, where the Government money is used and the Institution itself manages the whole affair without any supervision.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: This has to my mind, not been fully experimented, but I think, Steel Authority of India is an experiment in that direction.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: Is that a sort of institution that you are advocating?

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: What I am suggesting is that if you are appointing a body of competent people to run an organization, they should

be allowed to take decisions concerning its various aspects.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: We have Universities which are autonomous. The Vice Chancellor is appointed by the Government. Sometimes, election is also there, but the election is approved by the Government. The Education Minister has to issue sometimes statements of policy also, and then the Ministry is also there. Even then, we consider Universities as autonomous. Similarly, it is a body which has full freedom within the confines of the Act to develop the National Library. Government will reverse the decisions of the Board, only if it is against the Policy of the Government.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: As I said earlier, if the decisions taken by competent people of the organization are not reversed and they are really allowed to develop the organization to the best of their capacity, then I would consider that to be the real autonomy.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: After all it is a social institution. As the social changes take place, Government has to issue instructions.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: For example, Section 10 says that there shall be an Executive Council and a provision is made that there will be representatives of the Ministry in both the Board and the Executive Council. I have got the impression that this will be subject to the approval of the Ministry. So, if that is so, the autonomous capacity is not there.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: The institution will function in conjunction with the Government.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: In Section 15, for example, it is again mentioned "with the previous approval of the Central Government". I have no quarrel with the Clause as

such, but it means that the Board will not be able to take final decisions

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: I would like to refer to his memorandum on the last page of which it is stated "clause 30 of the Bill empowers the Board to make regulations not inconsistent with the provisions of the Act and the Rules made thereunder. The power of making regulations is confined to procedural matters". I would like to understand the implication of this. Is this not an enhancement of Government's own power in the Board under the specific authority of the Act?

Secondly, I would like to refer to Clauses 19 and 25. While he talks of autonomy, Clause 19 says "subject to the conditions and restrictions which the Central Government may deem fit to impose" and Clause 25 says "in the performance of the functions under the Act, the Board shall be confined by such directions as the Central Government may give from time to time". In view of these two clauses and many others, does he still feel that, as proposed in this Bill, it is really an autonomous Board? When he says that he would like to have an autonomous Board of the nature described, has he given thought to another aspect of the matter—that as per the composition of the Board it is nothing but a Government Board? Out of nine or ten people, one is the Secretary, Ministry of Education and another is the Secretary, Ministry of Finance one person from the UGC etc. Does this not show that it is a complete negation of autonomy?

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: I would agree with you. What is given out here as autonomy is not really autonomy. That is precisely my point and that is what I was trying to explain. Autonomy means something, but under this Act it is not emerging. They call it autonomy but, actually, its operations are restricted by

various clauses. That is precisely my point.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: Another point I would like to know is this. Mention was made of regional libraries and, at the apex of the regional libraries, a national library. Now, there is one National Library at Calcutta, one at Delhi and so on. Would you like to have four or five National Libraries or would you like to have Regional Libraries of which the National Library will be the apex library?

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: This is what I was explaining when I started. When you say "National Libraries", what is it that the National Library wants to achieve? The whole system of National Libraries should be explained as to what they are trying to achieve. Now, we want to develop further our National Library system. Should this National Library be at the apex of a whole chain of National Libraries, Regional Libraries, Rural Libraries and University Libraries, or not?

MR. CHAIRMAN: One thing you have to keep in mind is that the National Library has been given the status of national importance and therefore the Central Government is competent to legislate in respect of this Library. In regard to other Libraries like the Regional Libraries, State Libraries, etc. they cannot legislate because, under the Constitution, they do not come under the purview of the Central Government; they come under the purview of the State Government. So, naturally with respect to these Libraries the Central Government is not competent to legislate. That distinction should be kept in mind.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: What I was trying to point out is that we should keep in mind what we are trying to achieve. From that angle, what he asked me is, should this National Library be at the apex of a whole system of Libraries?

So what I was only suggesting here was that our aim for a national library should be to have an apex library.

MR. CHAIRMAN: When you speak of the system of the National library, you think in terms of combining different libraries with this library. But it has got the constitutional limitations. That should be kept in mind.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: Sir, I would not consider myself competent to go into the details of that. I will only give a rough idea of that. Perhaps it will be better if the national library emerges at the top of the national library system.

MR. CHAIRMAN: At present we can make legislation in terms of the present constitutional provisions.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: Mr. Mukherji, you have supported that the Governing Council should be made as an autonomous body. But so long as the national library which is popularly known as the Calcutta National Library which is at present the apex library in India, which has been declared by the Parliament also that this library is the national library, don't you apprehend that its prestige would be lowered or its popularity would get deteriorated if an autonomous body runs the administration of the national library?

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: No, Sir. I do not think so.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: You have got experience abroad regarding the working system of libraries. I would like to know from you whether the librarian of the National library should have such powers like those of a Secretary or a Joint Secretary of a Ministry so that there may not be any bottleneck between the Ministry and the autonomous body.

SHRI SADHAN MUKHERJI: I was trying to explain this earlier that I would not like to put it in this form

that a person whether he is of the rank of Joint Secretary or Under Secretary can over-rule the orders. That is not at all in my mind. What I feel is that if a decision is taken by a competent group of people or a person entrusted with the specific task, somebody else, merely because he

happens to be in the Ministry, should not over-rule it or create conditions in which this decision is not fulfilled. I would like to put it like that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much Mr. Mukherji.

(The witness then withdrew)

II. Shri S. R. Bhaatya, Organising Memorial Library, Allahabad-3.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr Bharatya, you are welcome to appear before the Committee. You have already sent your memorandum which has been circulated to the Members of this Committee. Before you proceed, I would like to inform you that the evidence you give would be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. Now, you may briefly state what are your ideas and after that Members might put to you certain questions.

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: I am not a technical librarian. Our Library was founded in 1941 and since then it has been working. I, as a social worker, would like to look at the Library legislation from all points of view and taking those points of view into consideration, I would prefer that there should be a National Library Act which should cover all the libraries—State, district, city, urban, moving and special types of libraries. Since we are dealing with this particular Act which is to control and bring about a provision in the Bill regarding the National Library of Calcutta, I would confine my observations to it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is one difficulty. This National Library which is a national institution is there by the Act of Parliament. As far as other libraries are concerned, they come within the purview of the State Govt.,

Secretary & Director, Chintamani

According to the present Constitution. So, you will kindly keep in mind the limitations that are imposed on the Central Government.

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: In the proposed Bill, I find that the powers of the Librarian are not clearly defined, he will have a subordinate position in the Board. According to these provisions, he will not be able to work properly and therefore he should have more powers, to exercise full control. As far as staff is concerned, it will not be under the Librarian. It will be under the Board and there will always be some difficulties for the Librarian to deal with the staff, if the staff does not work properly. That is one great thing which, I feel should be tackled and provided for in the Bill.

As far as the name of the Bill is concerned, I would like to suggest that its name should be National Library Autonomous Board Bill. As far as rule 30 is concerned, unless it is framed properly, it is difficult to say whether this Library Bill will be able to fulfil the conditions that are intended to be fulfilled.

As far as the appointment of the Librarian is concerned, I would like to state that his appointment should be made by the UGC after advertising through the Public Service Commission and he should have a status of the Vice-Chancellor so that he may be able to control all persons placed in his charge.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: I have gone through your

memorandum. What do you precisely mean by anti-climax? This is a recommendation which is reported to have been advocated by the Jha Committee.

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: It was not published; its recommendations in brief were commented upon in the Press. After that another committee was appointed which was presided over by Mr. K. P. Sinha and Sardar Sohan Singh was its Secretary. I understand that they intended to bring in the delegated autonomy rather than the autonomous system that you are now thinking of.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Have you gone through the Report of the Jha Committee or do you depend upon the newspaper report which has been published?

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: That report has not been published. Those persons who had seen the comments of Mr. Kalia and Mr. Keshavan, thought that the Report of the Jha Committee should have been published and the present recommendations should have been based on the Report.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: So far as I understand from the views expressed in the press and thereafter the comments made by other persons, they recommended a delegated autonomy and the present Bill envisages an autonomous body to manage the affairs of this Library. It is not entirely, what you call, anti-climax. In the present Bill, we have a provision for a full autonomy, specific autonomy, as we might put it.

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: Autonomy is quite all right. But the powers of the Director-cum-Librarian have to be defined, because he will be the man on the spot. If he is not entrusted with the powers and facilities to control the entire library staff, then it will be difficult for him to discharge his duties.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: I would like to be clear, in

precise terms, about what you want to say. For example, you are not against the statutory autonomy in principle.

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: I am not against the autonomous body. We need autonomous bodies for many other things, e.g. museum. Otherwise, it will not be possible to function. I know about the libraries which are in Calcutta, Bombay as well as in Allahabad. There the books are not categorised; they are piled up to the ceiling and most of them are not bound. Even at Allahabad Public Library which is over hundred years old, we have the Oriental Section where the books are piled up. The Librarian, I understand had written to Government that more fund as well as staff should be provided, but its request has not been granted. Unless a Librarian has powers and his functions are defined, he will not be able to work properly.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: In the course of your memorandum, you have said "The powers and working of the Board and the Executive Council are vague? What is precisely the concrete shape of the powers of the Executive Council or the Board in addition to your concept of powerful Librarian or Librarian with many powers?"

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: Clause 30 provides for framing of Rules. If you frame these rules, broadly and define powers of the Librarian, then he will be able to function better. Here, you are referring to two bodies, the Board and the Executive Council. You have said that the powers of these two bodies are vague. We would like to be enlightened by you as to what concrete powers you want to be vested in these two bodies, so that the Committee may benefit from your evidence?

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: The Board will consist of the Secretary, Ministry of Education and Culture, Secretary, Ministry of Finance, six nominees of the Central Government, a nominee

of the UGC and the Director. How do you suppose that they will all be conversant and interested in the library movement? They may be technicians. But, so far as the working of the Board is concerned, the Librarian will have a subordinate position.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: You are saying that they do not have certain powers. We want to know precisely as to what powers you would like these two bodies to have. Have you any idea to offer?

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: I cannot explain this at this time. But, after all, these things develop by working. Certain conventions have to be developed, but the basis should be there and the basis perhaps can be defined and this can be made more elaborate under clause 30, which you have quoted and precise rules will have to be framed under that. I would humbly suggest that special care has to be taken while framing the rules which will imbibe all these things.

DR. V. B. SINGH: I would like to know whether you have any suggestions to make about the composition of the Board. The Board, as it is proposed, consists mostly of official nominees. They are nominated by the UGC and so on. Can a Board of this type be autonomous? Have you any suggestions to make about the composition of the Board?

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: I do not think I can suggest anything about the composition of the Board. The Board, I think, should be advisory in character rather than have executive powers.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: Sir, from the memorandum of the witness, we understand that he is against Autonomous Boards. But, now, he says that he is not against autonomy as such. I shall pursue the question of my friend a little further. Now, autonomy is defined in the Bill and the powers are also defined. The

composition of the Board is also defined. The Board, as he might have seen, consists mostly of Government nominees. This consists of the Secretary, Ministry of Education and Culture, Secretary, Ministry of Finance, a nominee of the UGC and six nominees of the Government. That makes about 9 to 10. Here, if he cannot suggest any other alternative, suppose, we suggest an alternative, that instead of Government nominees, the Board should consist of persons drawn from different libraries/universities in the country through a system of election based on proportional representation, will he accept that type of autonomy? In that case, will he stick to his written opinion or will he stand by his view which he has now expressed orally?

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: I think the suggestion made by him is much better. It will be better to get persons who have the experience of having worked in different libraries and who have the necessary training.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: Then, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the witness to the second page of his memorandum. Therein, he has talked of the Jha Committee.

He has said:

"The Bill is said to be based on the recommendation of the Jha Committee (1958), which it is understood, envisaged the National Library to be the apex of a pyramid of regional libraries."

Of course, probably, the Chairman has mentioned to the witness that constitutionally, this is not possible. I am not sure of that. But, I would like to know his views. Suppose, this is legally possible, would he accept this provision that there should be regional libraries and the National Library should be an apex of the regional libraries?

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: I accept that.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: I would like to ask one more question.

He has said:

"The setting up of a public libraries Grants Commission like UGC should be envisaged for the promotion of efficient public library service both at the National and State levels."

What is this idea? What he wants to say? The idea of setting up a National Library is to have a chain of libraries here. Here, we are talking of the National Library. If at all any small deviation is constitutionally possible, we may have a chain of libraries or sister national libraries as you may call them, but, we cannot have many state level libraries.

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: For that, you may have a separate Act. The present Bill is only for the National Library of Calcutta. That is why, I say that the Bill should be titled National Library (Autonomous Board) Bill, and not National Library Bill.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: The witness has said that the Director of the National Library will not have sufficient powers to deal with the staff. He gave the instance of the Allahabad Library where he said that books were not entered and books were not being lent out to the readers. The efficiency of the staff depends on the terms and conditions of service and the maintenance of proper relations between the management and the staff. Do you mean to say, that if he is given additional powers, he will be able to deal with the staff? Take for example, the Government. It has all the power in the country. But, the Government has any amount of trouble with the Government employees. Is it not? Do you mean to say that just by giving more powers to the Director, he will be able to secure the highest integrity and efficiency among the staff?

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: I have already said that the Director should be given more powers.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: It does not mean that if he is given more powers, he will be able to achieve efficiency among the staff. I have given one instance. Government has all the power in this country. But, the Government has any amount of trouble with the Government employees.

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: I will give you one example. Take for example the Allahabad University or the Lucknow University. There, even for small things, the Vice-Chancellor has to refer things to the Committee of Referee and get the sanction of the Finance Committee etc.

MR. CHAIRMAN: When you refer to powers, do you mean only financial powers or powers for appointment also?

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: Appointments can be made by the Board or by the UGC. But, the Director should have powers to control, to punish and to take all such steps as may be necessary to enforce discipline among the staff. If the Director has no powers, then, the staff will approach the Members of the Board and the Executive Council over the head of the Director and he will have no say and he will be nowhere.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: Clause 26 says that the Board "may, be a general or special order in writing, direct that all or any of the powers or duties which may be exercised or discharged by it shall, in such circumstances and under such conditions, if any, as may be specified in the order, be exercised or discharged also by any member, officer or employee of the Board specified in this behalf in the order." According to this provision, it can be delegated.

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: That provision is one thing; but if No. 30 is followed by rules, then it should be all right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Bharatya. We have been very much enlightened by your views and answers. We all thank you.

SHRI S. R. BHARATYA: In the end, I would suggest that a comprehensive National Library Bill should be drafted, which should cover all libraries and take steps to register all libraries in the States, viz. Sarasinh Library, the Manuscript Section of the Tirumalai Naik Library of Tanjore, etc. The personnel may be trained and

seminars should be held and other steps may be taken so that the library movement in India is well established.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Committee knows your view points. Thank you very much.

(The Committee then adjourned)

RECORD OF EVIDENCE TENDERED BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON
THE NATIONAL LIBRARY BILL, 1972.

Wednesday, the 18th July, 1973 from 15.00 to 17.40 hours

PRESENT

Shri Amarnath Vidyalankar—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Acha! Singh
3. Shri Virendra Agarwala
4. Shri S. C. Besra
5. Shri Biren Engti
6. Shri B. R. Kavade
7. Shri E. R. Krishnan
8. Shri H. N. Mukerjee
9. Shri Tuna Oraon
10. Shri Narain Chand Parashar
11. Shri Sakti Kumar Sarkar
12. Shri Raja Ram Shastri
13. Shri Somchand Solanki
14. Shri Shrikrishna Agarwal

Rajya Sabha

15. Smt. Sushila Shankar Adivarekar
16. Shri Mahabir Dass
17. Shri Niren Ghosh
18. Shri Shyam Dhar Misra
19. Shri Patil Puttappa
20. Shri Sanat Kumar Raha
21. Dr. V. B. Singh

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

Shri R. N. Singhal—*Assistant Legislative Counsel.*

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE
(DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE)

1. Shri Mohan Mukerji—*Additional Secretary.*
2. Shri P. Somasekharan—*Deputy Secretary.*
3. Shri A. S. Talwar—*Under Secretary.*

SECRETARIAT

Shri H. G. Paranjpe—*Deputy Secretary.*

WITNESSES EXAMINED

- I. Shri J. C. Mehta, Director, Delhi Public Library, Delhi.
 II. Shri Asoke Chatterjee, Member, Delhi Metropolitan Council, Delhi.

I. Shri J. C. Mehta, Director, Delhi Public Library, Delhi.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mehta, before we proceed further, I wanted to inform you that the evidence that you will be treated as public and will be liable to be published unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. Even though you may desire your evidence to be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I agree.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before the Members put to you questions on your Memorandum, I would like you to briefly state your views. Thereafter the Members might desire to get certain points to be elucidated by you. You may first of all state your views briefly.

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I shall hurriedly go through the memorandum that I have submitted earlier. As stated in my memorandum, I find that there is nothing wrong in setting up an autonomous Board if the Government has considered it all right and has drafted a Bill accordingly.

So far as the draft Bill goes, I have commented on clause 3(3) on Chapter II. That is a minor point though, but it may sometimes create difficulties. In every library or office, there are some trifling articles that get together. It may be waste-paper or dilapidated furniture or some other thing which are not worth-keeping. If they are allowed to keep on waiting for a long time for the sanction etc. they may be eaten by white ants, insects etc. And ultimately they may be worth nothing at all. I think the Board has to be given the power that whatever they consider

to be waste that should be disposed of. Only rare manuscripts may be kept. Our idea in constituting the Board is to keep responsible people from Government so that they would take all possible care to see that they do not dispose of anything which is valuable.

Article 4 deals with the Constitution of the Board which says that four members can be nominated by the Board. The stress has been laid on academicians rather than on librarians. As stated here, and if we stick to our decision, in the Library, the Director can also be a non-Librarian. And if the Board is constituted with the Secretaries of the Ministry of Education and Finance, and other people who are academicians, then the whole show would be run by non-technical people who do not know the working of the library at all. With the advent of automation, there should be someone who knows something about the library business. The resignation of any member should be made preferably to, and should be accepted by, the Board which should then intimate the Central Government. The vacation of office by a member should certainly be delinked from notification in the Government of India Gazette, where sometimes it takes months for the news to appear.

It has been stated that a person who is nominated mid-way, the post should be filled up for the remaining period only. If we keep like this the Board will cease to exist on one day and we have to wait for the new Board. It may take a long time and the Director may have to wait for so many things which he wants to do urgently. It would be better if the Board is given perpetuity i.e. if somebody's term expires, the other person nominated may be allowed to continue for the term of three years. In this way, peo-

ple may come and go but the Board will remain for ever and the Director will not be without the Board and he will be able to run the library.

Clause 13(1): It is about the appointment of the Director. Preference shown in the Bill to a non-librarian is, perhaps, on account of two reasons. One is the recent experience of the Government of India with some individual librarians and the other is the belief that there is a dearth of persons of adequate calibre to fill up the post. If we have in mind the experience with some of the persons, then that should not be generalised, and if we feel that there are not enough librarians with adequate calibre to fill up this post, then this situation needs to be remedied. If we feel that in future we will never get good librarians, I think this is too much of despondency. There was time when there was vacuum every where in India after independence. The librarians were running their institutions singly and their performance could be seen. The librarians came in lime-light while other officers who ran offices jointly were not discovered. We should not try to perpetuate this situation. If we do not throw opportunities to the librarians—professional ones—no talented librarian will come forward. We want talented people to join this profession when dearth is being felt.

Clause 13(2): As things are, the Government regulation says that a person who is deputed out of Government service should not be on deputation for more than three years—three years is maximum—after two years they generally try to call him back. We should be prepared for three years, tenure when the person on deputation is called back or option is thrown as to whether he wants to come back or wants to get absorbed. The possibility of absorption is not there because we are providing a five years. When the man goes back after three years, we will again be looking for a librarian. Incidentally, we may get a person—young and fit—for National Library.

Two years' probation period, I think, is a long enough period to study a person if he is properly viewed and assessed at every step.

Chapter V

30(2): That is a minor amendment of wording.

30(2)(g): The intention is that whatever money the library gets, the Board will decide what amount should be kept in the Current Account and then whatever amount is left that should be invested. We see that continuously we are making expenditure and we therefore have to have a Current Account. This has been my experience in Delhi Public Library. We have Current Account and if there are some funds which we feel are to lie with us unspent, the Board can decide in which way the amount can be invested. Therefore, this thing should be corrected.

Functions and duties of the Library have not been properly laid down.

30(3):

"The Central Government may, after consultation with the Board, by notification in the Official Gazette, amend, vary or rescind any regulation which it has approved....".

Supposing the Central Government does not amend, vary or rescind and it approves of the regulation as it is proposed by the Board, it should say that it shall come into force or has been approved. There is a minor change in wording required.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are a Director of the Delhi Public Library. Since when?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I took over in 1967.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any convention or rule that the Director of your Library will always be a qualified Librarian or there is no such rule?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: The Service By-laws specify that he should be a trained Librarian.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Under which organisation is this Library?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: It is under the Department of Culture.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As it is directly under the Government, did you experience any difficulty? Here, some views have been expressed that it should be an autonomous body.

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: Our Library is governed by the Delhi Library Board which is an autonomous organisation. We have experienced no difficulty in running the library. On the contrary I find that things move much quicker when we have some autonomy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you regard the autonomy allowed to your institution as sufficient?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have made a distinction between an academician and a librarian in your memorandum on page 3. Don't you feel that a trained Librarian, if appointed as Director, will be faced with certain difficulties because he has to take decisions on various administrative matters, like the financial control, control of employees and various other matters concerned with administration. All this requires an administrator. So, will a technical person without the experience of administration be suitable to head the institution?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: This would apply to almost any institution. For instance, we have Vice-Chancellors in the Universities who are academicians and they do the administration work also. When a suitable candidate for the National Library is considered, one shall also have to see what experience he has got as an administrator. If he has been running a very big library with a large staff and large funds, he will have the necessary experience.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: You said that the Delhi Public Library is under a

Board. Are the people working there employees of the Government or of the Board?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: All the persons there are employees of the Board, but in my case, my appointment is made by the Ministry in consultation with the Board. Therefore, the conditions of my service continue to be handled by Government, whereas the staff is governed by the Board. We are not creating in the Board of National Library a replica of Delhi Public Library. We can take care of these things.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: The employees of Delhi Public Library are under the governance of the Board, that is what you said. I wanted to know, if by that you mean that they are employees of the Board.

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: They are employees of the Board. But they are governed by Government rules, because they have adopted the same rules there.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Was Delhi Public Library established by an Act of the Board? Is it financed by Government or by donations?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: It was established by a Resolution of the Ministry of Education. It is hundred per cent financed by Government. We do not depend on donations, though they are welcome.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Most of the people in the Board would be erstwhile civil servants. What is the benefit that you get in a Board? What is the experience of the other countries?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: So far as the Libraries in other countries are concerned, they initially did start on this very system and some of them still are like that. It is not I, that am proposing the Board; National Library Board has been proposed in the Bill. I am commenting on that, that it is not going to harm much. We are seeing too much danger ahead. I have personal experience of the Government

offices also. It appears that I can run things better and more quickly now than I could do earlier when I was completely under the Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have been informed by the Ministry that the Director, Delhi Public Library, is an employee of the Board, though he is appointed by the Government. He is not an employee of the Government. Generally, the person is an employee of the appointing authority. Don't you feel there is anomaly in this?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: As I said in the beginning, it is a diarchy. I am governed by two bodies. I belong to the Board, but am appointed by the Ministry. My terms and conditions cannot be changed unless the Government agrees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That will not create any difficulty?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: Anything can create difficulties any time. What system man has made is perfect, which runs successfully at all time and which suits all people at all places?

SHRI SOMCHAND SOLANKI: I feel your Delhi Public Library has got a constitution which, to my mind, has quite a few anomalies. On the one hand, you say that you are appointed by the Government; on the other hand you say that your service rules etc. are those which are framed by your Board. Is that correct?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: Framed by the Board, but with the agreement of the Ministry.

SHRI SOMCHAND SOLANKI: You are actually an employee of the Ministry or an employee of the Board?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: That is where the anomaly lies. I cannot give or verdict as to whether I belong to the Ministry or to the Board.

SHRI SOMCHAND SOLANKI: You might have noticed that this Bill is supposed to give a greater measure of autonomy. What do you feel about this.

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I have stated that fears have been expressed as to whether autonomy will be ruinous to a Library. It is for all of us to give proper thought to it and make a constitution for the Board which to us appears to be the best and most practicable. Wherever there are lacunae or shortcomings in the Bill, they can be considered in consultation.

SHRI SOMCHAND SOLANKI: We find that the Bill is being opposed by people connected with the Library on the ground that the employees of the Library are at the moment employees of the Government, but the moment the Bill is enacted they will cease to be employees of the Government and will become employees of the Board. Have you any comment to make on this point?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I can state from my own experience that I also had the same fears, when I was to leave the Government service I also, in my childishness, thought that leaving the Government means insecurity or something like that. But I have seen that there is no insecurity if we work properly. If we are good workers, things go in the same smooth manner as they went in the Government. So, I have told my friends in the National Library that these are imaginary fears. We had never seen autonomy and independence; we are now being set free out of a cage; we had got used to the cage and the security of the cage; if we get an opportunity to get out of it, I don't think there is much harm in it. Although much can be said if the institution stays with the Government but once it has been decided that it should be run by a Board, I don't feel there is as much danger as is visualised. Most of it is exaggerated and imaginary, I feel.

SHRI SOMCHAND SOLANKI: There is also a feeling that the Library movement should not be confined to the National Library at Calcutta but that it should be built up in all parts of the country, especially in metropolitan cities like Delhi,

Rombay and Madras. In that case, would it be better if it stays with the Government?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: This is a decision which the Government has to take, but I can say that the argument out of which it has been said that if the National Library stays with the Government this movement can be built up more quickly, is not correct. If we can have a National Library Board at Calcutta we can have one at Madras and other places also if we have Libraries there. If we have more Boards, they can function autonomously and speedily put up the Libraries whenever they desire to put up and they can deliver the goods much quicker than the Government.

SHRI SOMCHAND SOLANKI: Since when has the Delhi Public Library been working?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: It was set up in 1951.

SHRI SOMCHAND SOLANKI: During this period of 22 years, how many books have you acquired?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: We have about six lakhs of books.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Do you feel that the powers given to the Board under this Bill are adequate enough and are they really and truly powers of autonomy?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: To begin with, I feel that as the Bill reads, they should be considered enough. But we cannot take it that the situation will be frozen; there is always room for experimenting and amending. Even the Constitution of India has been amended so many times; why can't this constitution be amended?

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Out of the ten Directors, nine are to be nominated by the Government. Do you think that this is good enough?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I have not commented on this in my Memorandum.

but this is a thing which can be changed.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: You have also stated in your memorandum that some provisions are necessary to inspire confidence among the staff of the Library. What, according to you are those provisions which you deem would be necessary?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: There are one or two things where they tried to read between the lines and they feel insecure about it. For instance, it was said that the Board, having acted in good faith, cannot be sued or something like that. They probably thought that they will be under the thumb of the Director or somebody and that even if their interests have been transgressed they cannot sue the Board. But I have told my friends that we in Delhi Public Library have a Board and we have the same sort of provisions but we were sued in the Supreme Court in one case and there was no objection at any stage. They have that fear because they think a Board cannot be sued. A Board can't be sued when they are acting in their capacity as a Board, but when they are acting versus an employess, why can't they be sued? We are an autonomous body completely and we have the same provisions. The law courts these days give you protection under Clause 311 which has been quoted in the court. We were sued in the Supreme Court and in the High Court also.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Apart from providing some provisions for the staff in the National Library, what exactly do you have in mind to make this National Library a library worthy of the country?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I have indicated at the end of my memorandum that it is not part of my job to comment on the Bill itself. This is something on which the experts of the country should give some thought rather than our talking across the table.

श्री भद्र बर दास : दिल्ली लाइब्रेरी बोर्ड सीसाइटीज रजिस्ट्रेशन एक्ट के अन्दर बना है और नेशनल लाइब्रेरी स्टेचुटरी है, तो इन दोनों में कुछ फर्क है ?

श्री मेहता : फर्क तो है। मैं यह नहीं कह रहा हूँ कि यह त्रिज दिल्ली लाइब्रेरी बोर्ड की तरह काम करेगा। इस के प्रोवोइशन अलग हैं। अगर देखा जाय तो दिल्ली लाइब्रेरी बोर्ड और उस के ऐम्प्लाइज का जो सरकार के साथ ताल्लुक है वह ठीला है, फिर भी हम सिक्योर फील करते हैं। लेकिन स्टेचुटरी होने पर कुछ ज्यादा उम्मीद रखनी चाहिये।

श्री भद्र बर दास : आप ने नेशनल लाइब्रेरी बिल को देखा होगा, क्लॉज 16 के मुताबिक नेशनल लाइब्रेरी कलकत्ता में ही लोकेटेड होगी। लेकिन आप ने जो बातें कही हैं लाइब्रेरी के विस्तार के सम्बन्ध में उस का बिल के किस क्लॉज से सम्बन्ध है ?

श्री मेहता : जो बातें मैं ने कही हैं वह पब्लिक के दृष्टिकोण से कही हैं कि वह उन के लिये मांग कर सकती है। अभी होता यह है कि लाइब्रेरी एक एसी सेवा है कि जो पब्लिक ने कभी नहीं मांगी क्यों कि वह नहीं जानती है कि क्या चीज मिस कर रही है। लेकिन जो लोग जानते हैं वह इस बारे में शोर मचायें तो और जगह भी लाइब्रेरी बन सकती है। इस बारे में मेरे लिये कहना उचित नहीं होगा बरना यह कहा जायगा कि चूँकि मैं लाइब्रेरीयन हूँ इसलिये मेरा बेस्ट इंटरेस्ट है।

श्री भद्र बर दास : आप ने कहा है कि लाइब्रेरी इन ही डायरेक्टर आफ द लाइब्रेरी ऐपोइंट हो। आप ने क्लॉज 13 देखा होगा जो इस प्रकार है :

"13. (i) The Central Government shall appoint a person who in its opinion possesses academic qualifications of distinction or is a distinguished Librarian, as the Director of the Library."

तो इस से आप का पराज सब नहीं होता है ?

श्री मेहता : प्रोफरेंस और प्रायरेटी की बात है। जब चार लोगों के इंटर्व्यू होते हैं तो उस में एक सेलेक्ट होता है और बाकी पैनल में रखे जाते हैं, तब जिस आर्डर में रखते हैं वही सीनियर टी बन जाती है। इसी तरह अगर लाइब्रेरियन को प्रोसोडेंस दी जाय तो प्रायरेटी बन जाती है।

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISHRA: Sir, I would like to know the composition of the Delhi Public Library Board. I want to know whether it is a body appointed by the Government of India. How many officials and non-officials are there in the Board?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: The Chairman is nominated by the Minister for Education and the Ministry of Education or which ever Department is responsible for the Delhi Public Library nominates two of its officers to be on the Board. Then there are two nominees of the Delhi Administration, one of whom should be the Director of Education. Then there are two nominees from the Delhi Municipal Corporation, one be from the N.D.M.C. and the other from the Delhi Metropolitan Council Four members, on the basis of their experience and merit, can be co-opted by the Board. The Chairman who is the nominee of the Minister is the Presiding Officer of the Board and the Director is an Ex-officio Secretary and is also a Member.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISHRA: Now coming to the question of autonomy to the Board, do you feel that there should be autonomy or not?

Do you agree with me if I say that your Boards' Chairman and some other Members are nominated by the Government and therefore it cannot be an autonomous Board? You say that it should be an autonomous board but it you want that it should be completely an autonomous Board why should we at all take the trouble of going to Parliament for legislation? Why not have a resolution passed or by a legislation under the Companies' Law or by a legislation under the Society Act—create a Society for this purpose—enacted by a body so that there can be more than a statutory autonomy or the type of autonomy you have suggested?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: In our type of autonomy, I would say that the Chairman who is only nominated by the Minister is not necessarily, and has never been an officer of the Ministry. So far, he has been either a public man or an academician and he will not be somebody working in any Ministry. Then the Vice-Chairman, two Members from the Metropolitan Council, two Members from the Municipal Corporation, one Member from the N.D.M.C. and four members who are co-opted as member are all non-official Members. They do not belong to the Ministry. Therefore, I do not think that it is a body being run by the Ministry. Whether we want to have this sort of autonomy or not, when the things are still in hand we can discuss and then decide what sort of autonomy we should have. The act has not yet been passed and we are only discussing it.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISHRA: There is no point in discussing this. We want to arrive at a final stage. I want to know one more thing on this very point. Now will you kindly refer to clause 5 of the Bill which says:

"5. The Central Government shall appoint a member from among the members of the Board referred to in clauses (a), (b), (c) and (d) of

sub-section (1) of section 4 as Chairman of the Board."

What does it mean? Perhaps it means that in the Central Government it should be either the Secretary of the Ministry or the Secretary of the Ministry of Finance or within the six nominees of the Chairman.

In your case, there are three or four agencies public men, Metropolitan Council and the State Govt. So, what type of autonomy do you want?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I frankly agree with you that the lions' share in the National Library Board goes to the Central Govt. Here, we can seek an amendment of the clause.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He wanted to know what type of autonomy do you want?

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISHRA: I gave you so many types of autonomies. I do not know what type of autonomy you prefer?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: There is no question of my preference, but I would prefer a statutory autonomy where the Govt. has more responsibility for running the library rather than taking my type of autonomy where a board has been created only by a resolution. As far as National Library is concerned, the interest of the whole nation is involved and therefore it should be a statutory autonomy.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: As far as clause 4 is concerned, instead of having two Secretaries, whether you will agree that there should be only one or two officers and all of them should be librarians and academicians coming from Universities and especially the Secretary should not be the Chairman. We know how the Secretaries to the Govt. of India are functioning. They have to do so many things to do. If you feel that it will do justice, kindly tell us.

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: Frankly, I have no comments to offer on this point.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: You said that instead of one National Library, there should be more than one National Libraries. You said that it was an open question and the Parliament could do it. At this stage, we have to decide whether we should do it or not. Suppose, we decide not to have more than one National Libraries? Instead of having more than one National Libraries, we may have four or five regional libraries and the National Library should be apex of the regional libraries? Will you welcome that idea? As far as this Bill is concerned, it will take care of the regional libraries.

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: When I made my comments on the Bill as it was, there was no mention of the other libraries although it was expressed in various meetings of the librarians where the Bill was discussed that it should be a comprehensive Bill. Speaking about the National Library services and placing the National Library at the apex of the regional libraries, was discussed there. But unless it is there in the body of the Bill, I cannot say anything.

SHRIMATI MARAGATHAM CHANDRASEKHAR: As far as the composition of the Board is concerned, whether it will be conducive to the growth of the library movement?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: Mostly, it has been constituted with a view to running the National Library. In so far as the part it has to play to boost the National Library Movement, of course, the Bill is inadequate. But, I think, of course, the Bill is inadequate. But, I think, if the Government feels like this, it can put a clause accordingly. If this Library has to be a single library, then I do not think it can do much in the Movement. So far as the Library Movement is concerned, it is the Public Libraries, which form a major portion of the Library Movement. To that extent the States are responsible. Unless they move in the matter nothing can be done.

SHRIMATI MARAGATHAM CHANDRASEKHAR: As far as article 4 of

your memorandum is concerned, do you think if the Chairman or the Director is a librarian, then the work will be done in a much better way?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: It is a very common experience that if we have not worker with our own hands, we are likely to be cheated by our servants. People who run their own kitchen, know where the servants cheat. That is, what I feel, happens in offices. If an officer does not know much about the intricacies of work, the lower staff will try to play some mischief. It is just like a college boy who wants Rs. 50/- to buy a blotting paper. I suggest that some one who is more permanent to stay should be a librarian.

DR. V. SINGH: It is suggested that this National Library could be an apex of regional libraries. If it could be like this, then what is the type of relationship which he thinks should be between apex bodies and the regional bodies. I asked this question because there is a National Library at Calcutta. We are adding a new chapter and we must know the outlines of the new chapter.

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: Well, Regional Libraries will have a sort of general guidance from the National Library. The National Library should have a sort of relationship....

DR. V. B. SINGH: What should be the sort of relationship?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: You will have to make out a whole constitution for that. The relationship should be of such a nature, where the National Library can lay down the policies and the policy should be such that all the books and other Library resources can be available to the readers in Regional Libraries.

DR. V. B. SINGH: Under the existing practice, every publisher has to send a copy of his publication to the National Library. So, would you like such copies to be given to the Regional Libraries also? Secondly, there are certain provisions in the existing report, with regard to the

relationship between the National Library and the Regional Libraries. What are your reactions to that?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: So far as the question of making available the copies of the books etc. to all the Regional Libraries is concerned, this depends upon as to how many libraries you will have. If you require 20 copies, I do not think the publisher will send 20 copies free of cost, to all the Regional Libraries. These are all matters to be discussed in detail, where not only the librarians and the Government, but, the publishers are also involved.

DR. V. R. SINGH: What should be the qualifications of the Chairman? should he be nominated?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: If he is nominated, then the qualification question does not arise.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: Mr. Mehta, on page 1 of your memorandum, you have said:

"My friends at Calcutta have some fears, may be exaggerated, that by handing over the Library to a Board their services will be less secure and therefore all their arguments concentrate on the continuance of the *status quo*."

Is it not? Secondly, the Jha Committee had recommended that the Governing Council should be formed by the Government by a Resolution. It has further recommended that this should not be a statutory body, but, powers should be delegated to it. Do you think that there is some essential difference between these two types of Committee, the one autonomous and the other one statutory?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: So far as the first part of your question is concerned, I have said enough earlier. In so far as the recommendations of the Committee are concerned, I do not think it has been made public. I have not seen the report. Unless I see it, I cannot answer that part.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: From your experience, I would like to be enlightened as to whether there is any difference between an autonomous body and a body which is strictly under Government control?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: Well, firstly, there is this difference. The one is autonomous and the other is not. The rest of the differences, you will know, in their actual working.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: You have the experience as the Director of the Delhi Public Library. Do you think that more powers should be given to the Director so that he can function in a better manner for efficient administration of the Delhi Public Library? Do you want more powers—executive and administrative?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I am satisfied as things are.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: My last question is this. I would like to know whether the workers and the staff in autonomous bodies can enjoy their rights and privileges under the Trade Unions Act?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: Well, I think, it all depends on the nature of the institution to which they belong. There are so many autonomous organisations which are non-Government organisations. If they are factories, they come under the Factories Act. But, the question of a body being autonomous or statutory in character does not come in the way of trade unions.

SHRI SAKTI KUMAR SARKAR: It is also observed that Government shirks its responsibility in case of autonomous bodies. Is the Government not answerable to Parliament in case of autonomous bodies? What is your experience?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I think the Government is answerable even in case of autonomous bodies. I get all the Parliament questions whenever Parliament is in session. The Govern-

ment is responsible and it has to answer all the queries.

SHRI SAKTI KUMAR SARKAR: Mr. Mehta, you have rich experience with regard to the working of autonomous bodies. Are you satisfied with their working?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I am satisfied.

SHRI SAKTI KUMAR SARKAR: Do you think, where there are deficiencies, that Government intervention is necessary?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I think, so far, no occasion has arisen in the course of my experience. But, if it comes to that, well, the Government's participation or intervention can be sought. I think I can seek it.

MR CHAIRMAN: During your tenure, has any occasion ever arisen where resented any kind of interference.

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: That is not in my nature. I do not resent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But, has any occasion ever arisen?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: There has been no occasion.

SHRI SAKTI KUMAR SARKAR: Do you think that the administration as envisaged in the Bill, is better than the administration run by you, which is an autonomous body?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: It is too early to assess it; unless we work it and compare it, it is difficult to say.

SHRI SAKTI KUMAR SARKAR: Because you have gone through the bill and you have experience of the working of the autonomous body, you can compare between the administration envisaged by the present bill and your experience as a director of an autonomous body.

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: There is not much difference so far as working is

concerned. Whatever systems or structures you adopt, unless you run them honestly, you cannot have ideal things. We have got the best culture on paper; but how are things being done in actual practice? On paper, things may look simple, If we have got good people to run the show, they smoothly, otherwise, things take a bad shape.

SHRI SAKTI KUMAR SARKAR: Do you think that this bill will lead to a better climate or provide good leadership?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I feel that if you get the right sort of officers, it would help.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: You referred to clause 13 of this bill regarding the appointment of librarians. I think the Central Government can appoint a person who has experience, as also technical and general qualifications. But would you feel satisfied if the word 'or' in the bill is replaced?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: Why could we not say, "if he is a librarian of the right academic standard?" If we put "and", this would mean accepting it half-heartedly.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: The point is substituting "and" for "or", is that it would lead to the best combination.

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: That solves half the problem.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: To my mind, it appears that a person who, in the first place, has a good academic qualification, need not have technical qualifications of that standard; otherwise, high technical qualifications are necessary. Secondly, there are two libraries which are serving the purpose of reference for the whole of the country. One is the National Library at Calcutta. Secondly, there is the Central

Reference Library. Would you, as a witness, give us your opinion whether or not a merger of the two would be in the interests of the national character of the National Library; and whether the merger would make it central as well as a national library and, therefore, truly national?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: There is difference of opinion on this. Sometimes, the trend is towards amalgamation; but then we sometimes decentralise thing. I do not know. I have not been working in that library. If their separation is creating some difficulties, most certainly they should be amalgamated and if they are performing their functions—which are quite apart from each other smoothly, they can run separately as well.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Are you aware that there was a committee appointed by the Government i.e. Jha Review Committee on the National Library, Calcutta for which this bill is also there. Have you gone through that report?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I have not seen it.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: One of their recommendations, viz. No. 6, relates to the composition of the Council, parallel to the board here. It says, "The Advisory Council of the National Library should be replaced by a Governing Council. It should have eminent persons from the universities, distinguished educationists and administrators of proved worth." I am doubtful whether "proved worth" means facing agitations. It says that men of "academic bent of mind, scientists of repute and achievement, should be the member of the Governing Council. The Council should be instituted by a resolution of the Government and not by statute." What have you to say to the recommendations made here? One is regarding the constitution of the Council in which, for your clarification I may mention, the word "librarian," has not been mentioned as such. Therefore, there is no reference to the librarianship as a profession.

Secondly, there is a legal aspect to this. The Council should be instituted by a resolution of the Government. Therefore, the Governing Council should enjoy some delegated autonomy and not statutory autonomy.

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: Yes, Sir. I think when the Jha Committee reported, this National Library Board was not thought of. When it has come, probably the Council also has been taken care of.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: This is not the question. There is a specific proposition. Have you read it?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: If we have a statutory board, we will have to have a statutory council also. If there is no board, then the delegated authority should be enjoyed by that council. i.e. delegated by a resolution.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Are you in favour of delegated autonomy?

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: I am in favour of statutory autonomy for the Council, because if the board does come into being, how can we have a part outside it? We will have to take the whole. The executive council will have to stay in the statute itself.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: I am not very clear about this. because by delected autonomous body, we mean a body created by the resolution of the executive; whereas a statutorily autonomous board having this would be the creation of the legislature. It would be passed in the Parliament.

SHRI J. C. MEHTA: It is going to be the creature of the executive when it is a bill; and then, you have to convert it into an Act.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mehta, the Members of the Committee feel very grateful to you for enlightening them with your views and answers to their questions. We thank you again.

(The witness then withdrew)

II. Shri Asoke Chatterjee, Member, Delhi Metropolitan Council, Delhi.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I want to inform you that the evidence that you would give here would be treated as public and is liable to be published unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire the evidence to be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: I have signed a paper to that effect.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have not tendered any memorandum. You state your views briefly and thereafter the Members might desire to get some elucidation.

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: I have gone through this Bill. I have hardly any comments to make excepting one or two suggestions.

I would like to make a few comments in respect of a few Sections only. One is Section 5, where there is a stipulation for the appointment of the Chairman of the Board. It says:

"The Central Government shall appoint a member from among the members of the Board referred to in clauses (a), (b), (c) and (d) of sub-section (1) of Section 4 as Chairman of the Board."

I am afraid, I do not find myself in agreement with this. I would rather suggest that the appointment of the Chairman be restricted to categories (c) and (d) of sub-section (1) of Section 4. This is because (a) refers to Secretary in the Ministry or Department of the Central Government dealing with matters relating to the Library and (b) refers to the Secretary in the Ministry of the Central Government dealing with finance. Somehow I feel that the Chairman of the Board should not be

an official. To be brief, I would give three reasons for it. One is that the Secretary in any Ministry is a person, whose services can be transferred. Secondly, a Secretary in a Ministry need not necessarily be a very knowledgeable person about library affairs, whereas in the case of persons under categories (c) and (d), it is more than likely that persons who are very knowledgeable about national library should be on the Board. Thirdly, if you will permit me to say so, Sir, a Secretary in a Ministry is very often a Member of a dozen or so Committees. The Chairman, I should imagine, is an important functionary in this Board and a person who is a Member of a dozen or so other Committees would probably not take as much interest, or would not be able to give as much attention to the Board as would be required. That is why, I personally feel that the appointment of the Chairman of the Board should be restricted to persons only who are under categories (c) and (d).

Then, Sir, if you will kindly turn to Section 9, sub-clause (3), here is a stipulation that if any member, being an officer of the Government, is unable to attend any meeting of the Board, he may, with the previous approval of the Chairman, authorise any person in writing to do so. The Chairman can be an official of the Government, and if he is unable to attend a meeting, I do not see, how he can authorise somebody else to attend. That is why, I feel that the Chairman being a very important functionary on the Board should be from categories (c) or (d) of section 4. That was one comment that I wanted to make.

My other comment is with regard to Section 19(2). In this there is a stipulation that subject to such regulations as may be made by the Board in this behalf, the Board may, from time to time, purchase or otherwise acquire such manuscripts, books,

articles or thing, as may, in the opinion of the Board, be worthy of preservation in the Library. I am not very clear about it, because it is within my knowledge that apart from the National Library in Calcutta, there are very old and valuable manuscripts and other books in private collections all over the country and in some public libraries also. I am not sure, if this involves acquiring and purchase of these and whether this involves actual shifting of the manuscripts and books from those libraries where they presently exist. I am not sure, but if it involves, as it probably would, physically taking away such manuscripts and books from those libraries—I am not talking of private collections, but of libraries it should not be done. That is what I personally feel. Perhaps some ways and means could be found to keep those books and those manuscripts where they are and still extend the authority of the National Library for their preservation etc. To give you an example, there is the oldest and the first public library in my home town, in Uttarpara in District Hooghly, West Bengal. In that Library, there are very valuable manuscripts and books. But it is a matter of prestige, matter of convenience to scholars as also the residents of the district, that they would not ordinarily like their books and manuscripts to be physically shifted to the National Library. Of course, some of them have their own doubts whether the National Library would be able to preserve them properly, but there I do not agree. But I, personally think that for the benefit of the scholars, acquisition is good, but these need not necessarily be shifted. I am not very sure, if this is intended, as I said, if it means physical shifting of all such books and manuscripts. It need not be done.

With the rest of the Sections, I find myself almost entirely in agreement. As I can see, the scope of the Bill itself is very limited. It is about the composition of a Board in whom the management of the National Library would vest in future. For that the

provisions that you have envisaged are perfectly all right to my mind.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: I would like to have your opinion of on this because our experience in the Library profession is that they don't like this clause. They think it is directly loaded in favour of people from the public field and does not give credence to the people from the Library profession, especially this Clause 13 which relates to the appointment of a Librarian or Director—whatever he is to be called. How would you react to the suggestion that this Clause should be re-phrased like this:

“The Central Government shall appoint a person who, in its opinion possesses academical qualifications of distinction or is a distinguished Librarian, as the Director of the Library.”

Here, it is 'or'. If it is substituted by 'and' how would you react to it?

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: On the face of it, I would perhaps agree I would like to substitute 'or' with 'and' because the work of a Director of a Library, to my mind, is somewhat of a technical nature. This needs a special kind of know-how which is not perhaps possible for every academician as such to have. In any case, whenever we think of appointing a Librarian anywhere—whether for a big library or small library—we do insist upon the person possessing certain basic qualifications and competence in Library Science. Therefore, I would perhaps say that a person with high academic qualifications will not probably meet the requirements of this Bill. Because, once again, the Chairman or other Members of the Board may or may not be technically knowledgeable about matters of the Library, but the Director who will have to run the Library should be a Librarian with certain particular competence. So, I would react quite favourably to the suggestion that 'or' should be substituted by 'and'.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Secondly, I would invite your attention to Section 4 about the composition of the Board. Clause (c) sub-clause (i) reads—

“four shall be from among persons who, in the opinion of the Central Government, are educationists or have special knowledge of, and experience in, matters relating to the administration of libraries”.

Here, too, people working in libraries have felt that they have been ignored so far as their representation on the Board is concerned. Now, those persons who have some experience in matters relating to the administration of libraries may be non-technical persons—may be persons having no library qualifications or may be persons who have failed in this subject, though they might occupy a high opinion in the estimation of the Government. So, if we are to satisfy the Library profession as such, would you suggest that there should be some representation—at least one member—from persons who are actually Librarians by profession?

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: The situation here, as I see it, is slightly different. Unlike the Director, who in my opinion should be a person with some technical knowledge, the four persons, I must confess that I do not have a very intimate knowledge of the functioning of the Delhi Public Library, except that I have been inside it as many people have many times been.

But, coming to the second part of the question as to whether the Delhi Public Library can function better as an autonomous Board or under Government, I think that in all cases—and I feel very strongly about it also—a Public Library should function under an Autonomous Board. A Public Library, as I see it, is different from a University Library. It is stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of this Bill that a person who has attained the age of 18 can utilise the

services of the National Library. Now, our University Libraries and such other libraries are not open to everybody; they are open only to those who are enrolled. Since a Public Library functions differently. If the management of the Public Library is vested in an autonomous Board I think it can run itself better. Of course I do not have, as I said in the beginning, any personal knowledge as to how the Delhi Public Library is faring. I have never gone that deep into it, but if it is not faring well then the reason is certainly not that the Management is vested in an autonomous Board; there could be many other reasons which should be looked into and taken care of, on the Board need not necessarily be Librarians or, as you said correctly, they need not have any technical knowledge about how to run a Library. I know of several distinguished scholars who have been, in their time, in charge of Libraries without possessing any technical knowledge about how to run a Library. Besides, having a Librarian on the Board and having an educationist on the Board makes a lot of difference. Because, a library after all, consists of books, manuscripts and other things. A Librarian may know how to maintain these books and manuscripts but he does not know what books or manuscripts are needed and from where they can possibly be had. So, here we need distinguished educationists. If you want to make some kind of a small reservation for these persons one member from amongst the four can be a Librarian; that concession can be made. But even if you restrict it to educationists, I think it will meet the requirements of the Bill.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: So you think that if at all, there should be only one member among these four?

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: Yes, Sir, there is no harm in having one.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: I think you have got some experience

of the Delhi Public Library; if so, I would like to know from you whether the Public Library as it is at Delhi functions properly as an autonomous body and whether you think it can function better under direct Government control.

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: I would say that it should be either an autonomous Board or the kind of Board that you are envisaging here for the national library itself.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: We are discussing on the National Library, Calcutta. The purview and the jurisdictions of the Bill are very limited. We are discussing on the Review how to improve the functions and Committee recommendations as to management of this national library. In that connection we are also discussing on the question of systems of national library. Do you think that this bill is not at all sufficient for creating an atmosphere of national library movement in India and if so, do you think that the bill should be drafted in a different manner?

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: Well, as I said it before and as I have been able to understand, the scope of this bill is limited. This envisages the establishment of a Board for the management of the existing national library in Calcutta. But the question you put in regard to national library movement is a much wider question and certainly in this bill there is nothing which can have a hearing on that movement and off and on a topic like this I won't like to venture any opinion, because this needs a very great deal of thinking and a great deal of information about different libraries. In fact, I would not like to venture any opinion on this but then this bill, as it is, certainly has nothing to do with the national library movement, as you call it.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: My next question is this. In the Bill you will find that there is a proposal

for constituting an autonomous body—Governing Council—which would be composed of 10 Members out of which six would be nominated by the Central Government. Then, how can you call it an autonomous body if the majority of members are nominated by the Central Government? What is your suggestion on this?

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: Are you referring to Section 4, sir?

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: Yes.

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: Well, I don't see what other way can be there to nominate this Board unless it is done by the Central Government. If you allow me to ask a question on this, how also are you going to have a Board? As it is, it may be done; one way, of course, is getting some persons elected from amongst the Members. But in regard to national library, it is certainly not a matter which should be left to the choice of some members who have registered themselves as members of the library. And certainly the Board has to be nominated and if the Board is nominated by the highest authority in the country, namely Central Government—that may be of course the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Culture—then I should imagine though the members of the Board are nominated by the Central Government, I will say that there would be autonomy to function. Besides, you are nominating 4 or 5 educationists and one person is nominated by the Chairman, University Grants Commission. These nominated Members have knowledge of and experience in the administration of libraries, science and technology. I think it must be quite all right. There is no harm.

SHRIMATI MARAGATHAM CHANDRASEKHER: I want to know one thing from the witness. The bill proposes two separate bodies for the management of the national library. One body will be the Board and the other will be the executive council

If this is so, does the witness feel that there should be two Chairmen, that is one Chairman for each Body? Do you feel that one Chairman for both should be sufficient for discharging the duties of the national library?

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: How can there be two such bodies? It is not clear to me but to achieve some kind of cohesion, some kind of inter-relationship, I think, both the bodies should be headed by one Chairman. Otherwise, there will be clashes and it will not function properly. But frankly speaking I myself am not very clear on this point.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: Sir, the hon. witness has opted for an autonomous Board and has said that he prefers that type of autonomy that is in the Bill. I would like to ask him to read various clauses including Clauses 3 and 4 of the Bill which refer to the composition of the Board. Again I would ask him to read the clauses 18, 19 and 25 which refer to Duties of Board and the Powers of Board (Clauses 18, 19 and 25 were read out). Therefore, does he not feel that while it satisfies him that it is an autonomous Board, actually it is not an autonomy in the real sense of the term? Actually the power is somewhere else and somebody else is assigning the power. The Chairman should not be from A and B, but should be from C and D. If he means that it should not be the officer of the Ministry, I can understand that. But why did he not extend his logic further and say that the nomination itself should not be from the Central Government. Let there be regional representation. There are Universities, libraries, regional centres. In the Bill, we can say each library can send one person. Some such pattern should be there. Then we can say that there will be a real autonomy. Will you agree with me? Now the pattern of the Government itself is changing. Today you are seeing this Government; tomorrow, you may be seeing another Government. The change may come so successively that

the whole librarian movement will jeopardise.

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: When I mention the other possibility of an election, I did not rule out other ways of getting the Board nominated. In the case of these four or five distinguished educationists, I take it that in the actual operative part of this Bill, before the Central Government chooses the distinguished educationist, they will consult the Universities or the State Governments and through the State Governments other people.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: Are you sure about it?

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: I cannot be sure.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: Now, you have heard that the Chief Justice cannot be consulted about the appointment of judges. I am not talking of today. We are talking about the legislation which will be in the statute. Therefore, you please give me an answer not for today, but for posterity.

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: I cannot give an answer for posterity. But, as things stand today, and in a kind of political system in which we are working and we hope to function, I do not entirely rule out the kind of misgivings you have. This may happen. But it need not necessarily happen.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: Then all right.

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: When you are choosing these persons, of course all kinds of interests may come into play, whatever may be the authority to choose. But in a thing like this, I do hope the authority who chooses will be objective enough and would also consult the academic world before choosing such persons. But, it is only a hope I cannot give a straight no to your question. What you say may happen.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: I am satisfied. Another question is instead of this autonomous board of the pattern envisaged in this Bill, there is a Statutory Board. This binds this Government and other future Governments. This is a pattern which may be continued and within this, either they can do good or bad—both are possible.

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: I am not able to follow you.

SHRI SHYAM DHAR MISRA: My point is we are going to give an autonomy by a statute and if it is passed like this with certain amendments (3, 30, 19, 16 and 28), which according to some of us, puts a lot of restrictions and not an autonomy. We got this evidence at many places. It is no secret to tell you. Let the Board be constituted by the resolution of the Government.

And not by a statute so that the Government takes the full responsibility directly what is likely to happen. After all, there are bad men and good men; there are bad Governments and good Governments. Today, it is a good Government; tomorrow, it may be a bad Government and any bad Government may misuse its provisions and may make this Act as a scape-goat. Therefore, give them complete freedom so that total responsibility of the development of the National Library rests with them and they do not make a scape-goat of this Act as there is a fashion to make scape-goat of many things.

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: I frankly say that this is a very hypothetical situation that you are envisaging. For example a bad Government may impose military rule or some such kind of rule. That is a kind, which, in my opinion, we need not take into account. When you are making an enactment what a bad Government will do in terms of misuse of power, that nobody can say. But as far as National Library is concerned, the things which are there are very sacred to the nation. It is not like just any other library—

like the Delhi Public Library or any other library. It has valuable possessions. Even if there is some curbing of the kind of autonomy which you are envisaging, in the interest of the articles which are kept in the National Library, I would say that you have to curb that much of autonomy. Now, hypothetically it may turn out to beg academic discussion of what may or may not happen. In managing a library of this kind, you have to have a very special kind of enactment and it is a very special type of situation. So, what is good for other libraries need not necessarily be good for the National Library. Though apparently, you see a contradiction, in the autonomy which this Bill envisages and the kind of fears which some of the witnesses might have expressed or some of you might have, I, for one,—of course you are going to effect changes in the Bill when you take up discussion clause by clause, you may relax some of the stipulations or omit some of them—I for one would say that it is better to stick to the provisions of this Bill when you are managing the National Library.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: Sir, Mr. Chatterjee, has suggested a sort of dichotomy in regard to the appointment of the Chairman of the Board. While he had no objection for the Chairman being drawn from category (c) and (d) he had definitely an animus against persons being drawn from categories (a) and (b). If the Government really wants a particular person of its choice to be appointed, he may be even from the class from which Mr. Chatterjee wants the Chairman to be appointed, namely, categories (c) and (d). Government can so nominate a person in category (c) and also see that he is also appointed as the Chairman. Therefore, I do not see any appreciation of this point. If Chairman can be chosen from amongst these ten or fifteen or whatever the number we ultimately arrive at—of course, certain qualifications have to be fixed for the Chairman of the Board—in that case, I do not think there would be any

infringement of autonomy, and on the other hand, there would be greater fulfilment of the objective of autonomy. What would Mr. Chatterjee like to say on this?

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: At the very outset, I must assure you that I have no animus against persons coming from categories (a) and (b). The objections which I have are based on something quite different. As I said, the Secretary in the Ministry or the Department of the Central Government dealing with matters relating to the library, would be one particular Secretary and he is a changeable person. Today, he may be the Secretary in one particular Ministry and tomorrow he may go somewhere else. The same is true about the Secretary in the Ministry of Central Government dealing with finance. These two officials will go on changing. Their job is as such. They need not necessarily have any expertise on matters pertaining to the library. That was one reason. The other reason, why I want them to be excluded, is this. A person by virtue of his being Secretary in one particular Ministry—you know it and I know it—will be on an umpteen number of committees. He may be the Chairman of other Government Committees. This will be one more. I would not like the Chairman being an important functionary, taking this up as just any other of his many official obligations. You said that the persons can also be so nominated. You said it because you thought that I have an animus against the Secretaries in the Ministries as such, or against the bureaucracy. Not the least. Perhaps, a Secretary would

do much better in another kind of committee or a Board, but, not on this Board. The reasons are those three which I have given; but, no animus.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: I would like to know from the witness another thing. In view of the fact that we are a Federal Union consisting of 21 States, would it not be better if there is a greater participation of the States in the National Library, so that they could feel that they have a say in the affairs of the National Library and they can also identify themselves with the cultural and academic development in the country?

SHRI ASOKE CHATTERJEE: Most certainly, yes. But, if by implication, this means that every State should be represented, then, my answer is most certainly No. Of course, there should be a feeling of participation. In fact, something has got to be done. But, I would like to make one thing clear. The States must feel that they are participating in this, and in fact, the assets of the National Library would have been called from the States and will, in future, be gathered from the States. There should definitely be a sense of participation. But, I do not know whether you want to extend the participation to the composition of the Board itself. If that was what you had in mind, then, very frankly speaking, I would say that it would be very unwieldy and that is not the sort of thing needed for the National Library.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Chatterjee, we are very thankful to you for enlightening the Committee with your views. Thank you very much.

(The Committee then adjourned)

RECORD OF EVIDENCE TENDERED BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON
THE NATIONAL LIBRARY BILL, 1972

Wednesday, the 26th September, 1973 in Committee Room, 6th Floor, Sachivalaya,
Bombay from 15.00 to 18.10 hours.

PRESENT

Shri Amarnath Vidyalankar—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Acha! Singh
3. Shri Virendra Agarwal
4. Shri Shrikrishna Agarwal
5. Shri Pannalal Barupal
6. Shri S. C. Besra
7. Shri Samar Guha
8. Shri B. R. Kavade
9. Shri E. R. Krishnan
10. Shri Y. S. Mahajan
11. Shri Saroj Mukherjee
12. Shri Narain Chand Parashar
13. Shri Ramubhai Ravjibhai Patel
14. Shri S. A. Shamim
15. Shri K. P. Unnikrishnan
16. Shri D. P. Yadav

Rajya Sabha

17. Smt. Sushila Shankar Adivarekar
18. Dr. Rajat Kumar Chakrabarti
19. Smt. Maragatham Chandrasekhar
20. Shri Mhabir Dass
21. Shri N. G. Goray
22. Shri Sanat Kumar Raha

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE
(DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE)

1. Shri K. K. Baksi—*Deputy Secretary.*
2. Shri A. S. Talwar—*Under Secretary.*
3. Shri M. N. Nagaraj—*Deputy Librarian, National Library, Calcutta.*

SECRETARIAT

Shri H. G. Paranjpe—*Deputy Secretary.*

WITNESSES EXAMINED

I. Dr. A. U. Sheikh, Secretary, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, Bombay.

II. Asiatic Society of Bombay, Town Hall, Bombay.

Spokesmen:-

1. Shri Ajit Kumar Banerjee

2. Shri S. M. Joshi

III. Shri S. K. Havanur, Librarian, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bombay.

IV. Dr. M. B. Buch, Head, Centre of Advanced Study in Education, Baroda.

V. Shri T. D. Waknis, Ex-Curator, Librarian, Maharashtra, Bombay.

VI. Smt. Hansaben Mehta, Advocate, Bombay.

I. Dr. A. U. Sheikh, Secretary, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, Bombay.

(The witness was called in and he took his seat)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I may point out to you that your evidence may be treated as public and is liable to be made public unless you specially desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential, I may also add that even though you may desire the evidence to be treated as confidential, it is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. You are doubtless aware that whatever discussions we have here is treated as confidential and is not to be made public till the Report of this Committee is presented to Parliament.

Dr. Sheikh, you may first state what you want to say and thereafter the Members might desire to put some question for elucidation.

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: I would like to submit that the problem of the library expansion and extension activities in the country as a whole has not made sufficient progress during the last 25 years inspite of the fact that we have declared several libraries as coming under the Deposits of Books Act and so on. But it appears that the whole question of making the Central libraries and national libraries through which the regional and district libraries would be upgraded in various

ways and assisted by way of sending books for circulation, that problem has remained practically unattended to and what we know as library grid system has almost been frozen. This is an unfortunate state of affairs. When we say the library facilities should be made available particularly to the far-off regions in each State and moreover collection of ancient lore from these regions—maybe of ancient type—is also an important function of a library system, I believe, this activity could have taken better shape and if we are thinking now of a national library system, may be through one library or several other libraries, the question of coordination of work of extension activities of libraries and of reaching facilities to the interior areas must be taken up place. That is my first point.

In Maharashtra also we have got no better experience on the question of setting up of a library grid. That, I think, to a great extent has not worked, and as such, we have to review our procedures. I believe that the entire question of proper library system for the country is an absolute must, if we feel that library work as such should be attended to in an integrated and efficient manner.

Secondly, the total allocation for library work in the country—whether centralised or decentralised libraries—

has not been proportionately good enough for maintaining both the literacy and knowledge up-to-dateness of the people in this respect. Therefore, some recommendation has to come at all levels that this should also be done.

Thirdly, the co-ordination part of the Library knowhow work has got to be done. Facilities like Library training, book-keeping training, costing of books etc. are a matter of great significance from the point of view of the socialist and democratic pattern of expanding knowledge to the common man. Mostly what happens all over the country is that second-hand or second class material or even third-hand or fourth-hand materials come to the Libraries as first class or originals. Sir, I submit that this is not a very good state of affairs if the egalitarian society is to be a knowledgeable society. If the society has got to contribute to the special upkeep to the national upkeep and political upkeep of the country, then surely we will have to provide the means to the people to better their knowledge improve their contributions and get back altogether as individuals and as units of our society the things that are necessary in a democratic set up.

Unfortunately, the system that is being envisaged in your Bill is only pertaining to one particular National Library which is being set up in Calcutta. Now Surely, Sir there are three other Libraries which were originally considered as the seats for deposits of text-books and books under an Act etc. These Libraries may be considered in the proposed Bill for the same facilities. Therefore, these have got to be brought into focus from the point of view of a National Library through a regional grid system and for there should be some kind of co-ordinated society and they should be treated as original libraries. They should be given all the facilities like finance, knowhow and the co-ordinated inputs that are required in order to bring them upto a level where we can say that the National Library is well covered by the National Library system. Because through them you

will go to regional libraries, the District Libraries and so on. Therefore, you could say that we have really taken care of the country as a whole in so far as this branch is concerned. It is not that we have set up only one Library in our country in one part but it will mean that we have taken care of other parts of the country if we consider the old Libraries which are in three or four important cities. This is most important.

Further more, Sir, we have so many language groups and if we want to see that the growth of language system takes place, surely translations of good books from one area to the other should be encouraged and books should be made available from one Library system into another Library system and the question of translating and making them available to other regional groups is an important one, as has been taken care of by allotting financial grants for various languages for translating these books into and from those books. Of course text-books are translated but not the books in other languages of general culture and other things which are meant for people as a whole. So, my submission is that this aspect of the matter is also an important one in a Library System. When modern kinds of considerable assistance to the Library in the shape of micro-filming, documentation in the shape of preservation and sending different books to others in the shape of contributions and other things are provided, all kinds of individuals will be coming into the picture. I do not think our people are severed with that standard system in the sense that the library has become the repository of universal knowledge. It has not become such a place where a person can go and get answers to his problems. Therefore it is necessary to provide guidance to the people—who want to seek guidance so that their time is not wasted. Guidance can be given by the Librarians as a whole who know it better from the point of view of philosophy of the life and administration of the Library. This is an important point which is perhaps

not reflected in the Bill]. This will have to be taken care of by issuing instructions in this behalf.

Another point is, we feel, that the number of people that have been put on the Board here—many of them of course happen to be educationists—are required to be knowledgeable people with sufficient Library Science experience and will have to be brought into picture, in case they want the persons with expertise in this field and can run these institutions very efficiently. This is perhaps not done. Our experience is that more money can be spent on more institutions in the country as these have got to be brought into focus and more liaison can be created between the National Libraries and the University Libraries, District Libraries, Regional Libraries and all that so that there can be a link to these Libraries. Therefore, such a Bill as this may perhaps have an amending clause by which it could take under its auspices other Libraries like Regional Libraries, University Libraries, etc. so that all of them function as a Library grid for our country.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have given a good suggestion. But we have before this Committee a concept of true National Library. Can you suggest the picture of a real National Library? Here this Committee, as you know, is concerned with the Bill that is before us. It would be more helpful if you could suggest as to the composition and functioning of the National Library in order to consider them for incorporation in the Bill.

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: By providing certain amount of finance for the improvement of the Libraries, providing know-how, training facilities for Librarians and others, we can see whether the system of national library grid could be established all over the country. This is one suggestion. As far as the question of appointment of a Director or a Librarian is concerned, if there are four or five

libraries set up at the national level in the country, they could have a cadre of librarians who could be exchanged between these libraries from time to time and provide for a long term engagement rather than for a period of five years. According to the present Bill, it becomes an *ad hoc* appointment of a senior Librarian or a Director and where will he go after that period? The system should provide for a transfer of people from time to time, from one area to another area so that their experience and knowledge of the other libraries' system should not be lost to the country.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you kindly express your ideas while referring to a particular clause and how those ideas should be incorporated in that particular clause, that would help the Committee.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Our purpose of visiting the National Library at Calcutta was only to see how it was functioning. From Bombay, we will go to Poona and so on. But the basic question is whether there should be some kind of a national moving library or not?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: I am thankful to the hon. Members for their suggestions that these things are valid in the sense that we are thinking of the national approach to the problem of having a National Library grid. This is a concept of the library on the national pattern. I was submitting that perhaps this and other enabling clauses could come in the Statement of Objects and Reasons enabling the library to undertake such functions as will serve the purpose to some extent. If you think of the National Library being kept at Calcutta, then it must contain a sufficient number of films and books in all the languages of the country; the best literature in all the languages of the country must be maintained in the National Library. If a man wants to go to the Library in order to know about the literature, he will be able to get a certain amount of bibliographies; he

will be able to get the material of his own subject. In the library itself, he should be able to get the material which will enable him to know what is happening in Tamilnadu and Maharashtra; he should be able to get the material for that place for that purpose. Secondly, the library should contain all that kind of material in a language which the people should know so that they can get easy guidance on that score. If this National Library is having a treasure house of all the languages of the country in that place, then it must subscribe to the best part and they should have a liaison with other libraries in order to get these books to and fro. This is just as in each area all books of other areas must also be kept. This is a very important thing because people are now transferred from one region to another region. I was the Municipal Commissioner in Bombay City. We were running schools in 14 languages in Bombay City. We had to keep a library for each section of the people; we had to have a cultural centres for each section of the people; we had to evolve a proper library system, because, after all, mother tongue has been accepted as the best educator for all purposes. If this is so, then the people going to other areas and staying there for work should not feel lost that they are completely cut off in their own country from their own cultural heritage and so on. In that case, we have to maintain a section of periodicals in our reading rooms and in that section we have to maintain the latest list of books and bibliographies as well as their translated versions. If you say even that library as such is the only object of the Bill, then that library has got to be developed at that level where all these things must be maintained. Can that happen and how can that happen? In order to do that. I believe the objects should be so construed; the staff pattern will have to be so changed; the financial structure will have to be so cast; the liaison part and the coordination part with other areas will have to be so done.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRAVARTI: You have just now said that we must have a Library system build up from the village level upto the State level. I have got my doubts about this. My question is whether we can have five, six or ten National Libraries in a country in the true sense of the National Library? By a National Library, we understand that a Library where we have all the rare materials. Now, we cannot find seven copies of rare manuscripts and valuable things from the past history to be distributed among the six National Libraries. How do you think about this idea that the National Library should be the only one library where anybody would like to go and study whatever he wants to study? Apart from the National Library, it should remain under the control of the Government directly. Apart from that, we should have a system of central library or the zonal library. This zonal library will cater to the needs of the general public. But the National Library is usually meant not for the general public coming from schools and colleges and other areas, but it should be meant for the scholars who are doing research and specialisation on certain subjects. There should be only one library where all the material will be placed at one place. Do you think that we should have regional libraries whose action should be co-ordinated? As you have just now suggested that there should be something in the nature of a central university and this may be developed into a library system where it should co-ordinate the activities of each other and should have a Chief Librarian who will be transferred from one place to another place to which all the regional libraries will be co-ordinated. But if you support them in terms of five or six National Libraries set up in different parts of the country, then I do not know how it is going to serve the purpose in the true sense where highly qualified people conduct particular research and how copies of rare manuscripts can be distributed.

among the different National Libraries all over the country? It cannot be distributed. That will create a lot of difficulty. What is your opinion about that?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: I generally agree. After all there would have to be some levels of national library. It will be necessary to spread out facilities to some extent to other regions. Therefore, if you call them regional libraries they will have to be of the standard where you can get practically everything or call the same from other places. So, it is a system of libraries. If you have four or five central places from where library system receives its impulses then that will be a national library. Much smaller countries than ours have 10 to 15 libraries of the level of national library.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: Have you gone through Jha Committee report? At page 11 there is a suggestion regarding autonomous body for administration. Do you agree with this suggestion?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: Autonomy is a matter of different interpretations at different places. I am sorry to say when you make an independent trust for a library grid system very often the trustees do not come up to the level expected of them. When anything is made into an absolute autonomous thing it becomes static. In the library system you cannot have elections by which you will bring up a proper level of competence to come to the top in the library management. Quite often these things are managed by a man-made system in which really good persons do not come up to the top management. Therefore, autonomous institutional structure is a thing, which I do not know, whether it can be imposed from the top all of a sudden. Autonomy is a kind of top management which you are entrusting to some people whom you consider to be better in national importance but it is not always given

to us to predict what God has in store for those persons. Quite often we have got the experience that things have a tendency as soon as there is a final autonomous stature given to any body that system becomes static and non-progressive.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: You have suggested there should be four or five regional libraries. Is it feasible to have four or five national libraries?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: If it is a question of national library system then it has to be spread in three, four or five regional because there will be some homogeneity of interest and understanding. Travel is difficult for scholars who want to use the national library. There may be different atmosphere and he may not be able to get people to talk to. Therefore, it will be better if you have four or five central places from where the library system receives its impulses.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR: The proposal is that the National Library should be run by an autonomous Body and there is a very strong opinion against this proposal. My question is. Whether you accept in principle to run this academic institute by an autonomous body? If so, what are the principles on which this autonomous Body should be based? This is the first question. If we do not accept it in principle then the system of National Library will come under the direct control of the Government. So, do you consider that there should be better management than the management of the autonomous body? My second question is: Whether you consider the National Library at Calcutta should be the apex library in the system of library movement and in the system of regional and other libraries?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: Sir, the first question is about autonomous body. It can be answered by saying that the autonomy enjoyed by certain people or certain number of people under managed system is not the real autonomy. Therefore, you must

ensure that there must be checks and balance in the system of autonomy also so that you will be also to call for performance returns, you will be able to get certain Committees going into the accounting and maintenance of books and so on and also see that the concept of National Library should be of highly order. Whether it can be done only in one region, is it possible to conceive this in four different places in which the National Library grid is spread out, etc. should be considered. But if you have the system in one place—a crystalised system in one place and one autonomous body—then this will mean that we are running a great risk. Therefore, I believe that both from the point of view of utility and expansion and approach to the people for whom facilities should be made available the body should be spread into all the regions linking with one another for the purpose of sharing of knowhow and sharing of knowledge, sharing the experience, sharing books, sharing of systems of Libraries, etc. This is the concept I would suggest for of the National Library which should be in three or four places especially for a country like ours where different kinds of languages are spoken. That is my view. Hon. Member's second question was about the apex library. I think I have answered this question that it should be the best amongst equals and this question should be considered at some level but you will be the best judge I may recall that I said that it should be like a bank of bankers.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: I have got one pertinent question to ask. I think that very little has been done in respect of education and development of library movement in the country for the last 25 years. This is what you also said at the beginning. If you think like that, then do you feel that Government could take up development of library movement as you suggested at the beginning?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: Of course, the State has to take the lead in this

matter. In a poor country like ours, people cannot afford to buy books so that they may become knowledgeable persons in different fields. My second submission is that more funds should be allotted for this purpose.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: Do you expect that this Library movement should be a movement run and managed at the national level or at the regional, district and local levels?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: Sir, it will have to be a kind of co-operative management between the people's library movement and educational and cultural movements which should be sponsored by the State. It will have to be a co-operative kind of movement of all concerned. It may not be possible to take the big lead all of a sudden. It is because there is paucity of funds and all these things, the State should take care of them and the Centre should give a large amount of money to the State for this purpose.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: So far as the composition of the Board and the Executive Council is concerned the position is made clear in the proposed Bill. But I want to know from you one thing. What would you suggest in so far as the strength of the Executive Council is concerned? How many Members should represent the Executive Council?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: It should be big enough to give representation to all the regions because if it is National Library it should give representation to all shades of opinions. Moreover within those people who are so represented, there will have to be experts and experienced administrators and Government of India nominees and after the Board is constituted about 1/3 strength of the Board should be in the Executive Council. If there are 33 Members in the Board, 11 Members should constitute the Executive Council and if the whole Board meets about once a year, then this Council should meet at least once in 4 months.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: You have said about the autonomous body and other things. Do you suggest any changes in the composition of the Board? Because you have said about the autonomous body and its failures.

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: Failures may occur because there is no accountability.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: You say the autonomous body should be made accountable. I said that it would be accountable because the annual report will go to Parliament where it will be discussed.

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: To some extent, the report will help to make it accountable. Perhaps the audit will have to be provided at the central level. We have noticed that between audit and criticising body of this nature in Parliament and for actually getting the things done, it will have to be at the local level where it has got to be done. There is a great hiatus between Parliament and local levels.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: Would you suggest any other method of accountability?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: There will be few checks and balances if autonomy is to be granted fully. If you see as it is, the actual fact of the matter is that you are nominating a large number of people.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: Do you suggest that some members should be elected?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: There should be an element of election in a body of that nature if it has got to function from the grass-root. Let us come to the regional level and the National Library at Calcutta. At that level, we should take one or two persons from each region so that a certain amount of elected representatives of the people in the library movement should be there. You are saying that the library movement has to be developed by the people. If there are 200 regional and district libraries and 4000 village lib-

raries, then we have to see who has to tell them that you send your persons to the regional libraries and the latter send their persons to the National Libraries. You cannot but concede that? You can say that this is a national library system being catered to by the consensus of the people.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: Have you passed such an Act in Maharashtra and how much have you spent?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: We have an Act in Maharashtra, Tamilnadu and another State. We give Rs. 25 lakhs per annum for the central library and we have set aside a large amount of money for the library system. Our budget carries a large amount for the plan and non-plan items. Our main purpose is that whatever we spend should get better results. So, we are doing as far as possible and yet the system does not function as it should function.

SHRI SAROJ MUKHERJEE: You have mentioned three library systems. Do you think that these three types of library systems can be brought under one system of a National Library or any other kind of a library?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: It can be done indirectly. We have submitted that there may be an electoral college of the various types of institutions. But the National Library is the only library which caters to the scholars of the country. They have certainly to take care of the library system at the village level too. If there is any system of give and take from top to bottom, then it is a good thing. There should be a system where people can easily go and find their answers nearer to their homes and the system has to function as a whole; it cannot function as a statement at one place. It will have to be changed. It is possible to evolve a system of this nature. If Parliament can function, why cannot the National Library grid?

MR. CHAIRMAN: As far as possible, we should keep our eyes on the provisions of the Bill. I do not want

to prevent any Member from discussing the general aspects of the Bill. But, strictly speaking, it could be more relevant if we keep our eyes on the various provisions of the Bill.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: If we concentrate all our energy only on the National Library, then what is the purpose of our coming over here. In Calcutta, one basic question was raised and that was whether this National Library will confine itself to this Bill or whether it will go further?

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is a matter to be decided and discussed by the Committee itself.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: We can ask their suggestions. The scope of this Bill should be extended.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can put certain questions to the witness that this aspect should be put like that and so on.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Dr. Sheikh, as far as the objects which are mentioned in this Bill are concerned, whether their scope should be extended or not? What are your considered views on the scope of the Bill and whether that can be extended or not?

MR. CHAIRMAN: In his earlier statement he has stated that its scope should be extended and incorporated in the Bill. Maybe, he has stated that in the written statement.

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: Only one clarification. The Bill says: This is the Bill for National Library. We are talking of one and only one library under the Bill. There is no enabling clause to say that this Parliament may declare any other library to be national library on certain conditions being fulfilled. This enabling clause is not obtained here. The mis-understanding that will prevail is that something pre-conceived is being thought of here just in order to preserve some kind of heritage which is obtained at one place and not allowed to move from that place. My submission is you should call it a national library system bill and give it a scope enabling it to

establish other national libraries in the country and enabling them to work together.

SHRI SAROJ MUKHERJEE: I want to know your opinion whether it will function better if it is in the hands of the Government department or if it is in the hands of an autonomous body?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: I will have to be a judicious admixture of the two experiences of administration—State patronage and peoples' own effort and peoples' own representation. It has to be achieved. It is a difficult thing. My submission is 1/3 of the people should represent the library system; 1/3 may be of the Central Government and 1/3 may come from the autonomous body people. This should be integrated with the other three or four libraries which should be declared national libraries.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: The main need to bring this Bill has arisen because the National Library at Calcutta had not functioned properly and as Jha Committee says there is lot of confusion and lot of contradiction in the whole. Therefore, what should be the type of librarians to control these libraries. For example, for this Board it has been stipulated Chairman or Director. There was difference of opinion as to the qualifications of important functionary. There was line of opinion that this man should be an administrator with good experience but the people who came to us from the Library itself said that it should be a librarian first and scholar later. Now, what is your opinion? Should the preference be given to a person who has served as a librarian for a considerable time in the library profession or you prefer the other way round, that is, he may or may not be a librarian?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: There are views and views on the subject of technocrats versus general administrators. But here in this particular case perhaps giving unitary control to one individual for all the functions of national library—there are five or six func-

tions of the national library system which are envisaged in the proposition of this nature—that person should be both experienced in library science and good at administration, finance and controls. Should this be left to an individual or should we have a committee of four to five people with expertise? The Chairman of the library system will be a person as a man who is a coordinator with sufficient experience, knowledge and all that. But I submit all the others should not feel they are just nothing. My submission is you have a group of persons managing the library and if an experienced librarian happens to be in that system he can be promoted. But at the same time you will have to take into consideration the overall upkeep of Library. If the person is capable of doing things, then you will perhaps succeed.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Would you prefer that this organisation should be managed by one person or do you think that there should be some sort of rotation from time to time?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: No, Sir. Five years will be enough and later on if you do not want to remove him after this period of five years, then the person with five years' training and other experience will be helpful to the working of the Library system.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: You have suggested that the Board should have one Member from the State Government, one from the Central Government and one from the Libraries of autonomous body. Would you think that one Member from the Universities should also be included in this Board?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: I submit that there should be one Member for representing the Universities in the Board.

SHRI S. A. SHAMIM: The temptation of the witness is to suggest various changes in the Bill and the temptation of the Members is also to discuss this Bill elaborately. I would like to remind the Members that in any case we

are discussing the Bill but at the same I would like to remind the Members that we could not discuss it beyond the scope of the aims and objects of the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is for us to discuss. Let us not take up that question now then the witness is there.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: You have argued that there should be more control on the functioning of the National Library by Parliament. May I take it that your suggestion is that the Executive Council or the Managing Committee of the Library should be elected by the Members of Parliament?

DR. A. U. SHEIKH: Obviously I submit that the rules can be made laying down the procedures to be followed for all these bodies. These rules, under the Bill for the management of the Institutions, can be changed by the Government from time to time on the basis of the experience obtained. The rules under each Act or Bill can be made for functioning of this Body. It is not necessary that these rules should go to Parliament every time for approval even while there is a small change like a comma here or there. This kind of change can be done by the Government. But what I felt was that if you make it an autonomous body under an Act of Parliament, then the Court of Law will give so such protection to the people who will get stuck up in such autonomous body and they might act against the interests of the organisation and it would be very difficult to control them later on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have given us a lot of information on this subject. On behalf of myself and the Committee. I thank you very much for having taken the trouble of coming here to appear before the Committee and for furnishing useful data and valuable information. Thank you very much.

(The witness then withdrew)

II. Asiatic Society of Bombay, Town Hall Bombay

Spokesmen:

(i) Shri Ajit Kumar Banerjee.

(ii) Shri S. M. Joshi.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ajit Kumar Banerjee, I welcome you to this sitting of the Committee. I may make it clear to you that your evidence may be treated as public and is liable to be made public unless you specially desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. I may also add that even though you may desire the evidence to be treated as confidential, it is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. You are doubtless aware that whatever discussions we have here is treated as confidential and is not to be made public till the Report of this Committee is presented to Parliament.

I may further point out to you that if you want to say anything on this subject, you can state briefly and thereafter the Members may like to put the questions and you may answer them. While giving your ideas, you may also suggest what kind of management can be considered by us for incorporation in the proposed Bill.

SHRI AJIT KUMAR BANERJEE: Our submission is a very brief and simple one, which pertains to Clause 4. A representative of the Asiatic Society of Bombay, it is suggested shall also be appointed as a member of the National Library Board.

The Asiatic Society of Bombay is a learned Society functioning for the last 16 years in Western India. The Society is also conducting a big Library and reading room. The Library has about 5,58,000 books and files of old Journals at present. Our Library is also a recipient under the Delivery of Books and Newspapers (Public Libraries) Act, 1954, as amended in 1956,

like the National Library at Calcutta. We appreciate that there can be only one National Library for a Nation. However, we would like to suggest that in view of the standing, status, experience and the work which is being done by the Society in Western India and specially in a cosmopolitan Metropolis like Bombay, the Society may be associated with the management of the National Library which will be primarily effected through the National Library Board as envisaged under Chapter 2 of the draft Bill. Hence the suggestion. We feel that we have a case for representation on the Board and we feel that this could be done without effecting any change in the strength of the Board. That is the only suggestion that we want to make. As far as clause 18 is concerned, I think, what is really implied is that the Board will be entrusted with the control and direction of the management. The management itself will be by the Executive Council, and under the Executive Council, the Director of the library will function. That is all we have to say.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you receiving the books regularly?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR BANERJEE: We are receiving the books regularly and continuously.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Do you know that a similar demand is also made by the Asiatic Society of West Bengal, Society of India and some other learned bodies and therefore it would be difficult for the Govt. to accommodate all these interests? How do you think about this?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR BANERJEE: We certainly appreciate the difficulties. But we feel that the Library of the Asiatic Society here stands on

a special footing. It is almost comparable to the National Library. Therefore, it has a special position in this respect.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Would you like to enlarge the Board so that other similar bodies would be represented on the Board just as your Society would be represented on the Board? I think your society is also having a tradition of its own. In order to accommodate these bodies, we have to enlarge the scope of the Board. Do you have any objection?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR BANERJEE: If other libraries are also qualified to be represented on the Board, we should certainly have no objection.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: As you claim to have a special tradition of your own in this respect, have you considered the pattern of a National Library Management in other countries?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR BANERJEE: One of our members has got some experience of other libraries as well as the National Library in the United States of America. I think we have a member who has got special experience of the application of a National Library Science not only in this country but in other countries also.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: There were two seminars which were held at Paris and Manila respectively. One librarian from the National Library, Calcutta, participated in the seminar which was held at Manila and they had produced certain reports. Have you got any comments to offer on this?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR BANERJEE: I have not seen them and therefore I would not be able to offer any comments. I am sorry.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: You have just now said that you have got no objection if other bodies are to be represented on the Board.

SHRI AJIT KUMAR BANERJEE: If there are other institutions of a comparable nature and they are qualified to be represented on the Board, we would certainly have no objection; they could also be taken on the Board. If the Board has to be enlarged, then that is a decision that we have to take. We have to have a small and compact Board and it has to have a limit of its own. A line has to be drawn some where and each case has to be treated on its merit.

SHRI N. G. GORAY: I presume that yours is an autonomous body. If that is so, would you not subscribe to the view that your body is also incorporated in this Bill? So far as the National Library is concerned, it should also be an autonomous body and should not be a part and parcel of the Government body.

SHRI AJIT KUMAR BANERJEE: I would say that we should have the maximum possible autonomy which would lead to before sufficiency of management as well as administration in the long run. That is my view and experience.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: I want to know for the sake of information how many books you have got in your library and how much staff you have employed in your library?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR BANERJEE: The total number of books is nearly 6 lakhs and the total staff employed is about 70 people.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: How many people come to your library daily for reading purposes?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR BANERJEE: About 250 people daily.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: Regarding the question of Mr. Parashar may I think that the members on the Board may be nominated by rotation? Will you agree to that?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR BANERJEE: Yes, Sir. That could be done. I would not object to that.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: As a matter of fact, the main purpose of the Bill and the controversy which has arisen is whether this National Library should be given the autonomous status taking into consideration the comments of the Central Education Ministry or it should run under the Ministry as it was being done for the last so many years? Complaint has been received that its service has been declining for the last few years. Even for a small thing, they have to go to the Ministry and the Chief Librarian says that it is difficult to work like this. Secondly, if you make it an autonomous body like the universities, then it is not going to improve the situation. On the contrary, it will further deteriorate the situation. What is your concrete opinion about it? Do you think by making it an autonomous body is it going to function better than if it remains under the direct control of the Ministry of Education which is an advisory body with different numbers throughout the country?

III. Shri S. K. Havanur, Librarian, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bombay:

MR. CHAIRMAN: I may point out to you that your evidence may be treated as public and is liable to be made public unless you specially desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. I may also add that even though you may desire the evidence to be treated as confidential, it is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. You are doubtless aware that whatever discussions we have here is treated as confidential and is not to be made public till the Report of this Committee is presented to Parliament.

Mr. Havanur would like you to say something apart from what you have said in your memorandum?

SHRI S. K. HAVANUR: Yes please, I began with *Clause 4*: This clause is about the composition of the Board.

SHRI AJIT KUMAR BANERJEE: I am not aware of this controversy. My own feeling is that it is desirable to have the maximum possible autonomy whatever system is adopted. It depends on the kind of people who are chosen to run the management. But, I think, the maximum amount of autonomy is essential.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: In that case just like universities are giving maximum autonomy or IITs they are responsible to Parliament. This will also be an autonomous body and responsible to Parliament and will not function as a wing of the Ministry. Out of the two which would you prefer?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR BANERJEE: Overall policy may be laid down but in day-to-day running, I think, it should be autonomous.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, very much, Mr. Banerjee.

(The witness then withdrew)

I strongly feel that this Board should be broad-based. The Library fraternity should be specifically represented here. I would also say that the science community may nominate one member so that we would be giving due importance to scientific affairs in this field. Of course, there is provision in *Clause IV (c)* that Central Government is to nominate one person having experience in science and technology. I feel that CSIR or any other science organisation should also be given a chance to nominate some one.

Further Indian Library Association or the 'Indian Association for Special Libraries and Information Centre' should nominate some one for this purpose. Perhaps it would be better if there are about 15 Members on the Board instead of 10 as stated here in this clause.

Clause 5 refers to the appointment of the Chairman of the Board. It states

as: The Central Government shall appoint a member from among the members of the Board referred to in clause (a), (b), (c) and (d) of subsection (1) of section 4 as Chairman of the Board."

Now with regard to (a) and (b), these refer to Central body, it would be better if some one other than the Government official is appointed as the Chairman of the Board.

Clause 9 of the Bill. It refer to the Meetings of Board: "The Board shall meet at such times and places etc." This Board, as an Executive Body, should meet more often. I suggest that there should be some mention as to how many times the Board should meet.

Clause 10(1) refers to the Executive Council. In the case of the Executive Council, there is no mention as to who should be the Secretary of this Council. The term of office has also not been stated, whereas in the case of the Board it is mentioned that the Members will serve on the Board for three years or so.

Clause 10(2) states: "Provided that a representative each from the Ministry of the Central Government dealing with finance and the Ministry or Department of the Central Government dealing with culture shall be members of the Executive Council" I would say that it is not necessary because already two Government officials are represented in the Board and I do not find any reason why there should again be a representative each from the Ministry of the Central Government dealing with finance etc. in the Executive Council, as well.

The functions of the Executive Council are not specifically stated although it is stated here that the Board can direct the Executive Council as to what to do and what not to do. It is not very clear from this Bill as to the difference between the functions of the Board and those of the Executive Council. But more important suggestion I would like to make, is that

there is really no need for an Executive Council. The Board itself has all the executive powers and it is a small body consisting of only 10 or 12 Members. On the other hand it would be much better to have an Advisory Council rather than Executive Council. The Advisory Council should mostly consist of Librarians. This is absolutely necessary and I would like to emphasise this point. Another reason is that the National Library cannot have all the material at its command from the various sources in the country. Our country is quite large but the resources are very limited. Therefore it is essential to seek co-operation of the various libraries in the country. If an Advisory Council is there, it will help quite a lot.

Then I come to Clause 16 of the Bill. It states thus: "The Library shall continue to be located at Calcutta." It is quite O. K. for me but then I suggest that there should be provision in the Act for the establishment of three or four regional centres. Since our country is vast, we cannot expect any one Library to serve the entire country with the limited resources. If there are three or four regional centres in places like Bombay, Delhi, Madras.

Then I come to Clause 18—Duties of the Board. In the Bill, I notice that there is no mention anywhere about the aims and objects of the National Library. I know it is not that essential to state. But in order to give an idea of the functions of the National Library they need to be mentioned, especially in this clause. It is worthwhile if the duties of the Board are mentioned in this Bill.

As I can see there are three dimensions to the National Library—one is the collection, the other is dissemination and the third is co-ordination. As for co-ordination, certain libraries which have already developed a very good collection in their respective subjects, should be treated as National Centres and the main National Library should encourage them to develop further. I may quote for example the

Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. This Institute has got a very good library on Management and it can be treated as a National Centre. Take for example Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Bombay. It has a very good collections on nuclear science and atomic energy. Certainly it should be treated as a National Centre. We have got similar libraries in respect of agriculture, medicine, etc. For these, there should be provision for their growth, in the Bill. As I said in the beginning, we have also to recognise certain regional libraries which have good collections on various subjects as branches of the National Library.

As for clause 25 at page 8 of the Bill, I have submitted that this would be nullifying the very concept of an autonomous body as far as the National Library is concerned. This should be deleted. If the Govt. interference is there, then it is not possible to have autonomy. I do not want to stress more about this, but, it is a well known fact that if there is any interference from the Government side autonomy is meaningless. There would be red tapism and the things will be delayed. The National Library is a very important institution, but all these years it is just a name's sake. The collection is also not comprehensive and it does not truly reflect the entire reading resources of the country. Dissemination is also absolutely nil. There is no inter-library co-operation; there is no international exchange system. All these things are required in order to run it successfully. This is the place wherein we can bring out those things in the Act itself so that in future there would be more and more co-operation and coordination.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: The main purpose of this Bill is to make the National Library an autonomous body. Do you think if it is converted into an autonomous body it will function in a better manner than it has been running for the last 40—50 years under the direct control of the Ministry of Edu-

cation? Do you also realise that so long as it is attached to the Ministry for its development and other functions, whatever the financial responsibilities are there, those are to be borne by the Government? But once you make it an autonomous body like our universities in this country, then what happens is that you will start getting *ad hoc* grants and these grants are mostly limited. For example, they can fix a grant of Rs. 40 lakhs for a few years with the result that you may find that the growth of the National Library has stopped completely just as the growth of many universities in the country stops because of the financial difficulties? Under these circumstances, do you allow the National Library to become an autonomous body and its development is also stopped or it should better be linked with the Ministry and work under it as is being done now?

SHRI S. K. HAVANUR: For the last 25 years since independence perhaps the National Library has been functioning as a subsidiary office of the Ministry of Education and it has not made any progress. There are so many autonomous bodies which are functioning very well because they are autonomous. In this respect, I may mention the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research which is an autonomous body, but 96 per cent of its revenue comes from the Central Government. You know the fame that it has achieved.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: A section of our people have got the feeling that by making it an autonomous body the situation is not going to improve. It is also due to the fact that the proper person is not handling that institution for a long time.

SHRI S. K. HAVANUR: But there was a 'proper' person in the name of Shri Kesavan who did make some progress so far as the initial work is concerned. As I said earlier, we are far away from the concept of a National Library. We have yet to achieve that. Even Shri Kesavan

could not do much because it was not an autonomous body.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: What is your opinion about the Bose Institute?

SHRI S. K. HAVANUR: I do not know much about it.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: What about the other Institutes?

SHRI S. K. HAVANUR: While I was in Calcutta, I visited that Institute. But it was a brief visit. Since I do not know the functioning of that body, I would not be able to say about its merits or demerits.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: Are you aware of its functioning?

SHRI S. K. HAVANUR: No, Sir.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: Do you suggest that there should be only one library and it should be financed by local resources? Do you think that gradually it also creates a situation in which the National Library at Calcutta is also financed, if not entirely, but partly by open resources?

SHRI S. K. HAVANUR: I entirely agree with you. Some of the States in the country have enacted the law relating to the libraries. There are other States which have not done yet. But when most of the States have this legislation, they have to shell down part of their library cess.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: The Tata Institute of Fundamental Research is being run as an autonomous body. The efficiency is very high over there. Is it not a fact that the scope of this Library is very limited to the extent that only the research students, teachers and others who are working in the Institute only they utilize this Library?

SHRI S. K. HAVANUR: We have research workers who are internationally known scientists and also who are just his B.Sc.s.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: As in the case of Calcutta University Library

or any other university library they are autonomous institutions because their scope of function is limited to certain atmosphere. The scope of the National Library is very large and the number of beneficiaries is much wider. In view of this wider scope do you think that if it is made autonomous body don't you feel there will be certain difficulty in giving shape to autonomous body?

SHRI S. K. HAVANUR: I beg to differ. In this country there are certain autonomous bodies in various fields. You are saying national library has to work on a larger canvas where autonomy may not help very much. Theoretically speaking irrespective of the fact that the complex is very big autonomy should not come in the way and conversely we need not say if it is in the hands of the government, it would function better.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: It is only in name 'National Library'. Can you spell out a complex which can be made really national library?

SHRI S. K. HAVANUR: This is, of course, a matter of detail. As I say, there must be regional centres. It is only at regional centres that it can function efficiently. Secondly at a Central place like Calcutta there should be a bibliographical record as to where a particular material is available. Then it should have the powers enough to have access to that material, for the benefit of the individual requestor.

Also, the national library should have micro-filming and other facilities. As regards reading facilities, naturally if the regional centres are there it would be easier. Then INB at present is not being brought out as regularly as BNB its counterpart in U.K. does. Then again there are foreign countries which require material from India on India. The National Library should be able to cater to these requirements.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Don't you think there should be some kind of

hostel facilities available to the scholars and others at a cheaper cost?

SHRI S. K. HAVANUR: It is certainly desirable to have hostel accommodation at a nominal rent and it should be given.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Mr. Havanur you have clearly outlined the three objectives of national library. Of the three, so far as the location of the library is concerned that is most crucial. Now, this Bill in its Chapter I clause 2 and sub-clause (d) defined that the library should be at Calcutta. My plea is why should it not be at Raipur so that we can develop an entirely spacious campus, hostel facilities, etc. Secondly, the regional centres which will be four to five for that too one point was raised by Mr. Chakrabarti. There may be certain manuscripts of which we cannot find two copies. Only one copy may be available. That can only be at the Central headquarters of the national library and

not at the regional centres. So, for that matter would you suggest it should be amended and the national library should be at a place which is central?

SHRI S. K. HAVANUR: I would say for the simple reason that the national library as such is already there at Calcutta and should continue. The second point is we need not attach much importance to the geographical situation in this country, we can move from one place to another much easily. Thirdly, we are already thinking of establishing regional centres there in different parts of the country wherein we can store microfilmed copies of rare material.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you got any other point to make?

SHRI S. K. HAVANUR: No, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for your valuable suggestion.

(The witness then withdrew)

**IV. Dr. M. B. Buch, Head, Centre of Advanced Study in Education,
Lokmanya Tilak Road, Baroda**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we proceed further, I would like to inform you that your evidence may be treated as public and is liable to be made public unless you specially desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. I may also add that even though you may desire the evidence to be treated as confidential it is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. You are doubtless aware that whatever discussions we have here is treated as confidential and is not to be made public till the Report of the Committee is presented to Parliament.

I think you have sent your Memorandum to this Committee which has been circulated to the Members of the Committee. If you desire to say

something other than those suggested in your Memorandum, you may briefly state them.

DR. M. B. BUCH: Mr. Chairman, I may be permitted to refer to Clause 4 of the Bill regarding the Composition of the Board. As it has been visualised in this Bill the Board shall have 10 Members and there will also be an Executive Committee. Now, the Executive Committee will have some Members who are the Members of the Board and some Members who are not the Members of the Board. If the Executive Committee has to implement the decisions of the Board, there is a likelihood of some clashes between the Executive Committee and the Board. My suggestion here is this. Here is a Board which is highly technical in nature and this Board is going to manage and develop the National Library. I visualise that

instead of having only 10 Members, the base of the Board might be a bit broader, it might consist of 14 or 15 Members with representations given to persons who have worked in the area of Library Science for a long period. Here we have got 4 educationists, that is all right. But inclusion of mere educationists will not be helpful. We should have more tactful persons who have actually developed Libraries in some parts of our country. We have got one nominee of the Chairman of the UGC. I would suggest rather having a nominee of the Chairman we have the Chairman of the UGC. This is No. 1. No. 2 is about the representation from the branch of Science and Technology. Now, I visualise that the National Library will have highly efficient documentation Centre which will be located in Calcutta. For reference purposes people cannot go to Calcutta where the Library is located. There is a mention here that there will be micro-filming, documentation service and other things. Now, if you want to have a good documentation service which will provide service to all people interested in the country, then I visualise that not merely a man of Science and Technology qualification but the man who is expert in Library system should be there because science and technology subjects are so specialised that a person having knowledge of these subjects will be in a position to provide the type of data and other information to people in the country. So, the first suggestion is that the composition of the Board can be broad based consisting of about 14 or 15 persons with technical qualifications.

My second suggestion is that the Executive Committee should consist of Members of the Board only and not the outsiders.

My third suggestion is that since the Government is going to have its own nominees on the Board, I strongly feel that the Government

organisation like the National Library ought to be under the close vigilance of the Government. Of course we are going to put experts in various fields as well as educationists and other. But I do not understand why the Government should appoint the Director when the Board Chairman is being appointed by the Government? The Government will be having its own nominees and Government bodies like UGC etc. Then let the Board be given the freedom to select or appoint its own Director. The Director should be appointed by the Board rather than by the Government. Then what will happen is that the Executive Committee can be held responsible for implementing the decisions which the Board might take because they will be involved in the process of decision making.

My next suggestion is about the functions of the Library. I am visualising here that the Institution is not merely going to maintain or manage the affairs of the National Library and we have rightly put here "for providing reference and research facilities". Now we are talking of research in Library system and Library science. Then the question will arise, if not now but later on, that this branch of the National Library shall have to be affiliated with one or the other University. So, it should give its own Degree because there is going to be research scholars who will definitely go to the National Library for studies in Library Science. Then they shall have some arrangements with the University of Calcutta or some other university. But it is this Library which will have to add one more function. In our country large institutions are coming up in all areas. For instance, here in Bombay we have the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research and Training. There is no agency that is actually building up a good Library. Even after 12 years of its existence, the NCERT is still struggling for establishing a library of its own.

Then I visualise that this Board will be providing extension service by way of giving advice to various national level institutions to build up the Libraries. This function should be added in the proposed Bill. Somewhere it should be provided in its functions or scope because the people will not be able to go to Calcutta for reference purposes. With all our good intentions, it will not be possible for us to provide micro-card or micro-film to all. At page 8, it is something highly academic in nature; it is a service organisation and I entirely agree as far as its composition is concerned. Let the people be nominated by the Government or Government body. After this "I feel this composition of the Central Government on the question of policy shall be final." That might be deleted. Here is a library and the persons are more interested in developing it. When we have appointed persons who are technically more qualified in library science and are doing good work, we must put full faith on them, on the development of this library. You kindly see page 9, paragraph 30 and line 18. My feeling is that we should not compel the Board that the regulation should be there only with the previous approval of the Government. We should actually give full responsibility for taking a decision and running the organisation. These are the only things that we have to say.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: That shows in name the autonomy has been given to this National Library, but in reality and in action almost the whole control of running of these institutions has been vested in the hands of the central bureaucracy.

DR. M. B. BUCH: I would say of late that wherever there are auto-

V. Shri T. D. Waknis, Ex-curator & Librarian, Maharashtra, Bombay

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. T. D. Waknis, before we proceed further, I would like to inform you that the evidence

nomous bodies it is this fear that is coming up that perhaps that body may not be running properly and here is a key national organisation the only of its kind in the country. If the Government is trying to exercise more and more control, it is very clear and I said that I did not mind so long as the persons who were appointed are the persons who are technically qualified. It is the Government who will identify these persons throughout the country and put them there. Instead of four educationists, let there be eight educationists. The fear only is this that many a time these autonomous bodies are being supported by various Ministries and these autonomous bodies are actually being used in order to accommodate some persons who are being transferred from one Ministry to another. This has happened and as a result of this some of the institutions have not been developed. I am pained to see that the National Council of Education, Research and Training could not be developed for about 12 years because it was not given the full autonomy. You are right when you say, "let us accept two things." The first thing is regarding the control of the Government on a body like this. This control will be exercised not by Government officers, but by the people who are good in library science, who have devoted their life work. Government have identified them and put them on the Board. From that point of view, there is nothing wrong over there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for your valuable suggestions.

(The witness then withdrew)

you give would be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you

is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. I would now request you to just express your views and thereafter the Members might put certain questions to you and you should try to be as brief as possible. While expressing your views, you should try to tell the Committee as to how those views can be incorporated in the body of the Bill because that would help the Committee.

SHRI T. D. WAKNIS: The Board is to consist of ten members, three of them being there by virtue of their office, six will be nominated by the Government and one will be nominated by the University Grants Commission. Government will nominate one University representative, another who has knowledge and experience in Science and technology and four others who may be either distinguished educationists or knowledgeable and experienced Librarians. My remarks on this are as follows: One can readily understand the *ex-officio* appointment of the Director of Library as member Secretary. But the *ex-officio* appointments of Secretaries of the Government in Ministries of Education and Finance seem to be unimaginative. If the Government is really anxious to devolve on the Board the responsibilities of Library administration why should it seek to embroil their Secretaries in Library affairs. They have abundant work on hand and they are at their back and call when Government intend to issue directives to the Board. Similarly no useful purpose can be served by making the U.G.C. nominate one member who can be double of the distinguished educationists or University representative whom Government will be definitely nominating. Government should content itself with four nominees each one institution which deserves representation it is the Indian Library Association.

If may be called upon to suggest a panel of four Librarians out of whom Government may appoint two. Together with the Director they will present the views of those who work inside the Library counter, as against the views of users and patrons of library who stand outside the counter.

In clause 9 the number of times the Board will meet during the course of a year is not specified. As in Company Law the number should be mentioned in the Act itself. There should be at least four meetings of the Board one for each quarter. At these meetings the Director should lay before the Board the report of the work done in the previous quarter and the programme for the ensuing quarter. This would enable the Board to give timely advice and guidance.

The place of the meeting should invariable to the Board Room in the National Library. The members of the Board have an opportunity of seeing the work done and the library staff have an opportunity of meeting the Board members. The occasion of the Board meeting should be availed of, to forge ties of friendship between the management and the workers.

The Board is empowered in clause 10, to constitute an Executive Council with the Director of Libraries as its chairman, to exercise such powers as the Board may choose to delegate to it.

The composition of the executive council is not satisfactory. It is to consist of some members of the Board, some outsiders and two representatives of the Government ministries of Education and Finance. It will make a motley group. It may embarrass the Director to issue orders of administration. Why should not the executive function be left entirely to the Director and the officers and men whom the Board will employ to perform its functions, as contemplated in clause 10?

In clause 12 Government have stated in ambivalent terms that they will appoint as the Director a person in possession of academic qualifications of distinction or a distinguished librarian. This is in line with the Government's habitual ways of thinking that an academic or administrator is a hero at all points even in these days of pinpointed specialism. The Director cannot do without professional qualifications. He cannot administer the library without them in such a way that the National Library becomes a model to all other libraries in the country. He should be in possession of triple qualifications, academic, professional and managerial. The establishment of rapport not only with the staff but the wider circle of library's patrons must be the Director's goal. He should possess attributes which make him 'world loving and by the world loved'. The library profession will enter a caveat against the appointment of a non professional.

In clause 17, it is categorically stated that the library shall continue to be located at Calcutta. There has been a hue and cry against this location ever since the founding of the library. The protest is based on practical reasons. The Government are the largest users of the Library's foreign resources acquired at considerable cost. The distinctive mark of modern library is its dissemination of information. Through their embassies Government have access to information which the ambassadors glean by reading between the lines of printed material. But their scientific storage and speedy retrieval is accomplished by the sophisticated techniques of librarianship. The Government should not have separation from it by a distance of over thousand miles. Practically all over the world the National libraries are housed at the seats of Governments. Calcutta is not the capital of India since 1911. The fact

that it could make available palatial accommodation for the library in the Belvedere should not have made the Government bite the bait. It reminds one of the story of a scotchman who committed suicide in order to avail himself of the offer of a fine free buried by the undertaker.

While on the subject of the location of the Library it is useful to recall that the National Library is not the only the herefiary of the Delivery of Books Act 1954 amended in 1956. There are two shadow collections hestovs the same loving care on these shadow collections as it does on the Calcutta collection people in the south will have to make long and expensive journeys to Calcutta. If the National Library was to be in Delhi their toil trouble and expense would at least be halved. Calcutta will then nourish a shodow collection as Bombay and Madras do presently. Who knows Government may be moved to deal even handed justice and generosity to Bombay, Madras and Calcutta without discommunication?

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: The main question in this Bill is a controversy between the autonomous body and the institution run under the direct control of the Government. As in the first part, that is, constitution of the Board you stated though this Bill is meant for making the national library an autonomous body but in practice it is holding its complete control of nomination system and this nomination has every chance to be misused. I feel the national library should be one in any country because its purpose is entirely different but parallel to the national library there should be some regional libraries which should be taken care of by the Government. Do you feel by making it an autonomous body it is going to improve the working condition of the national libraries as is envisaged?

in the Bill or by keeping it under the direct control of the Ministry and give it more freedom to work? Which way will it function properly?

SHRI T. D. WAKNIS: The first question is about the location of the Library. It has been there in Calcutta for so long. It has been there since 1948 when the Library was established. Prior to that date the Library was intended to be used by the Government officials for the purposes of reference and information. Later on when the capital was shifted to Delhi, this old Library was being used as a public Library. Even now the so called National Library in Calcutta is being used as a public Library also. This kind of misuse should be stopped. The public Library function of this Library in Calcutta has to be entrusted to some other body.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: You are correct.

SHRI T. D. WAKNIS: I have stated that it should be shifted to the seat of the Government for the simple reason that it is going to be of great use to the Government. After all, the National Library does not comprise only the publications that are brought out in India itself. Apart from the publications that will be used and stored and preserved for study in the National Library, the National Library now serves the purpose of disseminating the latest information on all subjects to various people and the groups. The users of this Library at Calcutta will naturally be the Government Departments especially the foreign materials that come to the Library at concessional price and sometimes by exchange, while the speedy exchange of the information that is wanted cannot be done except through the sophisticated means of various systems and of increasing the strength of the Librarians for advice. Now, if the Government want any information, either they have to telephone or travel about thousand miles

or so. Even for getting actual material they will be put to a lot of difficulty. All the world over, there is no national library of a country which is situated in a place other than its own capital. That is why I have said that it is for the betterment or for the improvement of the services to the various people especially to the Government Departments that the location should be shifted.

As I have already mentioned, in a vast country like India it is not necessary to have one National Library for the preservation of the publications. It is necessary that we should have two or three shadow collections where materials will be received. I think Government have already made provision under the Delivery of Books Act of 1954 that people living in Calcutta could have access to the Indian publications as those living in Bombay and Madras are doing. Unfortunately, what has happened in Bombay and Madras is that the Government have not been so generous and liberal as they could have been. If they really want that the materials that have been entrusted to the care of the old Libraries in Bombay and Madras, then the people of regions will benefit. I have got experience from a Bombay Library where materials were found to have been dumped without any indexing or cataloguing or any possibility of their being made available or accessible to the reader. Well, as I said these three regional centres could be chosen for shadow collections in so far as the preservation of Indian publications are concerned. If the Government take it on themselves to treat them without discrimination I would say that these three centres would come up and the people of the country will be greatly benefited.

The shadow collections are also necessary for another reason. We can also think of dangers due to natural calamities. If the National Library is located in one place, it is likely to

be destroyed. If the material is scattered in different places, then it is quite possible that even if in one place it is lost, it could be made good from another place.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Apart from the question of the location of the Library I want to ask one thing. Is it not a fact that research workers, scholars, professors and academicians are the real users of the Library?

SHRI T. D. WAKNIS: Yes, Sir.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Is it not a fact that if it is only meant for the Government officials for reference and other purposes, then they can go to the Research and Reference Library located in Delhi? Apart from the Library in Parliament House, there is a Research & Reference Library of the Central Government.

SHRI T. D. WAKNIS: My submission is that the Central R & R Library in Delhi may not have the best means of retrieval. Well I have no personal knowledge of this but I know for certain that the equipment with the

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: That is a different thing but your argument was

based on the fact that the Library is necessary for the Government people.

SHRI T. D. WAKNIS: My humble suggestion would be like this that although Government are the greatest users of the foreign material that has been collected it is the indigenous material that is of greater use to scholars in the country and research workers belonging to various fields. I am sure the Government officials would really depend upon the National Library. I was submitting, Sir, when the scholars and the Research workers work in a Library they work on the materials that concern our national heritage and they go deep into this subject for the reason that they would like to have the roots of the problems that they may be facing. Apart from that it is only the Government who are making the greatest use of the foreign materials?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you Mr. Waknis for your valuable information.

(The witness then withdrew)

VI. Shrimati Hansaben Mehta, Advocate, Bombay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hansa Mehta, thank you very much for your coming over here. Before we proceed, I would like to inform you that the evidence you give would be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. Since you have not submitted your memorandum to the Committee, I request you to express your ideas in brief for the benefit of the Members of this Committee and thereafter the Members might like to put certain questions. While expressing your ideas if you tell us

how those ideas can be incorporated in the body of the Bill that would be helpful to us.

SHRIMATI HANSABEN MEHTA: In Chapter 2 regarding the establishment and incorporation of the Board, generally it is the head of the department or the head of the body which should be involved and not the Board itself. So, it should be the Chairman who may be sued and be sued. My another suggestion regarding the same chapter is that the Chairman should be elected by the members of the Board. The Board should be made autonomous and therefore it should not be approved by the Govt. after it has nominated the first Board. Then re-

garding the qualified persons, there is no mention that these persons should be qualified especially in the administration of the library. There is another suggestion at page a regarding renomination of the member. Suppose one member is nominated. Unless and until there is a difference of opinion, every time he will be renominated and the result will be that there will be no new ideas. So, there should be some provision that he should be renominated only once and the next time the other people should come in.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: She is suggesting two terms.

SHRIMATI HANSABEN MEHTA: page 4, first paragraph, clause 2. In this respect, suppose a member has some interest in the contract. If the disclosure is not complete, he should resign or he should be asked to resign. Once the interest is there in a particular case, the interest may continue in future. As far as clause 3 regarding proxy is concerned, this will be useless. This authority should not be given. If a member cannot come in the meeting, the committee can go ahead. As far as clause 10 is concerned, not more than 15 members should be appointed. Otherwise, there will be a crowd. So, the number should be specified. At page 5, the location of the library is given in Calcutta. In my opinion, in Calcutta Library, people of the entire Nation will not be able to take advantage. So, there should be some branches in the big cities or another library similar to this should be opened so that the maximum number of people can take advantage of this. If one library is destroyed, another library is there. The Board should be given the power for opening the branches. At page 6, clause 18(1), line 8 the following words are to be added after ... 'Board ... "according to sub-section 2 given below." Then in 19(1) line 17, after "Govt. may think fit to impose" the

following words should be added: "subject to the provisions of the Act." Then kindly see Chapter 4, 21(3) "a sum of money... as may be provided by regulation made." This may be kept because the saving a/c may also give more interest. There is not the business body which requires operation of current a/s. Whatever the Board might feel, they can open their a/c. Then at page 8, Chapter 5, clause (c) section 29(2) regarding qualifications for a person to be nominated as a Member of the Board and the procedure to be followed in removing him. As far as disqualification is concerned, it is not mentioned here specifically.

Anybody can be disqualified for any reasons. It should fit in with the disqualification mentioned in the Act. There should be specific mention.

Further no provision is made for the dissolution of the Board. There should be some provision. After the dissolution of the Board all the property should be reverted to the Central Government.

With all this thing, it is my opinion, maximum interference of the Government is there in the Act. If Government is having maximum interference there is no need for having autonomous body at all. Minimum interference of Government should be there.

Further a Director should be appointed by the Board and not by the Government because a Director has to work with the Board and not with the Government.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: As the interest of a particular Member is only as regards a particular contract and once he divulges his interest it is enough. Why should he resign?

SMT. HANSABEN MEHTA: If he makes disclosure and if he is present

automatically other Members will be influenced because of the relations of the colleague to give voting in his favour. That is why he should resign and independent views will be

taken.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much Smt. Mehta

(The Committee then adjourned)

RECORD OF EVIDENCE TENDERED BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON
THE NATIONAL LIBRARY BILL, 1972.

Thursday, the 27th September, 1973 in Committee Room 6th Floor, Sachivalaya,
Bombay from 14.30 to 17.15 hours.

PRESENT

Shri Amarnath Vidyalankar—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Acha! Singh
3. Shri Dharamrao Sharanappa Afzalpurkar
4. Shri Virendra Agarwal
5. Shri Shrikrishna Agarwal
6. Shri Pannalal Barupal
7. Shri S. C. Besra
8. Shri Samar Guha
9. Shri E. R. Krishnan
10. Shri Y. S. Mahajan
11. Shri Saroj Mukherjee
12. Shri Sakti Kumar Sarkar
13. Shri Narain Chand Parashar
14. Shri S. A. Shamim
15. Shri Rajaram Shastri
16. Shri K. P. Unnikrishnan
17. Shri D. P. Yadav

Rajya Sabha

18. Smt. Sushila Shankar Adivarekar
19. Dr. Rajat Kumar Chakrabarti
20. Smt. Maragatham Chandrasekhar
21. Shri Mahabir Dass
22. Shri Rattan Lal Jain
23. Prof. Rasheeduddin Khan
24. Shri Patil Puttappa
25. Shri Sanat Kumar Raha

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE
(DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE)

1. Shri K. K. Baksi—*Deputy Secretary.*
2. Shri A. S. Talwar—*Under Secretary.*
3. Shri M. N. Nagaraj—*Deputy Librarian, National Library, Calcutta.*

SECRETARIAT

Shri H. G. Paranjpe—Deputy Secretary.

WITNESSES EXAMINED

- I. Dr. P. K. Kelkar, Director, I.I.T. Bombay.
- II. Air Vice-Marshall M. B. Naik, Commandant, National Defence Academy, Poona.
- III. Shri K. D. Puranik, Director of Libraries, Government of Maharashtra, Bombay.
- IV. Shri V. V. Bhat, Maharashtra State Library Association, Bombay.
- V. Prof. (Miss) A. Dastur, Department of Civics and Politics, University of Bombay, Bombay.

I. Dr. P. K. Kelkar, Director, I.I.T., Bombay

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kelkar, I welcome you to this sitting of the Committee. I may make it clear to you that your evidence may be treated as public and is liable to be made public unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. I may also add that even to be treated as confidential, it is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. You are doubtless aware that whatever discussions we have here is treated as confidential and is not to be made public till the Report of this Committee is presented to Parliament.

I think you have sent your Memo on the subject and if you want to say further on the subject, you can state it very briefly. Thereafter the Members may like to put questions to you.

DR. P. K. KELKAR: Sir, my views are in two parts. One is with regard to the act itself and my feeling is that the autonomy that is proposed in the Bill is not really adequate. With regard to the financial matters, it seems to be that the procedures that are followed should be in the form of block grant which is made by the Finance Committee or some body like

that and not subject to further scrutiny by the Government because our general experience has been whenever on Board there are representatives of the two Ministries, they may agree to certain items at the time of the meeting but when they go back to their respective Ministries they may follow different approach. I think this is something which may cause a lot of difficulties for the organisation. That was one of the points I have made in my Memorandum. Another point was similar one which I made. That was about the quorum arrangement. But there is no specific arrangement made for adjournment meetings. Of course, these are minor points but they are important ones. Apart from this, I had made certain general observations. My own feeling is that the role of a National Library is quite different from what it used to be. We are accustomed to British Museum and like that. I think we have made a demarcation line between the National Library and other libraries. Now, the purpose of the library, professionally, may mean the very use where only scholars are able to take advantage of the publications that have been made available here. But I think the present concept of the society is quite different and I do not think the library facilities are what really amount to information processing techniques.

One of the basic difficulties with modern libraries is to get rid of the material which is not really relevant. Now in countries like the USA and the UK where you have one particular library in Washington or the British Museum in London and so on in which there are a large quantity of collections. But in this country we do not have library facilities like these in foreign countries and therefore I suggested that this Bill should make provision for associate National Libraries and they should start from 1940 and onwards with modern things and in regard to three language formula it is to my way of thinking, is an extremely important point. The library service should be for retrieval of information and the amount of extracting the bibliography which has been made by modern intelligent scientists and so on should be available to people and mimeography and other like facilities are available in abundance. There is no need at all to pile up books of all kinds and then search for the material. Therefore, this type of library service should be organised so that people living in big cities could get the materials ready especially when there is a three language approach and they will know where to look forward and what is required. Now, I have seen organisations like these elsewhere. This is point No. 1.

The second point is much more important which should be borne in mind. The modern technology has produced material in terms of Casset tape recorders of different types, Video long-playing records, etc. Now, for example, Phillips have developed a long-playing video recorder. I am told within two years they will be able to produce 5006 records per hour. Now the facility of the record is that for 3100 tapes recorded at one Unit and the method of extracting the information where computed techniques are used, is found easier, for example, the whole load can be on that record.

If one picture comes, it can be more stationary, although the recorder is moving all the while and the description or information can be in these

languages and you can choose as you like. I think the methods that are available on the limited resources that we should have, if we make an experiment we can produce exhibitions at the points where we want and I believe, therefore, that there must be another organisation which has casset tape-recorder video long plane of such material available which can be in these languages. In fact, it can be used by many people as long as they like to learn and India has a tradition, as far as I know, of carrying knowledge from generations to generations to the spoken words and we are losing that and depending only on the written words that modern technology has brought. Take, for example, the population of comics. There are some people who learn quite a lot not only through the library, but through the picture and much information can go along like that. Then there is no provision for creating posts of the scholars; there is no provision at all for supporting projects in various universities because library is not a static science. The modern methods are available; we need not investigate them. But we can make use of that material by referring communication system; computer may be anywhere; you need not have it in the library. But what it does is that it can be in the form of a tape and can be made available immediately to anybody. We want, and it is quite possible to have a large number of projects going on in various universities where a lot of material in the regional as well as Hindi languages will become available to lot of people and this will have a greater impact. This cannot happen unless this organisation has enough autonomy. It can bring a large number of people into operation without having them on their pay rolls. We need not be in a big city. For example, an organisation like INSDOC (just as in Great Britain) it extracts within a minute anything that appears in the world and it has get clientele of people whose profile is built up. There are 16 information scientists working and everything goes on tape quickly and the whole

thing is sent to them. So, they need not buy books. Now universities and other places have got limited facilities. But if we make these facilities available, so that according to the needs it can be focussed in terms of extracting information, bibliography,— I think it will be helpfull.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you ever visited the National Library of Calcutta?

DR. P. K. KELKAR: To my shame, I must say I have not done it. But I have visited many big libraries.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you visited some of the libraries in Bombay?

DR. P. K. KELKAR: In fact, I happened to be in Kanpur where we built up a library from the scratch. We spent a crore of rupees and the kind of facilities that exist there are in many ways quite unique. I am quite familiar with them and I get best out of them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Members would like to have your observations about the conditions of the library here in Bombay?

DR. P. K. KELKAR: According to my thinking, it is only catering to the needs of the selected type of clientele a certain habit that has been built and also the types of habits that are associated with what you call normally a cultured person in the formal sense. But these libraries give you what you want within these limits. But I do not know whether they are capable of providing the kind of material that is required now for a majority of the persons.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: We would like to know how the autonomy could be extended?

DR. P. K. KELKAR: It could be extended in two ways. First of all, the representation should be from the people who know what exactly a library can provide and they have a proper place in the scheme of things. Secondly, the finances of this library should be decided in terms of needs of the

library. We may not have enough money now. But our plans must be such that whatever little input we have in those plans should not be wasted and we should be able to do something *ad hoc* and for that purpose autonomy should be there. Today, as I said, once the budget is passed, there should be no further interference from the authorities who are supposed to control the library. As far as the present Bill is concerned, I think it does not provide for the creation of different cadres and so on. Similarly, it does not provide for autonomy for purposes of preparing projects by different people in terms of making out certain schemes or extracting certain type of materials which may not be existing and so on. It can be made available easily by the people who are involved in that. But the resources which can engage young people as students, which can work for their post-graduate and research degrees, have become much more significant, according to me, than the kind of permanent staff that we have in the library who will work only according to the prescribed time.

SHRI PATIL PUTTAPPA: You are referring that there should be an Associate National Library. In view of the fact that you want an Associate National Library, is it your intention that the States should be involved?

DR. P. K. KELKAR: No, Sir. It is the responsibility of the States to increase the library habits. Multiplication of experiments is the responsibility of States and the creation of the seats is the national responsibility. Otherwise, the States will wash their hands off.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: You do not want to have the representatives of the Ministry of Finance, Education and the Government body because you feel that when they go back they change their minds and so on. How do you expect that anybody from the library side would automatically approve of this thing? Now the question of availability of the resources is also considered to be the

most important aspect of any national aspects. These are just two things which must go hand in hand. Therefore, I feel the representatives of these Ministries must be on the governing body of the National Library and also on the Finance Committee.

DR. P. K. KELKAR: I have accepted it wholeheartedly in the memorandum that I have submitted. My point is whatever discussion regarding paucity of resources and so on should take place before the budget is formed and once all these limitations have been formulated then they should not be checked.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: You want first the Ministry should indicate the resources available and then the Library Committee will come forward and present need.

DR. P. K. KELKAR: There is something like previous budgets. Then you can suggest a development plan which is subject to pruning. Then yearly budget cannot be out of proportion to what happened last year. This budget be first formulated and then in the meeting of the Finance Committee whatever is to be cut out will be done by mutual discussion and once this is formed it seems to me it should be reasonably binding.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: I cannot agree with you. The officials in high authority some time agree at a meeting but differ when they go back to their offices. Perhaps, you have gone through the Bill—Clause 6. There is sufficient provision for fund. Is it not sufficient to run a national library?

DR. P. K. KELKAR: I wish it were true. If you take IITs they are getting funds from abroad for development. In their rules and regulars identical words have been used. The amount of money that we have been able to get from other resources is hardly five per cent of what the Government has to give and as I visualise the possibility of public coming and supporting it is very remote.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: I would like you to refer to page 9 regarding

the formation of Board to make regulations. Is it not sufficient, as you think, for the best interests of the National Library?

DR. P. K. KELKAR: It all depends on what view you take of the National Library. If you take the same view as has been current for the last 50 years then this type of provision is all right. But, I think, we are looking for something quite different and to that extent it does not provide for that.

SHRI SHAKTI KUMAR SARKAR: I think you do not fully agree with the composition of the Board. May I request you to explain your views? Is it really autonomous or something like sub-committee of the Government?

DR. P. K. KELKAR: Any Board that is formed there are two parts—its composition and secondly the way Government treats it. The manner in which the provisions are laid down it is quite possible for the Board to be very sub-servient to the Government. Secondly, the composition as it is, the Government is nominating most of the people. Further there is no specific indication whether the people who are concerned with Library are likely to be there or not. This is a question quite difficult to be answered.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: You are aware of the fact that this particular Bill arose out of the fact that some people thought this Library is not functioning well over the past 10 years and some reorganisation is needed and if it is transferred from the hands of the Government to an autonomous body it may function well. As you stated in your preamble you want the associate national library and so on would you think instead of having this Bill another Bill may be there with all these provisions visualising that there should not be one library but there should be some branches in different regions at the top of which there should be a Central library? What are your views about that?

SHRI P. K. KELKAR: My own feeling is like this. This Bill has a very limited scope and its approach is, to my mind, at least somewhat negative. They want that this library should be carried on as it is but something is wrong there and perhaps by giving a little autonomy, things will be all right. I think this type of approach at this stage in the development of the country to my opinion is not very adequate.

SHRI DHARAMRAO AFZALPURKAR: In your reply you have stated that after passing the budget there should not be any interference. I want to know from you what type of interference should not be there.

SHRI P. K. KELKAR: I would put it like this. The budget when it is framed, should be framed in a manner which should normally be acceptable to the Government in turn, and not something as a first exercise. It should be more or less a final exercise.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: My specific question is this. We have got 5 IITs in our country. But they have no separate Boards as their own. Of course we have got a Council. Now, would you think that the National Library should be a Board or an Advisory Council as in IITs?

SHRI P. K. KELKAR: I would put it like this with slight modifications because all the IITs are independent units with their own identities but associate libraries cannot be compared with IITs. At least for a few years to come, the source and the material cannot be collected over night. Therefore, I think that autonomy for the Associate Library is necessary.

SHRI D. P. YADAV: The question is about the administration, maintenance and working of the Library. Would you like that there should be a Board, whether autonomous or non-autonomous, or there should be a Council as the IITs have got?

SHRI P. K. KELKAR: I would like one similar to that.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: You have preferred it to be an autonomous body and do you expect that there may likely to be any kind of interference in the affairs of the Library after the budget is passed, by the Government? Now, most of the libraries which are functioning in a very efficient manner, are run by the Government. This is one feeling and the other feeling is that almost all the witnesses who gave evidence before this Committee at Calcutta were in favour of the library working directly under the Government. How do you react to this opinion? Do you think that it would be better managed under an autonomous administration?

SHRI P. K. KELKAR: The functions of the national libraries in other countries are quite different from those we expect our National Library to do. Now, take for example, the Museum. Even if it is run by Government and so on, so far as the library services are concerned, it does not come into the picture at all. But the main function of the national library is the collection and repository of books while here it is not only we want it to be repository but is also an instrument to bring about the kind of change in terms of information, dissemination and processing which I think is much greater to our need because there are about a hundred libraries in the US with volumes more than two millions and if you expect them to be run by Government, there will not be much effect at all. But we are a poor country and we want to have a jump and we want to have the same type of efficiency but it can be done with good organisation.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: The National Library in India as a repository of books national heritage, culture and all that, is also to be at the District and public levels, which would be a disseminating body. Now the States and the Union Territories and various universities are already having Libraries of their own. But one thing is very clear that the

national library cannot be at the same time repository and of the cultural heritage of the country and if that becomes repository or monolithic body, then it may not function properly. For that purpose, we may have clear things. The national library which is the repository of the books of the country with some regional libraries can do disseminating aspect of work.

SHRI P. K. KELKAR: I will not say it repository. With modern techniques with bibliography, the material can be made available—rather I suggested

II. Air Vice-Marshal M. B. Naik Commandant, National Defence Academy, Poona.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Air Vice-Marshal M. B. Naik before we proceed, I would like to inform you that the evidence you give would be treated as public and is liable to be published, unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. Even though you might desire your evidence to be treated as confidential, such evidence is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. Your memorandum has been circulated to the Members of this Committee. In addition to that, if you desire to say anything more here you can do so and thereafter the Members might put certain questions.

AIR VICE-MARSHAL M. B. NAIK: I do not have anything to add to the memorandum that has already been submitted to the Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have stated in your memorandum that at least one person should be nominated from the Defence Establishment. Why do you consider that is very necessary?

AIR VICE-MARSHAL M. B. NAIK: In the explanation given under this point, we have stated that a large number of Defence Establishments have large libraries and it would help

only a hundred thousand and 1940 and onwards. So these functions can be co-ordinated they are the repository but now only few people can take advantage and various facets are required by the people for limited purpose.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kelkar, the Committee is thankful for your valuable contribution.

SHRI P. K. KELKAR: Thank you, Sir.

(The witness then withdrew.)

in the functioning of the libraries to have a person on the Board from the Defence Establishment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Regarding re-nomination beyond two terms, suppose you are very much associated with the library movement; you have technical knowledge, long experience and your continued association would be very beneficial. Under these circumstances, you are forced to retire. Would it not be in the interest of the institute itself to utilize your services further in view of your long experience and knowledge?

AIR VICE-MARSHAL M. B. NAIK: It is merely a process that we thought we would adopt in suggesting this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But you do not want to really enforce these rules.

AIR VICE-MARSHAL M. B. NAIK: It is left to the Board, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you like to leave it to the nominating authority?

AIR VICE-MARSHAL M. B. NAIK: Certainly, it could be left to the nominating authority.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: Regarding the composition of the Board, you

have suggested that one person should be there from the Defence Establishment.

AIR VICE-MARSHAL M. B. NAIK: If the question is whether I should suggest more members, I am afraid, I may not be able to answer that. But I submitted before you according to the explanation that we have stated in our memorandum.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: There is a provision, you please go through it.

AIR VICE-MARSHAL M. B. NAIK: I do not think it is necessary.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: You want that one person should be nominated from the Defence Services?

AIR VICE-MARSHAL M. B. NAIK: Yes, Sir.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: What will be your reactions if the National Library and such institutes be under the direct control of the Government or would it be better if there is an autonomous administration?

AIR VICE-MARSHAL M. B. NAIK: All the Defence establishment libraries are under the Ministry of

Defence. The day-to-day administration of the libraries in the defence-establishments is being run by the Ministry of Defence. They function very well. Most of the Defence establishments have very selective libraries. The overall control should be exercised by a department of the Government.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: It was suggested at Calcutta by one of the witnesses that in order to preserve the national status and the national character of the library a man of national eminence such as the Vice-President of India or the Speaker of the Lok Sabha should be the Chairman of the governing Board. What is your reaction to this suggestion?

AIR VICE-MARSHAL M. B. NAIK: I am afraid I am not in a position to comment on this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Air Vice-Marshal Naik. The Committee is thankful for your views and your memorandum will be taken into consideration.

(The witness then withdrew)

III. Shri K. D. Puranik, Director of Libraries, Government of Maharashtra, Bombay

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Puranik I may point out to you that your evidence may be treated as public and is liable to be made public unless you specifically desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. I may also add that even though you may desire the evidence to be treated as confidential, it is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. You are doubtless aware that whatever discussions we have here is treated as confidential and is not to be made public till the Report of this Committee is presented to Parliament.

Mr. Puranik, you may briefly express

your views and thereafter the Members might like to put some questions. It would be more helpful if while expressing your views you could refer to various provisions of the Bill under consideration.

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have two or three important points to mention. The first is regarding the autonomy of the Board. The autonomy to be useful has to be at various levels. The first level would be that of policy-making and obviously the next would be that of implementation. As it is in the Bill the Board proposed to be constituted would not have the necessary auto-

onomy. In the statement of objects and reasons it is stated that the Board would be autonomous but the various provisions in the Bill itself show that the Board would not get the necessary autonomy. For example, Section 3 says that the Board would hold and dispose of property and contract etc. In the very next Section we nullify what is provided in the earlier sub-section "except with the previous approval of the Central Government." The Board cannot dispose of things like periodicals, furniture, etc.

Section 25 deals with the directions on question of policy and the two provisions made in sub-section (1) and (2) clearly deprive the Board of its autonomy. The decision of the Central Government is final. In Section 30 the provision is made in such a way that the Board which is proposed to be an autonomous Board cannot make its own regulations. It has to be with the previous approval of the Central Government. These are the three main provisions which deprive the Board of its autonomy which in effect would result in the Board being responsible for the management of the libraries but without any authority on policy making and when we come to implementation, I think, the National Library Bill.

It lacks provision in that respect also. At the implementation level, we have provided an Executive Council and the Director of the Library shall be the Chairman—that is also provided in the Bill. But as the head of the Institution, the Director should be given sufficient powers to implement all policies laid down by the Board and he should be held responsible for implementation of policies. That will be possible as the provisions envisaged.

My another point would be regarding the composition of the Board. Clause 4 sub-section (c)(ii) says that "one shall be a representative of any of the universities in India". I think it is not necessary in view of the Clause 4(c) where it reads as: "one

person to be nominated by the Chairman of the University Grants Commission to represent that Commission" and therefore we need not have a representative from UGC and since we are going to nominate a member out of the many universities in India, this provision is not necessary. But I would submit that the experienced Librarians have not been given the representation on the Board. Administration and management of Libraries are a specialised job and this has been recognised throughout the world. And if we have to entrust the work of management of the National Library to an autonomous body consisting of educationists who are the principal users of the Library, who will be able to study the needs of the educationists, who will be able to say what is required of the National Library, etc. then along with them we should have experienced librarians who would be qualified, who would be holding highest qualification in Library Science and who would be having experience in Library and Library systems. The National Library is not an isolated Library. It has to be at the apex of the Library System of the country. That is very necessary. If that is so, then we must provide an experienced Librarian on the Board. Under Clause 4 sub-section (c)(i) it is stated as: "four shall be from among persons who, in the opinion of the Central Government are distinguished educationists or have special knowledge of, and experience in, matters relating to the administration of libraries". It is possible that the Librarians would not get representation on the Board.

Now I come to the point regarding the appointment of Director. This relates to Clause 13(1). Here it is stated as: "The Central Government shall appoint a person, who in its opinion possesses academical qualifications of distinction or is a distinguished Librarian, as the Director of the Library."

In the above Clause if the word 'or' is changed into 'and' I would not have

much objection. But that is not possible because the minimum qualification a person should possess is that he should hold the qualification in Library Science and have experience in the management of Libraries. What I said at the beginning about the representation on the Board also holds good, much more so in the case of Director, he has to implement the policies of the Board for which he should have the knowledge of Library Science, he should have experience of Library management, he should have experience in Library training and so on and so forth. As the provision stands, the person who may be appointed as Director, cannot have Library experience or qualifications and then in my opinion, he would not be able to do justice to the post.

Then I come to the Clause 18 regarding the Duties of the Board Here it is mentioned as "including programmes for photo copying of manuscripts and books". Here it is mentioned in isolation. The functions of National Library, if at all they have to be mentioned in the Act itself, should cover all the important functions clearly. The three important functions, namely, preservation of books and manuscripts of national importance, then provision for bibliographical facilities and the third co-operation and co-ordination that is expected of a national library, all these three important functions should be mentioned here.

Now I come to the question of autonomy again because I want to submit one more point here. If the autonomy is to be given, it can be given to the present governing Council. We are trying to create a Board under the Act and give autonomy to it but we have a governing Council. Now in this we have a Director, we have a Librarian—of course in the case of National Library, we may change the designation; here we may call him Director or Adviser, that is a different matter—but if the only obstacle in the development of National Library is the

lack of autonomy, then the governing Council can, by executive orders of the Board, delegate the powers to the head of the Institution whosoever he is and then if there is any other need in alteration or addition of this Bill, there is no provision made here because the Bill has been based on certain Report which has not been published for the public. Therefore one has to go by what is provided in the Bill itself. I think I have mentioned all the important points. If there are questions, I would be glad to answer them.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: I would like to ask a question about the controversial matter of autonomy and direct control. Do you think it is possible for a Library in a Circle to cater to the needs of the entire country by becoming a National Library both in the matter of repository of books and cultural heritage, etc? On the other hand, you put an agency for the dissemination of this knowledge to at least a cross-section of the society which is deeply interested in such dissemination—maybe research scholars and eminent university people. I personally think that it is not possible to create such a vast institution and that this institution becomes both the repository institution as also the dissemination institution for disseminating purposes. We will have to have a number of other regional centres and you may call them regional libraries, associate libraries. But their functions would be specifically involved more disseminating aspect than the aspect of collectiveness and preserving cultural heritage. What have you got to say on this?

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: I have referred in my earlier submission on the functioning of the National Library in respect of coordination and co-operation. The National Library has to co-ordinate the activities of the specialised institutions and libraries in their respective fields. I am to mention here that the INSDOC is doing some

publication work at Delhi. We have undertaken a bibliographic work in respect of social sciences and that work need not be duplicated by the National Library. But the National Library has to undertake to see that all the fields of knowledge—humanity, arts, social science, applied sciences and the needs of the scholars and research workers—has to be coordinated at the national level and this is the responsibility of the National Library. I do not say that from one centre you can cater to the needs of all the scholars and research workers throughout the country. In fact, in this connection, the location of the National Library has to be thought of. In all the countries of the world, the National Library is at the head of the Centre of the Government and it has to be there. The distant factor in our country would not be important. From Calcutta to Trivandrum or from Trivandrum to Delhi or from Delhi to Trivandrum, probably there is no distant factor. But people from all over the country go to the Government very often and the other users of the National Library, the main users of the National Library, they should get the benefit of the services of the National Library. Even in Delhi, Government would get more services from the National Library than if it is in Calcutta. That is obvious. As it is, people from other parts of the country do not feel that it is a National Library of the country because it has not made any impact on the library development in other States. It need not undertake anything from, say, people in Maharashtra, but it can surely coordinate what is being done in different parts of the country and I mentioned the one activity that we are doing here. We are indexing all articles in Maharashtra; we are indexing periodicals not only in monthly, quarterly, but important articles in daily, weekly and fortnightly and are publishing subject-wise lists in the Association Journal. This work need not be undertaken by the National Library. But in our country so many activities of this type must be existing. All this co-

ordination work has to be done by the National Library.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: That means you are in favour of shifting the National Library from Calcutta to New Delhi and in your opinion that would enhance the prestige of the National Library simply because it would be located at a place where we have the seat of the national Govt. Secondly, do I take from your reply that you think that the present status of the library does not give the national prestige.

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: So far it has not made any impact on other parts of the country; it has to develop in that line. As it is, periodicals published by the National Library have some impact; but more has to be done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: From the practical point of view, do you think it is possible to shift the National Library from Calcutta to Delhi?

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: There would be financial difficulties. Then there will be the problem of transporting the staff, because you cannot shift all the staff.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It would be worthwhile considering that also.

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: Yes, Sir.

SHRI NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: It would be in the fitness of things if a person of national eminence like the Speaker of the Lok Sabha or the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha is the Chairman of the Board of Management?

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: Before I give an answer to this question, I would like to mention what is being done in other countries. In Great Britain, they are trying to constitute a National Library Board. The Dante Committee has recommended that the Chairman and three Members of this Board should be full-time members and they should have maximum ex-

pertise in library science management, etc. If necessary, they can take the help of part-time members if the job is to manage a library. A lot of time will have to be devoted to do it; it depends whether the dignitaries mentioned above can devote so much time.

SHRI SAKTI KUMAR SARKAR: According to the composition of the Board, do you think they will be able to fulfil the conditions of the Dante Committee?

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: The experienced librarian should be there. I think that point I have touched. I have said that expert librarians are very necessary on the Board. I have also said that educationists are also necessary on the Board.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: I suppose you are the Director of the State Library and that is run by the Department of the Govt.?

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: I do not run any library. I am a Director of the public library under the Public Library Act. My job is to see that the public libraries are established and developed in the States.

SHRI VIRENDRA AGARWAL: That is to say, you are opposed to the idea of a National Library. Why are you opposed to the idea of autonomy?

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: In fact, I said that autonomy is necessary at the policy making level and also at the execution level.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: There are two aspects regarding the administration which are agitating the minds of the people. One aspect is that the National Library like institutions could be run by the Govt. directly under its control. Another aspect is that it should be run by autonomous body with great powers. Is this the compromised formula? Under the present circumstances, do you think this formula will be able to deliver the goods?

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: We have not given sufficient autonomy to the Board. Unless we give autonomy to the Board, whichever Board is constituted, it would not be able to serve the purpose.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: Do you suggest the Board may be empowered to dispose of very very valuable articles or documents according to their sweet will?

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: That would not happen because the responsibilities of the Board are laid down.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: It is regarding disposal. There must be some control by the Central Government.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: At the beginning of your speech you mentioned that autonomy means autonomy in both policy making and implementation and the way Bill has been prepared it will not fulfil either of the two things. At the same time you suggested if a better organisation so far as National Library at Calcutta is concerned then this can be done by a simple executive order by giving more powers to the present governing council. As an experienced Government officer you may enlighten us keeping under the direct control of the Government how more powers can be given to the governing council so that it may function better. Further, if we want to have a better library system you suggest one apex library and associate libraries and there should be coordination and for that we want a separate Bill. But so far as the present Bill regarding the National Library at Calcutta is concerned you do not think it will serve the purpose for which it is brought because it is neither autonomous nor under the government. Because you have suggested that by executive orders given to the present Governing Council, we should have comprehensive Bill so that Library

System in the country may develop properly.

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: In fact I did not suggest a comprehensive Bill... I did not mention about the regional National Libraries as you have just now mentioned. What I have said is that exists specialised libraries in all parts of the country and they are doing their work in their respective fields. The National Library is the only library which can undertake responsibility of co-ordinating the activity. I have not mentioned any regional national library. That is a separate subject. The present Bill does not cover Regional Libraries.

Then, Sir, you have mentioned above the executive orders. In this connection, I have expressed my opinion that now because there is no autonomy, we are thinking of an autonomous body. We are thinking whether the term 'Board' or the 'Governing Council' should be retained and whether the composition of the Governing Council can also be changed and if it is to be changed, there should be no difficulty. Since there is lack of autonomy and because there is more supervision and it is upto the Government to issue orders, there are difficulties in its functioning, at present. Once the Board is constituted, their functions will be regulated and they would have full powers. The policies will be laid down by the Board and the functions will be performed according to the policies framed.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Then it will be directly under the control of the Ministry. This is like an autonomous body of the University. Now the IIT Boards are not directly under the Ministry. But they are responsible to the Parliament. They have to submit their reports to Parliament, but that is a different question. Once it is brought under the control of Ministry, then the administration will be done by the Ministry. And the other one, that is, the Board's functioning, will only be

supervised by Parliament and the Ministry will not be responsible for this. Can you tell us whether the Governing Council can be given more powers so that it can run more efficiently instead of making it completely an autonomous body like IIT or CSIR?

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: In so far as the autonomy is concerned, I mentioned already that it should be in respect of policy making and at the implementation level. On these aspects I mentioned very clearly. The policy making should refer only to the functions assigned to the national library because the Board or the Governing Body is not likely to frame policy outside the functions assigned to it. Once the Board lays down policies in the development of library and in respect of functions, there is no reason why it cannot be done by Government's decision without an Act of Parliament.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: You said that the Universities need not be given representation.

SHRI K. D. PURANIK: I only said that there would be duplication. We have a very small number of Members on the Board. Once you give representation to UGC, there is no need for giving representation to any other University. If it is to be a small Board, the UGC representation should be sufficient to look after the Universities' interests.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: You have mentioned that a body cannot be autonomous unless it has the power of policy making and getting it implemented. As we understand, no autonomous body usually lays down the basic policies but the day-to-day decisions are taken by the autonomous body and the implementation part of the work is also done by the autonomous body. Is there any autonomous body in India of your conception, where the basic policies are framed by the autonomous body and the implementation also is done by that body?

SHRI K. D. PUANAİK: Now Sir, you have introduced a new concept, that is, basic policies. When I said that the functions of such Body should be mentioned in the Bill itself, then everything including the basic policies would come under the heading 'functions'.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: Is there any autonomous body? Can you give the name of such body?

IV. Shri V. V. Bhatt, Maharashtra State Library Associate, Bombay

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bhat, before we proceed further, I may make it clear to you that your evidence may be treated as public and is liable to be made public unless you specially desire that all or any part of the evidence tendered by you is to be treated as confidential. I may also add that even though you may desire the evidence to be treated as confidential, it is liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament. You are doubtless aware that whatever discussions we have here is treated as confidential and is not to be made public till the Report of this Committee is presented to Parliament.

I think you have not sent any Memorandum to this Committee. So, you may please give your suggestions on the proposed Bill so that we may like to consider them for incorporation in the Bill.

SHRI V. V. BHAT: I have got two suggestions to offer. In the formation of the Board, two things are omitted. One is that the representation to the Associations has not been given. One representative from the Library Association should be taken on the Board. Another point is that there are Library Directorates in different States, especially in 4 States at present. Unfortunately, no representation has been given for these Directorates. My submission is that Library Directorates of these 4 States should be given representation on the Board. These

SHRI K. D. PURANİK: I said that the functions should be mentioned in the Bill itself. That is the basic policy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you Mr. Puranik for your valuable information.

SHRI K. D. PURANİK: Thank you, Sir.

(The witness then withdrew).

are the two points that I want to submit to the Committee. As far as the appointment of a Director is concerned, no specific rule has been laid down. Even the qualifications of a Librarian are not mentioned there. My submission is that these should be clearly mentioned. As far as Librarian is concerned, he should be a qualified Librarian.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: As far as page 5, 31(1) of the Bill is concerned you have suggested that he should also be a distinguished Librarian.

SHRI V. V. BHAT: That means he should be a qualified Librarian.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Supposing, they are asked to suggest the names of a few Librarians. Will they always suggest the name of the qualified Librarian?

SHRI V. V. BHAT: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you sure about it?

SHRI V. V. BHAT: Yes, Sir.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: You have mentioned that the Library Association has not been given any representation. Do you suggest that such Association should be there in each State?

SHRI V. V. BHAT: I do not say that every State should have representation. All India Library Association is there.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: Is it a non-official body?

SHRI V. V. BHAT: Yes, Sir. I do not say that every State should be given representation.

V. Prof. (Miss) A. Dastur, Department of Civics and Politics University of Bombay, Bombay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I hope you have gone through the Bill in the short time that you could have.

MISS A. DASTUR: I generally agree with the Bill, Sir. There are certain points which I would like to stress for the benefit of the Members. The composition of the Board is wisely kept at ten. The number is small, very effective and functional. As far as 4C(2) (1) is concerned, perhaps that one representation is very small. As far as C(3) is concerned, it is very wisely laid down that one number shall be from amongst persons with special knowledge and experience in science and technology. Today, Humanity and Social Sciences have come to acquire a status in knowledge and study of their own. Although I favour small Boards, I would urge that these two disciplines should be included with a specialists in the Science and Technology on the Board. The composition of the Board may be corrected, even if it means by increasing the number by one or two, I think, it would be worthwhile. As far as page 3 clause 7(c) is concerned, no irregularity, I would suppose, should be overlooked. As far as page 5 is concerned. Bill lays down the Library was continued to be located at Calcutta." If this Library is to be located at Delhi, we would be able to make much better use of it because the Parliament is there and all the parliamentary and other papers may be more easily available to the people, it would serve much more useful purpose if it is located in the Capital of the country. I find that a crore of rupees has been earmarked for construction in the Fifth Plan.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for your valuable suggestions. The Committee may consider them.

(The witness then withdrew)

Possibly that could be withheld for the time being and when it is permitted to move over there, at that time a little more will be added to that one crore and that the Library should possibly go over there, if it has to serve its real national purpose. Then on page 8 under miscellaneous, regarding selection of Board is concerned, perhaps I am allergic to directions from Government. But that apart, when the Government has very carefully selected this Board, as one hopes, then the question of policy should not enter; the board should decide, all matters of details that come up. Then there is a issue of directions of the Government to the Board. This is given on the last page of the memorandum. I think autonomy should be given to the Board for the simple reason, as I said, that we would expect people of competence, knowledge, past experience, organisation and management on the Board, and for them to be constantly instructed by the Government even on matters of detail which they want to pursue or on matters of policy which role is essentially political-oriented—I do not think will serve the purpose of a National Library. I would urge that the Board should be left as autonomous as it can possibly be.

The finances of the order of Rs. 27 lakhs per year for a National Library are much too little. Conceding that it is a recipient library, it will still have to go in for purchase of books. If these Rs. 27 lakhs also include administrative charges then, I think, it is a pittance which we give to a library which we call a National Library.

SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN: Do you think for creating any autonomous

body it is necessary that policy decision should also be left to the autonomous body? Is there any such autonomous body in India? I think there is non. We have autonomous corporations and autonomous universities.

MISS A. DASTUR: My understanding of the autonomous university is that every university makes its own policies. Secondly, what can be the policies which the Board may follow apart from giving excellent library service to scholars and students? Here it cannot be a matter of policy which will cut across any policy decision which the Government may take. But there will be danger if at any stage a biased government comes into existence. The library and its acquisition will suffer from that political social and for economic bias. Leaving the library to develop naturally as a store-house of knowledge, I think, the Government would be well-advised not to issue directives.

PROF. RASHEEDUDDIN KHAN: We are happy that an eminent scholar of social science like Miss Dastur has come to give the benefit of her experience before the Committee. Firstly, I would like to ask you about the composition of the Board. Would you like to suggest that the number goes up to 16 instead of 10 and it should include at least four representatives from universities— one from social science; one from humanities, etc.

MISS A. DASTUR: Sixteen possibly would be the maximum. I would have even opted for 12 to 13.

PROF. RASHEEDUDDIN KHAN: We had heard in Calcutta very strong plea from a very large number of people that it ought not to be given to an autonomous board. Their argument was that it should be part of the Government department as emoluments and service conditions are much better. Secondly autonomous bodies in India, with the exception of universities, have not worked in the manner we wanted them to work. As you have referred to clause 25 re-

garding policy and other things it is apparent what the Bill purports to do is to give a modicum of autonomy rather than a functional autonomy. This is a half-way house. What are your views about it?

MISS A. DASTUR: I would rather have it as an autonomous body for the simple reason if there is any fear of emoluments and the salaries being not protected, I think there should be no fear on that account the Government should guarantee that; but the Library certainly should be maintained on an autonomous unit because government's hand in this Board is a very big hand and, I think, the Government should satisfy itself that those whom it appoints are really bent towards cultivating and nourishing a really national institute and that is where, I believe, being run as a Government department is not good. What one hears about the libraries these days is very difficult to sort out what is what. And the library service is such that an autonomous body could work it up much better. Moreover Government Departments are noted all that efficient competently to manage National Library.

PROF. RASHEEDUDDIN KHAN: In the morning we visited the Asiatic Society of Bombay. The Condition of the library was so bad and it looked like a dungeon. Now, this library is under the management of the autonomous body. It functions far in excess of the capacity. This is the picture one gets from a library managed by the autonomous body. Autonomy means autonomy given to to the staff but the national library means that by an act of Parliament, no such organisation should remain autonomous.

MISS A. DASTUR: I did not compare it with the National Library for which the finances are going to come from the government. It cannot be put on a par with almost a private library. It is not an autonomous library in the sense that it is a private library with extremely limited finance and with a small membership. There-

fore, I would still say that we cannot compare it with a National Library. If I am a little chauvinistic, if you go to Bombay University, of course, you will get a very different impression and our resources are extremely limited and because it is a part of the University and because we have a very competent staff, we have been able to maintain a very fine service and the whole thing is very well organised. Now, I think the hon. Members will not carry this impression that other Bombay libraries are also in the same condition.

PROF. RASHEEDUDDIN KHAN: Article 13(1) states as: The Central Government shall appoint a person, who in its opinion possesses academical qualification of distinction or is a distinguished Librarian, as the Director of the Library." What is your reaction to this proposition? Should there be an eminent scholar, educationist or an eminent Librarian?

MISS A. DASTUR: I would like to change the word 'or' into 'and' in that proposed Clause. There should be a combination of the two. Leaving it merely to a very able Librarian is not good because a very fine Librarian would be purely a technician, he might

be an expert by qualification and organisation but what to get and where to get and how to obtain and to keep in touch, with the rapidly multiplying knowledge in the world is the most important thing. Under the Indian context it is very necessary to take into consideration limited financial resources of our country so that there is no wastage in every respect. I think we will have somebody with very high academic qualification and I do not think today in India it is difficult to have a combination of the two. Suppose, we do not find this, we could get somebody academically very highly placed, trained in art and practice of Librarianship. It should not be difficult. He should be learned and knowing the technique of Librarianship and then he is capable of reaching the top level as the Director of the Secretary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So, we are very thankful to you for the valuable suggestions and if you have to state anything more, you can send us a Memorandum covering the points which you have not mentioned here. Thank you very much.

(The Committee then adjourned.)

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