

**EMINENT PARLIAMENTARIANS  
MONOGRAPH SERIES**

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**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI  
1993**

**EMINENT PARLIAMENTARIANS  
MONOGRAPH SERIES**

**RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR**

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI  
1992**

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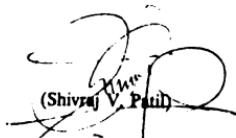
SPEAKER LOK SABHA  
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## FOREWORD

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, free India's first woman Minister stands out as a shining star amongst the great women, who made outstanding contributions to our national life. Though born a Princess, she chose to devote her life to the service of down trodden and weaker sections of the society.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was an ardent patriot, an indomitable freedom fighter and an able Parliamentarian and Administrator. One of the closest associates of Mahatma Gandhi, she was a Nishkama Karm Yogi in the true sense.

I am happy that in this monograph, a modest attempt has been made to recapitulate and place on record the yeoman's services rendered to the nation and its people by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. I hope that this monograph would be well received by the readers.

  
(Shivraj V. Patil)

## Preface

With a view to pay homage to eminent Parliamentarians and to place on record contributions made by them to the national and Parliamentary life, the Indian Parliamentary Group decided to celebrate the birth anniversaries of these great men and women. In this connection, a new series known as the Eminent Parliamentarians Monograph Series was started in March, 1990. So far 14 monographs have been brought out under this series.

The present monograph seeks to recapitulate the great services rendered to the nation by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, one of our outstanding Parliamentarians.

The monograph consists of three parts. Part one contains a brief profile of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur highlighting some glimpses of her eventful life. Part Two contains articles written by eminent scholars and dignitaries and academicians who have observed Rajkumari from close quarters. We are grateful to them for their valuable contributions. Part Three comprises some of her important speeches delivered in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, while participating in the debates on a variety of issues and problems facing the nation.

It is our sincere hope that the Monograph would be found useful by Members of Parliament and all those who are interested in the contemporary history of our country.

NEW DELHI;  
November, 1992

C.K. JAIN,  
*Secretary-General, Lok Sabha.*

# **Contents**

## **PART ONE**

**Rajkumari Amrit Kaur — A Profile**

(1)

## **PART TWO**

### **ARTICLES**

**The Karmayogi Disciple of Mahatma Gandhi**

**B.N. Pande**

(23)

**Rajkumari Amrit Kaur**

**Dr. Sushila Nayar**

(27)

**A Woman Dedicated to Gandhian Ideas**

**Aruna Asaf Ali**

(34)

**Humility in Greatness**

**Prof. N.G. Ranga**

(37)

**Rajkumari Amrit Kaur As I knew Her**

**S. Nijalingappa**

(39)

**A Tribute to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur**

**Rajmata Gayatri Devi**

(41)

**India's First Woman Cabinet Minister**

**Renuka Ray**

(44)

(iii)

**Rajkumari Amrit Kaur**

**Maj. General Rajinder Singh Sparrow**  
**(50)**

**A Profile in Courage**

**Prof. Anima Bose**  
**(54)**

**In Remembrance**

**Ivy Khan**  
**(64)**

**An Outstanding Personality—Rajkumari Amrit Kaur**  
**Phulrenu Guha**  
**(69)**

**Rajkumari Amrit Kaur: Her Life, Work and Ideology**  
**Kamla Kumar**  
**(71)**

### **PART THREE**

#### **SELECT SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT**

##### **I**

##### **FINANCE**

- 1 General Budget, 1953-54  
(81)
- 2 General Budget 1956-57  
(92)
- 3 General Budget 1957-58  
(103)
- 4 General Budget 1960-61  
(111)
- 5 General Budget 1961-62  
(116)
- 6 Demands for Grants 1954-55  
(119)
- 7 Finance Bill 1957  
(130)
- 8 Finance (No. 2) Bill 1957  
(138)

II

**HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE**

- 9 All India Institute of Medical Sciences  
(146)
- 10 All India Institute of Medical Science Bill 1956  
(153)
- 11 The Report of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences  
(183)
- 12 Indian Medical Council Bill  
(186)
- 13 Indian Medical Council Bill, 1956  
(201)
- 14 Indian Nursing Council (Amendment) Bill, 1957  
(213)
- 15 Indian Red Cross Society (Amendment) Bill  
(216)
- 16 Lady Hardinge Medical College and Hospital Bill  
(219)
- 17 Drugs (Amendment) Bill 1954  
(225)
- 18 Drugs Amendment Bill  
(231)
- 19 Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisement) Bill  
(239)
- 20 Jaundice Enquiry Report  
(244)
- 21 B.C.G. Vaccination  
(250)
- 22 Sterilisation of the Unfit Bill  
(255)
- 23 Resolution on Re-Sterilisation of Adults  
(257)
- 24 Geneva Conventions Bill, 1960  
(266)

III

SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL MATTERS

- 25 Dowry Prohibition Bill 1959  
(270)  
26 Orphanage Bill  
(276)  
27 Orphanages and other Charitable Homes  
(Supervision and Control) Bill 1950  
(278)  
28 Children Bill 1959  
(282)  
29 Report of University Grants Commission  
(285)

IV

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

- 30 Delhi Improvement Trust  
(289)  
31 Delhi Municipal Corporation Bill 1957  
(295)  
32 Delhi Development Bill 1957  
(298)  
33 Government Premises (Eviction) Amendment Bill  
(301)

V

FOOD MANAGEMENT

- 34 Food Adulteration Bill  
(305)  
35 Food Situation  
(308)  
36 Punishment for Adulteration for Food Stuffs Bill  
(315)  
37 Prevention of Food Adulteration Bill 1954  
(317)

VI

ANIMAL WELFARE

- 38 Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Bill 1959  
(329)

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**PART ONE**

**RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR—A PROFILE**

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# Rajkumari Amrit Kaur —A Profile

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## Introduction

A true patriot, an eminent Parliamentarian, a firm believer in non-violence and a selfless and dedicated worker for the cause of emancipation of women and weaker sections of the society, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur has left an indelible imprint on our national life and polity. A woman of great aristocratic bearing and dignified poise, she worked zealously and incessantly for the eradication of many of the evils that had crept into the then Indian society. History will always remember her as a woman of immense strength and qualities and her noble deeds will continue to inspire India's succeeding generations to make selfless sacrifices for the cause of the motherland.

## Birth and Early Life

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, the only daughter among eight children of Raja Harnam Singh of the Kapurthala State of Punjab, was born at Lucknow on 2 February, 1889, the year in which coincidentally was born Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of modern India, to whom she subsequently extended a helping hand in shaping independent India's destiny. Her mother, Rani Harnam Singh was the daughter of Golak Nath Chatterjee from Bengal. Although Rajkumari Amrit Kaur had inherited Christianity as her religion from her father, she had deep reverence for all other faiths. Like any aristocratic children of that time, Amrit Kaur had her early schooling abroad in the Sherborne School in Dorsetshire in the United Kingdom where she was sent at quite an early age. At the school, she was rated as an

outstanding child not only in academics but also in other spheres. Later, she was sent to Oxford for higher education where again she excelled. She also took keen interest in sports, especially Hockey, Cricket and Tennis and won several championships. At the age of 20, she returned to her homeland. She could speak Italian and French fluently and could play the piano and the violin proficiently. She was recognised as a connoisseur of things, cultural and aesthetic.

### **Her Role in the Freedom Movement**

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur had inherited much of her nationalist fervour from her father. Her interest in politics was aroused due to the frequent visits, to her father's house, of many stalwarts of the Congress Party, particularly Gopal Krishna Gokhale. It was Gokhale perhaps who left a deep impression on the young mind of Rajkumari. This is evident from her own acknowledgement as she had, referring to Gokhale, once remarked: "The flames of my passionate desire to see India free from foreign domination were fanned by him."

Having joined politics, she took an active part in the Salt campaign and was arrested in Bombay. As a true patriot, she condemned the 'Communal Award' given by Ramsay Macdonald when he was Premier in 1932, regarding the political rights of major and minor communities in India. Opposing the Award she moved the following resolution at All India Women's Conference held on 23 December, 1932:

This Conference stands united (i) in its protest against the communal award as touching the womanhood of India, and (ii) in its demand for a system of joint electorate.

In 1937, she went to 'Bannu', in the North West Frontier Province, to advocate the Congress Party's case in which she was convicted, on 16 July, 1937, on a charge of sedition and sentenced to imprisonment. During the 'Quit India' Movement in 1942, she led many processions and in one of them, was subjected to ruthless lathi charge in Simla. Subsequently, she was arrested and jailed. The hardships of the jail, which she

had to undergo, were, however, too much for her. She was therefore, put under house arrest in Simla.

### **As a Disciple of Mahatma**

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur came under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi in her early life and became one of his closest disciples. The first glimpse she had of the Mahatma was at a Congress session in Bombay. So much was she impressed by the views, ideas and the magnetic personality of Gandhiji that she later remarked: "There was a quiet strength, an earnestness and deep humility about him that went straight to my young heart.... I feel I have owed allegiance to him and to his cause from that time on." She had a very deep, intimate and emotional relationship with the Mahatma. Gandhiji too used to confide in her as is evident from one of his letters to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur in which he had written, "My special function from childhood.... has been to make woman realize her dignity. I was once a slave holder myself but *Ba* proved an unwilling slave and thus opened my eyes to my mission. Her task was finished. Now I am in search of a woman who would realize her mission," and asked: "Are you that woman, will you be one?"

It was no wonder, therefore, that the Gandhian era produced so many women leaders of eminence. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was among the privileged few who had, for many years, enjoyed and shared the close confidence of Gandhiji. If one can talk of a person who really influenced anybody, it was perhaps Gandhiji who performed this miracle in the case of Rajkumari.

She had come into contact with Gandhiji in the stirring days of martial law in 1919, soon after the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy. By this time, she was quite clear about her political convictions and requested *Bapu* to let her join his Ashram. Gandhiji, however, felt that she was still attached to all her finery and crepes and that her parents were not too keen on her joining the Ashram. Having been denied the privilege to become an inmate of *Bapu's Ashram*, her determination to join the Mahatma became stronger. She, therefore, plunged herself into movements aimed at the emancipation of women in general

and Harijans of Simla in particular. Being a silver tongued orator of high order, she delivered a number of political speeches at various platforms espousing the philosophy of Gandhiji. Finally, in 1934, she succeeded in joining the Sewagram Ashram. Subsequently, for sixteen long years, she worked as Gandhiji's Secretary. During this time, she campaigned for opening of more girls' schools and abolition of child marriage and polygamy. In this venture, she was obviously inspired by Gandhiji who wanted her to assimilate herself more and more with the common masses and get to know the evils prevalent in the then Indian society.

Gandhiji was not only a very loving and affectionate person but also a hard task-master. It was from him that Rajkumari Amrit Kaur learnt the art of perfection. At the feet of the Mahatma, she learnt to work hard and to devote all energies to the service of the poor and the needy. She took to Khadi, cut her hair short and plunged into the freedom movement. These spartan Gandhian habits stood her in good stead later on in her life. Though her bearing remained aristocratic even in her simple khadi garb, yet her adapting to a simple way of life in Sewagram inspired many of her contemporaries to join the Mahatma in his crusade for Harijan uplift. In her letter from Sewagram dated 11 April, 1940, addressed to one Mrs. Rallia Ram of Punjab she wrote,

May I ask you to take up khadi work in right earnest in Punjab—wearing it, using it, hawking it and above all, spinning too? I wish we women would help Gandhiji in this way.

Gandhiji had indeed a deep impact on Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. Although her Association with Bapu—her mentor, guardian and friend—came to an end only with his assassination in 1948, his philosophy and thoughts, however, remained her proud treasure till the last breath of her life.

#### **As a Union Minister**

After India became independent, Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru invited her, in view of her contribution to the national life, to become a Member of his Council of Ministers.

She thus acquired the distinction of being the first woman member of the Indian Cabinet after independence and held the portfolio of Health from 15 August, 1947 to 6 May, 1950 and again 23 June, 1950 to 17 April, 1957. As Minister of Health, she worked earnestly and with all the zest and devotion for the betterment of the health of the people of India. It was as a result of her dedicated efforts that the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in New Delhi—one of the best in Asia—came into existence. While piloting the AIIMS Bill in Lok Sabha on 18 February, 1956, she had observed:

It has been one of my cherished dreams that for post-graduate study and for the maintenance of high standards of medical education in our country, we should have an Institute of this nature in India which would enable our young men and women to have their background with the necessary experience that we would like to have of work in villages and the impetus that we would like to give to them to do research in the various spheres of medical education.... This is a pure, honest attempt to bring to this country good standards of medical education and to make them available to all.

Describing the modern systems of medicine as an effective means for proper diagnosis, prevention of diseases and promotion of health, she said:

Medical education in its theory as well as in its practice, is based on the utilisation of the contributions from the other physical and biological sciences. With the continued progress that has been taking place in both these fields, modern medicine has been made and is making enormous strides towards increasing efficiency in regard to diagnosis and in regard to treatment and prevention of disease, as well as promotion of positive health.

She was, however, in no way opposed to the indigenous systems of medicine. She was a person with scientific temper

as is amply reflected in her views expressed in Rajya Sabha on 3 May, 1956, when she said:

We have brought out today an Indian Pharmacopoeia of Indian medicines produced by people who are not Vaidyas. I would like Vaidyas and Hakims to produce their medicines in a scientific way.

For full one decade (1947-57), she held the portfolio of Health during which she piloted various welfare measures, for child welfare, for Nurses Training Centres, and for the control of diseases like malaria, leprosy and other venereal diseases.

Amrit Kaur had a deep concern for nurses and nursing services in the country. In 1954, she set up a Committee to study all aspects of nursing service and nursing education and expected the highest standards of behaviour from them engaged as they were in the noble cause of attending to the sufferings of the sick and the diseased. Her endeavour to promote nursing as a profession is clearly reflected in her speech made on 18 November, 1957 in Rajya Sabha on the Indian Nursing Council Amendment Bill, when she said:

The question of status of Nursing profession, the question of giving gazetted status to nurses occupying high offices in the State is something for which I worked very hard... Maintenance of a high standard of nursing is very necessary.

Welfare of the humanity in general was the mission of her life and as Minister of Health she worked hard particularly for the upliftment of the women, the children, the poor and the needy. She once said:

My ideal happiness, therefore, consists in doing good always, even to those who do evil to us, in loving our neighbours as ourselves and doing to all men as we would have them to us, in being gentle, merciful and forgiving, in never boasting but always humbly trying to do right in everything.

During her ten years of tenure as the Union Minister of Health (1947-57), she took keen interest in a variety of important issues and legislative measures, as for instance Sterilisation of the Unfit Bill, B.C.G. Vaccination Campaign,

Report of Jaundice Enquiry Committee, Food situation, Countess of Dufferein's Fund Bill, 1957 and Annual Reports of Employees' State Insurance Corporation, and so on. The suggestions made and solutions given by her on these issues were accepted by the House with great respect. During this period, several important bills relating to her Ministry such as The Indian Medical Council Bill, Indian Red Cross Society (Amendment) Bill, Government Premises (Eviction) Amendment Bill, Prevention of Food Adulteration Bill, 1954, Delhi (Control of Building Operation) Bill, 1955, Delhi Municipal Corporation Bill, 1957, Orphanages and Other Charitable Homes Bill, 1959, Children Bill, 1959, Lady Harding Medical College and Hospital Bill, 1959, Geneva Convention Bill, 1960, Drugs (Amendment) Bill, 1961 etc. were discussed at length and later passed by Parliament.

### **As a Parliamentarian**

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was a member of the Constituent Assembly of India (1946-50), the Provisional Parliament (1950-52), Lok Sabha (1952-57) and Rajya Sabha (1957-62). A dedicated Parliamentarian, Rajkumari always evinced keen interest in the on-going business of the House. For Parliamentary debates and discussions, she used to come fully prepared. Her speeches in the Parliament not only gave a new direction to the Indian polity and made it richer but also provided food for thought. Her stature and acumen as statesman, her parliamentary skill and eloquence, coupled with deep understanding and constructive approach to the problems facing the country are all suggestive of a great Parliamentary personality.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was always supported what was right and just. The interests of the common man, his tasks, urges, hopes, aspirations and even frustrations and deprivations were what mattered more to her than anything else. This is quite evident from the speech she once made in Rajya Sabha on the subject of food adulteration:

Everybody, whether they have much or little—and the ones who have much are very few and far between—are willing to tighten

their belt so that the country may progress as speedily as possible but what hurts the average person is that whatever he buys by way of food is not costly but adulterated. Surely, something tangible should and could, and what is more, must be done to give people their hard earned money's worth for what they spend.....Surely, it is high time for the Ministers concerned. Home, Food and Health to get together and advise strong measures to check what is a growing evil. Adulteration, at any rate where food is concerned, seems to be done at the source and it should be possible for Government to do something about it. I would plead for more attention being paid to integrity in every sphere. Without integrity, both moral and intellectual, there can be no progress in our country.

She had well-defined views on the various issues which hampered the progress of the country. Speaking on the Dowry Prohibition Bill, she said:

How terrible is the situation in India in regard to dowries?.....I want the girls who are being forced to marry somebody and whose parents have been forced to give a dowry not to commit suicide, but to stand up and say, "I am not going to marry"....

She always thought of providing a healthy condition and environment to make the life better for the people. For their proper development, her belief in the axiom "Prevention is better than cure" is very clearly brought when she spoke in the General Budget (1956-57). She said:

I have taken up a nationwide programme for the supply of pure drinking water to the nation. That is because if you get a pure drinking water supply, if you can get decent houses to live if you can have fresh air and sunshine, you will reduce disease much quicker than you can by increasing your beds for hospitals. With the increase of population and the increase of diseases that the people suffer from if they want to go to the hospitals. I must cater for curative side also because everything has to go on pari passu. I repeat that the emphasis laid by my Ministry has been very greatly on the preventive side.

A multifaceted personality encompassing vast range of activities and concerns, she enriched the content and quality of the deliberations and left a deep imprint as a forceful debater in the House and earned laurels from one and all.

### **As a Social Reformer**

Apart from politics, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur had actively involved herself in social reform and social welfare activities and in particular the cause of upliftment of women. A founder member of the All India Women's Conference (AIWC), she was also the Secretary of the AIWC in 1930 and served as its President during 1931-33. She not only helped in building this organisation but also widened its horizon so as to reach every nook and corner of the country. She represented AIWC abroad on so many occasions that it was said of her that "She is the conference and the conference is her". Rajkumari Amrit Kaur transformed AIWC into a forum for the propagation of peace and communal harmony. In the AIWC session at Abetabad, she once observed that "friendly and loving relations between Hindu and Muslim sisters of that part of the world give that lie to those who would wish to divide India". A champion of women's rights, she was a downright realist.

Besides, being a relentless fighter for the women's cause, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was also a zealous crusader for universal education. She was a trustee of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and Nankana Sahib Education Trust, and a founder-member of Lady Irwin College of Delhi. She had great concern for women's education and was the moving spirit behind a number of legislations for women's rights and education that were introduced in and passed by Parliament. Exhorting women to get rid of rituals and dogmas which hindered the path of progress, she, in her convocation Address to the Lady Irwin College, Delhi, observed:

I would have you remember that women must be true to religion, not the religion of ritual and dogma but to the religion that warms the heart, that lights the faith and tempers justice with mercy in the affairs of man.

An advocate of free and compulsory education both for men and women, she believed that a woman could not be suppressed for long. Referring to the reforms that she would like to be introduced in the system, she said:

In the realm of educational reform, we have urged ever since our inception that there should be free and compulsory education. Again as far as proper facilities for the female education are concerned, until such time as universal, free and compulsory primary education as well as adequate supply of infant and girl's school equipped with trained women teachers are introduced, we must continue to do our utmost to have the system of education in our existing institutions changed.

In one of her articles as early as in 1942, she enunciated the embryonic ideas of women's uplift in the following words:

Women must be made aware of what a pitiful condition our country is in and what part they have to play in making her free. They must be made aware of their latent strength. It is my firm conviction that unless and until we develop within ourselves the belief that moral stamina is able to withstand all the onslaughts of physical might, we shall not be able to divest ourselves of the inferiority complex which millions of years of man's domination has bred in us nor we will be able to help in bringing in a world where might shall no longer be right.

Amrit Kaur's efforts were not confined to any given field; she extended her reforming-spirit in all directions. Her interest in the field of health and medicine is reflected in her founding of the Anti-Tuberculosis Centre and the Centre for Child Welfare of the Jullunder (now Jhallender) Municipality as early as in 1934. She was also associated with the Indian Red Cross Society and was Founder Member and Chairperson in the 1950s. In 1957, she was awarded the Court Bernadotte Gold Medal by the League of Red Cross Societies consisting of 14 countries of Europe, Asia and Africa for her outstanding contribution and dedicated service. She represented India in the World Health Assembly and International Red Cross Assembly. She was also instrumental in setting up of the India Council of Child Welfare and was its founder President from 1948 to 1958, during which she helped to coordinate and promote child welfare activities in the country. She stressed the importance of not merely paying

lip-service to the cause of children's welfare, but to promote well conceived steps for their furtherance. In a talk over the All India Radio on 14 November, 1955, she said:

Children know no barriers of race, creed or language. Poverty and riches have no meaning for them. Let us emulate them in cultivating this virtue in ourselves. Only then we will be worthy to give them the nourishment—physical, mental and moral, which they need.

### **A Lover of Sports**

Rajkumari was also a great lover of sports and was especially good at cricket, hockey and tennis. Sports in her view was as essential as studies. She once said:

No school or college should be recognised by the State Government unless it has adequate grounds for games and sports. Facilities for games which do not involve heavy expenditure can easily be provided everywhere including in rural areas. I would plead strongly for more assistance and attention to encourage girls to participate in sports. Our youth must also be encouraged to take up games and athletics as a career. If all this is done, sports and games will *ipso facto* become part and parcel of the life of all sections of our vast population.

A founder-President of the National Sports Club of India (1949-59), she played a key role in the promotion of sports activities. She was also the Chairperson of the National Institute of Sports, the founder Chairperson of the Rajkumari Sports Coaching Scheme from 1953 to 1961. She also had the occasion to serve as the President of the All India Lawn Tennis Federation and the Table Tennis Association of India. So much was her love for sports that once she entered a public meeting in Delhi in a sportless white dress, kits and with tennis racquet in her hands.

### **Fearless Crusader and a Real Humanitarian**

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur's greatness was her simplicity and intense love for her fellow countrymen. She had equal concern for all people, irrespective of their caste, creed, sex, religion or social status. She was an ideal combination of several virtues—

love, humility, compassion and kindness and righteousness. A humanitarian to the core, her heart always went to the poor and the distressed. She spent a major part of her life in the upliftment of women and the eradication of social evils.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was equally concerned about the 'untouchables' as Gandhiji used to address them often. Lamenting that for centuries the untouchables in India had been denied the benefits of basic education or a proper life, she once wrote:

Our sympathies should naturally go out to those who have been oppressed simply by reason of their caste....It is crying shame that these people who cater for our wellbeing and without whose service we would not be able to exist, are relegated in most towns to live in the most abominable dwellings, if, indeed, we can call their hovels by the name...Their proper education is a certain way of making them get rid of that psychology of inferiority from which they as a class suffer.

Rajkumari was vehemently opposed to the social evils prevalent in the then Indian society such as *Pardah* and *child marriage*. She described child marriage as 'canker eating into the very vitals of our national life'. About *Pardah*, she once said:

If I believe in dictatorship, one of the first ugly customs that should be abolished straightaway would be *Pardah*. Men should pause to think before they advocate its continuance while every woman under its sway should rebel against it.

She went on to say:

The abolition of child marriage and *Pardah* will therefore not only improve the health of millions of women but will remove two of the main obstacles in the spread of female education.

Exhorting the educated and the well-off women to make efforts for the uplift of the poor amongst them, she once wrote:

My plea to my own sisters is to give every moment of their spare time to the poor women and bring to them the message of hope and cheer, which they surely need.

Though born in a princely family Rajkumari Amrit Kaur always believed in and led a simple and austere life without any extraneous splendour. She deplored extravagance in a developing country like India which was struggling to revamp its economy and to provide at least two course meal to all its citizens. Snubbing those engaged in wasteful expenditure, she observed:

It is monstrous to think of parties and extravagance on food stuffs, on clothes, on jewellery and on other idle pleasures, when most of our people have no wherewithal to eat even one full meal a day or provide milk to their children or sufficient clothing or shelter for themselves.

She was all for the use of *Swadeshi* products and wanted people to realise its intrinsic merit. It was with this end in view that she propagated spinning of *Khadi* to mend the broken warp and woof of the fabric of our national life. She did not want people to blindly ape the West and felt that every Indian must have a sense of national pride. They should wear their own dress and use their own language. She thus wanted to evolve a new India whose moral, spiritual and cultural values would emanate from our own soil.

The real human personality of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur is revealed in the following citation read out by the University Orator at the 209th Commencement at Nassau Hall on 12 June, 1956:

She had rendered distinguished service in the social development of her nation's service, she has gone amongst the poor and the weak, the mothers and children, the sick and the starving, not only with messages of hope and faith but also with substantial and highly effective programmes of action. For eighteen years' disciple and secretary to Mahatma Gandhi, she shared the work of making India politically free. Now she carries on the immense task of raising the standards of health and well-being of the people of her native land. She stands thus as a living image of faith, hope and love—believing like St. Paul that the greatest of these is love.

## As an Exponent of One World

A true cosmopolitan by nature, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur believed that all human beings were the citizens of one world. In her own words:

Humanity is one in spite of its varying nationalities and if there is to be peace we must strive to bring into being a world where there shall be goodwill. The colour bar, the mad lust for domination can only disappear if human values are appraised higher than material gain.

Speaking at the UNESCO Conference (London) which she attended in capacity as the Deputy Leader of the Indian Delegation she said:

No structure of society can be stable one that has not the roots deep in moral and spiritual values of life; our children must be educated to appreciate which is of a permanent worth...Geographical barriers may have been conquered but oceans of hate and misunderstanding still divide us. If education is to play the part, it should play in the refashioning of the world it must itself be refashioned.

Remarkable for clarity of thought and lucidity of expression her speech evoked appreciation from the audience, one of whom later wrote to Mahatma Gandhi to say that it had raised the tone and set a new standard for speeches at the Conference.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur also led the Indian Delegation to the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951 and 1953 and was elected its President and that of the World Health Assembly (WHA) in May, 1950. In her address to the fourth World Health Assembly, delivered on 7 May, 1951, she brought out lucidly the values of international cooperation particularly for fighting diseases and ailments afflicting the world so that it becomes a happy place to live in.

'Amor Omnia vincit' (Love conquers all) was her motto in life. In her inaugural address at the opening of the United Nations branch in Delhi on 26 June, 1956, she philosophised:

Peace is indivisible and the security and welfare of each country exist only in terms of world security and welfare. Cooperation must be universal or it is not cooperation. The United Nations stands as a symbol of this high endeavour. It beckons to all to follow the right way. In the history of mankind there comes a time when nations determine their own destiny and are called upon to make choice.

She was also awarded the service medal by the International Union for Education and received the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Letters from Universities of Delhi, Princeton, Smith College, Western College, Macmurry College, USA. She was also a Honorary Fellow, American Public Health Association and was awarded a certificate of recognition for her services rendered by the University of Winconsin, USA. The Princeton University conferred on her the Doctorate of Laws *honoris causa*.

### **Tributes and Homages**

As one thinks of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur these words from the revered Bible come to one's mind:

....a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in dreary land.

She was known for her gentleness, humility and objectivity. In her demise on 6 February, 1964, the nation lost a politician of eminence, a great social worker and a personality endowed with a cool mind and balanced views and the Indian womanhood best represented. On 10th February, 1964, both Houses of Parliament mourned the passing away of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. In the Rajya Sabha, the Deputy Chairman Shrimati Violet Alva paying tributes to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur referred to her as:

....a brilliant woman, her personality sensitive and refined and her spirit dauntless. Her strength lay in her vigour, courage and

outspokenness,... Talented and versatile with a spirit of self-sacrifice, she gave herself wholly to working for the people of India.

On the same day, Lok Sabha also deeply mourned the passing away of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and placed on record her immense contribution to our national life.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was very intimately associated with the YWCA of India. She had, as a matter of fact, rendered yeoman's service to this organisation. Recalling her dedication to the cause of this institution, Shrimati Ivy Khan, General Secretary, YWCA (India) had observed:

What a multitude of people Rajkumari belonged to and the innumerable causes which she had made her own. The country has lost a leader and the world a great woman...It is hard to realise that someone whom we loved and to whom we turned for counsel, upon whose wisdom we were so very dependent, has stepped out of life....she is not dead—life has but set her free.

Remembering her association with Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Smt. B. Tarabai, a renowned social worker, said:

.....the quality which appealed to me most was her graciousness, straightforwardness, and humaneness.... Rajkumari was personification of grace and charm.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who was deeply impressed by the extraordinary qualities of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur once wrote:

There is always a touch of distinction in what she says or writes, the mark of a sensitive person who has fought her way through many of life's problems....she made the vast field of women's emancipation and progress her own and has been one of the builders of the women's movement in India. From this she drifted inevitably into the wider domain of India's freedom movement for without that freedom there could be no emancipation for man or woman.

In her passing away the Mother India lost one of her most dedicated daughters, having outstanding qualities of head and heart. She, however, remains immortal even today in the memory of all those who shared her ideals and have had the opportunity to work with her. The zeal and devotion with which

she rendered service to the humanity shall continue to inspire generations to come.

Yehudi Menuhin, the world renowned violinist and Nehru Award Winner has very aptly remarked:

May India produce many more such universal and invaluable people and may it strive to keep alive the memory of one—Rajkumari Amrit Kaur who was so rare and lovely example to us all.

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**PART TWO**  
**ARTICLES**

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# The Karmayogi Disciple of Mahatma Gandhi

—B.N. Pande\*

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Rajkumari Amrit Kaur belonged to a culturally advanced royal family of the Kapurthala State of Punjab. Her father, Raja Sir Harnam Singh, was a prominent social reformer and a political figure of Punjab. Amrit Kaur was born on 2 February, 1889 in Lucknow. Her father sent her to England for studies, where she was admitted to Sherborne School for Girls and later joined college in London. After completing her studies she returned to India and devoted herself to philanthropic activities and to the cause of women's emancipation.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was an honoured friend of her father and often used to stay at their home. He ardently admired Gandhi and described him to Amrit Kaur as "a man of great potentiality" and "one day soon you will, I hope, see a man who is destined to do very great things for India. With this at the back of her mind she seized the very first opportunity, she could, of being presented to Gandhiji. It was the first Congress session in Bombay in 1915, which she had had the privilege of attending. There the tumultuous ovation went to the great Tilak who had just returned from Andamans. Gandhiji spoke a few words about Indians in South Africa. With no loud speakers in those days his speech was more or less inaudible except to those on the dais or in the front rows of the audience. But there was a quiet strength, an earnestness, and a deep humility about him that went straight to Amrit Kaur's young heart;

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\*Shri B.N. Pande is a member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha).

ever since she owed allegiance to him and his way of life, even though circumstances did not permit her actually joining him till much later.

Gandhiji came to Jullundur after the massacre of Jallianwalla Bagh. By then he was the idol of the people. The indisciplined crowds had trodden on him. At 6 p.m. he was suffering from a badly bruised foot and high fever. Amrit Kaur's doctor brother, who happened to be Civil Surgeon there, begged of him to postpone his journey by 24 hours. "How can I break faith with so many who are waiting for me at various places?"—came the quick reply. "And I assure you I shall be free from fever by 10 p.m. which is when my train leaves". She sent him a hot water bottle, and begged of him to take it with him for the journey. The next morning the bottle came back with a note of thanks written by Mahadev Desai in which has said: "You will be glad to know that the fever actually went down before he left Jullundur; so he had no need of the bottle afterwards."

His second visit to Jullundur the same year brought him to see Amrit Kaur because he had heard she was ill. He asked her to give all her 'foreign finery' to him to burn and take to 'Khadi'. She pleaded that burning was quite wrong. His reply was: "Not even when these things stand for the chains of our slavery? But if you will not burn, at least give it to me, and I will send it to poor Indians in South Africa, and you take to spinning and khadi". Amrit Kaur says: "Alas! that his words, at that time, fell on more or less stony ground. I tried to wear khadi but found it too coarse for my fastidious taste. In those days there were none of the fine Andhra or Bihar muslims such as there are today. His words carried power in them, however, I learnt how to spin and used to give my yarn to be woven for cloth for a poor child or woman. I began buying Khadi for dusters, towels and any rough use in the house." Thus she became his great admirer and was immensely influenced by him.

Later, she became his close associate and disciple when Gandhiji shifted to Sevagram. She worked as his Private Secretary and Public Relations Officer for sixteen long years. Her efficiency as a Secretary is evident from a letter to her by Gandhiji that says:

*"Chi. Amrit, an ideal secretary keeps her chief straight where he is going astray. She hovers round him and catches all the movements about him, picks up his papers even torn-lest he might have torn important ones in mistake, collects all she had given him if it is to be found anywhere. Therefore, she leaves after him and seeks what she has left behind and, if not owned by anybody else, collects it. Now I was right in correcting you yesterday, but wholly wrong showing disappointment or irritation. Forget the wrong and treasure the right. What I have said is by way of indication. Follow the spirit of this note, and you will be an ideal secretary."*

"This is my birthday present which goes loaded with all the good wishes that I am capable of conceiving. Love, Bapu".

"I doubt if anyone can possess a more unique and treasurable birthday gift" says Amrit Kaur.

After Mahatma Gandhiji's martyrdom Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru utilised her abilities and devotion to service as his colleague in his cabinet; she thus became the first woman member and held the portfolio of Health from 1947 to 1957. She was elected member of the First Lok Sabha from Mandi Mahasu of Himachal Pradesh (1952-57). Later she became member of Rajya Sabha from 1957 to 1962.

During her tenure as Union Health Minister, she expanded the medical studies. The health care programmes were extended in all directions. Many new medical colleges were opened. Many new hospitals were built. Eradication of Leprosy programmes were undertaken. She was also elected as the President of World Health Assembly. (WHA) in 1950. She organised the International Red Cross Conference in New Delhi in 1957. Besides this, she was elected the founder member and

first chairperson of Managing Body of Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS). She was also instrumental in opening the Blood-Banks in various State capitals. Under her guidance the Health Ministry was humming with activities.

On 6 February, 1964, this *Karmayogi* disciple of Mahatma Gandhi died, leaving a legacy of memories and inspirations for others to follow on the path of goodness and virtue.

## Rajkumari Amrit Kaur

—Dr. Sushila Nayar

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Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was the first Union Minister of Health in Independent India. She was a trusted Lieutenant of Mahatma Gandhi and an eminent Social Worker. A prominent freedom fighter, she was born in the lap of luxury as the only daughter of Raja Sir Hamnam Singh of the Ahluwalia princely family of Kapurthala. But she turned her back on the comforts of an affluent household fairly early in her life and became a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi. She was introduced to him at the Bombay Congress in 1915 and joined his Sevagram Ashram in 1934.

Raja Sir Hamnam Singh had seven sons and an only daughter, Amrit Kaur. He had accepted Christianity and therefore had lost the right to Kapurthala throne (Gaddi). The British Government however appointed him as the manager of Oudh Estates which were more valuable than the state held by the Kapurthala princely family. The father and the brothers doted on Amrit.

Amrit Kaur was born on 2 February, 1889 at Lucknow. She was a Christian by birth but had equal respect for all religions. She had her early education in England where she went to Sherborne School for Girls, Dorsetshire. Later she joined a college in London. She was very fond of sports and was an excellent tennis player. She won many championships. No wonder therefore that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru added the portfolio of sports in addition to Health and Local Self Government when in 1947 she joined his Cabinet. She was the

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\*Dr. (Smt.) Sushila Nayar is a former Union Minister.

founder Chairperson of Rajkumari's Sports Coaching Scheme and the Governing body of the National Institute of Sports.

Raja Sir Harnam Singh was "a pious and pure Christian". He had many friends among the learned patriotic Indians of all religions including Gopal Krishna Gokhale, whom Gandhiji considered his *guru* in politics. Gokhale often came to Raja Sir Harnam Singh's home and Amrit was thus exposed to nationalist ideas and aspirations quite early in her life. Writing about her father's influence on her, she says, "The flames of my passionate desire to see India free from foreign domination were fanned by him." She inherited much of her fame and position from her father and supplemented it with her own hard work.

As a Christian, Amrit Kaur was not a fanatic and followed in all earnestness the doctrine of "*serva dharma samahava*" (equal respect for all religions) so much so that in Gandhiji's Ashram, many like myself did not know for many years that she was a Christian. She used to regularly take part in the Ashram prayers which included selections from scriptures of all religions although the dominant position was given to the Sanskrit verses from the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagawat Gita*.

In public life Amrit Kaur's interest was in social work especially the upliftment of women and welfare of children. It took precedence over her interest in politics. She was active in the All India Women's Conference from 1927 and in 1930. She served as Secretary of the A.I.W.C. and later in 1938 became its President. From 1931 to 1933, she was President of the All India Women's Education Fund Association, and in 1932 gave evidence before Lord Lothian's Franchise Committee on behalf of Women's Organisations. In 1933, she testified before the Joint Select Committee of British Parliament on Indian Constitutional Reforms as a member of the delegation of women's organisations.

She was the first woman to be appointed as a member of the Advisory Board of Education by the Government of India and served on it for several years till she resigned from it in 1942. She was also a member of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, and attended the UNESCO meet in London in 1945 and in Paris in 1946 as a member of the Indian delegation. She was keenly interested in women's education.

She had come under Gandhiji's spell in the early thirties. I was a student in Delhi and often went to Gandhiji's evening prayers at the Harijan Sewak Sangh Headquarters at Kingsway Camp in old Delhi during his Delhi visits whenever he stayed there. I used to see her there sitting near Bapu dressed in fine silks and wearing long earrings as also other beautiful jewellery. All this changed when she came to live in the Ashram. I never spoke to her in those early days. She was a Princess, too high for an ordinary student.

Under Gandhiji's influence Rajkumari Amrit Kaur took to khadi. She sat on the floor and ate the Ashram food. She was made a member of the Board of Trustees of the All-India Spinner's Association. She learnt spinning and took part in scavenging in the Ashram.

Amrit Kaur had joined to Congress under Gandhiji's inspiration and took an active part in the Congress activities for the rest of her life. She took part in Salt Satyagraha in 1930 and was arrested in Bombay. She condemned the Communal Award of the British Government after the Second Round Table Conference in 1932. In 1937 she went to Bannu in the North West Frontier Province (N.W.F.P.) to promote the Congress Party's cause in which she was arrested and convicted on 16 July, 1937 on a charge of sedition and sentenced to imprisonment. In the course of the Quit India Movement in 1942, she led many processions, and in one of these was beaten up in a ruthless lathi charge. She was arrested at Kalka and after eight weeks of solitary confinement in a dirty prison, where she lost 7.5 kgs. in weight, she was kept in detention in her own house at Shimla. The ill-treatment meted out to her so upset Pandrel

Moor, an English Civil Servant, that he protested against it and lost his job.

Gandhiji was released in May, 1944. He met the Viceroy and later in 1946, along with Maulana Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and other leaders and had prolonged talks with the Viceroy and other representatives of the Government and an agreement was reached under which an interim Government was formed with Jawaharlal Nehru as the Vice President and virtual Prime Minister although, in theory, the Viceroy remained the head of the Government of India. Amrit Kaur's name was included as Health Minister of India in Pt. Nehru's cabinet, but it was turned down by the Viceroy.

Gandhiji and his party were Amrit Kaur's guests at Shimla and we stayed in her beautiful villa at Summer Hill where she lived with her brother Shamsher Singh and his family. She was a charming and a gracious hostess and was meticulous in seeing to everyone's needs to the minutest detail. In 1947, India became free and Amrit Kaur became the first Minister of Health. She was a member of the Constituent Assembly and a member of the Assembly's Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights, Minorities and Tribals and Excluded areas. The Constituent Assembly also functioned as the Parliament till the first General Election held in 1952. Amrit Kaur took an active part in its deliberations.

As Union Health Minister she did an excellent job. The Red Cross used to have the Viceroy as its President. So the President of India became the President of the Indian Red Cross after the 1952 elections and Amrit Kaur, the Health Minister, became its chairperson. She looked after the day-to-day work and strengthened the Red Cross as well as St. John's Ambulance Corps. Both these Organisations, under the inspiration of Amrit Kaur and Lady Mountbatten, did yeomen's service in helping the refugees who migrated from Pakistan as a result of the Partition of India in 1947.

She had become Chairman of the Indian Red Cross even before the 1952 election when Rajaji took over as Governor General on Mountbatten's return of England. She also became the Vice-Chairman of the League of the Red Cross Societies from 1950 and was awarded (1957) Count Bernadotte Gold Medal by the League of Red Cross Societies. She was awarded Gold Medals by National Red Cross Societies of 14 countries in Europe, Africa and Asia. She became Chairman, Executive Committee, St. John's Ambulance Association and was Chief Commissioner, St. John's Ambulance Brigade from 1948. She was honoured all over the World and received Honorary Doctorate from the University of Delhi and in the USA from Princeton University, Smith College, Western College and MacMurray College, Jackson Ville. She was also made an Honorary Fellow of the American Public Health Association.

Amrit Kaur had always taken a keen interest in the welfare of women and children. She was instrumental in the setting up of the Indian Council of Child Welfare and was its founder President from 1948 to 1958 to coordinate and promote child welfare activities in the country.

The British Empire Leprosy Relief Association, BELRA, used to be headed by the Viceroy. In free India, it was given the name of Hind Kushta Nivaran Sangh. Amrit Kaur was its chairperson and the President of India was its President. A Tuberculosis Association was also set up and she became its President in 1949. She encouraged and helped these organisations in every way and under her inspiration voluntary effort was mobilised and encouraged in all these areas to help those in need.

Amrit Kaur was a Member of Parliament in the first Lok Sabha, from 1952 to 1957 and later of Rajya Sabha from 1957 to 1962. She represented India in the World Health Assembly and International Red Cross Assembly with distinction. She initiated family planning and population control in India, laying emphasis on the Gandhian approach of self-control.

Amrit Kaur took a keen interest in legislation for the welfare of women and children. She was a strong opponent of child marriage and the dowry system and supported the Hindu Code Bill giving the right of inheritance of property to women. She stood for a better deal for widows and supported all progressive measures aimed at giving protection to women and children. But she believed that educating the people was more important than legislation. She was a strong advocate of women's education and considered the basic education as best suited for the needs of India.

Medical Education also got a boost during her ten years term of office as Union Health Minister. The Indian Council of Medical Research was strengthened and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences was established. Even after she ceased to be the Union Health Minister after the 1957 elections, she continued as the President of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences and the Tuberculosis Association of India and Chairperson of the Hind Kushta Nivaran Sangh and the Indian Red Cross.

I became Union Health Minister in 1962. When I took over from Shri Karmarker I got a message from her asking for an appointment. I had known her from close quarters in Gandhiji's Ashram. She was like a mother or elder sister to me. I said I would go to see her myself. She lived in one of the houses in Rashtrapati Bhawan. She asked me over for lunch.

She was a vegetarian. It was summer and her brother was away at Shimla. She had a tastefully furnished house and she served an excellent meal. We had a talk after the lunch. She discussed some problems of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, and we also talked of other things. After that, whenever she had anything to discuss she invariably invited me to a meal. Her brother was present on several occasions. He always complained that she was burning the candle at both ends. She needed rest, but would not take it. Her interest in health and sanitation, education and welfare of women and children kept her very busy. At the feet of the Mahatma she had learnt to work hard and devote all her energies to the service of the needy.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was keenly interested in improving the lot of the erstwhile untouchables, the Tribal people—the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Though born in a princely family, she was simple in her life and was a patriotic woman, who was instrumental in eradicating, or taking the country in the direction of eradication of many of our social evils. She was active till the end of her life. She passed away of a heart attack on 6 February, 1964 a few months before the death of Pandit Nehru. Her life will continue to inspire future generations.

## A Woman Dedicated to Gandhian Ideas

—Aruna Asaf Ali\*

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur belonged to a generation of pioneers. They belonged to well to do homes but gave up their affluent and sheltered lives and flocked to Gandhiji's banner when he called upon women to join the national liberation struggle in 1930. The Salt Satyagraha became a symbolic movement in which women were called upon to challenge British Government's tax on salt. Gandhiji proclaimed that there should be no tax on salt because it was a basic need of the common man. His *Dandi March* led to thousands of women in joining similar marches for defiance of the salt tax in various parts of the country.

After this there was no looking back for Indian women who participated in all the subsequent Satyagraha movements culminating in the *Quit India Struggle* which began in August, 1942. Though Rajkumari was a princess belonging to the feudal aristocracy of those days, she became a deciple of Gandhiji and decided to live the austere life of his ashrams.

I remember Rajkumari sitting at the spinning wheel and eating along with other ashramites the simple fare prescribed by Gandhiji. Gandhiji was a great disciplinarian who insisted that those who wanted to liberate the country must identify themselves with the hungry masses whether in the matter of dress or food.

\*Smt. Aruna Asaf Ali is a veteran freedom fighter and a renowned social worker.

Rajkumari was such an ardent believer in women's equal role in public life that she did not hesitate to criticize Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on this score. There was quite a controversy in 1936 over the composition of the working committee formed by Jawaharlal Nehru as Congress President. In that he included a number of socialists, but not a single woman member.

The protests were as amusing as the omission was surprising, considering Jawaharlal's well-known commitment to women's equality. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur in a letter of 30 May, 1936 from Simla informed Jawaharlalji that she was suggesting a communication to him from the All India Women's Conference "deplored the fact that a woman has not been appointed a member of the Working Committee." Writing from Bangalore on 29 May, 1936 Gandhiji said that no one—including himself—would have had the "courage to break the convention" of having a woman member. But the Mahatma's letter also suggested the explanation: "You went so far as to say that you did not believe in the tradition or convention of always having a woman and a certain number of Mussalmans on the Cabinet."

Ample amendments were soon made in the 29 sub-committees formed by the National Planning Committee, of which Jawaharlal was the chairman, to examine and make recommendations on various economic and social problems. The sub-committee on Women's Role in Planned Economy, formed on 16 June, 1939, was the largest. It had 30 members, all women. Whereas the other sub-committees consisted largely of experts in a technical sense, the women's sub-committee comprised persons who had been active in the women's movement.

On 3 April, 1937, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru:

I am very pleased about your programme regarding the Muslim masses. You should wherever possible have women on your provincial and local committees to get in touch with Muslim

women, who are not nearly so tainted with communal spirit as their menfolk. Throughout my work among women—extending now over a long period—I have not found the communal virus hampering us. Of course it is there in lesser degree, and if once the women are free from it the next generation will be healthy-minded.

However, events did not bear out the hope expressed by Amrit Kaur. It was not to be expected that the average Muslim woman, uneducated and living in seclusion in a subordinate position within the home, could withstand the prevailing current of separation. Though the women's movement in its initial phase had been free of communalism, it could not for long remain unaffected by the growing cleavage between the Congress and the Muslim League in the Political arena.

After independence Rajkumari became the first woman member of the Indian Cabinet I recall how, as Union Health Minister she went around to various countries to raise funds for AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences) which is now one of Asia's renowned centres of medical research. This institution is a standing memorial to Rajkumari's contribution to our post-independence development.

## Humility in Greatness

—Prof. N.G. Ranga\*

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Rajkumari Amrit Kaur came into Parliamentary life after the achievement of Swaraj and after having served as one of the Secretaries of Mahatma Gandhi for sixteen long years.

She rendered patriotic services through her faith in Gandhism and worked in the Gandhian constructive programmes. Though born in the Kapurthala Princely family, and was obliged to keep herself within the bounds of the conservative Indian family conventions, she was able to overcome the initial inhibitions of aristocracy and embraced Gandhian order of social service and public life.

She brought into our Parliament the charm of Indian culture and enriched our Parliamentary life as Minister by her sweet responses to our questions, criticisms and suggestions. As the first woman member of Independent India's first Council of Ministers, she brought credit to Indian womanhood by her responsible answers to our criticisms.

I had the opportunity to know her since 1930, when I was elected as a Member of the Central Legislative Assembly. She was then the Princess of Kapurthala with her English accents and manners of British aristocracy. She befriended me when the Simla Young Men's Christian Association refused accommodation to me on my refusal to drop my Indian dress. She invited me to dine with her in her bungalow and expressed her sympathy and appreciation of my stand.

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\* Prof. N.G. Ranga is a former Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha).

She continued to develop such contacts with Congress people. She congratulated me for insisting upon my right to join Viceroy Lord Irwin's banquet only with a *Gandhi Cap* on my head. The Viceroy was obliged thereafter to make the Madras Government to withdraw their ban on the *Gandhi Cap*. The knowledge of such imperial exhibitions of authoritarianism and prejudices must have impelled her to move towards Congress. Missionary evangelists like Rev. C.F. Andrews might have also helped her to seek the friendship of Gandhiji. It turned out to be a charming experience to see Rajkumari in Sevagram.

As the first Union Health Minister in Jawaharlal's Cabinet, she used to help our social workers, engaged in women's welfare and relief work with affection and appreciation.

We, the Gandhians, whether Parliamentarians or Congress workers, began to think highly of social workers, working in Government institutions especially because Rajkumari happened to be our Minister for Health. No wonder, therefore, that later when Smt. Durgabai, the dynamic Satyagrahi took over the chairmanship of the Social Welfare Board, we felt as if she and her Board breathed the charm and sweetness of Rajkumari.

## Rajkumari Amrit Kaur As I knew Her

—S. Nijalingappa\*

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Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was the first Union Health Minister in the first cabinet of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. She was also a prominent member of the Constituent Assembly and the Provisional Parliament. Although I was there, I did not have many occasions to be with her either in the Constituent Assembly or in the Provisional Parliament except meeting her once. I was impressed by her grace, kindness and sympathy.

It was only when she was the Health Minister that I happened to meet her several times in connection with the sanction of a private medical college to be started in Manipal near Udupi in South Canara district in Karnataka. Madhwava Pai, a brilliant doctor, wanted to establish a private medical college because there were not sufficient number of government medical colleges to cater to the growing need. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was very much against sanctioning private medical colleges. In spite of my pleading with her that the college to be named after Kasturba would satisfy all the requirements, she with all the grace at her command turned down my request. Finally when I was with her for the same purpose once again, recording machine which was imported just then was brought to her. She asked why I should not record something which I thought was important. I seized the opportunity and spoke about my opinion

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\*Shri S. Nijalingappa is a veteran freedom fighter and former Chief Minister of Karnataka and President, Indian National Congress.

of the lady, her kindness, her efficiency, her public spirit, her patriotism, services to the country, her sympathy for the poor and her deep interest and faith in Gandhian principles. When the record was replayed, she was very much pleased. I did not open my subject that day.

After a week or so when I again met her and reiterated my request that if a private medical college for the Canara district of Manipal was sanctioned, it would be one of the best, her opposition was not there and she was pleased to say she would consider the request. A few weeks later, by which time a thorough scheme was submitted to her, she was kind enough to tell me that in view of what all I had said and what all was submitted about the scheme for a good medical college, she had agreed to sanction the private medical college at Manipal.

I might add that the Kasturba Medical College at Manipal is one of the best in India. We must be grateful to Rajkumari for sanctioning possibly the first private medical college in India. I can never forget the grace and kindness with which she always treated me whenever I met her. I also found that she appreciated the other man's point of view better than most people I have known.

## A Tribute to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur —Rajmata Gayatri Devi•

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One of the outstanding personalities in India during the early part of the 20th century until her death early in the 1960s, was Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. She was born in the Royal family of Kapurthala. She was the daughter of Raja Harnam Singh. Her mother was the daughter of Golak Nath Chatterjee from Bengal.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur grew up with her large family in the Kapurthala Palace in Lucknow, which is now the Lucknow University and also in Jallandhar. She had two elder sisters who died in childhood and so she was the only daughter in a family of seven sons. Through the influence of his wife's family, Raja Harnam Singh became a Christian and his family was brought up in that faith.

At the age of eight she was sent to Sherborne School in England. She remained there for ten years and excelled in her studies and also in sports. She was particularly good at tennis. Later she became the President of the All India Tennis Association. On her return to India, she came home to live with her male dominated family in Lucknow, Jallandhar and Simla. She was fortunate in having an enlightened family. All her brothers distinguished themselves in public life. Her elder brother Raja Maharaj Singh became the Governor of Bombay. He was also the first Indian High Commissioner to South Africa and he led the Indian delegation to South Africa and to the United Nations. Another brother, Kanwar Daleep Singh was President of the International Court at The Hague and a Judge

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\*Rajmata Gayatri Devi is a former Member of Parliament.

of the Punjab Court. Yet another brother Kanwar Jasbir Singh was the first Indian Deputy Commissioner of Lucknow. He was about to become Chief Secretary of the United Provinces, when he sadly died. Amongst these luminaries of Raja Harnam Singh's offsprings it was, however, his daughter, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur who rose to the highest position of eminence. Hers was a household name. It seems incredible that with her aristocratic and privileged background and western upbringing, she was able to break the shackles of convention and leave the comforts of her princely homes to live in the Ashrams of Sabarmati and Wardha, where she performed the most routine tasks besides acting as Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur became one of Mahatma Gandhi's most ardent followers and pupils and worked tirelessly for the freedom of India. She served as Secretary to the Father of the Nation for sixteen long years.

In public life she devoted herself to social welfare and particularly the upliftment of Indian women. As President of the All India Women's Conference, she worked tirelessly for the eradication of child marriage, the parda system, polygamy, illiteracy and for the health of women and children. I had the privilege of serving under her as a representative from Rajasthan in the All India Women's Conference. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur's dynamic and practical leadership, her sincerity and earnest desire to improve the status of the Indian women was evident in her hard work and efforts to convince the conservative and backward elements in Indian society that radical changes must be made in the social system. It must be remembered that in those days, it was not easy to break the age-old customs, however, archaic, unpractical and demeaning they might be. But Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was undeterred. She tried and, to a great extent, succeeded.

After Independence, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur became the first Health Minister of India. She personally raised funds for the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. She was full of hope that it would be the best hospital in Asia. As Health Minister, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur worked tirelessly. She was also recog-

nised internationally and occupied high position in the Red Cross. She commanded the highest respect in this organisation and also in the World Health Organisation (WHO).

In the field of sports, it is not only the tennis that received her attention. She along with Anthony Demello, started the National Sports Club of India and was its Founder President during 1949-59. The National Stadium in Delhi was built during her stewardship. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was Vice President of the All India Council of Sports. The Rajkumari Coaching Scheme was her idea and if only her ideals had been followed and her ideas implemented, Indian sports and games would have been put on firm footing right from the time of Independence. As President of the All India Tennis Association, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was untiring in her efforts to promote the game and encourage the players. Tennis got a big boost during her tenure as President.

It was not only the public offices that she held and served with such distinction that has made Rajkumari Amrit Kaur a much respected person, but her whole personality endeared herself to those who knew her and worked with her. She was a true aristocrat and this came out in her manners of consideration, tolerance and understanding. She is an ideal which young women in India should follow.

It has been gratifying for me to be able to write this humble tribute to some one I knew, respected and admired.

## India's First Woman Cabinet Minister

**—Renuka Ray\***

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Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, the renowned tennis player who hailed from the Kapurthala princely family and was brought up in England was a well-known figure in our national life. When her family adopted Christianity, they were deprived of the succession to the Kapurthala title though they continued to enjoy the prestige at social status. I first met the aristocratic Rajkumari at the All India Women's Conference (AIWC) in Madras in the year 1932 when my grand mother Shrimati Sarala Ray was its President. Rajkumari was charming to everyone and as we came to know her better, we found that she was a wonderful person. She was then the Chairperson of the (AIWC's) Standing Committee. She was always kind to the younger members. One incident of those days stands out in my mind. Laxmi Menon and I brought forward a resolution enjoining that the A.I.W.C. members should wear Swadeshi apparel. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur on hearing it, immediately reacted and said "this smacks of politics, and A.I.W.C. is surely outside the sphere of politics". So the resolution on Swadeshi was adopted in guarded way. It was a strange contrast to the khadi clad Amrit Kaur who not many years after this, not only became a follower of Gandhiji but also took to simple and frugal living.

I had come to know Rajkumari Amrit Kaur in the earlier days when she was inspiring the women to help raise their status. Undoubtedly she played a very prominent part in arousing women and in fact provoking them to participate actively in the

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\*Smt. Renuka Ray is a former Member of Parliament.

women's cause. This she continued to do as a part and parcel of the national cause when she joined Bapu at the Wardha Ashram. She was soon to be known as a right hand man of Gandhiji in many ways and was working as one of his Secretaries. She had to experience the horrors of jail life under very strenuous circumstances but she stood it uncomplainingly.

When freedom came at last, she along with Hansa Mehta became a prominent member of the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly under the guidance of Dr. Ambedkar who was its Chairman. During those days, the fourteen women who were members of the Constituent Assembly met very often together and it was under her guidance that we were able to put up a united and concrete stand in regard to Women's rights. I remember how disappointed the women were as also Dr. Ambedkar, the Chairman, when it was finally decided that the uniform civil code for the citizens should be placed in the Directive Principles of State Policy under Part IV. This was done because unlike the Criminal Procedure Code which was already drawn up in detail during the British times, the civil code had to be drawn up adequately to cover all citizens. Dr. Ambedkar himself said that it would take almost one year before it could be completed for inclusion in the Constitution. The leaders particularly in Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru were anxious that the Constitution should be completed in the record time of two years and finally on 26 November, 1949 the Constitution was adopted.

However, the tragedy that occurred was that there was a difference amongst the Hindi speaking translators of the Constitution and so it took at least three more months and Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in spite of his disappointment reconciled himself to the view that it would be best to announce it on the day of 26th January, 1950 and call it Republic Day as

it was on that day years back that the Congress had passed the resolution on complete independence.

Apart from the uniform civil code for citizens, even such matters of utmost gravity and importance as the provisions for a free and compulsory education for children and equal justice and free legal aid and other important subjects were relegated to the Directive Principles of State Policy. Had we waited for another 6 or 8 months, the position might have been very different. For, to-day after 44 years of independence, the Directive Principles of State Policy are yet to be translated into reality.

To get back to those times when Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and Hansa Mehta and all the women who were then members of the Constituent Assembly and a very large number of men were extremely disappointed that vital matters had been left out of the Fundamental Rights. In the third reading of the bill Shri T.T. Krishnamachari aptly remarked that the Directive Principles of State Policy are "dust bin of our sentiment" and how true it was, we realize well to-day.

On 15 August, 1947 Rajkumari Amrit Kaur became the first woman Minister in the Cabinet of Independent India. She was assigned the portfolio of Health. At her request Dr. Jivraj Mehta, the well known physician, took up the job of Secretary to the Health Ministry and gave up his other work. He was the husband of Hansa Mehta. Rajkumari knew him very well and could trust him. She set herself very seriously to her assignment with the help of Dr. Mehta. However, it must be pointed out that the Health Ministry of those days was not widespread in its activities. With the help of Dr. Mehta and other colleagues, Rajkumari set herself to the formidable task of expanding the work of the Health Ministry and striving to help the Health Department of the State Government. Under the very restricted rules and conditions that obtained then, it was our truly complicated and difficult task to do and the odds against it were formidable. Rajkumari made a determined effort and, in consequence, some of those under her who had a soft job hitherto became very difficult to advise. But Gandhiji's Secretary was

not easy to contend with and was able to gradually bring in an entire change of outlook. It cost her heavily even in friendships with those who had a soft and easy living in the past in that Ministry. In spite of her heavy work in the Ministry, she kept up with us and very often she would ask me to come and have quick lunches or dinners with her. Her brother, Maharaj Singh and others were often present and demonstrated with her for not looking after herself at all. She kept a good home but there was no ostentation and extravagance. She felt responsible for me and others whom she had come to know in the All India Women's Conference. Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru used to count a great deal on Rajkumariji's help and she gave him unstinted support. At Panditji's insistence, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was sent to represent India at the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). In those days, Ministers or even the Prime Minister, rarely went as the head of a delegation to international bodies. But Panditji felt that Amrit Kaur would be a very suitable person at the UNESCO and this turned out to be more than true. She became extremely popular and her speeches at the UNESCO not only brought a great honour to India in general and Indian women in particular. She invariably utilised her opportunities when abroad to speak about the All India Women's Conference with which she had so much to do. She maintained a close association with it; however busy she was. I have repeated elsewhere and say again that in some countries other than the United States of America (U.S.A.), more than one illustrious person had said that "Rajkumari was the AIWC and the AIWC was her". It was true that during her time as an office-bearer the AIWC was first given the stature of an international organisation allied to the United Nations.

What was Rajkumari's contribution to Parliament? It may well be asked. I have already mentioned about her contribution to the Constituent Assembly and about her devoted work in the Health Ministry which she held as a Cabinet Minister. Apart from this, her speeches in Parliament were hailed from all sides. In fact, jealousy arose in the opposition benches because

so many opposition leaders wanted to hear her speak and not pay much attention to women on their own side.

I have written about Amrit Kaur elsewhere on more than one occasion. It is for us who knew her personally, to help the younger generation to understand and appreciate the values for which Rajkumari Amrit Kaur stood. The remarkable change in her mode of living without any feeling of sacrifice and working closely with Gandhiji gave her an inner satisfaction. It has been said of Gandhiji that he made heroes out of 'men of clay'. Here is an example of a heroine for which Gandhiji gets credit.

There is no doubt that Amrit Kaur of aristocratic lineage having lived in the lap of luxury—a princess in her own right—gave it all up in a twinkling of an eye when she became a true and ardent follower of Mahatma Gandhi. Invariably she went out of her way to be kind and considerate. She was extremely straight forward and could not be taken in by any semblance of flattery. She had a gift in her love of natural beauty and flowers. When I went to Wardha, I used to stay with Rajkumari in her room. On one occasion when I went from Santiniketan, Gandhiji suddenly asked me "as you have come straight from meeting of the Karma Samity from Gurudev's Santiniketan, what do you think we lack that they have in full measure". I replied diffidently by saying: Rajkumari Amrit Kaur has flower pots and a tree outside her room. Perhaps if this could be extended to this Ashram, the fragrance and the feeling that nature is all around us would help. To my great embarrassment, during the evening meal Gandhiji came in and told all the inmates that Renuka feels that if we could tend more flowers, then Wardha could be able to take on some semblance of the beautiful surroundings of Gurudev's Santiniketan. I remember feeling terribly embarrassed but he tapped my shoulder and said "you need not be embarrassed".

I think some of us should emulate what Rajkumari Amrit Kaur has done for the love of nature's beauty. It should be engrained in one's mind that Rajkumariji certainly has set us a good example. Persons of her calibre are outstanding examples to the future generation in India, of how to overcome the problems

that face us to-day and without any feeling of sacrifice, help to restore India under the Gandhian technique to the glory that is rightly hers. We have to retrace our steps during the recent years so that we can rebuild the India that was the dream of those who sacrificed and worked for her regeneration.

## Rajkumari Amrit Kaur

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### —Maj General Rajinder Singh Sparrow\*

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Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was a shining example of one who closely followed the peace-promoting trail laid so laboriously by such a tall personality as *Mahatma Gandhi*. She imbibed in her the spirit of promoting the cult of *non-violence*, equality in mankind, the upliftment and care of the needy have-nots. She also had an extreme urge to work dedicatedly to free Mother India off the heavy and hurting yoke of the then foreign rulers.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was the daughter of Raja Sir Harnam Singh and belonged to the Ahluwalia royal family of Kapurthala State of Punjab. She was born on 2 February, 1889, in Lucknow, the only daughter among seven sons. She had inherited Christianity as her religion from her father. She had her early education at Sherborne School for Girls, Dorestshire in England and later joined a College in London. She also devoted most of her time to sports. She was a very good tennis player and won many championships. She remained a spinster all her life.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur had inherited much of her nationalist fervour from her father. Gopal Krishna Gokhale was one of the honourable friends of Raja Sir Harnam Singh. Acknowledging the inheritance of her father, Amrit Kaur, says, "The flames of my passionate desire to see India free from foreign domination were fanned by him." She came under the sway and inspiration of *Mahatma Gandhi* and became one of his close followers and life-long disciples.

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\* Maj. General Rajinder Singh Sparrow is a former Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha).

In public life, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur had actively involved herself in social welfare activities and, in particular, the cause of woman upliftment. She was the Secretary of the All-India Women's Conference (AIWC) in 1930 and served as its President during 1931-33. In 1932, she gave evidence before the Lothian Committee on Indian franchise and later, as a member of the delegation of Women's Organisation, she testified before the Joint Select Committee of Parliament on Indian constitutional reforms. She also served as a Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi for sixteen long years. She was the first woman to be appointed a member of the Advisory Board of Education, but resigned in August, 1942. She was also a member of the *Hindustani Talimi Sangh*. She attended the UNESCO conferences in London and Paris in 1945 and 1946 respectively as a member of the Indian delegation. She was a member of the Board of Trustees of the All-India Spinners' Association. After India became independent she became the first woman member of Indian Cabinet and held the portfolio of Health.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur joined the Congress Party under Gandhiji's inspiration and took an active part in its activities throughout her life. She took part in the *Salt Satyagraha* and was arrested in Bombay. Later on, when the Communal Award was announced, she condemned it outright. In 1937 she went to Bannu in the North West Frontier Province to advocate the cause of the Congress Party. She was convicted on 16 July, 1937 on a charge of sedition and sentenced to imprisonment. During the Quit India Movement in 1942, she led many processions. One of them was subjected to ruthless lathi-charge in Shimla. Later she was arrested at Kalka.

Rajkumari was equally active in social work as in politics. She devoted most of her time to the upliftment of women and the eradication of social evils such as early marriage, *purdah* system, illiteracy etc., existing among Indian women. Regarding

marriage and *purdah*, she wrote, "The abolition of early marriage and *purdah*, therefore, will not only improve the health of millions of women but will remove two of the main obstacles in the way of the spread of female education. Needless to say that the position of the widows in Hindu homes, marriage laws and the laws relating to the inheritance of property by women need radical alteration." Similarly Rajkumari considered child marriage as one of the serious obstacles in the way of a rightful place for women in the society. According to her "child marriage is cancer eating into the very vitals of our national life. Girls become mothers while they are children themselves, and bring into the world off-springs, who are, in the very nature of things, the victims of disease and ill-health."

She was an indomitable fighter for women's cause and thus a strong champion of female education. In one of the women's conference she said, "In the realm of educational reform, we have urged ever since our inception that there should be free and compulsory education for all." Again, "as far as proper facilities for the female education are concerned, until such time as universal, free and compulsory primary education as well as an adequate supply of infant and girls' schools equipped with trained women teachers are introduced, we must continue to do our utmost to have the system of education in our existing institutions changed." Similarly, she regarded basic education as the best suited to India.

Rajkumari was also deeply concerned about the lot of the Harijans. Writing about their miserable conditions she deplored, "it is a crying shame that the people who cater for our services are relegated in most towns, to live in the most abominable dwellings—if, indeed, we can call their hovels by this name."

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, who had inherited the ablest traditions of a royal house, was not only a true patriot and a firm believer in the Gandhian principles of truth and non-violence, but had also been instrumental in the eradication of many of our social evils.

It is befitting to point out that as a patriot, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur became the folk-hero of a large section of India's population in a big way. The talk of the time all-round in village, towns and cities made much of Rajkumari by comparing her in a binding category of, say, *Rani of Jhansi, Florence Nightingale* and other top women heroes of world fame.

## A Profile in Courage

—Prof. Anima Bose-

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The words of Walt Whisman come to my mind as I turn my thoughts on Rajkumari Amrit Kaur:

"It takes struggles in life to make strength, it takes fight for principle to make fortitude, it takes crisis to give courage and singleness of purpose to reach an objective."

An inner strength, a total commitment to high principles, courage and a singleness of purpose to serve her country and the "Family of Man",—the humanity at large, enhanced Rajkumari Amrit Kaur's life and enlarged its dimension by generating an energy that primarily dedicated itself to a cause for "the other". In her life and work, the secondary never took the place of the primary, or the pretensions for the authentic.

We meet history of the then India in the person of Amrit Kaur, a portrait of courage and conviction. Those who had the opportunity of working with her in the varied activities of multifarious interests, those who were her friends and those who came in contact with her here in India and abroad, vouch that they felt the impact of her presence very deeply. In the words of those who worked with her in the Young Women's Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.).....

"Raj Kumariji was a great woman and a great patriot—a woman who carried God's light into so many dark corners, to the lepers, and the tuberculosis patients, to the blind, the sick and the illiterate. She will be a lasting inspiration to those of us who try to follow in her footsteps."

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\* Prof. Anima Bose is the Director of the Centre for Peace Education, New Delhi.

Born on 2 February, 1889 in the princely family of Kapurthala, Amrit Kaur became deeply involved in the life and times of her day and age evincing extraordinary intelligence, integrity, courage, compassion, loyalty and a tremendous sense of social responsibility. Her serenity and gallantry in the face of critical situations and challenging problems, shouldering responsibilities she herself chose to take on, and more often than not, those that were thrust on her, made her a legendary figure in her time and day. She made no compromise on integrity and moral and ethical values. She laid a great store by commitment and by an "I and Thou" relationship in her work and personal life.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was educated at Sherborne School in Dorset where she was outstanding in all endeavours. It was there that her love of sports was cultivated and she distinguished herself by captaining the hockey team, the cricket team and the tennis six. This love of sports was reflected in her founding the National Sports Club of India and initiating the Rajkumari Sports Coaching Scheme in 1961. She was the president of the National Institute of Sports started under the aegis of the Union Education Ministry. After she left Sherborne, Amrit Kaur continued her studies in London and Oxford. She was quite serious about obtaining a degree in medicine but her parents did not encourage her in this endeavour of hers. So, although she never sat for examinations, she attended lectures and must have absorbed a great deal. No wonder, health became one of her concerns in later life. She was the founder of Anti-Tuberculosis Centre, and the Centre for Child Welfare of the Jullundur Municipality as early as 1934. She was a member of Indian Society for the Prevention of Leprosy and the Chairperson of Indian Red Cross Society since 1950, as also the Chairperson of the Indian Council of Child Welfare. Her deep interest in matters of health led to her name being included in the list of nominees for the Interim Government submitted by the Congress. In 1946, she became India's First

Health Minister. Her portfolio included Housing, Sports and Local Self-Government. She worked tirelessly for the betterment of the health of the people till the end, even after she had ceased to be the Health Minister in 1957. She was a member of Lok Sabha from 1947 to 1957, and that of Rajya Sabha from 1957. As the Chairperson of All India Institute of Medical Sciences, she raised Rs. 300,000 to set-it-up which became a matter of special pride to her.

Rajkumari had a natural gift for languages. She spoke French and Italian fluently besides her mother tongue and English. She studied Piano and Violin with as much dedication and became very proficient in the former. She was closely associated with Delhi's Music Society and is warmly remembered by some members even to-day. She was recognised as a connoisseur of things cultural and aesthetic.

Her varied interests and commitments revealed the many facets of her personality. Those who knew her, or worked with her unfailingly felt the impact of her presence. Thus the doctors still associate her fondly with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences or the Red Cross, the Music Society which with her initiative was built on imaginative lines; her circle in the Congress, with the great contribution she made to the national movement for freedom and liberty; the YWCA, with her long association and with her Presidentship of that organisation as a national movement.

It will be interesting to hear what she said on her election as the President of the Y.W.C.A.: "There is no doubt in my mind that the YWCA has a definite contribution to make in the India of today, and this is why I have taken on the responsibility of the Presidentship at this late time in my life (1964)." Her association with the YWCA had been long. Her mother, Rani Hamam Singh was one of the first Vice-Presidents of this National movement. Amrit Kaur had a vision of the YWCA's action and programme reflecting the basic aims and principles which would reflect the inner meaning of these aims and objects, such as, meeting the spiritual, educational and recreational needs of girls and women, such as developing a sense of

Christian social responsibility among women and girls, working for the removal of barriers thus creating understanding between social groups, races and nations. She emphasized that "if we can grasp the inner meaning of these aims we can indeed say 'Our calling is high', meeting one of the essential needs of the world, — the need for an inclusive world-wise and infinitely varied fellowship — a Christian fellowship in all its dimensions, extending to youth and age alike, full and free opportunities for initiative, service and leadership". Dynamic as she was, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur never minimised the challenge for and of the future. For her, "the past constituted a call for a revival of the spirit and a fresh endeavour for the development of a well informed membership alive to the responsibilities of effective citizenship." She perceived that the tasks as she saw them in her time, were many for the Y.W.C.A.—such as removal of illiteracy, healthy rearing of children by responsible parents, and always having pride in the dignity of labour: "No work must be beneath our undertaking, be it scavenging in the slums, or digging in the fields. Always we must ask of ourselves what we can give rather than what we can receive." Rajkumari Amrit Kaur believed that the need of the hour in the then India, was that the older and experienced members of the YWCA movement made a concerted effort to attract young people and inspired a spirit of service amongst them. She laid a great stress on the fact that having attracted the young people, they be given more opportunities for personal development, that they be encouraged in their new and fresh ideas and experiments, and be released from the fear of failure. She was perceptive enough to know that the older generation are often too quick to discourage a spirit of adventure, too persistent about procedures thus stultifying initiative and causing frustration. Amrit Kaur, pragmatic and practical as she was, was sensitive to the working condition of those who worked for the movement professionally in a voluntary organisation, such as, the YWCA. As she said often enough, "we must pay them more and give them creative opportunities," because economic security means more self-reliance.

Rajkumari had the insight to perceive that "if the YWCA is to make its special contribution, AND NOT WASTE ITS HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES on tasks which others are more competent to undertake", as she stated in her welcome address at the convention of the National YWCA, the priorities of the YWCA and the primary concern at that point in time in India would be "to serve women and girls at the point of their most immediate needs. These are safe, inexpensive and comfortable housing, healthful recreation and opportunities for services". Even in 1963, she recognized that the need for hostels for working women was a growing one. She says in her letter (dated April 4, 1963 to the then General Secretary Ms. Ivy Khan):

"I do not think that any body other than the you can cater to this field in the special manner that is required for this, we need trained workers and young women filled with the desire to serve.....we should give priority to the creation of hostels whether for working women, or for university and High school students."

She perceived also the urgent need for nursery schools for the children of the poor and creches for the infants of working women. She felt strongly that adult literacy for illiterate women should lead to a door educating them to accept social reforms, to abandon outmoded customs such as, early marriage, the dowry system and the neglect of the first girl child in the family. She believed that such seemingly small but truly useful service such as described above, would make "an enormous contribution to national life and progress". She reiterated at the same convention. As members of a Christian movement, we are challenged at this Convention, to see what is being asked of us coming with different experiences, ideas and points of view yet united at a deep level. We must not cover up our differences but listen to each other in love.....we need to discover afresh in these days the unity of spirit which is the true mark of the community which calls itself Christian. Clearly, Amrit Kaur considered "Christian" as a quality and an enhancer rather than an institutionalised name of a given community.

It would be appropriate here to mention the love and concern Amrit Kaur developed about her country, the people and the non-violent struggle that Gandhiji was leading in India from 1915 after his return from South Africa. She had said once, "the flame of my passionate desire to see India free from foreign domination was fanned early by Mr. Gokhale", from him she had learnt that "Gandhi when he came to India would revolutionise the country. My young heart remembered those words." So when Gandhiji returned to India she did her least to get in touch with him. She had her first glimpse of Gandhi at a Congress session in Bombay which she attended. Of that first glimpse says Amrit Kaur, "There was a quiet strength, an earnestness and a deep humility about him that went straight to my young heart..... I feel I have owned allegiance to him and to his cause from that time on."

The time were out of joint, clearly. The women's demand for equal representation, for more educational opportunities, for more medical colleges for women, the struggle of the Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji for justice, equality and dignity against the high handed measures of the then British Raj, his non-violent campaign and Satyagraha against the foreign rule — all this deeply disturbed Amrit Kaur. This was in 1919, when she met Gandhiji in person. She recalled hon. Mr. Gokhale who had predicted, "one day, you will, I hope see the man who is destined to do great things for India". That man of destiny, "who else but Mahatma Gandhi", was brought by a turn of events, to her further, Raja Harnam Singh's house badly hurt during the Rowlatt Act Agitation in Amritsar. Her admiration was enhanced by her respect for Gandhiji and she decided to join this work. She was then living as a princess in all finery and in princessly luxury in her father's house. She was not quite convinced, however, at first despite her conversation with Gandhiji on the subject of burning all her foreign finery and the importance of wearing Khadi, she was content with supporting Gandhiji's movement by donating money. But Gandhiji's words carried power and made her reflect. She started to learn how to spin cotton yarn — but she did not take to wearing Khadi herself. She reorganised the Spinners' Association of the

municipal government in Jullundur and started work with the Harijans in Shimla. She travelled a great deal in Europe for reasons of health. She also became a founder member of the All India Women's Conference in Puna. In 1930—her father passed away. Amrit Kaur felt she had now all the time to give to Gandhiji's work and his movement for the independence of India. She had become the President of All India Women's Conference in 1933.

In 1934, Amrit Kaur joined Gandhiji's Sabarmati Ashram and dedicated herself to service to her country. There she detected that in the Gandhian movement and in the work of the ashram a pragmatic model for how to live healthily in all its dimensions. She served both the ashrams in Wardha and Sevagram. She travelled a great deal in villages and took up the cause of helping the peasants to live hygienically, campaigned for more girls' schools, worked for the abolition of child marriage and polygamy. She was inspired in this work of hers by Gandhiji who wanted her to know more of the people and the country experimentally. I have talked with people and learnt how they admired her. She harmonised her lifestyle of a princess in Shimla in Manerville and her lifestyle in the ashram, not just the simple living but scavenging when called upon to do so, and doing the menial tasks allotted to all the ashramites as the occasion arose. She took to wearing *Khadi* from this time onward but always dressed impeccably in *Khadi*. Her sense of proportion and perspective enabled her to bring about this harmony in her life style and the tremendous impact that Gandhiji had made upon her. This association with Gandhiji set the course of the remaining years of her life. We see this eminently reflected in her work and perception in the field of social work, in her work for people's health, child-welfare, women's movement and in her eminent contribution in the being and becoming of India's YWCA movement. Gandhiji most human and sensitive to the other under all circumstances in his compassion and understanding found Amrit Kaur as rich human resource and she became closer to him than most. Soon she became Gandhiji's English language Secretary. Her English

was flawless, she had poise, warmth and an in-depth social sense. Her aptitude for public speaking helped a great deal in spreading Gandhiji's message. Her deep sincerity and love of truth enhanced the cause. Of course, Gandhiji's correspondence and writing work were mountains but Amrit Kaur rose to the challenge. Gandhiji often asked her to slow down becoming concerned about the hard work she undertook and strongly advised her to retire to Shimla now and again for rest and recuperation. Gandhiji was a loving but a hard task master. Amrit Kaur learnt to seek perfection from him and strove to become an ideal Secretary. Needless to say, this period was one of a creative training for Amrit Kaur which helped her to become an effective Health Minister, an able member of the Parliament (in both the Houses) and an astute head, Chairperson or President of so many different organisations in the then India, in course of time. The experience and learning at the ashram added another dimension to her personality and character. She came to belong to a multitude of people all over the world, and she made her own innumerable causes that had anything to do with the wellbeing and betterment of human beings anywhere. She became a driving force and an inspiration to her co-workers, colleagues. She shunned superficiality, truly disliked hypocrisy. Her capacity for voluntary sacrifice grew and she developed a superb moral strength—embodying the qualities that Gandhiji extolled. She worked unhesitatingly with her Bapu (Gandhiji) "in low paths of service free".

In 1942, Amrit Kaur was taken into custody in the storm of the *Quit India Movement* by the British Raj. The hardship of the jail which she had undergone was too much for her. The nervous British Raj put her under house arrest in Shimla for three years. As has already been mentioned, Amrit Kaur became the first Health Minister in the first Government of Independent India. Wrote Gandhiji to her, "I see you will have the whole family on your hands now....I am waiting, watching and praying." The first impact of the death of Gandhiji at the hand of an assassin in 1948, brought about a sense of loss of

not only a beloved leader and friend, but as though she had lost her mooring.

This account will remain incomplete if we do not perceive how well she had learnt her lessons from Gandhiji and his all embracing concern for humanity at large, the family of Man. Her concern for world condition became all encompassing. Through her work with the Red Cross, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the YWCA she extended herself to the human dimension of internationalism. She would never be the person who could ask "am I my brother's keeper?" She felt within her core that every one is his brother's keeper, is his sister's keeper.

A woman of action she had started her memoirs and had completed her autobiography until the time of India's independence, August of 1947. But she was not able to write anything thereafter as she could not find time to write in Delhi she had hoped to do so in the quiet of Shimla some day. But things turned out differently. In the early hours of the sixth of February, 1964 she passed away after a cardiac arrest. It seemed she just stepped out of life—as though life set her free. Jaya Thadani told me over the phone when I called her to ask if she had left any books or pamphlets for the posterity to learn from her wisdom and rich experience. She said (in New Delhi, October 17, 1990) that Rajkumari Amrit Kaur had written a monograph on *Local Government* and several pamphlets on *Health*. It is hoped that her incomplete work, her autobiography will be completed. Undoubtedly, it would be document of tremendous significance for the future generation and the young people of contemporary India who all not only be enriched but be enabled to enhance their life as she did hers.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was the recipient of the fourth Rene Sand award in..... which is given for outstanding service in social work, both national and international with special reference to health. But when award was announced by the British Raj for her work, Rajkumari gracefully refused to accept that award.

I cannot help but quote a letter Rajkumari Amrit Kaur wrote to Eunice Ancheas on 23 April, 1962:—

"I have a charity box in my home and open it at the end of every year. The donors are mostly my domestic staff who give a little offering on the first of every month when they receive their salaries. I put in, as I have done over the last thirty-five years, twentyfive naya paise for every begger that I see. This was a pledge taken by me when I was with Gandhiji, never to give to beggers but to give what I would ordinarily give to them, into a poor box.

This year, I have found Rs. 70 in my little hoard out of which I am sending Rs. 35 towards the National "Y" Building Fund and Rs. 35 to Constantia for their building fund. It is a drop in the ocean and it carries with it my best wishes."

This letter speaks volumes of the discerning woman whose commitment, integrity, courage of conviction, rational thinking, innate sense of justice and fairplay revealed a mind "which was like an open home for new ideas" as Ivy Khan says when I interviewed her (New Delhi, 16 Nov., 1990), underscoring that to her it was the spirit of giving and nor the amount that mattered. She was generous to a fault towards any cause she undertook. Her life and work for her fellow human beings provide a new space in our thinking and understanding, to-day, because of quintessentially, she was concerned about their future, their being and becoming. She remained unswerving in her dedication to a just and humane order in which human beings would be able to achieve their rightful place, not only in India but globally.

## In Remembrance

—Ivy Khan•

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"She was a hiding place from the winds, a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and the shadow of a great rock in a dreary land".

This description from the Bible comes to mind when we think of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.

Hers was a sheltering mind, in its spacious roominess there was a place for all opinions and her hospitable spirit entertained the ideas of many. In her heart were truly many mansions, and none of the tenants usurped the place of another. The causes for which she gave of herself were numerous and varied but somehow we felt that our cause was specially hers, and in a sense we were right, and so were all the others who felt the same. One marvels how she conveyed this adorable truth, but we believe that genuine concern is of infinite dimensions and has room for all.

Though one of the busiest women, yet she was a most approachable person and accessible to anyone who wished to see her and seek her advice. In the midst of all the demands and pressures of her numerous responsibilities, when one went to her with a problem, she seemed to have plenty of time. There was none of that sense of haste that some busy people often give. It was restful to be with her but it was the calm of an active mind, for she gave her whole attention to the matter before her. In spite of powerful and unrelenting pressures, it was surprising how often we in the Young Women's Christian

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\*Miss Ivy Khan is the General Secretary, YWCA of India.

Association Y.W.C.A tended to take her for granted; meeting didn't seem right if she wasn't there; functions were incomplete without her presence.

Her calendar of engagements was brimful, and yet thinking back, I wonder how her interest and concern and especially her time, which is such a precious commodity, were always available to us yet. She never hurried and was never late.

Rajkumari believed in people and she knew how to communicate with people. In every human relationship, an attitude of giving without the willingness to receive, of teaching without expecting to learn, decreases the possibility of communication and raises barriers of resentment, for it is based on lack of recognition and respect of the human person. Rajkumari was endowed with that rather rare gift of receiving as generously as she gave.

Through working with people, meeting the experiences the days brought, submitting to the discipline of the multiple tasks imposed on her, she approached them with an unruffled calm. Seasoned in political activity, her poised and competent presiding technique was delight to observe.

The ability to view a problem unbiased by her own background and the extraordinarily sympathetic appreciation of experiences quite different from her own, made her equally at home with all kinds of people, the weak and humble and the eminent and mighty.

In spite of the generosity of self giving there was always a certain reserve about her. She neither took nor allowed any liberties. "I let all people count with me, but none too much" she said once, and yet she had an unusual faculty of not only getting things done, but getting other people to do them. Everyone who worked with her counted it an honour to have

her as a leader who combined a great professional integrity with a real understanding of people.

We valued her critical thinking healthy scepticism and hard headed practicality, which often brought our wild exuberance down to earth, gently but firmly. She also had the true sophistication that quickly reduced to size, persons displaying pompous postures. But she was always positive, almost blunt at times, and outspoken when the occasion required. An indefatigable worker and methodical to a high degree, she had an instinct for orderliness.

Rajkumari held office in many organisations she was concerned with many large social, educational, cultural and philanthropic undertakings in the national and international scene. She demonstrated how to fight for a cause without compromise, but with the weapons of conciliation and understanding. She refused to put institutional security and personal prestige before the interest of just and peaceful settlement of controversy. Working closely with her, one realised how much we relied on her serenity and seemingly intuitive wisdom in dealing with perplexing problems. In meetings, when talk seemed to take the place of action, as it so often tends to do, Rajkumari was an unhesitating discourager of hesitancy.

For me it was an immeasurably enriching experience, having worked for nearly a decade with such a vigorous and intelligent disciplined leader, who brought vision, wisdom and a belief in the significance of the task.

About her love, there was never the faintest trace of sentimentality. Those who came to her with hurt feelings, real or imaginary received due attention. If the trouble was not imaginary, she made sure that it was not exaggerated either. If there was real trouble, she was tenderness incarnate, but for self pity she had scant patience. She was unusually undemonstrative, seldom, except on rare occasions, did she voice affection, yet there was about her such a glow of loving kindness that one never came away from her without a lifting of the heart.

Rajkumari was a superb fund raiser. Her faith in the causes for which she solicited support and her faith in the person she asked for help, were of such a high quality, that by responding to her appeal, the faith of the giver was strengthened forever.

The size of the gift mattered little to her. She often reminded us of the parable of the 'widow's mite' who gave much because she gave her all. Rajkumari had simple methods of encouraging contribution from her household staff; somewhat like a offering box in churches. Placed on a table at the entrance hall in her home, there was a bowl beside a large spray of eucalyptus leaves in a tall brass vase, a fragrant green welcome—the bowl was for contributions from people who came to meet her, and always there was a handful of coins from those who worked in her house.

Once she devised a scheme called "Friends of the Y.W.C.A.", the collections from 'Friends' were mostly small amounts—but over the months it was significant. From time to time she would make out a cheque for the amounts collected from "friends", with a typed list of the names and addresses of the donors and send it to the Association. She was meticulous about receipts and made sure that acknowledgements were personally made and promptly sent.

I recall an instance when I went to her with some association work; she was particularly busy that day, so when our work was over, I was hurrying out, when she called me back and handed me an envelope which I accepted as her usual collections from 'Friends' of the Y.W.C.A. To my astonishment I saw it was a cheque for fifty thousand rupees the donor Rajkumari herself! She explained that she had been concerned for some time that the national Young (Y) needed a corpus fund which could be invested and whose interest could be used for work. "You can start the corpus with this contribution" she said. To her indeed, small gifts and large, were equally significant.

Rajkumari laid the foundation stone of many buildings around the country which stand today, not only as brick and mortar memorials of her vision, but as places where organisations and

institutions are housed, women find shelter and work, and people come to live and learn and find healing and hope.

Rajkumari was a frail woman, short of stature, delicately fashioned. Her love of beauty, compelling passion for cleanliness and graceful refinement, combined with her austere simplicity, gave a distinctive touch to her life style.

One of her great characteristics was to listen and concentrate and then come out with a simple truth which went to the heart of the matter, which had been overlooked in the excitement of our immediate preoccupation.

Once a group was making plans for the centenary celebrations of our movement. There was lively discussion about how to project our history of 100 years. We hunted the archives and there was much hilarity, going over quaint anecdotes and old photographs. In the midst of the confusion of noise and chatter, Rajkumari's gentle voice said. 'Has the question occurred to us, if our Association is growing up, or only growing old'. She continued saying "Are we growing up to meet new challenges; are we learning to live with a deepening sense of responsibility to community needs? Do the young see us relevant today? Is our struggle for women's rights vigorous and steady? Are we comfortable to function as a middle class, middle of-the-road movement—or are we ready to risk being a frontier movement?" Pointed questions for us to ponder: Her message was implicit and simple "What does it mean to add years to our corporate life"?

For many things we remember Rajkumari Amrit Kaur:

for her dauntless spirit which dared to move forward with the strength of gentleness,

for her patience and persistence in pursuing goals in the face of difficulties and, above all,

for her serenity and joy in sacrifice and service.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was a gentlewoman of all times' and rarely will we see the likes of her again.

## An Outstanding Personality— Rajkumari Amrit Kaur —Phulrenu Guha\*

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I cannot recall when exactly I met Rajkumari Amrit Kaur but I distinctly remember that I first saw her at an all India Congress Committee meeting from a distance. A striking figure—tall and slim, she was always in spotless white attire, be it summer or winter and always had her head covered. This was much before Independence.

I came into close contact with her in the field of All India Women's Conference from the early 40's. She attended the Standing Committee and Executive Committee meeting of the AIWC regularly for a long time. I, as a member, too attended the meetings without fail. After the Bengal famine, when Shrimati Vijayluxmi Pandit was the President of the All Indian Women's Conference (AIWC), I had the opportunity of working with Rajkumari Kaur. During the famine, AIWC had a number of Centres in undivided Bengal and children homes were organised because of the famine situation. During this period we used to meet often—to develop these centres and for the rehabilitation and education of these children.

She was very soft spoken and her voice was usually very low. To me, she had the air of a fresh bride. Yet, she was firm in her conviction. She used to give a patient hearing to different people with their different opinions but she had her own ideas and always gave a frank opinion without any reservations. She did not mind contradicting her friends in any decision but whatever may have been the difference of opinion with collea-

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\*Smt. Phulrenu Guha is a former Member of Parliament.

gues, her attitude towards them remained the same. After the discussions were over, she would be friendly as ever.

I don't remember the exact date, but I can vividly recall one occasion. We were having a meeting in Delhi, when Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, in her usual white spotless dress and white kits, entered the meeting with a tennis racket in her hand.

After Independence, she became the first woman Health Minister of free India. But she never failed to attend the meetings of the AIWC held in Delhi, though she could not attend those held outside Delhi as regularly as before.

Three all India organisations for children which existed before Independence came together and amalgamated to form the Indian Council for Child Welfare in 1952. She also took an initiative towards this. As one of the founder members, she used to take an active interest to develop this organisation and also to raise funds. I was a member of one of the amalgamated organisation—the Indian Council for Child Welfare and she used to constantly advise the workers to take care of the children particularly their health.

In a lighter vein, she was a good conversationist and used to converset with workers very freely and frankly. She always gave her workers and colleagues good guidance and inspired them to work better. In her lighter moods, she enjoyed fun and was quite free in parties and dinners.

I have never known her as a Parliamentarian, only as a Congress worker and a social worker. In that capacity I have worked and mixed with her in the social work field. Her nature, behaviour and demeanour in meetings or social gatherings have left an indelible mark on my mind. Memories of her as a leader and as a colleague will remain with me forever.

## Rajkumari Amrit Kaur: Her Life, Work and Ideology

—Kamla Kumar\*

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was one of the greatest women of India. She had a holistic approach to the problems of women in particular and the entire nation in general. Her outstanding contribution in the field of women's emancipation, health and sports would be written in golden letters in the annals of pre-Independent India. She had the great fortune of working closely with Gandhiji for several years and was able to translate his great thoughts into action. She was like Swami Vivekananda spreading the message of his Guru Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

Rajkumari was born on 2 February, 1889 into the princely family of the Kapurthala State of Punjab. She was the only daughter among seven sons. Her father Raja Sir Harnam Singh, had lost the right to the Kapurthala throne as a result of his change of religion. This background of Rajkumari had a profound impact on her thoughts and actions. She herself had said. "I am more than appreciative today of a strict up-bringing which enable me to realise the essentiality of discipline. My brothers and I were taught that telling the truth was important, that sharing our joys was proper, that quarrelling was all wrong, that rudeness to anyone was intolerable, that kindness to animals was a duty, that cleanliness and tidiness were essential and that disobedience would be severely punished."

\*Shrimati Kamla Kumar is an eminent social worker.

Rajkumari had her early education at Sherborne School for Girls in Dorestshire in England. While in England as a student, she took a keen interest in sports. She distinguished herself in hockey, cricket and tennis.

After her schooling, she joined the Oxford University. She could not complete her graduation and returned to India. During her stay in U.K., she read widely and travelled extensively all over Europe. She also acquired skills in learning the piano. She was very fond of Western classical music. She spoke French and Italian very fluently. When she returned to India she was not aware what destiny had in store for her. It was a turning point in her life to give up her princely life and take up the cause of Freedom Struggle and Swadeshi movement. About this change in her, Rajkumari says "Even in my late adolescence I felt a strange awareness. I knew that mine was not the real world. I remember for instance a feeling of guilt on seeing beggars upon my return from U.K. this feeling became stronger and stronger."

While she was battling herself with her inner conscience, she had the opportunity of meeting great men like Gopala Krishna Gokhale, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Surendranath Banerjee who used to visit her father Raja Hamam Singh. Raja Hamam Singh was a nationalist and deeply involved in the freedom movement.

Rajkumari was 20 years, a charming eligible young woman. There were several suitors to marry her. But she remained a spinster all her life and chose to serve the country.

She had heard of Gandhiji through Gopala Krishna Gokhale and was very eager to meet him. The first opportunity to meet Gandhiji came when he came to "Jalandher, and stayed in the house of Raja Hamam Singh. He was injured and had to take rest. Rajkumari was very impressed by Gandhiji. She did not then mind his chiding her for wearing expensive silks and suggested her to wear Khadi. In her own words, "There was a quite strength, an earnest-

ness and deep humility about him that went straight to my heart, and I feel I have owed allegiance to him and his way of life ever since, even though circumstances did not permit my actually joining him till much later."

Rajkumari was greatly influenced by Gandhiji's ideals and thoughts and till the end of her life she continued to cherish these values in her life. Her broad outlook and approach to various problems was an outcome of this influence. In her speeches she had covered various aspects such as women's welfare, health, education, handicrafts, untouchability, Alcoholism etc. Her thoughts have been very lucid and in each speech instead of mere empty words she had given concrete suggestions to bring about effective changes.

She started her association with Gandhiji in 1930 and worked as his Secretary for sixteen years. She stayed with him in Sevagram and Wardha Ashram.

As an inmate of the Ashram, Rajkumari got used to doing many jobs like cleaning, sweeping and washing, which she was not used to as a princess. She recollects, "years later when I came to live with him in Magunwadi, he saw or sensed perhaps my inability to rid myself of some of the comforts to which my sheltered life had accustomed me and how understanding he was! he would not allow me at first to sleep on the ground, I was not made even to wash up my own plates etc. I was willing to do everything and pleaded with him to be allowed to do so." Gandhiji used to write to her regularly whenever he was out of station. He used to affectionately address her as *Chi.Amrit*. In one of his letters addressed to her dated 21 October, 1946 he writes "I am sorry for your sufferings. It will do you good if you interpret it correctly. Physical suffering can be, and should be transmuted into spiritual joy. It is a difficult process but it has to be gone through if one is to be truly rich. This enforced idleness should be used for enriching one's thoughts." Again in another letter dated 16 August, 1947 from Patna, he writes, "so you are minister, you have to be firm and true. You should insist on team work. Then most things will come under your notice."

Rajkumari became the first woman Minister of Independent India and held the portfolio of Health in the first cabinet that was formed under the Primeministership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. She held the post till 1957. Her portfolio included Housing, Sports and Local Self-Government besides Health. In 1957, She became a Member of Rajya Sabha.

As a Minister for Health, she was responsible for a number of programmes in the field of health. Her outstanding contribution was the establishment of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in New Delhi. Probably not many people outside the Institute are aware of the fact that through her personal influence, she secured donations equipment worth millions of dollars from various countries and organisations. The idea of setting up such an Institute was mooted in the Bhore Commission's Report of 1943 but it was shelved for paucity of funds. It was Rajkumari who took the initiative to start the hospital. She knew the Prime Minister of New Zealand and secured from him a donation of 1 million Pounds. Later in 1959, when he visited India he gave another 100,000 pounds. On her request, the Australian Government agreed to build a workshop and supply equipment worth 80,000 pounds as well as train Indian, Personnel. She also got donations from U.S.A. Today the All India Institute of Medical Sciences is a Centre of Excellence in Medical Education. Shortly before her death, she donated her residence in Simla to the Government of India for being converted into a holiday home for the doctors and nurses of the AIIMS. So deep were her concern for and attachment to the Institute.

As the Union Health Minister, she had occasion to address the World Health Organisation (WHO) sessions. In may 1950, she was elected the President of the WHO. In her presidential address to WHO on 7 May, 1951, she said "I am sure history will record that inspite of wars and rumours of war which every country witnessed throughout and also continues to witness, the most significant human development has been in the field of social welfare. The world has been so narrowed down by the discoveries of science which have eliminated the obstacles of

both time and distance, that it is impossible any longer for any one nation to live unto itself. Living unto oneself is not the best way for an individual to grow either physically, mentally or morally. The same law applies to the community, to society and to the world in general. Therefore it was natural that thinking men should realise that there could be no happiness for the world until and unless we worked for or moved towards an integrated programme of international action for the promotion of human welfare....."

It was during the tenure of Rajkumari as the Health Minister that the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) and Employees State Insurance Scheme (ESIS) were set up. Speaking on this aspect in a Radio Broadcast on 5 February, 1955, Rajkumari said "when India became independent in 1947, the medical care programme for government servants excluded the lowest paid among them from the benefits of any medical care or relief while for the highly paid staff and their families all the services were free. We have now included all categories of Government servants in the medical care programme and have provided, as already pointed out, the same amount of medical attention to all in spite of differences in their contribution towards the cost of the scheme."

For the cause of women, Rajkumari has also done a lot. She had been involved in the activities of the All India Women's Conference (A.I.W.C.) since its inception. She used to regularly attend the meetings and persuade the members of the A.I.W.C. to work for the upliftment of women. She was genuinely concerned with issues relating to the status of women. As a pioneer of women's development, she started the Lady Irwin College of Home Science. It was managed by the A.I.W.C. through the All India Women's Education Fund. This was the first college in the country to teach Home Science as a subject for a degree. She was the President of the All India Women's Conference. She was also connected with the Young Women's Christian Association (Y.W.C.A) as the Convention Chairman. In 1963 as its Chairman, she was anxious to start hostels for working girls in cities and villages.

A keen sports woman herself, Rajkumari was eager to promote sports. She was responsible for setting up of the National Sports Club of India. She took the help of the late Anthon / De Mellow. Two stadia were built in Delhi and Bombay. She also took tremendous interest in the coaching aspect of sports and games and initiated training courses which came to be known as the Raj Kumar Coaching Scheme. Many young sports men and women have been benefited from the training scheme and Indian sport will ever remain indebted to her for the initiative she took in this matter.

She was the President of the All India Lawn Tennis Association and the Table Tennis Federation of India.

Rajkumari was a regular reporter for 'Harijan' a paper started by Gandhiji. This paper gave views of Gandhiji on several national and international matters. It also covered news items sent by various people on several matters. These news items were reported by Rajkumari in her own style of writing.

She was also associated with the Red Cross Society for two decades. She was the Chairman of the Indian Red Cross Society in 1950. She was closely associated with the St. John's Ambulance Society. She was awarded the Count Bernadette Gold Medal in 1957 and Gold Medals by the Red Cross Societies of 14 countries of Europe, Africa and Asia including those of Russia, Portugal, Poland and France.

Rajkumari was the fourth recipient of the prestigious 'Rene Sand Memorial Award' which she got for her outstanding service in social work, both national and international level, with special reference to health.

In 1946, Rajkumari was elected as the Vice-President of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Conference held in London. Her speech on that occasion was so remarkable for clarity of thought and lucidity of expression that it evoked appreciation from the audience and one of them wrote to Mahatma Gandhi to say that it had raised the tone and set a new standard of speech at that conference.

As a person in power, she used her position for the betterment of own people. She never stooped low to use power for personal gains. She always thought of the country and its people first. It was these great qualities that helped her to take up innovative health projects.

India and its people owe a deep sense of gratitude to Rajkumari for her outstanding contribution and single minded devotion for the betterment of the country. When Rajkumari breathed her last on 6 February, 1964, India lost one of its greatest patriotic daughters. She always had concern for the down-trodden. Every minute of her existence was devoted for the betterment of people in distress.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, a contemporary and colleague of Rajkumari had paid a rich tribute to her when he said:

"There is always a touch of distinction in what she says or writes, the mark of a sensitive. She made the vast field of women's emancipation and has been one of the builders of women's movement in India. From this she drifted inevitably into the wider domain of India's freedom movement for without that freedom there could be no emancipation of man or woman."

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**PART THREE**

**SELECT SPEECHES IN  
PARLIAMENT**

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## Finance

### 1. General Budget 1953-54\*

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I welcome this opportunity that falls to the lot of a Minister once a year to listen to the opinions of the members of this House in regard to this vital problem of health. I only wish these opportunities came oftener. I have, therefore, listened with great interest to all the criticisms that have been levelled at my Ministry and to some suggestions that have been thrown out.

It is difficult for me to express in words the immensity of my heart ache. It is perpetual and no medicine can cure it. I, who have to move and live and have my being amongst those who are sick and suffering, find that I cannot do all that I should like to do for them. It is enough to depress any one. But, after all problems are there to be overcome and I have no doubt that even in these last  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years, a very brief moment in the life of this or any country, something has been achieved. I have no doubt too that the State Governments who are mainly responsible for the promotion of health in their areas are well alive to the situation and their responsibilities. And the great thing is that, however slowly, we are forging ahead on right lines. Much, has been said in regard to the inadequacy of health facilities in rural areas. I entirely agree with the Members of the House who say that our problem is pre-eminently, as all our problems are, a problem of how to bring well being to rural areas. I have been told that nothing can be done unless the economic problem is solved. I do admit that I am not a little handicapped as are the Health Ministers in all the States in as much as we do not get

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\*Replying to the points raised by members on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Health (L.S. Deb., 1 July, 1952, cc. 3007-16).

enough finances for our schemes. But, I realise that the money is not there. I know how sympathetic my hon. colleague the Finance Minister is towards my schemes. But, then, he cannot mint money.

There are certain levels beyond which man's endeavour cannot go. Therefore, I agree with my hon. friend on the opposite side when he says that all the amenities that are possible to be given to city people or to people in other countries cannot be applicable to rural areas. Owing to lack of finances we have to have different standards. But I am not in agreement with him and with many others in all that they have said. They have asked for health amenities in the rural areas. I believe firmly that I cannot have health unless I have enough food; I cannot have health unless I have communications whereby to reach out to the people. I cannot have health unless the problem of housing is solved. The people must have a proper drinking water supply. I have always laid the greatest stress on the preventive side. Even that means money. I do hope that the new Ministry of Housing will have a dynamic programme of housing. I do hope that road communications and facilities for water will be amply developed in the Five Year Plan. I believe that the answer to medical aid and relief to rural areas is mobile dispensaries and cottage hospitals. I know the difficulty of getting doctors to settle in our rural areas. I blame the medical profession because I feel that here in this country when we stand at the threshold of a big venture and hope to make something big out of it, we ought to have a missionary zeal, a missionary spirit, a spirit, that counts no cost too great if it means service to our country. But, alas. The system that was left to us, of medical aid and relief has not played fair by the doctors either. How can one expect a doctor to go into the rural areas, on, sometimes, Rs. 80 a month? Where is he to live? He has not got a house to live in. He has got no facilities for the education of his children. He has to go without the amenities of life to which he as a city dweller has been used. Therefore, we are in almost, as it were, a vicious circle. I have no doubt that cottage hospitals should be built and I have no doubt that

mobile dispensaries should be used more and more and more, and that we should have a well paid cadre to doctors in Government service without private practice. So long as we do not pay our doctors adequately we cannot have both good men and women and good work. You have to pay the doctors a living wage, a wage that will not only attract them, but will make it possible for them to serve. We should not make conditions of service impossible for any one. I do plead for that. But I know this also. Even in respect of the limited scheme that I have put up recently, and which, to my joy, has been accepted by the Cabinet, to give on a small payment, free medical aid and relief to all Government employees in this city of Delhi, especially to those whom we used to call Class IV servants—I do not myself like this classification. I am already receiving letters from the members of the Medical Association saying that this policy is all wrong. The Health Minister of the United Kingdom when I was talking to him year before last, said to me that we too were bound to have difficulty if we started anything on these lines because everywhere there are vested interests in the medical profession. Well, we have to stand up to them. Vested interests must go because it is the people's welfare that comes first. I would like the Members of this House to help me. I believe we have to nationalise our health services. I believe every body can afford to give a little towards health. We are in the habit of depending upon the Government for everything. What can the Government alone do? I want the people's co-operation in the matter of public health. They can and should give it.

Members have talked about more doctors. I am not so keen about producing more and more doctors who will congregate in the cities and not go into the villages. I am keen to attempt to train doctor's aids and nursing aids from amongst the villagers themselves, who will carry out the doctor's instructions. Who will be intelligent enough, who will be educated enough and who will be trained enough to see that all the service that doctor directs for is made available to the people. I believe this is the right way of solving the huge problem of health. I do not take a gloomy view; I do not see why we should not be able to

give more and more of such aid and relief to our people over the next five years. I think we can do it; we must do it; we must make up our minds that it shall be done. I do not agree with my hon. friend across the way when he says that 2.3 per cent only of our people require hospitalisation. I wish he could visit the hospitals even in this city of Delhi and see what percentage of the people require hospitalisation and how little room. I have been able to give them. He also talked against B. C. G. campaign, against its efficacy, against its whole conception. I would like to quote but I have not got the books here at my elbow—I could quote to him, in fact far more liberally than he did against it, in favour of B. C. G. It is only one of the many protective measures that we are taking, and I think we ought to take it. And I do not think the experience that has come to us from those countries in the West where B. C. G. has been tried with marked success can be ignored by us. We cannot ignore the evidence of doctors who are capable and competent to speak. You would not have the World Health Organisation advocating it, you would not have a Government like the Government of the United Kingdom, which is one of the most slow moving Governments where new policies are concerned making

B. C. G. vaccination obligatory on those serving T. B. patients unless they are convinced of its efficacy. He quoted the Rockefeller report. He quoted some papers from the Minnesota University. There again, I had one of the highest officials in the health services of the United States come to see me that other day, and he told me that over practically the whole of South America, B.C.G. is being used. Among the Negroes in America it is also being used. Among the Red Indians it has yielded good results. I do wish to assure Dr. Jaisoorya that nothing has been put into this report that has not got evidence behind it. It would not be right for me to put out things that were not based on evidence, that were not based on facts. "Oh", he says, "it is an unscientific view". I have to join issue with him.

Much has been said about Ayurveda and Unani, and I have been accused of meting out step-motherly treatment or almost trying to strangle Ayurveda, Unani and Homoeopathy. I want to

make it perfectly clear from the very beginning that I have never wanted to stifle or strangle anything. In fact, I believe, that I have been a friend of Ayurveda, Unani and Homoeopathy when I have asked them to have the full basic scientific training without which they cannot hope to compete with the dynamic progress that modern medicine is making. Medicine or indeed any other science knows no barriers of race or creed and I cannot be expected to believe and say that anything that was born here thousands and thousands of years ago, even if it has remained static, can today compete with that which is spreading all over the rest of the world. And I say this in all humility for it is the truth. After all, it is the people for whom we are talking, and it is the people who will demand from us what they want. In the wilds of Himachal Pradesh when I went round the villages, they said to me: "Give us doctors, give us dispensaries." I said: "I cannot give you all you want, for I have not the money for them." What did they say to me:

वैद मामूली बीमारी के लिये ठीक है लेकिन डॉक्टर चाहिये।

(A Vaid is all right for an ordinary disease, but we need doctors). That is my experience every where, wherever I have been to the villages and I therefore beg all those who wish to practise the science of Ayurveda the science of *Unani* —I do not say they are not sciences, but I do say that they have remained static and I do say this that unless they pull up their socks, and unless they imbibe all that is of scientific value in modern medicine, they will themselves kill their art.

I agree with my friend<sup>\*</sup> who said that we ought to do research. But he want to know why I am doing it in Jamnagar? Another friend asked what was the need for research and mentioned a whole heap of well-known herbs. I want to tell the gentleman who mentioned some medicines that every one of the herbs that he named is included in the pharmacopoeia of modern medicine in a modern form and they are being used. They may have Latin names but that makes little difference. As far as research in Ayurveda is concerned and why it has been

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\*Dr. Jaisoorya.

started in Jamnagar, the Pandit Committee was appointed by me to tour round India and see where research could best be started. A majority of the committee were Vaidas and they suggested that the work should be started in Jamnagar. But who has got to do the research? The Vaid alas is incapable of doing it. They do not even know how to look down a microscope. I am very sorry to say what may seem harsh, but I have to say the truth. And I am a friend when I tell Vaidas, Hakims and Homoeopaths that until and unless they make themselves fit to compete with those who can talk with a scientific background and with scientific proof, They will not be able to progress. No science, no truth can die. After all, what is science? It is the quest for truth. Therefore, if the truth is fundamental, it cannot die. It does not depend on the patronage of any Government. If it has survived all these years, it is because there is something in it. If it has got to survive further years, it has got to come in line with progress.

Then there are the Homoeopaths. I am perfectly willing again in this regard to listen to their reasonable demands. After all, where was Homoeopathy born? Not in this country. It was born in Germany. What has happened to it in all the countries of the West? They have insisted on a basic modern course and made Homoeopathy, of course, a post graduate course. I am not unopen to conviction and I have asked the Homoeopaths again and again to tell me at what stage of training they would like to bring in their therapeutics. But they must have a basic modern training. I have no doubt there again that they will never be able to compete unless they are properly trained. It is no use wanting me to encourage Homoeopaths who go in for a three weeks or six weeks correspondence course. I had people here - I had them banished from one of the Secretariats of the Government of India - asking people to pay so many rupees. Rupees fifteen for a six weeks course. Rupees eleven for a nine weeks course and so on. That is going on, and it is nothing but hypocrisy and exploiting the poor people. Surely, no one can or should put up with these going on. Anyhow, I have not banned the practice of any system of medicine, but I know

that if India is to keep pace with dynamic progress elsewhere, she cannot turn a deaf ear to modern medicine any more as to science in any other realm. We cannot say that we are not going to have an aeroplane, we are not going to have motor cars. We are not going to have tractors. There, however, I may join issue. We have got human material for the work of tractors, but this House accepts tractors. Is it in medical science alone that the House wants to take us back from the realm of modern science to the middle ages or the dark ages? I am afraid I am not for it. I must give to the people the best. I am not out to give to the villager what is cheap. He must have something better than I have. Because I have more education and more facilities for healthy living, and therefore he has got to have what is best.

Then a friend has slanged, if I may use that word and as so very often people do, the officials of my Ministry. I want to say here very firmly that whatever he has said is completely wrong. After all, our officials are here to serve us, and I have not found—and I have been in charge of two Ministries—I have not found any official going contrary to what the Minister wants him to do. All this talk of rigid-mindedness has got to stop, and I think it is time we stopped it. We have inherited a fine service. They may have had or have different ideas, but there is no reason why they should go contrary to the directions of the Minister, and I want to say that never have I had anything but the most lovable co-operation from all my colleagues. It is not right to damn any particular section of the population. If co-operation is not forthcoming from his colleagues it is probably the fault of the Minister.

As far as the manufacture of our own medicines is concerned, I am in entire agreement and I want that desideratum to come about, that we should be able to manufacture our own medicines. Not only that we should be able to export our drugs also, because, after all, we have got thousands of herbs here that can be exploited.

My time is very short and I cannot perhaps comment on all the points that have been raised. But I must say something

about family planning because many of the Members of the House have talked about it. There have been contrary opinions expressed. The first speaker in this morning's debate said: "Family planning! Leave it out". There are some who have said: "Family planning! Well. You must do something about it." While others have said: "Family planning! Why? Irrigate more lands, there is plenty of room for expansion in our land." My Ministry has been accused of not having paid much attention to this vexed question. We are not wholly oblivious of the problem, as hon. Members will have seen from the report on health, in the chapter relating to this subject in the first Five Year Plan. But I would ask the House to remember that family planning has not been taken up by any Government in the world on a governmental basis, because it is a very personal thing, where religious susceptibilities are often roused, and perhaps Members of this House may have seen that even in an organisation like the World Health Organisation, the proposal that was sponsored by the Indian delegate to discuss birth control and to see what the organisation can do about it, was turned down because of bitter opposition against any such plan. Many of the Members of the non-progressive groups across the way—though some of them may call themselves more progressive—may oppose bitterly birth control by means of mechanical contraceptives. Unfortunately, the Members of the House who have spoken in favour of it have spoken only in terms of mechanical contraceptives. I myself am firmly of the opinion that—the moral side of it apart—this is completely unthinkable for us from the point of view of finance. It is impossible for us not only from the point of money, but also from the point of view of inadequate medical aid and relief. There are other methods, however. Will the hon. Members who talk about family planning take courage in both hands, and advocate that people marry at a much later age than they do now? Do the Members who come, especially from Bengal, realise that in their villages today girls are becoming mothers at the age of 15, and that boys in their teens are becoming fathers? These are some of the ways in which we can tackle this question. After all, the God-given remedy of self-restraint is given to us. Are we going

to be weak enough to say that no self-restraint can be practised, and that we have to resort to other methods? We are quoting the Father of the Nation again and again repeatedly on the floor of this House, but should we forget him in this vital thing? I think we shall be doing a very great disservice to this country if in this we blindly follow the West. It has been said that we should raise the standard of living of the people here. The answer is yes, as soon as possible. If we can do that, the birth rate will itself go down. But in other ways what are we doing? After all, a man has to have some outlet for his energies and for his pleasure. What do we give him? He has got nothing to turn to but gambling, drink and procreation. Will the hon. members go out and do something for these people? We give them no music, no theatres, no cinemas, no games, nothing of that sort. I say, these are the ways in which we can tackle this vital question. The rhythm method has been recommended by Dr. Stone. I do not know who is responsible for the libel that he has not recommended it. I am sure, the hon. member who quoted Dr. Stone as having said that, has not read his report properly. And this method is a costless method of self restraint. Dr. Stone's report and his recommendations are with me. He has said in it that after having travelled and talked with very many people, he has come to the conclusion that this is the best method for India. That is Dr. Stone's recommendation, and I can show it to the hon. member, if he wishes to see it. The solution of the problem is in our own hands. And I am not one of those who is going to go against the genius and the traditions of our people. These are many objections to the way of family planning as followed in the West; even in the West, doctors are not wholly satisfied with the methods that obtain there.

Finally, I would like to assure the hon. members of this House that I and my colleagues are at their disposal whenever they would like to see us. I would like to see, particularly the members of the Opposition. Let them come and talk with me

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\*Dr. M.M. Das.

and plan with me, because after all, health, at any rate is something that rises above all barriers; there are no politics in it. We all want a healthy nation. We want to have healthy children and healthy youth. People are dying of T.B. and I am told. I have got T.B. on the brain. How can I not? I have to have T.B. on my brain because I cannot find beds for T.B. patients. My heart aches for them. I know that we cannot do very much for them at the moment, but we could give shelters for them. We could have isolation, at any rate, for them. We can remove malaria from this country. We ought to remove it. I am now pleading with the hon. Finance Minister, that if any money comes his way, it might be given to me for a countrywide plan for the eradication of malaria. I would like to say that I sympathise entirely with the States when they tell me: "we have so many programmes on hand, we would like to avoid malaria and so one and we want money". I believe, one hon. member said that D.D.T. is not going to eliminate malaria. But I have the evidence of my hon. friend Mr. Vartak who comes from Bombay State, where with a really good programme, malaria has been brought wonderfully under control. It can be brought under control in every State. In four places, in the States of Mysore, Orissa, Madras and in the Terai lands of Uttar Pradesh, where teams of workers have gone out, malaria has been eliminated. It can be eliminated; it is only a question of ways and means. I have to guard myself against impatience. I may not be frustrated and I would like the House to join with me — that we should not be frustrated. We must not only not think that we are unable to do this or that but we should think that we will do it, we will do a little, and we will see when we can achieve the rest. That is the attitude that we have to take in the matter of health. I do hope that more and more members will take an increasing interest in this subject, and come to me with their suggestions. I have an open mind, and I would like to do everything that is practicable for the sake of this vital need. After all, there can be no production in this country, there can be no progress of any kind in this country, if our people are weak and dying of disease. It is no good quoting to me. Sometimes I have quoted Samuel Butler's 'Erewhon', where the law

was that "People who fall ill should be fined." That is all very well, but in Samuel Butler's "Land of Nowhere", I dare say, conditions existed where people need not have fallen ill. Unfortunately in our country, conditions exist where people have got to fall ill; they are exceptions if they do not fall ill. Therefore, those conditions have got to be remedied. I hope great things from our community projects, where, I hope the villages will have proper plans laid out for them, so that the health conditions, drainage, sewerage, latrines etc. can be improved, and all which makes for better health and living may be given to our villagers.

## 2. General Budget 1956-57\*

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It will be my endeavour during the brief half-hour that is at my disposal to answer the criticisms and the cut motions that have been moved with regard to the Demands for Grants for the Health Ministry.

Several things have been said, but the major attack—shall I call it—has been on me, because I have been accused of having in a very biased or a prejudiced mind against the ancient systems of medicine of India and ayurveda in particular. I would like to say from the very beginning that I have no prejudices in my mind against any system. I naturally want the people of this country, the poor people with whom I am in daily contact and whose suffering causes me perpetual heartache to be given such relief as I would like to give to myself and such relief as, I believe, the majority of the members of this hon. House would like to have given to them.

I have always held that modern medicine is the sum-total of all the knowledge acquired through all the ages from every country in the world including our own, where 5,000 years ago, ayurveda held supremacy. Therefore, it has been my endeavour from the very beginning, to try to get from ayurveda all of value that it has to give so that it may come into the large stream of modern medicine, as the hon. Member who spoke last has said. To say that nothing has been done for ayurveda during all these years is quite wrong. That the money for which provision had been made has not been spent or could not be spent is no fault of mine. There is a Board of Ayurveda and that Board advises me. The Jamnagar Institute was my conception. If Shri Dhulekar says that it came into being because of him

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\* Replying to the points raised by members on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Health. (L.S. Deb., 4 April, 1956, cc. 4308-4397).

I will gladly give him that credit, but it was my desire to have an institute where ayurveda could be developed, could be developed properly and where research in all aspects of ayurveda could be undertaken under a scientific aegis. The Jamnagar Institute is run by a governing body of 15 members, and it has autonomous powers. The President of that body is Shri Dave, the Health Minister of Saurashtra, who is a protagonist of ayurveda. There are three representatives from different States. There is Dr. Subramanyam, an ayurvedic physician himself. There is Dr. Mhaskar. There is one vacancy caused by the death of one vaid. There is Shri Dhulekar himself. There is Shri Dube from the Upper House. There is Dr. Kulkarni. There is Kaviraj Pratapsingh. There is Dr. B.B. Yodh and there is Dr. C.D. Pandit. I may say that no scheme for research that has come up and that has been approved by this body of advisers, of whom the majority are vaids, has ever been refused money by my Ministry.

Recently, I asked the Prime Minister to visit the Central Institute of Research in Indigenous Systems of Medicine, Jamnagar. I join issue with the expressions that have been used by my hon. friend Shri Dhulekar that the Jamnagar Institute is a hoax, and he has tried very hard during his budget speech to elicit public sympathy for his own institution. I would really like to ask whether it is proper for a Member of the Lok Sabha to plead on the floor of this House on the occasion for help to his own institution. However, that may be, I have helped his institution also, and if he sends me any scheme for research, I promise him that he shall have more money for that also, but it has to be vetted by the body of vaids who sit and pass judgment on all the schemes as to whether they are fit for help or not. I am sure no Member of this House would like me to give money where schemes have not been passed by or have not passed muster with the committee consisting of vaids themselves.

As I said, there is a great deal of research going on, and I would draw the attention of the House to pages 44-45 of the report and ask them to see what has been done, what is being done and what the future plan of work is, and how many important medicines have been investigated. 02- important medicines have been prepared and it has been my endeavour throughout to standardise medicines from amongst the mine of herbs that we have in India. I join absolutely in the opinion expressed by my revered friend Shri Tondon that too many medicines do not do good to the human frame. I wish he had been kind enough to read what I said in my address to a Medical College only the other day, I begged of practitioners of modern medicine to turn the searchlight inwards and use simple herbal remedies rather than invariably the so-called wonder drugs.

I have set up a body to carry out research into the effects that these wonder drugs have on the human frame. Further, I have gone to the extent of saying that in all my plans, in the First Five Year Plan and even in the Second Five Year Plan, which is a continuation of the First Five Year Plan, the emphasis shall be entirely on the preventive side. If I have tried to remove malaria from the people, it has been on the preventive side. If I have tried to do something for leprosy, it has been not only curative, but the emphasis has been on the preventive side. If I have tried and am trying to do something regarding filaria, again it is on the preventive side. If I have worked for maternity and child welfare, it is again, on the preventive side. If they will study the report and the figures and the information that I have given to questions, it will be seen that every possible emphasis has been laid on the preventive side. Infant mortality has come down. Maternal mortality figures are less and as a result of that the average of life has also gone up. This has all been due to the preventive measures that have been taken. I would again say to Shri Tandon in reply to his appeal to me that I have been as anxious as he to work on

the preventive side. I have often tried to help those people who know anything about nature cure. I have often quoted what Bapu used to say that man falls ill when he breaks one or the other of the laws of nature and, therefore, he should return to nature. I am not wedded to overdosage of medicine. I do not like it. But, the fact remains that people do fall ill because they disobey the laws of nature, because they live in surroundings which are unhygienic, which are not fit for human habitation, because they do not get a proper supply of pure water. Therefore, I have taken up a nation-wide programme for the supply of pure drinking water to the nation. That is because, if you get a pure drinking water supply, if you can get decent houses to live in, if you can have fresh air and sunshine, you will reduce disease much quicker than you can by increasing your beds for hospitals. With the increase of population and the increase of diseases that the people suffer from if they want to go to the hospitals, I must cater for the curative side also because everything has to go on *pari passu*. I repeat that the emphasis laid by my Ministry has been very greatly on the preventive side.

When I asked the Prime Minister to visit the Jamnagar Institution, this is what he wrote:

"This is a fascinating inquiry going on this research Institute and it may well lead to very fruitful results. The so-called conflict between ayurvedic and modern medicine has to be studied and resolved. The only right approach has to be the one of science that is of experiment, trial and error. In whatever type of medicine we may deal with, we cannot profit by its study unless we apply the methods of science. In this way there should not be many conflicting methods but various aspects of one scientific approach. Nothing should be taken for granted. Everything should be tested and proved and then it becomes a part of scientific medicine—old and new."

My hon. friend quoted an Australian Doctor, who went there. I may also say for information that it was I who asked him to go there. I do not fail to ask anybody who is interested, to see this institute and see what we are trying to do for ayurveda. Unani is practically never mentioned. I am very glad that it has been

mentioned today by one Member. That we have not been able to appoint a Board for unani as we have for homoeopathy and ayurveda is only because we have had no appeals for any help. The only one that we had, where we felt we could give that help, was from Aligarh and we gave a handsome sum to Aligarh. I shall certainly give more there, if necessary for good work.

In regard to the Tibbia College at Delhi, which was mentioned, we all know what a useful part it played while its founder was alive. Since then it fell into bad hands. Shortly before Bapu was taken away from us, he talked to me about it. He wanted me to take it over. I had a long discussion with him. He called the trustees. They almost agreed to pass a resolution making it over to the Government of India. But, later they went back on that. The trustees quarrelled amongst themselves. It was found that the institution was in bad hands. Nothing could be done. Later I asked the Chief Commissioner to see if we could go to law about it. He did. By that time, the Delhi State had come in. It was the Delhi State that had to cater for it. The Delhi State asked in its Health demands whether something could be given to the Institute. I naturally did not hold my hand against it. In fact, I agreed to it.

I do want to bring this to the notice of the House that while I have clarified my position that I am not against ayurveda, unani or homoeopathy, I am against quackery in whatsoever form it exists. When I am told that, so far as homoeopathy is concerned, I should recognise it, how can I recognise a few weeks' correspondence course which allows people to practise and give medicines to persons without a proper appreciation of what the medicines will do? Even in regard to the system of ayurveda, I may say that my advice to all the protagonists of ayurveda was this: you are living in a dynamic world; nothing remains static. In the West, modern medicine is progressing at a dynamic pace. If you will all become qualified practitioners of modern medicine and then devote two years to the therapeutics, post-graduate study of

ayurveda, you will be able to give to modern medicine what ayurveda has to give and you will be enriching modern medicine. My advice was not heeded.

I would like this House to remember also that the Health Ministry is not responsible for what is done in the entire country. Health is a State subject. I have had the greatest co-operation from my colleagues—I call them colleagues—the Health Ministers of the various States. When they come for conferences every year, I have their utmost co-operation. Two Committees have been set up in connection with ayurveda. One came to the conclusion that there should be one Degree course for ayurveda. Not content with that, another committee is now sitting to see and make recommendations as to how the practice of ayurveda can be regulated. I am waiting for its report.

What I feel very much is that people do not always understand when they criticise. No one bothers to read the report as a whole and see what the Health Ministry has done. Shri Kamath says that the Health Ministry should be abolished. I do not know who will do the work that has been done by the Ministry. I think I have a right to expect all the Members of this hon. House to read reports and see what has been achieved under the First Five Year Plan and what is sought to be achieved under the Second Five Year Plan, and then criticise. I would refer the hon. Member to the report. Shri Kamath has said in very extraordinary language that my Ministry has been responsible for death, destruction and disability throughout the country and therefore why should it remain? I treat a remark like that with, what shall I say, sorrow; nothing more than that. It does not make me angry. It makes me sad that anybody should use phraseology which is quite untrue.

Schemes of research in Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, etc. whenever they come from the States, are given the consideration they merit. Money is given to them. If there is less provision in the Plan than before for this, it is not because I want less provision, but because the money that had been allotted could not be spent. It is not my fault. After all, I have to work through

the States, through institutions, but I would like to assure the House....

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I would like to assure the House that whenever any schemes come up which pass muster as I have said, the money will be forthcoming. The Government of India have insisted on a proper, under-graduate training in Homoeopathy, and one college is being upgraded in Calcutta. In regard to post-graduate studies in Homoeopathy, the Bombay Government is doing the needful.

The training for Ayurveda is in the charge of the States but I have been visiting several institutions. It has been a tragedy to me to go to these institutions, whether in Madras, Bombay, Lucknow or Banaras or elsewhere and find that all the students that come out from these institutions, where non-clinical subjects are taught on the basis of modern medicine, every one of them practices modern medicine and not one of them practices Ayurveda. Amongst the *vaids* themselves there is a controversy as to whether we should have Shudh Ayurved or Ayurved which can bring about a synthesis. Between the two, it becomes very difficult for me, but the States are there to look after their institutions.

Now, it is said that the man in the street demands Ayurved and does not want modern medicine. I can quote Minister after Minister of Health in the States including the Minister of Health of U.P. They say: "When I put up Ayurved dispensaries for modern medicine in preference..." Having said that much about Ayurved, Unani and Homoeopathy, I hope I have been able to convince the House that I have no antipathy against these systems. I am willing to help them, but I must give money where I am assured by the qualified *vaids*, Homoeopaths and Hakims themselves that that money will be well spent.

As far as the provision of medical facilities for the common man is concerned, as I said, it is the responsibility of the State Governments. But if the Report is read, Members will see that there has been a great deal of advance. Maternity and child

welfare centres are spreading out gradually over the entire country. I need not again mention the National Malaria Control, the water programme and so on. I am giving grants so that water may go into the rural areas. Again, it is the States that are the working agencies. It is for them to take advantage of the grants that are made and give water supply and run maternity and child welfare centres for which the Centre gives a great deal of aid in the beginning. If aid comes from outside, it has invariably been given to the States and always the emphasis has been laid on help to the rural areas. Slum clearance occupied a certain amount of time by one or two Members. After having spoken about it they have thought it fit to leave the House. This problem is primarily the concern of the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply, but I am interested, intensely interested in it, because, as I have said I cannot have healthful living unless and until people are able to live in sanitary surroundings. The resolution by the Council of the Local Self Government Ministers demanded that because slum clearance was a matter of national importance, the Government of India should give liberal aid to States and subsidise the implementation of approved slum clearance schemes. In pursuance of that resolution, the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply have set apart during the Second Five Year Plan a sum of Rs. 20 crores for slum clearance *cum sweepers colonies*, of which 25 per cent is to be given as subsidy by the Centre, 25 per cent as subsidy by the States and the balance of 50 per cent as a loan from the Centre. This is a good scheme. It envisages giving plots of land on which the individuals will be allowed to build in the case of slum dwellers in non-crowded cities. When the Demands of the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply come up, if you ask my colleague more about slum clearance I have no doubt that he will give you a clearer picture than I can because slum clearance is in his Ministry.

In regard to Delhi, Rs. 50 lakhs was placed at my disposal. I have already answered questions on the floor of the House as to how those houses were to be constructed. My difficulty and the difficulty of all those who go in for slum clearance and slum

improvement is this, and this applies particularly to Delhi, what to do with the population which has increased owing to partition and where people have come and squatted and put up unauthorised constructions and taken up what were in the plan supposed to be open areas to park areas. Where are they to be moved? I entirely agree with the hon. Member who said you cannot separate the rich from the poor, why should you? In fact, if we have to think in terms of remodelling an entire town and removing the slum areas, we have to think in terms of the service that the people who go in for manual labour give to the people who live in that area. The tragedy again here has been that houses have been built and colonies have been built and time and again, as I said yesterday on the floor of the House, the colonisers who have vested interests have come and exploited the poor and built up colonies, and I am very sorry to have to say that certain Ministries have also been guilty in this building up of colonies without reference to sewerage and drainage.

And that brings me to the unfortunate episode of the jaundice epidemic over which we have had a discussion and about which I do not wish to say anything more than this that I gave a promise on the floor of the House that I would take up this matter myself. Since then, I can tell the House that I have been sitting practically every day and my colleagues have been sitting all day long to see what we can do, and on the recommendations of the enquiry committee's report wherever immediate action could be taken that action has been taken. In addition, another expert body was asked to look through the recommendations of the committee and submit their recommendations to me within a week, and these people too worked night and day, carried out tests and other investigations, and have submitted an extremely good report which tells what we can do immediately, what we can do on a short-term basis and what we should do on a long-term programme, with special reference to the fact that anything that has been done even immediately shall fit into the picture. I am hoping very much that when the next monsoon comes or even if floods come, we shall be able

to protect Delhi from such contamination as recently took place, and that within a much shorter time than originally envisaged we shall be able to divert the sewage and sullage from flowing into the river altogether. That is what we shall try to do.

Someone has quite rightly said that the fall of effluence into rivers, especially the sacred rivers, and the rivers where people bathe is a matter which should be looked into. This question has been looked into. Research is being done, and the States have been alerted and asked to do all they possibly can.

My hon. friend opposite, Dr. Rama Rao, had raised certain questions, and I would like to tell him about cinchona. I have told him personally already, and I would like again to tell him that I shall certainly consider the question of selling stocks that we have, at a cheaper rate, even if it means loss to Government.

As far as synthetic anti-malarial preparations are concerned, their preparation will have to go with the bigger scheme for the preparation of pharmaceuticals. But we are not blind to that. We are alert about that also. But just as Shri Tandon said that if we remove the rickshaw-pullers from their duty we create for them unemployment, likewise I would like to place before you this fact namely that if I close down our cinchona plantations, I put hundreds and thousands of persons out of employ; I am not willing to do it. In regard to the rickshaw-pullers also, when I addressed the States (because it is their matter), I told them that this was not a good thing for health because after all I know how the lungs and the heart are injured by this trade. But I said also to them, you must give these people, however, other employment. So, I would like to assure Shri Tandon that I am alive to the fact that nobody should be axed without his having been provided with alternative employment.

Much has been said about what China is doing in regard to her traditional medicine, as they call it. I have been to China very recently, and I saw all their hospitals and all the institutions that were being run by the traditional doctors. I saw also the co-operation that was there between the modern practitioner and

the traditional doctor. China has adopted the modern system of medicine. China is not producing any more traditional doctors. She is very short of any sort of health personnel. And I agree to what Dr. Rama Rao said, and I have already suggested this to the State Ministers that they should employ those who are in villages, those who are willing to go into villages, and give them training in hygiene and sanitation. That is what China is doing. They are making use of everything, but the traditional doctor in China is not allowed to treat any communicable diseases. There were five diseases which they were asked to treat, namely, chronic asthma, chronic arthiritis, chronic rheumatism, chronic gastro-enteritis and chronic hypertension. Apart from these, they are not treating anything. They are also doing research in their traditional medicines, just as we are doing here, and when they came here they were very interested in what we are doing.

I personally would like to follow the Chinese method, but then I would be told that I was unsympathetic towards Ayurveda. Many more vaids are being produced here, and when I say vaids are produced, I mean they are taught Ayurveda but alas! They practise modern medicine.

There are other matters which I would have liked to deal with, but unfortunately there is no time now.

I am glad that in regard to the question of the Tata Hospital for Cancer—Dr. Rama Rao is satisfied. For malaria we are doing, and have done, a great deal; the millions of man-hours that are lost by malaria are gradually being given back to the country. So, I do not think anybody can quarrel with the many schemes that have been taken up by the Health Ministry.

Again, I would like to say that the work of my Ministry should be judged by the report, by the work that is done by us. My doors are always open. Anybody who would like to come can come and give me his suggestions, and my mind is always open to all new suggestions.

### **3. General Budget 1957-58\***

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Sir, I rise with very great diffidence to speak on a subject on which I consider myself very unsuited in more ways than one to speak. Also, it is the first time since independence, political independence, came to India that I am able to stand on the floor of Parliament and offer some criticism, not destructive I hope, of the proposals of the Government. I only hope I shall not be misunderstood and that my erstwhile colleague, the Finance Minister, will extend to me the same sympathy and understanding as he did when I was privileged to work with him.

Sir, we are all aware of the need for fulfilling our commitments as far as the second Five Year Plan is concerned. I am sure everyone is also willing to sacrifice infinity for the cause of the country, a cause which must override all individual, communal, provincial or even party and political considerations. Money has to be found and found primarily within our own borders for, in the long run, a nation has to stand on its own strength. The Finance Minister has therefore, rightly said that everyone, rich and poor, has to shoulder the great burden if we are to achieve our aims and objectives. But while everyone is and must be willing to put his shoulder to the wheel, he can only do as much as is commensurate with his strength. Has that strength been appraised aright and what will be the consequences if the burden is more than any sector can bear? The cost of living has gone up considerably. We are told that prices have gone because the purchasing power of the people has increased. Has the purchasing power of the people increased *pari passu* with the rise in prices? I doubt it very

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\*Intervening the debate on General Budget, 1957-58. (R.S. Deb., 2 May, 1957, cc. 714-23).

much. I am not an economist but I did learn that deficit financing will always cause inflation, and if that is so, the more we go in for deficit financing the higher will soar the prices of commodities. Women are said to be poor financiers. As a woman, I admit that with the large majority of my sex, I know nothing in regard to the theory of high finance. But as a woman I also have to meet household expenditure and I am not at all sure that women do not know how best to make two ends meet but I fear that the present proposals are going to make it very very hard and in fact may make life impossible for those that are poor, and the large majority in this country are poor. I am glad to read in the papers that kerosene oil has been left out of the tentacles of the Finance Minister, but he is taxing heavily such other things as the poor man needs like matches, sugar, tea, coffee, etc. They are not commodities whose prices can be sent up without touching the poor man's purse. Talking of tea, I wonder if something tangible could be done to stop its adulteration instead of asking the poor housewife to pay a little more than she does today for it. Now, food cannot continue to be doled out to the poor for ever with promises of subsidy whether by the Rs. 25 crores which the Finance Minister is going to put aside for supplementing the food needs of the nation or by fair price shops. Production in every sphere is the only answer but an under-nourished person can never produce. Why has the lowest income rate for taxation been lowered to the extent of making life still harder for the poor man? I think everybody who has anything to do with expenditure today realises that Rs. 250 per month for a family is nothing at all. Take a man who has got to feed himself, his wife and three or four children and perhaps his father and mother who are dependent on him. How can he possibly pay taxes on this small income? The price of the post card—again the poor man's only means of communication—has been raised. Why? The rise in railway fares too is going to hit him. The poor, Sir, should be made less poor. That should be the objective of every Government but I fear greatly that the present Budget proposals are going almost the other way in many directions of the chimerical

assumption of the fulfilment of a plan which might itself indeed break on the rock of finance.

Sir, I have said I do not believe in destructive criticism or, at any rate, I said I would offer some constructive criticism. Now, there is no one who sympathises with the Finance Minister in his efforts to raise money but will he be willing to listen to other ways and means which will not hit the poor man quite so hard. Instead of raising the post card rate, why cannot the price of the stamped envelope be raised from 13 naye paise to 15 naye paise? I would not mind even if the cost of the reply post card was raised to 12, but I object strongly to the cost of the single post card whether local or internal being increased. I do not know what the yield from such a measure, that is raising the cost of the envelope from 13 naye paise to 15 naye paise, will be but I imagine it will not be less than that from the tax on the post card. I believe I am right in saying that our civil aviation rates are less than any in the world. The aeroplane up to date is the rich man's means of conveyance. Why cannot air fares be raised rather than railway fares?

Sir, I may be pardoned for saying so but we as a people have a habit of clinging to slogans and we very often forget the slogans like, shall I say, slang words in any language, come and go and their significance at the time is entirely lost in another age and a succeeding generation knows nothing at all about them. Now, as a housewife I maintain that the poorest of the poor will not feel it if rock salt which sells at nine pice a seer, is raised to ten pice a seer and if the finer element which sells at 12 pice is raised to 15 pice. Gandhiji spoke in parables and his actions were nearly always symbolic. We have been apt, again and again, to take him too literally. I think the Union Government will be well-advised to raise a levy on what today is not longer symbolic of bygone days. No family—I am taking the family as six or eight souls as a rough reckoning—consumes more than a seer of salt a month and the infinitesimal extra will yield, I am sure, a rich dividend. I would like the Finance Minister to probe into this suggestion if he will have the courtesy to do so.

Now, I come to another suggestion which may raise a furore from some of the members of my own party. But I feel that truth has to be adhered to at all costs and he who pursues it has ever to turn the searchlight inwards and to stand for it whatever the consequences. Can the Congress Government in the States who have tried out this policy and the members of the Union Ministry here at the Centre lay their hands on their hearts and affirm that the policy of prohibition has been a success? I say to you, it has been a dismal failure and will continue to be so. Human nature is the same the world over. Russia tried and failed; Turkey tried and failed; The United States tried and failed. I was in New Zealand the other day. There, the women of New Zealand and also of Australia, had asked that no drink may be served after 5 O' clock.

Those very women today are asking for that law to be rescinded because they find more drunkenness before the hour of five than before. Australia has rescinded the measure and New Zealand will probably follow suit. The conditions in India are different, very, very, very, few people drink. The number of addicts, if a survey were to be taken, would probably be less than 1 per cent., and the actual people who even touch any wine would probably be less than 10 per cent. What is happening is that money which should come into the Exchequer is being taken by bootleggers and today I am told that they are the biggest protagonists of prohibition. The administration has been corrupted and people are encouraged daily to resort to lying and deception. Smuggling takes place. One State has prohibition and its neighbour has not. Smuggling must go on. Now, Gandhiji's name is exploited in this as in so much else. I often wonder how far away we have gone from his teachings but we forget that his greatness lay, Sir, in acknowledging an error and retracing his steps. I claim humbly to say that if he were alive today and if I were to go and tell him that this is happening in every State, where there is prohibition by law, that there is corruption in the administration, that there is bootlegging, that there is more drinking, that wine is flowing more

freely and further that illicit distillation is increasing, then he would say, "Abolish it and try out other ways and means". I submit that there are far better ways of weaning the people from drink than legislation. I in my young days profited from the wisdom of Plato and later I learnt more than ever at Gandhiji's feet to believe that that country is governed best which is governed least. I am not sure but we seem to excel others in legislation and even high judicial luminaries have told me that they can scarcely keep pace with all the legislation that the Government of India goes in for.

Now another suggestion. Education which ought really to be the birthright of every citizen is becoming almost a luxury which few can afford. We seem to regret it but presumably. We cannot alter this at the moment. But what about a small health cess? I had mooted this question to be discussed at the next meeting of the Health Council, and I trust that my successor will keep this issue alive. That again, I think, would help to subsidise and expand medical aid and relief and the people will more readily come forward to give a few Naya Paise for medical aid and relief as a health subsidy for themselves and for their families than they will towards an increase in the price of sugar or of the other daily necessities of life.

Finally, Sir, the Finance Minister himself said that he is exploring uncharted seas, as it were, when he is asking for an expenditure tax I do not know how it is going to work out, and also the one of capital levy. Well, I have no antagonism against the rich paying more than they do, willingly paying more than they do, so that those who have not should have, but again he says that many of his proposals were submitted with a view to getting rid of the tax evasion that today exists in the country. I very humbly submit that I am not really sure if he is not opening out very many more ways of tax-evasion. I finally do plead with the Finance Minister to reconsider the exemption from tax on personal effects, personal effects including furniture, cars, jewellery, etc. up to a maximum of Rs. 25,000. Now, Sir the value of Rs. 25,000 is very very little, and far too small a sum has been fixed as the maximum. That apart, all the time I have

the feeling that the poor should be lifted rather upliftment should be the order of the day, upliftment of standards, not always a lowering of standards. I shudder to think of the harassment which will be caused and caused to my sex in particular. Now who will examine the clothes, etc. and find out the correct value? It may be that some men will go round and examine clothes in our wardrobes, and jewellery, and put on them such value as they like. It will all result in harassment to the people, and I think it is an impracticable suggestion. I would like him to leave out entirely clothes and jewellery. The latter is not a paying proposition today because if, for example, you bought a ring for Rs. 500 some ten years ago, probably it would not fetch even a hundred rupees today and also nobody is going in now-a-days to invest in jewellery; jewellery is out of date for investment purposes but so long as women are alive they do want to put on nice clothes and a few ornaments. This has been the case from earliest times and women will continue to be the same. In this country the moment a girl is born or for that matter the moment a boy is born, the mother thinks of buying a good sari from out of her hard savings, tries to purchase it cheaply or a pair of ear-rings for her daughter or a ring for her son or a pair of churis to give to her daughter at the time of her daughter's marriage or to her daughter-in-law when she comes newly to her house. On the one hand we are asked to save but thrift is surely not for the purpose of being taxed. The Indian woman saves something with great difficulty so that when actually the time comes for her daughter's wedding she can say to her husband with some pride, "I have bought this pair of churis already. I bought this or that out of savings over a number of years. You need not spend money on that account." But now by your tax policy you are going to kill all this wisdom.

Now a person is delighted to have a little work of art as an ornament in his house. If you go to a foreign country you like to buy something and to bring it back to your country and keep it in your house as a little souvenir. Time and again your friends give you a little souvenir. You are now going to be taxed for all these things. A picture which you would like to live with, that too

will be taxed, and heaven alone knows how this tax will be organised and how it will be manoeuvred, but there will certainly be terribly harassment that the housewife will have to bear. So I do beg of the Finance Minister to think twice before he takes this step. We want to encourage handicrafts. We want to encourage artistic wares of every kind which are things of joy and beauty. Who will buy them in such circumstances? We want to encourage Khadi. Now how can I afford to buy Khadi when these measures come along? I will naturally turn to buy mill-made cotton saris at a cheaper price because I won't be able to buy Khadi. You are going to kill the very things which bring joy in the lives of people and the enhancement of income in the case of the poor artisans. Now art, music and drama are encouraged by those who spend on it. I say, Sir, that those who spend also do a service. Money circulates. But why should they now spend? Indeed why should anyone save? I have a feeling that what is given with one hand is taken away with the other, that is the way we seem to be following.

I have spoken with frankness and with sincerity. We want a contented people, a land where there will be plenty, a land where there will be security. I have to say with great concern that there does not seem to be in the minds of most people any sense of security. Everybody asks: Where are we going? Government has a right to ask for and has a right to expect willing co-operation from its citizens. But I would like Government not to close their eyes to their own duty, primarily to the corruption that exists. Corruption is not going to be abolished by committees and legislation, and if it has to be abolished, Government itself has to take stringent action. I know that Government can reduce overhead expenditure. As a matter of fact, in my Ministry I formulated a scheme which, I hope, continues to be alive or at any rate will be looked into by my successor whereby on an average we might be able to save five lakhs of rupees per year. We always talk of reducing administrative expenditure. We used to criticise the British when they were here and used to say that enormous amounts were being spent on overhead expenditure. Of course, it was a

foreign administration. But I would like to know how much is being spent on our administration now, taking into consideration of course also that the work has greatly increased since independence. But it can be minimised, and I feel that a much stricter account should be kept and stricter supervision of what is being spent. For example, Member after Member of the Opposition says that money is being wasted in our community projects, in our N.E.S. Blocks, indeed everywhere. I feel that much greater supervision should be exercised throughout to see that every bit of our money is put to use and not wasted. I know there is bound to be a certain amount of wasteful expenditure, a certain amount of losses when you enter into a great venture, but I feel that enough supervision is not exercised. I would like to bring here to your notice, Sir, for example, when I used to call meetings of the Councils of Health, or Ministers of Health or other Ministers at some place, while we from the Centre used to go with a bare minimum of staff, I found one Minister coming for only one day to attend three days meeting with two officials, two chaprasis, two personal servants, etc. I remember another Minister coming with eight chaprasis and P.S.'s, and God alone knows what not, with no work for any of them. They simply went from north to south so that they could have a look at the south. These are things that can save the Government lakhs of rupees and I think that we should be very much more careful as to how our Ministers at the top act so that they may be a model for others to follow. Trust alone begets trust, Sir, and I am sure that even the business world whom we go to without any compunction when we want funds for our elections or anything else to give us money, will come to our help. Ask them, trust them; don't think that they are all bad, for Government also has to be human to understand human problems and the reactions of human beings.

Sir, I have put my reactions as lay person, merely as a human being and a woman, and I hope they will receive some considerations from the Finance Minister.

## 4. General Budget 1960-61\*

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Sir, I always feel very diffident about speaking on the Budget because I am a complete layman. I also always have a very soft spot in my heart for the Finance Minister who has to try to cut his coat according to his cloth and, in the present financial circumstances of India, to act almost as a conjuror to produce the requisite means to fulfil our Plans. I know that Shri Morarji Desai is a man of sterling worth and integrity and that his heart aches for the poor just as much as that of any one of us. I myself am only one among the millions of housewives today who have to try with great difficulty to balance their budgets but who have to meet their requirements without daring to indulge in deficit financing. That expedient is left, I believe, only to Government to indulge in but I am very worried about the extent of the use that we are making of it today because it can only lead to greater and greater inflation.

Sir, I crave indulgence of the Finance Minister for the few observations and suggestions that I am going to put forward. He will, I know, look upon them as coming from a humble social worker, as anxious as anyone else to see that the tempo of our Plans does not lag too far, if at all, behind the targets we have set before ourselves.

First of all, I should like to congratulate the minister for not having resorted to further direct taxation. I wish, however, that it had been possible for him to lift the very heavy burden that direct taxation today lays on those whose incomes are static. The cost of living is high, is likely to increase rather than decrease, and the incomes of this class of persons are being

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\*Intervening in the debate on General Budget 1960-61. (R.S. Deb., 4 March, 1960, cc. 2689-2695)

rapidly taken away by the heaviest taxation that exists anywhere in the world. I would beg of him, before this class of persons is reduced to absolute penury, to consider the elimination of the capital levy or, at any rate, to allow a capital of five lakhs of rupees without such levy. After paying income-tax this leaves an income of Rs. 1,200 a month or so—not too much for educating and feeding a family today. If we must, on the other hand, follow the Kaldorian method of taxation, should we not have his safeguards also? The entire complicated and, if I may say so, unjust structure of taxation needs to be simplified. Simplification will mean less expenditure on its administration and, I believe, less evasion too.

And while I am pleading for those with static incomes, may I also raise a plea on behalf of pensioners who are also in a bad way? The U.K. has raised pensions six times in the last 25 years. They have accepted the principle that pensions should be raised in order to approximate to the cost of living. Could there not be a Department of pensions in the Ministry? I repeat that direct taxation on static incomes, as it stands, is very hard and needs revision.

It seems to me that the urban middle classes have become almost the sole source of revenue simply because the Government does not seem to be able to evolve a broad-based policy of taxation. The bicycle and the scooter are the poor man's necessity and not a luxury. The increase in salaries of the Secretariat staff of the Government will go on the maintenance of this simple transport rather than as food for themselves and their families. I would, therefore, like some other ways and means to raise the monies needed, and they are needed to cover our deficit.

Last year too, Sir, I pleaded that the road transport industry was being badly hit by the Railways as also by the increase in excise duty on diesel oil. This was raised last year from 40 np to 80 np. Now, another 25 np per gallon is to be charged. Further a 10 per cent. *ad valorem* duty on all internal combustion engines is being levied as also an excise duty on all vehicles—buses and trucks. This will not only mean

increased fares for the low-income groups but will also constitute a heavy blow to the road transport industry—an industry which is run by middle class folk, a really small-scale industry and we say that we stand for small-scale industries on principle. Will this extra duty on diesel oil really reduce the existing imbalance between its consumption and production? Might not a better remedy lie in reducing the price of petrol?

Trucks and buses are not luxuries. They are means of earning a livelihood for a few middle class folk and they render a very important public utility service for millions who cannot afford any costlier mode of transport. The industry stands in need of relief, if I may say so, and not of further taxation. But where road transport is concerned, even the development rebate which is given to all other industries has been withdrawn from them. I would like to know why this injustice on persons who were pioneers in the field of road transport and who are now sought to be eliminated. I would beg of the Finance Minister to consider their case favourably. I am forced to wonder whether all this is being done in order to support the Railways *vis-a-vis* the road industry. But that would scarcely be fair. It is the interest of the travelling public that should be given first priority and the question of revenue to Government should not come into the picture. This injustice certainly does not happen in any of the advanced or democratic countries in the world.

I have said that taxation should be as broad-based as possible. I have also said that we must try to achieve our Plan targets and therefore it is necessary for us to find ways and means. I am sure no one is unwilling to tighten his belt but this should come much more from willing co-operation than from compulsion. If we could afford to save, we would willingly do so. But who can save with the cost of living as it is? Cannot the Government see to it that wheat and wheat flour, rice and *dal* are available to the public at reasonable prices, and unadulterated? *Dal* which even during the last war was never more than six annas a seer is today unavailable below 14 annas per seer. If only these three commodities, without adulteration, were

within the means of the poorest, there would be much more contentment and nothing of that feeling of frustration which exists universally today.

Why could not we have had a surcharge of one naya paisa on the postcard? This would have yielded what the taxes on diesel oil, scooters and cycles are meant to yield and would have been broad-based. I know I may hurt the feelings of the Finance Minister. But I long for him to be converted to think of winning persons over from alcoholism by means other than those of total prohibition by law. Lakhs of money are going into the pockets of bootleggers, illicit distillation of tons of liquor is taking place, drink among this class of persons is on the increase, much money is spent on administration, there is corruption in that administration and Government is losing money.

I will plead again for a renewal of the salt tax. Gandhiji often acted symbolically and on what was appropriate at the moment. He was dynamic at all times and always willing to adjust his policies to changing circumstances. The salt tax today would yield several crores and constitute no hardship on anyone. Ask any middle class man, who suffers from taxation, whether he would mind an increase due to the salt tax, he would say "no". And again it would be broad based.

Can we not seriously consider a small health cess which would reduce Government subsidies and expand our health services? May we not also consider a tax of Rs. 5 per marriage? This again would be easily got and would not be felt. What about an entertainment tax on marriage guests—a mere four annas per head? All these measures would be far more broad based than the ones now proposed or in existence and which unduly penalise the urban middle classes.

I believe this has been advocated before but I put it forward for consideration once again. Many economists believe that the time is ripe for the taxation of kerosene, firstly to prevent diversion of kerosene into diesel engines and also to provide a fairly large element of revenue out of the increase on agricul-

tural income which fortunately has taken place and perhaps more so than in any other sphere. I would like everyone of us to feel that we were making some contribution to the economic uplift of our country. The idea that the masses can crush any one class of society is neither a sound nor a fair one. Moreover, the resources of the urban middle classes are very limited, and I do not believe they are capable of bearing any further burdens without creating unhappiness, discontent and frustration among them. It may even lead those so placed and in Government employ in particular to indulge in dishonesty. In any event and at all times it is wise for a government to carry the intelligentia of the country with them. I do not believe they are doing so today.

I am glad that the Finance Minister has sensed the need for curbing administrative expenditure which, for a poor country like ours, is extremely high and top heavy. Serving as I have done over the last two years on the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament, I have been somewhat staggered at the all-round complaints that come from Audit about wasteful and avoidable expenditure. I wish the Finance Minister could find some means of seeing that the monies made available for various projects are always or, at any rate by and large, spent on those projects and that the purpose itself is always closely studied and well-planned.

I am glad that the extra amount budgeted for Defence is not as high as some journals had forecast. Nevertheless it does make sad reading for India which has always stood and agitated for disarmament as a world policy. I still hope that increasing friendliness with Pakistan will help us to save several crores and that Premier Chou En-Lai's visit to India will also ease the situation on our Tibetan borders so that we may not have to spend so much for purposes of defence. How good it would be if all that money could be spent on our social services—I mean on education and on health—without which inadequate measure there can be no progress in any country. I would like far more emphasis to be laid on social services than on heavy industry.

## 5. General Budget 1961-62.

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Mr. Chairman, we live in difficult times where the Finance Minister has, of all Ministers, the most difficult task to perform. The preparation of a Budget is never an easy job and when the target aimed at is high and the means at his disposal very limited, the responsibility becomes even greater. Considering the grave limitations the Finance Minister has to contend with, I think he needs to be congratulated on having, as he himself has claimed, tried to keep an even keel by not coming down too heavily on any one particular section of the community.

The Third Five Year Plan may not be trimmed. That is the general consensus of opinion. Industrialisation must be proceeded with a pace. Ours is to be a mixed economy with both the public and private sectors playing their legitimate roles. Money has perforce to be found somehow to supplement what we have. It is therefore no good criticising the ways and means adopted by the Finance Minister unless there are concrete alternatives to offer. \*Knowing as we all do the Minister's antipathy towards certain means of revenue which have been suggested to him in past years, it is difficult to see where else he could have turned for the lessening of the deficit than to what he has done. I have therefore no adverse comments to make on what I feel is a wise Budget under the circumstances. I would however like to make a few observations.

I wonder very much whether sizable economy cannot be made in administrative expenditure. While I realise that work and governmental responsibility have increased, I am not sure that administrative expenditure has not increased, compara-

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\*Intervening in the debate on the General Budget, 1961-62. (R.S. Deb., 9 March, 1961, cc. 2247-76)

tively speaking, very much more and whether there is not a great deal of overlapping. Could not something drastic in the nature of an overhaul be done in this regard? Everybody, whether, they have much or little—and the ones who have much are very few and far between—is willing to tighten his belt so that the country may progress as speedily as possible but what hurts the average person is that whatever he buys in the way of food is not only costly but adulterated. Surely, something tangible should and could, and what is more, must be done to give people their hard-earned money's worth for what they spend. According to the laws on the statute book, the guilty can be punished but because of the graft that exists everywhere, sinners can always go scot-free. Adulteration applies equally to drugs also. Surely, it is high time for the Ministries concerned, Home, Food and Health, to get together and devise strong measures to check what is a growing evil. Adulteration at any rate where food is concerned, seems to be done at source and it should be possible for Government to do something about it. I would plead for far more attention being paid to integrity in every sphere. Without integrity, both moral and intellectual, there can be no progress in our country.

I would like the Finance Minister to consider seriously for his next Budget the desirability of levying a marriage registration fee or tax, both on existing unregistered and all future marriages. I do not think that such an imposition would be resented by even the poorest in the land and a large sum of revenue would thus be available to the exchequer. Further, it would be of help to statisticians and demographers to know at what age marriages take place in our country. The collection of such data and the collection of the cess should not be too difficult or too heavy an executive burden. Such a procedure would also be of educative value as the men who ask for a marriage licence could be advised not to marry unless they are wage-earners. This would be a healthy check on population growth which is a problem for us, and the breaking of the law concerning the age of marriage could also be checked.

I would also plead for the consideration of the levy of a health cess. This would help to subsidise to some extent, at any rate, the cost of expanding medical aid and relief which is a dire necessity. If people have to pay for education, why should they not pay for health services too?

I would like to plead for more attention being paid to small-scale industries, to smaller schemes for irrigation and all activity which can absorb the large number of unemployed. Large and costly schemes like another atomic reactor should be relegated to the background in order to cope with the serious problem of unemployment.

And finally, since food production is of the essence, everything possible should be done to help the farmer. Such help should not be in the nature of laws or imposition from above which crush initiative. Indeed, we should refrain from resorting to measures which kill incentives rather than create them. I am glad that at long last my plea for abolishing the ban on the slaughter of useless cattle has received response from the Food Ministry. We cannot afford to allow our valuable food which should feed our children to go into the mouths of useless or wild animals, and much greater attention should be paid to protecting our grain from pests.

## 6. Demands For Grants 1954-55\*

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Madam-Chairman, I have listened with very great interest, not only interest but with pleasure, to all the speakers that have been good enough to ventilate their grievances and also make their suggestions for the improvement of the health of the nation. I will try, in the short time at my disposal, to answer most of the points that have been raised. One hon. member complained that when he asked me for certain statistics as to the number of dispensaries and hospitals in our country, the number of beds, patients and so on, I was unable to supply that information. He quite rightly said that he did not throw that fault at my door, because he knew that the States were autonomous in the matter of health and that I was not able to get this information from them. Now that is the absolute truth because I can only write and ask the States to furnish me with information. And I may say that I have been trying for the last several years to get all such information as would enable me to put before this hon. House a clear picture of the health situation in the country, but I am unable to get those figures. The figures as I have in my possession today would mean a report for perhaps 1948-49 which is not good enough, because naturally I want to know how much progress we have made. Nevertheless in spite of my inability to get these figures I do want to assure this House that progress is being made in the States, that there are more hospitals, that there are more dispensaries and that the attention of all the Health Ministers of all the States has been drawn to the rural areas.

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\* Replying to the points raised by members on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Health. (L.S. Deb., 12 April, 1954, cc. 4627—4638).

As more than one hon. member of this House has said, the problem of health in India is the problem of how much medical aid and relief we can give to rural India. There is no doubt about it that in all our plans—if anybody reads the Five Year Plan with an impartial mind he will find—the basic motivation behind the minds of all those who have made them, is how to get relief and upliftment to the rural areas. In the matter of health this has been no less evident. It will be evident if hon. Members read the report, that I have placed in their hands, of the Health Ministry, the plan for health in the First Five Year Plan and now what is going to be done in the Second Five Year Plan.

Malaria has been enemy No. 1 of India. If hon. members look at the Plan, they will find that during the two and a half years remaining of the First Five Year Plan, it is hoped that we shall be able to make 125 million persons of this country free from the malaria risk. I am hoping that in the Second Five Year Plan we shall be able to go still further and perhaps embrace almost the whole of the country, if not the entire country. Now malaria exists very much more in rural areas than it does in the cities. It disables the farmer for months on end and if this protection is given to the farmer he is going to be able to produce more.

In the Second Five Year Plan, even in the remaining years of the First Five Year Plan, I am negotiating and I hope we shall be able to give to the people a clean drinking water-supply, because in my opinion prevention is at all times better than cure and if we can reach out to the people a pure drinking water-supply and if we can by means of modern knowledge that is now available to us get rid of malaria, or at any rate the risk of malaria, I consider that we shall have done a great deal for rural India.

Again, the high rates of maternity and child mortality have been stressed by more than one speaker; the expectation of life has also been referred to. May I humbly submit that since independence the expectation of life has increased from 27 to 32? Now I do not consider that it is a bad record. I know it is

not good enough, but at any rate we have not gone backwards. I also wish to say that wherever one is able to send out a woman health visitor, or a midwife, mortality rates at once come down.

In the All-India Institute of Hygience in Calcutta we have intensified the training for village workers, so that for child and material welfare as also for environmental hygiene, which again is a very very important subject and which has been touched upon by more than one speaker, we may be able to put into the villages the type of worker that will understand the needs of the villages, that will be able to tell the people how to get rid of the habits that make for insanitation. In addition to that, we had appointed an Environmental Hygiene Committee sometime back. It wrote a very valuable report. But the States, again owing to lack of finance, have not been able to give practical effect to many of its recommendations. All the same the matter has not been allowed to lie still and in the last meeting of the Ministers of the Council of Health a sub-committee has been formed to draw up a Public Health Act which again will be extremely valuable. Attention has again been drawn of the States to the absolute essentiality and the urgency of the problem of environmental hygiene in the States.

I have been accused of being unable to have uniformity of policy in the country. True, there cannot be uniform policy for various reasons, the main reasons being, of course, that the States are autonomous in the matter of health.

\*His point is that I cannot have it unless there is Central control. I agree with him. For that we have got to change the Constitution. After all, I have got to work within the limits of the Constitution as it is today. But I do want to say this that I have been able to get a very large measure of co-operation from the Health Ministers of the States and they try their level best, again within the means both material and physical at their

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\*Speaking on the point raised by Dr. Jaisoorya that "uniformity cannot be achieved unless one has power".

disposal, to try to work along the lines of policy after we have discussed them and thrashed them out round the table. That I consider the best that I can do and the Health Council is a very valuable forum which enables me at any rate, to keep contact with what the States are doing. It also gives me an opportunity of giving them advice and guidance which is at all times available from the Centre, should they wish to use it.

I am grateful to my hon. friend on the Opposition Benches for the very useful suggestions that he has made. I would like to tell him that in the matter of training of village workers, I have already, recommended a short course. For the community projects we have got three training centres; special centres for training village workers that will go and help in the community projects and that will be continued to be used in the village areas. This is a short training course. In addition to the three centres,—one in the South, one in Calcutta and one in Delhi, I have recommended to all the States and nearly all of them have accepted it, the training of auxiliary personnel. This gives just the type of training that my friend Dr. Rama Rao suggested.

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If any practitioner of homoeopathy or Ayurveda or Unani, or anybody who has got no training at all, wishes to undertake this training he can certainly have it; and he can practise his homoeopathy, Ayurveda, or Unani; there is no ban on anybody doing that. I am coming to the question of Ayurveda I will take it up last. It has been suggested that there should be more manufacture of synthetic quinine. We have not got any manufacture of synthetic quinine just now. We produce more or less enough quinine for our requirements, pure quinine which we can never do without. The question of the pharmaceutical industry is under investigation. A committee is sitting to make recommendations. DDT will be produced from this year, and I hope penicillin also. I hope with these two factories coming in,

we shall go forward in time with the production of sulpha drugs and antibiotics which are also greatly in need.

Then many Members have naturally stressed the question of the menace of TB in India today. Nobody is more conscious of it than myself. When I took over, there were only five thousand beds in the whole of India. With the aid of the people of this country I am glad to say, very much more than with the aid from Government, we have been able to raise forty lakhs of rupees in the country, and the number of beds has been practically quadrupled. And I do not think that, that again, is a bad achievement. In addition, there are now TB clinics—and I hope to have two more this year—which will give treatment, first class treatment, to the people, and also give demiliary treatment. I know that more beds are needed. I would love to have a target of fifty thousand beds in the next five years, as was recommended to me. But I would have the hon. Member who suggested that to remember that fifty thousand beds will cost Rs. 40 crores capital expenditure and Rs. 6 crores recurring expenditure. Where am I to go and get that money from? I would like everybody to remember that TB is a disease that can be eliminated, and will be eliminated, as our standards of life go up, as the question of malnutrition and under-nutrition is lessened or eliminated when we begin to produce more, as I definitely hope we shall, and also as and when there is less overcrowding in our houses. After all, I cannot really have health, such health as I would like to have, while there is overcrowding, malnutrition and under-nutrition. All these things go together.

I was very glad indeed that somebody mentioned the question of nurses. I would have the hon. member remember that no one perhaps has done more for nursing than I have

been privileged to do in the last five years. And no six months in any year elapse without my writing to the Health Ministers of the States to raise the standard of pays of nurses, to give them better dwelling houses, to reduce their hours of work. A Nursing College has been brought into being. I am glad to say that the pays of nurses too have gone up.

Again, if there is unemployment amongst doctors or amongst nurses, it is because there is not enough financial backing to employ these persons. One of the great difficulties in sending doctors to rural areas is that they are not paid, as an hon. Member said, a living wage. Our young doctors are willing to go to villages, but they must have even a small hospital where they can carry out their skill. But, time and again, it happens there is nothing for them. There again, the attention of the State Governments has been drawn to this and I believe, I hope at any rate, that this question will be solved. I am asking all the medical colleges, and I certainly will want the All India Institute of Medical Sciences that comes up here, to give training actually in the village for all the under-graduates, for postgraduate studies and for research, so that those who practise the art and take up this profession may have a calling to go to the villages and understand the problems, in other words, have the urge from within.

But there again, it is difficult unless we socialise medicine and unless we are able to pay the doctor enough so that he does not have to rely on private practice. One hon. Member was saying that there is no hope for anything in India unless and until we socialise medicine. Well, we are taking steps towards it, though slowly no doubt but I also agree with him that we should, as far as we can and within our limited resources at the moment, do all we can to go that way. We are going that way. There is the Employees' Health Insurance Scheme and, for the first time, the Contributory Health Service Scheme for the Government of India employees is there. I hope these small steps will lead to bigger steps in the future.

One hon. member referred to mass X-ray examination. Wherever it is done nothing is charged for TB. In Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Delhi, Patna, in all these places it is free, and it is yielding us, at any rate, knowledge. I want to make a plea for BCG vaccination. Some hon. members said it had been declared a failure. I am here to say with all the emphasis at my command that all the countries that have gone in for it have reported extremely favourably on it, and even the U.K. one of the most conservative of countries, the last even to move, is now going in for it and is reporting favourably on it. And in the U.S.A. where the standards of life are so high that they do not need it for themselves, where there is illness amongst the Negro population, they are going in for mass inoculation.

In regard to the hill areas I would like to tell the hon. member who talked about neglect of the hill areas that I am aware that very little has been done. But I would like to assure him that all the hill areas that come under the Government of India have had special attention paid to them in these last few years. And I would like him if he would be good enough—because I have very little time left—to come at any time to my office and I would be able to prove to him that today there are more dispensaries and more medical aid per capita available in some of the hill areas of Manipur than, for example, there are perhaps in other more advanced places. But I will certainly not forget the hill areas for I would like to do as much as I can for them. In the way of mobile dispensaries, we have given them a mobile dispensary in Manipur and another is going to be given to the western hill areas. And today the health services there are greatly improved in comparison with what they were before. As I said, they have got more hospitals and dispensaries than the valley areas which have a population of four lakhs as against two lakhs in the hills. In the valleys there are only seven dispensaries and six branches, whereas we have increased them to very much more than that number—ten more dispensaries have been opened in the year 1952-53 in the hill areas, and

more medicines are being supplied and so on. So, I would ask him not to be depressed and believe me when I say that we have these areas absolutely in mind.

In regard to statistics I have to plead that our statistics are not satisfactory. There again, we are trying to do what we can and we hope to show some progress in this sphere also in the coming year.

Now I come to the question of the Ayurvedic system which has evoked some very trenchant remarks from some Members of the House. In fact some members have said that the only solution to medical aid and relief in our country is through Ayurvedic. I would like the hon. Members who think in this way to remember again, as I have said more than once, that after all Ayurvedic has existed here for centuries and for reasons, whatever they may be—I am not going to enter into details—the fact remains that there was a tremendous period of stagnation for which they may or may not be responsible. Whatever circumstances may be responsible for it, there is no doubt about it and I say that modern medicine is the outcome or outgrowth of all the medicines and/or systems of medicines that existed in the bygone years.

In any case, the Member<sup>1</sup> who is the greatest protagonist of Ayurveda in this House, comes from a State whose Health Minister, the other day on the floor of the Council of Health Ministers, said to me: "I have had to change my opinion and come round to your way of thinking. I am giving Ayurvedic dispensaries to the people of the State of Uttar Pradesh, but they want a modern doctor." I may say that the answer to the question whether modern medicine is to be the basis of health and medical aid to the people or whether it is to be Ayurvedic, comes to you from the people of this country. I have travelled about in villages and visited the remotest areas. Wherever I have encouraged the Vaidas

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<sup>1</sup>Shri Dhulekar Rajbog

to come forward and help me because I could not give the people a modern dispensary, the people have said:

मामूली बीमारियों के लिए तो अच्छे हैं लेकिन जब हम ज्यादा बीमार पड़ते हैं तो हमें उसके लिए डाक्टरों की जरूरत होती है।

Therefore, the answer, as I say, will come to you from the people. In spite of that, I say that if Ayurveda has got to give anything to modern medicine it must withstand the fierce light of scientific investigation and for this quite a fair amount of money has been set aside. I may say that any research that has been done in Ayurveda has been done by modern doctors because the vaidas today do not know how to go in for research; I have to say this with all the earnestness at my command. In every other science, in all the natural sciences, we are going forward and accepting modern methods. Why only in this science do we want to go back by centuries? The people are not for it and I cannot be responsible for taking the people back. What is happening to the vaidas today? In Madras, the Director of Health Services and the Health Minister of Madras said that all those who are trained in Ayurveda plus the basic sciences of modern medicine, when they are qualified, they all practise modern medicine. Those who are not trained, what do they do? They use penicillin, chloromycetin, streptomycin and all such drugs with the most terrible risk to the people on whom they practise because they do not know the reactions of these medicines on the body. If you train them to make use of these medicines, I have no objection whatever. In the matter of homoeopathy I have tried to help them. The homoeopaths quarrel among themselves. If you expect me to allow people who practise after six or nine weeks correspondence courses to be recognised. I say to you, you are asking me, at any rate, to do the impossible.

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But I have not recommended it. I have got a committee of homoeopaths who have come to an agreed solution, but now they are quarrelling among themselves because they cannot tell me which institution they would like to be upgraded. I have

therefore referred the matter to the State Government concerned. It is not a question of what I want or even what the individual Members of this House want; it is a question of what are the best means to work out these problems; and in the ultimate analysis it is, what the people of this country want. I say again with all the emphasis at my command that we are trying to achieve the best that other countries in the world have; India cannot remain behind in the struggle. In the fight for progress we cannot remain behind in medical science. I was told that China has said: "We have not got enough doctors; we must make use of Chinese doctors with such indigenous medicines and they have". But the younger ones are being trained in the modern system. The Health Minister of China told me that the basis of treatment in China must be modern medicine and this is rightly so in every country in the world—Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Indonesia—they have all accepted it. Why should India want to go back? I do not want my country to go backwards, but I must take, and take willingly all that Ayurveda gives me, provided it is scientific. I want the Vaidas to get the training and then do their research. I say again as a friend of Ayurveda that if Ayurveda is uplifted to the post graduate stage, only at that stage will it be able to make its contribution to modern medicine. Modern medicine just like any other science knows no barriers. I for one cannot ever concede the theory that because it is cheap, because it is born in this country; therefore Ayurveda is best. The same applies to everything else that we have. If it has been outmoded, well, it has got to come into line. There is no ban on Ayurveda it is being employed by Vaidas in many States. There is no ban on the science and wherever we find that good work is done, we are helping and the Planning Commission has also put aside a certain sum of money that can be utilised usefully. But, it is our duty to see that it is properly utilised.

Madam-Chairman, there is no more time for me; otherwise I would have replied to some of the other questions as for example the matter of health education. I entirely agree that we should go ahead with health education. We have got a bureau

from this year; I have been longing for this for a long time so that we can put out all our pamphlets, posters etc. to our schools in order to give education on health.

## 7. Finance Bill 1957\*

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Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am very happy that you have given me this little time to answer some of the arguments that have been raised against the proposed modification of the Lady Hardinge Medical College which my Ministry has put forward and which they have decided to accept. I think there seems to be a considerable amount of misunderstanding and confusion with regard to these proposed schemes of reorganisation. Many statements have been made in the speech of Dr. (Shrimati) Seeta Parmanand which, if there is time, I would like to contradict. But I would also like, once and for all, to clear the idea in the mind of my hon. friend opposite, that the Health Minister had decided to issue an ordinance to dissolve the trust. I may say that this is completely wrong. He further asked, what had happened to the 100 acres of land the price of which had considerable increased during this time.

I may say that the management of the Lady Hardinge Medical College which was started 41 years ago, was taken over by "The Association for the Control and Management of the Lady Hardinge Medical College for Women and Hospital for Women and Children," in 1927, under a Notification under Act XXI of 1860. The objects for which the Association was established were among others:

- "I. The provision of higher medical education to women and treatment for women and children in the Lady Hardinge Medical College and Hospital for Women, of which the teaching medical and administrative staff shall ultimately consist of women.

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\*Replying to the points raised by members on the Finance Bill, 1957. (R.S. Deb., 28 March, 1957, cc. 939—949)

II. The widening of the field of recruitment for medical women in India.

III. The provision of training for women as nurses and midwives."

Nowhere in all this, you will notice—and I say this because a point was raised yesterday—is there anything in the objects of this Association clause to say that the institution shall be only for women. Anyhow these were the main objectives.

This Association managed the affairs of this College until 1953. But on an application with the concurrence of the Association the Association themselves applied after having held a meeting with the Central Government found it necessary to settle a scheme under sub-section (1) of section 5 of the Charitable Endowments Act, 1890 to manage the affairs of the College. Now, if I may refer to the book here that has been given to me, of Unrepealed General Acts, the Charitable Endowments Act in sub-section (2) of section 5 says:

"On application made as hereinafter mentioned, and with the concurrence of the person or persons making the application, the appropriate Government may, if it thinks fit, modify any scheme settled under this section or substitute another scheme in its stead."

I say this only to show that the Government was perfectly within its legal rights in making this modification.

Under this scheme the main purposes for which the Association was established were retained absolutely intact. Under sub-section (2) of section 5 of the Charitable Endowments Act which I just now read out, we can modify the scheme as I have just pointed out. Since 1953, and even before that I may say, the entire expenditure in connection with this college and hospital is being met by the Central Government. Even before 1953, the Government of India's grants to the institution were made on a basis of covering the

deficit and since it was nearly all deficit, the entire burden of maintaining and running the college has lain on the Government of India.

Since I took over, the Government of India have incurred an outlay of Rs. 34 lakhs in extending this institution during the First Plan period and a sum of Rs. 55 lakhs has also been provided for its expansion during the Second Five Year Plan. But briefly, If I may say so, the modified scheme for the Lady Hardinge Medical College preserves practically in their entirely the original objectives of the founders at the same time meeting the requirements of the present time. Both ethical and legal considerations that were involved have been thoroughly considered, before the proposed reorganisation was decided upon. And as I said yesterday, I consulted very eminent legal advice on this matter and the learned Attorney General has stated unequivocally that the action taken is legal and within the rights and competence of the Government of India.

Sir, I have already explained the position. As I have said, in 1953, at the request of the Association itself, the Government took over this institution under the Charitable Endowments Act.\*

Sir, the Lady Hardinge Medical College came into existence 41 years ago and 41 years is a very long time. It was never inspected, until it was inspected for the first time in 1935, when the All India Medical Council was created. I think this Council—I am speaking from memory—was created in 1932 or 33 and the first inspection of this college took place in 1935. At the time the inspectors were three Europeans and they said that there was a reasonably good standard of education here, and one of them actually suggested that the girls studying here might be given opportunities of doing post mortems even though it was unlikely that they would ever have an opportunity of doing a post mortem. There was no training given to them in general

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\*Clarifying the point raised by Dr. (Shrimati) Seeta Parmanand about the position of the trust.

medicine and surgery. They were affiliated to the Lahore University and I have myself met some Hardonians who were educated in this college during that time and they have told me that they used to come to Lahore for their examination, and before the examination, they used to go round themselves to the Mayo Hospital, look at some of the male cases in the wards and ask questions of the surgeons who were looking after them and thus try to gain such knowledge as was possible in that way.

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I would beg of you, Sir, I listened with patience to all that was said.....But I have read the hon. Member's speech twice over, with the consideration that it merits. As I was saying, the Lady Hardinge Medical College was then affiliated to the Lahore University and that is what used to happen then. After partition, this college was affiliated to the Delhi University and since then, in 1948, the Medical Council carried out its first inspection and sent a very critical report. I asked them at that time to be patient because I had only just taken over, the country had just become independent, and I said that I would try to see what I could do to meet their criticisms. They criticised all the departments of Anatomy, Physiology, Pharmacology, Pathology and Bacteriology in addition to the main criticism that no training worthwhile was being given in general medicine and surgery to women. Since women were eligible to hold posts of Civil Surgeon, Staff Surgeon, Professional posts, etc., it was necessary that they should have these facilities given to them. The students of the Lady Hardinge College used to go over to the Irwin Hospital for a month or six weeks at a time—I think it was only a month to begin with—to have a look, I may put it that way, at a certain number of male beds in the general wards there, but because the Irwin Hospital was not a teaching hospital, it was not possible for the Professors of the College to have beds reserved for them in the Irwin Hospital and thereby give the

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\*Dr. (Shrimati) Seeta Parmanand.

students the necessary teaching in the male wards which is expected of them. They used to go and the Surgeons or the medical officers in-charge used to let them have a look at the case and the students used to get a certain amount of knowledge from the Doctors in-charge. When this report came to me the Medical Council before they inspected for the second time told me privately that his arrangement was not satisfactory and I said. "Well, let us see whether it cannot be made more satisfactory" In the meantime, the other criticisms of the other departments of Anatomy, Physiology, Pharmacology, Pathology and Bacteriology were taken up and I took all the necessary steps to upgrade those departments and to do all that I could to bring them up to standard. I am glad now that the All-India Medical Council has said that they are adequately satisfied with what has been done in regard to these departments. When I took up the question at that time, there was a demand from Delhi as also from the University, that we should give facilities to men students in this area. They said, "Will you not consider making the Lady Hardinge College into a co-educational institution?" I did my best to bring that before the public eye. There was a certain amount of criticism from some members of the Women's Medical Association—those women who still object to any co-education—and they actually went to the High Court and got an injunction issued. Even though I could have gone ahead at the time, I told my colleagues in the Ministry, "Let us wait and see if we cannot do something else and keep the college as it is. There are many girls who wish to come and we may not always be able to accommodate everybody. So long as we can raise standards where we are supposed to raise then we should make every effort to that end." Therefore, we reserved a certain number of beds in the Safdarjung Hospital and appointed a man Professor for them. The girls used to go across to the Safdarjung Hospital and get their teaching from this man who looked after these beds. But in 1953, the Medical Council again made adverse criticisms. In 1956 again they have made still further adverse criticisms and they have now said. "We finally conclude, owing to defective and unsatisfactory teaching in the major clinical subjects of

medicine and surgery"—I would have thought that at any rate strictures would not have been passed on the subjects of midwifery and gynaecology but even those subjects have been included—"...We recommend that the degree of M.B.B.S. of Delhi University be not recognised for inclusion in Schedule I". Now, Sir, Government was faced with the terrible problem of having the degrees of this College not recognised by the Medical Council. Naturally, the Vice-Chancellor of the University was extremely agitated about it and wrote another letter to me and asked me to do what I possibly could to take this stigma away and in any modified scheme that I could bring about for the Lady Hardinge College to see to it, if I possibly could, that similar facilities were also given to boy students. Therefore, Sir, in order to meet the public demand for some facilities for boy students and, at the same time, keep the facilities now available to the girl students—please remember that when the College started, there were only 20 girls; when I took over, there were only forty students and since then we have raised the number from forty to sixty—we decided that if we could give some educational facilities to men students as well and keep intact the objectives for which this College was founded, we would be satisfying not only the public demand but also meeting the criticisms of the Medical Council. And that is what has brought this present scheme into being. I may say that the Medical Council has recommended among other things that there shall not be any difference made between Professors of either sex. The best people should be available for the Professorial jobs. They have also said that in the compound of the Lady Hardinge Hospital campus there ought to be at least sixty beds for male patients. Privately they have said that they would like that number to be raised because it is difficult for the girls to go outside. Safdarjung, they say, is rather far away; The Irwin Hospital would be nearer. These are the recommendations that they have made. I am keeping the Lady Hardinge campus completely aside for women patients. That is to say, no men patients will be admitted in the women's hospital that already exists there. The student's hostel for men will be far away, near the Irwin Hospital. No boys will be admitted for teaching even in

the clinical departments of the Lady Hardinge Hospital. The hon. Member who spoke so vehemently in criticism of the present arrangement asked, "Why do you want to spend this extra money?" I would be happy if no extra money were spent. I am not in sympathy with those women who wish to live within a protected area. I submit very humbly that the days when women want protection all the time are now over. Anybody who wants protection and privileges must consider himself or herself to be weak. I, as a woman, am willing to stand on my merits and compete with any man in any sphere of life and I want women Doctors to do the same. I think this is all to the good. I am absolutely in agreement with the Prime Minister when he says that the days have gone for women to want separate institutions for themselves. They may want them in certain cases but when it comes to technical teaching institutions like medical colleges and engineering colleges and other technological institutions, women must stand on their own merits. I have given them all the protection that they have today in the Lady Hardinge College, that is to say, the staff will be recruited on the same basis. In the first instance, only women will be considered. Only when we find that adequately qualified women are not available will men come into the picture. Beds will be reserved in the Irwin Hospital in the general wards and the present staff will be able to have them. Now, no man Professor will be able to reserve beds in the Hardinge women's hospital but the women members of the staff will have beds both in the Hardinge and in the Irwin Hospitals so that they score all along the line. As I said we ask for rights and we want exactly all the rights that men have and yet we complain that we are not appointed to medical colleges as Professors, we are not appointed to jobs, because men have a prejudice against us. I think we have to turn the searchlight inwards and see where we are lacking and whether we are lacking. I have got faith in the men of my country, in my brothers. I do not think that they will be unfair to us in any way. Therefore, this scheme is a legitimate and a natural corollary to the development of this country. This country has got to develop. All over the country, there are girls studying in medical institutions with boys. I have

got nine girls studying in the tiny little college which belongs to the All India Institute. It is delightful to see them in the dissecting room working with boys in their anatomy section and so on. Why should the present staff grudge in addition to teaching 60 girls, teaching 40 boys also? I am told so much money is wasted, why can't you divert it and have another college? Sir, I submit in all humility that there are States today, a State like Bihar with a 40 million population with only two colleges; only now have I given them another one; U.P. with a 65 million population had only two colleges; now they have got another one. We cannot go on having college after college in Delhi with a population of only two millions. I would be scarcely justified in going to my colleague, the Finance Minister—kind as he is to me always—and ask him to give me extra money for another college in Delhi, when otherwise I can serve the purpose, give education to the boys as well as the girls and at the same time protect all the interests of the women, ask him to give me an initial expenditure of one crore and a recurring expenditure of 25 lakhs of rupees when the recurring expenditure perhaps can be managed in about three lakhs a year and the same purpose is served, and therefore I feel, Sir, that the objections that have been raised are completely wrong. To the Member who talked so vehemently for instituting an enquiry, I would say, let her go round to the Lady Hardinge Hospital, at any time go and look at every thing, all the papers that I have, see what she wants to see, and as far as the report is concerned.....

Anyhow I am much more concerned with convincing this House. There is no question of issuing ordinances. All the land on which the buildings stand belongs to Government. The whole burden of the college is on the Government and what is more, the burden of making the college efficient is also on the Government, and I am determined that it shall be done. That is all that I have to say.

## 8. Finance (No. 2) Bill 1957

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Mr. Chairman, when you did me the honour of asking me to open the debate during the last session in this House on the finance measure introduced in this year's budget, I did so with a certain amount of, or I might even say, with a great deal, of diffidence. The reasons for my diffidence were obvious but I rise with less fear and trepidation today because since then I have received so many hundreds of letters of congratulations. These have both heartened and saddened me—heartened because I feel that what I said expressed the views of the many who are not in a position to speak, and saddened because many of those who are in agreement and in a position to speak—even members of my own party—have not the courage to do so.

Much water has flowed under the bridges since the debates last session and some healthy changes have been accepted by the Finance Minister. Nevertheless the financial position is no better, if not more difficult today than it was three months ago. The Government has many hurdles to face and therefore it is more incumbent than ever before on each one of us to see to it that we do our best not to increase those difficulties. It is equally incumbent on the Government to see to it that it is made as easy as possible for its citizens to co-operate with it in its endeavours to ameliorate conditions. There is no doubt that our future depends entirely on how hard we are able to work, how much we can produce and how far we can sacrifice our own for the country's good.

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\* Replying to the points raised by members, on the Finance (No. 2) Bill, 1957  
(R.S. Deb., 2 September, 1957, cc. 2042-2849)

The prices of essential commodities are very high and life for everyone is very hard. We live therefore under threats of strikes which, if they come off, are bound to paralyse our development schemes to say nothing of the inconvenience caused to citizens and the financial loss which the country's exchequer can certainly not support. In view of the steep rise in prices the Pay Commission is bound to recommend some kind of relief and if for the P and T workers, naturally the same will apply to other employees too of the Government of India as well as of the States. I personally am glad that a Commission has been appointed because whatever restrictive or penalty legislation is brought in. It can never make for general contentment and well being, either mental or physical. And without these there can never be any enthusiasm in the hearts of the workers nor any industry on their part. Now, why has there been such a steep rise in food prices and why is the Government unable to control the same? Production figures, we are told, have not gone down; we have had good harvests last year, any amount of foodgrains were imported, then where has the food gone? Is inflation responsible to a large extent for this debacle or are our figures for production wrong and how much of our foodgrains have gone underground into the hands of black marketeers? Why cannot Government bring these anti-social elements to heel? These are questions which have to be faced squarely. Rises in salaries will cost the exchequer hundreds of crores of rupees. Where is the money to come from in addition to what is needed for the Plan? As far as salaries are concerned, the time has come, I think, for Government to fix a minimum wage for the worker and to give him relief in the shape of free primary education for two of his children, old age pension, free living quarters, fair price shops rather than dearness allowances. I feel the moment any body's salary is raised, he is inclined to spend more. A socialistic pattern of society means, as I understand it, a society where everyone has food, shelter, clothing and employment and equal opportunities for his

material, moral and spiritual development. If the salaries of our workers are fixed at a reasonable minimum and other relief given to them, I think we shall be fulfilling one of our main objectives, namely, an improved standard of life for millions. I have often felt that perhaps we lay too much stress on our big projects for whose results we have to wait for years rather than on our immediate requirement which will make life even a little easier than it is today. But, Sir, a socialistic pattern of society should not mean robbing Peter to pay Paul and at all times there must be a feeling of security engendered in the minds of everyone.

Sir, I have just mentioned the anti-social elements that succeed in hoarding and blackmarketing our foodgrains but if I may be permitted to say so, anti-social elements have penetrated everywhere. Food and drug adulteration are rampant in spite of laws and likewise one hears on all sides complaints of bribery, corruption and nepotism and if we are honest we shall have to admit that integrity and efficiency are our biggest casualties. This sorry state of affairs has to be put right if we are to progress. Of course, efficiency and integrity go hand in hand as do their opposite numbers. True patriotism demands today, more than at any other time, high standards of integrity and efficiency and in their restoration both the public and the Government must make common cause. If the public demands standard of integrity from the Government machinery, it must set standards of behaviour for itself too for the law-breaker or the bribe-giver is just as, if not, more guilty, than those whom he tempts.

Criticism is always easy to indulge in but is not always helpful. Therefore, I put forward certain concrete suggestions in the last session for the consideration of the Finance Minister which, in my humble opinion, would provide permanent sources of revenue in addition to and in some instances to replace what he is tapping. The reply which the Finance Minister pleased to give to the two suggestions regarding the levying of excise duties on liquor and salt was not convincing, if he will pardon my saying so. True that sentiment and reason do not always go

hand in hand but when sentiment is actually aiding and abetting against the very object which it set out to achieve, surely reason should step in and stop the rot. I for one do not mourn nearly so much over the loss of revenue to Government as I do over the dishonesty that prohibition by law brings in its wake. At the same time why should the money that the Government needs so badly go into the pockets of unworthy elements?

Sir, man would accept the hardest disciplines if he could be convinced of the rights of the measures imposed on him. But man will always question the validity of rules if he does not know their source because he can only think morally if he is improved from within. The goal to improve man does not consist in making him go through the 'gestures of morality.' If moral rules are arbitrarily imposed, no matter what their practical value is, they will never fight successfully against the inherent weaknesses or frailties of human nature. I venture to submit, Sir, that not for nothing has man been given free will and it is only the best, the most evolved morally who will choose the right path and in order to let him evolve man must be free to choose his path. Educate him, persuade him, show him that you care for his welfare and he will follow you. Bring the heavy hand of the law down on him and he is bound to try to evade it. Ninety per cent of our people do not and will not drink, whether we have prohibition by law or not; nine per cent probably drink in moderation such as does not injure them any more than doing anything in moderation does, smoking for example. We are therefore imposing a universal law for the betterment of one per cent of the population, incurring an expenditure on administration for enforcing that law out of all proportion to the gain and abetting corruption in society as well as encouraging the drink habit. The tax on salt will again yield fruitful revenue. This excise duty will not now be felt as a hardship. I suggested also the consideration of a small health cess. This would enable our health services in the States to spread out to the rural areas and will not be considered harsh because everybody is anxious, even in the most remote village, to have hospitals and doctors.

I would also like to suggest another measure, and that is a cess on marriages, which would be a source of perennial revenue and one towards which no one will mind paying his mite. Sir, at a time when the poorest among us spends Rs. 200 or Rs. 300, on a marriage, a cess of one or two rupees will not only yield dividends but will also fill a great lacuna which exists today in this regard. I refer to the registration of marriages. For all who on such occasions spend over Rs. 10,000 or whatever limit you may like to place on such expenditure, a certain percentage, in addition to the cess, may be charged, and this may be graded as the expenditure goes up. The Finance Minister has quite rightly laid emphasis on broad-based taxation. I entirely agree with him and here is a case where even the poor man will not feel the pinch for when he is spending a hundred rupees on a marriage he won't mind giving a cess of one rupee at that time. On the other hand if we are to levy a charge on an income which is only Rs. 250 a month, then he will object. I know administrative difficulties may be involved in this, but I feel they would be less involved, certainly not more involved than which the Finance Minister will have to face in the matter of his wealth and expenditure taxes.

Now I am very keen on family planning inasmuch as I want people to realise that if the population goes on increasing at the rate at which we find it increasing, we will surely land ourselves in great difficulties. Therefore to help family planning indirectly, I would suggest a small cess on every third child, provided two are alive. Why not?

Sir, such taxes as I have suggested for consideration would be broad-based, not only broad-based but educative also, and they would not be felt as a burden and they would be a permanent source of revenue. While those who can afford to pay more than they do today should and I am sure will do so willingly, I do not think the complete impoverishment, in time, of the few who have, will in the long run yield either much revenue or for long and might even deprive us of the co-operation, help and guidance of a section who have the capacity and the wherewithal to help with their intelligence, their experience and

their resources. Everyone wants the Second Five Year Plan. If it cannot, owing to circumstances beyond our control, go ahead as rapidly as we had wanted, let us be frank and phase its implementation but do not let us alienate anybody in the country.

The Princes helped tremendously towards the integration of India at a time when a selfish attitude on their part would have made even our political independence difficult. I remember some of them asked whether the rights that were being given to them over their property, both movable and immovable, should not be made justiciable. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel advised them to withhold such a request and to trust the Indian Government. The Covenant signed by them ensured freedom from all taxation. I know that some of the Princes can afford to yield a substantial part of their income for the national welfare. I think such yield should have come voluntarily from them ages ago. All the same I would plead with the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister to ask the Princes individually to donate so much of their incomes as it is felt they can donate, and I am sure they will willingly do so. Put them in charge of or make them responsible individually for any specific project within their State and within their means or collectively anywhere and make them feel they are partners with the rest in our great venture. Make them responsible for the development of sports in the country and I think their efforts in this field will yield far better results than have hitherto been attained by the Government. The same applies to the business world. Ask them to give us according to the Finance Minister's assessment of what they can give, and I am sure they too will come to our help. Such a procedure will save us the trouble of having to set up a large administrative machinery and will also lessen and, I trust in time, banish both corruption and tax evasion. We know Vinobaji has had village after village donated to him. Why cannot the Government also try to follow the non-violent way of eliciting co-operation from all and alienating none? Willing co-operation yields far richer dividends than legislation and there will be increasing enthusiasm and decreasing tax evasion if we give

the human way a trial. Those, whether Princes or industrialists or other well to-do who will not co-operate, can always be dealt with by law.

The same, Sir, applies to foreign aid. Foreigners will come if they are convinced that we do not in effect stand for State-ownership of the means of production and distribution and that there is room for private enterprise. Confidence has to be created in the world of free enterprise, in particular so long as Government have not the means to undertake every venture on their own. Indeed, where they have undertaken any venture, has it always been a success? It is the duty of Government to encourage, indeed to create a climate where there shall be incentives to dare and to sue all that everyone of us possesses for productive purposes.

Finally, I plead with Finance Minister to accept these other taxes which, I consider, will be more broad-based and not to impose a tax on persons earning Rs. 250 a month. Indeed no one who earns upto Rs. 300 per month should be taxed. The middle classes are almost crushed out of existence. The peasant, the labourer and the artisan are better off since independence, but not the middle class. The high cost of living lies more heavily on them. Education of children is beyond their means. Serving as I have served in the field of health I know how under-nutrition is playing havoc with our youth. Do not make it still harder for these people to exist. We are too under-developed a country at the present moment, Sir, to follow the taxation principles of wealthy countries. The advanced Welfare States give old age pensions, free education upto a fairly high standard, health insurance, unemployment doles, holiday homes, cheap transport, unadulterated food and cheap clothing. We give next to nothing and we are one of the highest taxed countries in the world and at the same time, one of the poorest.

Sir, I wish to make it clear that I am not against taxation of those who have and can afford to give. All I want from the Finance Minister is an assurance that the honest persons will not be harassed and the dishonest will not get away with it. I want an assurance from him that the method of taxation will

itself not become too complicated and the machinery so costly as to fail to yield the very results he wants. There are very real fears in the minds of everyone in regard to these matters.

My humble proposals are meant to help him to raise the money we so sorely want and to make his task easier. And as he sets out on his mission abroad I am sure he carries with him the good wishes of the entire country for the success of that mission.

## Health and Medical Care

### 9. All-India Institute of Medical Sciences\*

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I think all the members of the Lok Sabha are aware of the scheme to bring into being the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. The money for this has been allocated in our budget for the last 3 or 4 years. It was actually owing to the generous donation from the New Zealand Government under the Colombo Plan of £1,250,000,000 that the Government of India was enabled to begin to establish this Institute. It has been one of my cherished dreams that for post-graduate study and for the maintenance of high standards of medical education in our country, we should have an institute of this nature in India which would enable our young men and women to have their post-graduate education in their own country, in their background with the necessary experience that we would all like to have of work in villages and the impetus that we would like to give to them to do research in the various spheres of medical education.

Medical education, in its theory as well as in its practice, is based on the utilisation of the contributions from the other physical and biological sciences. With the continued progress that has been taking place in both these fields, modern medicine has made and is making enormous strides towards increasing efficiency in regard to diagnosis and in regard to treatment and prevention of disease, as well as promotion of positive health. Therefore, the task of medical education, by

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\*Moving the Motion, "That the Bill to provide for the establishment of an All India Institute of Medical Sciences be taken into consideration". (L.S. Deb., 18 February, 1956, cc. 260-264 & 428-431).

and large, is to utilise as far as possible this new knowledge in training the doctor of the future. Medical education must, above all, take into account the special needs of the country from the point of view of affording health protection to the people. For instance, in our own country, and in Asian countries in generally the continued prevalence of various forms of preventable causes of sickness and suffering necessitates special emphasis if I may so put it, on the preventive aspect of medical care. Further, the extent to which the future doctor will contribute his share to the well being of the country also depends on the extent to which he develops a community outlook and a desire to serve the people. Medical education, moreover, is receiving considerable attention in all the progressive countries of the world. I have had the privilege recently to see what is being done in the U.S.A., in the U.S.S.R., in Scandinavia, and even in the U.K. and the various steps that are being pursued to bring it more and more into consonance with present day needs and to promote an increasing realisation of the object of equipping the future doctor to give his best to the community. India cannot afford to keep apart from this broad and steady programme of development that is taking place in other parts of the world. The idea of the establishment of this All India Institute is to fulfil the purposes which I have mentioned. I need not go into the details about how the Institute will function. It is first going to start with a medical training centre which will provide under-graduate study to only a very very limited few. The major emphasis will be on post-graduate study and specialisation, because one reason for our inability to fulfil the desire of so many States today to have medical colleges is the lack of personnel. One of the main duties of this Medical Institute will be to prepare personnel for medical colleges which it is becoming increasingly hard for us to get. I may inform the Members that when the States ask for medical colleges to be started, nearly always they have to go to retired personnel to carry on. How long we

go on relying on retired personnel? It is absolutely essential that we prepare young men and young women of the highest calibre who will be able to man our educational institutions, in particular. This demand, as I have said, is increasing. I would now like to mention one or two special features of this Institute.

The system that prevails of private practice being permitted to doctors in medical colleges has, in my opinion—I know I have many people which differ from me, especially members of the medical profession—had a deleterious effect on the development of both sound teaching and active research in colleges. And therefore, in order to prohibit in this Institute, which is the first of its kind in our country and the first of its kind in Asia, private practice of every form and to pay the doctors reasonably high salaries to compensate them for the loss of private practice, is going to be a special feature. The doctors, if they are paid enough, will then be able to live contentedly and to devote their whole time to the promotion not only of teaching, not only of serving the patients who come to the hospitals, but also to what is very important, namely research. Then, all the staff and students are going to be housed in the campus of the Institute. The campus of the Institute is proceeding ahead fairly rapidly and I shall welcome any Members of this House who would like to come and have a look at the campus to see for themselves how things are going on. It is in Delhi just beyond the Safdarjung aerodrome.

Also I feel that by housing the staff and the students on the campus, we shall be reverting to and taking advantage of what I believe has been one of the traditional good things in our country, that is the Guru-sishya relationship which has, in my opinion, not been given that attention that it should be given. Further I want every student whether under-graduate or post-graduate to have ample opportunities to participate in both urban and rural health work, in rural centres as well as in the cities. I want the student even during his student days to participate and take some responsibility for the health of those who will later on be committed to his charge, because I feel that will promote in him early in his career a community outlook

and also promote powers of initiative and observation and of drawing conclusions from them. When I was in America year before last, one thing struck me greatly. I was listening to a fourth year student who was not yet qualified giving a complete history of the case which had been put in his charge. In America much more responsibility is being laid on students once they get towards the last year of their stay in a college.

Then, of course, this Institute will be given the powers and functions of a university because it will probably make revolutionary changes, as I hope, in curriculum as well as in modes of teaching, and therefore I feel that in the first instance; at any rate, the university status given to this Institute will permit it to give diplomas to all the students who pass out of its portals. Of course, they will be recognised qualifications and they will have to be put down in the Indian Medical Council Act, an amendment to which I hope very soon to introduce in this House.

Subject to such minimum control as the Government of India may exercise through its rule-making powers, the Institute will enjoy a large measure of autonomy in order that it may fulfil the objectives—I humbly claim that they are very fine objectives which I have tried to set forth in this brief survey. The Government of India will, of course, make itself responsible for providing adequate funds for the maintenance of the Institute, but I hope that philanthropy also will come to the aid, as it so often does, of such institutions because, after all, serving the cause of sick and suffering humanity is always something that appeals to those who would like to give.

The future of the Institute will lie ultimately in the hands of the Director, the Professors and other members of the teaching staff and students, and I believe it will be their devotion to duty, their desire to promote their work and the spirit of altruism that will actuate them to subordinate personal considerations, as I believe the noble profession of medicine should do, to the fulfilment of the objectives to be achieved that will eventually create and maintain the atmosphere which is necessary for an Institute like this. I therefore do hope that in presenting this Bill

for acceptance by Parliament today, the legal structure that is created may facilitate the progressive realisation of a steady development of improved methods of medical education in this Institute and that, through the influence it exerts, the standards of different forms of professional training in the field of health throughout the country will be raised. With these few words I commend this measure to the acceptance of this House.

I am sorry that such an enormous amount of heat has been engendered over a Bill which is really a very straightforward and simple measure, and as such should have received the unanimous support of this House.\*

The plan for this All India Institute of Medical Sciences has been before this House for the last four years; we have discussed the question from the point of view of education, from the point of view of maintaining standards, and also from the point of view of giving to our people post-graduate studies in their own country and in their own background. If you will turn to clause 15 on page 5, you will find that it has been clearly stated there that this institute is meant,

"to provide for under-graduate and post-graduate teaching in the science of modern medicine and other allied sciences, including physical and biological sciences."

As my hon. friend Shrimati Renu Chakravarty has said, and so clearly said in her speech supporting it, there is no reason why we should not have an institute of this nature. You, Sir, have also said that this does not mean that we are not going to have post-graduate studies in either homoeopathy or Ayurveda. As a matter of fact, post-graduate studies in Ayurveda have already been started on an all-India basis at Jamnagar, and we are upgrading now the College of Homoeopathy in West Bengal, and introducing post-graduate studies, I hope, in Bombay.

Now some criticism has been levelled—I have so little time to reply—as to the official character of the Governing Body. I may

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\*Participating in the discussion on 20 Feb., 1956.

bring to the notice of members that there are merely three or four officials out of the seventeen members, because the non-medical scientists and those representing the Indian Science Congress certainly won't be official representative of the medical faculties are not likely to be officials. Then there are three Members of Parliament who certainly are not officials. So that objection really does not stand.

Then as far as the recurring expenditure is concerned, in the first Five Year Plan appropriations for this Institute have been accepted by the Lok Sabha. It has been stated by an hon. Member who opposes this motion that Rs. 131.15 lakhs is the recurring expenditure of this Institute. I would like to bring to his notice, to your notice Sir, and to the notice of the House that Rs. 131.15 lakhs is the recurring expenditure for 7 years from 1953 to 1959, and not for one year. Every thing has been given before. I have no time to go into the details of the expenditure. As far as the rural and urban centres are concerned, we are going to give teaching in them; it does not mean that there will not be rural and urban centres as Shrimati Renu Chakravarty pointed out, in other parts of India. Doubts were raised as to whether the existing medical colleges will stop post-graduate studies. I would like to assure members, 'No', because I have upgraded certain departments for post-graduate studies in various States. That process will be continued. Then all kinds of colleges are not to be concentrated here. The nursing college and the dental college certainly are going to be here with this Institute. You cannot ask me to remove this Institute today from Delhi, because the decision for having it in Delhi was taken many years ago.

I have been asked by one member to give him an assurance about a college in Delhi and to start the same with the Irwin Hospital. If my plans had come about, this Institute would have been functioning by now, but I had to give up the Irwin Hospital at that time. Now, after the States Reorganisation Report is through, and if Delhi does come under the Centre, as has been suggested by that Commission, the Irwin Hospital will then be available. I have certainly in mind that there should be a college

in Delhi so that people from this part of the world may not have to go outside for their studies.

I need not discuss Ayurveda because it is not relevant to this issue. I was told that in China many things were being done which we should copy. I may say that China is going ahead with modern medicine, and what is more, they have asked me if they may be allowed to come and study this Bill. In fact, I have sent them a copy of this Bill. They are determined to bring in a measure similar to this in China also<sup>1</sup>. I may say this that I have consulted the best medical educational minds in India, I have consulted scientific minds in India other than medical, persons who practise sciences allied to medicine. I have also consulted the Medical Council of India.

About the name, we call it the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. We do not call it the All India Institute of Modern Medical Sciences. I may say that the name, as it is, is all-inclusive. As ayurveda and homoeopathy develop and as such of them are taken into modern sciences, they will certainly also benefit greatly by this institution.

With these few words, I would like to assure the Lok Sabha again that there is no insult meant to ayurveda or to any other system of medicine. This is a pure, honest attempt to bring to this country good standards of medical education and to make them available to all. I quite agree that medical relief should be made cheaper. That will be achieved when we start manufacturing our own medicines and make the highest medical education available to your young people in our own country.

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<sup>1</sup>Later the motion to the Bill was adopted and passed.

## **10. All India Institute of Medical Sciences Bill 1956\***

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I have very great pleasure in bringing forward this Bill before the House. The creation of an all India institute of this nature was first mooted by what is known as the Bhore Committee in their Report. That Committee toured all over India, went into the question of the health services in India, the means that provided those health services, ways of combating the lack of those services and also how best we could maintain high standards of medical education and thereby promote the scientific knowledge of modern medicine in our own land with all the experience and all the clinical material available to us in our own country, in the background of our own country, including the villages, rather than send a few of our student abroad to go in for further post-graduate study. Now, this Institute is going to lay primary emphasis on post-graduate studies.

As I have just said, it is sad that today, up till now—in fact right up to this time—we have had to depend on scholarships, whether Governmental or from abroad such as the Rockefeller Foundation is good enough to give us, to send a few chosen representatives of the medical profession to outside countries to get their post-graduate studies in the various limbs of the medical profession. I have always felt that it would be even so much better for us if we could give the same knowledge as these young men and women acquire by going abroad in our own country. Further if we have an Institute of this nature, we

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\*Moving the motion "That the Bill to provide for the establishment of an All India Institute of Medical Sciences, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration." (R.S. Deb., 3 May, 1956, cc. 1208-19 & 1607-30).

shall thereby be able to control the standard of education: we shall be even able to make changes in the curriculum of our medical education and thereby give not only to this country but perhaps through our country even to the world, something different, something that we from our rare experiences will be able to find as we go along this exploratory path of progress. As I have often said, it has been one of my cherished dreams that an institute of this nature should come into being and that through it we may be able to serve our own people better, especially the people who live in our villages. Our educational institutions have up till now been always located in the cities this is also going to be located in Delhi, you may say a city, but we are going to have village hospitals attached where our students will be able to go and work. They will not only get part of their education there but will be given wide chances for research in the villages.

When I refer to medical education, I refer to modern medical education. At the very outset, I would like to say that perhaps there might be a little confusion in the minds of some Members of this House, as there certainly was in the minds of the Members of the Lok Sabha, that because this Institute is called the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, it should also include sciences other than modern medicine. I have to say that if I had not been given a very large sum of money, a million and a quarter pounds, by the New Zealand Government under the Colombo Plan to start an Institute of modern medicine, I should probably never have been able to get our Government to give me that amount of money to start with. This is not a new scheme. It has been before both Houses because money for it has been budgeted over the last four years. There have been some delays in starting it but there was no question ever of this Institute being anything except one for developing sciences which are allied to modern medicine. Now, modern medicine includes, ever so many sciences which with the dynamic progress which this science makes, are increasing in number every day. For instances, there are various limbs of surgery; not only general surgery but there is also orthopaedic surgery,

neuro-surgery, chest surgery and so on. Even in the matter of clinical medicine, there are cardiologists and paediatricians, there are tuberculosis experts and specialists for various kinds of diseases. Then there is dentistry which is allied; there is the nursing profession which is allied and there is also radiology which is allied. There are the non-clinical sciences also, biochemistry, bio-physics etc., which are all allied. So, it would not have been right to call it just an Institute of Medical Science. It has been right to call it the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, that is, all that modern medicine embraces within its very, very wide orbit. I go further and say that what modern medicine constitutes today, what modern medical science constitutes today, is the sum total of all the knowledge gleaned through all the long years lived on this earth as far as we can know, and just as I have no doubt that in the old days the Arab world called their science Unani, that is to say, they took it from Greece and probably ancient Greece and ancient India had contacts too—I have no doubt either that modern medicine in the initial stages took a great deal from Ayurveda or the science of life as propounded by our ancients. But there is no doubt also that Ayurveda remained static. We should do all in our power not to revive Ayurveda and through Ayurveda give what it has to give to enrich the broad stream of modern medicine, which we have accepted as the basic means of giving relief to our people in this country. We cannot in this one vital science go backwards or remain static or say that we will not progress with the rest of the world. Even when we were discussing the Red Cross Bill one Member said that it was too modern, it was too western—I do not understand what western and modern mean—for surely in the world in which we live we must take every thing that is good from every part of the world. We certainly cannot live to ourselves. We are taking the aeroplane, we are taking the motor-car, we are taking atomic energy for peaceful purposes in which of course modern medical science is also included, and like wise from Ayurveda we must take what we can. I would have the House remember that with the continued progress that has been taking place in the fields of the physical and biological sciences which make

such a vital contribution to medical science, modern medicine has made and is making enormous strides and it is increasing its efficiency in regard not only to diagnosis and treatment but also in regard to the prevention of diseases which is extremely important and promoting what is now a common term and that is positive health. Therefore the task of medical education becomes a very important one and not one which we can minimise in any way because on the training of the future doctor depends really the type of helps that we are going to be able to give to our people. So medical education above all things has got to take account of the needs of the country. Not only in our own country but in all Asian countries, various forms of preventable causes of disease and suffering continue and we have therefore to put greater emphasis on preventive medicine. Even in the western world, when I visited America two years ago in order to see the new trends in medical education, I was able to sense there also a desire to change over from many things and to integrate the preventive with the curative side very much more than has been done up to this time even there. The same aspect is coming into the United Kingdom, which is a conservative country and moves perhaps much more slowly than others. Only yesterday I had the privilege of talking with one of their outstanding surgeons who happens to be in India to-day. He has come out to see which hospitals in India are good enough for them to send out examiners for our students to take the F.R.C.S. He too was telling me that in all their teaching institutions they must specialise because an enormous amount of specialisation is taking part in modern medicine today and that is why they are called the sciences, but he said that in their countryside they do not want all that specialisation and they still want the general practitioner. I said that is exactly my problem and that is exactly what I have also embarked upon and therefore it is that more and more I feel, that the future doctor has to come into line with modern medical practices and India cannot possibly afford to stay away from the steady progress and development that is taking place in other parts of the world.

The main idea at the back of the establishment of this All India Institute is to fulfil the purposes which I have mentioned.

Now I do not want to go into details as to how the institution is going to function. I am sure the Members of this House have heard, and I hope they have heard with pleasure, as I have had the pleasure in making the appointment, of Dr. Dikshit as the first Director of this institute. He is a man who has wide knowledge, outstanding knowledge in his own speciality which is physiology. He has had teaching experience. He was principal of a college. He has had research experience by having worked in the Haffkine Institute and latterly he has had wide administrative experience too as Surgeon-General of Bombay and so I hope that at the very beginning of this institute itself, as I hope this Bill will be passed today, this new Director will have the blessings of both the Houses of Parliament so that we can go ahead with confidence that we shall be performing a duty which we could not so far performed by our young doctors, both men and women, simply because we have lacked the facilities. And one of the main thing is that this institute will do is to provide the teaching personnel, Sir, for our medical colleges. Now practically every State has sent in their health plans to the Planning Commission and of course they always ask me to help them to get money for their health plans and I invariably do so, and practically all these States have asked for another medical college. U.P. wants to have three more colleges and I think they are right that they should have, according to their population, three more. But where are they going to get the teaching personnel? These just do not exist. What is happening in many of the medical colleges that are being started today. We have to fall back on retired personnel, which is not a good thing. How long can we fall back on retired personnel? And therefore I am hoping and I think I have reason to hope with confidence, that after six years or seven years we shall be able to give to new colleges first class medical personnel that will have been trained in this institute in their post-graduate studies.

The other point that I would like to mention about this Bill is that in this All India Medical Institute we are not going to allow—I know I have a great deal of opposition or, shall, I say, at any rate rare differences of opinion to face in this matter—we are not going to allow our professors in this institute to have private practice. I myself feel, have felt for a long time, even though I am not against private practice qua private practice for I am all in favour of the axiom that the labourer is worthy of his hire, that because of the lack of personnel, because of the enormous numbers of persons that come to hospital—and the enormous numbers naturally are the poor amongst us—that private practice with poor salaries which we have given to our doctors upto date has had a deleterious effect in-as-much as if a man has to supplement his income by private practice he naturally gives more attention to those who pay them to those who don't. It is human nature. I don't call the doctor bad names as some people do who say, "He won't go out to the villages." What do you give him? You give him a mere pittance, not even a house to live in, not even a hospital where he can practise his skill, and then you say he is unpatriotic. We have always to look at the two sides of a picture.

So these doctors are going to be paid enough and I have a feeling from the good response that we have had to the advertisements that have already gone out that those who will come here will be quite contented and will be glad to devote their whole time to the promotion not only of teaching, not only of serving the patients who come to the hospitals but also, what is extremely important and vital to the progress of modern medicine, of research. Today our doctors because of private practice have no time whatsoever to give to research. A very distinguished physician Lord Moran—I may give his name—when I was talking to him four or five years ago about the health services in the United Kingdom said that there had been a great deal of opposition to them too and though private practice had not gone, it had decreased. He said that if there was one good thing that had happened it was that their doctors who were really proficient in all the limbs of the medical profession were able to devote ever so much more time to

research than they did before. Another thing which I think is a good step, a step in the right direction, is that all the staff and the students are going to be housed in the campus of the Institute. I feel that by thus housing them we shall be doing something as I said in the other House to revive or maintain the old and ancient Indian philosophy of the *Guru-Sishya* ideal which I think is extremely useful. The student should be able to go to any member of the staff if he has any difficulty and the staff should be in close touch with those with whom they are dealing. Hon. members may—perhaps now it is too hot but during the next session when it is a little cooler—if they like come with me or they themselves can go to Safdarjung and ask Dr. Dikshit to show them round the campus and see the plan of the Institute. I am sure it will delight their hearts to feel that an Institute of such significance, of such magnitude—I do not mean now the magnitude of the buildings but the magnitude of the conception of the Institute—is going to be set up in the country. I am proud that India has really taken the lead in medical science in this part of the world. We are today training workers from abroad for Malaria; we are today training workers from abroad for maternity and child welfare; we are training them as public health nurses; we are training people for village work, as sanitary inspectors and public health personnel and I do hope that here in this Institute also we shall be able to give that help to those countries who are not perhaps as far advanced as we are.

Then I hope after we have taken up our teaching programmes and after we have drawn up the curriculum, the course may perhaps even be shortened and the students who work in this Institute may have more chances of undertaking responsibilities as I was able to see in the University of Denver in the U.S.A. One of the things that struck me there was the opportunity I had of listening to a fourth year student giving his dissertation on the patient who had been put in his entire charge.

Now, this Institute—and this is very important—is going to be given the powers and functions of a university because it will, I

am sure, make revolutionary changes in many things, not only in curriculum but also in modes of teaching. Therefore this university status which this Bill will give, will enable the Institute to give diplomas and this will be on the same pattern as exists in England today in institutions such as the Royal College of Surgeons, the Royal College of Physicians etc. They give diplomas of their own which most of our students when they go abroad are only too anxious to get because they maintain an extremely high standard. Of course, these will be recognised qualifications and they will have to be put down in the Indian Medical Council Act, an amendment to which I hope very shortly to introduce in this House.

Subject to such minimum control as the Government of India may exercise through its rule making power, the Institute will enjoy a very large measure of autonomy in other that it may fulfil the objective which I have tried to set forth before you in this very brief speech.

I could not answer that question off-hand. But at the moment I am myself in my Ministry budgeting for this Institute. I see no reason, however, it should not, but I cannot say off-hand because I have not got the constitution of the University Grants Commission before me.

It is not going to be under the Delhi University but since it enjoys the status of a university itself, it may be that it may come into the picture but I am not worrying about that at the moment. Of course the Government of India will make itself responsible for the expenses but I am always an optimist and I hope that serving the cause of suffering humanity as this Institute will be, it too like so many medical colleges, medical college hospitals and hospitals not attached to colleges, will

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\*Speaking on the clarification sought by Dr. W. S. Barlingay as whether the Institute would be entitled to

benefit from private philanthropy which will also come into the picture and help us to progress still further. The future of this Institute will lie in the hands of Director, of the Professors and other members of the teaching staff and of the students. I believe myself that it will be their devotion to duty, their desire to promote their work and their spirit of altruism that will actuate them to subordinate their personal considerations, as I believe the noble profession of medicine should do to the fulfilment of the objectives in view, that will eventually create and maintain an atmosphere which is necessary for an Institute like this. I do therefore hope that in presenting this Bill for acceptance by the Rajya Sabha today, the legal structure that is created may facilitate the progressive realisation of a study development of improved methods of medical education in this Institute and through the influence that it will accept, I am sure that the standards of different courses of professional training in the field of health throughout this country will be raised.

I have received one or two amendments about putting in persons representing the Indian systems of medicine. I would like to assure the members that in not including the Ayurveda, *Unani* or *Homoeopathic* systems in this Institute no insult is meant to them. They cannot just fit into this picture. I hope to have a Chair for the History of Medicine as you will see that we are including the teaching of the Humanities and in that History of medicine Ayurveda will make its contribution and so will *Homoeopathy* and *Unani*. But the actual teaching of these systems cannot be undertaken in this Institute. As a matter of fact I was not going to wait for the teaching of Ayurveda post-graduate courses. Post-graduate studies in Ayurveda are going to be opened in July this very year in Jamnagar where there is already an under-graduate college and I feel that later on when more research comes into the picture and as we widen our scope, we shall be able by that time to have enough knowledge about all the drugs that are available in India. After all, there is a Drugs Research Institute in Lucknow. I pleaded with Dr. Bhatnagar at the time when he was raising these scientific laboratories all over India. I said, "Please have one as quickly

as you can for research in Indian drugs". It is working in Lucknow. It is doing very fine work. I believe that there is now going to be a herbarium which will feed it still more. Then there is Jamnagar which has been working extremely well and when the Prime Minister went there the other day, he said this is a fascinating experiment that is going on here. And now we are going to have post-graduate studies evolved there also. We are gradually taking more and more of our Indian drugs into the pharmacopoeia. I have placed in the library of this House the latest Indian Pharmacopoeia. That has been drawn up not by vaidas but by those who profess modern medicine. I hope that those who go in for modern medicine will more and more after they have qualified go in for the therapeutics of Ayurveda. I do not believe that we are really going about the right way in enriching Ayurveda or allowing Ayurveda to enrich modern medicine, because what is happening today is that all those young students who go into the so called Ayurvedic schools come out and practise nothing but modern medicine. That is not what you want if you want Ayurveda to live. I want Ayurveda to live. It will be killed by antibiotics and the use of penicillin, sulphadrugs and everything else by the practitioners of Ayurveda themselves. I myself feel that I am a much greater friend of Ayurveda than many of the Members of this House or of the other House imagine. Now, I hope with this brief and perhaps longer survey than I intended to give. I have made the objectives of this Institute perfectly clear before the House and that I shall have their full support to this measure.'

Sir, I have listened with very great attention during the last three days to all that has been said by every single speaker that has risen to speak on this Bill. I am, like my friend, Dr. Subbarayan, a Member of this House, distressed that instead of considering the Bill, instead of having read the Bill and the objects and objectives of that Bill, this debate has just deteriorated into almost a battle of Ayurveda against modern medicine. It was never the intention of the Government of India,

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\* Intervening in the debate on 8 May, 1956.

under whose auspices and with whose blessings this All India Institute of Medical Sciences is being brought into being, to have any quarrel with *Ayurveda* or *Unani* or *Homoeopathy* or *Nature Cure* or any other system of medicine that may tomorrow come into being.

Sir, if the hon. Members will permit me to explain the position, their questions and the arguments that have been raised will be answered *seriatim*.

The All India Medical Institute was an institute that had been suggested to be brought into being as long ago as when the Bhore Committee issued its Report and I confess that I am extremely happy to have had in this House, at a time when I have brought this measure for being passed here, a Member of that Committee for whose support and for whose clear enunciation of what this institute was meant to be—he was the first speaker in this debate—I am thankful.

I would draw the attention of the Members to the Statement of Objects and Reasons and if you will turn to the last sentence, you will see there that "the Institute will have the power to grant medical degrees, diplomas and other academic distinctions which would be recognised medical degrees for the purpose of the Indian Medical Council Act, 1933." Now surely nobody can ever draw the inference that of these medical degrees can be anything relative to either *Ayurveda* or *Unani* or *Homoeopathy*.

At page 5 you will see under clause 14(a), "With a view to the promotion of the objects specified in section 13, the Institute may provide for under-graduate and post-graduate teaching in the science of modern medicine" and again at page 8 in clause 23 and 24 "Notwithstanding anything contained in the Indian Medical Council Act, 1933, the medical degrees and diplomas

\*Speaking on the point raised by Shri Biswanath Das, whether the other systems of medicine viz. *Ayurveda*, *Unani*, *Homoeopathy* etc., come under the purview of medical science.

granted by the Institute under this Act shall be recognised medical qualifications for the purposes of that Act and shall be deemed to be included in the First Schedule to that Act." "Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, the Institute shall have power to grant medical degrees, diplomas and other academic distinctions and titles under this Act."

Therefore the purposes of this institute have been very clearly laid down in this Bill. Naturally therefore it pertains to the development of modern medicine. Now, when I took over charge of the Ministry of Health, one of the first things that I deplored greatly was the fact that so many of our young boys and girls and doctors who had been in practice for sometime, especially in the teaching profession in our colleges, used to have to go abroad to get their postgraduate training away from their own background, away from conditions which they would have to practise under when they came back, away very often from the clinical material that this country offers and offers in a special way because, after all, we are a tropical country and we have many diseases here, which we do not have in the western hemisphere, and therefore it was that I thought that, if I could have a medical institution where I could give post-graduate studies to my own people in my own country, it would be of enormous advantage. It would not only save money but it would give them the necessary knowledge in their own country and with a sense of pride that they will be getting it in their own country rather than having to go abroad for it.

Secondly, it has been born in upon me recently—and born in upon me in a special manner when I go abroad as I have the opportunity of doing fairly often that there are noticeable new trends that are taking place in the modern system of medicine and I want to adopt many of those new trends here. For example, last year we have a special conference on medical education for this purpose and many suggestions have been made and many things have been said to us in regard to the alteration of the curricula that exist in our medical colleges today. I was anxious that we should also come into this picture

and perhaps take a first step in this direction whereby other countries might also learn from us. Now, as far as the modern system of medicine is concerned, I would just like to read to you the Cabinet decision which was taken after several days of serious talk, naturally under the leadership of our Prime Minister:

The Central and Provincial Governments should decide that modern scientific medicine shall continue to be the basis of the development of national services in the country.....

but they also recommended and I remember so well that it was at my own suggestion that—

Facilities for research on scientific lines into the Ayurvedic and *Unani* systems of medicine should be promoted on as broad a basis as possible on the lines recommended in the Chopra Committee's Report and the results of such research when they are of proved value will not only enrich the Ayurvedic and *Unani* systems but will also be incorporated in modern medicine so that eventually there will emerge only one system of medicine.

Now, I say this to you in all humility that in the Central Ministry of Health while I have been its chief servant it has been my endeavour to follow this resolution which was passed by the Cabinet of this country not only in the letter but in the spirit. And I claim with all sincerity that I have given full play, as much as I could, to the development of Ayurveda on proper lines. I will comment in detail on this question of Ayurveda later. I would like first of all to answer some of the other points that have been raised because they are really very much more relevant to the Bill.

First of all, hon. members have said, 'why have you located it in Delhi?' Well; Delhi was thought—again after much consideration—to be the best place because it was going to be a new venture and naturally it was right that it should be under the eyes of the Ministry concerned so that we would see to it that it develops along right lines.

You have to ask the Law Ministry. I do not know. It matters very little whether there is a statutory provision<sup>\*</sup> or not. But the land has been acquired and as I have said already, hon. Members can go there at any time and see how much of the building has already come up. Therefore the question of location really does not arise. And there is no gainsaying the fact that there is plenty of clinical material in Delhi. It is not necessary to go to Bombay, Calcutta or Madras to get clinical material.

Then I have been asked whether there were any conditions attached to the New Zealand grant. As a matter of fact, as I said, this concept of an All-India Medical Institute was given by the Bhore Committee. I accepted it at once and from the very first year when I took over charge I pressed for it but I could not get any money. So when the Colombo Plan came I put forward a scheme and that scheme was accepted by the New Zealand Government. Their grant carries no conditions whatsoever. Naturally, they did understand that it was to be an All-India Institute for the development of post-graduate and under-graduate training in modern medicine and research.

Some other hon. members asked, "why should there be a Dental College and a Nursing College? Why not other"? Someone else asked, "why any at all"? Sir, dentistry has been a very neglected science in our country. There really is not one first-class dental college in India today and I was determined to be able to have the facilities to turn out trained dentists in my own country. Our dentists have to go abroad now to get really first-class qualifications. Therefore it was that I wanted a Dental College attached to this Institute. Similarly, nursing also has been the most neglected limb of the medical profession though it is an important limb. There are only two Nursing Colleges in the whole of India—one here and one in the South. They are producing for us Sister-tutors who can go back to the states and take up teaching of nursing. I do not want a whole heap of other colleges in this campus but I do look forward to a

\*Clarifying the point raised by Dr. W.S. Barlingay about the necessity for a statutory provision for location of institute in Delhi.

department for Social and Preventive Medicine. We cannot keep abreast with the development of modern medical science if we do not have the teaching of Social and Preventive Medicine.

Dr. Raghbir Singh talked about stereotyped colleges and the need for L.M.P. courses and rural services. I have no doubt in my mind that this is not going to be a stereotyped college. It is a new venture; it is a pioneer venture. It will break new ground all the time and I have no doubt that with the support that it will have from the Government and I hope with the support that it will have from the elected representative of the people who have the honour to come to the Rajya Sabha and to the Lok Sabha, this Institute will be a very fine Institute and it will be not only something worthy of India but something worthy of the world. I agree—as one speaker said—that our own young men are no less intelligent than others. Many of them have made their mark in the world of surgery, in the world of medicine, in the world of pathology and in all the other branches of this great science of medicine. We may never lower standards.

Someone asked, 'why is the U.P.S.C. not allowed to recruit?' We consulted the U.P.S.C. and they have agreed to recruitment being made without consulting the Commission until the Bill is passed and after the Bill is passed, because it will be a statutory non-government institution, recruitment will be outside the purview of the Union Public Service Commission and that is a logical corollary.

About rules and regulations, some have said that there are too many and some have said that we are taking away from Parliament what is really Parliament's due. Clause 28 gives power to the Central Government to make rules and clause 29 gives power to the Institute to make regulations. Clauses 6 to 10 specifically mention matters which may be catered for by rules and regulations. And these matters are mentioned in clauses 28 and 29 for the sake of further clarity. If references to rules were to be deleted from clauses 6 to 10 the language of the Bill, I was told, would become cumbrous. And this pattern has been followed in innumerable Acts and I only plead that we

should give as much autonomy as we can to this Institute which is going to be a pioneer venture. Let us have elasticity and let us have autonomy and let us not feel that for every little thing, for every little rule and regulation they will have to come up here. After all, you are going to have an extremely good Governing Body which will lay down the policies which will be followed by the Institute and the regulations must be left to the discretion of the Institute itself.

Well, the Government is not going to make rules that are not going to be acceptable to the governing body\*. Government will be in very close touch with the governing body. Trust your Government. Trust your good scientific people. Don't always think that all the wisdom lies in these Houses. It does not.

And now in regard to the University Grants Commission, section 3 of the University Grants Commission Act provides that the Central Government may declare that any institution other than a University shall be deemed to be a University for the purposes of this Act.

Shri Sapru asked for clarification regarding the Committees. I would refer him to clause 10 (5) whereby the Institute may set up as many standing committees and *ad hoc* committees as may be necessary for specific purposes and for advising the Institute and these sub-committees may either be executive or advisory. And liaison between the Institute and other medical colleges will be maintained through non-official representatives on the Institute. And if you will look at the membership in clause 4(a), 4(e) and 4(f), you will see that the non-official element is very, very much present there.

On this Institute, I was again asked, why representation had not been given to the Indian Medical Council. When the Bhore Committee recommended the inclusion of the President of the Medical Council of India and another member of that Council, at that time the idea was to include the supervision of the Council

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\*Speaking on the point raised by Shri Jaspat Roy Kapoor, regarding the autonomy of the institute

over the under-graduate part of the functions of the Institute. Latterly—and I think quite rightly—the whole concept has changed, because we want to make the Institute an independent organisation in the under-graduate field. We want to experiment in that under-graduate field. We want to shorten it or widen its scope of however else we may want to change it. But we want that done and, therefore, we do not want it to be a stereotyped college that will come under the Medical Council. Later on, of course, changes can be made. That is another matter. But at the moment we do want in this institution full freedom for experimental studies.

These same reasons apply to the special status that we wish to give this new venture for non-affiliation with any University. There is no question of bypassing any University. There is no question of not going on helping the existing Universities, to upgrade any of their institution or departments should they wish to do so. But this Institute has to become—if it is to play the role that I want it to play—a guide to all our teaching institutions. It has got to be an all-India seat of learning giving the lead and ever so much in the truest sense of the term of 'all-India'. And I think we want an all-India spirit in this country now more than at any other time of our history. We are sadly in danger of going into narrow parochialism and provincialism which cuts at the very foot of all that we at any rate were taught to fight for under the banner of the greatest man this country has ever produced. Moreover in the nominations under clause 4(e) and 4(f), members of the Indian Medical Council are almost certain to be there. I should say they are certain to be there, and I hope, therefore, that that satisfies the Members. I have already said that we want an under-graduate college and I need not repeat the argument. Apart from the fact that reform is needed in under-graduate studies because new trends are coming in everywhere. Please remember that in modern education now post-graduate studies are not and must not be in a water-tight compartment any longer....They are too closely linked with under graduate courses and are not work in isolation if we have to forge ahead.

There were some objections raised to clauses 23 and 24 of the Bill. I venture to submit that these are necessary because one of the main purposes of the Institute is to experiment in the field of medical education and adequate freedom for this purpose is hereby provided. Of course, these diplomas and degrees will be recognised. They will be recognised under the Act. They will have the impress of the Government of India and what is more I am hopeful and I am certain that they will be recognised throughout the world just as the F.R.C.S., M.R.C.P. and F.R.C.P. of London and Edinburgh and M. Ds. of America are recognised all over the world. I have no doubt that the degrees and diplomas that our people get in this Institute will also get not only worldwide recognition but worldwide approbation.

Now, regarding the budget of this Institute I say that it has not been sprung as a surprise. Every year for the last four years both Houses have been passing the budget for this Medical Institute. So, no surprise has been sprung. This actual Bill is just for power to manage the Institute in the best possible manner.

Someone then said that there may be conflict between the teachers and the Governing Body. Now, I see no reason whatsoever why scientific men should quarrel with each other. The Governing Body will lay down policies, but the internal management will be the burden of the Director with such staff as is under him. Someone then said, "We have experience of large buildings and little work being done therein." I can assure him that this will not be the case. As a matter of fact, Members may be interested to hear that post-graduate studies in orthopaedic surgery have already commenced and commenced in hutsments.

Someone talked about 'modern medicine' being an American phrase. I must say that this took me by surprise. I do not know whether the lady who said this has visited America, but all I know is that the term 'modern medicine' is not really used in

America or in England if you were to speak, as I was speaking last year to the late Minister of Health of the United Kingdom, he talked about "orthodox medicine." The other day I was talking to an American professor and again he talked about "conventional medicine." I think we may claim that we here in India have coined this word 'modern medicine' and doctors both in England and elsewhere have taken to it and are going, I think, to adopt it. Anyway what is in a name? Further, in any case, allopathy does not mean modern medicine. Allopathy, I may tell the Members of the House if they do not already know it was a name coined by Homoeopaths because they wanted to call modern medicine by a name as opposed to homoeopathy. But modern medicine is very very much more than any 'pathy'. It is the sum total of all the knowledge, gained through all the years since mankind has existed, as I have said again and again and I have no doubt that Ayurveda and Unani have contributed to it....

No. They are certainly excluded\* as they exist today. Please remember that Ayurveda in its pristine glory was one thing, but as one of the very great supporters of Ayurveda has on the floor of the House more than once said, I agree that it is not being practised in the proper way today. It has remained static. Are we going to remain static in anything? Is India not to come up to scratch in this vital science? I should be very sad if my country failed in this when it was going to adopt everything scientific in every other department of life—in your engines, in aeroplanes, in motor cars, in river valley projects, and even in atomic energy. Atomic energy is going to come and is going to be used for medical purposes. Will you bring Ayurveda there too? You cannot mix up things.

When I used to be with Gandhiji we used always to have a

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\* Replying on the point raised by the Shri H.P. Saksena which Ayurveda and Unani systems of medicine were excluded from this concept of modern medicine.

great deal of humour with him. He used to say to me, "Tell me, what is the 'Thought for today' in today's *Times of India*?" And I always used to read out the 'Thought for today' to him. And if he was struck by it, he used to tell me to write it down in a special book so that he could remember it. I have continued to read 'A Thought for today' in the *Times of India* ever since and today, this was the 'Thought for today':—"The interests of society often render it expedient not to utter the whole truth, the interests of science never: for in this field we have much more to fear from the deficiency of truth, than from its abundance." And I was struck by it—not as a miracle as some friends here have talked about as being done by vaidas, but as a very happy coincidence because it does really express what I feel about the approach to this whole question. Science is a search for truth. Medical science is not less a search for truth than any of the other vital sciences. In fact it is much more vital because it touches the human being in a special way. It means life or death; it means enjoyment or suffering; it means illness or wellbeing; it means pain or lack of pain. Therefore, we have to approach medical education in a very, very scientific manner. And I have felt all the time that I have listened to the speeches made here and time and again, even wondered—whether it is due to expediency or whether their arguments are due to an appreciation of a real search for truth. When I was fighting in 1951 for my election in my own constituency, vaidas came to me and said, "Here are 3,500 or 4,500 votes which we will give you if you will recognize Ayurveda." I said, "Go and throw them down the next drain. Nothing doing. I am not to be bribed." Those votes went against me. I say to you, "Do not think in terms of placating any interest; think in terms of the science."

Now, in the speeches that have been made on the floor of the House, no differentiation seems to have even been conceived of between fundamental research and research in drugs. Many people have said, "Ayurvedic Medicines are this and that." I do not deny it. I say that there should be research-intensive research—in medicine that are used by the vaidas and by the unanis and by the homoeopaths also. But

fundamental research is a little different and is a far more difficult thing. If you will read the Health Ministry Report—one member was good enough to turn to this Report—you will find that in addition to the research that has been done in Jamnagar on the study of Pandu, Grahani and Kamla group of diseases, "investigation on guineaworm infection in collaboration with the Director of Ayurveda. Saurashtra and identification of drugs used in Ayurveda have been undertaken. In Addition to the above research literary research for the collection of references on the subject of Anaemia from Vedas, Upanishads, Purans, and other classics and original works is also in progress. The Pharmacy Department have prepared some important medicines" and twenty items are given. And then they give you further information as to what the Institute is doing. If you turn to page 45, you will find that they are doing research on *Mana Vinishchava*, *Darvva Vinishchava* and *Varma Vinishchava*. References are being compiled from Ayurvedic Classics on colour as well as similes used. Then, work on identification of crude drugs plants and herbs, cultivation of medicinal herbs etc. are also in progress. And there is the future plan of work at the Institute:—

1. To develop Siddha System of medicine.
2. To develop outdoor clinical research.
3. Schemes proposed in the Second Five Year Plan, viz.,
  - (a) Establishment of the Unani Section.
  - (b) Animal Experiment Laboratory.

After all, if you want to experiment on the effect of medicines available, you have got to take the help of modern medicine.

Then there are:—

- (c) Panch Karma and Naturopathy.
- (d) Manuscript and Publication Department.
- (e) History of medicine and so on.

People have rather....



Of course there are\*. I would beg of the members to go to Jamnagar and see for themselves what is happening and perhaps they will then realise what the Prime Minister has written himself:

This is a fascinating inquiry going on in this research Institute and it may well lead to very fruitful result.

Now, in spite of the fact that funds were provided in the First Five Year Plan for the development of Ayurveda and other ancient systems of India, they could not all be utilised. Why could they not be utilised? Simply because I write to every single State and say to them, "Send me schemes for research" and schemes are received. The *vaidas* are not people who have been educated in modern medicine. They examine them and pass them or not. Some members seem to have some kind of an antipathy to modern medicine in spite of the fact that, when they are ill, most of them come for accommodation in my hospital.

I am not going to give way to anyone,

The advisers in Ayurveda are:—

1. Dr. Gokhale, Principal of Ayurvedic College, Poona.
2. Dr. Srinivasa Murthy, ex-President of the School of Indian Medicine, Madras.
3. Shri Ramprasad Sharma, Director of Ayurveda in PEPSU.

I have got people to advise me on Homoeopathy: Dr. Mazumdar, Dr. Diwan Jaichand, Dr. Dhawale, Dr. Saksena and others. For *Unani* also I am having talks with *nakims* to see what they can do. I have asked them on more than one occasion to send me schemes. Three times I have seen them

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\*Speaking on the intervention of the Shri Jaspal Roy Kapoor.

myself, and asked them to send me schemes, but I have not yet got them. I am hoping that with the help of my friend, Mr. Zaidi, who is interested in this institution in Delhi, something may come out for *Unani*. In addition to that, Rs. 1 crore has been provided by my Ministry solely for research in the indigenous systems of medicine in various institutions in the country. Ayurveda has been allotted Rs. 60.5 lakhs. I can only hope they will be able to spend it. If they spend it and if the *Unani* and *Homoeopath* people also spend more, I have no doubt that I will be able to get them more money. There will be no question of lack of money. The only question is: Will they be able to spend it? In addition, the Indian Council of Medical Research of which I am again the President have set aside another Rs. 20 lakhs in the Second Five Year Plan for investigation in indigenous drugs. It is for the State Governments really to do more for Ayurveda. What are they doing for Ayurveda? It is their burden in the first instance. If they do not encourage it, you should go and penalise them, if you so wish. They are also responsible to the people whom they serve. I have met Health Minister after Health Minister from the States, and I have to contradict Dr. Gilder's statement which he made yesterday. They tell me that while they are opening Ayurvedic dispensaries, the people actually demand modern medicine. This is what is happening. I think I have a recollection of Dr. Gilder wanting to put up an Ayurvedic dispensary somewhere or other in some village in Bombay State and telegram after telegram and representation after representation coming to him asking for a modern dispensary. After all, he was Minister of Health for five years in the Bombay Government. What was he able to do for Ayurveda? He started some new courses for it. I said to him, "What is happening today is, 'You train these young men in Ayurveda but they actually....'"

If they are paying Rs. 5 or Rs. 10 to these vaids, I say that it

\*Clarifying the point raised by Shri M. Govinda Reddy.

is very wrong. I will ask them to pay more. What I say is this: If you really want Ayurveda to live and not allow the practitioners of Ayurveda to practise anything but that science, then, if you teach them anatomy, teach them physiology, teach them pathology and all the other non-clinical subjects and teach them also how to read X-Ray pictures and expect them after that to practise Ayurveda, they are not going to do it. They are going to practise modern medicine and that is why the students in the college at Lucknow are on strike, the students in Trivandrum are on strike. They want to learn modern medicine. If you feel that the States are not doing enough, I am willing to write to the States. I have advised all the Ministers of Health to teach the vaidas a certain amount of hygiene, a certain amount of sanitation, teach them how inoculate, how to vaccinate, and that let them give their own remedies in their own way to the villagers. In that way alone will Ayurveda live. Secondly, I say that, if the therapeutics of Ayurveda and Unani is made a postgraduate study, then alone will you get the real essence, the substance, the life-giving things which are in these systems, so that all knowledge may be brought into the broad stream of modern medicine. But my suggestion was not accepted by the Ministers. I hope to be able to give substantial stipends to M.B. B.S. fully qualified people to study Ayurveda and then to practise it. Now, I think that is a far better way of doing things. I am willing to give to one or two colleges in the first instance a chair in Ayurveda so that those who have graduated in modern medicine may learn this science also. That is the way to revive Ayurveda. I fully agree with my friend from Bihar who said. 'Do something to revive it.' I would like to revive it and take from it all that is worthy of taking from it. That is what we want. As I said, I do not run the hospitals in the country. I am only the Health Minister in the Centre. I can only advise. But I claim that I have done more for research in Ayurveda than was ever done before. We have brought out today an Indian pharmacopoeia of Indian medicines produced by people who are not Vaidyas. I would like Vaidyas and Hakims to produce their medicines in a scientific way. There are difficulties, however, in fundamental research. When I went and saw the patients, in one place

where we are having this fundamental research, being treated by the vaids and by modern medicine, the people who were being treated by modern medicine were able to get out quicker. The other people who were being treated with Ayurvedic medicines were asking to be changed over to modern medicine, so that they too could get out of hospital quicker. We want to do research, because after all quickness is not everything. As Dr. Gilder rightly said, there are many people who get well without medicines and not by some homoeopathic pill or anything else. The same about homoeopathy. I have been trying to get the three Homoeopathic Colleges in Calcutta to agree to have just one really good college so that I could give it enough money, but they have not agreed. They are still quarrelling. I have chosen one college, and I have actually in the next Five Year Plan provided the best part of Rs. 14 lakhs for *Unani, Homoeopathy* and, if possible, nature cure. As Gandhiji once said, nobody in India knows the science of nature cure.

Then one word with regard to the bias of some people against modern medicine. After all when you want surgery, where do you go? If you want gyanaecology and obstetrics, where do you go? If you want pathology, where do you go? If you want radiology, where do you go? If you want dentistry, where do you go? If you want Ophthalmology; where do you go? If you want maternity and child welfare, where do you go? Modern medicine has reached out to the villages. You have maternity and child welfare in modern medicine and not in Ayurveda. It is all very well to say that our people live because of these people. People live certainly. Man lives through all kinds of difficulties. He survives. But what about the high incidence of disease in India? The doctrine of the survival of the fittest still remains. In bio-chemistry, in preventive medicine, in all these things research can only be done in my opinion by scientific modern medical men. My friend, Mr. Govinda Reddy, said to me that research must be done by modern men, and I agree with him. I shall do my best in regard to research in Ayurveda, but that can be done only by modern medical men.

Even in Ayurveda, there are two contrary views: One view is that there should be no modern medicine in it at all. There is another body of opinion which says, "Let the vaidas practise modern medicine as well." I think myself that that is wrong.

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I have already told the House that Rs. 60 lakhs have been given to Ayurveda. In addition, Rs. 5 to 6 crores are being spent by the States. As a matter of fact, for modern medicine all the money that is provided in the country is provided by the States, and we give very little. I am providing for something for this Institute which is still to start. I am providing Rs. 1 crore for the indigenous systems, for research in them. We have got under us only institutes like the All India Institute of Hygiene, Nutrition laboratories and so on. A large sum of money is being provided, for research in modern medicine. In addition, Rs. 1 crore is being given for the indigenous systems of medicine. I am not stingy about giving to what is good. Now you talk about the attitude of mind of my Ministry. There is nothing wrong with the attitude of mind here but I want the best for my people and I do want here and now to say this, that I wish to condemn in the strongest language at my disposal the horrid remarks that are made by Members of this House—and I expect more responsibility on their part—against my advisers. They cannot defend themselves on the floor of this House. It is not right to hit below the belt and I bear witness that it is to their credit that in all my schemes for every sort or kind of help to the indigenous systems of medicines, I have had nothing but absolute cent. per cent. support from them. It is cruel, wrong and wholly inaccurate to talk against them as some persons have done here and I would like those words to be withdrawn by them.

Regarding the chair for History of Medicine, I think it is most important that the History of Medicine should be taught and that our people should know from the beginning the history of

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\*Clarifying the point raised by Shri H.P. Saksena regarding amount of money given for modern medicine.

*Ayurveda* among other things and I am delighted that Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji quoted all the Sanskrit that he did. I would like to tell him that I have appointed in the Bangalore Institute for research in mental diseases a Sanskrit scholar who will help me to see what the ancients did in mental cases. I shall do likewise here and I wish to say this too that as this Institute develops—just now it is only in the under-graduate stage and a few post-graduate studies have begun—there is no reason at all why there should not be a close liaison between this and Jamnagar. I want Jamnagar to develop and become an All India Institute. It is an All India Institute for *Ayurveda*. I would like another Institute to spring up for *Unani* and I would like an All India Institute for Homoeopathy. These will spring up in time. Don't be impatient, don't ask me to mix up training here because the very purpose of this Bill will be spoiled. The Chair for the History of Medicine will be a tremendous asset and will give very great help. I can assure hon. Members that I will not deny help to research in the indigenous systems of medicine.

No. The emphasis will be much more on post-graduate studies. The under-graduate school I have to have as I have already said, because I want to experiment with the orientation of under-graduate education so that the University in Lucknow—the hon. Member's University—and others may be able to learn something new and he may be able to bring the reorientation into all medical colleges. Also those who are taught here will become teachers. We badly lack personnel in our teaching colleges. We are so lamentably short that I do want young men and women to be trained here and trained in the proper way and therefore a teaching institution must surely have a practising school but it will be a very small under-graduate college. In time, I hope to draw from the very best from all over India. That is what I wish. Self-sufficiency on post-graduate education only refers to the fact that we should be

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\*Speaking further on the point raised by Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji, asking whether under-graduate study should be included in the same at this stage.

able to have all our post-graduate education in our own country. Self-sufficiency in under-graduate education is not necessary. We have already got it. Now many Members have mentioned—I have nearly finished, and I might be allowed a few minutes more as it is difficult to break off in the middle of an argument—many people have talked about China. I have been to China quite recently myself. I took the trouble of going into the utmost details in regard to what they call, traditional medicines. It may interest hon. Members of this House to know what China and their Prime Minister told me—of course we have adopted the modern system of medicine—"We have to catch up with the West". I said "You may have a great deal in your traditional medicines". He said "We may have, we have." But no more traditional doctors are being turned out in China—not one. Now in the traditional school—and I went to two of them because I wanted to see what they were doing—not a single traditional doctor is allowed to treat anything except four or five chronic diseases like chronic hypertension which they treat with acupuncture and they are doing research on that. Then they treat chronic rheumatism, chronic arthritis, chronic gastro-enteritis and one or two other ailments. They were doing something for children—I think in some kidney trouble in children. That is all. No communicable disease is allowed to be treated by traditional doctors. They have got new graduates, men trained in modern medicine, educated absolutely in the modern way and their auxiliary personnel get their training in pathology, in anatomy, in physiology. That is what they are doing. They are teaching everyone, even the traditional doctors, whether they are old or young, a certain amount of modern medical science. I found an old man with a stethoscope round his neck and I asked him, "Are you using it?" "Yes, Madam," he answered "I am using it and I am very glad I use it, because I find it much easier to do the diagnosis with the aid of the stethoscope than by just putting my fingers on the pulse." So that is China. Do not imagine that China is happy to lag behind the West. It is not. It is going ahead. We too are trying to train any number or what we call auxiliary

medical personnel who are getting as good a training as the Chinese doctors, if not a little more.

I was told, "Do not think of tinkering with modern research." I think that was the word. I do not understand how research can be tinkering, for research has nothing to do with tinkering. But to do research only in *Ayurveda* without the vast field of medical research open to us in this country under the modern system would be to me the absolute negation of research. I do not understand what kind of research that would be. Research has to be all embracing and all inclusive. Therefore, I hope that I have explained everything to the satisfaction of everybody and that I have convinced the House that I am not against *Ayurveda*. I am willing to help *Ayurveda* and to give them fully qualified men. I want them to go into that field. They should have every opportunity for research. Every opportunity for serving our people, not only in the villages but everywhere. Why do you want always our villages to have the second best? I want the villages to have the very best. I want the villagers to have even better service than I have, because I consider them much more liable to fall ill than I am. I want these people to serve in the hospitals, everywhere. I will have no objection to giving them the best facilities. We are developing better under-graduate and post-graduate studies in Jamnagar and when I get fully qualified post-graduate men from there, certainly we will collaborate with each other and there will be interchanges and there will be coordination so that all that is available in *Ayurveda* will come in, as I have said, into the broad stream of this vital science—medical science.

After what I have said, I hope those hon. Members who have put forward amendments will understand that it is impossible for me with the purpose that I have in view for this Institute, to accept those amendments. But I have given every assurance on the floor of the House and I shall carry out all those assurances, that none of them, neither *Ayurveda* nor *Unani*, nor Homoeopathy shall be allowed to suffer for lack of funds, for lack of facilities for research; and it is up to their protagonists and their practitioner to give me schemes and get money from

me, whatever I can give them. And I shall also ask the States not to pay the Vails so little, but to encourage them to serve the public and to do research also.'

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\*Later the motion was adopted.

## **11. The Report of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences\***

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Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am delighted that my hon. friend, Shri M.P. Bhargava, has moved that this Report of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences be taken into consideration because I feel that this is a unique institute of its kind not only in this country but in Asia. Time and again I have begged personally of Members of both the Houses of Parliament to come and visit the Institute but unfortunately they are not able to do so, or perhaps may I even say that they are not interested enough to do so. I have been closely connected with this Institute from its very inception. I founded it and even today I am intimately connected with it. As the Chairman of its governing body I would like the Members of this House to realise the limitations and difficulties under which this Institute has worked during the few years of its existence. Perhaps we are apt to expect a good deal from an institute of this kind and naturally we have a right to do so and that all the facilities for the work to be undertaken by this Institute, as has been suggested by Dr. Gour, should be made available to the Institute. But Members do not know that for a large institute like this, today we have not even 400 beds. How can we be expected to carry out research in various diseases which we would like to do when we are so terribly limited? Time and again we cannot appoint staff simply because either we have not got the space or the accommodation in which they are to stay. I may say that one of the biggest limitations that this

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\*Speaking on the motion moved by Shri M.P. Bhargava, "That the fifth Annual Report of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, for the year 1960-61, laid on 16 August, 1961, be taken into consideration." (R.S. Deb., 28 November, 1961, cc. 338-341).

Institute has had to suffer from is the non-co-operation of the Safdarjung Hospital where we were promised beds which never were forthcoming. Also I am sorry to have to say that there has been a certain amount of non-cooperation even from the Ministry. Now, the Minister will certainly be good enough to reply to all the questions that have been raised and I will not dwell thereon.

In regard to the Professor of Biochemistry, there was a first class man appointed but this terms of appointment unfortunately were suddenly taken back by the Government, not by the Institute. The Institute fought hard that the person having been appointed on certain terms, those terms should not be rescinded, and he naturally resigned. I had to go up to the Prime Minister to plead with him that this injustice might be undone. The Prime Minister was kind enough to rescind the orders of the Government but by that time this excellent professor had gone and had got a very well-paid post in a foreign country. So, we lost him. For the present appointment nobody has been selected for various reasons. We have experts on our selection committees and I do not think it is right for laymen really to criticise the selections when we are satisfied that the selections are made in a true spirit with expert knowledge.

Nobody has so far been appointed. When the matter come up to the Institute the other day—the Institute has a governing body, more or less like an executive committee; then there is the bigger body of the Institute—it was decided that the post should be readvertised. I do not think that any injustice has been done to anybody. I would, therefore, like to plead again with the Members of this House that now having discussed this Report, if they would be good enough to come and see the Institute for themselves, see our limitations, perhaps then they will recognise that within those limitations the Report that has been presented to this House for consideration for the year 1960-61 is an excellent one.

I may also mention here that we get many visiting Professors from many countries. Recently we had an eminent Professor of Medicine from England. He is not only eminent in his own field

of clinical medicine but he is the Principal of a very big teaching institute in England and if the House could only hear what he has written in praise of this institution, I am sure it would gladden their hearts.

The buildings have been delayed due to the fact that we have limited funds. The Planning Commission cuts down the budget and, therefore, we have to limit our activities to that extent also. But I have no doubt that the Institute has now turned the corner, and when we run our own hospital, for which again international aid has come to our help—that will be a 750-bed hospital—then we shall be able to have all the research facilities, treatment facilities and everything else. At the moment we have an improvised building for our patients. I entirely agree with Dr. Gour that the nursing home should be completely separate but we have today to manage both in the same building. We have to manage as best as we can in the improvised building. This improvised building is the one which was meant to be a nursing college. We are labouring under great difficulties. I think that the Director and the staff have to be congratulated for the work that they have done. And since the Minister of Health is here, I would plead with him also to visit the Institute fairly frequently and look into the difficulties that we are facing. I would beg of him to return to us what the Safdarjung Hospital refuses to return after four years of negotiations. These buildings were meant for and belong to us but they do not return them to us. They go on building hospital wards and do not return our buildings to us. I think this is most unfair treatment which should be rectified at a very early stage.

## 12. Indian Medical Council Bill

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Sir, the question of amending the Indian Medical Council Act, 1933, has been under the consideration of Government for some time as the Act had become greatly outmoded and a number of amendments were necessary. Now, I would like just briefly to tell the House the main reasons for which the Act has to be amended.

First of all, it was absolutely necessary to give representation to licentiate members of the medical profession, a large number of whom are still practising in our country. Secondly, it was necessary to provide for the registration of the names of citizens of India, who had obtained or have obtained foreign medical qualifications which are not at present recognised under the existing Act. Thirdly, to provide for the temporary recognition of medical qualifications granted by medical institutions in countries outside India with whom no scheme of reciprocity exists, in cases where the medical practitioners concerned are attached in India for the time being to any of our medical institutions for the purpose of training or research, or any charitable bodies. Fourthly, it was also necessary to provide for the formation of a committee for post-graduate medical education so that they could assist the Medical Council of India where the prescribing of standards of post-graduate medical education for the guidance of universities was concerned, and to advise universities also in the matter of securing uniform standards for post-graduate medical education throughout India. Then, we also had to provide for the maintenance of an All India Register to be kept by the Medical Council of India,

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\* Moving the motion, "That the Indian Medical Council Bill as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration". (L.S. Deb., 10 December, 1956, cc. 2329-35, 2351-52, 2365-77 and 2404-17).

which would contain the names of all medical practitioners possessing recognised medical qualifications.

As I have already said, the idea of amending this Act has been before us for some time. Naturally, I had to consult, in the first instance, all the States. I had to wait for some time before I could get their recommendations. After that I had to consult the All India Medical Council itself. Then, I did also consult the Indian Medical Association as well as leading medical men in the country.

There had been considerable agitation from the licentiate members of the medical profession that their qualifications ought to be recognised under the Indian Medical Council Act. At present their qualifications are recognised only under the various State Medical Acts, and I had felt that this request of theirs was reasonable. Therefore, we are going to recognise licentiate qualifications under the amending Bill that is now before the House.

Then there are a number of foreign medical qualifications that are not recognised under the existing Act. As the Medical Council of India has not succeeded in being able to settle schemes of reciprocity for recognition of these qualification with corresponding authorities in foreign countries, it has been found necessary to recognise these qualifications both when they are held by Indian citizens and by foreigners, who happen to be appointed in any medical institutions in the country mainly devoted to teaching, research and for charitable purposes. Now, in the case of foreigners holding special qualifications and who happen to have been brought to India for a specific purpose, either for teaching or for research or for work in any charitable organisation, naturally we are going to put a condition that they will not be allowed to practise for personal gain and further they will only be here for such time as the Government of India may prescribe in consultation with the Medical Council

and their practice will be limited only to the institutions to which they are attached and for so long as they continue to be so employed.

The present Act, as it exists, does not permit the Medical Council of India specifically to prescribe standards for post-graduate medical education. For this purpose the Government of India had created by executive order an All India Council for Post-Graduate Education, which functioned for sometime. There was overlapping in the function of this Post-Graduate Committee and the Medical Council of India as both bodies were inspecting institutions at the same time. Therefore, under the amending Bill, with the full concurrence of the All India Medical Council, it is proposed to entrust the function of prescribing the standards of post-graduate medical education for the guidance of universities and for prescribing uniform standards for such education to the Post-Graduate Medical Education Committee, which will be constituted from among the members of the Medical Council of India who possess post-graduate medical qualifications and experience in teaching and in examining post-graduate students of medicine. One of the main complaints of the medical profession, and in particular of the Licentiates, was the absence and the need for the preparation and maintenance of an All India Medical Register which will contain the names of all persons who are enrolled on the State medical register. As I said just now, the States maintain their own registers; but there is no All India register. Now there will be an all India register which will be prepared and maintained by the All India Medical Council. I am quite sure that this is a step in the right direction. Further, opportunity has been taken to make a few other amendments. For instance, certain amendments have been made because of the reorganisation of States. Then, certain amendments have also been brought to the Bill as it originally stood by the Rajya Sabha. I am myself moving some of these amendments officially.

There has been a certain amount of dissatisfaction amongst the Licentiates that they have not been given what they consider is their due, that is, equal status with the medical

graduates. I would like to bring to the notice of the House that a Licentiate does have a lesser qualification than what is known as the M.B.B.S. or the medical graduate. This Council is formed primarily for setting up standards of education for graduates and it does not seem right that the Licentiates should have the same number of members on the Council as graduates because naturally they will not have any experience either in teaching or in examining and actually they have not themselves had the same standard of education. So I think the fact that we have given them 7 seats on the Medical Council should satisfy them. In fact, when I had occasion to talk to them they said they are grateful that this has been done.

Their other complaint was that they were not put on the same register as medical graduates. There the difficulty is this. Our medical graduates want to go abroad for post-graduate study. But in foreign countries the Licentiate qualification is not recognized. Therefore, in order not to penalise our medical graduates from receiving the advantages of post-graduate studies abroad, we have to keep the Schedules of graduates and Licentiates separate. But we have conceded to the Licentiates that there will only be one all India medical register and their names will be one all India medical register and their names will be there along with the graduates. I have reason to believe that they have been really quite satisfied with these two concessions.

Now, because of the fact that we have no reciprocity with a number of foreign countries—in fact, none at the moment, if I remember right, except with the Commonwealth countries—those of our men and women who go abroad for either getting post-graduate qualifications, we are not able to put their names on the register. It is literally penalising our own people and I feel very strongly that Indians who have got foreign degrees should not come under that ban. After all they are Indian citizens and to ban them from our own register is a very unfair thing. I am sure that amendment, at any rate, will appeal to the heart of every Indian.

Regarding temporary recognition of medical qualifications granted by medical institutions outside India, with those countries with whom no scheme of reciprocity exists for the time being, we have said that this will apply to those foreigners who are attached to our institutions only for the purposes of teaching or research or for charitable purposes and for the limited period for which they may be allowed to come by the Government in consultation with the All India Medical Council. We shall put in the rules that they shall not be allowed, naturally, to practice for personal gain in order to avoid any kind of competition between foreigners and ourselves.

I have already spoken about the formation of the Committee for prescribing standards of post-graduate medical education. I may tell the House that as regards amendments after I had circulated the Bill for the opinion of the All India Medical Council, we accepted 98 per cent of their recommendations. The only question on which we differed—one of the amendments has come on that point—and in which Government cannot simply give in is about appeals. Now an appeal lies from the State Council to the State Government. When an appeal lies from the State Government it should lie to the Central Government which will consult the All India Medical Council. I gave an assurance on the floor of the Rajya Sabha that the Union Government will always consult legal opinion before coming to a decision. After all, if an appeal lies from the State Council to the State Government, an appeal from there should naturally lie to the Central Government.

These are the main points. We had a discussion with the Indian Medical Association in the matter. As far as the States are concerned, their opinions have been obtained about the Bill. The Bill was first introduced in May 1955. So ample opportunity has been given to everybody to study it but no amendments at all came. A few amendments that were proposed in the Rajya Sabha and were accepted have been embodied in the amending Bill as it now before this House. Only early in November did the Medical Council again raise some points. And in spite of the fact that the objections came very very late we did have a meeting with the President of the Council at which Dr. B.C. Roy

was also present and the Prime Minister was in the chair and we went through the whole Bill, clause by clause, and we arrived at an agreement in respect of the official amendments which I am moving today. This is the largest common measure of agreement between the Union Government, the States and the All India Medical Council. I do hope that the Bill as now put before you, coupled with the official amendments that I am bringing forward will be passed by this House.

I am glad that we have had a fairly long discussion on this Bill and I am grateful for all suggestions that have been made by many hon. Members of the House who take an interest in medical education, because it has been my aim throughout to maintain high standards of medical education in the country. But there has been a great deal of talk that is not really relevant to the Bill. I am, therefore, not going to dwell on what has been said about Ayurveda, Unani or Homoeopathy because it is completely irrelevant to what this amending Bill has been brought in for.

There were certain points raised by my friends Dr. Jaisoorya—I am sorry he is not in the House now—because I would like to bring to his notice that power to add to the schedules has been provided for in the Bill. I think one or two other Members also said that if there are degrees that should be recognised, why have only, these few been actually put in the schedules. My answer to that is that the Government of India accepts the recommendations of the All India Medical Council in this regard and there is provision in the Bill for it. Further, I do want to make it quite clear that qualifications whether from a British University or German University or a University in Russia or China or anywhere, where our nationals may go for education, can be included in Part II of the Third Schedule as and when requests from Indian nationals who qualify from those Universities are received and Government, after consulting the Medical Council of India, is satisfied that the standard of those qualifications is up to the mark. I think this is perfectly right as I said in my opening remarks. It is wrong for us so often, up to date to have refused to recognise

the qualifications obtained by our own nationals in countries that do not have reciprocity with our country. Their qualifications may be very bit as good, may be even better than what can be obtained from Universities with whom we have reciprocity, and simply because we do not have reciprocity it has been wrong not to permit them to come on to our registers.

One member opposite raised the point that there should be no reciprocity as far as degrees are concerned. I am one of those who feels that if we are to bridge the gulf that separates man from man and country from country, perhaps medical science is par excellence one of the ways in which we can do so and thereby not deny to our nationals the privilege of going to any country where they wish to get graduate or post-graduate education. When they come back, simply because we have not got reciprocity with the country concerned, not to allow them to practise or to come on to our registers would be completely wrong. How can we then expect our nationals to go abroad and get their degrees also recognised? Reciprocity is something that connotes settling down in a country, practising in a country, and therefore, all kinds of other questions come in. But where standards of medical education are concerned, I feel that we should not deny to our nationals higher standards of education. For example, there are Universities in America which have excellent degrees. Dr. Jaisoorya mentioned four. I know very many more than these four and certainly we should recognise those degrees. So far as foreigners are concerned, I naturally am jealous of the status of my country. I do not want foreigners who do not recognise our degrees and who have not got reciprocity with us to have the privilege of coming and settling down here and practising for personal gain. That has been completely eliminated. We have said that we shall only have them here for three purposes—for teaching, for research and for charitable institutions. As a friend opposite said, there are hospitals where people with foreign degrees, foreigners, are doing excellent work; why should they not be allowed to work? They will be allowed to work. Government, in consultation with the Medical Council, will limit the period of their stay, and the

purpose for which they are here, namely for teaching, for research and for charitable work is already there.

Further, an hon. member raised the question of not allowing them personal gain. It was here in the first instance in the Bill as it went before the Rajya Sabha. It was eliminated there from the actual Act itself. I consulted the Law Ministry about it also, and they brought to my notice the fact that if we retained those words here, it may reflect on those persons who are perhaps commandeered by a University to teach in their college, and simply because they are being paid their salaries by a foreign government—they are not doing any private practice—even that might be looked upon as a personal gain and, therefore, we might lose the privilege of having many of these persons. But in discussing this matter the other day with the members of the Medical Council, I have agreed that it shall be put in the rules that foreigners who come from abroad at our request, of course, for a limited period naturally, whether it be for teaching or research purposes or charitable purposes, shall not practise for personal gain.

Some members raised the question of licentiates—why should they not be in same schedule as the graduates? I said in my opening words and I say so again now that the only reason for keeping licentiates in another schedule is not to make them feel inferior to anybody else or to promote casteism or classism, but when our people go abroad for post graduate studies, they will not be admitted because the moment we put licentiates in the first schedule where graduates are, we shall be told that we are recognising the licentiate qualification as a qualification fit for post-graduate studies. Therefore I will not do it simply in order to defend my own nationals. It cannot and should not be done. But there again I have listened as far as I can to the plea of the licentiates and they are going to be on the All India Register, they are going to be on one register and only for the purposes of the Act will they be in another schedule. none is going to look at the schedules, but the whole country will

look at the All India Register and there will be no difference there for them. I think that is the most that we can do.

The fact that we have given seven licentiates a place in the Council is again a concession to their oft-repeated demand that they should be there. I would very much like the House to remember that it is not right to put licentiates on a body which is purely for maintaining the standards of graduate education when they are not graduates themselves. But simply because the Indian Medical Association, on whose membership there are thousands and thousands of licentiates, begged of me to bring them on to the Medical Council. I have given them seven seats, which seven seats they will be able to elect from among their own people. The Medical Council is very averse, and I think rightly averse, to give them any more representation because it says they are not really in a position to set or criticise standards of education. It is not good saying that licentiates are serving the country and they are in the villages and so on. All that is not relevant to the type of service here when we are really thinking in terms of a body that has to see to it that standards are maintained in our teaching institutions. We are only concerned with medical education in this Bill.

Some of the other points that have been raised have been that the body as proposed in this Bill in clause 3, is going to be 90 per cent, if I remember aright, nominated. Until the All India Medical Register is ready, I have got to nominate seven licentiates. I am willing to give an assurance that I shall consult the executive committee of the licentiates. Until the Register is ready, they will not be able to elect the persons from among themselves and preparation of the register may take a long time. Immediately the elected persons will be: 21 from the universities, 13 from the State medical colleges. As against this 34, the nominated will number 28. After the All India Medical Register is ready, out of a total of 62, the elected persons will number 41 and the nominated 21. In no sense is it correct to say that ninety per cent of this Council is going to be by nomination.

Clause 3 (1) (a) reads as follows:

"One member from each State to be nominated by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government concerned."

Originally, the clause read:

One member from each State to be nominated by the Central Government."

In the Rajya Sabha it was said that I might put it 'in consultation with the State Government'. I did so. A very healthy tradition has been built up between the States and the Centre.

On no occasion during the nine years that I have had the privilege of serving the cause of health has one single nomination from the State not been accepted by the Centre, even though sometimes inwardly I felt that a better man could have been sent. I have never questioned the State nomination and this procedure should continue.

This Bill has been before the public eye since May 1955 and not a single objection had been raised by the States or by anybody else until the other day in November. Therefore, the criticism that was read but by the hon. member, I beg to say, is completely uncalled for. It has not been rushed through. It came before the public eye in May 1955 and in August it went to the Rajya Sabha where it was fully discussed. Even before the Bill was introduced, I had consulted the members of the Indian Medical Association, the All India Medical Council, medical luminaries, personally and collectively, all over India. Naturally, I have consulted the States. Not until all that had been done was this Bill brought before the Rajya Sabha. After it was passed there, the Medical Association came to me with some grievance and asked me: "Why were we not consulted?" I told them: "The Bill has been with you for three months. Anyway, you come and see me again." They came to me in deputation. So, the memorandum or whatever was read out by my hon. friend, Shri Nayar, must be very out of date.

They have no right to say that they have not been consulted. The plea that they put forward about the licentiates, as I have already explained, is wholly unacceptable; it would be wrong to accept them from the point of view of medical education. Certainly, the All India Medical Council would not look at it. My sympathies are naturally with the Medical Council. The first batch of the students completed their medical course in the Travancore University and took their examinations last April, I am told. It just came to me, and I had my memory refreshed. I believe the Medical Council has inspected the College and so its recognition is only a matter of time. I cannot put them into the schedule until I get the O.K. from the Medical Council. But I can assure the Members of this House that those young men or women can apply for any job and so far as I know they will *ipso facto* come on to the Schedule. I will not delay putting them on the Schedule the moment we know that they are eligible for the same.

There is the question of reciprocity with South Africa. We have no reciprocal arrangements with South Africa. But, certain qualifications granted by the universities of the Union of South Africa have been included in the Second Schedule subject to the proviso that they will be so recognised only if they were granted before certain dates. Whoever raised this point may see foot-notes (a), (b) and (c) on page 17 of the Bill. He will see that the degrees granted after the dates mentioned in those footnotes will not be recognised as the Union of South Africa have not agreed to have a scheme of reciprocity with us.

There was the question about Bengal and I made it clear that those who were registered in the State Medical Register would continue to remain on those registers even after this Bill has been passed. Please remember that it is the All India Medical Council who have to recommend to the Government. In no case do I refuse to accept their recommendations.

But, there was a case in the matter of the five medical colleges—Poona, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Nagpur and Darbhanga. These qualifications were not recommended by the All India Medical Council from a certain date. I accepted what they said in the first instance. But, then I had representation after

representation from the graduates themselves and from the Health Ministers of the States concerned and from the Directors of Health Services. I had an enquiry made into the matter and I found that the All India Medical Council had been unjust. After having answered question after question on the floor of this House, I gave an assurance that if there was any injustice to the youngsters, I would remedy it and I remedied that injustice. I am sorry to have to say that the Indian Medical Council had not behaved as it should have. I for one will never be a party to giving away the power that the Central Government has to put an injustice right. After all, the Medical Council is an advisory body of the Government of India. The Government has always played fair by the Medical Council by accepting its recommendations, by and large, *in toto* and it is not right for the Council to feel that any injustice has ever been done to it. It is only right that where in the opinion of this hon. House an injustice has been done, it should be put right.

About inspectors and visitors, I may say that no university has ever objected to the appointment of inspectors and visitors by the Indian Medical Council. It is due not so much to the rules and regulations that obtain in the Act itself as to the courtesy and the desire on the part of the university authorities, no less than on the part of the Government, that they should have some kind of inspection to see that the examinations are conducted properly. The universities also are extremely jealous about any encroachment on their liberties. When the discussion was going on with the representatives of the universities, they said: "We will go so far and no further." It must always be remembered that in a Bill one has to see the view points of everybody and then try to get the greatest common measure of agreement.

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I am not able to give a definite answer to that. It may vary from university to university but, at any rate, it is not up to us to

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\*Replying on the point raised by Shri M.K. Moitra, asking whether the universities have agreed to allow visitors to inspect examinations?

put this kind of thing in the Bill. We want to work as a happy family in co-ordination and collaboration with each other. I have no doubt, if the Medical Council says that this is something which they would like to do and if the university authorities feel that it will be to the general good, they will accept it for I do not think they will object. Anyhow, there is provision that the visitor shall not interfere with the conduct of any examination. The universities also feel a little chary, but they have, as I have said, never objected. They could object to anybody from outside coming in and criticising them about the conduct of an examination. The provision that is today in the Bill is exactly what was in the original Bill.

One amendment has been put forward that the Chairman shall be nominated by the Government, and this has been put forward on the plea that the Indian Medical Council has sometimes done things which it should not have done. I am not accepting that amendment myself. I think we should stand for as much election as possible and, therefore, the Chairman should be there by election.

There has been some criticism about the Post-graduate Medical Committee. But I would again have the House remember that this entire clause 20 was discussed between us and the Medical Council, and this was a compromise, if you may put it like that, that was arrived at. Only the other day when Dr. Roy was here with the President of the Medical Council, he said: "This is exactly what we have agreed to, and we must not go back on it". And I would have the House remember that, after all, the Central Government also will be nominating members from amongst the members of the Council. We are not going outside the Council. I do feel very strongly that time and again it is sought to be said that, perhaps, the Central Government is not democratic. After all, we too have come on the votes of the people to this hon. House and we too cannot afford to be unmindful of what the people say. But there are certain rights which, if the Opposition Members were on the Treasury Benches, I am sure they would also safeguard in the same way as we do. There are certain rights and prerogatives

that the Government must keep within its powers. But here, in the matter of these nominations as I say, it is reasonable and it is a compromise arrived at between the Medical Council and ourselves. And, since the nominated members will be from amongst the members of the Medical Council, I do not think anything much will go wrong anywhere.

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I have my own reasons for it. I am afraid that very often persons or individuals are not as objective as the Government would be. I claim the right for Government always to take a more objective view, and to have persons, perhaps, from various parts of the country when they might not have got such representation or of giving representation somewhere where they have not had it and picking out the best persons regardless of the State they come from. If you have more members from a certain area and the President comes from a certain area, there is bound to be a certain amount of, perhaps, favouritism, and I hope Government is always above favouritism. Therefore, I would like that right to remain. Now it is absolutely clear that the Post-graduate Committee will not interfere in any way with the autonomy of the universities.

I think I have answered most of the points. There are a certain number of official amendments which I propose to move. One of them is because of the reorganisation of States and the rest are a corollary to the discussions that we had the other day when the Prime Minister himself presided at a meeting between myself and the members of the All India Medical Council.

I would like to say one more thing. There is no scheme of reciprocity with the United States of America and Switzerland. Again I repeat that if an Indian citizen who acquires qualifications from abroad applies for recognition then the necessary entry can be made in Part II of the Third Schedule after consulting the Medical Council of India.

Two other small points were raised, one about the Gauhati University and the other about Baroda University. Members said

that they did not see why there should be any dates. As a matter of fact, I have two amendments to this effect seeking to omit that the qualification of M.B.B.S. shall be a recognised medical examination only when granted after the 20th May, 1952. I am willing to accept those two amendments.

Then there is another amendment. As a matter of fact, I am bringing it up as an official amendment, and that is in regard to the L.M.S. of East Punjab. I agree to the inclusion of L.M.S. qualification when the holders thereof have passed the Pre-medical Examination instead of F.Sc. in Part I of the Third Schedule. I may say this also that in the Rajya Sabha I accepted the point raised there by some members that when an appeal comes to the Central Government we shall have the opinion of legal luminaries of the Government of India in addition to consultations with the Medical Council. If an appeal arises from the State Council to the State Government, it is only right that from the State to the Centre the appeal should lie with the Central Government.

Sir, I hope I have answered to the satisfaction of all the members who spoke on the various points that were raised and that now we may proceed with the clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

## 13. Indian Medical Council Bill 1956

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The question of amending the Indian Medical Council Act, 1933, has been under the consideration of Government for some time as the old Act had become greatly outmoded and a number of amendments were felt necessary to be incorporated in it. Now, there is nothing controversial actually in the amended Act as put forward before the House today. I introduced this in this House 2½ months ago so that members should have had ample time to study it—at least those members who are interested in the All India Medical Council. I regret very much that not up till this morning—and that is one of the reasons why I was a little late for Question Hour—had I any amendments sent to me. I do feel very strongly that when amendments are sent the rule that they should be sent at least twenty-four hours before the Bill is taken into consideration should be adhered to in order to give the Minister-in-charge some time to see whether the amendments can be accepted or not. I myself have moved a certain number of official amendments which, I trust, the House will accept.

Now, these amendments to the Indian Medical Council Act have been brought in after very careful consultation, in the first instance, with the States themselves; and, in the second instance, with the All India Medical Council which had been asked some time ago to look into the Act and suggest amendments. May I say that most of the amendments that have been suggested in this new amending Bill are those that the All India Medical Council themselves framed? In addition, apart

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Moving the motion, "That the Bill to provide for the reconstitution of the Medical Council of India and the maintenance of a Medical Register for India and for matters connected therewith be taken into consideration". (R.S. Deb., 1 August, 1956, cc. 284-289, 290 & 343-350).

from the States, and apart from outstanding men in the medical world, the Ministry of Health also consulted the Medical Association of India, so that the entire medical world has had an opportunity of giving its views. And it is only after very careful consideration of all those views that this amending Bill has been brought before this House.

There are certain things which I would like the members of this honourable House to take into consideration. First of all, there was a very great agitation amongst the Licentiate members of the medical profession that their qualifications were not recognised under the Indian Medical Council Act because the present position is that their qualifications are only recognised under the various State Medical Acts. I have felt for some time that it was only reasonable that these men—and there are thousands of them who are practising in the country and who have rendered very good service—should be eligible to come in on an All India Register and, therefore, it was only right that the Government of India also should recognise their qualifications. We have even gone further than that. Now, not only have we recognised their qualifications so that their names will come on the All India Register, but we have also seen to it—and it was not an easy thing to get this through with the members of the All India Medical Council—that they shall have representation on the All India Medical Council itself. I have received several deputations from the Licentiates during the last few years and I believe that the amendments, as they have been framed today in this new Bill, have now satisfied the aspirations and desires of the large body of Licentiates in this country.

Secondly, what had worried me greatly was that many of our Indian men, and sometimes women also, who obtain foreign medical qualifications were not recognised under the Indian Medical Council Act as it stood simply because we did not happen to have reciprocity with those foreign countries. While I quite understand that in the case of those countries which do not have reciprocity with us in the matter of our medical graduates practising in their country, we should not allow their graduates to practise in our country, I feel at the same time

very strongly that Indians who have got foreign degrees should not come under that ban for after all they are Indian citizens and therefore should be on our Registers. I think that this is an amendment that should appeal to the heart of every Indian.

Then there is the question of providing temporary recognition of medical qualifications granted by medical institutions in countries outside India, again, with which no scheme of reciprocity exists, in cases where the medical practitioners concerned are attached for the time being to any medical institution in India for the purpose of teaching or research or for any charitable object. They too should be allowed to practise. And that, again, is a fair proposition provided, of course, those foreign persons who are out here for any temporary employment—whether called to India by either the State Governments or by the Central Government—should at any rate have the satisfaction of knowing that they can render the service they are called upon to render but of course without any motive or any personal gain.

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There is too the question of the formation of a Committee of Post-graduate Medical Education in order to assist the Medical Council of India to prescribe standards....

On clause 14<sup>\*</sup> regarding reciprocity what I said was that where our Indian citizens have got qualifications granted by medical institutions in any State or country outside India, in respect of which a scheme of reciprocity for the recognition of such medical qualifications is not in force, that shall not apply against Indians who have got those qualifications. I feel that they are Indian citizens and they should not be penalised when they get degrees from countries which may not be in reciprocity with us. That should not prevent them from coming on the Register and we should recognise these degrees. I may also for the satisfaction of the Member opposite perhaps say that I have

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<sup>\*</sup>Clarifying the point raised by Shri Rajendra Pratap Sinha, about clause 14 of the act.

just given an amendment that we shall be able to enlarge Part II of the Third Schedule, i.e., recognised medical qualifications granted by medical institutions outside India not included in the Second Schedule, in consultation with the All India Medical Council, so that those that are already given can be added to. In fact, I am also going to accept the amendment put forward by one member that M.D. (Munich) shall be added to these. I actually have not had time to consult the Medical Council in regard to M.D. (Rome) has also been mentioned to me. I think I shall be meeting the point made by the hon. member by this amendment, namely, that it shall be within the powers of the Government in consultation with the Council, by notification in the Official Gazette to amend Part II of the Third Schedule so as to include therein any qualification granted by any medical institution outside India which is not included in the Second Schedule.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I have listened, naturally with consideration, to the suggestions that have been thrown out to me by various members of this House and I am grateful for many of them and some of them I am actually accepting. I will say afterwards what I am accepting. Perhaps I should first reply to certain suggestions that have been made which are impossible of acceptance by me. For example, the last Speaker has said that this Council should go in for limiting the fees of doctors. Now I would have the hon. House remember that this Bill is to regulate medical education, under-graduate and post-graduate and therefore I cannot possibly bring into this measure any limitations of fees. These are administrative matters which the States will have to undertake should they wish to undertake themselves. But I may tell the hon. member that whenever I have raised the question of even the teaching profession in the medical colleges being paid adequate salaries and not allowed private practice, I have not received the support of one single State Health Minister for reasons of finance. Further, it is impossible for me either to limit the fees or for this Council to go beyond the scope of what it is supposed to do and frame ethical rules. There are ethical rules already framed for medical

practitioners and it is only for the breaking of those rules that the name of anybody who comes on the register is struck off the rolls. Such ethical rules cannot be, may I say, brought in by legislation. We cannot turn people good overnight by legislation. We have to build up traditions and I say that the task of building up those traditions lies in the hands of the medical profession and I have no doubt that they will do so.

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"Professional misconduct" is there and if the Medical Council considers it necessary and if any case is brought to their notice, the Council knocks that doctor off their register. That power is already there. In the matter of regulating the curricula of medical education, that is the job of the University and I am sorry that the Vice-Chancellor of the Lucknow University, who is a member of this hon. House is not here. I am quite sure that he would be frightfully annoyed if I gave the Medical Council the liberty to change the curricula. But the Council have the right of inspection and they have every right to suggest any changes that they would like to be brought in.

Now, as usual, I have heard the plea for Ayurved and I have been accused again, as usual, of having some queer mentality that does not like Indian things. I am not concerned now to argue this point because the arguments are wholly irrelevant to this Bill because this Indian Medical Council was brought in for a specific purpose and it has been made perfectly clear that the specific purpose for which it was created in the first instance still exists. It is only that it has become outmoded in certain respects and therefore it has to be amended and by amendment naturally, the old Act is repealed. The Bill as I have said is to regulate medical education, under-graduate and post-graduate, in our modern medical colleges. The Council do not inspect the Ayurvedic Colleges which again are run by States. They don't do it. My point here again is that there are, I believe, State Ayurvedic Medical Councils which are supposed to

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\*Intervention by Shri Gopikrishna Vijaivirgya, raising a point on professional misconduct.

recognise Ayurvedic degrees. Now the question of creating an all India Ayurvedic Council can only be taken up and accepted by every State to have a uniform standard of education. There can be no all India register when the standards of Ayurvedic or *Unani* education, including *Homoeopathy* too, differ from State to State.

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Pardon me. As far as modern medical education is concerned, the standards are absolutely the same. It is only a difference of some saying Licentiates, and some saying L.M.P. etc.

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The Indian Medical Council's business is to get into touch with foreign countries as far as recognition of degrees is concerned. Licentiates' degrees are not recognised abroad by anybody for going there and getting post-graduate studies. I cannot regulate what foreign countries do but since the Licentiates have served in India and are continuing to serve in India and do exist and there was this cry from them that they should be given a place in the Medical Council, with the utmost difficulty. I have been able to persuade the All India Medical Council to give Licentiates a representation of seven members. Please remember that this Bill deals only with under-graduate (that is M.B.B.S.) and post-graduate education and therefore there was a solid opposition that the Licentiates will not be able to say very much about such things but I pressed them and they have agreed. And please remember again, as was said by another member, that the Licentiates are a dwindling number. Many of them are being given chances of doing a short-term course and coming on the register of M.B.B.S. so that we have done for them as much as we can and I believe they are on the whole quite satisfied.

I have already spoken about Ayurveda. As I said, the Vaidyas can always appeal to the Medical Council and if they accept

<sup>1</sup>Replying to the point raised by Shri R.U. Agnibhoj.

and after the Dave Report if a uniform policy comes, in, we shall consider the formation of All India Ayurvedic Council.

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I am sorry if I made a mistake. His brother is. Anyhow, someone asked me why the Medical Organisations have not been consulted. I have already said that I have consulted every State Government, that is all the Health Ministers of all Governments. I consulted Medical men individually and collectively, I consulted the Indian Medical Association and above all, I have consulted the Medical Council that exists today. In regard to the clause as far as the composition of the Post-graduate Committee is concerned, I may say to you that this was a compromise arrived at between me and the Medical Council and at that Medical Council meeting the President of the Medical Council was there and more than the President of the Council, Dr. B.C. Roy was there and it was according to their suggestions and in agreement with all these persons that the provision relating to the personnel of this Committee was so framed. They are experts and they are not going to quarrel amongst themselves.

One hon. member said that this was an autocratic Bill, that the Government wanted to take all power to itself and so on. And a letter was read out which the President of the Medical Council had written with regard to the Government giving recognition to Darbhanga, Poona and Baroda degrees. May I say for the information of the hon. member who made this accusation on behalf of the President of the Medical Council that Government consulted the Indian Medical Council with regard to this. There was tremendous agitation in the States. I was approached by the State Governments. I was approached by the students. They threatened hunger strikes. I got no reply from the Council for two years and I considered that a tremendous injustice was being done. I have been congratulated for doing what I did. For example a Darbhanga medical graduate could practise in Patna and Buxar, but not in Banaras or Moghalsarai. Can you imagine anything more fantastic or absurd? And this anomaly had to be removed by the Govern-

ment of India. A student who passed in the first division in the final year at Darbhanga was not recognised, but the student who failed in the first year but had passed in subsequent years was recognised. There was no justice in what had been done; and I am certain that if there is any sense of fair-play and absence of provincialism or narrow-mindedness anywhere in the country today, I venture to humbly submit that it is in the Central Government where we have got a leader like our Primer Minister.

Someone said that nothing was done by the Government of the United Kingdom without reference to the British Medical Council. But I may say that there was bitter and sustained opposition to the National Health service in England from members of the profession and by the British Medical Council and still the Government got it through in the teeth of such opposition.

As regards Part II of the Third Schedule and foreign degrees, reciprocity in this country is a matter for decision by the Indian Medical Council. Government have in no case recognised any foreign degree without the concurrence of the Indian Medical Council.

As for each university having a medical faculty with elected members of the faculty, that was a suggestion by the Medical Council itself. It has been considered that no restrictions should be imposed on the medical faculties of universities in the matter of election by restricting this to persons who have had at least four years' teaching experience. I venture to submit that we should leave the qualities of the teachers and the quality of those whom the Medical Council recognises, to that body of experts, and we lay people should not interfere it is not necessary.

Next as to the pays of the employees of the Medical Council, they are the same as those of the Central Government. To give the liberty to the Medical Council to say tomorrow, for instance,

that the Chairman will get Rs. 6,000 and someone else will get so many thousands and so on, I do not think it would be right, when Government is incurring the entire cost, surely the Government has the right to insist that so much money is to be spend on salaries, on travelling allowance etc., etc.

With regard to the Financial Memorandum, may I submit, Sir, that this was put up when the Bill was introduced and at that time Part B States were there. By the time the Bill becomes an Act and comes into force, these Part B States will have disappeared, and so no further notice need be taken of this part. As far as the Financial Memorandum is concerned in any Bill, it is always put by the Finance Ministry.

I am very grateful and I sympathise with the case that my hon. friend Dr. Sapru put up with regard to some gentleman—I do not know what his name is—who was disqualified because he went abroad and got foreign degrees and the High Court quashed the judgment of the Medical Council. In order to see that such injustices do not arise, for the present I can say that if anybody is ever scratched off the Register, the Medical Council of the State discusses it with the State Government and as a rule the State Government does not interfere with the decision of the State Medical Council. But if at any time the State Government feels that the State Medical Council has not been just, then we have given them the right to appeal to the Centre, and I again maintain that the Central Government will be impartial and will never allow anybody to suffer injustice. Nevertheless, if Dr. Sapru is keen that I should give an assurance that we shall have rules that the Central Government in case of the any such appeal, shall consult either the Attorney General or the Solicitor General, I am perfectly willing to give that assurance. For that reason, I will have to submit to you, Sir, an amendment that the Central Government may by notification in the Official Gazette make rules to carry out the purposes of this Act. For the matter of that there may be other rules too which we may, as we get experience, like to make and for that reason too, I should like to have this added.

Naturally, all rules made under this section will be placed before both Houses of Parliament as soon as possible after they are made.

As regards the Schedule about foreign degrees, there was a point raised that Indians who have got foreign degrees should have to pass examinations here and so on. I submit I consider that to be very very unfair to our citizens. After all, if any of our young boys or girls go abroad, they do so because, as some Members have said, they cannot get entrance into our medical colleges. So they go abroad. I am not so much concerned about the under-graduate course as about the post-graduate studies. But these post-graduate studies may be in countries with which we have no reciprocity. That is to say, if we cannot practise in their country, naturally we do not allow those foreigners to practise in our country. But I do not want and I do not like to have that ban against our own Indians. They may be excellent and extremely good doctors. They might have gone with Government scholarships or they might have gone on their own. I feel that when they come back we should use them. We are so short of post-graduate qualified young men in our teaching and research institutions and so on that we should not want to put a ban on them.

Then, there was the question of private practice of medicine for personal gain. These words have been omitted and some one took strong objection. Where foreigners are concerned, those who work in mission hospitals, they do not take any personal gain, they give it to the institution. They limit themselves to the work of the institute. In the case of any foreign professor, he is only employed temporarily for teaching or research. And State Governments that might care to bring all such in, can make their own rules. No private practice can be allowed and it is not allowed.

But, supposing we have an Indian who has got his post-graduate degree abroad where we have not got reciprocal arrangements and we employ him in a college here for part-time teaching, would it not be wrong to ban him from practising

for personal gain? I do not think we should cut the throats of our own people. I do not want our standard to be lowered and may I say that when I went abroad this time, again and again the Government of India was congratulated on not having yielded to temptation because of lack of medical services in this country to lower the standards of medical education. May I say too that India is really ahead of all the countries in South East Asia as far as medical education is concerned and we are becoming almost the centre for all these countries to come and learn. We should be proud of that position. We should not think in narrow terms of medical science as belonging to the West or belonging to the East or belonging to the North or belonging to the South. Every country in the East has accepted modern medicine. China has accepted it, Indonesia, Burma, Thailand, Ceylon, Pakistan and Afghanistan have done likewise. Should we be the only people always having a dig at modern medicine? I certainly will not be a party to allowing modern medicine to grow under frustration here, but that does not mean that I will not give every opportunity as I am giving to other systems. In Jamnagar every opportunity is being given to Ayurveda to develop and develop along scientific lines and everything of value that it has to give must flow into the broad stream of modern medicine. The Vaidas are with me and the post-graduate studies that have been just started in Jamnagar hold out tremendous hope for development on proper lines.

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I am bringing an amendment also to that effect. Unfortunately, the Medical Council whom I consulted on the phone just now were not very keen on this but since opinion in this House is very much in favour of adding the M.D. of Munich<sup>\*</sup> to the Schedule that already exist, I will accept it and do my best to tell the Medical Council that it is the unanimous opinion of the House that Munich should be included. As far as Rome and others are concerned, I naturally have to abide by the decision

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\* Replying to the point raised by Shri P.N. Sapru about recognition of the Munich Degree.

of the Medical Council and as time goes on and other degrees are added or taken away these things will lie in the hands of the future."

Thank You, Sir.

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"Later the motion to the Bill was adopted and passed on 2 August, 1956.

## **14. Indian Nursing Council (Amendment) Bill 1957**

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Sir, I rise to support this Amendment Bill because most of the suggestions that have come before us for acceptance today are really consequential on the experience which the Nursing Council has gained during all these years. Now, I am in very great sympathy with a great deal of what the speaker that has preceded me has said, as for example, in the matter of the serving conditions of nurses, in the matter of salaries of nurses, in the matter of under-staffing of hospitals and the long hours of work that the nurses have to fulfil but I venture to submit that the Indian Nursing Council Act was really only meant to deal with the standard of training of nurses and I think that during the last years since this Nursing Council Act came into being, a great deal has been done to improve the standards of teaching. It has to be remembered that it is the States that are concerned largely with the training that exists in their hospitals. I think, I am right in saying that there is much more uniformity prevailing today than there was in 1947 and I have no doubt that more efforts should be made to give more uniformity as far as training is concerned and the Health Ministry at the Centre, I hope, will continue to make those efforts.

The question of the status of the nursing profession, the question of giving gazetted status to nurses occupying high offices in the State is something for which I worked very hard and I do hope that my successor in the Health Ministry will not

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\*Speaking on the motion moved by the Minister of Health, Shri D. P. Karmarkar. (R.S. Deb., 18 November, 1957, Col. 112—114).

fail to bring up these questions when he has the meeting of Health Ministers every year.

As far as Union Territories are concerned, the Speaker raised the question as to why Union Territories are excluded. As far as I know only these territories can have a place that have got Nursing Councils and so far as I know, Union Territories have not yet got Nursing Councils. The moment those Nursing Councils are formed, the Union Territories will, *ipso facto*, be represented.

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I am doubtful about that<sup>1</sup> I feel that where the State Councils are concerned and where representation for them is concerned, unless the Union Territories have State Councils, they cannot send a representative. He laid a great deal of emphasis on clause 4 and said that the method of rotation was not clear and so on. I myself have not had much difficulty in understanding that clause and I think the rotation as put down there is quite correct. I would, however, like the Nursing Council to be able to make certain recommendations to the States. As a matter of fact, they have made a recommendation that there shall be a proportion of one nurse to three patients. But the States spend so little on their nursing service that it is impossible for them to do this.

The last speaker also talked about nursing students being made to work. Well, work in hospitals is part and parcel of their training. Of course, I do feel and feel very strongly—and I do hope the Nursing Council will take this matter up—on the question of hours of work. Their present hours of work are far too long and I feel that the Nursing Council should be very much more strict in giving recognition to those training institutions which do not take this matter into consideration. I think if there is one department of service in this country that can be called sweated labour, it is the nursing profession and I want

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<sup>1</sup> Replying to the point raised by Dr. R. B. Gaur, about the representation for all States where Nursing Councils are not there.

the Ministry to go ahead with legislation, if necessary, to see to it that nurses are not over-worked, that nurses are given proper salaries, that nurses are not exploited as they have been up till today. But I feel much of the criticism in regard to the Nursing Council Act does really not come within the scope of the present Amendment Bill. My appeal to the Health Ministry will be to see to it that nursing training is put on a proper basis, that standards are never lowered. In fact, I am glad to hear that in most nursing training centres sister tutors are being employed. We have nursing colleges, one in the North and another in the South where these are being trained. That is a tremendous step forward. Maintenance of a high standard of nursing is very necessary. We have now got the public health nurses too. I also entirely agree with the last speaker that specialised nurses are also a necessity. But we have to wait and possess ourselves in patience until all these facilities are available. I do not see anything that is actually of a controversial issue in this amending Bill and therefore, with the remarks that I have made on the general subject of the raising of the status of nurses, raising their salaries and giving recognition to training centres, which the Health Ministry may deal with by separate legislation or by persuasion with the State Ministers, I support this measure.

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\*Later the motion to the Bill to amend the Indian Nursing Council (Amendment) Bill, 1957 was adopted and passed on 18 November, 1957.

## **15. Indian Red Cross Society (Amendment) Bill\***

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My main object in having brought this Bill before this hon. Lok Sabha is because we have to apportion to Pakistan the sums in the Red Cross fund that are due to that country. As a result of the partition of India in August, 1947, it has become necessary to amend the Red Cross Society Act, 1920 in order to authorise the Indian Red Cross Society to partition its corpus and allied funds with the Pakistan Red Cross Society and to transfer the share due to the latter in accordance with the terms mutually agreed between the two Societies, the Indian Red Cross Society being at the same time discharged from all obligations imposed by the Act in respect of the areas in Pakistan. That is the main purpose of this Bill.

As the Bill had to be amended to fulfil the obligations that rest on the Indian Red Cross Society in this regard, the executive of the Indian Red Cross Society also took advantage of this opportunity to make some very minor amendments to section 5 of the existing Act which would enable the parent body to have a certain amount of control over the management and procedure adopted by branches in the States for the purpose of ensuring the harmonious development of Red Cross Services all over the country, as well as to enable the Society to affiliate to itself Societies formed in territories outside the Indian Union. I might mention that the Red Cross Society in Sikkim has asked to affiliate itself to the Indian Red Cross Society. We would like to do so but unless we put in that particular amendment it cannot be done. There is nothing controversial in this.

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\*Moving the motion, "That the Bill further to amend the Indian Red Cross Society Act, 1920, be taken into consideration." (L.S. Deb., 18 February, 1956, cc. 247-248, 255-256).

I have received just now an amendment sent by an hon. member in which he has raised the question why we should not transfer the specified amount to the Government of India requesting the Government to get the said amount paid to the Pakistan Red Cross Society by the Pakistan Government from the funds which the Pakistan Government owes to the Government of India. Before I brought this Bill before this Sabha I consulted, naturally, the Finance Ministry and the Law Ministry about this procedure but we came to the conclusion that the procedure proposed to be adopted in the Bill now before the Sabha was the best. So I am unable to accept that amendment and as it has only just come in it is not really eligible. That is all I have to say in regard to this.

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I would just like to say a few words in regard to the points that have been raised. I have said that I cannot accept the amendment even though I need not have mentioned it. But I do not want any Member to feel that even if an amendment has been sent in late it just would not be considered by me.

My hon. friend Sardar Hukam Singh has asked me to say whether there was any negotiation between our Government and the Pakistan Government or whether we got the usual refusal from them or whether we behaved in a generous manner, the way in which we always want to feel and do as far as Pakistan is concerned. I may say that the representatives of the Pakistan Red Cross Society have met me more than once. We have had several discussions. There were matters of dispute between us in regard to funds belonging to the Punjab Red Cross and the Bengal Red Cross—these were the two cases—and on every point we have come to very amicable settlements. Both of us held that we should not deal with this at Governmental level, because the Red Cross stands for something very very noble not only in Indian life, but in world life. The Indian Red Cross has been paid homage to by many members and I am grateful to them for what they have said. There is such a thing as the Red Cross spirit and I am glad that the Indian Red Cross can hold its head high amongst the

nations of the world and it has had representation in international committees for a number of years simply, because we do try to live up to its high ideals. An hon. member so rightly said that this is not a question of the Indian Government coming into any decisions with the Pakistan Government, but a question of the Indian Red Cross Society fulfilling its obligation to the Pakistan Red Cross Society, that is to say, the Indian people to the Pakistan people. I am very glad that the Bill has the support of the hon. members.

## 16. Lady Hardinge Medical College and Hospital Bill

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Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am grateful to you for giving me just a few minutes to say a few words in connection with this Bill because after all, for ten long years I was in very intimate contact with the Lady Hardinge College and know all about it and I would like to tell much to the members of this House. I cannot go into the details of what Mrs. Seeta Parmanand has said but I may say without fear of contradiction that her accusations and reference to facts literally amaze me because they consist of a string of inaccuracies. She talked about the Court's Judgement and so on. I will not say very much more except just to read to you, Sir, if I may be permitted to do so, a few sentences from the last two or three paragraphs of the Judgement of the Punjab High Court:

In my 28 years' service in India I have seen vast social changes taking place not only as regards social intercourse between Indians and Europeans but also between the sexes as regards Indians. It seems obvious to me that the persons who first originated, worked for and founded the Lady Hardinge College and Hospital were among the pioneers in the field of the emancipation of women in India and were persons of what in those days were regarded as very advanced and liberal views. It therefore, seems to me strange, to say the least, to find some of the successors of these pioneers whose labours have now resulted in the emancipation of women and the securing of equal rights for them that they should now be fighting to retain an

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\*Intervening in the debate on the motion regarding Lady Hardinge Medical College and Hospital Bill, moved by the Minister of Health Shri D. P. Karmarkar. (R.S. Deb., 10 August, 1959, cc. 143-148).

institution like a medical college solely for women. The nature of the medical profession and the training which necessarily precedes it are such that even in these days persons with what the modern generation regards as old fashioned ideas, and what they themselves would prefer to describe as conservative ideas, regarding the social segregation of the sexes, would hardly consider the medical profession a suitable one for their daughters to be permitted to enter, and it seems to me that in 1957 it is almost meaningless to insist on keeping a medical college for the training of women only by women unless medical teaching for women is not available in any other form, and it must here be again emphasised that under the scheme of management now opposed neither a single woman medical student nor a single woman teacher at present in the College is to lose her place.

In the circumstances I am of the opinion that the scheme now opposed by the present petitioners does not infringe on any essential purpose of the original charitable purposes with which the College and Hospital were founded and that the only part of the original objects which has disappeared in the scheme is a part which, as a result of the vast social changes which have taken place during the last 40 years, has ceased to be essential and has lost its original significance and importance. For these reasons I would dismiss the petition but would leave the parties to bear their own costs."

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We had to go to court because of some of these women who are over-feminist or ultra-feminist and completely out of date, if I may say so, made a reference to the court. I have been a fighter for women's rights all my life and throughout the time that I had the honour of holding the portfolio of Health, I tried to promote the cause of medical education amongst women and for women. In fact, the great changes that have come about and the reduction in the incidence of maternal and child mortality has been due simply to the policies followed by the Health Ministry from its inception and this could not have been done if we had been anxious to get rid of women doctors,

anxious to supplant them by men. I call such accusation absolute calumny. It has been my privilege to work with my Indian brothers, my Indian colleagues and I can say that this country stands alone in its respect for women, in the opportunities that have been given to women, that we women have been allowed to lead delegations to the specialised agencies of the United Nations and that we probably have more women Members of Parliament simply because of the policies enunciated and set in motion by Mahatma Gandhi during his freedom struggle when he gave equal rights to women, and followed absolutely by our present Prime Minister. Now, I repeat that for women to say that the Ministry has done nothing for women is absolute calumny.

I do not wish to say anything more but I would like to say this that I personally got a Cabinet decision on this subject also that the Lady Hardinge College should be made into a composite college. When I took over I thought about this. When the College started, it had twenty girls. Then it worked up to twenty-five, thirty and in my time it was raised to forty. I myself raised it to sixty. Now, I differ from my successor, the present Minister of Health, when he says that it is because women could not manage the unruly element in the staff that this measure has been brought forward. There was some unruly element during my time. When Dr. Jivraj Mehta was Director General, one day he had to go there at 10 p.m. and found some trouble and it was scotched straightaway. Later on, these people began raising their heads and asking for the recognition of a Union. They were not desirable people and they were scotched all along the line. I do not know later on what happened but during my time not one of them raised his head nor do I believe in the theory that women when they run institutions or are incharge of institutions are not able to manage such people. They are and when a college like the Lady Hardinge Medical College has the

backing of the Ministry, there should be no reason for taking over the college simply because of unruly employees. But the fact is that the college has been maintained for the last several years, ever since I took over, entirely by Government funds. There is no doubt about that.

And I may say I entirely agree with the hon. Judge that when the college was founded conditions in India were very very different. Women were not willing to go to hospitals and be examined by men and girls were not willing to have co-education with their brothers and treatment of women by women was the order of the day. In fact it was for that reason that this college was founded. But much water has flown under the bridges since then. Women do not mind being examined by men, being operated upon by men. Conditions have changed entirely. The main trouble with the Lady Hardinge College was, because the hospital for women and children, that the girls did not get the necessary education in a general hospital which is absolutely essential for anybody who wishes to practise modern medicine and it was for this reason, I started to consider what would be done. We gave them a few beds in the Safdarjang Hospital. We did try to remedy affairs and the Medical Council gave us time to see whether we could show better results. We did show better results but not to a sufficient extent. Then there was a terrific demand also for a men's college in Delhi. And as we are very short of funds and never have enough money to promote medical education as much as we would like and because the question of personnel is also a very vexed problem for us therefore, I thought that the best thing was to have a composite college and raise the number of girls from 40 to 60. No young men were to be admitted in the Lady Hardinge College premises, the girls were to lead their lives as before. One of the grousing was that the girls learnt only obstetrics and gynaecology and nothing else. If they could also go to the Irwin Hospital and attend lectures with the boys when they study general medicine, what was wrong in it, God alone knows. I am not an ultra-feminist but I do stand for women's rights. The only thing I made conditional was that on no account were the

professors and staff of the Lady Hardinge College to be removed from their posts and that always the Principal and the staff should be composed of women and only when suitable women with the requisite qualification were not available should men be taken. And I say, Sir, if that scheme had gone through the Government would not have had to spend an enormous amount of money on another college in Delhi, nor would there have been need perhaps for the hon. Minister to bring forward this Bill, which I think he is right in doing now, to take over the Lady Hardinge College. Many women members have said that we must have a college for women only and the hon. Minister spoke about women's colleges in America. May I inform him that there is no college for women in England at all—all of them have gone—and in America there is one single college and 80 per cent of the staff there including the Principal, are men. And when I asked them, 'why does this college continue like this?' they said, 'we have got so many colleges and girls go everywhere but still it just continues but we do not believe in segregation any more.' India has got to advance also and we have to study medicine just as we study any other subject. Girls in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Hyderabad and in the Institute here are all studying along with the boys. Why should there be all this objection? However I would like to have this assurance from the Minister and if he can include it in the Bill well and good. Because women are nervous and frightened that they do not get professorial appointments in the medical colleges in India, I would like to have the assurance. This college was founded for women and by women and it has been run practically all the time by women. I believe I am right in saying but the hon. Minister will correct me if I am wrong, that there are not more than two men on the staff today and the others are all women and to say that appointments have not been given to women is wrong because we advertise and advertise and we just cannot get women. All kinds of things had to be done to fill up vacancies simply because women were not there. Anyhow, I would like to have the assurance that as far as possible the professorial jobs in this college shall be given to women with the requisite qualifications provided they are

available and that no men will be appointed professors unless suitable women are not available. I am one of those who stand for this that women must not ask for anything simply because they are women. They must fight for everything but have everything on the basis of merit and merit alone. There would be no nepotism if we paid far more attention to merit. The more privileges you ask for yourselves, the weaker you really become in the long run. Having said this, I support the Bill.\*

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\*Later the motion to pass the Bill was adopted on 11 August, 1959.

## 17. Drugs (Amendment) Bill 1954\*

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This Bill has been circulated and all I would like to say in connection with this is that the Drugs Act, 1940, which provides for the regulation of the import, manufacture, distribution and sale of drugs and also prescribes the standards of quality of drugs, has been in force since April 1947. But in the light of the experience gained in the working of the Act during the past seven years, it is proposed in this Bill now before the House, to make a few amendments, so that the Act might become more efficacious. There are many points that have been taken into consideration. There was need for the amplification of the definition of the term, 'drug' for example. There was need for definition of 'manufacture' and there was also need for the constitution of a Drugs Technical Advisory Board. And there was need also, in the present circumstances, for the assumption by the Central Government of rule-making powers, which until now had been in the hands of the States, in order to have a uniform policy.

Then, hon. members are aware of the terrible amount of adulteration not only in foodstuffs but also in drugs, that has come into being and the number of spurious drugs that have also come into the market. Therefore, we felt that an enhancement of penalties for offences under the Act should also be brought in. As corollary to that, we have to have an enhancement of magisterial powers regarding the passing of sentences and so on. There is need, therefore, for these amendments and for giving further powers to drugs inspectors. The need for these amendments was very very great and, therefore, this Bill

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\* Moving the Motion, "That the Bill further to amend the Drugs Act, 1940 be taken into consideration". (R.S. Deb., 1954, cc. 925-26, 939-41 & 955-961).

has been brought before this House. I do hope that it will receive the same measure of interest and support as the Dentists (Amendment) Bill has received.

May I interrupt the hon. member<sup>\*</sup> for one moment? If he turns to section 106 of the original Act he will find it stated there:

"No drug may purport or claim to prevent or to cure one or more of the diseases or ailments specified in Schedule J, or to procure or assist to procure miscarriage in women or to alter or affect the structure of the human body."

and if he turns to Schedule J, he will find the diseases and ailments, by whatever names described, which the drug cannot purport to prevent or cure. I consider that in Schedule J, a wide area has been covered and more than that I do not think we shall be able to do.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, again I would like to express to this House my gratitude for the interest taken in this Bill and I could not include mechanical contraceptives under the definition of 'drug' and therefore, whatever I could do I did.<sup>\*\*</sup> Now much has been said about Ayurvedic medicines. I am very glad to hear one speaker say that this measure should include Ayurvedic medicines as well. I could not very well include them in this Bill because we have no pharmacopoeia for Ayurveda or *Unani*, though we would like to have one. The Speaker quite rightly said that this would help Ayurveda. I am very sorry to say that Ayurvedic medicines are being adulterated just as much as anything else. The other day a *Vaidya* came from Allahabad to see me and told me that pills were being manufactured and given for malaria as '*Shudh Ayurvedic*' remedies, when they

<sup>\*</sup>Shri Kishan Chand.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Clarifying a point when Shrimati Seeta Parmanand stated that the proposed amendment included only chemical contraceptives and not the exhibition of mechanical contraceptives also.

were really quinine given in a disguised form. Well these things are happening and I would like later on to do something about that also. In regard to taking over the rule-making power from the States, which has been commented upon by many speakers, I would like to say that the States were consulted and they substantially agreed to the Centre taking over the powers for the simple reason that there is need for uniformity and need to do away with the possibility of differing, conflicting, or contradictory rules in different States. Of course, the States will always be consulted before the rules are finalised and the rules will be published in draft form for public criticism also. So, I hope, I have satisfactorily answered the objection raised.

Then, someone talked about the sentence of fine having been abolished. Now, no such thing has been done. Only the maximum limit of a fine has been done away with, so that the trying magistrate will have the power to impose a much higher amount of fine, if he so thinks fit.

Then, there was a reference to clause 9(b) of the Bill. I might say that those powers, again, are to be used by the Centre only in an emergency. It is not a question of over-ruling the States. Very often consultation with the Boards takes a very, very long time. The Centre is not going to try to over-ride States, but the Centre would like—occasionally if an emergency arises—to have the strength to use those powers.

I entirely agree with those hon. members who have said that a very great deal depends on the calibre of the Inspectors. The qualifications of the Inspectors have been prescribed under the drugs rules and it will be seen, if a reference is made to those rules that they must possess a degree in pharmacy or pharmaceutical chemistry or a post-graduate degree in chemistry, so that the calibre, as far as knowledge is concerned, is certainly high.

Now, as far as honesty is concerned, we must trust our people. After all, we have to raise the standards of integrity all round, and if we demand them we must set them also. I have

no doubt that this legislation is a step in the right direction. Of course the States will be asked by the Centre to see that there is occasional inspection. In fact, they must be very vigilant to see that the Inspectors are carrying out their duties properly.

Now, in regard to the powers of Inspectors, I have been told that we have given far more powers to these Inspectors than are proper. These powers have been made more stringent, in that search or seizure is to be made in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, i.e., sub-section (2) of the new section 22 at page 4 of the Bill. Now, similar provisions do not occur in the existing Act, and therefore, they have to be brought in. But as far as the Inspectors are concerned, if you will turn to page 31 of the original Act, there are plenty of clauses there which prevent the Inspectors taking any undue liberties with their powers. And as far as search and seizure are concerned, they will also be subject to strict scrutiny in the prosecution that may subsequently be launched. Therefore, it is desirable that such search should take place in the presence of witnesses or *panchas*, as has been provided for in the Code of Criminal Procedure. So, that safeguard, in itself, is enough. And I do feel very strongly that unless we give our Inspectors a certain amount of power, we will fine them very very diffident about taking action.

Then, Sir, more than one member has talked about offences by companies. Now, why they want to protect companies, I do not quite understand. I think that companies who go in for spurious drugs, or manufacture spurious drugs, drugs which are substandard or drugs that put the lives of our people in jeopardy, should be harassed, and I personally think that they must be harassed and continue to be harassed, until the whole tribe of them, if they continue to manufacture drugs of this nature, gets extinguished, for such action is a criminal offence and a menace to society.

Sir, since 1951, I may bring to the notice of the hon. member\*, exactly the same provisions have been made in all Acts of Parliament providing for offences by companies. So this is nothing new. But I do feel that if the companies which do this kind of thing are punished, well, it will have a very salutary effect on even the individuals who are indulging in this most dishonest and inhuman practice.

Now, Sir I would just like to mention the amendments that have been brought in by the only member in this House. He has sent in an amendment to clause 11. But in view of the safeguards provided in section 23 (v) of the original Act, he will find that the proviso he wants to bring in is redundant, and might even make the working of the Act difficult, because a reference to a Chief Presidency Magistrate was specially omitted for reasons which are fairly obvious, and therefore, I am sorry I cannot accept that amendment.

Then, Sir, he is talking about the Inspector making a complaint. As a complaint can be made by the Inspector if he is obstructed in his duties, I do not just understand how the District Magistrate can lodge such a complaint for an offence that has been committed in his absence.

In regard to clause 14, Sir, the present provisions are intended to cover all types of offences and to enable the trying magistrate to use his discretion and pass orders for punishment according to the nature and the magnitude of the offence. If I insist on a maximum of fine plus imprisonment for every offence, it would not be quite fair. And, therefore, I am not accepting that amendment.

As far as clause 16 is concerned, the existing proviso already provides the necessary safeguards, and therefore, that amendment too is redundant. And then, all the other amendments which have been brought in are just consequential to that

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\*Clarifying the observation of Shri Akbar Ali Khan about unnecessary and unjustified harassment by Inspectors.

amendment, if it had been accepted. I regret my inability to accept it, but I believe that all that he wants is already provided for in the Bill.

Then, Sir, some member did happen to mention Ayurveda and he said that a very meagre provision had been made for it in the Five Year Plan. Though it has got nothing to do with this, yet I would like to say for his information that there is a provision of Rs. 37.5 lakhs for research in the indigenous systems of medicine in the First Five Year Plan. It is therefore not a question of ignoring Ayurvedic medicines.

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I could not give you the exact figure just now; but my difficulty is that it is difficult to spend it, because enough people who can do research in Ayurvedic medicines are just not there. So the research has often to be done by those who practise modern medicine. The tragedy is—I do not defend modern medicine or the practitioners of modern medicine either—the profession itself has very often become a money-making concern. In other words they are not concerned with what they do, but are much more concerned with what they get.

Well, Sir, I think I have answered all the points raised by the members.”

\*Clarifying further about the point made by Dr. (Shrimati) Seeta Parmanand regarding expenditure on research in the indigenous.

\*\*The motion that the Bill to amend the Drugs (Amendment) Bill, 1954 was adopted.

## **18. Drugs Amendment Bill\***

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I have much pleasure in asking this House to take into consideration the Drugs (Amendment) Bill. I think I have been asked on more than one occasion on the floor of this House to do something in this matter. I took it up as early as I could when it came on the Concurrent List and after having received the opinions and suggestions of all the States the necessary amendments have now been incorporated in this Bill: and these amendments incorporate the greatest common measure of agreement between the Centre and the States.

The Drugs Act has been in force since April, 1947, but in the light of experience gained during these seven years, it is proposed to make a few amendments to the Act. I should like to enumerate them briefly.

The definition of 'drug' has been amplified. It came to our notice that a number of drugs which purported to be or which were claimed to be, contraceptives had come into the market and were doing a great deal of damage. It has been sought to cover drugs of this nature as well as insecticides in the definition and also to take power to the Central Government to notify these from time to time in the official gazette, so that standards may be controlled wherever necessary.

Then, a definition of 'manufacture' has been given in this Bill for the first time; it was not defined in the Act previously. I might mention that a substantial portion of manufacturing activities in this country really consist of importing drugs in bulk, and re-bottling them, re-labelling them or re-packing them, and it has

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\* Moving the motion: "That the Bill further to amend the Drugs Act, 1940 as passed by the Rajya Sabha be taken into consideration". (L.S. Deb 28 February, 1955, cc. 601-605, 621-625 and 629-632).

been considered necessary that to maintain control over such activities, we must include what is done here also in the term 'manufacture'.

The constitution of the Drugs Technical Advisory Board needed some alteration. At present the representation of the pharmaceutical profession on the Board consists of only one member but because of the increased activity of this profession, it is now proposed to enhance their representation to three. These representatives will now be elected by the Pharmacy Council of India which was set up under the Pharmacy Act of 1948. There used to be Indian branches of the British Medical Association who were authorised to elect one member on the Board. It is no longer considered necessary to give this Association any special representation. So that provision has been omitted. Then we feel very strongly that the Drugs Controller, who is the principal officer attached to the Centre in charge of the administration of the Act, should be made an *ex-officio* member of the Board.

One of the main amendments is the assumption by the Central Government of rule-making powers under chapter IV. I may say that the States are absolutely in agreement with us on this. Many of the important drugs in the country are imported and because they enter into inter-State commerce, it is essential that the rules governing their standards should be uniform throughout India.

Then the question of enhancement of penalties has also been taken up. There has been a consistent demand from State Governments, and indeed on the floor of this House also, for the enhancement of penalties provided under these sections. Therefore, it has been proposed to enhance the penalty under section 27 to imprisonment for three years, and under section 30, to five years, without prescribing any upper limit to the fines that might be imposed. The question of spurious drugs and adulteration of drugs is a menace to the country and all the States are agreed that the punishment should be enhanced.

Now, because the punishment has been enhanced, offences under the Act will be triable only by Presidency Magistrates or Magistrates of the first class. That is only right because, if we enhance the punishments, it should be Magistrates of the first class and Presidency Magistrates who should be empowered to inflict the penalties.

The next amendment, which is also important, relates to giving publicity to convictions for offences by companies. That also has been considered very necessary. In view of the increased responsibilities that will fall on the drugs inspector, it has been proposed to amend the present section so as to give effective powers of search and seizure to the inspector without obtaining special authorisation from the Magistrate. Of course, the necessary safeguards provided by the Criminal Procedure Code will be there to control such searches. It is further proposed to amend the section providing punishment for wilful obstruction.

Then one very important thing is that we have withdrawn the concession in respect of patent and proprietary medicines permitting their sale, which has up to now been possible purely or simply, under a registration number granted by the Drugs Laboratory. We feel that we ought to come in line with all the advanced countries and that all drugs must have on their labels information about what they contain. This will enable the purchaser to know what actually he is getting when he pays for it.

I have already mentioned the menace of spurious drugs. I am glad to say that the States have been active in this matter and have been doing quite well by prosecuting quite a number of cases that have come to their notice, but the proposed amendments are still considered necessary as they will go a fairly long way to strengthen the hands of the drugs standard control authorities. I want this Act to come as quickly as possible on the statute-book because while the provisions of the Act have been extended to Part B States, practically none

of them has made rules, and therefore, it is very important that the Central Government should make the rules and are able then to have that uniformity of policy which is necessary.

I do not want to take up the time of the House any more. But I just want to say this, that the House is aware that recently a Pharmaceutical Inquiry Committee was appointed to look into the whole question of drugs, what should be imported, how they should be controlled, how manufactured etc., and they have made several very important recommendations. A great many of those recommendations have already been anticipated because the report came in after the Amendment Bill was placed before the Rajya Sabha. I repeat, a great many of the recommendations have been anticipated and incorporated. One or two of the more important ones are under active consideration. I do not want to hold up this measure any longer. I shall have to bring up further amendments after the Government have considered the other recommendations in the light of the opinions received from the States at a later date. That is all I have to say.

I am very glad that I have received practically no amendments. The ones I have received are more or less the same as I got in the Rajya Sabha. I shall reply to them—I am afraid they are not acceptable to me—as they come. I take it that the House is in general agreement with the measure. I myself have two absolutely factual amendments to be put before you, Sir, at the proper time.

I would like to thank all the members of this House who have spoken and supported the Bill in principle, although some of them have had remarks to make about its shortcomings. Very briefly, I shall try to reply to the points that have been raised.

I shall reply first to the last speaker. He has asked me why I have omitted to bring in Ayurvedic and *Unani* drugs into this Bill. It was practically impossible. It was not that I was not willing to do it. It simply cannot be done because we have not

\*Shri Dhulekar.

really got a good pharmacopoeia for our indigenous drugs. All those indigenous drugs that have been included in the new pharmacopoeia that will shortly be published will come under this. For the rest, I know that adulteration does go on in indigenous drugs. We will try to do what we can. At the moment, unless and until I get, an absolute list of drugs, it is extremely difficult to do anything. It is not that I do not want to do it. I entirely believe that any medicine of any sort given to anybody should be pure.

The first speaker Shri Gidwani raised some important points to which I should like to refer. He wanted imprisonment and fine, both to be included. The difficulty is very obvious. It would naturally arise in regard to technical offences of a minor nature. I feel very strongly that we have got to trust our Presidency Magistrates and our First Class Magistrates to be able to use their discretion. Therefore I am not willing to have both imprisonment and fine provided. It must remain as imprisonment or fine.

Another hon. member referred to the punishment provided in section 27. I think there was a mistake. He thought that it was the minimum. My hon. friend Dr. Rama Rao has already corrected the error and stated that it is the maximum. Hence there is no hardship. The Court is perfectly entitled to inflict a lesser punishment. I am not willing to allow the people who go in for these social malpractices to be let off with an ordinary fine which, because they make thousands of rupees, they really just do not mind paying. I say that people who commit these crimes against humanity should be imprisoned.

Another suggestion that was thrown out was that the Inspectors should have special qualifications. I would like to inform the hon. member that according to the Act they have got to have special qualifications. Under the Drugs Rules, they have to be well paid. For example, in Delhi the scale of pay is now Rs. 275—800. I entirely agree that if the Drugs Inspectors have got a fair amount of power entrusted to them, they should be well paid so that they may not succumb to bribery and corruption. On the other question raised by Dr. Rama Rao, I would like to

assure him that the States are naturally to be closely associated with the administration. In fact, the administration of the Act is going to be definitely under the States. It is up to them to see that the Drugs Inspectors are fully qualified.

Another point raised was that of nationalisation. No one is more keen than I to develop the pharmaceutical industry in this country. Unless and until we do that, we are not going to bring down the prices of drugs and be able to supply them to the public at a reasonable cost. I have had the greatest co-operation in this regard from my colleague, the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry. We are going into this question very shortly as to how much we can do in the very near future. We have started the Penicillin factory and it is going into production very shortly. The same is the case with the D.D.T. factory; in fact, there are going to be two D.D.T. factories. Manufacture of antibiotics will have to be taken up and I believe that in these factories we shall be able to produce antibiotics as well. The Pharmaceutical Enquiry Committee has also made a recommendation regarding the necessity of making the country self-sufficient in the matter of drugs. This point is under the active consideration of myself and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

About educating the public, I entirely agree with the hon. member. One of the things that will be undertaken by the Publicity Bureau that is now going to be under the Ministry of Health, will be to educate the general public in all kinds of matters and the fact that no medicines will be allowed to be sold, which have not got their particular prescription on them is a step in the right direction. As far as advertisements are concerned, I would request the House to remember that these are also controlled by the provisions of the Drugs and Magic Remedies Control Act, which this House passed quite recently. The rules have been published and the Act will come into force on the 1st April of this year. I would also like to refer to the Pharmacy Act which control the pharmacists. This will provide the necessary personnel for staffing our Drugs stores.

Standards for contraceptives were alluded to. I am in entire

agreement that this should be done. The proposed amendment does provide that standards for contraceptives will be prescribed and this will include contraceptives of all kinds, both chemical as well as mechanical. If the hon. Member referred to clause 17(b) of the proposed Bill, on page 6, he will be reassured that it is so.

There have been some amendments proposed. I am sorry I am unable to accept any of them for various reasons. I would request my hon. friends Shri V. B. Gandhi and Shri S. V. Ramaswamy to be kind enough to withdraw them. In regard to the amendment in list 1 regarding clause 6, the existing provision in the Act contains the words 'if required by him'. The word 'necessary' was purposely substituted in the draft Bill in order to leave the responsibility and discretion for forwarding the package to the Central Drugs laboratory with the detecting officer. The section includes "if required by the Drugs Controller." Whenever in doubt, the officer concerned will, no doubt, take instructions from the Drugs Controller and the amendment, in my opinion, is not necessary.

I would like to reply to this that the hon. member<sup>\*\*</sup> does not take into consideration that sometimes the laboratory where the drug has to be sent for examination is at a very distant place. It was for this reason that actually in the Rajya Sabha I was asked to increase the period from ten days to 30 days, and I compromised at 20 days. I think that 10 days is really not enough because of the distance that may have to be taken into account in the rural areas, and therefore I am not willing to accept the amendment.

The amendment proposed by the hon. member<sup>\*\*</sup> seeks to

<sup>\*</sup>Dr. Rama Rao

<sup>\*\*</sup>Speaking on the amendments moved by Shri V.B. Gandhi about substituting "twenty days" for "ten days."

restore the proviso, which is sought to be deleted in this Bill for the obvious reason that the Drugs Inspector might be enabled to function effectively and efficiently. The intention is that there need not be any intervention by the magistrates at this stage; but the search and seizure should be conducted according to the procedure laid down in the Criminal Procedure Code. This is what you will find in the proposed new section 22(2) in the Bill. This point was also raised in the Rajya Sabha, and there I said that in view of the safeguards provided in section 25 of the principal Act, the proposed proviso was redundant, and in fact it might even make the working of the Act somewhat difficult.

So, I would ask the hon. member to withdraw this amendment, if he will kindly do so.

As I said in my opening remarks, the manufacture and sale of spurious drugs have increased in recent years, and there has been an insistent demand from State Governments and others for the enhancement of the penalties provided in the Act. I do not consider that reducing the sentence from three to two years is really necessary. The present proposal to enhance the penalty under section 27, that is, the imprisonment to a period of three years will automatically make offences under this section cognisable offences, and that should be done within the meaning of the relevant section of the Criminal Procedure Code. The acceptance of the amendment proposed by the hon. member<sup>1</sup> will defeat this object, and therefore, I am sorry I am unable to accept it.

I would like to assure the House that the enhancement of the penalty under this section will not necessarily result in any hardship to offenders, but we must deter people as far as possible from going in for this very unsocial practice.

<sup>1</sup>Speaking on the amendment moved by Shri V.B. Gandhi about substituting 'three years' for 'two years'.

<sup>2</sup>Later the Bill as amended was passed.

## **19. Drugs And Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisement) Bill'**

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I do not wish to take much time of the House, especially when the same allotted for this Bill is very very limited. I am quite sure that this little measure that I am placing before the House today will not meet with any opposition, but will meet with as much general approbation as it did in the other House. I need not say anything more about the objects of the Bill, as they are contained in the Statement of Objects and Reasons. But I have been very worried about the increase in recent years in the number of objectionable advertisements relating to so-called wonderful cures for various diseases, which are not only obscene, but are positively dangerous. These are only means for unscrupulous people to exploit the ignorant section of the population. In the Drug Rules made by the Central and State Governments there exists a provision according to which no drug purporting or claiming through its label or enclosed literature to prevent or cure certain diseases can be imported or manufactured for sale. But this provision was found to be very inadequate for the purpose.

I have received notices of a few amendments, which I am afraid I am unable to accept. Many of them are purely verbal in character. We have consulted the Law Ministry and are advised that no material difference would be made to the

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<sup>1</sup>Moving the Motion: "That the Bill to control the advertisement of drugs in certain cases, to prohibit the advertisement for certain purposes of remedies alleged to possess magic qualities and to provide for matters connected therewith, as passed by the Council of States, be taken into consideration." (L.S. Deb., 26 April, 1954, cc. 5734-35 and 5765—87).

meaning by certain proposed amendments. There are one or two others to which I have to take exception. I shall deal with them when the amendments actually come up.

Sir, I am glad that by and large this little Bill has received the support of a very large majority of this House. I am not going to say very much, except to answer some of the points that have been raised. As far as advertisements are concerned, I have got only a few extracts here which show their appalling nature and so there is no need for me to be enlightened about the types of advertisements that appear. Some step had to be taken to bring this evil to an end. I may say that almost every State—I naturally had to consult the States individually about this Bill—has welcomed this measure. After the measure was passed by the Council of States it has had an extremely good Press also. That should be an answer to my hon. friend who said that I was by this measure intruding on the liberty of the Press. I would ask him for a moment to turn his attention to the type of advertisement that comes under the scope of this Bill. The scope of this Bill, as he will notice, is very very limited. The definition of 'advertisement' given in sub-clause (a) of clause 2 includes "any notice, circular, label, wrapper, or other document, and any announcement made orally or by any means of producing or transmitting light, sound or smoke." So it is not the Press alone that is concerned. I should have thought that Editors of newspapers would be glad if restrictions like this were put on them, so that the standard of their paper may improve and advertisements like this which are derogatory to human dignity prevented from seeing the light of day.

Now, I have been accused of not having given priority to the Food adulteration Bill and of having brought this Bill before that. I must in all humility say that I have laid far greater emphasis on the Food Adulteration Bill. But I am not responsible for deciding the priority of business. It is a Committee of

the House which decides which Bills should come up first before the House. That allegation cannot, therefore, be laid at my door.

One hon. member raised the question of foreign drugs. Now foreign drugs are not allowed to be imported without an import licence. So I have a check at my disposal.

In regard to concessions to doctors it was suggested that the clause relating to it should be eliminated entirely. The reason for exempting registered medical practitioners from the operation of the Act is that after all they are presumed to be sensible people who are interested in the quality of the medicines with which they deal. We have to trust those who have been registered, who have been given the responsibility of propagating the art of healing. If any medical practitioner finds that there is a certain medicine which is efficacious in the treatment of any of the diseases specified in the Bill he should have the right to send it to a laboratory where it can be scientifically tested. Similarly, chemists and druggists should know the properties of a drug before they can undertake its sale. Advertisements confidentially sent to chemists and druggists are meant for the purpose of acquainting them about the nature and properties of drugs in question. I would not mind if the drugs that were advertised possessed the properties attributed to them. But they do not. That is why they are dangerous to health and ignorant people are deceived. Self-medication is a thing that should be tried to be stopped at any cost.

As far as doctors are concerned, we can take action against them under the Indian Medical Act. The other point raised was that really the root of the matter is that people go in for drugs which are advertised in this way because we are not able to give the medical aid that we should. In this respect we are trying our best. The report of the Pharmaceutical Committee is awaited and Government will try to undertake the manufacture of drugs in our own country so that they will in due course become cheap and will be available to the public. The Penicillin Factory will begin production this

year; the DDT factory also will go into production shortly. So we are not absolutely idle in this regard.

I also feel that the law should be enforced with vigour, as one hon. Member suggested. At the same time the power to exempt from the application of the Act, will protect all those who, as some Members of the House felt, might be unduly penalised under this Act. then again there is the power to make rules, under clause 16. Some valuable suggestions have been made as for example in the case of booklets. We shall try to accommodate all useful suggestions.

I think I have answered all the points that have been made in the course of the debate. I would like to thank hon. members for the support that they have given to the measure and I shall be glad to see it on the statute-book as quickly as possible so that we may begin to take action against this evil.

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No two Bills are analogous. So, the argument that because imprisonment and fine' have been put down in one Bill, they should be included in this Bill also, is not valid. I have a feeling that it is better to leave the power to impose a fine to the discretion of the magistrate. I prefer to leave it to the discretion of the magistrate, whether he should impose punishment with fine and with imprisonment, or impose punishment with fine and without imprisonment, or with imprisonment only. I think it will be better to leave it as it is.

In regard to the word "punishable" being changed to "punished",—I am not a legal expert—I should have thought that "an act shall, on conviction, be punishable." means that whoever is convicted will be punished. therefore, I oppose the amendment.

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<sup>1</sup>Replying to the amendment moved by Shri Gadilingana Gowd that a minimum fine of Rs. 1,000 for first offences and Rs. 2,000 for subsequent offences, as minimum, be fixed.

It is scarcely likely that the Government of India, which has brought in this particular Bill,<sup>1</sup> will make it nugatory by vetoing everything that it wants to do. After all, this exemption from application is an ordinary thing which should be in the hands of the Government, and I would like to assure the hon. member that it is not at the back of the mind of the Ministry of Health to act against any particular system of medicine or favour any particular system of medicine. It is just to get rid of an evil. As far as foreign advertisements are concerned, they certainly will be liable to the same standards as any other, and this point can be checked at the time of making rules.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Replying to the amendment moved by Shri Dhulekar that No Person carrying on or purporting to carry on the profession of administering magic remedies shall take any part."

<sup>2</sup> "Later the Bill was passed.

## 20. Jaundice Enquiry Report\*

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I rise to reply to the debate with very great sorrow, because no one has been more upset and sad than I have been about this epidemic. Naturally, with my love and sympathy for suffering humanity. I do not want to see any extra suffering ever coming into my picture. I think there is some misunderstanding in the minds of the members who have spoken as regards the constitution of the Delhi Joint Water and Sewage Board. It is under the Chief Commissioner. There are four members from the Delhi Municipal Committee; who are elected by that Committee one member of the Delhi Civil Lines Notified Area Committee; one member who is a citizen of Delhi. These are all non-officials. Then there is a member who is nominated by the Officer-Commanding, Delhi Independent Brigade. Further there are two persons nominated by the Central Government, namely the Superintending Engineer of the Delhi State, C.P.W.D., and a Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Finance. Then, by convention, the Health Minister of the Delhi State is always invited to attend the meetings of the Board. The Municipal Engineer of the Delhi Municipal Committee is also invited Likewise. Therefore, it is a body on which one places a certain amount of reliance and of which the majority are non-officials.

I have of course listened with very great attention to the speeches that have been delivered by the hon. members. Many angry things have been said and I do not blame them for being angry, because the situation has been an extremely unfortunate one. The Enquiry Committee's report has dealt with all the

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\*Replying to the points raised by members on the report of Jaundice Enquiry Committee admitted under rule 213 about Contamination of drinking water in Delhi (I S Deb 12 March, 1956, cc. 2519-2524)

unprecedented nature of the events that took place as extenuation for what has happened. But what I say is that we should not easily be led away into making unjustifiable criticism because of the gravity of the epidemic. There were, as a matter of fact, cases of infection even before.

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I know there was contamination. But there were cases of infectious hepatitis in Delhi even before this epidemic. There has been a steady rise in these cases not only in Delhi but in many towns of India, and because I was aware of the rise in the whole of India, I had actually asked the Indian Council of Medical Research to carry out research on the problem. My friend opposite, Shri Kamath, with his characteristic—what shall I say—over-dramatisation, which is part and parcel of him, has exaggerated the mortality rate.

He exaggerated the mortality rate by saying that thousands and thousands of people have died.

All the records in my possession, and death records are fairly accurate..... If we take the total number of infections, according to the report, as 400,000, the deaths have been under 100 in Delhi the incidence of the disease was certainly high but it was mild from the point of view of its severity. Special instructions were issued to the hospitals to admit all cases; not a single case, as far as I know, was refused admission in any hospital in the city. Separate wards were allotted.

If any officials are found to be responsible for this in any way, the Chief Commissioner is enquiring into every thing and it is within his right to take any action. But in my opinion many things like this can happen without anyone's fault but it is a pointer to the unsatisfactory state of affairs that exist. There is no doubt in my mind—the criticism has been made by several members—that the diversity of authorities dealing with civic and

\*Shri Kamath.

other problems in Delhi is one great reason for the lack of co-ordination and for the fact that it is difficult to assign responsibility.....

I am divulging no secret; ever since I have been Health Minister, I have tried and tried to have a single authority to deal with this evergrowing and complicated problems of Delhi; and, if I have not succeeded to the extent that I wanted or that I consider necessary, it is not for want of endeavour. After partition, refugee colonies sprang up and sprang up—in spite of my advice, unfortunately—haphazardly and indiscriminately with no proper drainage and sewage arrangements.

It is perfectly true that this Najafgarh Nalla, about which, we have heard so much, was always meant to be a storm water channel; but it was made to serve as a sullage canal, with disastrous results. This has rightly been pointed out by this committee. But now, the point is primarily what steps are to be taken to see that such a thing does not happen again. I have asked for the services of Shri Modak of the Bombay Corporation to advise me on the immediate steps to be taken.

As far as the water question is concerned, there must be speedy and expeditious action and I am doing the utmost in my power to go ahead with it. Action has already been taken to divert the sullage from the Najafgarh Nalla by the provision of outfall sewers and to erect treatment plants at a cost of Rs. 1.4 crores west and north of Delhi. These works will be carried out expeditiously.

I entirely agree with my friend Dr. Lanka Sundaram; he has made some very valuable suggestions regarding changing the location of the Wazirabad pumping station. He said it should be shifted further upstream. This matter has already engaged my attention and I would like to associate him with the discussions on the subject. In fact, I would like all members of Parliament who are interested in what is being done to come to my Ministry and talk those things over with me to see what we are doing. My Ministry is not even connected with it. I cannot do

anything until I am told that the water is contaminated. Can I? The moment it came to my notice, I took immediate action. On that very day I had a conference with all the persons concerned with it.

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The news about contamination came to my notice<sup>\*</sup> on the 15th. At once I summoned a conference. As far as the analysis of the water is concerned, some members asked, "when the percentage of chloride content was found to be high, did they not suspect that the water had been contaminated?" There was evidence of chloride but none of nitrates or nitrites and therefore, they hoped that there had been no contamination.

I am perfectly willing to admit that it has been a very very unfortunate situation. I agree with my friend Shri Krishnan Nair, that apportioning blame is not a wise thing to do when sometimes circumstances get the better of one. I can assure the House that if anybody has been wholly negligent, we should see that he is dealt with and we have to put the position right, so that in future nothing of this kind can happen. I can assure the House that already I have taken such actions as I can on the recommendations of the committee; I wish to go still further and see what can be done in order to improve the position. I remember how in order to see that there was no bacteriological infection of the water we were working night and day with the Defence Ministry at out elbow. I would like to join with my colleague, the Defence Minister, and say that no particle of blame attaches to the Defence Ministry. The moment they said that their personnel were not here, we at once got the C.P.W.D. machinery, but unfortunately that did not work satisfactorily. Therefore, the very next moment we appealed to the Defence Ministry again and they sent their people at once and they were working night and day. When this very responsible committee says that there were very cogent reasons why the army could

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<sup>\*</sup>Replying to the point raised by Dr. Suresh Chandra asking as when did it come to her notice.

not come at first and also that they are in no way to blame, I think the House should accept that finding.

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My Ministry's letter may be dated anything; my Ministry does not work always by correspondence. We telephoned to the Defence Ministry and we immediately got the reply that their personnel were not here. Then we went to the C.P.W.D. and with all the equipment that they had, we went ahead. I would like to say this: if the water could have been pumped successfully with the machinery at our disposal quickly enough, there would have been no contamination. It was only because the channels that were built up with the machinery at our disposal broke down that we could not pump out the water and the water from the Najafgarh Nalla contaminated the drinking water. I am very sorry about it and I can only apologise to this House for what has happened. As far as my own Ministry is concerned, we did what was in our power the moment we were apprised of the situation and I will continue my efforts to see to it that these things do not happen again and that the Delhi public does get the water that it needs. I also agree that sullage and sewage should not go into the river—this question was raised on the floor of the House some time ago—because our people go and bathe in the Jamuna. I have been time and again asking people not to bathe in the river because I feel that because of the lack of proper drainage and sewage this water is not pure. Even today there is another drain near Rajghat where sullage goes into the river. I do not like it. I want to take precautions against it. Something may be evolved whereby sewage plants which will make the sullage innocuous are installed of the sewage is diverted into other channels. I have gone into the question of sub-soil water. That is so contaminated that I cannot possibly use it. We have been exploring every avenue. We have been sanctioning money for the necessary works. I would once again assure the House that I will do whatever is in our power and I will take the members of the House into confidence at every turn. But I would ask them to help me to find out how we can best battle against the

problem, which is a very big one. I repeat it is not a small problem. Facilities for drainage and sewage and the equipment necessary for it have not gone up *pari passu* with the increase in population and the enormous number of people that are coming in and with the amount of drainage and sewage that is necessary to cope with the sanitation of Delhi. My friend Mr. Nayar, has talked about a press conference that I gave. But again, as I said, a remark that I made was of....It was torn out of its context because I said infective hepatitis comes not only from contaminated water but also from contaminated food. And when I ask the public to co-operate with me as far as not eating contaminated food is concerned, I do not get the co-operation that I need. Sir, I would not like to take much more time but I would request the members of this House to recognize that it was a very difficult situation and circumstances beyond our control were responsible for it and I apologize for this epidemic having come. But I also plead with them to help me to see that such things do not happen again.

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I have already taken up this question. Now there has been an interim development authority<sup>1</sup> formed which is seeing to all things of this nature. The other question the States reorganisation will come up shortly. But as far as water is concerned, I can give an assurance to the members that this will be the Centre's responsibility.

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<sup>1</sup>Replies to the point raised by Dr. Lanka Sundaram regarding creation of one unified authority, cutting across constitutional procedural and other tangles.

## 21. B.C.G. Vaccination\*

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A controversy regarding the harmlessness and efficacy of B.C.G. vaccination has again been raised recently. During the earlier controversy in Madras State five years ago, the utility and efficacy of B.C.G. vaccination were explained in detail to the general public. As a result of this, the doubts raised against B.C.G. were set at rest and the B.C.G. campaign continued to be popular. Subsequently increasing demands were received from various parts of the country, including Madras State, for further extension of the campaign. Since then mass campaigns have been introduced and are being carried out in all the States in India and the total number of persons tested and vaccinated so far is nearly six crores and 2 crores respectively. At this stage unfortunately some doubts have again been raised about the utility and efficacy of B.C.G. vaccination and it has therefore become necessary to reiterate the need for this vaccination in our country.

The seriousness of the tuberculosis problem in India is well known to hon. members. It is also known that the resources of the country in terms of finance and trained personnel are too meagre to control tuberculosis in India by methods adopted in those countries which have ample resources at their command. Under the circumstances we have to adopt such safe and effective methods as are within our means in order to bring the problem within manageable limits. Schemes for raising the standard of living and for providing better nourishment, housing and other facilities including more hospital beds and clinics

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\* Replying to the points raised by the members on the Calling Attention to a Matter of Urgent Public Importance under Rule 216, regarding the Controversy of the B.C.G. Vaccination Campaign, moved by Shri N.M. Lingam. (R.S. Deb., 31 August, 1955, cc. 11611-11616).

have all been included and are being implemented under the Five Year Plans. These will no doubt augment the natural resistance of the people against all diseases and provide more facilities for treating tuberculosis patients, but since their implementation cannot be achieved overnight, it is essential also to adopt such other measures as will stem the rising tide of tuberculosis in the country. B.C.G. vaccination has been certified by experts in T.B. after prolonged investigations as the best method known to medical science today for providing specific resistance to this disease.

After the most careful consideration and a thorough study of the various aspects of B.C.G. the Government of India decided in 1948 to introduce it in the country. In arriving at this decision, the Government considered the recommendations of international and national bodies such as the Expert Committee on Tuberculosis of the World Health Organisation (wherein were represented some of the foremost tuberculosis authorities from U.S.A., U.K., other European countries and India), the International Tuberculosis Campaign, the South-East Asian Inter-Regional Conference, the Technical Committee of the Tuberculosis Association, India, and the Indian Tuberculosis Workers Conferences. The Government also had the benefit of the views of eminent Indian doctors, viz. Dr. B. C. Roy, Dr. Jivraj Mehta, Dr. K. S. Ray, the then President of the Indian Medical Council, Drs. Frimodt-Moller and Ukil and others from different parts of India. The Government also studied the available scientific literature on the subject. The results of repeated investigations in various countries of the world such as the U.S.A., Canada, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, France and Japan convinced the Government about the harmlessness, safety and protective value of B.C.G. vaccination. These investigations carried out in different countries under different conditions and among different races have proved conclusively that B.C.G. can reduce morbidity and mortality from tuberculosis among the negative reactors to 1/5th of what it would be, had they not been vaccinated. Parents in the U.K. are advised, and the advice is willingly accepted by the large majority, to have

their children vaccinated at the age of 14. The statement that the U.K. is against B.C.G. vaccination is therefore wholly incorrect.

India is not alone in adopting this vaccination and was certainly not the first country to introduce a mass campaign. Such campaigns were started in many countries of Europe more than thirty years ago and are now being carried out in South America, Asia and Africa. The U.S.S.R. and Japan have carried out mass campaigns on a large scale. The total number of persons vaccinated all over the world today exceeds 100 million. In spite of such a large number of vaccinations under varying conditions, the number of complications is very very small, indeed far less than those incidental to other preventive vaccinations, including small-pox. World medical literature has so far quoted only three deaths associated with B.C.G., and even here the deaths occurred not because the germs became virulent. Eminent workers who have investigated these cases say that these extremely rare instances should not affect the progress of the campaign. Against this, it is on record that a phenomenal decrease in tuberculosis morbidity and mortality has taken place in countries where mass vaccination was carried out. For example, in Japan while 282 persons per 100,000 died of tuberculosis in 1945, after seven years of a mass B.C.G. campaign, the death rate was reduced to 82 in 1952. Denmark, where nearly every person needing vaccination has been given B.C.G. has now the lowest tuberculosis death rate in the world. To quote from the American Review of Tuberculosis (November 1948):

"Recent reports from Soviet Russia show that large-scale B.C.G. vaccination in that country resulted in 50 per cent, diminution of the tuberculosis mortality among infants since the beginning of this preventive measure."

It has been stated that B.C.G. may prove harmful to under-nourished people like those in India. This is not true. Indeed, mass B.C.G. vaccination was started in the countries of Europe at a time when it was feared that the prevalent under-nourishment might cause tuberculosis to assume alarming

proportions. But no such results ensued. In Japan, where conditions with regard to nutrition, over-crowding, environmental sanitation etc., were similar to those in India, if not worse, mass B.C.G. vaccination campaigns have proved highly successful.

Some apprehension has been caused in the public mind because of a few alleged cases of complications reported in the lay press, and as far as we know, about 25 such cases were reported, most of them in Madras State. The majority were investigated, and it was found that quite a few of them had not been vaccinated at all but were only given a pre-vaccination test, and the rest were cases of ailments common to the community.

One case of blindness that occurred in Coimbatore has been much commented upon and has been ascribed to B.C.G. An expert committee of doctors who went into this question found that the blindness was due to encephalitis which was found prevalent in Coimbatore at the time of vaccination. The committee found a similar case of partial blindness in a girl who had never received the vaccination, thus clearly showing that this complication was not due to B.C.G., but again due to encephalitis. During the same period, encephalitis had caused three cases of blindness out of 24 investigated by the Indian Council of Medical Research in Delhi. It is incomprehensible that just a few cases of complications over the last eight years, even if they could be attributed to B.C.G., should be considered reasonable ground for an attack against a campaign under which about two crores of persons have been vaccinated all over India. It is a matter of satisfaction, however, to note that in spite of the recent controversy, the vaccination continues to be popular throughout the country, and I am sure that even in Madras State where the controversy has unfortunately been started by those who should have known better, the people will in the long run co-operate with the Government.

Apprehension has also been caused by the statement that B.C.G. is a live vaccine and might, therefore, cause active tuberculosis. If this were so, Denmark, where the entire population needing vaccination have been given B.C.G., and

where complete records of vital statistics are preserved, any increase in the tuberculosis rate would have been quickly noted. Instead, there was a steep fall in the incidence of the disease, and Denmark today has the lowest tuberculosis death rate in the world.

As for the vaccine being a live one, it is worthy of note that there are other live vaccines like the small-pox vaccine, the yellow fever vaccine, the African plague vaccine which are universally accepted as harmless and are in vogue.

It is, therefore, abundantly clear that B.C.G. is a perfectly harmless vaccine and does confer specific resistance against tuberculosis. It is an effective weapon in our hands in our efforts to control tuberculosis and will greatly supplement other measures which we are concurrently taking.

I wish to stress once again that there is no room for any fears in this matter and the Government of India find no reason whatsoever to revise their policy of carrying on this useful campaign as vigorously as possible.

## 22. Sterilisation of the Unfit Bill\*

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Sir, I am very glad that you have given me just a few moments which I shall take to explain the attitude of Government in this matter. While I am extremely anxious, just as anxious as the hon. mover of the bill is, to eliminate the diseases that he has mentioned such as leprosy, syphilis, insanity and imbecility from the country, yet I wish to submit with all the emphasis at my command that this is not the way to achieve the end in view. No Government in the world has any Act on its Statute Book as far as leprosy and syphilis are concerned. Syphilis, I may say, today by modern methods is absolutely curable. And then while one child of a syphilitic may be syphilitic, there is no evidence to say that every child born of a syphilitic is going to be a syphilitic. In the matter of leprosy, medical opinion in the world is that it is not a hereditary disease. Leprosy has been eliminated from many countries, and if I have the means at my disposal here, i.e., the financial means, I guarantee to eliminate leprosy from this country also within a given period simply by isolating and segregating the cases of leprosy patients and their children. So, in regard to these two diseases, the question of sterilisation should not apply.

In regard to insanity, in clause 2(5), "unfit" has been defined as "any person, male or female, who suffers from such a type of leprosy or syphilis, insanity or imbecility, congenital or

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\*Replying to the points raised by members on the Private Members Bill moved, by Shri S.V. Ramaswamy to prevent procreation of human being of undesirable physical and mental conditions by certain types of people be taken into consideration (L.S. Deb., 30 July, 1952, cc. 4894-95).

otherwise, that he or she is likely to give birth to children like himself or herself unless sterilised." We have not yet reached the stage that we can say what type of imbecility or even insanity is hereditary. Eugenics is a very great science, but it has not made all that progress which can enable any doctor to say that because a man today has lost his powers of reasoning, if he has a child, that child is necessarily going to be a lunatic. Therefore, I do not think that in view of all the medical evidence that is available to us, a Bill of this nature is necessary. Sterilisation of any man or woman is a very serious matter. No Government should at any time think of resorting to compulsion in this matter, unless one is absolutely certain of adverse results. Further the Boards that have been suggested by the hon. mover might even consist of those who are not experienced. Their decisions will not be conclusive. Then they go to a court where it will certainly not be wholly a legal matter. Experts will be required. Government administrative machinery will not be available for this, and I am not prepared to concede his viewpoint that it will not be expensive in regard to the consequential results if this Bill were made into law. Therefore, I want to oppose this Bill and reiterate that there are other ways and means of seeking the object which the hon. mover would like to bring into being. As I said, I too would like to eliminate so many things from this country, but the financial point of view apart from the practical point of view as also from the scientific point of view the Bill is wholly unacceptable and I would ask the mover of the Bill to withdraw it.'

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\*Later the motion was negatived.

## 23. Resolution on Re-Sterilisation of Adults\*

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Mr. Deputy Chairman, I have listened with the greatest interest to all that has been said this morning on the Resolution that has been put before the House by my friend, and old co-worker, Mrs. Lilavati Munshi. I am sorry to find that those who have supported the Resolution have not studied this question, or gone into it with that amount of understanding regarding the conditions obtaining here today, which I had expected from them. Last session, a Bill trying to secure the same object as this Resolution is trying to secure, was moved in the House of the People. I opposed it with all the emphasis at my command because I looked upon it from the point of view of science as wholly unscientific, from the point of view of ethics as wholly unethical and from the point of view of practicability as wholly impracticable. There has been in the minds of those who have supported this Resolution a certain amount of confusion of ideas and therefore confusion of arguments. The hon. mover started off by saying that this country was suffering from an enormous amount of over-population, and the Resolution is worked in such a way as to make the average persons understand that this Resolution is going to stop the evil which she is very anxious to combat. One would be inclined to imagine from the speeches which have been made in favour of the Resolution that this country was suffering from millions of insane babies, millions of babies with congenital diseases which we are unable to cure, and that, therefore, those people who

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\*Replying to the points raised by members on the Private Members Resolution regarding sterilisation of adults suffering from incurable diseases or insanity, moved by Shrimati Lilavati Munshi (R.S. Deb., 28 August, 1953, cc. 6633—43).

are supposed to be suffering from such diseases, if they are still alive, should be sterilised and we should thus stop this enormous production of babies who are suffering from insanity, from leprosy, from T.B., from V.D.—these are diseases which have been mentioned. I would very much like to know from where those members have got their statistics. Furthermore, I would also like to know whether those who have talked about this subject have really studied the science of eugenics in any way. I am no less anxious than anybody in this House, living as I do in the midst of suffering, to avoid any more suffering, but I have to think of proper ways and means of eradicating this suffering, and therefore, I study medical science as far as I can. I am at a loss to understand how people can say that those who suffer from insanity or those who suffer from leprosy or those who suffer from tuberculosis or those who suffer from V.D. are either incapable of being cured or that they pass on the diseases that they suffer from, to their progeny. That being so, and that being the evidence of medical science, how then can this Resolution hold water? There is no doctor who would say that a particular individual who is suffering from insanity is wholly incurable. There is no doctor in the world who would say to you, except perhaps in the last stages of T.B., that the patient is not going to recover.

I have listened very patiently and I would have no interruptions. I am coming to the point raised by my hon. friend<sup>1</sup>. There is no doctor in the world today who will say to you—all experts agree in this—that leprosy is always infectious and is always transmitted to the progeny. Having said that much, I would like to ask even those who have put forward amendments and who here talked about congenital diseases whether they know that

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<sup>1</sup>Khawaja Inait Ullah who had interrupted earlier and said: "There are no means of curing them."

there may even be congenital blindness. Would they like people with congenital blindness to be sterilised. As I said, these are things that require a very scientific mind to be brought to bear on them. Please remember that the growth of population will not be stopped by a Resolution of this kind or by sterilising those who are suffering from these diseases or those who are insane, because if you take the census figures, probably you will find that not more than 5 million in this country in a population of 360 millions are suffering from these diseases. What about the children born of very poor people who are unable to support them, who are unable to feed them? Are you going to sterilise the parents? In many cases, children born of persons suffering from leprosy, for example, might be quite healthy and, if allowed to develop in surroundings where they may not get infected, might become extremely healthy members of society, whereas a children born of people who are too poor to earn their livelihood, too poor to maintain their progeny, might be a child who would be sickly throughout its life. Therefore, no superficial study of the question is really going to do any good in order to solve the problem of the growth of population. I understand from the hon. mover of the Resolution and the other members who supported it that their main object is to try to stem the tide of the growth of population rather than to help those people and also help me and my other colleagues who are Health Ministers in the various States to stem the tide of the growth of infection. To me that is much more important. You do not want to stop a woman suffering from T.B. or a man suffering from leprosy from living with her husband or his wife who may not have the disease, thus spreading the disease in the house. I ask you, 'Is this fair?' Is this the only way to stop disease? Is sterilising people the only way? I want to look at the whole thing from the scientific angle and have tried to put before you expert medical opinion throughout the world.

Now, I wonder whether we can do here everything that is done in other countries in the U.S.A., for example, in Switzerland, in Denmark, because we have to see the conditions in our own country as they appear to us here in relation to the means

that we have got to combat our problems. I would also request the members of this hon. House to remember that sterilisation has got a great psychological effect, especially if it is compulsory on the victim. What are you going to do if a leper refuses to get sterilised? Are you going to prosecute him? I tell you that I would be very sorry to be a part and parcel of a Government that indulges in violence of this nature. I am sorry that the name of the Father of the Nation has been mentioned today. It has been said that he held very impracticable ideas. I have to say that I stand by every ideal of his today and that, if he were alive today, he would have opposed a Resolution of this nature. I believe him to be right in the matter of checking the growth of population also. God has given to man that self-restraint which it is his duty and his right to use, if he wishes to serve his country and it is no good saying to me that you cannot do it. If you cannot do it, you are little men and little women. There is a certain sense of mutilation also in general in those who have undergone the process of sterilisation and I have discussed this with Dr. Gamble who came here last year to the Conference that was held in Bombay and also with Dr. Helena Wright and other men and women who were protagonists of the use of mechanical contraceptives and every one of them said "Now having come to your country and seen the conditions that obtain in India, we are going back convinced that they are not practicable in India." Now take the practicability of the question. Are members of the House who support this Resolution aware of the enormous administrative machinery that would be required to maintain any legislation of this nature? Even in the United Kingdom, the hon. member who moved the Resolution said, the Departmental Committee on Sterilisation recommended legislation for legalising voluntary sterilisation—and she said that. But is she aware or are members of the House aware that sterilisation was not implemented on account of several difficulties, one of the reasons being not having sufficient qualified medical authorities? If this was the position in England, what would happen in this country you can well imagine. In the United Kingdom they have one doctor to about 300 or 400 of the population. I can only boast of one doctor to about six to

seven thousand of the population and these doctors are all living in the cities. What about the villages where our people are living. Who is going to diagnose leprosy or insanity? Who is going to diagnose even tuberculosis? It is a most dangerous proposition—this Resolution—because it is wholly impracticable. Even in countries like America where the quoted laws were passed long before medical science had progressed to the stage at which it is today, if you were to ask how many people have been sterilized in that country today, the reply would probably be that the number is next to nil.

Therefore, I don't think that we should, today, in the state of our country—and I personally go further and say never—agree to solve any problem by what may appear to be the easiest way. Time and again I am approached to solve the problem of over-population by what our so called educated women call, mechanical contraceptives. It sounds so simple but it is wholly impracticable and in the same way this question of sterilisation of those supposed to be suffering from these diseases is most impracticable. Who is going to diagnose that a particular type of insanity is hereditary. A number of children born to healthy parents have lost their balance of mind. I have heard the sad example of two today whose parents are occupying high positions in Government whose sons have lost the balance of their mind. Are you going to sterilise those parents for having such children born to them? No doctor is going to say that insanity is always hereditary, and what is more, the children of lunatics are very often not lunatics. We were quoted an instance of a man who had an insane son to maintain and that son had seven children and the man had therefore to look after the son as well as the seven grandchildren. But it was not said that these seven children were lunatics. I am quite sure, they are not. So this House should view questions like this with sanity and with the right appraisement and right mental attitude that I expect from member of this House. How are we to deal with this section of poor humanity? As I have said, from the point of view of practicability the expense involved to Government is beyond its means. And not only expense, we have not

got the experts and I cannot give you the experts—to say whether a person is insane and whether he is curable or not. Also imagine the amount of litigation that will take place where the inheritance of property or anything like that is concerned. Imagine the abuse that might take place also. A man or woman may be quite anxious to have A, B or C sterilised in order to have personal advantage. I have every sympathy with the object of having a healthy nation brought into being but I say to you that there are other ways of doing it.

Now I am told by the House that 'You cannot treat the tuberculosis patients properly and therefore it is better to sterilise them'. I entirely agree with them. I am unable to cater to all the tuberculosis patients that there are in this country. It is a tragedy but we have to mitigate that tragedy. How can we do that? We must spend more and more on health. We must have homes for those suffering from leprosy. We must have isolation wards for those suffering from tuberculosis. I think the example of a child having been born to tubercular patient in a Sanatorium must be viewed as a grave exception because I don't think there is a single tuberculosis sanatorium in India that I have not visited and I am not aware of children being born in tuberculosis sanatoria. I am aware of children being born to lepers. My heart has ached to see a baby in the arms of a leper woman just as the hon. Mover's heart has ached; my heart has ached; though, in a different way. She would have the woman sterilised whereas I would like to take that child from her and bring it up as a healthy citizen of India. We need to have better treatment of those suffering from leprosy. I would like the hon. members to remember that in spite of the grave limitations that we have of finance and otherwise, there has been a great deal of progress made in the matter of ministering to the sufferers of tuberculosis. Whereas we started when we first got Independence with only 5,000 beds for tuberculosis, that number has been quadrupled. There have been T.B. clinics opened in very many of our big towns that are now catering to the needs of T.B. patients. There are so many T.B. cases that are diagnosed in time and that are getting timely treatment in this country.

They come voluntarily. During the last three years statistics also are being collected. We know, it is a drop in the ocean, but we know little drops make the ocean. I will not despair. I think we shall be able in time to bring down the incidence of T.B. And if we have enough money we would even be able to eliminate leprosy. That would be a far better way of dealing with this question than making people impotent against their wish. I assure you, Sir, that if this House were to accept this Resolution, it would merely be treading on very dangerous ground. How many members of this House go in for educating our people? I think if we appealed to our people, if we went to those suffering from leprosy and asked them to disclose that they have leprosy, that would be better. One hon. Member of this House rightly said that if a Resolution of this kind was passed, all that I am doing to educate the people, to ask them to come early to the hospitals so that T.B. may be diagnosed, to come early to hospital so that V. D. may be diagnosed and may be cured, to come early to hospital so that leprosy may be recognised and then cured, or arrested—all that would cease. Leprosy will be hidden, T.B. will be hidden and V.D. will be hidden till the last stage is reached and those who have been getting the infection. The risk of getting infection would be worse then than now.

I know quite well, and I understand that many members of this House, especially women members and others, are keen on legislation which would make it compulsory on people who are suffering from active T.B. not to marry until the active T.B. ceases so that there may be reasonable chances of expecting the disease not to recur. I would be perfectly willing to support even legislation that would say that all those suffering from leprosy may not marry or their wives may even live separately or the husband and wife may live separately until such time as the disease was declared to be non-infectious. I would have the same thing in regard to those suffering from V.D. But is even that practicable in our country? Our country does not consist of cities. We in Delhi do not really represent the real India. The real India is in our villages and that is the tragedy of so many of

these Resolutions. When they are brought forward, they are brought forward with the idea of dealing with the problem, without any conception of what means the Government has to cater to the needs of the real India that is in the villages. After all, our people are intelligent people. They also have ideas of their own. You go to the poorest in the villages and they will certainly have ideas on the subject of this Resolution. This Resolution will have countrywide opposition. We have to think in terms of all the people. We have to educate them to our way of thinking. This is being done but much more ought to be done. And what is more, you cannot ask anybody to turn round and think as you do, unless what you think and what you propose to do, can be put into action in a practicable manner.

But, what is happening in the matter of leprosy today? I know case after case of women who are suffering from leprosy and men who are suffering from leprosy, who have been turned out of their homes as outcastes. They are begging in our streets daily. You will find many of them here. Some of them have to beg as a profession in order to feed their stomachs. The other day, when I visited a leper home, there were two women there who were completely cured, absolutely noninfective. They had been made literate but they could not go back to their husbands because their husbands refused to have them. Those are the social evils that the women members of this House should seek to combat and not talk of sterilising the woman or making her impotent. It was fortunately possible to find employment for the two women, they are earning members of society. I wish they may never get infected again. Therefore, I say it would be almost cruel to sterilise people as this Resolution would have us do with all the emphasis at my command, I say that I am perfectly willing to meet the members of the House and find out ways and means of combating these problems but I cannot possibly give my support to a resolution which, as I said, on the basis of science is unscientific, on the basis of ethics is unethical and, on the basis of practicability, is quite impracticable.

In regard to the amendments that have been moved, well, there is no ban on anybody from undergoing voluntary sterilisation. Numbers of our people are doing it every day in the towns. When they come to me, I warn them about the consequences and, if they are willing to do it, I do not stand in their way.

Shri Sundarayya's amendment to the Resolution just makes no sense in the sense that if the hon. members of this House will persuade any man suffering from leprosy to be sterilised, I have got nothing to say. Everywhere in all the countries mentioned, there is only a permissive legislation, so far as I know.

As for the amendment which says that the adults should not be made decrepit, I do not know what meaning the mover of this amendment attaches to the word decrepit, whether he means man becoming impotent or physically unbalanced or mentally unbalanced, I do not think the amendments really make any advance on the Resolution or make any real sense. Therefore, I do hope that this House will throw out the Resolution and the amendments because of the explanations that I have given.

## 24. Geneva Conventions Bill 1960

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Mr. Vice-Chairman, I have great pleasure in supporting in to this Geneva Conventions Bill that has been so ably presented to the House by the Minister. Having been in intimate contact with the International Committees of the Red Cross for the last fifteen years and with our own National Red Cross since its inception, I know every step that has been taken in regard to these conventions which, as the Minister rightly explained, have had to be altered in the light of changing circumstances in war and in the world in general. After all, the Red Cross came into being because one man who had a humane heart saw the suffering of soldiers who had been killed and wounded and were left in the field of battle without any attention. Naturally, the first convention related to the protection of soldiers whether wounded or sick. After that, it came to apply to a wider field but only in the sense of those who wanted to help the wounded and sick in battle. Then it came to be applied to prisoners of war and this protection afforded to the prisoners of war has gone on increasing as the social consciousness of the world has expanded and as people felt that much more could be done by an organisation like the Red Cross. The fourth convention has now come to recognise that the civilian population can no longer be ignored. Everything has been so clearly explained by the Minister that I do not want to take up any time in repeating what he has already said but I would like to say one or two words in regard to what my hon. friend, Shri Bhupesh Gupta, said. He held forth for a long time and said, "What is the good of Conventions? Everybody ignores them." I know that evil exists in this world but that does not

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\*Speaking on the Geneva conventions Bill, 1960 motion moved by the Minister of Defence, Shri V.K. Krishna Menon (R.S. Deb., 16 February, 1961), CC. 860—864)

mean that good has not got to battle against it all the time. War in itself is a brutal thing and during war man sinks to the level of the animal but that does not mean that all the time we have not got to be exhorting both governments and human beings to be human in their dealings with mankind even during such an awful calamity as war if it happens to overtake this world. Moreover, it seems that there is no organisation other than the International Red Cross which has throughout its nearly hundred years of existence kept the world attention glued or rather, kept the attention of the world riveted to the ideals for which it stands and in that line it has made ample contribution. May I say that whenever any country, angry with the United Nations or with the League of Nations, has walked out of those forums, not a single country has ever walked out from the forum of the International Red Cross, and I believe I am right in saying that today we have more member nations in the International Red Cross than even the United Nations.

Now, these conventions have been drawn up with the utmost care. Many months may elapse, many years may elapse, but the consent of the national Red Cross Society is always taken and the greatest measure of agreement is sought to be arrived at. Nothing in any convention is arrived at without due care, without due analysis and without the consent of everybody. I would like, however, to say that I too am a little worried at the length of time that it has taken the Government of India to bring this Bill before Parliament for ratification because actually this convention was signed in 1949 and our Government was a party to it. You are aware that in the International Red Cross, as far as the conventions are concerned, the Governments of the member-nations are members of the International Red Cross; then, of course there are the national societies which are also members of the Red Cross but they work much more as far as peace-time effort is concerned and they naturally have not got governmental responsibilities. I would like to say that in spite of the fact that these conventions may be ignored or abrogated during the time of war, the International Red Cross does a lot of work during peace time. Even today, for the

prisoners of war in the camps in Algiers, the International Red Cross is doing a lot of work. The Red Cross has made very good recommendations in respect of the prisoners of war there. They do work with single-minded devotion. There is no inhibition at all in the recommendations as you may have judged from the recent report that has been issued after the Committee went and interviewed the prisoners in the prison camps in Algiers. There is never any question of taking sides with anybody. The Red Cross takes no sides; it is not interested in politics. It conforms to the ideals of the Red Cross which are purely limited, may I say, to the requirements of humanity. As the Minister rightly said, it is the moral law which is sought to be imposed even more than the conventional law or the law of any country or even the international law and it is in that spirit that we have got to look upon these conventions and in that spirit we have got to accept everything that is embodied in this Bill.

There is one request that I would like to make to the Minister. At the International Conference that was held two years ago, after a whole year and a half of sitting round tables, after consulting governments as well as national societies, draft rules were submitted for the acceptance of the national societies and of the governments concerned. These rules were in conformity with the ideals and requirements of humanity for the protection of the civilian population against the evils of war.

Now, I would like this House to know that long before any summit conferences or the decisions to hold them were taken, we had committees to enquire into what atomic warfare would do if unfortunately any nation resorted to it. The Red Cross has been one organisation that has unanimously passed resolutions against nuclear warfare, against nuclear tests, against biological warfare, against chemical warfare and all these awful things and always with a unanimous voice. They may not have been listened to but the fact remains that it has had a forum which does command the attention of the entire world and always we get the most responsive appreciation for these resolutions from the Secretary-General of the United Nations. These draft rules

that we submitted were meant to be examined by the Governments and it may be that, after the Governments have accepted these draft rules, we may have to propose a further Convention which will have to come up for ratification before Parliament. After all for anything that refers to the requirements of humanity—where the protection of any part of the population of any country is concerned—naturally the Defence Ministry of the country will have to come in and I would beg of the Minister to see those draft rules and approve them. They have been approved by the representatives of Governments at the last international conference. We, as the national society, have referred them to the Health Ministry on more than one occasion. We have also sent copies of them to the Ministry of External Affairs. I do not know whether they have come as far as the Defence Ministry but if they have not, I will myself send copies of those to the Minister and I would ask him again to expedite Government's approval of those draft rules so that the International Committee may know that the Government of India stands by those rules also. I think any delay in these matters is unfortunate. Why this delay took place as far as this Bill is concerned. I do not know, but I do hope that the Government's formal approval—because the Government has already approved those draft rules—will not be further delayed. With these few words, I have much pleasure in supporting this measure and I hope the House will pass it unanimously.'

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<sup>1</sup>Later the motion to pass the bill was adopted.

## Social and Educational Matters

### 25. Dowry Prohibition Bill 1959\*

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Sir, I rise to question the wisdom of a Bill of this nature. I have been a social reformer all my life. I have grown grey in the service of the women and children of this country. But I am absolutely certain that this Bill is not going to achieve the objectives which it has in view. I am really led to wonder whether, because the Acts that exist in the States of Andhra Pradesh and Bihar have been failures, the Government of India is constrained to have an all-India Act. In Bihar and in Andhra I do not believe that there have been—may be only two or three prosecutions—but certainly there have been no convictions; and I venture to submit to the Law Minister that however much we try the Bill cannot be improved as far as I can make out, even if it goes to a Select Committee. But even if you pass the Bill, you are never, never, never going to enforce it in any way. How can you? As the father of a daughter whom I am anxious to marry in a certain family, am I going to go to the court and say that the father of the boy to whom I wish to give my daughter in marriage has demanded so much from me? Of course not. What happens if I do? My daughter remains unmarried.

How terrible is the situation in India in regard to dowries? Eighty per cent of our people, I suppose, or even more than that, are far too poor to be able to demand or give dowries more than Rs. 200 or Rs. 300. I have only recently been drawing up the budgets of poor people asking them, persuading them—and I have succeeded in doing so—not to spend more

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\*Speaking on the motion moved by the Minister of Law, Shri A.K. Sen (R.S. Deb., 31 August, 1959, cc. 2393—2397 and 2569-71)

than Rs. 200 or Rs. 300. These are poor people and they have saved up as much as Rs. 500 to spend, and on persuasion they did not spend even this. I have actually been to their weddings. They have given one meal to the bridegroom's people and they have given a small present to the son-in-law. They have given all that they could afford to their daughter, which is the ancient Indian tradition. So, is legislation the way to attack this problem?

I am surprised when I hear my sisters—I am sorry that not one of them is here today—painting such a black picture of Indian life. I do not believe that all girls that are married in this country are unhappy or are victims of this system or any other system for that matter. I feel that we have got to grow in stature, change our views, change our code, our concept of life, as we progress. We live in a scientific age. We are talking of a dynamic age. We want to do this, we want to do that. These evils will go as you educate your girls. Bring your girls up to a profession. Who practises the dowry system. They are a certain number of people in the middle classes. It does not apply to the rich classes. It does not apply to the poor. In the middle classes also a certain number of greedy, over-ambitious people, because they think that their son has got good prospects or think that the daughter has got a good deal of money to bring in, and well, they may want to exploit. But those people will continue to do this. And it is the parents that are to be blamed. If the parent of a boy demands a dowry well, the parent of the girl should be willing to resist and say 'no' and not be upset should his daughter remain unmarried. We have got to change the outlook of the parents. Today it is felt that the daughter must be married. Why must she be married. Bring her up to earn her own living and let her and the future husband find their feet. I believe that in time we have got to allow our young people to choose their own husbands and their own wives, and that will be the proper end of the dowry system.

We have got the Sharda Act on the Statute Book. Every year you read of infants being married in Rajasthan. Is there a single prosecution? Of course not. You cannot cope with people when

they are illiterate and uneducated, and you have to enter into the psychology of the persons concerned. Unfortunately our daughters are not getting the education that they should get. We should appeal to the Education Ministry to make it possible for every parent to be able to give his daughter an education that will enable her to earn money, to earn her livelihood, and she will be somebody that every boy will probably be very glad to marry. I do not believe that you are going to achieve anything with this Bill. I would beg of the Government to appeal to the women's organisations to go into the field and persuade the parties. If you think that legislation is the answer to every evil in life, it is not. What is more, it drives the evil underground. In the same way we wanted to have prohibition. We have got it. But wherever we have got it, the evil has gone underground. Here also perhaps you will find the evil going still further underground than now. This is not the way to tackle social reforms. Our sisters, as I say, want protection, protection, protection. I want them to become able to protect themselves. I want the girls who are being forced to marry somebody—and whose parents have been forced to give a dowry—not to commit suicide, but to stand up and say, "I am not going to marry". This is what I want. We have to create, as Gandhiji said, not abalas, but sabalas, and we are not going to create sabalas with legislation. So I beg of the Law Minister to reconsider and withdraw the Bill. The evil is not so awful as is painted. It is there, I know. I have stopped it in various places. I have been to the father of the son and said, "It is wrong, it is wicked to demand a dowry from people who cannot afford to pay, who would even have to borrow and get into debt". And it has had effect. But our women, in women's organisations, are content to pass resolutions, content to go to the law. We have got laws of inheritance. With equal laws of inheritance, equal rights for women, equal education for women, equal opportunities for them, they become wage-earners. These are the things that are going to do away with the dowry system and not a Bill like this. Everybody will evade it and nobody will pay any attention to it. And what happens? Government comes into contempt, the law comes into contempt and we encourage our

people to go underground to evade the law and do all kinds of things which are against social uplift. It is the social conscience of the people that has to be aroused and I beg to submit that no legislation is ever going to arouse the social conscience of people. It may take a long time, but legislation is not going to help; legislation will make it difficult. It will take even a longer time. Anyhow, I suggest that this Bill be withdrawn.

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There is enough public opinion<sup>\*</sup> against the dowry system in every way. For the last forty years, to my knowledge, we have propagated against the dowry system and that is why we congratulated Bihar—I did—when they brought in this Bill. I congratulated Andhra when they brought in this Bill. But what happened? Has anything happened in either Bihar or Andhra? Nothing, and nothing is going to happen in this case either.

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Sir,<sup>\*\*</sup> having been extremely keen on social reform all my life and still very keen that this country should be rid of all the excrescences that have crept into our society, I am afraid I have not been convinced of the necessity of this Bill. I am equally convinced that this Bill will do nothing whatsoever to achieve the objectives for which the Government has brought it into being. I want to know whether the Government has considered as to in how many instances or what percentage of the population of this country is subjected to this dowry system. Eighty-five per cent of our people who live in the villages are not greatly troubled by it and most people are too poor to spend more than Rs. 200 or Rs. 300 for a marriage. The five per cent who are well off and can afford to give dowries to their daughters will continue to give them. Now, we are legislating for a tiny section of our society. Generally, the social reformers who want to give their girl to a boy whom, perhaps, they

<sup>\*</sup> Replying to the query of Shri Sheel Chandra Yajee that was it necessary to create public opinion through legislation?

<sup>\*\*</sup> Participating in the discussion which was adjourned in the Rajya Sabha on 21 August, 1959.

consider as higher up as far as status is concerned than themselves, or where they feel that the girl is going to get a more comfortable life, will continue to give dowries. What is more nothing is going to prevent them from paying to get what they want. Whether they pay two or three years before the marriage actually takes place or one year and a day after the marriage takes place, is a different matter, but these things will continue. Moreover *stridhan* is part and parcel of our civilisation, of our life. It will continue and it should not be stopped. It is a natural thing as people are anxious to give to their daughters and should be allowed to give to them the little that they can spare, and I say, in the large majority of marriages, very little is really being spent by the majority of our people. I do not believe in attempting to make people good overnight by legislation. You have got to rouse the social conscience of the people. The other day in Delhi—recently—there was a marriage. And while the marriage was being conducted, the parents of the boy demanded a dowry from the parents of the girl, and the poor parents of the girl felt: "Well, we must give it, or else the marriage will be cut short", as it was half-way through—and the parents of the girl agreed that they would pay. After the marriage, this boy was asked, naturally by his parents to bring his bride to their house. The boy steadfastly refused and said, "I am not going to come nor bring her. You have sold me to the parents of my bride and I am going to stay with them. I am not coming back to you." Now, I consider that this is the way to rouse social conscience. That boy has never gone back to his parents and he has promised that he will pay back what his parents had demanded from the bride's parents. And in my opinion he has made a far bigger contribution than what the Government is going to make through this Bill. The solution is not in legislation which is not going to stop the evil but is going to make people evade the law, and evasion will be extremely difficult to detect for it will be very easy to practise it. I agree with my friends that although you may have this Bill passed and put on the Statute Book, you will not be able to enforce this Bill with success for the purpose you have in view, and this Bill is not going to achieve any results whatsoever. Rouse the social

conscience of the people. That is what you ought to do. We should work among them. I find Members of my sex getting up and talking as if this country was absolutely burdened and that the parents of girls were being wiped out of existence because of the dowry system. Believe me, it exists amongst a very small section of the population and what is more, as I have said law is not going to lead you anywhere let us work amongst the people. I have been recently to the houses of ten persons and get them to reduce their expenditure by 60 per cent. And they have done so. Poor people, instead of spending Rs. 500 have comedown to spend Rs. 200. That is the way to abolish the dowry system or any other system that you wish to. The more laws you bring. The more breaking of those laws you encourage. You have had already the experience of the Bihar legislation and the Andhra legislation. Where has it led to? Nowhere at all, and I think it is a waste of time and money, Government and public money. It is being wasted on putting Acts like this on the Statute Book. If I want to marry my daughter to a particular boy. I am going to do it somehow or other. Neither of the parties will be going to court to complain against each other for infringement of the provisions of this Bill. So, get your young people, on your side. All our young people, I am glad to see, have got conscience, and they are becoming much more alive to this evil where it exists, and they are the people who ought to resist it. And I say again and again that it is wrong for the State to want to control individual lives such as they want to do by State legislation. It seems as if State control will be extended everywhere. It is wrong. You ask your Government servants to see to it that they treat their wives properly. I have never heard of such things happening in any other country in the world. The less State control, the better; the less people are governed, the better government there is for the people, and therefore, Sir, I oppose this Bill for I do not think it is going to achieve the object for which it is intended.'

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\*Later the motion that the Bill be passed was adopted on 16 December, 1959.

## 26. Orphanage Bill\*

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I had no intention to speak this morning, but naturally, placed as I am, the physical, mental and spiritual welfare of the child is my very great concern, and I feel that all the speeches that have been made in the House this morning denote not so much anxiety for the Bill as it stands as that Government should do something for the protection of the child. I am happy to be able to say that my hon. colleague, the Minister for Education has prepared a Children's Bill which will be an all-embracing Bill, and which will give protection to the child, which the child has not until now had, and therefore I was glad to hear from some of the women Members of Parliament who spoke that it is that kind of Bill that they wish should be brought forward. After all, this Bill only caters to what are called orphan children. Now, a child may not have father and mother, but he may be cared for by relations, but there are hundreds of children, millions of children other than orphans who need just as much care. I am glad that voluntary organizations are seeing to these children. In the meantime, until the Government's own Bill—all—embracing Bill—for children comes in, I would bring to the notice of the Members of this House the fact that in the Planning Commission's Report Rs. four crores have been set aside for voluntary work. It is for the members of this House, and especially for the women members of this House and the women members outside in these voluntary organizations, to bring to the notice of Government those organizations, that are working for child welfare, and I am quite sure, that out of this money provided

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\* Replying to the points raised by members on the Private Members Bill moved by Shri M.L. Dwivedi, that the Bill to provide for bringing up, maintenance and education of children who have lost their parents and have no other person to look after them in proper manner, be taken into consideration. (L.S. Deb., 24 April, 1953, cc. 5048-5049).

they will get money which will help them to expand their activities. After all, the actual care of the child, whether he be an orphan or whether he maimed, blind, crippled or anything else, is morally the responsibility of the State, but I am not one that would like to take away from the voluntary organizations the power, the means and the urge that they have to work for children. I think that they can bring their activities to the notice of the Government, and they are the people who will be able to say which are the organizations that are working properly. There is the Indian Council of Child Welfare of which I have the privilege of being President. There is the Balkan-Ji-bari which is doing magnificent work all over India; there is the Ashok Vihar in Madras. There are many organizations in Bombay, in Calcutta and elsewhere that are working for children. We have to look upon this not from the narrow standpoint of just a Bill for what we call orphans, but in a comprehensive way. Government has got a children's Act ready, and therefore I feel that the Government will look after that side of the question. In the meantime, we should take advantage—full advantage—of the opportunities that the Planning Commission is offering us in this respect.

## **27. Orphanages and Other Charitable Homes (Supervision and Control) Bill 1950\***

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Sir, I am glad you have given me a chance to say something about this measure. I have read and re-read this Bill and I confess that I am not in favour of this measure at all. I agree with the two speakers who spoke before me, that this is a matter primarily for the States to consider. I do not think it is right for the Centre to ask the State Governments to appoint Boards which, I am quite sure, they themselves are at liberty to appoint should they feel that such institutions as cater to the needs of women and children in their domain are not being properly run. Why do we want State control—State control over everything? I have been a social worker all my life. I know how much good has accrued to women and children through the efforts made by persons devoted to social service, who had taken up these questions. There are Children's Acts in every State, which can cater to the needs of children, which can at once come down like a ton of bricks on any institution that is exploiting children. The same applies to women.

Social conscience has to be aroused in these matters, but I would like to reiterate with all the emphasis at my command an aphorism—if I may call it—that that State is best governed which is least governed. But here the Government of India, I am sorry to say, wants to bring in legislation after legislation and thereby kill initiative. The social workers and the women's

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\*Intervening on the motion regarding Private Members Bill moved by Shri Kailash Biharilal to provide for the Supervision and Control of Orphanages, Homes for neglected women or children and others like institutions and for matters connected therewith. (A.S. Deb., 21 August, 1959, cc. 1389-1392)

conferences, they are the people who should be primarily concerned to see how much exploitation of women and children there is in the country. Have the State Governments been consulted as to whether they want Boards of this nature, I would like to know, before we want to pass Central legislation for States to have such Boards, and I think the States will definitely resist the encroachment on their rights, and I think they will be right in doing so. I do not for one moment doubt the *bona fides* of the gentleman who has brought forward this measure, but several clauses of the Bill have already been referred to which, in my opinion, will make confusion worse confounded if this measure is resorted to. Here we are asking that—

"it shall be the duty of every manager to teach, train, lodge, clothe and feed every woman or child admitted into the recognised home..."

Well, there are the societies that are registered under the Societies Registration Act and it is incumbent on them to do all this. Why then do we, from the Centre, want to interfere in this kind of thing? I do not know how many homes for children and how many homes for women in this country are being badly run. Have we got any data at all in our possession? I know of hundreds that are extremely well run. I know it for a fact because I happen to be a member on the governing bodies of some of these homes, and I resent interference by the State, because the managers will be dictated to as to what is to be done and what is not to be done. Then the Statement of Objects and Reasons says:

"So far as the constructive side is concerned, no existing orphanage or charitable home is to be disturbed, but only its management is sought to be regularised through a managing committee to be elected as described."

Now, if a home is working well, its management is naturally good. Why do you want to regularise it? What right have you to regularise it? After all, for these institutions it is the public that donates.

May be, I do not know, but the moment you get these Boards, that are supposed to look into this, that and the other, they will gradually interfere with everything, and it is bad; it is bad to kill private initiative; it is altogether bad to have State control over everything.\* Leave it to the women's organisations, the voluntary organisations, to put their house in order; appeal them to do it; bring the facts which you have in your possession to the notice of these organisations, to the notice of the States, if necessary, but do not pass enactments like this. What is the point of wasting money on Select Committees to go into this kind of Bill? Literally it is waste of money, waste of time, it is interference with private endeavour which, in my opinion, is something that India today can be proud of. We can raise our head high in the international world and say that our women, in particular, are devoting their attention to social service. No country in the world perhaps has got a Social Welfare Board at the Centre, which look after this type of homes, which, if any is badly run, can at once say that no more grants can be given to it. The Central-Social Welfare Board has got its branch boards in the States. They can go to the States concerned and say: This organisation or this particular home is being badly run, the inmates are being exploited; please see to it that you take action against it at once. It is within the power of the State to do this. Why then do we want legislation of this kind? I am wholly opposed to this kind of legislation being brought in or sought to be brought in, which infringes on the rights of the States. I venture to submit that private endeavour, voluntary endeavour in this country, has got a proud record of service. If there are some institutions that are badly run, well, it is the duty of the Social Welfare Board to bring it to the notice of the State concerned, to the notice of the authorities concerned, and they should be penalised, and there is enough legislation in the States today, for every State to be able to take action against homes and institutions that are being badly run. There is no

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\*Clarifying the point raised by Shri Akbar Ali Khan about his observation that there are some institutions which require supervision and control.

reason why this kind of Bill should be brought in and therefore there is no reason for it to be recommended to a Select Committee. I oppose the motion.

## 28. Children Bill 1959\*

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Mr. Deputy Chairman, I do not think anybody will have anything to say against this measure. As the Minister himself has said it is really long overdue. I wish, however, that the Government had been able to consult all the other States also in India and that we could have had a uniform measure. This has been said also by the Speakers who have spoken before me. I was one of those who, in the early days, agitated for children Acts and we had a great deal to do with the Children Acts that came into existence then in the States of Bombay and Madras, and much good has been done by them. Doubtless, anything in regard to any of the clauses in the Bill will be looked into by the Joint Select Committee. The question I want to put to the Minister is that *pari passu* with the need for this Bill have he and his Ministry paid adequate attention to the need for special people to administer this Bill: There are going to be administrators; there are going to be magistrates; there are going to be observation homes; there are going to be special schools. Who is going to run these schools? Who will be in charge of these observation homes? Who is going to really see to it that the child gets not only the love and affection that he needs to bring him back, if he is delinquent, to normal life, but also the psychological treatment that is more than anything else necessary?

Now, I have had the privilege of travelling in a great many lands and always I have looked with particular interests at children's homes. Now, the other day only, in New Zealand, I think I was looking at a special home for children suffering from cerebral palsy and even there they told me that the greatest

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\*Speaking on the motion moved by the Minister of Education, Dr. K.L. Shrimall. (R.S. Deb., 15 February, 1959, cc. 702—704).

difficulty they had was to get the right type of women—generally it is women—to look after these children. In regard to delinquent homes also, there was always the same difficulty in all the countries which I have visited and where I saw homes for delinquent children, I have been witness to proceedings in courts and I saw how magistrates were trying children. Always everywhere the difficulty has been trained personnel. I wonder whether, when we pass this Bill and when we bring into being special schools, observation homes and special courts, we are quite sure that we have got specially trained personnel. We shall find that all that we want to do through this Bill, the excellent things that we want to do the service that we want to give to these children who are in need, will not be possible without proper personnel, and I am a little doubtful as to whether we have taken advantage of the facilities that could be offered to us by special organisations or by the specialized agencies of the United Nations in giving scholarships to our women in particular to go abroad and get special training. So that when they come back, they will be able to work the observation homes properly, they will be able to bring the correct atmosphere into the courts, that the administrator will not be just a man who says that there are a few children that need a home and says "Oh, well, we have a special home". A special home must be run by specially trained personnel. Observation homes must also have specially trained personnel, trained in psychology, trained very often in medicine, trained in the special needs of children, trained also to understand why the child has become a delinquent, trained to understand what is there in the environment of the home of the child that has made him become a delinquent, trained to look into the economic factors which also very often force the parents of the children to send them to these homes. All these things are necessary. Only the other day, the Minister may be interested to hear, I rescued a small child from being made to beg. Now, I went to the parents. I had to go to his parents' home and saw the terrible conditions under which they lived. Luckily I was able to persuade the father and mother that even if they had to beg, they must not let the child beg. And I think that it is

workers of this kind filled not only with the urge, but also with special training, that will be needed if this Bill is to be made a success. So, I would like the Minister, when he is replying, to tell us whether this special personnel is ready to take over these things. If this becomes a model Act and everything that we do for the children in the Union Territories is worthy of being emulated by the States, then I hope the States themselves will even ask to have laws of this kind or have a uniform Act that will apply to the whole of India. But the success of this Bill depends on trained personnel.\*

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\*The Bill was passed and adopted on 15 February, 1960.

## 29. Report of University Grants Commission<sup>\*</sup>

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Sir, in the first place I would like with all my heart to welcome this Report. In the short space of a few pages, this Commission has raised many fundamental issues and they have also made many useful suggestions. I am in agreement with every word that fell yesterday from the lips of my hon. friend Dr. Kunzru. The subject matter of this Report is of vital importance to the future well-being of the country for there is no gainsaying the fact that universities everywhere have a tremendous opportunity to produce the right type of educated men and women and above all, of turning out good citizens filled with a sense of duty and responsibility towards the development of the country.

There are some points which I should like to stress in the few minutes at my disposal, even though others have already stressed them. The ratio of student to teacher is most unsatisfactory, indeed alarming. How can we expect to maintain high standards of education in a world which is making such dynamic progress in every sphere, if our youth did not have made available to them facilities for imbibing knowledge, and how can they imbibe that knowledge under the existing circumstances? This is the problem that we have to solve. On all hands we hear that standards of English are going down, that students are unable to follow the lectures, that the general standards of knowledge of the students are also deteriorating. Hostel accommodation is just not available. Youth have little or no outlet for their energies and valuable contacts between students and teachers are lacking. Books are not available in adequate numbers in libraries, laboratory equipment is often

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\*Speaking on the Report of University Grants Commission motion moved by the Minister of Education, Dr. K.L. Shrimali. (R.S. Deb., 23 April, 1958, cc. 182-186).

inadequate. And the natural result of all this is deterioration in standards of teaching and of learning and indiscipline born out of frustration from which both the staff and the students suffer. The thirst for knowledge is there and it is increasing rapidly as secondary education spreads. But we have to admit that no proper screening is done at the important stage in secondary education where it should be done. Therefore, the universities are flooded by youth who might do far better if they were helped to find places in institutions other than universities. In every advanced country of the world, Sir, the bent of the student is studied at the proper stage and he and his parents are advised and guided to choose the right career for the student. Very many more polytechnics are needed where our boys and girls can get facilities for learning many trades and be able to follow many occupations where they will make good. What is happening today? They join the ranks of graduates by the score and thereby join the ranks of the unemployed and increase that category in a most alarming manner. Liaison, therefore, between secondary education and university education is a crying need and this can be met by raising the standards of school education, by proper guides for screening the teenagers, by creating schools like the London Polytechnic and by raising the school-leaving age to 18 and accepting the three-year degree course. I am delighted to learn that most of the universities have accepted this and I hope very shortly all of them will come into line.

All that I have said should certainly happen. But how? I feel that a far greater and indeed dynamic drive has to be made for producing first-class teachers and I would not hesitate to draw this teacher personnel from anywhere in the country, from any university, even from abroad, until such time as we can supply all our needs. Narrow parochialism should go where the general good is concerned. What is happening today? I found while I was Minister for Health that medical colleges would not accept a first-rate professor simply because he happened to belong to another State while they would accept a third-grade teacher from their own. All this is wrong and it must be set right.

As far as language is concerned, I know what a controversial subject it is and I do not want to say very much. I will only say this, that we should not allow our zeal for our regional languages and also for our national language to run away with our discretion where English is concerned. It is far too goodly a heritage for us to lose and in my humble opinion I think that we should change the Constitution, if necessary, and have it included in the Eighth Schedule—I believe it is that—and add it to the 14 languages that already exist there as the principal languages of India and it should be taught to our children from their earliest years just as the national language should also be taught.

Then I would like to stress the need for taking our temples of learning out of the mire of party politics. Dr. Kunzru stressed this point in a very able manner yesterday and I would like to endorse every word that he has said. I would like also to add another suggestion. We should move out, by and large, all our universities from our capital cities. This would enable them to have the residential system whereby alone, in my opinion, we can build up healthy traditions for our universities. Every capital city needs accommodation for its growing population. Why should not the State Governments take over some of the university accommodation and let our colleges move out to more pleasant and new surroundings? In any case, I feel that no new capital should have universities built in its precincts and no new colleges should be built in our capital cities.

Now, co-ordination of standards has been mentioned by many of the speakers and I look upon this aspect as a most important one. If this means that university education will come under Central control, I myself have no objection to this happening because I believe that that would mean the maintenance of uniform and higher standards and I hope, freedom from the influence of party and local politics which are playing havoc with the student world. I believe that this is a matter which needs very early consideration. I would also like to stress the need for all kinds of learning coming under the aegis of the universities. This Report has touched on it in one paragraph but

I myself feel that there is no reason whatsoever now for keeping medical education, for example, outside the purview of the universities. I am also in favour of the Commission's comments on general education. The more the windows and doors of our minds can be opened to the light, no matter from where that light comes, the better men and women will we become.

In conclusion, Sir, I sincerely hope that the recommendations on the vital points raised in this Report will receive the most favourable consideration of the Ministry of Education and that the University Grants Commission that has done such very valuable work in the last year or two will get the financial support that it has asked for and that it needs.

## Urban Development

### 30. Delhi Improvement Trust\*

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Mr. Chairman, the hon. member\*\* has raised two points viz. (1) that Government have not taken any action on the Enquiry Committee's Report, and (2) the demand for the abolition of the Improvement Trust. The two things are not really relevant to each other because, after all, the Enquiry Committee did not recommend the abolition of the Trust. I have very little time to reply to all the points raised by the hon. member. First of all, he has given dates which are completely wrong. The Delhi Improvement Trust Committee was set up by the Government of India in April 1950. Two years have elapsed since the Report came in. It furnished an Interim Report—and I want here publicly to express my gratitude to this Committee for the extremely good work that it did and for the record space of time within which it submitted its Report—its Interim Report came into our hands in September 1950. Within two months of submission of the Interim Report, all the recommendations that the Interim Report had suggested were considered in the Cabinet at my request and all of them have been implemented and action has been taken on those recommendations. Then the full Report came into my hands in manuscript form in April 1951. Printed copies were available in June 1951 when it

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\* Replying to the points raised by members, Shri K.B. Lall, out of the answer given on the 29 July, 1952 to a Starred Question No. 70 regarding implementation of the recommendations made by the Delhi Improvement Trust Enquiry Committee. (R.S. Deb., 6 August, 1952, cc. 3190—97).

\*\* Shri K. B. Lall.

was possible to circulate it amongst the Ministries concerned, the local Administration and all relevant parties. After two months of consideration by the parties concerned, meetings were held in my Ministry in August 1951 and certain conclusions were arrived at. Now these went to the Chief Commissioner for his recommendations and for his proposals as to what he could do to implement them—by executive action in some cases and by legislative action in others. I would like to say that most of the recommendations involved either financial or legislative implications and therefore they are not matters which can be implemented in the twinkling of an eye by executive action. As a matter of fact, much that was recommended for executive action comes into being *ipso facto*, i.e., as a matter of course. For the remainder—that which required legislation and that which involved financial implications, by the time the Chief Commissioner might have been in a position to take some action or submit proposals, the whole picture of the Delhi State had changed. The Delhi State Administration was coming into being in April of this year and the Chief Commissioner thought that it would be better to wait until the Delhi State Administration had time to consider the Report. So I have not been idle about it, and you will bear me out, Mr. Deputy Chairman, and hon. members of this House will bear me out, that in fact quick action has been taken and much ground has been covered in the consideration of the recommendations. Later the moment the Delhi State Administration came into being, we wrote to the Chief Commissioner again to place this before the Ministers of the Delhi State. The Chief Commissioner has told me on the phone that he has had several discussions with the Ministers and that the matter has been put to the Delhi State Assembly. And I am now writing to ask them not to delay any longer but to come back quickly with their proposals so that we may take action on the recommendations of the Committee. I may say this that my Ministry has accepted the recommendations in principle and I feel that the Report has been an exceedingly good one. But it is not always possible to take

immediate action where financial implications are involved and where legislative action is necessary.

For those members of the House who may not know much about the Delhi Improvement Trust, I may say that the *Delhi Improvement Trust* was created in 1937 with the idea of clearing slum areas and working out a housing and building plan for Delhi—and what is termed as Greater Delhi. Well, the Second World War broke out in 1939 and it was impossible for the Trust to continue its work during the war years. In 1945 it began again to do some work. Now some land was given to it and it had to sell this land to prospective builders and with that income and certain loan that was given to it, it was supposed to proceed with its development plans. Then come 1947 and independence and everybody here knows the tremendous influx of refugee population into Delhi and every thing was again held up. And here I would like to say with all the emphasis at my command that you cannot pick out just the Delhi Improvement Trust where building in Delhi and the development of areas in Delhi are concerned. I would like the House to know that out of the very fine land that was in the possession of the Improvement Trust for development and lands which it had also developed, that is to say, for which it had laid down the necessary drainage and sewerage, out of that over 3,000 acres have been made over to the Rehabilitation Ministry for building purposes. Now whether the Government of India has built on that land through the Rehabilitation Ministry or through the Delhi Improvement Trust, matters little. But the fact remains that if, purely from a factual point of view the Government of India's contribution to building in Delhi was to be examined, it would not be, by any means, mean—in the number of houses built and built on Improvement Trust land. But naturally when the Improvement Trust made over all this land, it got still more impoverished. In spite, however, of the fact that its work originally was held up by the war during the years 1939 to 1945, and again its work was held up by the partition of India and the consequent flow of refugees into Delhi, I maintain that the Trust has developed and has contributed a fair amount,

within the meagre resources at its disposal, towards housing in Delhi. I have not got the time to read out all that has been done, but Mr. Deputy Chairman, should the member who had raised this question wish to have a list of what the Trust has done and what its future programme is, I would certainly let him have it. The Trust has got a programme for 1952-53 and for 1953-54 which is designed to provide housing for a population of one lakh. That is general housing. There is of course some dissatisfaction but I may mention that one of the major difficulties that the Trust has had to face was that when refugees came, they came in and put up unauthorised constructions all over the place. Now when the hon. member<sup>\*</sup> raised this question and when he has accused—I would not have mentioned this on the floor of the House but for the fact that he has accused the Trust of victimising him—I must tell the House that he himself put up an unauthorised construction and I say that against those who put up unauthorised constructions, some action has to be taken and it is not right to say that any organisation of Government victimises people without any rhyme or reason. I challenge him to deny the truth of what I have said. Where then has there been victimisation? On the contrary, I can give instance after instance, in hundreds and in thousands, where the Improvement Trust has gone out of its way to placate—I am afraid 'placate' is not the right word to be used here—what I mean is to see to the difficulties of those who had come in and who could not get land anywhere and who had put up unauthorised constructions. We have always tried to accommodate them and have not moved them until alternative accommodation has been provided for them. There has been no victimisation on the part of anybody—much less by the Improvement Trust. On the other hand, the Improvement Trust has been impeded in its work by these unsocial elements of society that put up unauthorised constructions without having any right to do so. I want the sympathy of the people to be with the Improvement Trust in the very difficult task it has had to perform. The Improvement Trust has literally had a chequered

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\*Shri K. B. Lall.

career because of the circumstances that I have already described.

Then, take the question of compensation. As the law stands at present, compensation is fixed with reference to the market value of the land which prevails at the time of the modification of any scheme. Another complaint that I have to make against those who bought Improvement Trust land is that they did not build on it and many of them were speculators; they wanted to sell that land at bigger prices as land values went up. When they were asked, time and again, to build on the land, their first excuse was: "Oh, we have not got building material". But even when building material was available, even then, many of them did not take advantage of it, so that, the Trust has been handicapped and its desire to go forward has been impeded by obstacles—some of which should not have been placed before it and for some of which circumstances beyond anybody's control have been brought into the picture. And I may mention this also to the hon. member, that the question of determination of compensation has nothing to do with the Improvement Trust. These questions depend on the law as it stands. The Land Acquisiton Collector is the man who is responsible for sponsoring judicial proceedings after all, the Trust is merely a party in the proceedings and has no power to determine any compensation.

I would like to put before you, very speedily, the figures showing the number of encroachments. Up to the end of 1949—6,444; up to the end of 1950—11,039; up to the end of 1951—13,845; and up to the end of March 1952—14,000. You will thus see that the number of encroachments has not lessened. In spite of repeated requests they have increased. And these are nearly all on public lands—Government lands. As I said, every consideration has been shown to the refugees. About 4,000 plots have been sold in different localities, and as I said, half of them—are lying vacant and unbuilt. That also cannot be laid at the door of the Trust.

I venture to submit that as soon as the Delhi Administration has considered the recommendations—and I hope they will

accept them all—the Government of India will not delay for one minute in going forward with the plans, because no one is more keen about this than I who have to deal with overcrowding, I who have to deal with slum areas and whose heart aches for these conditions. And slum areas of course raise a different question. For, after all, slum areas cannot be really built up unless there is a fairly good subsidy given for the removal of slum areas. But there too I am anxious to improve matters. But my task is not made easy by those who want to impede it by unauthorised constructions—unauthorised because they should not have ever come up there; unauthorised also because they violate the Municipal building byelaws in the matter of health. All that, I have said, makes the task of everybody extremely difficult. The Rehabilitation Ministry has been put to the same inconvenience—unauthorised constructions. The moment you say "Remove them", they come out in deputations and demonstrations and so on.

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Sir, I give the assurance that as and when finances permit, as and when the recommendations of the Committee are accepted by the Delhi State Administration, there will be no delay in going forward, provided of course, as I said, we know the financial implications involved and that the requisite finance can be placed at the disposal of the Improvement Trust.

### **31. Delhi Municipal Corporation Bill 1957\***

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Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me a few minutes wherein in support of this Bill. By and large I think that the Bill as amended by the Joint Committee is an improvement on what had come before the other House. I only wish to say a few words about it because I have been very closely connected with the formation of a Corporation for Delhi, even before we got our Independence, the question of how best to govern Delhi had been before the Government of India and a very comprehensive report had been written which was studied by the Ministry of health immediately after independence. The Improvement Trust that existed was not supposed to be doing as well as it should within its limitations and therefore a Committee, called the Birla Committee was appointed to look into how the Delhi Improvement Trust could function and they gave an extremely good report and very many suggestions about it. Then in between came the Delhi State Government itself and therefore the Corporation actually had to be shelved which was a pity because I think that if we had had a Corporation such as is envisaged in this Bill straightaway from the very beginning, when we first got our Independence, perhaps Delhi would have not had quite the number of slums that it has or made the number of mistakes that have been made so far. The number of Committees that functioned in Delhi really had added confusion to confusion and now we are, I hope, on the verge of a new era for Delhi. The main objections that have been raised to this Bill, both in the other House and I think here too, have been, one, that New Delhi has been left out, two, that some rural areas have been brought into the Delhi Corporation and

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\*Speaking on the Delhi Municipal Corporation Bill, 1957. (R.S. Deb., 16 December, 1957, cc. 2704-2707)

three, that some of the Statutory bodies and particularly the Delhi Development Improvement Trust have been left out of the purview of the Corporation itself. Now I myself was one of the protagonists and I very strongly advocated that New Delhi should not be brought under the Corporation at any rate in the beginning stages, I feel very strongly that the area which the Central Government occupies should be free from the mire of party politics. I think that both Washington and Canberra have adopted a healthy practice in keeping their capital cities away from politics and I think it will be a very good thing if we do like wise as, I am happy, we are going to do. As far as the rural areas having been brought under the Corporation is concerned. I think that it is a good thing. After all a capital city expands and we do not know how quickly it will expand. It has expanded extremely quickly already. We don't know how many more acres will be required for its expansion and also I think it is an extremely healthy thing for those of us who live in urban areas to become acquainted with the problems of the rural areas and I don't think that the argument that nothing will be done for the rural areas or that the urban people will not take a proper interest in the rural areas, I don't think these arguments really hold water. As far as the Statutory bodies that have been left out of the purview of the Corporation are concerned there too I think that there will be no harm. The Delhi Development Authority is a body that was brought in to see to it that the future plan of Delhi is worked in a coordinated way. Haphazard buildings have come up in Delhi and have literally ruined Delhi. Therefore the formation of this body was an absolute necessity and I myself, while I was serving the cause of health was delighted that a body such as this had come into the picture in order to stop further haphazard construction and further creation of slums. If there is liaison, as I am sure there will be between these bodies and the Corporation and also between the Corporation and New Delhi, I see no reason at all to doubt the success of the Corporation as such or to imagine that so many complications will come in or so much of interference from Government will come in as to make the Corporation not worth while. I am a great believer in local self-government.

I believe that that is the pivot of good administration and it has also been always a matter of sorrow to me to find local bodies being superseded everywhere all over the country and more than that, a kind of feeling that the State Governments are trying to take away the powers that should really belong to the local bodies and not give them the powers of taxation either which are their due and then to say that they are unable to function. They cannot function unless they have enough money. They cannot function unless they are trusted.

Finally I should like to say—I know things like that cannot come under a Bill of this nature but I feel very strongly—that local self-government should be encouraged and one way of encouraging it—and I would like Delhi to take the lead in this—is, not to have elections to the Corporation, the Delhi Corporation, on a party-political basis. There are plenty of good citizens in Delhi. After all local bodies are meant to encourage and sponsor and foster a sense of good citizenship. The moment we allow party politics to come into a Corporation, then very often we lose the chance of getting good citizens to stand for seats. I would like to see this Delhi Corporation as a model for all other Corporations. True, when we looked into all the Corporation Acts that were on the Statute Book in the different States, we came to the conclusion that Bombay was the best. Therefore, we tried to copy or take as much from the Bombay Corporation Act as we could. The Bombay Corporation has done extremely well but of course it has had nearly a century or a long period of time, to build up its tradition. Delhi is new but I do hope that Delhi also will build up good traditions and that if we can get plenty of fine young men and young women—and I am very anxious that more and more women should take an interest in local self-government—if we can have good citizens, no matter to which party they belong to become members of this Corporation, I see a very bright future indeed for the Delhi Corporation.\*

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\*Later the motion to pass the Bill was adopted.

## 32. Delhi Development Bill 1957\*

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Sir, I am glad to have the opportunity of saying just a few words and I will take a very few minutes to support this Bill.

It was my privilege to bring in a Bill before this House which was called the Delhi Development Authority Bill and it was brought in at that time and passed by both Houses on the express understanding that, before the year was out, only one Authority—this permanent Delhi Development Authority—would be brought into being. Therefore, I welcome this Bill very greatly.

A great deal has been said about the sins of the former Delhi Improvement Trust. I have had to defend that body on many occasions before this House and before the Lower House also, simply because it is so easy to criticise what a body does regardless of the limitations under which it has to work and regardless always of the annoyance which that body is subjected to by people who simply disobey the existing laws and make progress impossible. It is not only the Improvement Trust that can be accused of profiteering, but more so the people who bought land, who refused to build on that land because they wanted to make profits. They were profiteers; but that the Improvement Trust was a profiteering body, I deny.

Now, the Authority is not going to consist of only members of the bureaucracy. We have got wedded to certain slogans and this is one of them. All the servants of Government are bureaucrats, supposed to be working against the best interests of the people. I do deny that charge on their behalf.

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\*Intervening in the debate on the motion regarding Delhi Development Bill, 1957 moved by the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs Shri R.N. Datar. (R.S. Deb., 20 December, 1959, cc. 3503-4)

The Chairman now is going to be the administrator of the Union Territory of Delhi, *ex officio*. A vice-chairman will be appointed by the Central Government. A finance and accounts member and an engineer member have to be there. Then the Municipal Corporation of Delhi will have two of its members. These certainly won't be "bureaucracy". Then the representative of the Advisory Committee will also be on it. They certainly won't be "bureaucracy". But these persons will be nominated by the Central Government and in addition, there will be this advisory body which is going to consist of knowledgeable people who will be at all times competent to advise the actual Authority.

My contention is that in an administration, the fewer the people you have on your executive authority, the better and the quicker does the work get through. Therefore, I have no reason to share any of the feelings of apprehension that have been put forward before this House.

The present Authority—the Delhi Development Authority—has been criticised for delays, but I am sure that the delays that the Delhi Development Authority has had to contend against have been due again and again to the disobedience of the existing laws by people who build without permission, who build not according to plans and who do all kinds of things to harass the Authority. I am delighted that one authority has come in for the whole of Delhi. We had far too many such. They had created a muddle in Delhi and been responsible for creating slums and unless this Authority is allowed to function—and I do hope it will be allowed to function—in a proper way, I see no hope of ever improving Delhi.

A Master Plan, they say with a certain amount of sarcasm, may take ten years to prepare. Well, Master Plans for capitals do take time. But a skeleton plan is already before us and I suggest that we again give the Members opportunities to go and look at this Master Plan. The interest that should be

displayed in Delhi is not displayed by Members, but when any Bill comes up, it will always get criticisms of this kind.

I am very glad that this Bill has come. There is really nothing controversial in it and I give it my support."

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\*Later the motion was adopted and passed on 21 December, 1959.

### **33. Government Premises (Eviction) Amendment Bill\***

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Sir, perhaps, I may say just a few words now, because to go into minute details is rather difficult.

I would first like to refer to the meetings that were held and the assurances that were given. Now the assurances that were given were that the Delhi Improvement Trust would seek the advice of the citizens of Delhi, those who know where the slum dwellers live and those that are concerned with the refugee population with a view to seeing that in all matters of slum clearance we should be able to afford better living conditions to slum dwellers and that we should provide alternative accommodation to persons who were to be evicted in localities as near as possible to where they are living at present.

May I also submit that at this stage much water has flowed under the bridges since these discussions were held. The Delhi Development Authority has come into being which has already got on it as members, for example, the Development Minister of the Delhi State and others. The Improvement Trust is now not selling any more land. The Chairman of the Improvement Trust is actually Secretary to this authority. All plans of slum clearance and all plans of further building have got to get the sanction of this body which is a very representative body and has representatives of the Delhi State Administration as well. So that, things are very different now from what they were in the old days.

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\*Replying to the points raised by members on the motion on the Government Premises (Eviction) Amendment Bill, moved by the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply, Sardar Swaran Singh. (L.S. Deb., 22 August, cc. 1956, 4057—4065). Speaking on the point raised by Shri Feroze Gandhi about the name of the person to whom the land was sold.

I wish again to assure members that nobody will be evicted without alternative accommodation. We never have evicted anybody without alternative accommodation. After all if you have to clear slum areas and there are 10,000 people living where according to standards of health there should only be 5,000, naturally those other 5,000 will have to be removed to another place. You cannot go in for slum clearance, or solve this problem of congestion without a little hardship coming to some people. But, as far as possible, we will try to give them accommodation where they will be able to earn their livelihood and not suffer monetary loss. I would again say that the Improvement Trust has never broken any of the assurances that were given on the floor of this House. In this Delhi Development Authority, I would like to remind hon. members, there are three Members of Parliament—Shrimati Subhadra Joshi is there, Shri Nawal Prabhakar is there and Shri Kailash Bihari Lal is there—I think I am right in three names. So that, Parliament also is well represented on this Committee and they advise us in regard to every step that we take.

I need hardly say that I echo every word of what my hon. colleague the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply has said. We have never intended to break, nor broken any promises; nor will we break them in future. May I also mention that we are both Punjabis and if anybody's heart aches for the refugees it is the hearts of these two Ministers that ache more than any others. We are not out to disturb or hurt the refugees in any manner and I do hope that with this assurance and the fact that the Improvement Trust being a statutory body of Government should have the same powers as Government for it would be invidious for it not to have these powers, and also the assurance given by me and my Hon'ble colleague, I hope this House will accept this Bill.

As far as I know, no land has been sold<sup>\*</sup> by us to anybody in that area. To Bawa Bachittar Singh the Improvement Trust has

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<sup>\*</sup>Speaking on the point raised by Shri Feroze Gandhi about the name of the person to whom the land was sold.

not recently sold any land. As far as building is concerned, there are strict regulations that no building shall go up anywhere without reference to the Delhi Development Provisional Authority. So far as I remember, the land that has been referred to belongs to the Improvement Trust, and if that is so, no sale can have now taken place and has taken place.

No one will be removed ten miles out; no one will be removed to a place where there is no assurance that they will get their livelihood there. So far as I remember I have not got the fact and figures with me here this particular area has marked out to be kept as an open space, as open park, and all these people now there have built for themselves these huts in an unauthorised manner. I did ask the matter to be explained to you, Sir, because I understood that you had taken a special interest in the case. These were all unauthorised structures, and we have not dealt harshly with them, and no one has been turned out. These dwellings are very near a crematorium, and in my opinion, a crematorium is a sacred place and should not have this type of dwelling house or any type of building near it. We should have a clear open space in the vicinity of the crematorium. That is the ideal. But I shall be perfectly willing to go into details again in regard to this, and I would like to assure hon. Members that I shall ask some of the refugees themselves or some of the Members that the Parliament may themselves agree on to come and advise me in regard to all these places where refugees live. I shall see to it that the land is not sold.

I would like to give the assurance to my hon. friend, Shri Feroze Gandhi<sup>1</sup>, that if it is a question of any land having been sold to anybody here or there and rich people are building

<sup>1</sup> Replying to the point raised by Shri Feroze Gandhi about his apprehension that the people were being sent 15 miles out of town.

<sup>2</sup> Replying to the point raised by Shri Feroze Gandhi, asking for the assurance that if people were removed from the present dwellings some accommodation would be provided for them say, within a mile or two and not more than two miles way.

Bhavans there, I will certainly not allow that. I will consider the question if this has been done. If necessary, we will acquire the same for the price that was given, and I say that I will see that the poor are not penalised in any manner. As I said before, I shall ask for confirmation that land has not been recently sold to rich persons and even where plots had been sold earlier, further construction has been stopped under the powers with the D.D.P.A. with a view to seeing that if this land is to be kept in an open space, no building shall be allowed thereon. If it is a question of rich people having taken land, which really should go for construction for poorer people who earn their living there, that matter also will be looked into. I will give this assurance.

It is not always possible for me to say within a mile or two because the areas are so terribly congested, but I do give the assurance that we do not remove persons unless we feel that they can earn their livelihood in the other place. I suggest that even if they are removed five miles away, I shall see that they get occupation there and that this objection will not be there. But it is not always possible that I can find accommodation within a mile or two. People have to go round Delhi as I go round almost once a week to see what the conditions are in which these people live. Nobody knows Delhi better than I do I am out to clear up the mess and not to create a further mess.

Sir, I may say that under this Delhi Development Authority an interim plan has been drawn up and members of Parliament are going to be given a free view of this plan. This will give them an extremely good idea of how Delhi is to develop, how open spaces are being provided, where they are kept and what provision is to be made for slum clearance.

Now I may give two instances. The slum evictees of Delhi, Ajmeri Gate area were removed to Andha Mugal and Karol Bagh. If you see the wretched quarters from where they were removed and see their present premises, you will know that they are happy now. Another scheme is going on under which some of them have been moved to Thilmila Teharpur where further quarters are being constructed. We have also been to it that they are going to get occupation there.

## Food Management

### 34. Food Adulteration Bill\*

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In bringing forward this proposal may I be permitted to say a few words. I do not think that there will be a single Member of this House who will not welcome the introduction of this Bill. In fact, in the past Parliament and even before that I have been asked several times as to why I have not been able to introduce this measure before today. But the difficulty was that I could not do it until the adulteration of foodstuffs and other goods came on to the Concurrent List. The moment I was in a position to bring a measure like this before the House, I circulated it to all the State Governments and asked for their opinions. The Members of the House know that laws against food adulteration do exist in all the Part A States, in some of the Part B States, and in some of the Part C States, but they lack uniformity, and I think in a situation like this where food adulteration is growing or has grown into a positive menace, it is absolutely essential that something should be done in this regard. And therefore, it is that I feel it was absolutely necessary for the Central Government to enact legislation.

Now, opinions have been received from all the States, and all their useful suggestions have been incorporated in this Bill. My own feeling has been throughout these years that while food laws do exist, it is the inadequacy of Government machinery that has been greatly responsible for their inability to check the

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\*Moving the motion with the recommendation of the President, "That the Bill to make provision for the Prevention of adulteration of food be referred to a Select Committee". (L.S. Deb., 26 November, 1952, cc. 1225—28 and 1292-1293).

menace. Not only is the machinery inadequate, but there is also. I am sorry to say, lack of integrity in that machinery. Therefore, whatever legislation we pass, the State Governments will have to see to it that this inadequacy is removed, and that, as far as possible, the integrity of the machinery is also ensured. Some friends feel that this Bill should be circulated for public opinion. I myself feel that there is no necessity for that now since the State Governments have been consulted and consulted over a long period. So that they have been able to give all their experiences and their considered judgments on the measure and, what is more, they have again been circulated since this new measure has been drafted. That is to say, the present Bill has been circulated to them and they have been asked to give their opinions before the 22nd of December, so that the Select Committee will have ample time to consider any further suggestions that they may have to make.

The most important suggestions in this present measure are; first of all, the constitution of the Central Food Laboratory which I am sure the Members will welcome because under the existing laws where if a food inspector or a vendor is not satisfied with the report of the analysis of any food article that has been given to a public analyst in any State, there is no provision for analysis by a superior authority. Therefore this Central Food Laboratory will be of very great value, and it will not only carry out analysis of such foodstuffs as are given to it that have not been satisfactorily analysed, but they will also carry out analysis of samples of imported foodstuffs sent from the ports by the collectors of Customs or by any other officers authorised by the Central Government for this purpose. They will also carry out investigations for the purpose of fixation of standards of foodstuffs. That is very important. They will also undertake investigations, in close collaboration with the laboratories of State public enterprises for the purpose of standardising methods of analysis uniformity in the formulation of standards for various items of food and any permissible variations from the standards will be achieved through the

Central Committee that is sought to be appointed, and State Governments will also set up their Committees, and I think that a very great deal of efficiency will be brought into being by the constitution of the Food Laboratory, the Central Committee and the State Committees.

One of the standing complaints against food laws has been that the penalty prescribed for offences has been too small, and that very often the courts do not even award these small penalties. For that also, some more drastic provisions have been put into the Bill. I, therefore, hope very much that those who have put forward amendments for further circulation will be good enough to withdraw them in view of what I have said and since the public opinion has been elicited and these have been circulated again to the State Governments. I do hope that all Members who are interested in this measure will send any suggestions that they may like to the Select Committee. There is ample time for their suggestions to be considered, and I hope that the Bill will go on the Statute Book as early as possible in the next session of Parliament.

I do not think I have anything more to say.\* I have listened with great interest to and taken note of all the suggestions that have been thrown out by the various Members who have spoken on the measure. I am also very glad to note the satisfaction evinced by the Members on such a measure as this being placed on the statute book. I can assure them that all the suggestions will be carefully gone into by Select Committee. I am as anxious as any one of them that this measure shall not be a dead letter, that it shall be rigorously enforced and that it will enable us to deal with what I agree is a growing menace. I hope, therefore, that the motion for reference to Select Committee will now be approved and that we shall go ahead as rapidly as we can.\*\*

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\*Intervening in the debate on 27 November, 1952.

\*\*Later, the Deputy Speaker moved the motion which was adopted on 27 November, 1952 and bill was referred to Select Committee.

## 35. Food Situation\*

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Sir, I rise to say a few words on a topic which continues to cause cancer, but I do not do so in any spirit of carping criticism. I know how far and often, how very unfair it is for a Union Minister to be held responsible for the sins of omission and commission of the Ministers of States, and when it comes to food and agriculture, there are also always bad harvests and circumstances beyond man's control which further cause harassment to the Minister in charge of this particular portfolio. But the lay mind is certainly puzzled because the food situation has not improved nearly as much as hopes held out for its improvement had led people to expect. In spite of what, we were told were sufficient stocks of grain in the country, more and more imports have had to be resorted to and, what is more, these seem to be consumed very much quicker than expected. The position is unfortunate, as neither the consumers nor the producers are satisfied, and the targets for self-sufficiency in food also seem to be receding rather than coming nearer.

There seem to be certain anomalies in the position too. It is said that our food production during 1956-57 amounted to 68.5 million tonnes and that our food requirements work out roughly at 55 million tonne reckoning 16 ounces per day per adult and 12 ounces per day per child under 14 years, or say, roughly 60 million tonnes. With production averaging round about 65 million tonnes and imports averaging 3.5 million tonnes, why should prices be going up and up? Are the figures given or the claim for production that we are furnished wrong?

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\*Intervening in the debate on the motion regarding food situation moved by the Minister of Food and Agriculture, Shri A.P. Jain. (R.S. Deb., 18 Dec., 1957, cc. 3011-17)

A farmer was telling me the other day that if protection to plants from pests and insects were to be extended, the chances of saving foodgrains would yield rich dividends. The loss due to this is said to be pretty considerable; I am told about 20 per cent. I am sorry that the Mehta Committee has paid no attention to this aspect, but I would like to know from the Food Minister whether they are paying any attention to this aspect. Why should these losses continue? The Mehta Committee recommendations have been, I am sure, read by everybody, and I hope myself that the Government will accept those recommendations, and that by their acceptance these will be all round improvement in the situation. But I confess, as the Minister himself has confessed, that it was depressing to learn from this report that in spite of all efforts to attain self-sufficiency we shall have to import 2 to 3 million tonnes of foodgrains every year for the next five years at an annual cost of Rs. 100 to Rs. 150 crores, which naturally will impose a very heavy burden on our exchange resources.

Sir, the Minister has said that he is not pessimistic as the Mehta Committee is. I can only hope that his optimism will be justified in the years to come. The price stabilisation organisation which has been recommended by the Mehta Committee, I think, is sound provided it works vigilantly. But there again, never can prices be kept down if demand greatly outruns supply. Of course, the task of increasing food production is really the keynote to everything. Now, Sir, any amount of money has been spent in recent years on various schemes for increasing food production. Have they always been successful? Co-operative farming, we are told, is necessary and doubtless it is so. But in terms of sheer financial outlay, co-operative farming is going to be a stupendous undertaking. I personally do not see how anything can be imposed from above at any time with any hope of good results being achieved. Also, our

social and agricultural structure throughout the ages has not been based on the principles of a co-operative society or a cooperative system, or whatever we may like to call it, and the people, therefore, have to be led to change their attitude of mind if co-operative farming is ever going to be a success. The landlord system had to go as it has gone everywhere in the modern world in which dynamic changes are taking place all the time, and it is only right that it should have gone from India. But a good landlord was beloved by his tenants and they looked up to him all the time for advice, for guidance as also for help in times of distress. These were readily forthcoming. Today, I do not think the farmer has the benefit of that human touch from those who have supplanted the landlords, that is to say, the Government. I have a fear that, with very small holdings, the farmer may be tempted to grow only as much as he needs and thereby, he will not get that impetus to increase food production which is of such vital importance today.

Talking of schemes, the latest Audit Report on the Appropriation Accounts of the Government of Orissa should serve as a warning not to undertake schemes which are infructuous and we have to be very careful when we are limited by finance and everything else, not to launch on schemes which are not going to yield dividends.

I am very happy that minor irrigation projects have been strongly supported by the Mehta Committee and accepted by the Ministry. Many agriculturists complain that payment for irrigation purposes is beyond their means. How can they increase food production if that is so? And I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to this aspect that, where you want to give the farmer incentives to produce, you must subsidise him also or help him, at any rate, to give to the country what the country wants from him.

Then again, it is obvious that production of crops on an intensive basis involves higher costs in providing irrigation, manure, better seeds, more care and labour in the techniques, involved in further production. Now, this applies for example, to the Japanese method of rice cultivation. The farmer will only go

in for such methods, if he can get a proportionately higher return. Surely, this matter requires further probe. Have our Departments always got in their produces and return, before they recommend special methods to the farmer? The farmer must be given incentives, as I said before, if they are to produce more and I wonder whether we do know how much the increased cost is going to mean to the farmer and whether, if he has to spend, he will get more from what he produces. I know of more than one farmer that have given up the Japanese method of rice cultivation simply because it did not pay them. Well, now, it has got to pay him to go in for methods of production which are going to grow more. Then, have any experiments been made by our Agricultural Department to take up the work of lowering the cost of production by introducing less expensive manures? We must not always rely on fertilisers. I was glad to hear from the Minister that they are now thinking in terms of human manure which is so widely used in China where they have not got fertilisers and which does yield dividends. We must introduce less expensive manures and produce new implements by inventing them and thus save costs on operational techniques. I think, this is a very important point that Gandhiji used to stress all the time and I would like the Ministry to pay more attention to this aspect of the question. May I suggest that the Food Minister have a talk with Mr. Richard Gregg, who is writing for the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and is in Delhi? I believe, he can give useful advice on manures, on implements and everything like that, because he is a farmer after Gandhiji's own heart.

I now come to raise a point—and I am conscious, many orthodox people will perhaps frown at me—complete ban on the slaughter of cattle has been imposed in seven States. In some other areas, the ban existed even from earlier times. In other States, there is a ban on the slaughter of useful cattle only and in Orissa, I believe, no ban at all exists. In the old days, the existence of a ban on cattle slaughter in a few areas did not present any difficulty. Old and useless cattle used to be pushed into other States for disposal. Now, a complete ban almost

everywhere has changed the position considerably for the worse. The number of old and useless animals has increased enormously and will go on increasing. They are, if I may use a slang expression, "eating our heads off". The Expert Committee on the prevention of slaughter of cattle in India which was appointed in 1949 has said:

"A complete ban on slaughter of all cattle will tend to increase their number further and jeopardise the well-being of the limited number of few good cattle the country still possesses. It will also result in a real danger of a number of wild cattle increasing and proving a menace to the production of crops. A complete ban on the slaughter of cattle would, therefore, not be in the best interests of the country as it is merely a negative and not a positive approach to the problem."

This is what they have said. Now, the increase in the number of stray and wild cattle, as they prognosticated has been increasing in many parts of the country. The former State of PEPSU, I know, spent a large sum of money annually in rounding up these animals which in many cases had become dangerous. . . . .

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The Gosamvardhan Enquiry Committee in U.P. in 1955, reported as follows:

"From the information available to the Committee, it appears that during recent times, the number of stray and wild cattle has increased enormously in the rural areas as well. In many parts of the State the menace of wild cattle has become quite serious. And there are consequently requests from a number of districts for the capture of stray and wild animals which are doing enormous damage to crops. This serious problem is affecting agricultural production and progressively assuming unhappy proportions."

Several States have had to be asked now to draw up schemes to deal with the problem and to put these schemes in their Second Five Year Plan. All such schemes are going to cost a great deal of money, because the methods which have been tried out have not been successful nor can they look after

what are now veritable hordes. I suggest that this matter should be looked upon in a practical manner and dealt with in a realistic way and wholly divorced from sentiment. It is time for us to give up making slogans and listen more and more to the voice of reason. We dare not continue to be unscientific in a dynamically scientific age. Then, are we doing enough for afforestation and for the prevention of soil erosion in the mountainous regions? I know the mountainous regions fairly well in my part of the world. I have found very often deforestation progressing at a rapid rate and no afforestation, to speak of, to keep pace with this destruction; and soil erosion too is taking a heavy toll from our productive lands.

Finally, Sir, the recommendation of the Mehta Committee in the matter of family planning cannot be ignored. Apart from the efforts already being made, I think social legislation must be resorted to. We cannot afford to go on increasing our population at a rate with which our increased food production cannot keep pace. I feel, that the age of marriage of girls and boys should be raised, and it can be raised. They have done it in China. Why can't we do it here? And I am even in favour of taxing the birth of a third child where two children are already alive. I entirely agree with what the Mehta Committee has said in regard to the control also. I would like to see more fair price shops established. I would prefer to have more fair price shops everywhere rather than an increase in the wages of Government employees. We give more money simply because people cannot afford to buy their requirements. But fair price shops should be run honestly, and I would like the Minister to consider the utilisation of voluntary organisations as far as fair price shops are concerned. I believe that we women could help greatly in running these shops where there would be no exploitation of the poor people who could come and get their requirements, rather than giving them a paltry sum of Rs. 5 extra which is going to cost us crores of rupees. I believe that subsidising fair price shops will be a better method of bringing contentment to the people. We all have to put our shoulder to the wheel in what is a matter of vital import to us. Public

confidence and co-operation have to be enlisted, and in particular, the co-operation and the enthusiasm of the real tillers of the soil.'

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\*Later the motion was adopted on 18 December, 1957.

## **36. Punishment for Adulteration of Food Stuffs Bill\***

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Sir, I fully subscribe to the views expressed by the hon'ble member on this issue. It is a thing that affects adversely the health of the people. If we do not get hygienically pure things to eat, no amount of medicines taken by us will do us any good. Therefore, I am in full agreement with it. But till I had no power to make central law, I could not bring forward this Bill before the House. But I used to write to the Ministers in the States, after every two or three months, that they should evolve a suitable machinery so as to prevent food adulteration and to check unscrupulous elements indulging in adulteration. I could do no better. When I came here, I found that there was only one officer in Delhi who was attending to this task. I augmented the strength of such officers so that more attention could be paid to this issue. I persuaded people hard to bring them round to my view, held several meetings with them but to root out dishonesty was no easy task. Thereafter, when I got the power to bring forward a Bill before this House, I brought forward Food Adulteration Bill before this House. It was referred to a Select Committee formed for this purpose and now it is before you for your kind consideration. It is my misfortune that owing to this House remaining busy with so many other items of work, this Bill could not be brought forward before this House earlier. I have made my earnest efforts in this regard and I sought your cooperation as well in bringing forward this Bill before this House at the earliest and getting it passed. But it could not be

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\*Replies to the points raised by members on the motion on the Private Members' Bill moved by Shri Jhunjhunwala to provide 'Punishment for Adulteration of Food Stuffs Bill'. (L.S. Deb., 28 April, 1954, cc. 5548-5550).

brought forward till date. This time also when I approached the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs for this purpose, he informed that since the House had quite a lot of business before it and the people wanted three days' time to speak on it, it would be introduced in the House in the beginning of the next session.

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I deem it very essential. I got it passed by the Select Committee in five days by devoting my time from morning to evening so that it could be passed at the earliest. Still it could not be brought before the House and I am not to be blamed for it. You were also aware of this and if you had taken interest and raised the demand that the Government should bring forward this Bill before the House at the earliest, it would have certainly been brought here. But when you blame me for this, then I would say that I should not be blamed for this. This Bill has been lying ready for the last one year for consideration by this House.

I would like to say that the Bill, the hon'ble member has introduced is not a comprehensive one. It would not help him achieve his objective, nor would I be able to achieve my aim through it. I unequivocally endorse his efforts to draw attention of this House towards this issue. I also agree that the Government must do something in this regard at the earliest. In my opinion, his Bill is quite inadequate. For example, it has not laid down standards of food and adulteration. My Bill is a detailed one and will be more useful. I will be very happy if this Bill comes before the House and is passed at the earliest. I have often been requesting the State Governments and Delhi Government for which hon'ble member had also said that they should be cautious about it and try to check adulteration to the extent possible. Therefore, I would request the hon. Member to withdraw his Bill, and I will try to bring my Bill before this House as early as possible.

## **37. Prevention of Food Adulteration Bill 1954\***

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Sir, I do not think there is any necessity for me to dilate on the urgent necessity of having a measure which could possibly act as a deterrent in the face of the terrible menace with which we are faced, namely, the adulteration of food of all categories. Practically all the States have had legislation to cope with the evil, but there was no uniformity in the measures that existed. And what is more, the existing punishments were, in the opinion of most of the Ministers, before whom I brought this question, inadequate. Therefore, as soon as it was possible for me to bring in all India legislation, I did so. A Bill was placed before the Lok Sabha in November 1952, and it was referred to a Select Committee. The Select Committee met and reported in February 1953. Since then this Bill had been waiting to come before the Lok Sabha. Unfortunately, other business, considered to be more important, shelved this Bill until the other day. Now, the Lok Sabha has again considered the Bill as amended by the Select Committee, and the Lok Sabha having passed it, I have the privilege today of placing it before the Rajya Sabha. And I do hope that the members of this honourable House will give the measure the consideration that it deserves, because I am very anxious that it should come on the Statute Book as quickly as possible.

Members, who have studied the Bill, will have noticed that the offence is now a cognizable offence, and that a great many clauses have been brought in after consultation with all the States and after close scrutiny of all the existing measures in

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\*Moving the motion for amendment of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Bill, 1954 as passed by the Lok Sabha be taken into consideration. (R.S. Deb., 1 September, 1954, cc. 1008-1010, 2134-2135 & 2182-2193).

the States, in order to see that it becomes easier for the State Governments to deal with companies or individuals who go in for this terrible crime because it is a crime against humanity to adulterate food. And I have no doubt that the measures that have been suggested in the Bill as amended by the Select Committee, and as further amended in the Lok Sabha, will go a long way towards checking the evil, or at any rate, giving the State Governments means to check the evil. No one knows better than I that legislation alone can never get rid of dishonesty, but deterrent punishment does have some effect. And I do hope that with the passage of this Bill much have been achieved in the right direction.

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May I say that there is nothing to prevent any person who commits an offence from being tried, whether he is a Government servant or otherwise, but Government as such cannot commit an offence.'

The individual who is found guilty will always be prosecuted whether he is a Government servant or not.

Mr. Chairman, the different provisions of the Act will be worked out are specified in the various clauses of the Bill and the over-all control, of course, will be in the State Governments because under the Constitution (article 73) the executive power in relation to any matter in the Concurrent List is vested in the State Governments unless otherwise provided by the Constitution or by law made by Parliament. And in the present Bill ample powers have been reserved for the Central Government also. If you turn to clauses 23, 3, 4, etc., and if you read those provisions you will find them all given there."

\*Intervening in the debate on 14 September, 1954 and clarifying the points raised by Shri Rajagopal Naidu, that there should be uniform law with regard to food adulteration in the country and the specific provision for offences committed by the Companies.

\*\*Replying further to the point raised by Shri Rajagopal Naidu with regard to offences by the Government servants.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, first of all I want to thank the members of this House for the warm support that they have by and large given to this measure. I know more perhaps than anybody in this House the terrible detriment to the public health that takes place by means of adulteration and therefore it was that the moment it came within my means to bring a Bill like this on an all-India basis before the Parliament I did so. I did so at the earliest opportunity after we became a Republic. I consulted all the States; I considered in detail the measures that existed in all the States for dealing with food adulteration and after having got their agreement and after having taken the best parts of the existing Acts I brought forward this measure before the Lok Sabha. It was introduced in November 1952 and in 1953 came before a Select Committee and the Select Committee worked extremely hard and it was again put before the House in April 1953. Unfortunately I have been blamed for letting it lie for so long in the Lok Sabha. But I may say that I did my very best to bring this Bill forward every session, but unfortunately the Members of the House gave priority to other Bills and hence it was only before this session that I went to the Prime Minister myself and asked him to give this Bill first priority in this session and he agreed and now I have the great privilege of having had the Bill go through a Select Committee, considered in detail by the Lok Sabha and of bringing it now before this House and I hope, before this House rises this afternoon, this Bill will be on the Statute Book of India because I consider it very very necessary that it should go there. Now everybody has said that it is necessary to have means for checking adulteration, but many Members have raised various points, and while I am very glad to have their reactions, what pains me more than anything is the doubts that have been expressed as to whether a measure like this is going to meet with success. I know that legislation alone can never rid society of any evil that exists, but legislation is one of the means of providing society with the knowledge that if any member of that society indulges in committing a crime—and food adulteration, I think, is a crime against humanity, especially in a poor country where our people

are undernourished and malnourished as it is,—he will be brought to book. It really is a wicked thing to adulterate the little food that they get. I say that legislation also is necessary, but it is not legislation alone that is going to eradicate the evil. I want the sympathy and the active support of every member of this House and of the Lower House and in fact of every human being in our country to help us to get rid of this evil. I am not one of those who is going to say that every one of us is dishonest. It cannot be. I like to believe that the large majority of our people are honest, but if a few dishonest people are working havoc, well, they must be brought to book, and I hope that, with this legislation and the powers that have been conferred on those who are going to administer this Act, both individuals and State Governments, great deal will be possible to be done. The social workers in particular have got to welcome this measure and have got to go out of their way to see to it that the offenders are brought to book.

Now some members have said that the powers given to the food inspectors are too many and some have said that they are not enough. It makes me feel more certain than ever that perhaps the Bill has given the *via media* which it ought to give. After all, your food inspectors must have powers. They must have sufficient powers. But the vendor also has to be protected against the misuses of those powers and hence that clause which has been criticised by some, that is clause 10, sub-clause (9), has been put in. At least it is a wholesome deterrent on the food inspector from harassing anybody. I think it is absolutely necessary. Many members of this House themselves, Mr. Deputy Chairman, have said: "Well, we are only putting into the market, so to speak, further inspectors who go round and are in league with all dishonest persons." Well, we cannot do everything for everybody, and however fool-proof a Bill may be, there are always lacunae and if a person is bent on doing wrong, he can generally find some way of doing it. But I feel that this clause, while giving him the powers, is very necessary to guard against any misuse of the powers conferred on him. Clause 22 protects him and protects everybody for

having done something in good faith. Some members also said that detection at source is very necessary. I entirely agree and there is nothing in this Bill to prevent the State Governments from inspecting everything that is made for food at source. There is no reason at all why they should not inspect every production that is made in any mill that pertains to food and see to it that it is pure, and when it is impure the people there should be caught. Sir, I think it is very necessary that wherever food is manufactured or food is produced, it should be inspected at source.

Now, I am not going to say that the villager is more honest than the townsman because I myself fairly recently caught some villagers who bring milk into Delhi. I found them with their milk cans and I stopped them. They did not know who I was. I asked them to show me the milk and obviously it was adulterated—and adulterated with dirty water. I asked them: 'How do you do it? Are there no food inspectors going round and checking?' They said to me quite plainly that the more the food inspectors the more adulterated the milk will be. Therefore dishonesty is there with everybody. I know that economic conditions have something to do with it and it is, as one Member rightly said, a question of trying to make a little money from whichever source it can be made. Education of course is extremely necessary and therefore it is that I want the association of the public with this measure and if I can have that association, I have no doubt that we shall be able to make something of it. As far as education is concerned, we are trying from the Health Ministry as far as possible to educate the people but education is a different thing because, as I said, a poor man may have to turn anywhere in order to fill his pockets. But I have no doubt that as our economic standards improve---and I am quite sure they will improve—we shall go ahead. We shall not be poor all the time and gradually with legislation like this and with social work increasing and every member taking a more live interest in these things the situation—the very sad situation as it is today—will improve.

In regard to the vendors, some members have said that the vendors are too much protected while others have said that it is they who will be sent to jail and the real culprits will get off. Well, I see no reason to fear that the real culprits will get off. All depends on the efficiency and on the integrity with which this Act is administered and here I would like to say that it is not the Centre that can be responsible for the administration of this Act. It is the States that are responsible and I shall do all in my power in this framing of the rules and in the advice that I give to the States to ask them to frame such rules as will make it possible for them not only to get hold of the smaller vendors and punish them but really go to the very root of the problem and get hold of these big business people who are doing these things and filling their pockets. I know that the machinery that exists today is both inadequate and not up to the mark and members here as well as in the Lok Sabha have rightly stressed this point that unless we have food inspectors of first-class calibre we are not going to get anywhere. Many members have recommended raised salaries for the food inspectors. I entirely agree with them and that is one of the suggestions that I am going to make to the State Governments that unless they have food inspectors who are above reproach they are not going to be able to make anything of this measure. Some members have said that there is very little centralisation, if at all. The Central Committee also has been criticised. The administration of the measure will be absolutely in the hands of the States. In regard to the Central Committee, members have criticised it on the basis that it is a body that is not representative of the consumer and that after all it is the consumer who would really be able to advise the Government better. Now if you turn round to the clause which appoints this Committee, it will be seen that the Central Committee is really more or less a technical Committee consisting of scientific experts and experienced administrative personnel and consumers can be represented by the nominees of the State Governments. The experts to be nominated by the Central Government also need not always be further technical personnel. Moreover, if you turn to sub-clause (5) of clause 3, the Committee may appoint such and so many sub-committees as it deems fit and may appoint

to them persons who are not members of the Committee to exercise such powers and perform such duties as may, subject to such conditions, if any, as the Committee may impose, be delegated to them by the Committee. And I am quite sure that on these sub-committees the States and the Centre will nominate non-officials and representatives of consumers who will be able to bring their difficulties before the Government.

In regard to punishment, again there have been varying opinions. Some have said that the punishment is too heavy, others have said it is too little. I am one of those who believe that no punishment is really severe enough for people who commit such dreadful crimes and, therefore, I have no doubt in my mind that I shall certainly ask the States that when anybody is caught, there must be no such thing as fine, because they make such a lot of money that they do not feel the penalty of fine as a punishment at all, but that there should be imprisonment and I feel that if a certain number are imprisoned in every State—even though they may be small vendors because they also know what they are doing; in fact there is no man who does not know that he is committing a crime against humanity when he is mixing water with milk or when he is adulterating ghee—it will have a good effect. And what is more, if he is the servant of a big businessman we can get to know who that businessman is and there is no reason why the big businessmen also should not be punished. For the second offence, there is no option at all. It has got to be fine and imprisonment. First offenders are always everywhere let off more lightly.

Now, one or two members have suggested whipping. I do not like to ever suggest that corporal punishment should be undertaken by any enlightened Government. All enlightened Governments are giving it up and I would be the last person to feel that corporal punishment is going to be more deterrent; and if it is, it does not reflect well on society. Criticism was also levelled that drugs and food should go together. As you know, I brought forward quite recently the Drugs Bill. Drugs and food cannot very well go together because the persons who are required to look into drug adulteration have to be trained

pharmacists and because we have got a Drugs Act and a Food Act, it is as well to keep the two separate.

Then I was told that this Bill was modelled on the British Act completely. I would like to say to the hon. member who said that this Bill was modelled on the British Act completely that it is not true, because we sent for Acts from practically every country which has these Acts. Similar Acts exist in the U.S.A., in Canada, in New Zealand, in Australia and all these were consulted in addition to the Food Adulteration Acts which exist in our own country. So it was not modelled by any means on any one Act.

Now, one point has been raised which has commended itself to me greatly, namely, where are we going to get enough analysts from and will they be available? Will enough laboratories be available? It is a very difficult question. I would like to inform the House that we have facilities now for training analysts in Calcutta; we have facilities in Madras and, I believe, in Bombay also, so that analysts can be trained and I hope very much that the State Governments will see to it that there are analysts and laboratories—at any rate, to begin with—in every division and, as soon as possible, in every district, so that it will not be difficult for the food that has been seized to be taken to nearby laboratories and to be analysed. Some hon. members thought that the central laboratory was going to be the only laboratory. Well, I would like to say that the central laboratory is only the appellate authority, that is to say, if there is any appeal to come from the laboratories in the States, that comes up to the Centre.

The question of Panchayats was raised. I entirely agree that Panchayats also should come in, but if members will turn to the clause which refers to local authority, on page 3—clause 2, sub-clause (viii) (2), "any other local area, such authority as may be prescribed by the State Government under this Act", they will see that it includes Panchayats; it also includes district boards, because every State has not got the same local authority, and I shall myself send a directive to the States that they shall include Panchayats wherever they consider the

Panchayat is competent to deal with this question. I have no doubt that that should be so.

Now, much was made about Government servants—why Government servants have not been brought in whereas companies have been. Well, in this regard I would like to say that the different authorities by whom the different provisions of the Act will be worked out are specified in the various clauses of the Bill, though the overall control will be vested in the State Government. Because, under the Constitution, the executive power in relation to a matter in the Concurrent List is vested in the State Government, unless it is otherwise provided by the Constitution or by any law made by Parliament. And in the present Bill ample powers have been reserved for the Central Government, e.g., in clause 23, clause 3, clause 4 and other clauses. Then, the principle of criminal law is that whoever commits an offence is liable to be punished. Now, the doctrine of vicarious liability, I am advised by my legal advisers, has little applicability in criminal law and, therefore, "company" in the eyes of law is a legal person having rights and obligations like an individual. But a company has no mind and it cannot have any guilty mind and moreover physical punishment like imprisonment cannot be inflicted on a company. We can only fine a company and, therefore, where the manager or director of a company is found to be guilty of an offence under the Act, he has to be punished. Hence, the provisions here have been made in order to bring big business into the picture. But in the case of the Government, Government is not a legal person, and an employee of the Government who commits a crime, does not, cannot commit it on behalf of the Government, because the Government surely cannot and will not ever authorise its employees to commit crimes. Therefore, Government employees are personally liable, as I said before when I intervened, and it cannot be Government that is liable for their actions.

In regard to clause 10 (9), I was told that provisions like this do not exist in any other Act. Now, I may say that similar provisions are to be found in the Dangerous Drugs Act, 1930, the Central Excise Act and the Salt Act and the Provisions are

necessary in order to check the activities of an over-zealous inspector.

I was also told that in clause 8 I should not have the word "may", but that I should make it obligatory and the word "shall" should be used. But I may say that this is a power conferred upon the State Governments and that is the language always used when a power of appointment is conferred. Therefore, I may say that limited language has to be used, but generally it is natural that in such cases the power to appoint is coupled with the obligation to appoint and so the language as it stands is all right.

Now, another objection that has been raised is that the definition of "adulteration" is vague. I think if it is studied carefully, under clause 2(i) right up to (1), it is really all-inclusive and I do not think that anybody can say that if he goes to buy milk, for example—because milk was stressed and I agree with hon. members who stressed the importance of milk, after all, milk is a protective food and a body-building food, and if our children cannot get unadulterated milk, our nation is going to be nowhere. No one buys milk except with the idea that it is pure milk—if it is adulterated milk, if it can be proved that it is adulterated, well that man can be hauled up. Simply because water is added to milk and it may not be injurious to health, it does not mean that it is not covered by this Bill. It does come under the description "or is not of the nature, substance or quality which it purports or is represented to be" or, again, under sub-clause 2(i) (1) "if the quality or purity of the article falls below the prescribed standard or its constituents are present in quantities which are in excess of the prescribed limits of variability" and we shall prescribe standards in our rules. So I do not think that we need have any fear as to the vagueness of this particular definition.

Now, as regards "panchayat" for food inspectors, after a great deal of discussion in the Lok Sabha, it was decided that the food inspector—in order to protect him and protect the offender—should have two witnesses and I think it is a

healthy idea. I accepted the amendment and thought that it was a suggestion worth accepting.

Then, in regard to seizure of the article, an hon. Member raised the point and I might draw his attention to clause 11 (4) where a very full description is given:

"An article of food seized under sub-section (4) of section 10, shall be produced before a magistrate as soon as possible."

Delays are always bad where food is concerned and, therefore, as often as not the action that has to be taken must be taken as speedily as possible.

Then, clause 12 empowers the purchaser himself to take samples. Somebody said that it will only be the food inspectors that will be able to prosecute. No. This power has also been given to the purchasers, so that there is every opportunity for the public to co-operate with the authorities. And I have no doubt that the State Governments will never withhold their consent to prosecution in cases where they feel that the case that is being put up is an honest or a *bona fide* one, because, after all, food adulteration is a perfect menace to them.

The question as to how long it would take this Government to produce wholesome food and give it to the public was asked. Well, can Government give any guarantee about that? But, if we can bring about the stoppage of adulteration of food, at any rate, wholesome food can be given to the public. And it may be that if the States cannot remedy this evil, they may want to have shops of their own. And I have no doubt in my mind that States should encourage co-operatives, because I think that if we can have an honest co-operative effort, that would be one very good way of getting rid of this terrible evil, and if the States have their own shops, certainly it might also be an excellent way of seeing that the general public gets what it wants.

Now, Sir, I think, I have more or less answered all the points that were raised. One member thought that clause 22 would cut across clause 12. But I do not think so at all,

because clause 22 gives protection to acts done in good faith, and clause 10(9) provides for punishment for the food inspector. So, the one by no means cuts across the other.

While 'saying' all this, I would once again like to admit that no amount of legislation is going to rid us of the evil but I have hopes that it will be possible to help to check the evil and gradually to rid the country of it. Very few amendments have been put up. Most of them are the ones that were put up more or less on the same lines in the Lok Sabha. They were discussed and I was unable to accept any of them. I am very anxious that this measure, having been fully discussed in the Select Committee, fully discussed in the Lok Sabha, and now fully discussed in the Rajya Sabha, should be passed as it stands, so that it may come on the Statute Book as early as possible\*.

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\*Later, the motion to pass the Prevention of Food Adulteration Bill, 1954 was adopted on 14 September, 1954.

## Animal Welfare

### 38. Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Bill· 1959\*

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Mr. Deputy Chairman, thank you for giving me just three or four minutes to say what I have to say in regard to Chapter IV of the Report. Sir, I have been a great lover of animals all my life and almost every day I have been trying to do something to prevent cruelty to animals in the city of Delhi. But I am very alarmed at the way the Government wants to legislate for all kinds of evils, without due reference really to what this legislation will mean in the way of harassment of people.

We want social reform. We want to convert people to our way of thinking. But how many of us are willing to go and see every day of our lives how animals are being ill-treated or rushed about overloaded and raced along the roads? I mean, how many of us have tried to stop it? None of the Members of Parliament is seen to be doing these things.

Today I am going to say a few words on experimentation on animals and in that connection I would like to support every word that has fallen from the lips of Dr. Gour.

Sir, I do not feel that sentiment should override reason in this matter. We all know that any amount of good has accrued to humanity because of scientific experimentation on animals. I dislike vivisection and I do not know whether I could do it myself. But I have to recognise, the good that accrues from it. Therefore, I was a little alarmed when I read this clause 15, and

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\*Speaking on the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Bill 1959. (R.S. Deb., 1 March, 1960, cc. 2301—4).

still more alarmed when I heard the Minister say that this Committee would be appointed straightway. What does this mean? It means that you do not trust your medical personnel in your Colleges to be humane to animals. I should say that they are far more humane than anybody else.

For ten years I was the Minister of Health. Out of the medical institutions that I visited in the whole of this country, where scientific experiments are conducted, there was not a single institution where there were bad housing conditions or where cruelty was inflicted, and I do not want our students to be cramped by any of the clauses that come in this Bill. I would say that this Committee should not be constituted.

If you were not satisfied, you could always bring it to the notice of the people there and could have insisted upon their improving the condition of the houses where the animals were kept. I agree that very often air-conditioning is not there, and other things are not there. But do not say that you have got to have a committee to control experiments. I am terrified by that word "control" and I would beg of the hon. Minister to remove that word from clause 15. I mean there is so much good that is being done and you will be harassing people.

Whosoever might have been consulted, I have every right to put forward my views. Whether Dr. Gilder or any officer of the Health Ministry<sup>1</sup> agreed or not, I have nothing to say about that.

Sub-clause (2) (e) of clause 17 says:—

"that experiments on larger animals are avoided when it is possible to achieve the same results by experiments upon small laboratory animals like guinea-pigs, rabbits and rats;"

Well, it is very difficult for me to enter into the pros and cons

<sup>1</sup>Clarifying the intervention of Shri N.R. Malkhani about his apprehension that conditions of animal houses were unsatisfactory.

Speaking on the point raised by Shrimati Rukmani Devi Arundale about whether a representative of the Health Ministry was consulted and the approval of the report obtained from Dr. Gilder.

of this sub-clause. But there is no doubt that we have to have bigger animals for experiments. Why should an experiment on a guinea-pig be any less cruel according to those people who do not want experiments at all, than an experiment on a dog? I do not see the logic of this clause at all. If it is all right to experiment on guinea-pigs, rabbits and rats, then why not on other animals? Why are these poor things supposed to suffer less? What I wish to say is that so far as the experimentation on animals is concerned, I am not in favour of harassment of either the medical or scientific personnel. That is all I am afraid of here.

I agree with Dr. Gour on all that he said on one or two other clauses also, but in particular with Chapter IV. A lot of good has accrued to humanity by experimentation on animals and I would beg of the hon. Minister to go very very slowly about the appointment of this Committee and remove sub-clauses (e) and (f) of clause 11. For the rest, you can always say that animal houses should be air-conditioned and the animals should be well looked after. I have no doubt in my own mind that as far as experimentation is concerned, it is always carried out in a humane manner. Why should we go farther than other countries where they take so much care of animals, where they are far more looked after and where there is far less cruelty to animals? Our country is bad, I know, worse than most, but this is with regard to the other animals, not in the matter of experimentation of animals.

Therefore, I would beg of the Minister to consider Chapter IV very very carefully before he acts on it.

I have said that all those hindrances should go and I do not believe in a lay Committee looking into and controlling and supervising scientific experiments. I also do not believe in legislating against experimentation for scientific purposes. I object very strongly to it.

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\*Speaking further on the point raised by Dr. R.B. Gour's observations that experiments were not performed merely for acquiring of manual skill.

## CORRIGENDA

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Read</i>
24	7 from bottom	tasted	tastes
45	10 from bottom	Particularly in late	particularly late
63	9 from bottom	Nor	Not
68	14	ancedotes	anecdotes
70	10 from bottom	converst	converse
73	10	alchohlism	alcoholism
73	17	As in inmate	As an inmate
92	3	Damands	Demands
94	9	Tondon	Tandon
95	5 from bottom	Austrain	Austrian
107	11 from bottom	more that	more than
147	5	generally	general
177	1 from bottom	only be	only by
209	8 from bottom	of the any	of any
209	5	spend on	spent on
316	10	brough	brought.