

(vii) PROBLEMS OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

PROF. RUP CHAND PAL (Hooghly): The All India Federation of University and College Teachers' Organisations representing more than one lakh college and University teachers of our country has organized a mass deputation to Parliament today, the 4th August, 1980, to press their demands and urge upon the Central Government to expedite a solution to the problems in the field of education in general and higher education in particular. Various discussions with competent authorities in the past failed to satisfy them.

The major demands of the college and University teachers of our country include:

- (1) Review and revision of the existing scales of pay for college and University teachers.
- (2) Abolition of anomalies existing in respect of State Universities and Central Universities in the matter of allowances and perquisites and full neutralisation of rise in cost of living index.
- (3) Statutory security of service for all teachers.
- (4) Representation of AIFUCTO in UGC, CABE and Education Panel of the Planning Commission.
- (5) Lecturer's scale for Librarians and DPEs and upgradation of Demonstrators and Tutors.
- (6) Democratisation of Managing and Governing Bodies of Colleges and Universities.
- (7) Common cadre of teachers for 2nd and 3rd stages of education.

The Central Government is urged to immediately take into consideration the very just demands of the All India Federation of University and

College Teachers' Organisations and take all suitable steps at an early date to find out a solution to the grave problems facing the college and University teachers of our country.

(viii) REPORTED DEFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF TELEPHONE SYSTEM IN CALCUTTA

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): It is reported that Shri C. M. Stephen, the Communications Minister, went to Calcutta last weekend. He came to know that telephone subscribers of Calcutta are in great difficulty as many sets do not function at all or seldom function. Besides, it has been admitted time and again that there was technical defect in the Calcutta telephone system. Sometimes the telephones hardly served any purpose because of incessant defects and lack of attention. The telephone has become nightmarish, because for the dead sets also the subscribers are given bills for fantastic amounts. It is also happening in cases of MPs.

A subscriber pays a rental of Rs. 200 or so for the installation and a certain number of calls. The authorities lose sight of the fact that the installation has to be a living one and not a dead one, and only then he can claim for the rentals. Telephones, particularly, for public utility purposes and organisations have become an inseparable part of life in a civilised society, and when there are such widespread complaints, the Minister of Communications, instead of meeting and rectifying them, told the subscribers in Calcutta. "If you don't want the telephone, then give it back."

There are many cases when the courts have restrained the telephone authorities. The Communications Minister should clarify his utterance before the House.

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI C. M. STEPHEN): Mr. Chairman, Sir ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Out of respect for you, he is not only here but he is replying.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Sir, I am always respectful to him ...

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: He is an old friend of mine.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Sir, I am thankful that he has brought up this matter as it gives me an opportunity to clarify this question which came up in the Rajya Sabha last week—the Calcutta Telephone system, where incidentally one Member demanded that if a telephone is not working for a time, proportionately the rental must be paid back and he must be given a rebate. On that I said that it was not a contract. But he insisted and I told in the Rajya Sabha that if this is the basis on which the telephone is wanted, then the telephone will not be available. It is an option open to him—to either keep the telephone or surrender it. That is the only matter.

When I went to Calcutta, this question again came up and I again explained and said in the background of the demand for a rebate ...

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Jadavpur): You were very angry.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: No, I was not angry. In the background of the demand for rebate, I said on the basis of rebate telephone services cannot be available and if that is the basis, then it is open to those members, whoever they be, to surrender the telephone. Next day the papers carried the news that I said, 'Surrender the telephone if service is unsatisfactory' That was not what I said. I immediately called a Press Conference and explained that this was the background.

If the complaint is that the service is not satisfactory, my position is that we won up that the service is not satisfactory to the extent it must be, I told them—because there are so many difficulties and our duty is to make it as satisfactory as possible. We have got a responsibility

to attend to them and this responsibility we own up.

And then, in Calcutta, I also explained that there are three factors—(1) certain factors which are beyond us, (2) certain factors which are within us like rectification, etc. which will take a long time and (3) certain factors which can immediately be rectified—digging, going into the pit cutting the cable and all that and that is taking place. Sometimes thefts take place of the cable and this is a matter which is beyond us.

Now, the aged machine and the aged cable have got to be replaced. This is a matter within us but subject to the availability of the instruments we are now going ahead with it. This is the second factor.

In spite of all that, I am of the opinion that even subject to these constraints, if a hard effort is made by the workers and the staff, a better service can be given. I called the staff and the workers and talked to them. I talked to the officers also and I have told them that we have got a responsibility to the public to see that this is done and I only want to clarify that my statement that the telephone may be surrendered is only against the background of the demand that there must be a rebate. I explained that that sort of an arrangement obtains nowhere in the world because the telephone service has got an inherent risk of becoming dead at times and remaining so for a time and it is on that basis that arrangements are made to rectify it and it may take time according to the weather and the cable that has to be rectified.

In Calcutta, if the telephone goes out of order by a cable break, we must obtain the permission of the Government or the Corporation before we dig up the road and go down. All this takes time. The Government is cooperating. I must own it. With all that, the whole city is being dug up for the metropolitan railways. So many things are taking place. Every-

[Shri C. M. Stephen]

body knows that there is a weak link in the cable. Everybody can just jump on it and take away my cable. That is the difficulty with which I am grappling. In spite of that, in Calcutta, per day, 11,000 trunk telephones mature; per day 2½ lakhs of local calls mature in Calcutta; per day 1½ lakhs of STD units mature. In spite of all this, it can still be bettered. Every effort will be made to better it. That was the purpose of my visit. I told the staff and the officers. I also met the Merchant Chambers and explained the matter to them. I can assure my friend, Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu and other friends in Calcutta that no *malafide* was intended by that. It was not that I was challenging.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: No flippancy either.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: No flippancy either. Before I close, let me thank Mr. Bosu for giving me this opportunity to explain.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Mr. Stephen is a lawyer. He knows one thing. A man is required to pay the rental of 200 for the instrument which has to be a live one. Suppose the live instrument remains dead for two out of three months, how does he expect to compel the subscribers to pay a rental for a dead instrument? That is my question.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: It is simple. If 16,000 telephones go out of order, my people can put in greater efforts to rectify them. More effort is invested upon it. The money is lying there. I cannot give a return on that. Calculation cannot take place. That never takes places at all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: My only hope is that you will be equally generous and prompt in responding to the requests of other hon. Members.

Now this question would not have been raised had you not been misquoted by the press to a large extent. I hope on this particular occasion your clarification will be reported

correctly and there would be no room whatsoever for your repeating *ad nauseum* what you have said here.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: There is no discrimination. Shrimati Sahi also raised some point concerning this. Let that also be attended to. It did not appear in the papers. Only Mr. Bosu's notice is there. I shall assure her that that matter is also taken on hand. If what she said is correct, it is an omission. That will be rectified.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now we move on to the next item.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI (Bombay North West): Before that, I have one matter under 377 to raise. The hon. Speaker permitted me to raise it. I saw him in his Chamber.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You want to speak.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: I want to raise the point under 377.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It has been listed for tomorrow.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Be generous to me. Give me that chance to-day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I do not know the background. It has been listed for tomorrow. I cannot do that.

13.40 hrs.

RESOLUTIONS RE: RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE—Contd.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up further consideration of the following Resolutions moved by Shri Kamalapati Tripathi on 1-8-1980 re: the Railway Convention Committee.

(1) "That this House do resolve that a Parliamentary Committee consisting of 12 members of this House, to be nominated by the Speaker, be appointed to review the rate of dividend which is at present payable by the Railway Undertaking to General Revenue as well as other ancillary matters