

17.01 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE. STEPS FOR SPEEDY IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROGRAMME

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA (Tumkur): Sir, I beg to move:

"Keeping in view the vital need for speedy implementation of the socio-economic programme of the Government, this House recommends the setting up of a monitoring body under the Government to constantly watch the progress of the different developmental activities at all levels, locate the factors hampering the progress and suggest immediate and remedial measures to expedite their implementation."

Sir, this Resolution is based on the need for speedy socio-economic changes of our society.

In support of my resolution, I would take you back to the history of our freedom struggle. The object and goal of our freedom struggle was to establish an egalitarian society and to ensure justice to the people as now envisaged in the Constitution. If I have to trace the history of the functioning of democratic system, I will have to go back to the days of freedom struggle and the period after the establishment of democratic set-up in this country.

Recently, our Prime Minister has emphasised the need to bring about socio-economic revolutionary changes in this country promptly. Very recently, the Cabinet Secretariat has directed all the Secretaries to submit within two months comprehensive papers identifying constraints, inter-ministerial squabbles delaying major decisions and policy suggestions aimed at increasing productivity and quickening the process of decision making. This directive followed the Prime Minister's meeting with the Secretaries held a few months back. The Prime Minister's directive is very relevant. There is nothing wrong with the democratic system, but it is only the bureaucracy and its operations, which are really difficult to understand.

For the last thirty-five years since our independence, the speed of our developmental activities and the socio-economic changes has been directed by the political decisions. Political freedom envisages transformation of the society in the socio-economic field and the liberation of the people from the stranglehold of poverty, and to make the country progress quickly. This is the spirit behind my resolution and this is the spirit behind our Constitution.

17.07 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

I would be failing in my duty if I do not pay a glorious tribute to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who made history by introducing the concept of planning in our country. We have had a number of Plans, Resolutions and endless discussions for the last thirty-five years, but still something is needed for the speedy implementation of the socio-economic programmes. I would like to bring out a few important points so far as the implementation of the various programmes by the bureaucracy, the implementing agencies, is concerned.

As I said, there was nothing wrong with the democratic system in our country, but the most crucial and important factor was how to bring about proper and speedy implementation of the various programmes, and how to work it. Our Prime Minister very recently, addressing an orientation seminar on parliamentary practices gave a call to turn red tape into green. This is what appeared in the *M. P. Chronicle* Bhopal under the heading 'Turn red tape into green' on the 21st January, 1981:

"Cutting the red tape has an appeal going back to Alexander, but the red tape, unlike the Gordian Knot, we must admit, cannot be cut in one simple stroke."

On the diurnal progress of a file in the Central Secretariat Lord Curzon had a classic withering note. But for all his prodding, Government file had continued to move in a stately fashion from desk to desk. 'Round and round,' said Lord Curzon in a famous minute on the working of the Secretariat, 'like the diurnal

movement of the earth comes the file, steady, solemn, sure and slow; and now, in due season, after it has completed its orbit, I am invited to register the concluding stage. How can I bring home to those who are responsible for this the gravity of their blunder."

Sir, red-tapism and delay in administration is all round these days. Therefore, I would like to say that it is very relevant even today.

Sir, we have taken up very seriously our socio-economic programmes. The Prime Minister of this country has announced that the socio-economic changes in this country have to be brought about through the 20-point programme. This 20-point programme has to be implemented in letter and spirit right from the grass-root level to the highest planning body and also at various stages in the States and State administrations as well as at various grass-root levels in the rural areas.

Sir, there are a number of citations that I can quote. There are a number of decisions taken by the political body while announcing the policy of this country. But Sir, tragedy is that it has not been fully backed by the bureaucratic functioning. So, the question is where do we stand after the political freedom in order to achieve our socio-economic freedom, if there is a roadblock set up by the system of bureaucratic delays and red-tapism? I am here not to criticise the system of bureaucracy, the legacy left over by the British Raj, but I must stress that this system must respond to the social needs, demands and requirements of the society and help in bringing about green revolution, exploit our natural resources to meet the challenges of eradicating poverty from our country. Sir, this is a challenge taken up by the Congress Party as a whole right from the Nehru time and we have taken many progressive decision to achieve our goal. Sir various progressive ideas and ideology have been introduced through the legislations in various States and in this Parliament and have given the shape of statutes and laws. But, Sir, my question

is whether they have been implemented in letter and spirit to change the society? This needs to be examined and probed. It is in this spirit in which I have brought out this resolution for consideration of the House.

Sir, now I would like to go over to the working of the bureaucracy. There is a general feeling that the public administration has deteriorated in its integrity as well as in its efficiency and that the same trend continues. Sir, this is not a criticism. I am levelling against bureaucracy and the bureaucratic system but I am telling you the general feeling that prevails all around. Unless you cut at the root of the cause, the process and the trend set in will not be reversed. And unless we change this trend, our goal of establishment of an egalitarian society will only remain a dream. From this point of view my main criticism is against the administrative delays in implementation of our socio-economic programmes. This can be categorised into three parts; Undue delays and cumbersome procedures in decision-taking, an attitude of apathy and discourtesy in dealing with the public.

Sir, we have been in a democratic set up and in a free society. We have brought out many legislations and handed them over into the hands of the bureaucracy after having got them passed in the State Legislatures and in Parliament. Now, the question is whether we are the grand spectators of the situation or we have got any agency to monitor the situation whether laws have been implemented in letter and spirit for transforming the society in its proper perspective. Sir, we have got the biggest natural resources, we have got long rivers, vast mineral wealth, forest wealth and manpower. But the problem is while our population is increasing, there remains an attitude for delays and red-tapism in administration with the result our economic growth has not kept pace with the pace of our population growth. But we want to cut short delays, and we have to reduce the rate of growth of our population, in order to cope up with the pace of our development programmes, and to bring about socio-economic changes needed in our society. But, unfortunately, our administrative system is not respond-

[Shri K. Lakkappa]

ing to the decision-making body, viz., the political system. So, we want a meaningful change. I would like to quote Mr. C. S. Seshadri in this connection. He says:

"The basic reason for much of the delay in public administration is apart from the political and other general factors, the out-dated equipment and systems. The tendency is to deal routinely without any ideas of priority."

The Planning Minister is here. He wanted to say that there are priorities to be fixed. Let us examine the irrigation problem. Let us take the water policy of the country. We have got long rivers. But the water available is going waste into the sea. All the river disputes have been locked up, and not decided by the bureaucracy. They are held up either in the judicial courts, tribunals or are hanging in the air somewhere. These decision-making bodies go round and round, and take an inordinately long time to come to decisions. It is more than 30 years since we got freedom, but the river disputes have not been settled. The water policy has not been decided. Because of delay in this, irrigation projects have been completely stopped. And as a result, we are not able to achieve Green Revolution, bring about the socio-economic changes and remove poverty among our people. The authorities concerned are unable to get the riparian rights.

This delay can be explained. It is not a delay on the part of the political people. It is the delay on the part of bureaucracy which is hampering the progress of our country. Mr. Seshadri also says:

"The Governments have been aware of the problems of administration for quite some time. The several administrative reforms commissions, the establishment of administrative training institutes and the Government-sponsored Indian Institute of Public Administration are all evidence of the awareness of the problems."

These institutions have been packed with IAS and IPS officers: but even after all this, the administrative services have not taken proper steps to see that delays are wiped out. They have not taken steps to remove the rusty machinery which has been operating for a long time. The establishment of Administrative Training Institutes is not enough. We have had reports of Administrative Reforms Commission; there have been discussions and deliberations. But what has happened as a result? Not much change has been effected in the administrative system. Files are moving at the same snail's speed.

Mr. Seshadri continues to say:

"—these have had little impact as they all tend to think in very general terms and even."

Time and again, there is no politics involved in it. We have to change our society into a democratic way of functioning thereby establishing an egalitarian society, a meaningful free society to utilize our resources with administrative skill and ability and to produce the results and distribute the wealth. There is a plenty of raw-material available, but there is no proper decision-making body to distribute it equally; in this way, administrative delay takes place and we have not produced anything worthwhile for our people.

We may have made profit of Rs. 450 crores through the public sector system if our public sector undertakings are running properly, but they have been incurring heavy losses in various sectors which are being revealed in the Reports of the Estimates Committee, the Public Accounts Committee and the Committee on Public Undertakings. All these Reports show that the old system of red tapism has been created and this results in administrative delay. Therefore, these delays have not been cut short; these delays have not been removed. Unless these things are checked, the transformation of our society will not take place. This present structure is mainly responsible for this red-tapism in our country. The official correspondence involves a tremendous

amount of noting. Our Deputy Secretaries and Joint Secretaries know that our bureaucratic system is very famous for noting and piling up of memoranda which it should not be difficult to reduce. A conversation across a desk may often do away with hours and days of correspondence. The Red Tape is also responsible for much of the present democratic distemper in the country. The test of all methods of re-organisation of administration is whether the end-quickness and efficiency is attained. When a file moves right from the lowest level upto the highest level, it takes a lot of time even for doing a small development activity. Therefore, why should not we have a dialogue with the system and see that the delay is cut short. I repeat what I said earlier that the test of all methods of re-organisation of administration is whether the end-quickness and efficiency is attained. Some may forget the end while vigorously pursuing the means.

After Independence, our civil servants, even those at the highest level, tended only to enforce the system of checks and balances, even extending it to areas where it had not existed before, in order to protect themselves from political criticism and pressure.

Our genius for hair-splitting also led many of the administrators to add new rules to the existing system of checks and balances. Our bureaucratic system of recruitment also plays an important role in absorbing people in the administration through various levels, right from the State level upto the Government level. The appointment to the highest bodies is also there right from the lowest level upto the highest level. They are creating a sort of strong-hold in the administration and it is very difficult to cut the guardian knot. This is a system which the bureaucracy is carrying on even today in the secretariats at various levels, at the State level, even at the grass-root level and upto the highest level. Therefore, what is the sanctity attached to the political system?

Our Prime Minister is very right. That is why she has brought the 20-point programme for transformation of the society. Therefore, we are thinking of bringing

social and economic changes in the society. If we have to do that, then we have to change the system and we must bring about meaningful changes in the administration. It is not a question of one party or the other party. It is the responsibility of the Opposition and the Government. Therefore, there is no question of any difference on this; there is no question of any discrimination, so far as these things are concerned. It is the duty of every citizen of this country to try to bring social and economic transformation in the society. Therefore, the political system and the political decisions have to be backed by the bureaucracy and this part of their working has to be in response to the tune of the political decisions that we take in democratic forums. Our ingenuity in hair splitting has also led many of the administrators to add a new rule to the existing system of checks and balances. The volume on Fundamental Rights has expanded enormously during the last forty years. Every rule is amended after 10 or 12 years; the Criminal Procedure Code is amended, the Indian Penal Code is amended and the Industrial Disputes Act is amended many times and so many amendments have been brought out. And, what is the result? Have those amendments to the rules brought about any change of the structure of the system or has it brought out any change in the society? This has to be judged in the spirit of this resolution. It is paradoxical that very few obsolete and old rules are deleted.

On the other day I was mentioning about the political development we have achieved. We have enormous resources in each Ministry and Department today. Take for example, our telephone system. It has been stated that our Telephone Department still is a status symbol and some rules of the British time are in operation in it. I mentioned that these rules must be changed, But still merely the Department goes on with those rules. Therefore, certain changes are very necessary for a speedy implementation of the economic programme. The first task is to improve administrative efficiency, and to set in motion a process of removing obsolete and unnecessary procedures. But the administrators go on attending con-

[Shri K. Lakkappa]

ferences, like the inter-State conferences, inner-ministerial conferences, inter-political conferences but no effective changes are made in the system. That is why they are exposed to detailed scrutiny, to ensure that obsolete or unnecessary procedures are deleted. What is the detailed scrutiny we have got today? What is the machinery that we have got for scrutiny today? Through the Planning Commission we have sanctioned thousands and thousands of crores of rupees for drinking water, for the improvement of the villages, for industrial growth, for irrigation projects, for electricity, and so on. But, state-members from both sides complain here that their villages have not been electrified, that there are no roads and wells in their villages and so on. What are the EDO's doing? What are the Secretaries doing? What are the officers doing? There is no provision to monitor the political system. The politicians bring resolutions, bring suggestions to change the system of adult franchise, to make it more functional saying that they have no powers. That has become a Utopia. We make a speech and when we go to our villages we find that there is no water, that there are no roads. That is because the suggestions are in the files with the officers and the officers are thinking of amendments to the legislation made by us. After legislating the Acts, we hand over them to the administrators and we are at the mercy of those people. And thus, the people have to wait for years together, to get the fruits of that legislation. The people have to go to those officers for justice. Therefore, this change in the administrative system is very vital. I am not criticising the bureaucrats. I am not criticising keeping anybody in mind.

SHRI SUNIL MAITRA: Then, what is it you are criticising?

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: I say that the system has to be developed. I am not criticising the bureaucrats.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: He is criticising the system.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: I think you do not believe in it. I know it. They do not believe in that because their system

is different. They do not believe in democracy. They only believe in bloodshed and violence. When it suits them, they will say that they are democrat. But we know how they are teaching the people and how people are suffering in those areas.

Another point is that there should be a periodic check on seats of heavy work loads. Random checks of public counters at the busiest hour of the day should be obligatory for supervisory officers. They should re-deploy staff to meet unusually heavy, but temporary, loads at a particular country. Additional counters should be promptly provided if the load is expected to be permanent.

Rationalisation of the administrative machinery in all the offices is a must. What have we done? We have just added on more persons in the offices. The result is that there is more bureaucratic delay. So, the need of the hour is to rationalise the recruitment system and at the delays to the minimum. Checks and counter checks have to be made in various Departments of the Government to see whether there are administrative delays.

We have taken lot of steps in many directions, particularly supply of power and functioning of the Electricity Boards. In various States we have been monitoring the performance of the Electricity Boards, which are sustaining losses. We are toning up the organisational set up of not only hydro-electric power stations but also thermal and nuclear power stations. But it is for the entire system to see that it functions properly, the electricity produced in various States is distributed equitably and is utilised for the growth of the country, both industrially as well as agriculturally. Even today there is an imbalance in the power sector. In some sectors it is in plenty and some others are just starving. Therefore, we want to bring about a meaningful change in the administrative machinery so that there is a better utilisation of our infra-structure, raw materials and natural resources and proper distribution of the end products.

Civil servants are unable to feel the pulse of the people or to sympathise with their difficulties. They do not understand the sorts of communalism, the pernicious nature of caste antagonism, or rural agriculture's basic needs. Consequently, the bureaucracy has ceased to operate as an effective force for progressive change. Today ameliorating the socio-economic conditions of the poorest people is very necessary under a time bound programme. But the most inexperienced people have been put in jobs for achieving these results. This is the system which prevents it. This is a system where the administration is manned by people who are not trained for it. Many of the public undertakings in the industrial sector are not manned by the technical people who are trained for it, but only by the rule-minded IAS officers, who will take decision on technical matters. This is happening in spite of the fact that Madam Prime Minister stated several times that technical men should be drafted into such organisations to bring about a meaningful impact into the system by introducing administrative reforms and wiping out administrative delays, leading to quick results.

Many people have been trained for running the bureaucracy. Officers are sent abroad for higher qualifications and training so that science and technology can be developed in this country. But it is very vital to know whether those trained people have been put into that organisation for which they have been trained so that administrative delays in the matter of industrial growth and stagnation in industrial production are removed by bringing about revolutionary changes, especially in this Year of Productivity.

Though these changes are absolutely necessary, it is an unfortunate fact that many of the public sector undertakings are run by people who are not trained for that purpose and this causes administrative delays. So, the entire system has to be changed to suit the economic realities of the country. There has to be an over-hauling of the system of training with a view to inculcating the humanist so outlook in the trainees officers so that they do not feel that they are aliens but part

and parcel of the democratic system.

Every officer has to be imbued with the democratic spirit and will for the political transformation of the society, as envisaged in the Constitution. Unless our officers are imbued with that spirit, all the suggestions given by the Administrative Reforms Commission and all the training now given will be a farce. Therefore, there has to be a new spirit of devotion to duty, devotion to the people, devotion to an understanding of the socio-economic change and a communion of understanding has to be introduced in the system of recruitment, training and operation.

The UPSC and the Indian Academy of Administration have to evolve a system of recruitment and training where the officers have a spirit of understanding of the realities of the situation of the society where they are going to be posted. The officers posted at the District, State and Central level should have a spirit of devotion, sacrifice and identifying themselves with the people. Instead of doing that, we are blindly following the recruitment and training policy which we inherited from the British days, which was meant for an entirely different purpose.

Therefore, every attempt has to be made to see that the training of the officers is in tune with the socio-economic changes which we want to bring about in the country. The officers should feel a spirit of communion with the people and they should be imbued with the spirit of sacrifice. This is necessary throughout the administration, from the grass root level to the highest level. Unless this spirit is there, the people will find that they are at the mercy of these officers. The decision taking is in their hands. We are at their mercy. And this is backed by political system.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Lakkappa, you can continue next time.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: Investigative reporting...

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You can continue next time.

Now, we will take up **Half-an-Hour** discussion. Mr. B. V. Desai—Absent.

17.41 hours.

The House stands adjourned till 11 AM. on 16th instant.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, August 16, 1982/Sravana 25, 1904 (Saka).