

the largest minority of the country, namely, Muslims, had been appointed as chairman of the Minorities Commission. The failure has brought much disappointment in its wake.

It is also necessary that the Minorities Commission be given an independent and constitutional status. These and other factors have resulted in much discontentment, particularly among the Muslims. While I appeal to all to cooperate fully with the Commission so that there is a positive response to a grave and challenging task, I fervently appeal to this House and the Government, both, to consider and meet the thoughts, feelings and sentiments of the largest minority of the country and to be true to the primary objective of the commission, namely, to provide a really effective institutional arrangement.

(v) LIQUOR POISONING CASES IN DELHI

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI (Chirayinkil): Under rule 377 may I draw the attention of the House and the government to the tragedy of liquor poisoning which has taken away the lives of ten persons in the Capital. The incident is not an isolated one. It is happening in different parts of the country on different occasions due to the large scale network of manufacture and distribution of illicit liquor. The illicit liquor is very injurious and it causes death of many persons every year. Yet people, especially the poor, resort to the consumption of illicit liquor, hooch, in a big way and it is freely available at a cheap rate. Unfortunately the government and the authorities could not break the empire of the gangsters vending illicit liquor.

The Delhi tragedy is a clear expression of the failure of the authorities to check illicit liquor distribution. There is a suspicion among the people that a section of the police are also in connivance with the culprits. The whole tragedy throws light on the underground world of illicit liquor and everyone has to think over prohibition policy. The policy of prohibition is very ideal and spiritual. But at the same time in a vast country like India it seems that it is impossible to enforce the law of prohibition especially when different sections of society drink by custom and religion. Prohibition should not be a matter of force or compulsion. It is to be through persuasion and education of the people. The present policy of the government can only encourage large scale manufacture of illicit liquor

and distribution which always ends in tragedy every year.

So the government has to review the policy of prohibition with reality and initiate a national debate on prohibition and evolve a consensus before enforcing it by law. May I take this opportunity to appeal to the Government and also to the Prime Minister who is present here and who is very much interested in Prohibition to take all steps to prevent the manufacture, distribution and consumption of illicit liquor ?

13.05 hrs

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS, 1978-79—contd.

MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY

MR. SPEAKER : The House will now take up discussion and voting on Demand Nos. 58 to 61 relating to the Ministry of Industry for which nine hours have been allotted.

Sarvashri Vasant Kumar Pandit, Shibban Lal Saksena and K.A. Rajan have tabled cut motions to the Demands for Grants relating to the Ministry of Industry. I would like to know if they are present in the House and desire to move their cut motions.

SHRI K. A. RAJAN (Trichur) : I am moving my cut motion.

MR. SPEAKER : Motion moved :

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts on Revenue Account and Capital Account shown in the fourth column of the Order Paper be granted to the President out of the Consolidated Fund of India to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1979, in respect of the heads of demands entered in the second column thereof against Demands Nos. 58 to 61 relating to the Ministry of Industry."