

करें, वरना वे इस गद्दी पर बैठने वाले नहीं रहेंगे और न स्वतन्त्र पार्टी वाले बैठेंगे। वे धनी पार्टी के लोग हैं। जब सरकार मुनाफाखोरों की धरपकड़ कर रही है, तो जनसंघ के भाई कहते हैं कि उन्हें क्यों पकड़ा जा रहा है।

सरकार को पहले अपने खर्च में कमी करनी चाहिये। वह मिनिस्ट्रों, राष्ट्रपति और गवर्नरों प्रादि के खर्च और तनख्वाहों में कमी करे। वह उन की तनख्वाहों को जनता के समकक्ष लाये, वरना काम नहीं चलने वाला है। सरकार ने जो लैंड सीलिंग रखा है, उसी के समकक्ष सब का स्टैंडर्ड आफ लिविंग होना चाहिये, चाहे राष्ट्रपति हो या मिनिस्टर हो। हिन्दुस्तान में एक क्लास बन गई है, जो सारे देश पर राज्य करना चाहती है। मिनिस्ट्रों और धनी लोगों के बेटे विदेशों में जा कर पढ़ते हैं। इस प्रकार हिन्दुस्तान में सेठ-सेठानियों, राजा-रानियों और भ्रफसरों की एक क्लास बन गई है, जो हम पर राज्य करना चाहती है और हम पर हावी होना चाहती है।

मैं एक डिसिप्लिन्ड पार्टीमैन हूँ और मैं मरने तक पार्टी के खिलाफ काम नहीं करूंगा। लेकिन मुझे इस बात से भ्रसंतोष है कि पच्चीस साल की आजादी के बाद भी सरकार ने हिन्दुस्तान की शरीबी को दूर करने के लिये अधिक मजबूत कदम नहीं उठाया है। इस का कारण यह है कि देश के ब्यूरोक्रेटिक भ्रफसर कुछ नहीं करने देते हैं और मिनिस्ट्रों में उनको ओवर राइट करने की ताकत नहीं है।

हमारे यहां भावना की कमी है। अगर भावना होती तो हिन्दुस्तान की जनता ने हम को जो इतना विश्वास दिया था उसके द्वारा हम इस देश में एक हिसक कल्चरल रेवोल्यूशन करते लेकिन हम ने आज तक ऐसा नहीं किया है। जिन भ्रफसरों ने आजादी की लड़ाई में हम को जेल भिजवाया था आज वही गद्दियों पर बैठे हुये हैं। यदि सरकार को देश को चलाना है, तो वह इस प्रस्ताव की भावना को समझ कर देश में आर्थिक समता लाये। किसानों के लिये जो

सीलिंग लगाई जा रही है, उसी के बराबर सबका जीवन-स्तर हो। किसानों के लड़के इन्टेली-जेंट होते हैं। माधो-त्से-जुंग ने किसानों के द्वारा चाइना में कान्ति की, फ़ैक्टरी में काम करने वालों के द्वारा नहीं।

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now, what do you want to do with the resolution?

श्री विष्णुति मिश्र : मैं इस को वापिस लेता हूँ।

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Does he have the leave of the House to withdraw it?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

The resolution was, by leave, withdrawn.

16.08 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE. PROBLEM OF ECONOMIC STAGNATION OF WEST BENGAL

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Alipore) :
Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I beg to move :

“This House demands that the Government should fulfil, without delay or dilution, its commitment and responsibilities towards solution of West-Bengal's urgent problems of economic stagnation.”

16.08 hrs.

[SHRI K. N. TIWARY in the Chair].

Sir, what are these commitments and responsibilities to which I refer? I do not want to take this hon. House through a narration of all the various assurances and promises which have been made on behalf of the Centre, both inside this House and outside, during the course of 1970, 1971 and right up to the general elections of this year in the States. I think many hon. members will recall that on numerous occasions, beginning from the Prime Minister downwards to other Ministers, it has

(Res.)

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been stated here repeatedly that the Centre was vitally interested in halting and salvaging the fast-declining economy of West Bengal. Infact, I remember the occasions here when the problems of the Calcutta Metropolitan Area were referred to here by Members of the Government as being a National problem because of their impact on problems of unemployment and so on. There was a promise that top priority would be given in the matter of allocation of funds and resources for various development works, for providing avenues of employment, etc.

It is in this general background that I am raising this motion. The question that I want to pose is whether after the massive majority which has been won in the elections at the Centre by Mrs. Gandhi's party and later on in most of the States also, there is now a tendency—it is becoming more and more evident every day—to back slide from those commitments and assurances.

You may say that it is only a suspicion, but I shall endeavour in the limited time at my disposal to point out that this suspicion is very wide spread in West Bengal and is based on facts and recent acts of omission and commission by the Centre. I also plead with the hon. Members who come from other States not to consider this problem as something which is parochial pertaining only to the States of West Bengal.

For example, the first problem, Farraka Barrage Project is something which dates back to the days of our Independence even before independence. This is not a new thing. It was to save Calcutta port from ruin, by a barrage across the river Ganga at Farraka to divert water into the Hooghly so that the desilting process can be carried out and Calcutta port could be saved from extinction.

This is not a problem affecting West Bengal alone. Calcutta port does not belong to West Bengal alone. It is an national asset and it serves a vast hinterland covering six or seven States, namely, Assam, Orissa, Bihar, U.P. and Madhya Pradesh, apart from providing employment for so many lakhs of people coming from all the States of the country.

Now we find that there is some sort of a confusion, on air of mystery if I may say so is sought to be created as to what is going to be the ultimate fate of this project I am conscious of the fact that discussions are taking place on this question at this moment, perhaps between the Government here and the State Government on this very issue. Perhaps some Members might feel that one should not raise this issue until those discussions are over. I would have been happy to do so but for the mystifying and erratic behaviour of both the Governments in the Centre and the State in recent days. It is important therefore to draw the attention of the House to this matter for seeking some clarification.

Only recently the State Government was preparing or has prepared a White paper on this subject; the contents of that white paper are widely known, though it was never published, to knowledgeable people in West Bengal. The story goes that it was due to insistence or pressure by the Centre that the State Government was ultimately persuaded not to publish that. That was one mystifying factor. The second one was even more recently, a few days ago, when the West Bengal Assembly adopted a resolution on this subject. In the original resolution, it was specifically mentioned that a minimum discharge of 40,000 cusecs of water from the Farakka barrage through the feeder canal was necessary in order to save Calcutta port. That motion was

amended by an amendment which was obviously inspired and moved by the ruling party thereto water it down by substituting the words "necessary amount of water" in place of 40,000 cusecs. I do not recall the exact words, but it was something like that. Naturally, this motion as amended was passed in the Assembly and my party abstained from voting, because my party had initiated the original resolution in which a specific mention of 40,000 cusecs was mentioned.

All this has led to a most confusing state of affairs. It has bred a great deal of apprehension in the minds of the people of West Bengal. I hope it will also breed a great deal of apprehension in the minds of the people of those States whose economy is virtually dependent on the survival of the port. The question is, will Calcutta port live or die? Nobody in this House will say that it can be allowed to die. I do not expect anybody to say it. The Minister for Shipping and Transport is present here. He is vitally concerned with it, I hope. The Minister for Foreign Trade should be concerned. The Minister for Industrial Development should be concerned. The Minister of Irrigation and Power is here. Of course, he is vitally involved in the whole matter.

I hope hon. Members know many may not know that at the time of partition, when the boundaries were being demarcated, the engineers of West Bengal had pleaded before the Boundary Commission—the famous Radcliffe Commission—that the boundary should be drawn in such a way that in view of the importance of Calcutta port, the headwaters of Hooghly and the offtake from the other rivers like Jalangi, Bhagirathi and Mathabhanga from the Ganga should fall within India,

i.e. within West Bengal, because without this, there was no possibility of saving Calcutta port. It was because of this pleading that the Radcliffe Award eventually gave the Muslim majority district of Murshidabad to India and the Hindu majority district of Khulna to Pakistan. From that time up to this time, nobody has ever disputed the fact that if this river is to be saved, if this port is to be saved, the headwaters of the Hooghly and the water from the Ganga coming into the Hooghly must be ensured in sufficient volume to see that the river, whose condition is deteriorating due to heavy silting up, is kept clear for navigation, the ships are able to come and the port is allowed to function. I do not want to get derailed into too many details, but just briefly I would remind the House that since 1956 a number of expert studies have been made in succession as to the actual quantity of water that is required for the flushing of the Hooghly channel. In 1956, Shri Debesh Mukherjee who, at that time, was Officer on Special Duty in the Central Water and Power Commission, and later on became the General Manager of the Farraka Barrage Project—I believe he is an engineer of some standing—he has claimed that the study which he made was made in constant consultation with Dr. K. L. Rao, who was himself a member of the CWPC at that time, and the then Chairman of the Commission, Shri Kanwar Sain, and on the basis of that study the finding was that 40,000 to 46,000 cusecs of water would be required. As you know, the whole problem concerns only a few months which are called lean months from about January to the middle of May. It is only at this time there is dearth of water. For the rest of the period nobody bothers about it because there is ample supply of water. This finding has been more or less endorsed later on by successive studies.

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At the invitation of the Government of India, the famous West German hydraulic expert, Dr Hansen, was here in 1957. He made a study and he also confirmed that 40,000 cusecs was the minimum. The retired Chief Engineer of UP, who was later the Chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee for Farraka, Shri A. C. Mitra, also made a study and confirmed this. Then the Government of India sent for another foreign expert from Holland, Dr. J. J. Dronkers. He made another hydraulic study and confirmed it. Our own well-known hydraulic expert, Dr. D. V. Joglekar, also made a study and confirmed it.

On the 31st May of this year, the last day of the last session, Dr. K. L. Rao made a statement in this House. He said in that statement:

"In the sanctioned project report, the following operational pattern was adopted, keeping in view the availability of water in the Ganga system and the requirements of other users of the river waters."

Then he has given a chart of schedule. I will leave out the portions which are not relevant. Dr. Rao says there:

"From January to middle of March the water available will be 40,000 to 20,000 cusecs and mid-March to mid-May (which is the most acute period) up to 20,000 cusecs."

That means that it can be less than 20,000 cusecs; how far down it can be, we do not know because it is not stated here. The maximum will be 20,000 cusecs but what the minimum may be is not stated here. Again, from mid-May to the 20th June it will be between 20,000 to 40,000 cusecs. This is referred to in the government statement on the 31st of May as the sanctioned project report.

After that I have tried to the best of my ability to find out when this operational schedule was sanctioned. Who did it after consulting whom? Who discussed it and who agreed to it? I could not find any information on that. From the Irrigation Department of the West Bengal Government, the Calcutta Port Commissioners, all the people I was able to go, I asked when this schedule of water, in the critical months going down from 40,000 to 20,000 and even below 20,000 cusecs was sanctioned, who discussed it and with whose approval it was agreed to. It still remains a mystery and nobody knows about it. And this has given rise to a controversy which is raging now. When the time comes for Dr. Rao to reply, I hope he will be able to give us some clarification on this.

In the meantime, the Centre has gone on clearing many projects, minor, medium and major irrigation projects in the Upper Ganga Basin. There is, I believe, a Ganga-Brahmaputra River Commission which was specially constituted to settle inter State problems connected with sharing or distribution of water. This Commission was not even consulted when the projects up-stream of the Ganga were sanctioned. There is some apprehension that some of these projects which have been sanctioned will divert the estimated water before it reaches Farraka, because of this the original schedule is probably being revised and only 20,000 or less than 20,000 cusecs will be available.

Now, to make the confusion more confounded, the Deputy Minister of Irrigation and Power, replying to a question of mine on the 30th May, said:

"Thirty two major and 117 medium irrigation projects have been sanctioned in the Ganga basin so far.

No reduction in the flushing of the Hooghly channel envisaged by the Farakka Barrage project as sanctioned would occur by the implementation of these projects in the basin."

Obviously, this does not have a reference to 40,000 cusecs of water. This was a reference to that schedule which Dr. Rao placed before this House on the last day of the last session. Nobody claims that upstream of Farakka Barrage, the other States through which the river passes are not entitled to any water from the Ganga. I would be the last person to say that. But whatever water from the Ganga is to be made available for projects in U.P. or in Bihar, I would humbly submit, must be subject to the minimum requirements required for keeping the Calcutta port alive.

The origin of the Farakka project was that. Otherwise why was this project drawn up? Why have Rs. 200 crores been spent on it? If now we are told that the project has to be modified, then the purpose of the project will be defeated. What are you going to do? Are you going to scrap the project? Are you going to spend more crores of rupees on an infructuous project? In the end, the Calcutta port will not survive. No. Many engineers have suggested that during this period, from March to May, in U.P. and in Bihar, certain schemes have to be devised and can be devised for drawing adequate ground water, sub-soil water, surface water, for that short period, until it is possible further to augment the supply of water in the Ganga which can also be done by linking it up with the Brahmaputra *via* Teesta river. That project was also mooted at one time. It is being dropped now. We talk of Ganga-Cauvery link. What about Ganga-Brahmaputra link which will solve the problem?

In any case, without trying in any way to minimise the importance of irrigation projects in other States, I would humbly submit that the original concept and the original studies which have established beyond any doubt that anything less than 40,000 cusecs of water will ruin the Calcutta port which will be a national disaster, not a disaster only for West Bengal, must be the pre-condition for supplying any surplus water which may be available after that for upstream projects. Otherwise, those projects have to depend during the lean months on ground water, sub-soil water and surface water, which can be drawn and exploited for which nothing has been done.

It is not as though the sanctioned project as regards water supply is the only one which is being modified. I would like to know from Dr. Rao whether it is a fact that the size of the lock as constructed alongside the Jalangi Barrage across the Bhagirathi river is very much smaller than what was provided in the original sanctioned project. The result is that the possibility of developing navigation with Bangladesh and, through Bangladesh, with Assam through Bhagirathi river has been closed for all time to come. The size of the lock is very much smaller than what was designed in the original project. The regulators across the feeder canal and the by-pass channel with a regulator across it have not been constructed. I do not know whether they have been abandoned. The down-stream lock at Farakka has been abandoned. The tail-end of the feeder canal has been abandoned.

How has the sanctioned project been adhered to? Neither in these respects nor in respect of promised supply of water. I do not want to spend more time on this particular problem. But it is certainly a grave matter. We would like to have a clear-cut reply once and for all. This

mystery and confusion should be cleared up. Either we should be told that 40,000 cusecs of water is going to be ensured or it is not going to be ensured. And if it is not going to be ensured, the Centre has to reply how the Calcutta Port is going to be saved and how the Hooghly river is going to be kept navigable. The Minister of Shipping and Transport should also apply his mind to that. He has been briefed thoroughly in Calcutta by the Port Commissioners at a meeting at which I was also present, and he assured us before leaving, 'Do not worry; I will see to it that the Calcutta Port will never die'.

**THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN-
TARY AFFAIRS AND SHIPPING AND
TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR) :**
It will never die.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : I know, it will never die. We will see to it that you adhere to your original promises and assurances. At the moment we want to know why these modifications and amendments are mooted. What is the reason? Who is responsible for it ?

I have to take a few other problems also. One is the problem of oil exploration. I think, I will take that up a little later. The Minister of oil is not here. I do not know who else is here. The Minister of Foreign Trade has run away.....

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI
MOHAN DHARIA) :** I am here and I can assure the hon. Member that I will take care of all the points that he mentions.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Very Good. The ONGC, at its 59th meeting held in Dehra Dun in the year 1965, had proposed that at least four to five exploratory wells for oil should be drilled in the Bodra area

in 24-Parganas District. Subsequently, following this recommendation, one well was drilled. The target for that well was a depth of 5,000 metres. After drilling had gone up to 4,000 metres, the work was abandoned. Why was it abandoned? It was because we were told that at a depth of 3,800 metres very high pressure zones were encountered and also the drilling rig got damaged. On this plea, well No. 1 in Bodra was abandoned, and no other well in that area was taken up for drilling in spite of ONGC's recommendations.

Then in 1966 the Technical Committee of the ONGC which included some Soviet experts recommended that in the Chaitanya area of Midnapore District, in the Budge Budge area of 24-Parganas District and in the Barasat area of 24-Parganas District drilling should be attempted because these were areas where there was possibility of finding oil. Nothing was done; nothing has been done upto this day. I want to know whether or not some oil-bearing structures have been found in these areas which I have named and if so, why no drilling is taking place. The Chief Soviet Adviser to the ONGC, Mr. Nogaev, has gone on record in 1969 as stating that West Bengal was perhaps one of the most prospective areas out of the new exploratory sites in the country. But now everything is held up in the name of technical surveys.

In reply to a question of mine on the 4th of this month, i.e., a week ago, Mr. Gokhale has stated that the Malaviya Committee which has recently submitted its report has also suggested "that at least a few exploratory wells should be drilled both in the platform zone and in the subsidence zone". You know the terrain there; there is a big decline and subsidence. In both the higher part and the lower part, the Malaviya Committee has recommended,

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 exploratory drilling should be carried out. I want to know why nothing has been done about it. Is it because the drilling rigs which are available are obsolete or are inadequate for the job? Or now everything is sought to be postponed in the name of going in for more surveys? In any case, West Bengal is being deprived in this way of vast potential resources which can open up vast avenues of development, employment and so on. I want to know why this thing is being neglected.

Then there is the problem of the prices of raw jute because this concerns not only our State but it concerns at least 1½ million families in West Bengal who are dependent on the cultivation of raw jute. All I would like to say here is that while the index figure for the price of cotton has gone up from 119 in 1966 to 223 in 1972, in the same period, the price of jute has gone up from 132 to 138. This is the index figure based on 1961 equal to 100 as base. This is a major cash crop of West Bengal. I don't want to go into it in detail. It was discussed many times in the House. I do not want to go into the plight of the jute-growers. Mr. L. N. Mishra, for over four years, was toying with the idea of a support price and announced a support price of Rs. 40 at Calcutta, which support price was anyhow unreal, uneconomic and has no relation to the actual cost of production and, in any case, could not be enforced because the Government never had any machinery for seeing that this minimum floor price could be enforced. Recently, he has come forward with this idea of statutory minimum price which is a welcome idea. But the statutory minimum they have suggested is Rs. 115 per quintal which works out at Calcutta to about Rs. 42.50. When everybody is agreed that the actual cost of production to-day is in the neighbourhood of Rs. 50-55 per maund; fixing a price less than that is quite unrealistic.

Even the West Bengal Government is reported to have asked the Centre to revise this minimum statutory price upwards and they have demanded that it should be at least Rs. 135 per quintal. But the jute-grower is being left at the mercy of the Indian Jute Mills Association, their agents and the middlemen all these years. The drought has ruined the jute crop. At least, of West Bengal I can speak though I cannot speak of other States. In West Bengal the bulk of the jute crop is ruined and even jute seeds are not available. Very strange. Sir, the Jute Corporation of India has been set up to carry out purchasing operations and there is no representative of the West Bengal Government on the Board of that Jute Corporation. The IJMA is represented there already. Other people are represented. Representatives of every other jute-growing States are there. I do not grudge it. They should be there. But, why is there no representative of the West Bengal State Government on the Board of the Jute Corporation of India which has its headquarters in Calcutta. A strange thing.

They have announced that this year this Jute Corporation will buy only three lakh bales of jute in West Bengal and that also from only three districts of North Bengal, viz., Cooch-Bihar, West Dinajpur and Malda. Three lakhs. It won't have even a marginal fractional impact on the market for raw jute. This is a matter which vitally concerns 15 lakh families in West Bengal and the Government here should be more concerned with those people and with the economy of West Bengal than with the profits of these middlemen and the IJMA.

About the Dum Dum airport one word. A new international terminal building has been constructed. You must have seen it though you might not have gone through it as you go through the domestic terminal. A very good international building, a

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a cost of Rs. 2 crores has been constructed. But the airport is declining and dying for want of traffic. It is a strange thing. It is like that second Hoogly Bridge which may be constructed in four or five years' time, but there may be no river underneath the bridge unless Farakka bridge comes through. There will be no ships and no river. Only the bridge will be left as a marvellous relic of the century. Similarly, here in 1965 seventeen international airlines were operating through the Dum Dum airport. But at present there are only eight. I don't blame them because when our own international airlines, Air India, has neglected and discriminated against Dum Dum, why should I blame the foreign airlines? My quarrel here is with the Air India. It has been admitted by the Minister on the floor of the House that Air India does not at present operate a single flight which originates from Dum Dum or which terminates at Dum Dum. It does not operate a single chartered flight from Dum Dum. It does not operate a single freighter service through Dum Dum. What is the idea? What is being done? I do not understand this. Somebody said there is not enough of cargo for freighter service. Let me just inform the Government that from June, 1971 to May, 1972, BOAC carried a cargo freight through Dum Dum to the extent of 7,578 sales bills, that is, different items, whereas Air India carried only 4,574 bills worth of cargo. International fair structure has been devised in such a way that it puts Calcutta at a disadvantage. I should have thought, in a country like India, when people go abroad from Bombay, Delhi, Madras or Calcutta, the return ticket fare should be the same. Here we find that from Delhi or Bombay there is some 20 per cent discount on the international ticket. People from Calcutta have to pay this 20 per cent. I want to know whether Air

India is a national undertaking or not. If it is a national undertaking, it must cater to the needs of all the major international airports. Dum Dum is being grossly discriminated against. There is no ground equipment for handling of cargo on the aircraft. Category two instrument landing system has been installed there whereas at Delhi, category one has been installed. Because category two has been installed there, jumbo jets cannot land there. Why do they have class two equipment when Delhi, Bombay and Madras have class one equipment? Why should they be treated as second class so far these equipments go?

Lastly, Sir, even when it comes to a question of servicing of aircrafts, we have been told that the Boeing and Caravel aircrafts will be serviced at Delhi and Bombay and that Dum Dum is to service only the Fokker Friendship Aircraft and one or two old Dakotas. Even that servicing is being taken away from Dum Dum. Yet, they are expressing the desire that the air-port should survive. Why this should be done, I don't understand.

The Minister of Shipping and Transport is here. I want to point out something about Haldia, about the dredging in the dock area. Why is that dredging held up? How long has it been held up? Is it going to be held up because of some dispute going on between the port authorities and the contractors, some contractual disputes? I was told that the firm which was responsible for this dredging left the job and went away. I have seen it with my own eyes. We were taken round a part of the dock area. We saw that dredging was held up there. The same Yugoslav company is having the same dispute with the Naval Dockyard at Vishakhapatnam. We would like to know what is it that is going on? Already 3 or 4

years were taken up to have a decision regarding location of the shipyard. The engineering infra-structure for a shipyard has been present above all else in Calcutta area and facilities exist there, for this shipyard. But we are kept hanging. We are not told whether this shipyard is going to be located there or not.

Important institutions in West Bengal which have been located there for years together and decades together are being broken up and disintegrated now. Why? I would refer first of all to the Geological Survey of India which has been there from British times. Now, a decision has been taken that the Ground Water Wing and the Mineral Exploration Wing are to be taken out and bifurcated from the Geological Survey of India and removed to other places. The strange thing is that the Planning Commission's own panel on water resources recommended in September, 1971 that the continuation of ground water and mineral exploration work and its intensification by the Geological Survey of India should be continued. The same recommendation was made in April, 1972 by the Irrigation Commission. The same recommendation was made in June, 1972 by the Technical Committee, to assess the Geological Survey's work as per the 16 126 Report of our Estimates Committee. Since the Planning Minister is here, I would request him to please consult the Fourth Five Year Plan, and he will find that the Fourth Five Year Plan was quite explicit on this matter that the Geological Survey of India which was a body which must continue to conduct and intensify its work on ground water and mineral exploration. Now, suddenly despite the views of these experts and scientists, why is the Geological Survey of India being bifurcated broken up and removed like this from Calcutta ?

I would also like to know from Dr. K.L. Rao whether what we hear about these rumours, because I have no authentic report about it, are true; we hear that there is a move afoot to break up the DVC also and to take the DVC headquarters away from Calcutta, and.....

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION
AND POWER (DR K. L. RAO) : No.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : If the answer is 'No', I would be very glad to reassured about it when he speaks later on.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SINHA (Muzaffarpur) : Let him please tell the West Bengal Government to give us some water from the DVC.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : But we must sit together and talk about these things. He should also remember who spent how much on the expenditure of the DVC.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SINHA : The terms and conditions are there.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Finally, about the shortage of power, for which cannot blame the Centre alone because there are many agencies concerned, some of which are the State agencies like the State Electricity Board, or the Durgapur Projects Ltd. which are certainly not proving to be at all efficient or competent, I would like to say that certainly there can be no development in West Bengal if this power shortage goes on mounting at the rate at which it is doing. Already 200,000 workers were laid off or are being laid off from time to time because the factories are closed. Already, the West Bengal Government has had to give up its plan to electrify the villages; they wanted to electrify some 10,000 villages, and they

had planned to start a number of small-scale industries and provide some employment there. All this is now in jeopardy because of the acute power shortage, and this power shortage, it is estimated, may reach 1800 MW by 1979-80.

My quarrel with the Centre is this. They have recently appointed a committee to inquire into the causes of this acute power shortage in West Bengal, and in that committee, out of six members, four of them, that is, the majority, represent those very organisations which have failed in their task and failed miserably and which should have been brought to book, namely the Calcutta Electric Supply Co., the DVC, the State Electricity Board and the Durgapur Projects Ltd. One top man representing each of these agencies has been put on this committee. How can we expect them to make any impartial inquiry about this? This, I would submit is only a dishonest gimmick by the Centre who try to show off that they are very much concerned about this problem but who have packed this committee with the very people who should be asked to give an explanation as to their record of failure. So, I do not think that they are at all serious about it.

These are some of the problems. There are several more, but I have no time to raise them now. The main problem with which we are concerned is the Farakka project at the moment. I have indicated some of the others. Taking the thing as a whole, I would once again express the apprehension that I had expressed at the outset that after this ruling party has won its massive majority, after so many assurances, promises, election pledges and what not during President's rule and subsequently that West Bengal will be looked after, because West Bengal is a problem

State and West Bengal is a State which has given rise to all sorts of social and economic explosions and, therefore, priority must be given, now we find that there is some callousness and some apathy and some backsliding and the sense of urgency seems to behave evaporating very fast. I would like to warn them that if they go on in this way, then again the wheel will turn a full circle, and again, there may be all sorts of social and economic disturbances on a very big scale which none of us wants, but which the people who have been driven to desperation may be provoked into.

Therefore, I would like them to reassure us about what they are doing, what they propose to do, what they are thinking about in their inner conclaves without discussing or consulting people outside when they reply to this debate.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Resolution moved :

"This House demands that the Government should fulfil, without delay or dilution, its commitments and responsibilities towards solution of West Bengal's urgent problems of economic stagnation".

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE (Howrah) : The Resolution moved by Shri Indrajit Gupta has referred to the question of the economic stagnation of West Bengal and the Centre's commitments and responsibilities.

16.5 hrs.

[SHRI SEZHIYAN *in the Chair*]

He has dealt with some vital issues such as the Farakka Barrage and supply of water which is now dominant in the minds of the whole of the people of Bengal. I do not want to deal with that issue further. He has also dealt with oil exploration, bifurcation of the GSI and the question

[of the power crisis. There are certainly very vital questions which require solutions in a way the Government has already made commitments. I would deal with other aspects.

Shri Indrajit Gupta has told the House that now a doubt has arisen in the minds of the people whether there was any earnestness on the part of the Central Governments in the promises made to the people there before the elections, in the commitments made to them, or these were just promises made before elections in order to mislead the people so that these promises could influence the electorate on the eve of the elections. West Bengal is a State where the Congress lost its majority since 1967. There a reign of terror is still continuing. The last election was held in the midst of terror. The entire election was rigged and parliamentary democracy subverted. On the basis of a rigged election the Congress has come into power in that State. Now that the Congress has come into power there, the Central Government is backsliding, as is the nature of a party which represents capitalism. They make promises and fail to fulfil them when the time for actual execution comes. That is why a doubt has crept in the minds of the people.

In his Resolution, Shri Gupta has brought out the fact that now in Bengal there are problems as a result of economic stagnation. It is not a question of economic stagnation. It is the gradual decline in the economy of the State. The State is faced with a serious crises. I want to refer to the question of unemployment, closure of factories, lay-offs and lock-outs.

Now the Congress Government is in power. They are making tall promises. The Chief Minister has promised that in the Haldia project, jobs for nearly one

lakh unemployed will be provided. But no jobs have been provided. On the other hand, 500 railway employees of the Haldia link line have been dismissed from service. In the budget speech, the Labour Minister of West Bengal has stated on the 10th July, that during the three months of March, April and May, there have been further lock-outs in 29 factories, in 57 factories there have been strikes, there have been closures of 36 factories, rendering 55,708 workers unemployed.

Recently, under the impact of the jute workers' movemnet, there was some agreement with the jute employers and the unions. But taking advantage of that agreement, and in the name of reorganisation of the industry recently we got the report that nearly 50,000 of the jute workers have been further retrenched. This is happening under the Congress Government now. Still, the number of closed factories amounts to a total of 302 and the number of temporarily closed factories comes to 188. Nearly 500 factories are closed. This is the position in West Bengal. So, it is not a question of economic stagnation alone. The entire economy is in the midst of a deep crisis. It is the responsibility of the Central Government due to whose policies this economic crises is intensifying. They have to take the responsibility of getting these factories opened and those who have lost their jobs must go back to their jobs.

Another new feature is the question of law and order. Daily, you see in the newspapers that there has been improvement in the law and order situation, but some factories have been closed due to the problem of law and order. Gangster elements under the cover of youth congress and Chhatra Parishad are terrorising the old workers in many factories and preventing them from joining their duties and

forcing the management to recruit their own men. Generally, those anti-social and rowdy elements who are taken into the jobs are not prepared to do the job to increase production, and when the management demand production from them, they are refusing to oblige. On the other hand, it is reported that some officers there are being beaten up by the anti-social elements and due to that, some factories have been closed. I am referring to the IN-CHEK factory; one factory of Hindustan Steel in Dum Dum; there officers have been beaten. In the joy factory, one officer has been beaten by the rowdy elements. So, this law and order question also has become a problem for the maintenance of these factories. The factories are being closed due to these factors.

The economic decline or the crisis in West Bengal is a part of the crises of all-India economy. There is no doubt about it.

17 hrs.

Particularly in the case of West Bengal the problem has become far acute due to the total neglect of the Central Government. Promises were made on the eve of the election. For example, the Prime Minister herself in a public meeting on the eve of the elections gave an assurance that the Martins Light Railways which remained closed would be reopened and the Chief Minister also gave a similar assurance. Those promises had been completely forgotten, though people are demanding fulfilment of that promise.

The per acre yield of agriculture is the lowest in West Bengal and the percentage of land under irrigation is very low, the result is that agriculture is very largely dependent upon the vagaries of the monsoon. Drought and floods alternate regularly and there is no provision to fight

either. Total land under irrigation is only 3.5 million out of 13.6 acres of agricultural land. The area with an assured rainfall is only 4 million acres. Unless this condition is changed completely, unless there is proper arrangement for irrigation and effective measures to control flood, there is no possibility of more yield from agriculture in West Bengal.

Shri Indrajit Gupta had referred to jute prices. Raw jute must get its support price from the Central Government as early as possible and proper machinery should be set up so that jute growers can sell at that rate to the Government agencies. Otherwise fixation of price will not help jute growers.

The Government spokesman says that the figure of unemployment in West Bengal is 28 lakhs. The number of unemployed people who had registered in the Employment Exchange is nearly nine lakhs. Between last year and this year the figures of unemployment has increased by 41 per cent, that is in one year.

Two weeks ago I went to Purulia and I heard that hundreds of people were standing in the queue to register their names in employment exchange so that they can get some job. There is some illusion in Purulia that there will be industries and people will get jobs. If you include the thousands and thousands of people who have not registered themselves, you will see how staggering is the number of unemployed people.

Because of power shortage, some collieries are now being closed. It is reported that 90 lakh tonnes of coal are stacked at pitheads in Jharia-Raniganj coalfields because of the railway's inability to lift them. Nearly one-third of it is in West Bengal and Rs. 34 crores are locked up in the stacked coal. Due to this, the collieries are

facing a crisis and the question of employment is also involved. Then, out of 22 textile mills, the Textile Corporation has taken over only three or four and the others are still closed. In engineering, textile, jute and other industries, production is sluggish and the entire economy is faced with a serious crisis. The figure of unemployment is so staggering that unless the Central Government takes full responsibility to revive the economy of West Bengal, there is no possibility of any advancement or removing the stagnation of the economy. That is why I urge upon the Central Government to take full responsibility and see that their promises are kept.

श्री राम रत्न शर्मा (बांदा) : सभापति जी, श्री इन्द्रजीत गुप्त ने बंगाल के बारे में प्रस्ताव रखा है। अपने प्रस्ताव के समर्थन में उन्होंने बहुत सी बातें बतलाई हैं जिनमें फरक्का बांध, कलकता पोर्ट, दमदम एयर-पोर्ट, पावर की शार्टेज, जूट प्राइसेस इत्यादि मुख्य रूप से थीं। वास्तव में यह बात किसी से छिपी हुई नहीं है कि पश्चिम बंगाल की आर्थिक रीढ़ टूट चुकी है। सन् 1970 से वहाँ का व्यापारी वर्ग भाग रहा है। तमाम ऐसी बातें वहाँ पर हुई हैं जो कि विचार का विषय भी रही हैं। उस तरफ से भी और इस तरफ से भी इस बारे में काफी कुछ कहा गया है परन्तु जैसा मेरे लायक दोस्त ने अभी कहा, लगता है सरकार चुनावों के समय जो वादे करती है वह केवल वादे ही रहते हैं। उनको पूरा करने की तरफ कभी भी कोई प्रयास नहीं किया जाता है। यदि इमानदारी से प्रयास किया जाये तो ऐसी बात नहीं है कि उनमें से कुछ बातें पूरी न हों, सम्पूर्ण वादे पूरे होने का प्रश्न नहीं है, जो बातें कही जाती हैं उनमें से एक प्रतिशत भी यदि पूरी होती जायें तब भी जनता को कुछ राहत मिल सकती है। तब भी कहा जा सकता है कि सरकार वास्तव में इमानदारी से उस तरफ प्रयत्नशील है।

भाज सम्पूर्ण देश में बेरोजगारी की समस्या है और पश्चिम बंगाल में यह बहुत ज्यादा है। बेरोजगारी की समस्या को हल करने के लिये यह सरकार तरह तरह के वादे करती रही है परन्तु भाज तक कोई सफलता नहीं मिली है और बेरोजगारी दिन प्रति दिन बढ़ती जा रही है। एक बेरोजगार आदमी के लिये यह समस्या रहती है कि किस तरह से अपना तथा अपने परिवार का पालन पोषण करे। इस समस्या पर इमानदारी के साथ और दृढ़तापूर्वक कुछ काम करना पड़ेगा—अन्यथा इस तरह की परिस्थितियाँ अब ज्यादा दिन नहीं चल सकती हैं।

हमारे देश में सूखा और बाढ़ पुरातन समय से और यह कहा जाये कि सनातन से चलते आ रहे हैं तो कोई प्रतिशयोक्ति नहीं होगी। इस और सरकार ने पच्चीस वर्ष में ध्यान नहीं दिया और इन पर काबू पाने के लिये कोई ठोस कदम नहीं उठाया। अभी बीच में सूखे की स्थिति पैदा हो गई है। सूखे की चपेट में बिहार राजस्थान और उत्तर प्रदेश आ गये थे। उत्तर प्रदेश का खास तौर से बुन्देलखंड बांदा और हमीपुर का इलाका विशेष रूप से सूखे से प्रभावित हुआ था। वहाँ फसलें सूख गईं। उसकी वजह से वहाँ के किसानों को काफी नुकसान उठाना पड़ा। उसके बाद अति-वृष्टि के कारण बाढ़ें आईं। उसकी वजह से भी परेशानी पैदा—हुई और जनता को नुकसान सहना पड़ा। चूंकि इनकी रोकथाम के लिये कोई प्रयत्न नहीं किये गये इस वास्ते जो परेशानियाँ हैं वे दिन प्रति दिन बढ़ती ही चली जा रही हैं। बिजली का संकट भी हमारे सामने है। पावर शार्टेज चल रही है। यह पश्चिम बंगाल में ही नहीं सम्पूर्ण भारत में चल रही है। उत्तर प्रदेश में तो खास तौर से पावर की शार्टेज है। इसकी शार्टेज की वजह से वहाँ अच्छे उद्योग धंधे नहीं लग पा रहे हैं। इसका नतीजा यह है कि जो क्षेत्र पहले पिछड़े हुये थे इस दौर में और भी अधिक पिछड़ते चले गये हैं।

[श्री राम रतन शर्मा]

मैं यह भी कहना चाहता हूँ कि कीमतें बहुत ज्यादा बढ़ गई हैं। अगर ये न बढ़ी होती तो संभव था कि किसी तरह से जनता को कुछ राहत मिल जाती। जिस तरह से कीमतें तेजी से बढ़ी हैं उसके कारण जनता को, भ्राम भ्राममी को बहुत ज्यादा परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ रहा है। लोगों को राहत प्रदान करने के लिये सरकार की तरफ से कोई योजना नहीं बनाई जा रही है।

मैं समझता हूँ कि इन सब बातों को देखा जाये और साथ ही साथ पश्चिमी बंगाल की जो समस्याएँ हैं उनको अच्छी तरह से और पूरी इमानदारी के साथ हल किया जाये साथ ही सरकार जो बायदे करती है, उनको भी पूरा किया जाये, यही मेरा आप से आग्रह है।

SHRI. B. K. DASCHOWDHURY (Cooch-Bihar) : Sir, I congratulate the mover of this Resolution for bringing to light, bringing to the notice of the Government, certain aspects of the West Bengal situation. But before we go ahead with the problems, we must know certain facts. What made the position of West Bengal go down step by step, from year to year? It is known to all that long before the time of the partition, even immediately after the partition of the country, Calcutta was not only the nerve-centre of trade and industry but it was really the capital of the whole India and, to a certain extent, one of the most developed cities in the eastern region. Unfortunately, we find the position of West Bengal has been steadily going down and down.

I have before me some statistics. I notice from the recent 1971 census that the number of persons dependent on agriculture is going up from decade to decade, from one census statistics to the other census statistics. In 1951 out of the total

employed persons both in agricultural and industrial sector in West Bengal, 50 per cent were in agriculture. The rest 50 per cent were not in agriculture but in industrial sector. In 1961, the number of persons who depended on agriculture has increased to 53.80 per cent. Conversely, it has been found that by 1961, within 10 years time, the number of persons employed in industry, etc., has gone down from 50 per cent to 46.20 per cent. In 1971, the number of persons employed in agriculture has gone up further still, that is, 57.50 per cent. Conversely, the number of persons employed in industry, etc., has gone down to 42.50 per cent. Whereas, in the case of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and other States, it is going up and up. In the case of West Bengal, it is coming down and down.

Let me give you another interesting story. It is not a story but a fact, a very heart-rending fact. In 1951, the number of towns and cities with a population of more than 1 lakh in West Bengal was 6, known as first class cities or towns. In 1961, it went up to 11 and, in 1971, it has gone down to 5. This is according to the Census figures of 1971. The number of second class cities or towns with a population of more than 50,000 and less than 1 lakh, in 1951, was 14; in 1961, it was 23 and, in 1971, it is 19.

These are the most revealing facts as revealed by the Census figures as to how West Bengal stands today, not very farther away from British days, not very far away from 1961 to the days of 1971.

The main causes, I must say, are the economic depression, the stagnation in industries, and the like, which have resulted in this position and the position of West Bengal has been coming down and down. To that I must add the policies of the Go-

Government of India pursued from time to time which are, if I may say so, absolutely and solely responsible for this depressing attitude in West Bengal's life, including law and order. What is a law and order problem? It is nothing but the manifestation of frustration amongst the youth of West Bengal.

Dr. B. C. Roy, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal submitted a memorandum to the Planning Commission—I stress on this point—that West Bengal must depend on its very existence on industrial development. No doubt, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal, Dr. B. C. Roy, tried his best to have industrial development for West Bengal, particularly, Calcutta which enjoy certain locational advantages, locational benefits. It has near it very rich steel-producing centres and coal-bearing centres. For a very long time, it has got a very good Calcutta port and also the Dum Dum Airport, one of the largest and biggest in Asia in those days. But steadily, we have seen the Calcutta port's position going down and down every time. We see in the press reports and, every time, we have to discuss it here.

My hon. friend, the mover of the Resolution has dealt with this matter very specifically. Why is it so? Why today the Government of India, the Minister concerned, are diverting the whole issue from the development of Calcutta port? Is it not a fact that the Farakka Barrage scheme, the entire scheme, was fashioned only to save Calcutta port which earns the largest amount of foreign exchange which is more than 40 per cent now-a-days? Even today, with certain draw-backs and other things, out of whatever the total foreign exchange earned by the country, to the extent of Rs. 1400-1500 crores, the Calcutta port earns 38-40 per cent of it. The entire Farakka Barrage scheme with a provision

to discharge water into the Bhagirathi river and the Hooghly river was to save the Calcutta port. It was specifically meant for the preservation of the Calcutta port.

The hon. Minister has been making statements one after another that throughout the season, throughout the year, it was not possible to get 40,000 cusecs of water. Even according to the expert, it was required to discharge 40,000 cusecs of water in those days when it was thought of when it was conceived. Now it must have a discharge of more than 40,000 cusecs of water because of siltation; with the formation of the silt on the river bank and also the river bank being higher and higher, it is required to ply at least small vessels, not to speak of bigger vessels. More water discharge must be kept flowing through the Hooghly river if we really want that the Calcutta Port must not die out. The hon. Minister of Shipping and Transport just now remarked that the Calcutta port would not die. I wish it does not. I simply urge on the Minister and the Government to consider whether, with this minor discharge of 20,000 cusecs of water in the lean period—not in the monsoon period—it is possible to ply even a small vessel in Calcutta; if it is not, the only reply is that the Calcutta Port will have to be died out in course of time.

If the Government of India does not come forward with all these measures to save the Calcutta Port, the people of Calcutta will not suffer, the people of West Bengal will not suffer, the entire eastern region, the entire hinterland of the Calcutta Port, including Orissa, Bihar and Assam, the entire eastern Indian States will have to suffer, and the reasons for this suffering must have to be shouldered by the Government of India because of the wrong policies being pursued by them from time to time.

[Shri B. K. Daschowdhury

Regarding the Dum Dum Airport, about which my hon. friend also spoke, what has made this Government of India or the Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation not to take sufficient interest for the improvement of the Dum Dum Airport which at one point was the best airport in the whole of Asia? What has made him so? Is it to subserve some other parts of the country?

Let us analyse some more facts also. As I said, in 1956, Dr. B. C. Roy made a very emphatic statement and represented to the Centre that the very existence of West Bengal was dependent on its industrial development and he wanted a series of schemes to be taken up one after another. But, unfortunately, nothing was done.

Immediately after independence, when the question was reviewed of the extent of availability of crude oil, petroleum oil, it was said by the experts of India that the policy before the war, before independence, was that oil refinery should be located near the site of crude oil wherever possible; it is not to be done there; from the point of economics it should have to be located near the port area so that it can be exported or certain other facilities can be taken advantage of. Unfortunately we find that in the case of Maharashtra nothing was done. The same principle set out by these experts on crude oil was not followed in the case of Maharashtra. Had it been so, Calcutta Port being the largest or the greatest in respect of foreign exchange earning, near about the Calcutta Port or West Bengal there ought to have been a refinery. But this was not done. In 1952-53 two refineries were set up, located, in Maharashtra and in 1954 one was sanctioned in the case of Visakhapatnam which went on stream in 1957. What was the idea behind this? What was the policy of these experts? What was the policy of the Government of India? The Go-

vernment of India did not consider what was the expert opinion. They simply wanted to have certain other considerations but they can explain it very much. Not only in this matter, let us go to the other aspects of expansion of industry.

The Philips Co. one of the biggest manufacturers of radios and electronic machines, was established in 1938 in Calcutta in West Bengal. First of all it started manufacturing only electric bulbs. In 1948 it started manufacturing radios also with an installed capacity of 12,000 sets a year. Thereafter, this Philips Co. wanted to expand and to have more licensed capacity of this particular radio manufacturing line. But the Government of India put certain restrictions on it. There are two restrictions. Initially, after the expansion of its licensed capacity to a certain extent, the Government of India made two restrictions : (1) 75% of the excess capacity of 60,000 which they wanted to have expanded to 3 lakh sets per year, must be exported and (2) the foreign investment of the Philips Co. must be reduced to less than 50%. But, thereafter, rather surreptitiously I would say, with the influence of some of the persons who are at the helm of political affairs in the State also, this Philips Co. set up a new factory in Maharashtra and its licensed capacity was given to the extent of 7 lakh sets a year. Step by step it was increased, but, no conditions were attached thereto that after a certain limit and above that, 75% of their production must be exported or that the foreign investment of this particular company must be less than 50% which were the conditions imposed in the case of expansion in West Bengal.

This is not enough. With regard to the question of refinery and petro-chemical complex, there, as I said earlier, no such particular policy was maintained from time to time so that there could be a balanced growth throughout the country. But, in

the case of petroleum and a refinery and the petro-chemical industries, we find suddenly, though it is very much in hinterland, a policy was taken not to have this refinery in West Bengal or nearabout Calcutta to get the facilities of the Calcutta port, the Barauni refinery project was sanctioned. Not only that, the North Western Refinery in Mathura has also been sanctioned though it has no facilities of port etc. But, ultimately, on account of the efforts of West Bengal leaders, the Government of India have now agreed to have the Haldia Petro-Chemical complex along with these. But, what was the policy in those years, in that period, immediately after 1960-61 and later on? Assam, the source of crude oil had to suffer for it and they had to strike to have a refinery sanctioned, but in the case of Maharashtra these things are not considered.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Member's time is up.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : Please give me a few more minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have already taken 16 minutes.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : So, even the Planning Commission's recommendation, made from time to time they have never considered. The Government of India have never considered as to what will be the position of West Bengal if proper facilities for expansion of the existing industries are not given while the same facilities are given in some other States. They never considered that. Not only this is the case in regard to refineries and petro-chemical complex. Same is the case with regard to cement industry. Dr. B.C. Roy in 1953-54-55-56, in all those years, tried his level best to get at least a cement factory in Purulia, a very backward region. It has got certain limestone. The Government of India did not hear. Ultimately what happened was that when with help of a private firm, Dr. B.C. Roy just made a proposal that if the public sector is not coming forward to have a cement factory at Purulia, the private firm should be allowed; it was said that the

limestone found in that part is not of a superior quality. Dr. Roy said that if it is of inferior quality, certain incentives should be given. It has been increased in the case of the other areas.

Take the case of the Travancore Cement. Take the case of Saurashtra Cement, Pandian Cement, Madras Cement, etc. These freight substitutions or certain concessions in the case of their pricing policy has been announced but in the case of Purulia it was not done.....

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has taken 17 minutes. He may continue his speech next time.

17.22 hrs.

HALF AN HOUR DISCUSSION

GRANT OF PENSIONS TO FREEDOM FIGHTERS

MR. CHAIRMAN : We take up the Half-an-hour discussion now. Prof. Samar Guha has to initiate the discussion. Half-an-hour discussion means thirty minutes he has to be as brief as possible in his opening remarks. Members who ask questions may require 10 minutes and the Minister may require 10 minutes.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA (Contai) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, we have got freedom, although a divided freedom, but unfortunately, the freedom-fighters were long left out of their role of honour and their services were not recognised.

Though very belated, the decision of the Government to give honour to them, to give them honorarium, to give pension to them has been hailed not only by the freedom fighters but by the people at large. The freedom-fighters still feel that the decision taken by the Government was half-heard and they have not recognised all those who have contributed their mite and their best to the freedom of our country.

It is known to the country, it is accepted by all, that Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and Azad Hind Foj played a most decisive role in the last phases of our freedom stru