the land monopoly of landlords is broken, all the exemptions are done away with and ceiling is fixed in such a way so that sufficient land is made available for distribution to the agricultural workers and poor peasants"

substitue—

"expeditiously comprehensive legilation on land ceiling in the light of the guidelines drawn up by the Government of India on the basis of the conclusions of the Chief Ministers' Conference on land ceiling held in July, 1972 and to take suitable steps for speedy and effective implementation of the legislation so that the surplus land can be distributed promptly among the landless agricultural workers and agriculturists with uneconomical holdings in accordance with the priorities fixed by the guidelines". (2).

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Then, I put amendment No. 4 moved by Shri Jharkhande Rai to the vote of the House.

Amendment No. 4 was put and negatived.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Next, I put amendment No. 5 moved by Dr. Laxminarain Pandeya to the vote of the House.

Amendment No. 5 was put and negatived.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There is an amendment by Shri A. K. Gopalan to his own Resolution. This is a very formal amendment that instead of "26th January, 1973", the words "30th May, 1973" be substituted.

Amendment No. 6 was put and negatived.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, I will put the Resolution moved by Shri A. K. Gopalan, as amended, to the vote of the House.

The question is:

"This House calls upon the Central Government to recommend to all the State Governments to enact expeditiously comprehensive legislation on land ceiling in the light of the guidelines drawn up by the Government of India on the basis of the conclusions of the Chief Ministers Conference on land ceiling held in July, 1972 and to take suitable steps for speedy and effective implementation of the legislation so that the surplus land can be distributed promptly among the landless agricultural workers and agriculturists with uneconomical holdings in accordance with the priorities fixed by the guidelines."

The motion was adopted.

17.14 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE: NATIONALISATION OF FOREIGN OIL COMPANIES AND OTHER VITAL INDUSTRIES

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE (Calcutta —North-East): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I beg to move:

"This House is of the opinion that Foreign Oil Companies and other vital industries under the control of the 75 monopoly houses be nationalised."

I have no illusions about the fate of this Resolution because I have a long experience of Government's allergy to the subject and its pusillanimity in respect of big money, both native and foreign. I see my friend Mr. Dharia, the Minister of State. I do not see the Minister of Planning who must be busy with more fashionable jobs. I see the Deputy Minister for Industrial Development. I was only hoping to see again the face of his senior Minister that in 1966 had launched a thousand American ships to bring food to our famishing country. Of course, he is not here, per-

[Shri H. N. Mukerjee]

haps, too pre-occupied with 'Small Car' and other gimmicks.

Happily, my long-time friend, the present Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals, has made it a point to be present. I came to know him during the days of the first Parliament and, though I have no hopes in this regard, I shall have an expectation that he would like to do something to change the line which a team of previous Ministers, no doubt, under the guidance of the Prime Minister, the relay team from Mr. Asoka Mehta to Mr. Gokhale, had taken egregiously in regard to this country's oil policy.

17.15 hrs.

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

In one part of my Resolution, I am repeating a demand rejected a few months ago by Government in this House, though it had secured the support—almost universal—from every part of this assembly—and that is, in regard to the nationalisation of the 75 monopoly houses. I shall not spend much time over that aspect of the Resolution.

We all know that the Mahalanobis Committee reported in 1962; the second part of the report never saw the light of the day. Then the Monopolies Inquiry Commission was set up in 1964. Dr. Hazare's celebrated reports exposed the phenomenal growth of monopoly. The Dutt Committee reported in 1969 on the operation of the infamous licensing system. Then the Sarkar Commission was set up to report within six months, but unassisted by Government, it goes on desultorily for more than three years now.

This process of endless inquiry inhibiting action is a deliberate matter. It shows the present power elites' disbelief in the very process of planning, let alone socialism. Thus, a Tata goes on heading Air India, and one of his employees selling soaps and shampoos tops the giant government-owned steel holding company. The Chairman of IFC, IDB, ICICI, LIC, UTC, State Bank, and so on and so forth hold strong pro-private sector, anti-licensing and anti-nationalisation views and even air them in public. Far too long has this game continued. Let there be some finality and let the issues be faced squarely.

How long shall we go on seeing, as we did in the Exhibition, Asia 1972, Indian economy being represented by Philips, Indian Oxygen, Gust Keen, Williams, Remington Rand, Automatic Tyre Industry of Dunlop and Firestone and so on and so forth, then by Tatas, Mahindras, Kirloskars and others, proudly advertising their collaboration with foreign giants? Can people be left unaware of Tatas and Birlas growing stupendously not only before, but also after, the present Ministry took charge—the Tata increase in assets being from Rs. 505.36 crores in 1967 to Rs. 638.50 crores in 1969, while Birlas grew from Rs. 457.84 crores in 1967 to Rs. 629.60 crores in 1969? The FICCI and Tata memoranda make clear their offer to come to terms with Government provided it gets a free hand to dominate the economy in a different way. No wonder, our most eminent living journalist, Chalapathi Rao, wrote lately with irony and pathos that 25 years ago he was writing articles for the nationalisation of the then decrepit sugar industry and today also, 25 years afterwards, he is continuing to write articles for nationalisation of the even more decrepit sugar industry. The only way is to take the plunge, take over the monopoly houses and the key areas of the economy. But with its fatal fascination for soft options, Government blunders on and hoodwinks the people with hypocritical humbug.

Foreign oil companies not only in India but anywhere else, are meddlesome and rapacious instruments of international financial capital, its octopus grip strangulating the freedom and sovereignty of less fortunate countries —a grip which has begun to loosen with the advance of national liberation and socialism and will soon be shed. Mossadeq in Iran had to pay heavily for the first attempt at nationalisation in 1951. Since then, a dozen or more countries—Ceylon in 1961, Egypt in 1966, Burma, Bolivia, Venezuela, Peru, of course, Cuba and Chile, and then, Algeria, Iraq and Syria,—have then nationalised foreign oil companies outright or taken positive steps in that direction. It goes without saying—and cruel experience underlines it—that if a country is to mobilise resources for economic development, if the strategic importance of oil in the develoment of other industries is kept in view, if national defence and security is to be safeguarded, the Government of that country must have complete control over management and ownership of petroleum resources potential and actual, under-ground or over-ground, off-shore or on-shore. And the only thing to do in regard to foreign oil companies is to take them over. That alone is consistent with the interests of our people and the honour of our India.

There is a celebrated report of our Estimates Committee which in 1967 pinpointed the evil role of ESSO, Burmah-Shell and Caltex. Our free country got into an agreement with them between 1928 and 1953, assuring that for 25 years, they should not be acquired or their operations taken over by Government and if after 25 years we acquire them, we must pay them all 'reasonable compensation'. If there can be an agreed infraction of a country's sovereignty, here it is indeed, and we must wipe out this shame and ignominy.

Fantastic preferential terms were given to these foreign tycoons and I quote the Estimate Committee's words:

"An assurance was given that in the matter of taxation, the Indian Company will not be treated less favourably than if it would have been operating in India as a subsidiary of the parent foreign company."

Further:

"Among the various assurances and concessions the following two are very important:

(i) Rights of the oil companies regarding import of crude oil; and

(ii) Pricing of the Petroleum products on the basis of import parity."

Another stipulation was that they would be allowed to bring in crude oil from sources of supply of their own selection, charging therefore for inflated transport and other additional costs. India would compulsorily release foreign exchange acquired for such imports. It must always be remembered that these three are subsidiaries of the eight big international oil companies, in whose interests, in fact, is neo-imperialist foreign and military policy largely moulded, as witness the frantic effort to use Israel against the emerging freedom of Arab peoples who own the world's most valuable strategic area in terms of oil and other things, as witness also the desperate drive to dominate Africa and South-East Asia and the illimitable riches of Latin America.

We must not any longer truckle down to these powerful vampires, and we can stand up to them, particularly since the Soviet are our friends and the new wave of friendship for India is blowing over the oil rich Gulf States and especially States like Iraq, a situation of which we should take advantage. But I fear our Foreign Office is nearly illiterate in so far as the links between economic and foreign policy are concerned.

According to figures given in Parliament last year, the foreign oil companies remitted abroad in 1969, a total of Rs. 81.91 crores, Rs. 72.64 crores in 1970 and Rs. 94.49 crores in 1971. This comprises payment for import on crudes, products, coastal

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freights etc., for dividends, profits and loan payments, and also for royalties and office expenses abroad. In three years, they have taken away nearly Rs. 250 crores in foreign exchange from us.

The *Economic Times* of the 4th April, 1972 reported that in the last fourteen years, these companies have remitted Rs. 1040 crores from India, more than 70 per cent of which was on marketing and the rest on refining. Dividends declared by them on paid-up capital have been of the order of 40 per cent per annum. It is known that they are using even their accumulated reserves to pay out such large dividends. Every year, they remit 2.5 times their invested capital on marketing account and a sum equal to their invested capital on refinery account. Their assets in India have not increased. In fact, they declined by 5.8 per cent to Rs. 64.6 crores in 1969-70 and further by 2.7 per cent to Rs. 62.8 crores in 1970-71, and this is in spite of the expansion of their refineries without the necessary approval of Government, as the Estimates Committee noted in 1967. Government have been allowing this enormous loot in the name of the 1951 agreements.

On the 13th November, 1972, Mr. Gokhale told the other House, 'These are refinery agreements which are international agreements. So, he concedes that the companies are like sovereign States, and he added—

> "I am not saying that we do not have sovereignty to overrule these agreements, but delicate issues are involved and have to be taken into consideration.".

Somewhat more important than nursing the delicate plant of Indian sovereignty into strength and splendur is to Government the task of delicate negotiations with the world's oil sharks, but Ceylon and Egypt and Cuba and Chile and Algeria and Iraq have done this, which this old country cannot do because this Government is timid and halting.

The sordid story of these foreign companies black-mailing us on prices must be remembered. 'Till Soviet help came in the sixties, we hardly knew how much we were paying for British and American oil. We know how in 1969 they refused price reduction, when Government wanted them to do so. After a long tussle, they agreed to five cents per barrel reduction on crude, but this did not last long. Between 1970 and 1972, they have asked five times for price increase. Often they blamed the fact of increased taxes payable to the oil-producting countries being the reason for the increase, but this is very often phoney. We should of course, do away as soon as possible with this middlemanship and the oil sharks from abroad and have direct contact which we can if we will, with the oil-producing countries, the OPEC and all that sort of thing.

Pending that, the exorbitant claims of the foreign companies have to be disciplined. Unfortunately, Government always succumbs to their black-mailing. Their latest claims have not been conceded by the Government, Government have had to release foreign exchange to the new companies at the new rates demanded. They behaved shabbily, no doubt about that and their blackmailing has meant our foreign exchange bill on crude oil leaping from Rs. 102 crores in 1970 to Rs. 138 crores in 1971 and an estimated Rs. 144 crores in 1972. These international exploiters may further increase prices as a result of the recent American devaluation.

It is notorious that people in high places in the Ministry, in the Planning Commission, in the higher ranks of the civil services, and of course, in the big money circles are linked with these dastardly foreign interests.

When Shri K. D. Malaviya tried with Jawaharlal Nehru's blessings to go ahead, he met with hurdles which are still very much there. In spite of so much talk about socialism, do we not hear of the recurring Bechtel scandals? Do we not know how the Takru Commission is being disabled from proper discharge of its task by the deliberate bargering by high-ups in the the Ministries, in fact, in more than one Ministry?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member may continue his speech on the next occasion.

17.30 hrs.

HALF AN HOUR DISCUSSION

PRIME MINISTER'S SURVEY OF HOOGHLY AND SUNDERBAN AREAS IN WEST BENGAL

SHRI SAMAR GUHA (Contai): I am raising this debate on the Prime Minister's survey of Hooghly and Sunderban area (west block). The Prime Minister visited this area on 23rd and 24th January 1973. 23rd January was the birthday of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. On 23rd there was an international seminar on Netaji also. We made a request to the Prime Minister to open that seminar and also attend the function at Netaji Bhavan on 23rd January. She declined. She wrote a nice letter to me in which she sail that she preferred to visit the Sunderban area and the Hooghly river to look into its developmental programme. The people of West Bengal did not mind in the because they thought that her visit to that scenic area of estuarial Bengal was not a more pleasure trip but was a trip with a positive purpose for tackling the problem of the development of the Sunderbans area and also the navigability of the river Hooghly.

In 1926, Pandit Motilal Nehru was the only other distinguished personality of India outside Bengal to visit the Sunderbans area. He was so much charmed with that area that he wrote to a friend referring to the splendeorous beauty of that area that 'this land of beauty really deserved the name Sunderban'. To the poetic mind, Sunderban has a grandeur and beauty which really inspired many good poems. But in reality, Sunderbans is a land of distress, misery, object poverty and extreme backwardness. Yet this area has plenty of natural resources and immense potentiality of development, development of food development of fish, levelopment of animal husbandry, development of immense quantities of vegetables, jute, cotton, cashew nuts, coconuts and many other commodities.

West Bengal has a marginal deficit in food production. If food cultivation could be intensified in the Suderbans area, food production only from that area can very largely make up the food deficit of West Bengal.

But the problem there is the salinity of water. Being a oastal region, the salinity of water creates a trouble and a problem for intensive cultivation. The West Bengal Government has set up a Dutch expert committee to go into the problem as to how make the land free of salinity. That committee prepared a project called Delta Project of the Sunderban area. They had suggested a number of embankments, dikes, so that this area could be protected from the salinity of the sea water. With the embankements, with small and giant sluices, salinity could be controlled and a very big area could be brought under intensive cultivation.

As I have already said, if that can be brought under cultivation—there is plenty of sweet water—and if water spply can be assured, the Sunderbans alone can make up very largely the deficit in food production in West Bengal.

Now, leaving aside the question of jute which can be produced in some other areas also, there is a new potentiality for the production of cotton in that area. You know that cotton is a much-wanted commodity in West Bengal. That also can be developed.