

[Shri Humayun Kabir]

vidual nexus with the land would be lost. He did not see the inconsistency between the two parts of his statement.

One of the major defects of the agricultural policy in the First, Second and Third Plans, which persists in the Fourth Plan also, is the attempt to mechanise agriculture. Here I would like to point out that while mechanisation has certain advantages in agriculture, the conditions differ from country to country. In a country like the United States or USSR, where, compared to India, the land availability is 8 times or 20 times *per capita*, where the manpower is short, there is a strong case for mechanisation. But in a country like India, where everything is in short supply excepting man-power, I think the attempt to introduce mechanisation on a large scale will not merely not give us the desired results in agriculture but it will have harmful effects and far-reaching social implications, which are not always realised.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I would suggest that he may continue his speech next day.

We shall now take up Private Members' Resolutions.

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COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Forty Ninth Report

SHRI BHALJIBHAI PARMAR (Dohad) : I beg to move :

"That this House do agree with the Forty-ninth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 8th May, 1969."

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The question is :

"That this House do agree with the Forty-ninth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 8th May, 1969."

*The motion was adopted.*

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15 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE : APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSION TO GO INTO CHARGES AGAINST BIRLA GROUP OF CONCERNS—Contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Before I call Shri Tenny Viswanatham to continue his speech, I would like to say one thing. The balance of time available is only 17 minutes. Two other important Resolutions are there in the agenda. These Resolutions come before the House by ballot and every mover feels that he should get an opportunity. So, we have to ration time. Only 17 minutes are left and in my discretion I can extend it by half an hour. How much time will the Minister require ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, INTERNAL TRADE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SARI F. A. AHMED) : I may be given at least half an hour.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : 20 minutes.

SHRI F. A. AHMED : On the other hand, I have been informed by the hon. Members that many of them are anxious to speak on this Resolution. I would submit that they may be given an opportunity .....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I would have very much liked to do. But in the Committee when the time was decided upon, nobody pressed for more time for this Resolution and the movers of other Resolutions, on the contrary, said that I should not use my discretion even for an extension by half an hour. That is the position. It is very difficult.

SHRI F. A. AHMED : I think, if the matter is left to the House, to decide. it will be better.

SHRI K. N. Tiwary (Bettiah) : No extension should be given. We have got a much more important Resolution, next in the list.

श्री कृष्ण शूबल (खारगोन) : मैं यह कहता हूँ कि इस पर एक्सटेंशन देना चाहिए।

**SHRI D. N. PATODIA (Jalore) :** On the last occasion, in respect of the previous Resolution regarding Centre-States relations which was very important and many Members requested you to give some more time, at that time, you refused point blank to extend the time at all. I do not see any reason why you should extend time on this Resolution because the next Resolution is still more important.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER :** Last time, what I did was according to the procedure laid down. My discretion to extend time is for half an hour. Even if the House were to take a decision by majority, I have to adjourn the debate and go back to the Committee. This is the position so far as the Resolutions are concerned. I am sorry. Mr. Tiwary and some others said there should be no extension of time.

**SHRI TENNETI VISWANATHAM :** only 5 minutes.

**SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur) :** I have a suggestion to make. The total time available today is 2½ hours for the non-official business. We want that this Resolution should be completed; the second Resolution of Shri Rabi Ray should also be completed and the third one of Dr. Ranen Sen should be allowed to be moved. If you concede that, my point is only this that we have moved amendments on the first Resolution and those who have moved them should at least be allowed on a non-official day.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER :** The question of time is important. You have mentioned about Dr. Ranen. Sen Resolution. If I give him one minute at the end, still in between there is another Resolution of Shri Rabi Ray for which the time allotted is 2½ hours.

**SHRI S. M. BANERJEE :** There are 2½ hours available today. We can give, say, 40 minutes more to the first Resolution and about 1½ hours to the next Resolution and Dr. Ranen Sen can move his Resolution at the end.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER :** The Minister will take at least 25 minutes. So, I can call only one or two Members more.

**SHRI S. M. BANERJEE :** I have already moved an amendment.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER :** Not because anyone has moved an amendment he will get an opportunity. That is not the procedure.

**SHRI TENNETI VISWANATHAM :** (Visakhapatam) : May I know, Sir, how much time do I get ?

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER :** 5 minutes.

**SHRI TENNETI VISWANATHAM :** Sir, everybody thought.....

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER :** I am sorry.

**SHRI TENNETI VISWANATHAM :** I am not arguing with you. This is part of my speech.

Everybody thought that this is a very important matter, as, it relates to a particular group of industries, the Birla group. The name of Mr. Birla is known throughout the world and the fact that it is known throughout the world, gives it a greater importance. It is often said, and perhaps it is true, that his influence over the Government is very great. On one occasion, when a gentleman was arguing with me that half the number of Ministers are in the pocket of Mr. Birla, I said, "Don't argue like that. It rather increases his influence. If Your point is that he should not have any influence, you ought not to argue like that." But our friends go on arguing like that. The Rajya Sabha has given plenty of time to him and we are giving him time. I am very glad that you are not giving more time. Really, all that is necessary, is this. There is a complaint against such a great industrialist having under his control assets to the tune of about Rs. 500 crores which have grown only within the last 12 or 13 years.

Written complaints have been made and the Government itself has conceded that, in regard to 40 or 44 of the charges framed by a particular member of the other House, some have been proved right and about the rest they are inquiring. Some have been proved right and they are launching prosecution and all that. So, a

[Shri Tenneti Viswanatham]

*prima facie* case is there for the appointment of a commission of inquiry. All that is requested in this is not to say that the Birla group of industries have committed gross abuses, but all that it says is that, on the admission of the Government itself several of these things having been proved right, it is only proper, it would be in the interest of Birla group itself, to have a commission of inquiry. On much smaller case about 12 or 13 years ago, inquiries were made under the Commission of Inquiry Act. I really do not understand why anybody should feel shy of it. Personally I would feel that if my name had been brought in like this on the floor of the House here and in Rajya Sabha, I would have said, 'Please by all means do appoint a commission of inquiry; I shall acquit myself'. The Government, should have been glad to do so. The Government have allowed this matter of a particular individual industrialist to come to this House, and I really do not understand why the Government at this stage are against the appointment of a commission of inquiry. If I were the Speaker, ordinarily I might not have allowed this matter to come before this House at all because it is an individual case and your rules say that individual cases ought not to be brought here. But you have brought it here because Birla is not a mere individual industrialist, but is an institution and as powerful an institution as a State Government. His power and influence spread over almost all the State Governments and also over the Central Government. As far as we know, his name has been there from 1951, it has been a great name down from the income-tax investigation commission till now. Later on he has been awarded Padma Vibhushan also. I do not understand why, when such important personages are brought here and his industrial capacity or his industrial over-capacity is under question, he should feel shy of having a commission or why the Government should say that they would not have a commission. It would be in the interest of the Government, in the interest of the reputation of the Government as well as the reputation of the Birlas, that a commission should be appointed.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : I support Shri Tenneti Viswanatham.

I have heard the speeches made 15 days ago.

SHRI HIMATSINGKA (Godda) : Mr. Tenneti Viswanatham also has supported this Resolution. But I feel that there is no justification for any commission of inquiry to be appointed. If you read the Resolution, you will find that it says :

"Having regard to the seriousness of the charges that have been levelled against the Birla Group of concerns..."

Firstly, this is a pernicious practice that has grown up in this House of singling out an individual for attack in season and out of season...

AN HON. MEMBER : Birla House and not Birla,

SHRI HIMATSINGKA : It is a group of individuals or even a family. If that practice is allowed to grow, we do not know how this is going to be utilised and for what purposes...(Interruptions)

SHRI JAIPAL SINGH (Khunti) : It is not about Mr. Birla, but about the Birla empire.

SHRI HIMATSINGKA : If you notice the dates, you will find that suddenly, after the 1967 elections, a number of allegations have been put forward by a member of the other House and he goes on submitting memorandum after memorandum. The Government has very categorically replied and given information as to how they have dealt with the various allegations that have been made.

The Minister for Industries explained that out of 88 charges that have been levelled about 44 had no substance. There were some of them in which there were some facts which were neither illegal nor immoral, and in some other they have started the necessary action by way of searches, inquiries and investigations. In different courts the matter was tested and it has been decided by almost all the different High courts. It has been held by the courts that the action was *mala fide* and the proceedings have been quashed. These facts were not disclosed by the hon. Minister when he stated these facts. But in

almost all the cases the inquiries have been quashed as *mala fide*. (Interruption). That is the limit where we can go that even the courts are helping individuals; Courts are the only bulwark of democracy in this country. The courts are behaving as they should and everybody has faith and respect for the judiciary in this land and we should not cast any aspersions on the judiciary, or any allegation against High Courts.

The allegation against Birlas is being used for a double purpose attacking the industrialists as also the Government. These companies and the families have done so much for the country and also for the Government. The accusers want to strike with one stick both the industrialists and the Government. The opposition parties are taking advantage of this position to browbeat the big industrialists who have been helping the Congress Government.

You will find that the Member on the strength of whose allegations this Resolution was moved, wanted to clinch the issue as he said, by laying stress on only there. In his speech he said he had brought various charges and one of the most serious charge was that duplicate shares of the Hindustan Motors were in the market. As you know even currency notes are forged. Is the Government responsible for that? The Company itself gave information to the Government that a number of forged shares were in the market. Inquiries have been held. Two persons were formed responsible for the forged shares and they have been prosecuted.

Another charge was about the allegation that customs papers had been tampered with. This case was taken to the Chief Presidency Magistrate's court in Calcutta. Even *prima facie* case was not made out and the case was dropped.

Then I come to the allegation as regards excise duty. This relates to certain number of cotton mills. Those cases also were examined and the different courts have held that there is no violation of excise duty regulations.

SHRI S. KANDAPPAN (Mettur) : Why do you say all these things? The Minister can reply.

SHRI HIMATSINGKA : There has been no violation of excise duty.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The hon. Member must conclude now.

SHRI HIMATSINGKA : The other charge was that a number of companies have been sent into liquidation. The Minister has very clearly stated that there has been no ulterior motive for the companies being sent into liquidation. Certain companies whose business had ceased had to be wound up. That is all. Liquidation is not a very serious thing and just as a particular business stops, so also a company which has been started for a particular purpose, finding that that purpose is over, can stop work and goes into liquidation. Here, one of the companies was started for running the Khetri copper mines. That Copper mine was taken over by the Government. That is why there was nothing left for the company to do. So, it was sent into liquidation.

15.14 hrs.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Then I come to the allegation regarding alleged favours shown by different States. It has been alleged that States have been offering attractive terms to industrialists. In fact, even in Kerala, the Chief Minister, belonging to the Communist party, invited the Birla House to set up an industry in Kerala and offered them attractive terms. Now to say that they have been able to get favours from the States is a strange thing.

SHRI CHENGALRAYA NAIDU : (Chittoor) : Probably because Birlas paid them money.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You must conclude now.

SHRI HIMATSINGKA : I feel that the Minister has dealt with the matter fully and therefore there is no justification for any commission being started now.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : Sir, did you hear what Shri Naidu has said, when this question was raised that Kerala Government invited Birlas and gave them land for lease for bamboos? We are not going to be bamboozled by that. Shri Naidu said that Birlas paid them money.

SHRI CHENGALRAYA NAIDU : I said that probably the Birlas have paid them money for licences.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : If he has said so, that is very bad. Everybody is not a Congressman...

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : This is mud-slinging.

SHRI JAIPAL SINGH : May I suggest that whatever Shri Banerjee and Shri Naidu have said may be expunged ?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Krishna.

SHRI S. M. KRISHNA (Mandya) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the authority with which Shri Himatsingka spoke about the specific cases that were pending before the courts of law and the number of them that were quashed by the courts of law leads me to think that he has authoritatively defended the Birla empire.

Sir, I am not interested in witch-hunting. We have repeatedly made it clear on behalf of my Party that no single industrial house should be singled out for this treatment. We would have liked the Resolution to be on a much broader basis to the effect that wherever there are complaints made by responsible Members of Parliament as well as by responsible men outside the Parliament against any industrial house those complaints should be gone into by some judicial process. That is the stand taken by us. The Resolution tabled by Shri Viswanatha Menon singles out the Birla empire and the Birla industrial group.

The country in the last two-three years has repeatedly heard charges, counter charges, memoranda and counter-memoranda in this connection. We have read the debate that took place in the Rajya Sabha where the Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of India answered on behalf of the Central Government and said categorically that the Government of India is opposed to hold any judicial enquiry or an enquiry by a high-powered commission in regard to the dealings of the Birla industrial establishment. I take it that that is the present position of the Government.

I can understand if the name of 'Birlas' generates considerable heat in the Congress Executive of the Parliament. We and the country including most of the Congressmen that are present here know that Birlas have always patronised the Congress.

SHRI CHENGALRAYA NAIDU : Now they have gone to the Communists.

SHRI S. M. KRISHNA : I could understand his grievance. But after all the Birlas are politically shrewd and they know which way the wind is blowing. Therefore, they are slowly shifting their allegiance from the Congress to elsewhere. But we are not concerned with that. We are concerned mainly with the industrial policy objectives that were adopted by this House-

The Industrial Policy Resolution has three main planks. One of them is avoidance of monopoly and prevention of concentration of wealth. During the last twenty years, has this Government which professes that it stands by socialism done anything at all to arrest or to check the growing economic wealth and concentration of economic power in a few business-houses ?

The second plank is protection of small-scale industries against undue competition from large-scale industries. Figures have been quoted and they are figures released by the Planning Commission as well as other agencies of the Government of India. After 1947 we find that some of these industrial houses have grown beyond imagination. My hon. friend had just pointed out that the assets of the Birlas were nearing Rs. 500 crores. Is this the way we are checking the growth of monopolistic tendencies in this country ? Is this the way we are saving the cause of the broad objectives which we have accepted in the Industrial Policy Resolution adopted by this House ?

I feel that in their own interest, the Birlas must accept an inquiry so that that would set at rest all the criticisms that have been levelled against the Birla firms. Even at this late stage, the Government of India must come forward and accept the resolution which has been tabled and if need be, the resolution should be broadened by way of an amendment.

श्री शशि भूषण (खारगोन) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, यह मेरी समझ में विल्कुल नहीं आता कि बिरला जी के जो एजेन्ट्स, सालिसिटर्स या मददगार हैं उनको क्यों इस बात में परेशानी होती है कि अगर कोई इन्क्वायरी कमीशन मुकर्रर कर दिया जायेगा तो वे किसी भगड़े में फंस जायेंगे। हमारे देश का यह कानून है, और लोगों के ऊपर भी इन्क्वायरी कमीशन बनाये गये हैं इसलिए इनके लिए भी अगर बनाया जाये, जैसी कि मांग है और अखबारों ने भी लिखा है, तो इसमें कोई दुविधा की बात नहीं होनी चाहिए। इस देश में आज भी 82 प्रतिशत लोगों की आमदनी एक रुपए से कम है लेकिन बिरला जी की सम्पत्ति, चाइना के हमले से लेकर पाकिस्तान के हमले तक, तीस करोड़ से चार सौ करोड़ तक बढ़ गई। इस प्रकार से जो सम्पत्ति बढ़ी है उसको देखते हुए मैं चाहूँगा कि बिरला जी की इन्क्वायरी हो। इसके अलावा और भी जो इस प्रकार के बिजनेस हाउसेज हैं जैसे कि कहा जाता है कि जो लोग बिरला जी के लिए कहते हैं कि वे साहू जैन से सम्बन्धित है, तो साहू जैन भी बिरला जी से कम नहीं है; उनके लिए भी इन्क्वायरी कमीशन बिठाया जाये। मैं समझता हूँ इस प्रकार का एक परमानेंट कमीशन होना चाहिए जो कि इस बात की इन्क्वायरी करे कि इस देश में कौन लोग ब्लैक करते हैं और गलत किस्म के व्यापार करते हैं। आज बिरला जी के पास 50 लाइसेन्सेज पड़े हुए हैं जिनकी इंडस्ट्रीज वे नहीं लगा सके हैं। इनके जो इंडस्ट्रियल एडवाइजर हैं उनको अमरीका भेजकर बिरला जी ने पढ़ाया और अपने मिल में नौकरी दी। उसके बाद में वे सरकार में आयें और उन्होंने इनके लाइसेन्सेज दिलाये। उनके एक्सटेन्शन्स भी मिलते रहते हैं। इस प्रकार से न तो वे खुद ही इंडस्ट्रीज लगाते हैं और न दूसरों को लगाने देते हैं। वह हैं श्री कालेलकर जी—मैं उनका नाम नहीं लेना चाहता था। बिरला जी सारे जीवन उनसे सम्बन्धित रहे हैं। अगर इन्क्वायरी कमीशन मुकर्रर किया जाता है तो इसमें कोई एतराज की बात

नहीं होनी चाहिए। मैं समझता हूँ बिरला जी की जो वकालत करते हैं, वे देश के कानून के साथ और देश की जनता के साथ, जिसका कि शोषण किया जा रहा है, द्रोह करते हैं। इतना ही कहकर मैं समाप्त करता हूँ।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now, the hon. Minister.

SHRI SHRI CHAND GOYAL (Chandigarh) : You have not called any Member from the Jan Sangh.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Not at this hour.

DR. MELKOTE (Hyderabad) : Kindly give us an opportunity to talk over this matter.

श्री शिव नारायण (वस्ती) : क्या खाली अपोजीशन वाले ही बोलेंगे? वन-वे-ट्राफिक नहीं होना चाहिए। यहीं पर बैठकर इन लोगों की तरफ से कहा जाता है कि बिरला के दलाल हैं—ये अलफाज इस्तेमाल किये जाते हैं।... (व्यवधान)...

SHRI CHENGALRAYA NAIDU : Please hear the labour point of view from Dr. Melkote.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have already said that the time is limited, and under the rules I cannot extend it further; I have already extended it by half an hour for the sake of the hon. Minister only.

DR. MELKOTE : Kindly give me only two minutes.

श्री शिव नारायण : इस तरह के लफ्ज इस्तेमाल किये जाते हैं कि बिरला के दलाल हैं... (व्यवधान)...

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The hon. Minister is in possession of the floor of the House and he is not supposed to yield to any pressure.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The time left is only 17 minutes. I have in my discretion extended it by half an hour. The next Resolution and the one after that are equally important.

SOME HON. MEMBERS *rose*—

SHRI SHEO NARAIN : You do not hear our point of view. Is this the way to conduct the debate? Is this in consonance with the dignity of Parliament?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : If every-time we were to bypass the rule, it would be very difficult. If members insist; we can adjourn the debate on this and refer the matter back to the Committee for allotment of another two hours. Otherwise, I am helpless.

SHRI BALRAJ MADHOK (South Delhi) : The Jan Sangh represents a very important point of view. How can you shut us out? You may give us five minutes. But you should not let us go unheard.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The other day I was looking for his groups spokesman to speak. But no member was present.

There is some procedure laid down in such matters and we have to follow it. If any further extension is required. I have to go back to the Committee. That is the rule.

SHRI BALRAJ MADHOK : You have your discretion. We are asking for only 5 minutes. After all, our point of view has got to be represented. Shri Kothari will speak for us.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : All right. Shri Kothari. Five minutes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS *rose*—

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I am not making an exception. One group was left unrepresented.

श्री प्रकाशवीर शास्त्री (हापुड़) : जब कभी इस प्रकार के महत्वपूर्ण विषय आये तो हाउस की राय जान ली जाये और घन्टा घाघ घन्टा

समय बढ़ाने की आवश्यकता हो तो उसको बढ़ा दिया जाये ताकि सभी लोगों को एकमोमेंट किया जा सके। इसमें दिक्कत की क्या बात है ?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : If I do that, one or two more will speak; then one or two more; like that it will go on for one hour and then the Minister will take half an hour.

श्री शिव नारायण : अध्यक्ष महोदय, इस सदन में डा० मेलकोटे से ज्यादा कोई भी सीनियर मेम्बर नहीं है। इतना सीनियर मेम्बर इस सदन में खड़ा हो तो आप यूँ हाथ दिखा देते हैं।

Dr. Melkote is our senior most member representing the labour point of view. If you want to shut him out, will it be proper? Is this the way to conduct debate?

SHRI S. M BANERJEE : On a point of order.

इसमें सीनियर या जूनियर मेम्बर का सवाल नहीं है। डा० मेलकोटे बहुत सीनियर हैं, उनकी हम बड़ी इज्जत करते हैं। लेकिन शिव नारायण जी ने कहा है कि एक सीनियर मेम्बर खड़ा हो तो डिप्टी स्पीकर साहब हाथ दिखा देते हैं। अब हाथ नहीं दिखायेंगे तो क्या दिखायेंगे।

SHRI JAIPAL SINGH : You have raised a very important point. I am rather surprised at the observation you have made. The Chair is responsible for everything. You have said something about the matter of extension of time being referred back to the Committee, and therefore you cannot decide it. I submit the Chair is supreme and it can over rule the Committee.

SHRI S. S. KOTHARI (Mandsaur) : My Party takes an objective view of the whole matter. We are of the opinion that all the industrial groups must subscribe to public interests. I have a feeling that the demand for the appointment of an enquiry commission is motivated by political considerations. One section of the Congress raises demands for the appointment of a commission of enquiry, while the establishment pressurises the industrial houses and obtains donations. That is the technique that is being adopted... (Interruptions).

श्री शिव नारायण : साहू जैन और शर्मा  
चन्द प्यारेलाल का भी कहते चलो ।

SHRI S. S. KOTHARI : For decades, the Congress and its leaders had been very friendly with the industrial house and have received election funds from them. It was only when Mr. R. K. Birla contested the election from Jhunjhunu that a section of the Congress launched a campaign against that house. Even in the mid-term elections according to reports, the Congress has obtained large sums of money by pressurizing that house.

The basic question that arises is whether the existing law is not sufficiently effective to deal with any allegations or charges levelled against this house. In my opinion, the Government have a sufficiently large arsenal of powers to deal with any situation, and they can take whatever action is necessary.

If we look at the allegations, it is found that many of them do not have much substance or evidence. I say on behalf of my party that we do not hold any brief for anything wrongly done by anybody. If there is anything against the law, it can be looked into and action taken. But we are opposed to witch hunting against industrialists or politicians or civil servants or any other class of society. The sort of witchhunting that is indulged in is actually leading to degradation in this country.

May I say that even communist Governments and foreign Governments invite Birlas to establish industries. Mr. Nambudripad finds one Birla good and invites him to establish industries in Kerala. Mr. Jyoti Basu finds another Birla congenial. Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia finds a third Birla very fine and invites him to set up industries in Yugoslavia with thier collaboration. Ethiopia and Nigeria are also inviting another Birla to put up industries. One thing in common to all these Birlas. They are hardworking and efficient persons in the field of management of Industries and they are able to extract the maximum return from capital employed. I wish the public sector learnt this lesson and earned a good return on capital invested therein.

As an economist, I was surprised that one of the charges is that they have used more than their installed capacity, if

all the public sector undertakings utilised their installed capacity, at least upto ninety per cent, this country would be in a far better state. Let us learn that lesson.

I shall ask four questions—short but relevant questions and then conclude. Firstly, have the charges not been thoroughly investigated or are in the course of proper investigation? The answer is yes. Secondly, have the firms not given co-operation? Again, yes. Thirdly, is the existing law not adequate? The reply is in the affirmative. Fourthly, what has been the verdict of the courts where they had been approached? Day after day we open the papers in the morning and we find Birlas exonerated by courts. Either there is something wrong with the courts as my hon. friend said or there is something wrong with the Government or there is no substance in the charges. It is for the hon. Members to judge. Therefore, all I say is that if anything is wrong, let the rule of law prevail but let us not go about witch-hunting. That is my basic and fundamental point. There is no case for a Commission of Enquiry.

DR. MELKOTE (Hyderabad) : As a representative of the working class, we come across the Birla concerns in various parts of the country and I must say that the workers are very much disappointed with the way the Birlas have been behaving with them.

Therefore, we are very anxious to see that they are properly punished, provided there is a case. Towards that, I tried to go through the report of Mr. Hazarika and the Government's version in the Rajya Sabha. (Interruption) I would like to tell you that sometime back, in this House. I made mention that during the discussion on wealth-tax in 1961, it was found that about 175 industrial concerns or families in this country controlled all the big industries in the prigate as well as many of the ancillary industries running into Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 40,000 crores. What is this paltry Rs. 500 crores in that context? Why not call upon all those 175 concerns, private ones—(Interruption)

AN HON. MEMBER : 75 concerns.



DR. MELKOTE : I stand corrected. Therefore, this resolution ought to be broad-based from this point of view. But what we are trying to do is this. There is a section of the House coming up individually to deal with regard to this particular concern. But what I would like to plead with you is, why is it that these people are after Mr. Birla? If there is a *prima facie* case, we have got to discuss it in this House threadbare. The Government have come forward, after some enquiries, to say that many of those cases are flippant, that no *prima facie* case whatsoever is there and where there was a case, they have been filed in the courts. We would have been very glad if they were caught somewhere in some way or the other and got punished. But as it is, the working classes find it extremely difficult to get them punished. Unless specific charges are mentioned, merely a question of enquiry does not help us. We have to prepare our data properly. Some Members on this side of the house mentioned about witch-hunting. That is not the way in which this House should have a debate. This is a responsible House, responsible to the people.

Now, whoever it may be—X, Y or Z—it is immaterial to us—we must have the data. You and I have got to through the data. From that point of view, the data given to us by the Government are very, very vague. The report itself is very vague. There is nothing particular about the particular concern, except that a case in respect of so and so, may have happened. On the question "so and so, so and so" and "may have happened", what could be done? This question of Birla, is not a matter over which you and I could discuss here without adequate data before us, I would, therefore, plead that in this House, if we have got to have this discussion, why not broad-base it and then enquire into the licensing policy and other things. Let the Public Accounts Committee or the Committee on Public Undertakings take up the matter and specify what exactly is wrong with regard to this industrial concern. We do not want this concern to thrive in this manner; owing about Rs. 500 crores of investment is a very serious matter for us, and from that point of view I would like to plead with you again that this is a matter which you and I and the whole House have got to

take into account and go on finding out what is wrong until the Government yields to this House and says that the policy that we have adopted so long is wrong. But towards that question, nobody seems to have tackled.

The manoeuvrability and a adaptability of Birlas is simply wonderful. On the one side, these people blame the Congress and, on the other, Shri S. M. Banerjee said that the Kerala Government gave only a licence for bamboos to Birlas. Is it for growing bamboos or for using bamboos for production in the industry? That is what one has to consider. It is not for growing bamboos that they gave a licence. (Interruption). The whole point is very clear. I learnt a few days back that the present West Bengal Government appealed to the industrialists to help them to tide over the present crisis in the industry in West Bengal. One man came forward and possibly his terms were accepted by the Government, and that is again the Birlas in West Bengal. On the one side, they blame Birlas and, on the other side, they manoeuvre with same Birlas (Interruption)

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : Sir, since he has mentioned my name, I just want to say a word. It is not a question of West Bengal Government; let it be any Government. We want to give a clean chit to the Birlas, but why are the Government afraid to face a Commission?

DR. MELKOTE : Where will this discussion lead to? If there is to be a commission of enquiry, we have to specify the particular points which have to be enquired into. After that, Government will have to go into that and find out whether it is correct and then go to a law court. All these things will come. However much we may like or dislike the Birlas that is not the point. It is not correct for a House of this type to discuss this sort of resolution. I plead with the House that this matter be dropped. (Interruption).

SHRI DHIRESWAR KALITA (Gaubati) : Who is on the pay roll of Birlas?

DR. MELKOTE : Sir, as I said, I plead with the House that this matter be dropped. It is for the Government to

take up the question in all its seriousness and bring before us comprehensive data telling us what exactly is wrong not only with Birlas but with all the industrialists. Then we will be in a position to discuss the issue threadbare. Till then, a discussion on this point is irrelevant and I would appeal to the mover to withdraw the resolution.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The hon. Minister.

श्री प्रेम चन्द वर्मा (हमीरपुर) : आपको मेरी बात सुननी होगी ।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have called the minister. Nothing will go on record. (*Interruptions*). If any member from this side takes the time of the House. I will have to deduct that time from the minister's time.

श्री प्रेम चन्द वर्मा : \*\*

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, INTERNAL TRADE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI F. A. AHMED) : Sir, I am grateful to the mover of the resolution, who has given once again an opportunity to the members of this House to discuss a very important matter regarding the appointment of a commission to enquire against one of the industrial houses, namely, Birlas. This subject has attracted attention not only of members of this House but also of the people outside the House.

While attracting attention it has also brought about a large number of controversies regarding the issues involved. Therefore I would like to submit, in the first instance, that when we are considering this important matter it is only desirable that we should take into consideration the basic issues involved and whatever decision is taken, that should be taken dispassionately and objectively. It is only in this context that I would like to proceed with the matter discussed in this House on the last day as well as today.

Sir, at the outset, I would like to emphatically deny all the charges that have

been levelled against the Government and the Congress Party for white-washing the allegations or the cases against Birlas. I would only like to point out that, if you go through the speeches of many of the hon. Members, you will find that they have been able to make out a case for a Commission of Inquiry but their main purpose has been to belittle the Government and to launch a campaign against the activities of the Government and the Congress Party (*Interruptions*). I would only request the hon. Members to give me the same indulgence as I gave them when they were speaking. I did not disturb them in the least.

What I wanted to point out was that the Government, every member of the Government, yields to none in their desire to bring to book such persons as are at fault, as are guilty or as have committed some wrong. Therefore, for anyone to say that because a particular house or a particular individual is being favoured by any member of the Government is a baseless charge and no our making such allegation has been able to place any proof or to show that there is any basis in their allegations.

SHRI SHASHI BHUSHAN : What about Shri Chandrasekhar's memorandum? (*Interruption*)

SHRI F. A. AHMED : This House is discussing the allegations against Birla House. It is not that they have brought any specific allegations except what were contained in the memorandum submitted by Shri Chandrasekhar and which was discussed in Rajya Sabha. I was waiting to hear if any hon. Member had anything more to add to what is contained in the allegations submitted in the form of a memorandum by Shri Chandrasekhar.

श्री प्रेम चन्द वर्मा : मैं लगाने को तैयार हूँ, मुझे आप मौका दीजिये। मेरे पास सबूत है।

श्री हुकम चन्द कछवाय (उज्जैन) : कांग्रेस वालों को मौका नहीं मिलेगा। आप इधर भा जाइये।

SHRI F. A. AHMED : Sir, as the time is limited I would like to go to the main issue which is involved in this resolution. What is the main issue? The main issue is that a Commission of Inquiry should be appointed for going through the allegations contained in the aforesaid memorandum.

If a Commission of Inquiry is to be appointed, what is the purpose, what is the objective? It can have three purposes. One of the purposes of the Commission of Inquiry will be to find out the facts, that is to say, whether there is a *prima facie* case in respect of any allegations against the Birlas or any of the business houses.

Secondly, if such irregular practices are rampant, what is the legislative remedy which can be provided in order to check those practices? Thirdly, if there is lacuna so far as administration is concerned, what action can be taken to improve the State of affairs.

As hon. Members are aware, if a Commission of Inquiry has to go into the various allegations which are made, the first question will be the terms of reference for that Commission. When 88 or 90 individual cases are involved in the allegations, it will be very difficult to seal the terms of reference. Even if the terms of reference can be settled, it will be for the Commission of Inquiry to find out facts supporting these allegations.

Can anyone deny that, instead of waiting for the Commission of Inquiry to find out facts, Government have themselves ascertained a large number of facts and wherever they have found that any violation of any of the statutory provisions has taken place, they have referred that particular matter to be dealt with by the proper authorities? The Commission of Inquiry is not a body which can give punishment to either Birlas or anybody else, if they find on facts some illegality. The Commission can only find out facts. Then they have to leave the matter to the Government to pursue the matter under the relevant statutes.

So far as these three memoranda are concerned, they contained 88 or 90 allegations against the Birlas. From the list which I placed on the Table, it is apparent that in some cases there is no *prima facie*

evidence or basis for some of these allegations. In the case of a large number of allegations where *prima facie* case has been found action has already been taken.

For instance, the hon. Mover of the Resolution, Shri Menon, referred to the case of Hindustan Insecticides Limited. His contention was that this was a case where a licence to a particular party was given in a hurry. He also asked that when the public sector was in a position to undertake the manufacture, what was the necessity of giving this licence. May I point out that after this particular matter was brought to the notice of the government, we referred it to the Dutt Committee. What else could we do? Why do you want to refer this matter to a Commission of Inquiry? Have we no confidence, have we no faith in the Dutt Committee, which is examining such cases, that they will not tell us what is present evil, what was wrong in giving this licence and whether licences had been implemented or not? So far as this particular matter is concerned, may I also say that though the letter of intent was granted to the party in 1967, it has since lapsed and we are now considering whether this particular manufacture can be undertaken in the public sector?

Therefore, I would ask the hon. Member to consider whether any useful purpose can be served by referring a matter of this nature to a fresh Commission of Inquiry, especially when the facts are all there before us. Where action can be taken on the basis of available facts, we have taken action. In such cases where we have felt doubts, we have referred some of them to the Dutt Committee to go into the question and give us recommendations so that further action can be taken by government to stop such malpractices.

There are a large number of cases where breaches of income-tax law and excise laws and involved. Have government not referred those cases to appropriate authorities for making necessary inquiries? The hon. Member has tried to create an impression as if everything is wrong with the administration.

It has been said that no one in Government can be trusted to do justice in his particular matter; it is asserted that the influence of Birlas is so much, so overpowering, that it is not possible ever for a

judge or a magistrate or anyone to take action against Birlas even though there may be evidence against them. If that is so, what is the remedy the hon. Members would like to suggest? Would they like that the entire machinery, judiciary machinery and the investigating machinery, should be changed completely? Even after the commission of inquiry comes to a decision with regard to facts, we shall have to entrust the investigation of the cases, the prosecution of the cases, to the machinery which exists. And that is what the Government has done. Therefore, what I am trying to point out is that it is not that the Government are against making an inquiry into this particular cases. What the Government has done is that instead of handing over these matters to the commission of inquiry which would have taken two or three or four years time before we actually knew what was the factual position, the Government have themselves taken up the burden of finding out what are the facts. Whenever any fact was disclosed, where any matter appeared suspicious or required to be thoroughly investigated, we have given it to the C. B. I. or where we have found there is a *prima facie* case, we launched prosecution and taken action. Where any action has to be taken under the Excise Act, that action has been taken.

So far as the licensing matters are concerned, I would like to dissuade the Members from the impression that we are trying to shield Birlas or anyone else. Wherever we felt there was a doubt...

SHRI DHIRESWAR KALITA : How are they growing?

SHRI F. A. AHMED : I will also deal with the question of growth. Here, so far as licensing matters are concerned, without waiting for the hon. Member to say anything I have referred all the 6 or 7 cases to Dutt committee for the purpose of making an inquiry and letting us know what is wrong so that proper action may be taken in those matters.

श्री प्रेम चन्द वर्मा : अगर आप ने भेजे है तो बाकी और जो मिनस्ट्रीज हैं उन्होंने क्यों नहीं भेजे ? मुझे मालूम है कि कुछ मिनस्ट्रीज ने कैसेज दबा कर रखे हुए हैं ।

SHRI F. A. AHMED : May I just say it will be wrong to say that there is any reluctance on the part of any Ministry not to send proper cases for necessary action. If the hon. Member will go through the papers, what we have said is that only in about 17 cases, the matter had to be further inquired into before the decision could be taken as to what action should be taken. But there are a large number of cases in Finance Ministry itself. under the Excise Act, itself, where action has been taken and action is proceeding. Similarly, under the Company Law Department...

श्री प्रेम चन्द वर्मा : क्या मिनस्टर साहब हमें यह विश्वास दिलायेंगे कि ऐसे जितने भी कैसेज हैं उन सारे के सारे कैसेज को वह दत्ता कमेटी के पास भेजेंगे ?

SHRI F. A. AHMED : What I was trying to point out was that in a large number of cases, action has already been taken. About those cases, either they are being investigated by the C. B. I. or there is prosecution or they have been referred to the income-tax authorities for necessary action. There are only about 17 cases where we were doubtful as to whether there was a *prima facie* case or not and, with regard to those matters, as was stated by me the other day in the other House, an officer has been appointed to coordinate activities to see to what extent action can be taken in those matters expeditiously so that we may decide one way or the other, whether any action is to be taken in those matters. We hope that as soon as the report from that officer is available to us, we shall take necessary action in those matters also.

16.00 hrs.

The other question which my hon. friend from Assam has asked is : What are we going to do so far as the growth of monopolies is concerned. Now, that is a matter which a commission of inquiry cannot decide. Further it is not necessary to appoint a commission of inquiry for that purpose because other commissions have gone into this question.

We had the latest report about this from the Monopolies Inquiry Commission

[Shri F. A. Ahmed]

as also report from the Hazare Committee. In pursuance we have taken action in placing before the Parliament the Monopolies (Restrictive Practices) Bill. That Bill is under discussion in the Rajya Sabha. Another action that we have taken in order to stop the influence of the business houses—the other day we began discussion in this House on the Bill—to ban company donations to political parties. These are the two measures, by which we propose to prevent the concentration of wealth to the detriment of the public interests, is avoided, is checked. What else can a commission of inquiry to except suggesting certain legislative measures? And those legislative measures are already on before the House for consideration. It is for the House to decide to what extent we should give powers so that these tendencies can be checked.

The other day one of the hon. members—he is not present here—Shri Madhu Limaye, made a speech which was full of sound and fury. But when we go through his speech, we find that there is no substance in the speech. He not only accused us but also tried to introduce insinuations against Mr. Chandra Sekhar who took initiative to bring this matter before us. What did the hon. Member say? He said that there are two groups in the Congress—one is in favour of the Deputy Prime Minister and the other in favour of the Prime Minister—and it is at the instigation of the Prime Minister that certain Congress members have brought out those charges...

श्री शशि भूषण : यह गलत है ।

SHRI F. A. AHMED : I am just mentioning what he said. This was how it was interpreted. I can say this much that Mr. Chandra Sekhar is a very sincere and honest person and what he has brought before this House is on the basis of his information and what he wanted was a wrong thing to be corrected. He has not submitted this memorandum because he has been inspired either by the Prime Minister or by any Minister. Therefore, for the hon. Member to say that it is the internal politics inside the party which was responsible for these allegations being brought through the memorandum placed before Parliament, is not correct; I deny and emphatically that

there is no substance in these charges. Similarly, some hon. Member...

SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDI (Kendrapara) : May or may not be on this question. But I do not think that you will deny that there are groups inside the Congress Party. (Interruptions).

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE AND SUPPLY (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT) : It will be there in any democratic party.

SHRI F. A. AHMED : I can look after him. The only thing that I would like to say is this. I am not in the least worried about differences in our party because that is a sign of life. Ours is not a party which is not moving, which has no life. I think, it will be wrong to say that in a party, which is alive which is fresh, there can be no differences and so on. I am not afraid of having differences in the Party. But it is for us to settle them and it is not for the hon. Member to say that such and such a thing exists. Today it might have had some value but some of the hon. Members are over-reaching to such an extent that the other day they got me married to a girl of 21 years. He can thus realise to what extent there is substance in making allegations against either the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister.

Similarly there is no basis in the allegation that Birla was favoured because Birla wanted to make our Indiraji the Prime Minister. May I tell him that this is only a wishful thinking? Our party is not so low that it will allow any extraneous influences.

श्री रवि राव (पुरी) : चाप चाहे जितना कहें वह बात सत्य साबित हो चुकी है ।

SHRI F. A. AHMED : It is they who make such allegations because of their own thinking in that way, and their readiness to be influenced by big business, think that other can also be similarly influenced in their election of leader. There is no basis in the charge that our party has been influenced or P. M. has been elected as leader of the party and Prime Minister because of the influence of the Birlas. This is totally baseless.

The hon. Member alleged that the entire Government does not speak with one voice. I categorically deny that charge. Whatever decision we have taken for not agreeing to a Commission of Inquiry—and that also for very good reasons—has been a decision taken by Government as a whole with every member of the Government, and not merely taken by one individual member of the Cabinet. So, there is no substance for any one to say that there has been no unanimity...

**SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDI :**  
Was the Cabinet unanimous in this matter?

**SHRI F. A. AHMED :** Yes. This is decision of the Government. This is binding on the Government. People who say about these differences of opinion among members of the Government do so with only propaganda purpose, to belittle the Government.

We have taken this decision not because we were guided by any interest or because we had anything to be afraid of but we took this decision objectively and dispassionately. We took that decision because appointment of Commission of Inquiry would have delayed the entire matter for a period of 3 or 4 years. We have taken this action because wherever we found that immediate action is called suitable action has been taken including prosecution. There are income-tax cases where action also has been taken quickly. Where we feel doubt and the matter required further probe some of such cases, particularly licence cases have been referred to an independent authority, namely, the Dutt Committee, and as soon as the report is available from that Committee we shall take whatever action is called for. Therefore, for any Member to say that our refusal to appoint a Commission of enquiry was for any subjective consideration or due to any influence, is something which is entirely baseless.

16.08 hrs.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

The other day, it is unfortunate, some charges were made against a Member of the Government by the hon. Member who is not here now in this House. Mr.

Mukherjee, while making his speech, referred to the Dodsell case. What has the Dodsell case to do with Birla? He even brought in matters which are not relevant to the subject matter under discussion. He made references in that connection to our Deputy Prime Minister and mentioned about the Dodsell case. This has nothing to do with the allegation contained in Mr. Chandra Sekhar's memorandum. So far as Dodsell is concerned, it has no connection with Birla. The House is considering the question of enquiry relating to Birla's. The allegation is against Birla's, I do not know how this charge against the Deputy Prime Minister could have been brought. He again made some charges with regard to a certain chemical company.

**SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDI :**  
Your Member also brought it in the Rajya Sabha.

**SHRI F. A. AHMED :** May I just say, that, after all, we should behave as gentlemen? When a gentleman makes a certain statement *bona fide* and the gentleman against whom allegation is made goes into the fact and says that there is no basis in them, I think there can be no justification whatsoever in repeating the same charges over and over again and saying, here is a person who is guilty of such and such misconduct so on and so forth.

**SHRI RABI RAY :** You are repudiating your own man.

**SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDI :**  
Whatever may have been your differences and whatever may be the controversy, so far as the allegations made by Shri Chandra Sekhar against the Deputy Prime Minister are concerned, they have not been rebutted in the Rajya Sabha. I do not know why it has not yet been done.

**SHRI F. A. AHMED :** I do not know whether the Hon. Member was present when the Deputy Prime Minister was replying to a debate I think, on the 30th. He referred to these two charges regarding the Chemicals. He never made it a secret that he had not deposited some amount in one of the private companies of his son-in-law or grandson. He said that there was nothing wrong in making that deposit

[Shri F. A. Ahmed]

in that company. What further explanation do you want from him? He has come forward and placed all the facts before you and said: "Yes, there is this thing". That has nothing to do with the Birlas, there is no question of any misconduct in this. If you do not accept even that statement, I do not understand what else would satisfy you. This is a matter which does not require any enquiry at all. You alleged certain things and he has already explained them. After he has clarified the position, there is very little inspection for Hon. Members to repeat those very charges day in day out in order to force people to believe that there is something wrong while there is nothing against this man. I have really not been able to understand this.

What I wish to submit before this House is that we are not afraid of taking action against any house or whoever he might be provided there is a case in which action can be taken. Secondly we feel that appointment of a commission of inquiry cannot be helpful because there are a large number of cases. In respect of many of them, we have already taken action and some of them we have referred to the Dutt Committee. In respect of some where there is doubt, we have appointed an officer of high integrity who will go into these matters, coordinate inquiries between various Ministries and place early the actual facts before us, so that we may take a decision as to what action should be taken in those matters. I feel that appointment of a Commission of Inquiry will only delay and will neither help us in regard to the legislative action or in the direction of taking administrative action to plug any loopholes which will present persons from committing from the irregularity.

I would also like to say it was very unfair and very unfortunate for one of the Hon. Members to make certain remarks against the officer—Shri Rajagopalan—who has been appointed to coordinate these activities. Without any substance it was said that he was only a Birla man and, therefore he will be influenced by the Birlas. He is an officer of such calibre against whom there is nothing to show that he will be influenced by any business House. For some Hon. Members to come forward and say that he is such and such, is, I think,

not proper and not fair. If today you have that feeling against every officer and against every person in the Administration, I do not know what are the authorities or who are the people to whom these matters can be referred for the purpose of proper inquiries and placing the real facts before us. We are not afraid of taking action against an officer provided there is some substance or you have some Proof to show that that particular officer has really done something wrong. But without any substance and without any proof, if one keeps making wild allegations against officers, that does not redound to the credit of the Hon. Members who make these allegations. While we are prepared to listen to what hon'ble members have to say and while we are prepared to welcome any suggestion, I would beg of them to make allegation only with a full sense of responsibility and if they have some proof. If there are facts, please place them before us and we shall certainly take necessary action to improve the state of affairs. I can only assure the House that the purpose which the House has, namely to bring to book those people who have committed irregularity or are at fault, will be served by the action we have taken. If the Dutt Committee or the other Committee give any suggestion to further modify or improve upon the functioning of the licensing committee, we are willing to consider it. We are waiting for the report. As soon as that report comes and is in our hands, we will take necessary action.

With these words, I oppose this Resolution and I hope the Hon. Member will not press this Resolution.

**SHRI D. N. PATODIA :** On a point of information. Would the hon. Minister clarify and throw some light on the claim made that in respect of several court cases Government had lost?

**SHRI F. A. AHMED :** I think it will not be desirable for the hon. Member to refer to those cases, because in many of these cases, judgment has been given; and those are also under appeal; and many of those cases have been disposed of on technical grounds also. So, I think it is not

desirable that those matters should be referred to here.

AN HON. MEMBER : It may not be desirable for Government.

SHRI VISWANATHA MENON (Ernakulam) ; I thank all the Members who have taken part in this discussion. I have to answer some points, especially those put forward by the hon. Minister.

I would like to make it clear that I have moved this resolution in all seriousness. I do not want to pinpoint and make allegations against any particular Minister. In fact, in my opening speech I had declared that my allegation was that the entire Cabinet was responsible. So, I do not want to pinpoint any particular Minister. From the figures given by Government themselves we find that the assets of the Birlas have gone up from Rs. 200 crores to Rs. 500 crores. The period is also very essential to note. This has happened during the period from 1963-64 to 1966-67. That was the period when the emergency was existing in this country, and this so-called patriot was looting people by amassing wealth to the tune of Rs. 500 crores, and Government were not doing anything against such people. That is my first allegation. The hon. Minister has agreed that that is *prima facie* correct, he has agreed that the Birlas have amassed wealth. Except in regard to seventeen cases, the hon. Minister has agreed to the other allegation before this House.

My only question to the hon. Minister now is why he is shy of conducting an open inquiry. Why is he entrusting the work to these officials? The Birlas have their influence all over this country. The allegation is that the Birlas have influence amongst the Members of Parliament, even on some members of the Cabinet also. When such is the case, why is he entrusting the work to the officials along? Why should an open public inquiry not be conducted? Let all the facts come before the House. Why not put the facts before the commission? Pandit Nehru was not prepared to appoint a commission of inquiry against Shri Kairon in the first instance, but later on he agreed and when the inquiry was conducted, everything came out. Why is the hon. Minister shy of

setting up an open inquiry? He is shy because the Birlas are paying funds to the Congress. Why should he be so much agitated over it? It is a fact; the hon. Minister himself has said before this House when questions were put to him that that was so. My suggestion now is this if the hon. Minister is sincere in whatever declarations he has made now, then let him conduct an open public inquiry. In the case of Shri Kairon, and in the case of Shri Bakshi Ghulam Mohommed, Government conducted inquiries. Why should they not come forward now and declare the appointment of a commission like the Vivian Bose Commission so that all the facts may come before the public? Why should Government be so reluctant to appoint such a commission? I was trying my level best to find at least a single argument against the appointment of such a commission in all the speeches that have been made by those who were pleading for the Birlas and also in the speech of the hon. Minister, but I could not find any. That is so because it has been clearly established that there are allegations, and the hon. Minister has also accepted that there is a *prima facie* case. If that be so, why not allow these things to come out in the open, in a public inquiry?

Instead of trying to do so, the hon. Minister is trying to answer Shri Madhu Limaye. I am not interested in Shri Madhu Limaye's arguments; I am not interested in the groups in the Congress. I am only interested in the welfare of the people. That is why I have said in my opening speech that it is a national question; it is above party-politics. It has to be treated as a national question and dealt with as such. Are Government prepared to do that? Without meeting my argument, the hon. Minister has tried to divert it by referring to Shri Madhu Limaye's arguments about groupings in the Congress.

Shri Lobo Prabhu was trying to impress on this House that the Birlas had given jobs to a number of workers. As regards how the workers are being treated, Dr. Melkote has already dealt with it, and, therefore, I do not want to refer to that point again.

An allegation was made against the Kerala Government and Shri Namboodiripad. I will answer it. Central Government are giving the licence to Birlas. In



[Shri Viswanatha Menon]

Kerala, the people are unemployed. What else can we do ?

**SHRI SITARAM KESRI (Katiyar) :** Did not the Kerala Government make an agreement with Birlas ?

**SHRI VISWANATHA MENON :** The licence was given by the Central Government.

**SHRI SITARAM KESRI :** The State Government must have recommended.

**SHRI VISWANATHA MENON :** The Kerala Government gave only the lease for bamboos which has no market value. But on this also, I am prepared for an inquiry.

**SHRI F. A. AHMED :** The hon. Member may not like me to say something which perhaps would not be to his liking. In these matters of licences, we are also guided by the opinion of the State Governments. I can assure him that in connection with giving a licence to this Birla firm, Shri Namboodiripad did write a letter to us.

**SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDY :** He made the statement earlier that the Licensing Committee decides without recommendation from anybody. Now he says they are influenced by the recommendation of the State Government.

**SHRI F. A. AHMED :** All the matters including recommendations of State Governments are also considered by the Committee.

**SHRI VISWANATHA MENON :** I have made this clear : On all these points, are Government prepared for a Commission of inquiry ? Let him conduct an inquiry. The Kerala Government will face it. It was because unemployment was acute there that it was done. We wanted some work. If the licence was given to the Kerala Government in the State sector, we would have done it. Without doing that, they have given it to a private party. That is my complaint against the Government. Our youngsters in Kerala

are without jobs. Even the other day, young boys come over and staged a satyagraha before this hon. House.

Instead of giving the licence to the State Government, they are giving it to Birlas and other houses. Why are they doing it? I am attacking the licensing policy of Government. How is it that this house has amassed Rs. 300 crores within three or four years ? It is only because of the licensing policy of Government. The bureaucrats act according to the tune of the Birla group. I am not prepared to withdraw a single allegation. To prove these, they can conduct an inquiry. We are prepared to adduce evidence. Shri Varma was saying that he was prepared to give evidence. Shri Chandrasekhar was willing to give evidence. Without facing this issue squarely, why is the Minister apologetic and trying to sidetrack it ?

The question came up the Rajya Sabha. Shri Bhupesh Gupta has made the allegation there that four Ministers are in the pay of Birlas. Very serious allegations have been made against you. You are not facing them. Even in Faridabad, if my information is correct, Shri Morarji Desai was prepared to face a Commission if the Prime Minister was prepared to do it. Why should not the Prime Minister come forward ? I am accusing the Prime Minister and the whole Cabinet ; I am not pinpointing any particular Minister. The whole Cabinet is responsible.

If you are against monopolists, if you are against the Birla group, you must come forward. Let the matter be thrashed out before us. Then we will decide what to do. If necessary, we will have to enact new legislation to confiscate the wealth amassed by Birlas. That is the attitude we are taking on this issue.

Are Government prepared to conduct an inquiry ? I again ask.

They have not said anything about the prosecutions. We know how prosecutions are being conducted, how they can be influenced. That is why these cases have been lost. Now they say that they are going in for appeals and all that. The influence of Birlas are so much everywhere, in each and every corner of this country.

Including the Cabinet. So at least to save your face conduct an inquiry.

I am not going to withdraw my Resolution. I press it.

**SHRI F. A. AHMED :** The hon. Member has drawn attention to the licences. We have referred all these cases to the Dutt Committee and when the report is before us it will be possible for us to know the exact position and decide what action is to be taken.

**श्री सतिश भूषण :** दत्त कमेटी की रिपोर्ट कब तक आ जायेगी ?

**SHRI F. A. AHMED :** By June we expect it.

**SHRI S. K. UNDU :** After that report is received will you attend an enquiry commission ?

**MR. SPEAKER :** He has answered that point : he has said 'No'. Therefore, it does not arise now.

I shall now put the amendment of Mr. S. M. Banerjee to the vote of the House.

The question is :

That is the resolution,—  
add at the end—

"and the Commission should be instructed to submit its report within three months".

*The motion was negatived.*

**MR. SPEAKER :** The question is :

"Having regard to the seriousness of the charges that have been levelled against the Birla Group of concerns by very responsible persons including Members of Parliament, this House is of opinion that a High Power Commission should be appointed by the Government to go into those charges and recommend appropriate action."

*The resolution was negatived.*

16.27 hrs.

#### RESOLUTION RE. ABOLITION OF PRIVY PURSES

**श्री रवि राय (पुरी) :** अध्यक्ष महोदय,

भ्राज में राजाओं के निजी कोष के बारे में जो प्रस्ताव रखना चाहता है वह इस प्रकार है :

"इस सभा की राय है कि भारतीय रियासतों के भूतपूर्व शासकों को निजी थलियों की करमुक्त भ्रदायगी को तथा उनके विशिष्ट विशेषाधिकारों को जारी रखना संविधान में उल्लिखित लोकतंत्रीय तथा मानवीय समानता के सिद्धांतों के विरुद्ध है, और इसलिए सरकार से सिफारिश करती है कि इन भ्रदायगियों के उत्पादन-कार्य को पूरा करने के लिए कार्यपालिक तथा विधायी दोनों प्रकार के सभी आवश्यक कदम उठाये परन्तु सीधे पुनर्वास हेतु निजी थली की वार्षिक रकम की सात गुना अथवा दस लाख रुपये की इकमुश्त भ्रदायगी, जो भी कम हो, 2 अक्टूबर, 1969 तक कर दे।"

अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैंने इस प्रस्ताव को कानूनी बहस के लिए सदन के सामने नहीं रखा है। यह एक सिद्धांत का सवाल है, मानवीय मूल्यों का सवाल है और गणतान्त्रिक तथा प्रजातान्त्रिक मूल्यों का सवाल है। इसी पृष्ठ-भूमि में इस सदन में इस प्रस्ताव पर बहस की जानी चाहिए। सन 50 के बाद हमारा राष्ट्र एक गणराज्य घोषित किया गया। एक साधारण तंत्र या प्रजातन्त्र में हम नागरिकों के समान अधिकार के सिद्धांत को मानते हैं। इस समान अधिकार को मानते हुए भी हमने एक विशिष्ट वर्ग के राजा-महाराजाओं को, संविधान के अन्तर्गत, स्टैट्यूटरी प्राविजन के रहते और सरकार के हुकम से कुछ सुविधायें और निजी कोष दिया है। लेकिन इन दोनों बातों में सख्त विरोधाभास है। इसी विरोधाभास को खोलने के लिए आज मैं इस बुनियादी बहस को उठा रहा हूँ। वास्तव में राजा महाराजाओं का इतिहास क्या है, उसके बारे में हमें सोचना विचारना चाहिए।