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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
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OFFICIAL REPORT

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**HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE**

*Wednesday, 8th April, 1953.*

*The House met at Two of the Clock.*

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

(See Part I)

2-52 P.M.

**KHADI AND OTHER HANDLOOM INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT (ADDITIONAL EXCISE DUTY ON CLOTH) BILL—contd.**

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The House will now proceed with the further consideration of the following motion moved by Shri T. T. Krishnamachari on the 4th April, 1953, namely:

“That the Bill to provide for the levy and collection of an additional duty of excise on cloth for raising funds for the purpose of developing khadi and other handloom industries and for promoting the sale of khadi and other handloom cloth, be taken into consideration.”

**An Hon. Member:** What about Question No. 1231?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** It is deleted. I am finding out why it has been deleted. Possibly it has been withdrawn. I will find out.

Along with the main motion will also be considered the other two amendments that have been moved.

**Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy (Mysore):** On a point of order. We learn that a cess is being collected on mill-made cloth already, and they have not yet passed the Bill. So, it is rather unconstitutional and illegal to collect a cess.....

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Order, order. There is no point of order. A point of order ought to be raised only in connection with the further progress of the Bill. Even if illegally they collect a thousand taxes, it cannot stand in the way of our proceeding 55 P.S.D.

with this Bill here. Apart from that, the hon. Member does not know that there is an Act for the provisional collection of taxes passed as early as 1931 or so, and under that it is open to the Government to collect the tax: Hon. Members will ask questions of the Ministers if they have got serious doubts. It would not escape the notice of the Government or the Ministers before they bring up such measures before this House.

**Shri C. R. Narasimhan (Krishnagiri):** I thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to speak first in the debate today.

I rise to welcome warmly this measure. Successive Governments in the past had adopted a policy of concern for the textile mills and cold neglect of the handloom industry. Now, this Bill is a sign that there is a signal departure from that deplorable policy. As such, as a person coming from a district where the economic life is very vitally connected with the handloom industry and the cottage industry, I have additional pleasure in welcoming this Bill.

Public opinion and State policy will not hereafter tolerate or treat the fate of the handloom industry as just an incident in the cruel law of the survival of the fittest. An hon. Member speaking the other day on this measure, referred to bullock-cart mentality and such things. I am very sorry for that. I think it is not right for the mills or for those who speak for the mill industry or on behalf of them, to take that attitude. They should adopt a policy of live and let live.

In this connection, it is interesting to refer to what the Fiscal Commission in 1949 and 1950 thought of it. They considered this question of cottage industries, and they were of the opinion that protected industries had certain obligations in the matter of cottage industries. Protected industries should not adopt an anti-social policy. They should do their best to

[Shri C. R. Narasimhan]

develop ancillary and subsidiary industries. And the Fiscal Commission went on to say that it was the duty of Government to support cottage industries when they conflict with major industries by various measures including delimitation of markets, differential excises and differential transport facilities. As such, I think it is quite in keeping with the policy of the Government to levy this kind of cess.

More than once our Prime Minister has referred to what he described as the need for emotional awareness to public problems, and I say that the first question needing that kind of awareness is the problem of the handloom industry. Here we have millions of people with traditional skill and wishing to pursue that hereditary and ancient profession, but very helpless to do so because of circumstances now prevailing. The handloom industry cannot be allowed to die, and certainly not the handloom weavers and as such, proper steps should be taken to keep the industry going, and if there is any conflict between that industry and the major industry, it is the duty of Government to come to the rescue of the cottage industry. And out of the proceeds of this cess, I visualise the emergence of new projects like the community projects. While they are now centred round the agricultural industry, I visualise the emergence of new projects around the weaving industry in places where it is the main occupation, and I hope the Minister will also, when administering the funds, keep this in view.

This Bill is, in effect, an assurance to the harassed weavers of the country that a place has been reserved for them, that the country has charged them to go ahead, and that no one shall disturb them in their allotted sphere. It is the harbinger of a new era for them, and I am very thankful, as I said at the beginning, that the Ministry has taken this measure and is going ahead with it.

3 P.M.

Shri Raghuraj Sahai (Etah Distt.—North East cum Budaun Distt.—East): I rise to welcome this Bill for more than one reason. My first and foremost reason is that it is in furtherance of the implementation of the Five Year Plan, which aims at raising the standard of living of the common people within a reasonable space of time. My second reason is that it would help to a certain extent

in the solution of the problem of unemployment which is a very vital problem facing the country. In this connection, the other day, our learned friend Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava showed his dissatisfaction at this Bill and he expressed the view that this Bill was no solution to the problem of unemployment. I quite agree with him. But it is not claimed for this Bill that as soon as it is passed, the problem of unemployment will not remain in this country. But I beg to submit that it is some solution towards the big problem of unemployment, and to that extent, we must welcome this measure.

The first Five Year Plan has laid great stress on food self-sufficiency in the country and on the fact that all possible steps should be taken to see that enough foodgrains are produced in the country, so that imports from outside countries may not be necessary. At present, we find that we have to import millions and millions of tons of foodgrains into this country, because India is deficient in foodgrains. Similarly, our aim in the matter of cloth also should be that India should be self-sufficient, and it should not be necessary to import cloth from outside. We are glad to find that the total production for 1952 was a record, being 4608 million yards of cloth, and 1448 million lbs. of yarn. Deducting exports, there is an estimated handloom production of more than a thousand million yards. This meant a *per capita* availability of nearly 14 yards as compared with 11.8 yards in 1951. This is indeed a heartening record of cloth production in our country. Although in a sense India became self-sufficient so far as cloth was concerned, on account of the greater production of mill-made cloth available at comparatively lower prices, both the handloom and the khadi industry suffered very heavily. The situation was like this that the handloom cloth was not in demand, as the prices of mill-made cloth came down comparatively. So far as khadi was concerned, its stocks piled up, and the prices rose very high. There can be no two opinions that both these industries have to be kept alive, for they provide subsidiary employment to millions of people in this country. They not only provide employment to men, but to women also, who contribute towards the increment of their daily wages by spinning and weaving of cloth, to whatever extent they can. It is clear that pressure on land is very great at the present moment.

and it is well-known that every unemployed person cannot be provided with a piece of land to support him. But if we have to keep these two industries alive, in the larger interests of the country, we have to see that unfair competition does not take place between handloom cloth and mill-made cloth on the one hand, and between handloom and *khaddar* on the other. In my humble opinion, if such a state of affairs is to be remedied, we have to assign distinct places for every kind of industry, namely the mill-made cloth, the handloom cloth and *khaddar*. During the wartime it so happened that the mills were manufacturing cloth resembling *khaddar*, and it was sold as *khaddar* in the market. It would be in the fitness of things if we lay down that mills would not use yarn below a particular count. It was also a step in the right direction that the production of *dhoties* by mills was restricted to 60 per cent. of their peak production. Opening of new cloth mills can also be restricted, and it should also be arranged that whatever varieties of cloth are produced by the handloom are not produced by the mills.

In this connection, it would be worthwhile to consider what will be the position of co-operative societies in helping the handloom industry. From the speech delivered by the hon. Minister, the other day, it appears he was enamoured of co-operative societies, and he spoke very highly about them. All honour to his views, but I may be permitted to state that our experience is just the contrary. Experience has shown that in many cases these societies in the past have bungled very badly. Embezzlements have been reported, loss of funds has taken place, blackmarketing has been indulged in, and the rank and file, namely the ordinary members of those societies have suffered tremendously. I am not against the formation of co-operative societies, nor do I wish that their work may be interrupted. But if co-operative societies have to be encouraged, their constitution should be made foolproof, and if there are any cases coming to the notice of the Government where they have not been acting up to the mark, then they should be put down with a very strong hand, and their supervision should be made very strict.

The Government should also see to it that prices of handloom cloth and *khaddar* do not go abnormally high, and that they are kept within reasonable limits. At present everybody

knows that the use of *khaddar* has become very costly. Those who have been using it for the last 25 or 30 years consider it to be their religious duty to use it and to use it at all cost. But there is a limit to their patience and I think the time has come when the Government should see to it that the prices of *khaddar* remain within moderate limits.

The problem of problems in India is that both foodgrains and cloth for daily requirements should be available on moderate charges. At present prices of both are abnormally high and that is why there is so much discontent in the country despite commendable work done by the Government. And if you want that handloom cloth and *khaddar* should both be developed, then the man in the street should know that the Government is behind both these industries. Mere imposition of the cess on mill-made cloth would not be sufficient. Government will have to lay down a definite policy and see that all State Governments do also act in a similar manner. In regard to purchases both from handloom and *khaddar*, patronage of Government is absolutely necessary. The Government, in my opinion, can easily lay down that in so far as Government buildings are concerned, cloth for decoration and household purposes would be purchased from either handloom or *khaddar*, and to begin with the liveries supplied to the orderlies and peons may also be made from cloth both hand-woven and *khaddar*.

Lastly I would refer to the remarks that were made the other day by the distinguished industrialist Member of this House, Mr. G. D. Soman. To be frank I was rather astounded by the discordant note that he struck that day in regard to this Bill. I think, if I am right, he was the only Member of this House the other day who opposed this Bill, and his main reason was that the textile industry should not suffer at the expense of the handloom and *khaddar*. I would respectfully ask him, at whose expense the textile industry has flourished so far? I suppose he will not be able to give me a reply, but that reply can very well be ascertained from the valuable report supplied to us by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for 1952-53. With your permission, Sir, I may quote a few lines. They run like this:

"With larger supplies of mill-made cloth available at lower prices, the handloom industry which provides livelihood for a very large number of people has

[Shri Raghbir Sahai]

been passing through a difficult period. Sometime ago their main handicap was the lack of sufficient yarn, but with the consumer resistance and plenty of mill-made cloth available, stocks of handloom cloth began to accumulate and the problem this time was to find adequate markets for handloom cloth."

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

The same was the case with the khaddar industry, and the report runs like this:

"As in the case of the handloom industry, with larger supplies of mill-made cloth available at lower prices, the khadi industry, which plays an important role as a village industry and which offers relief through part-time employment to a large number of persons, has been passing through a difficult period. The main handicap of the industry has been accumulation of stocks and comparatively high prices."

I think these remarks that I have quoted from the latest report of the department will give an adequate reply to the apprehension of the hon. and distinguished industrialist Member of this House who spoke against the very principle of this Bill. The least that I can say is that he showed a very narrow and limited outlook and he did not read the signs of the times.

I have finished my remarks and I would just say that I give my whole-hearted support to this Bill.

**Shri N. Sreekantan Nair** (Quilon cum Mavelikkara): Sir, I am glad to have the opportunity that you have given me to speak a few words on this Bill. But before I enter into the subject of the Bill, I want to record my strong protest against the application of the Provisional Collection of Taxes Act, 1931 to this Bill. This is a very important Bill which ought to have been discussed in full before certain decisions are taken. Now that the Ministry has already taken a decision, the hon. Minister's ear is certainly sealed against all sense. So moving any amount of amendments will be of no avail and I am afraid that our voice may not have due weight. Anyhow I would just wish to strike some other discordant note on this Bill as well.

I consider this Bill only as a very temporary measure. As a matter of fact, I have fundamental differences

with regard to the basic conception underlying this Bill. I do not believe in the medieval institution of khadi, nor am I prepared to support the handloom industry as such. I believe in industrialisation. I believe that human power, human efforts and human energies should be utilised to the minimum and that the maximum technical skill should be utilised to help production and bring down the hours of work and increase per capita production. As such I feel that khaddar has no place in the future set up of the world, and even the handloom industry has only a very limited scope. If we are not prepared to turn a leaf from the experience of resurgent Japan in prewar days and if we are not prepared to switch our handlooms on to Power and reorganise them on the basis of self-sufficient units and supply mechanical warping, weaving, finishing, calendaring and marketing facilities, then we cannot decentralise the textile industry. Let us be honest, let us be rational. This is a world of capitalist competition; this is a world of competitive markets. We can never ask the common man to go back to his primitive days. My learned friend was very vehemently asking for giving a two-anna sustenance to the millions of people and compared it with the allowance received by Members of Parliament. I would honestly ask him whether he is prepared to give up his other incomes and take up spinning as the only means of livelihood. I for one am not prepared to do it. I for one would rather prefer to be a professional thief, to be even a professional murderer than spin for twelve hours and earn two annas. That is what I feel about it. I cannot allow an ordinary man of this country to go and work for another with the sweat of his brow and get two annas. I cannot agree to it.

Then there is another aspect of the matter. We have been responsible for driving these gullible people in the villages to resort to the production of khaddar as a subsidiary source of income. We, during the national struggle, of course, realised that it was a political weapon to be utilised. I do admit that we have a moral responsibility to undo the mischief as far as possible and give some relief immediately. As such, I welcome this Bill. But, if you think that this measure should be perpetuated in the Statute Book, I say, 'No'. We look at things from two different angles. I have to agree with my hon. friend, Mr. Somani in resisting that. It is

not my intention to support the demand of big business. I am not sorry that the textile mills are taxed, but I feel that the taxation has been shelved on to the shoulders of the common man. The other day myself and another hon. Member of this House went from shop to shop in old Delhi to get a pair of *dhoties*, either medium or coarse. I could not find a single *dhoti* in the market because all the *dhoties* available have gone under-ground. They will come up only in the black-market. If two Members of Parliament could not get two *dhoties* in Delhi, I would leave the House to consider what would be the fate of the common man.

The other day, in connection with the half-an-hour discussion on coconut and coconut oil prices, the hon. Minister waxed eloquent in his desire to control the rising level of prices. But I would ask him whether he is aware of the fact that in mid March, 1953, the index number was 386, that is 21·2 higher than what it was during the corresponding period in 1952. That means that the cost of living is rising and it affects the poorest section of the people much more than it does the more richer and happier section. Naturally, at least in the case of workmen this should not have adverse effects. So, I would request the hon. Minister to see that medium and coarse cloth are exempted. You may naturally ask me, 'Where are the means to finance khadi and handloom?' There are other means. I do not know what led the hon. Minister to exempt exported cloth from this duty. As a matter of fact, the export of cloth has been bringing such huge profits that in the past there have been persistent complaints from the mill-owners and exporters in South India that the traders in Delhi, Bombay and Ahmedabad carry away all the.....

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order. Will hon. Members carry on their consultations inaudibly? They are visibly interfering with the debate.

**Shri N. Sreekantan Nair:** As I was saying there have been persistent complaints from the exporters in South India that the producers in Delhi, Bombay and Ahmedabad carry all the export licences. The export of cloth has been bringing in so much profit that there is competition in this field. I do not understand why the exported cloth should be exempted. So, the exported cloth should come under this levy and at least the coarse cloth should be exempted so that the common man would not be out to any difficulty.

Another aspect of the question which I want to bring to the notice of the House is this. Of course, in spite of what I said, I have a sneaking sympathy for *khaddar*. But I cannot support the monopolistic attempt of any organisation for the production and marketing of khadi. Even during the pre-war days, as one who had been connected with the A.I.S.A., in those days, I know, out of every rupee worth of cloth, eight annas were taken up by yarn, four annas were taken up by the A.I.S.A. and only four annas were distributed to the spinner, the reeler and sizer, the weaver and the others.

**An Hon. Member:** No, it is not correct.

**Shri N. Sreekantan Nair:** It is correct; I know the figures.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order; let him proceed.

**Shri N. Sreekantan Nair:** An attempt at monopoly is being envisaged and visualised. Recently, you might be aware of an attempt in Madras State to give a monopolistic hold to this organisation which was disputed in the Supreme Court and I do not know how far they have succeeded. I think they have failed. Anyhow, this Bill and the funds collected through this Bill should not be utilised to give this Association any monopoly. On the other hand, we must welcome competition to pay higher wages to the spinners and to sell at lower prices to the common man. If any other individual or institution can supply the ordinary citizen who wishes to buy khadi at much cheaper rates than this organisation, certainly that individual or institution must get the benefit as much as the organisation which is now clamouring for monopoly.

Another aspect which I wish to bring to your notice is that the levy has been already collected. A point of order was raised and it was ruled out. I would request the hon. Minister to proceed slowly by accepting my amendment and postpone the levy of the cess till the 15th of May. My amendment, of course, will be moved in due course. But, I know it will not be accepted unless and until the hon. Minister agrees to it. With these words I finish.

**Shrimati Jayashri (Bombay?Suburban):** Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to support this Bill. I would call this cess as an unemployment tax and this should be paid by the persons ungrudgingly as a ne-

[Shrimati Jayashri]

cessary social obligation. In other countries, we are told that there are work houses for unemployed and they are given doles. Now, we know how humiliating it is for a self-respecting person to take these doles. Mr. Nair just now referred that this khadi and handloom industry cannot do much work and that is why he would like not to support this Bill. I would ask him how many people are employed in the mill industry, and what is the number of unemployed in our country.

Mr. Green in his 'Rural Industries of England' says,

"It would be a great boon if in bad weather and winter the agriculturist had something to do in their homes of a remunerative character as in the past. In Italy also it is said that wherever mulberry trees are grown, women do spinning and earn and add to their families' income."

In Assam also I am told that many women know weaving and it is considered as one of the qualifications for marriage. So, we all realise that handloom and khadi are the two industries which can help. We can say that agriculture and khadi are the two lungs of the national body. In one of his prayer meetings, Vinoba Bhaveji also said: "Though there is enough food to go round, people cannot purchase it because they lack purchasing power." Then, he said: "Give work to the villagers, if not by village industries, by other means; by machines, if you like. But machines are not making their appearance and the people continue to suffer for want of work, and I claim that work cannot be produced by the rural people except through village industries."

When Rajaji made his now famous statement in September last, I sent round a circular to all the branches of the All-India Women's Conference asking for their opinion about Rajaji's statement. I have received replies from Madras, Ernakulam, West Bengal and Punjab. They have all supported Rajaji's statement. Some of them have said that handloom weavers must be granted priority for supply of yarn that they need and only the surplus mill yarn available should be allotted to the powerlooms. Another suggestion is to discontinue the issue of licences for installation of additional powerlooms. Another very important suggestion is that propaganda for the sale of handloom products should be undertaken by Government and welfare organisations in the States.

So long as there is fashion and individual taste, I do not think mill-made products can beat the handloom industry products. The principal lines of handloom cloth made use of by women are the cloth used for sarees and skirts of Hindu women in Northern India, cloth used for *salwar* by Muslim women and cloth used for blouse pieces, mostly in Maharashtra and Karnatak. Even in Bombay, these hand-made blouse pieces are very popular among women. Then you have men's clothing, *dhotees*, *lungis*, *chaddars*, *angavasthrams*, *pugris*, shirting and coating. Then you have cloth for domestic use like table cloth, curtain covers and longcloth. Generally speaking, handloom weaving excels in colour styles. Handloom cloth is specially noted for being made of extremely fine yarn, for cloth interwoven with gold and silver thread, cloth with multi-coloured designs, cloth with embellishments in the borders and edges, cloth of unique designs and also rough, thick cloth.

At present, the difficulty which the handloom industry is facing is regarding yarn. The supply of yarn is not enough and regular. So, once this Khadi and Handloom Board is appointed, it should see that the supply of yarn is adequate and the industry does not have any difficulty in obtaining dyes and chemicals and in marketing the cloth.

A few years ago, at one of the Ministers' Conferences held in Poona—I am giving this information from the report with a foreword by Shri Shankarrao Deo—it was suggested that in those areas which may be selected for this purpose the entry of certain selected mill products may be banned by Government. The idea was to make our villages self-sufficient. I do hope that the Board will see that such villages as demand such a ban will be helped.

I want to say a few words about machine *versus* man. Many hon. Members have already spoken about it. The machine industry takes away employment. Mr. Sreekantam Nair was saying that big industries should be supported. I would ask him to read the article written by Mr. Stuart Chase, entitled 'Men and Machines', in which he writes that up to 1927, 12,000 new labour-saving machines were introduced into America and they took away the work of nearly 50,000 people! Henry Ford changed from model T to model A and laid off 60,000 men for an indefinite period. So, I would appeal to hon. Members to realise that since, as we all know, our population is in-

creasing daily, Khadi and handloom are the only two industries which can give at least part-employment to those who are unemployed.

**Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan** (Dindigul): Sir, I must thank you for giving me an opportunity to say a few words on this Bill. I very heartily welcome this Bill, especially coming from South India as I do and seeing the suffering of the handloom weavers of that State. I do feel that there was a great necessity to introduce such a Bill and I am happy that the Commerce and Industry Minister who comes from South India has realised the necessity of introducing such a Bill and has brought it up in this House.

Just one word I would like to say about what the hon. Member Shri Seekantan Nair said, more or less opposing this Bill. I was really taken aback when he got up to speak against this Bill, especially as he comes from Travancore-Cochin where he knows there are a great many handloom weavers who are suffering for want of help. I should have thought that he would be the first person to speak in favour of this Bill, as he is so often standing up for the common man, and this Bill would be greatly helping the common man.

Today, of all the people who are suffering from unemployment—I think the handloom weavers are the worst. A few months ago, the handloom weavers of Salem and Madurai districts were almost on the verge of starvation, because, for one thing they were not getting enough yarn to weave and for another when they had the cloth in hand, they could not find a place to market them. These were the two difficulties which they were facing.

I am particularly glad about clause 4 parts (e) and (f) of this Bill. They will help the weavers in promoting the sale and marketing of khadi and other handloom cloth. Part (g) also is good, because it refers to co-operative effort among manufacturers of khadi and other handloom cloth. We have a Handloom Weavers' Co-operative Society in Madras, and it has been a real help to the handloom weavers, as during the difficult times they were passing through, it purchased whatever cloth they had and found a market for that cloth.

Another aspect of the problem, about which I do not think many Members have spoken, is that handloom cloth appeals to one's aesthetic sense. I do not think any mill cloth can come up

to the beauty of handloom material. Maybe, mill cloth has the same appearance. It tries to imitate the handloom cloth, but I do not think that any mill-made cloth can ever come up to the beauty of the South Indian silk woven sarees, or the Bangalore laced border sarees or the Banaras gold sarees. I do not think any mill cloth can come up to the standard of beauty of handloom cloth; nor do I think we get the same satisfaction, or the same pleasure by wearing the mill cloth, as we do in wearing handloom cloth.

**An Hon. Member:** What about the cost?

**Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan:** Handlooms also give employment to women in their own houses. Even when they are sitting at home, or when they cannot go out and do any work, they can spin the yarn in the house, and very often put up one or two handlooms and weave the cloth. I do know that in many a home women make all the cloth that is necessary for a family. Human beings in the world cannot do without two things. One is food, the other is cloth. If you help them in one thing you are helping them in the other too. If you give them enough to eat, and enough to clothe themselves with, you will bring contentment to the people of this country. As it is they are finding difficulty in getting even the bare necessities of life. At the time I was going about my election campaign, I have seen with my own eyes the great hardships the men and women of the handloom community were undergoing. They did not know what to do for a day's meal. They had to see their children on the verge of starvation, all because they had to cope against the competition of cloth made by mills owned by millionaires.

I have nothing to say against mill-made cloth at all. But I do feel the time has come when the Government has to move in the matter and give more encouragement to the handloom industry. About 60 per cent. of the handloom materials comes from the South. So, we from the South are particularly interested in this matter, because we do not like to see the difficulties of these people aggravated. I hope the Government will see to it that enough cloth is made of the cheaper variety so that everyone of the lower-income groups as well as those who are hard up in other ways can also buy handloom cloth.

I heard one of the hon. Members saying: What about the price? When I was speaking about the Banaras sarees and the silk sarees of Koranad, I was not referring to their prices. I

[Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan]

was only thinking of their beauty. But today you can get handloom cloth very much cheaper than it used to be about six months ago. I have just come back from the South. The first thing I do when I go to Madras is to visit the Co-operative handloom weavers' shop and I did find this time that the cloth had come down in price a great deal. Today I do not think anybody can say that they cannot afford to buy handloom cloth. Why? The mill cloth itself is very high in price; it is not cheap today. It was cheaper at one time than handloom cloth. But today I do not think it is cheaper. I have seen mill cloth also and I do not think the prices are very much lower.

So, I do feel that not only should this Bill be passed, but everyone here should be very thankful that such a Bill has been introduced. The Government must also be vigilant all the time to see that prices do not shoot up. The prices should be kept at a reasonable level. If this measure is properly implemented many of the people who today are without employment will get employment, which will make their life somewhat better off.

With these few words, I support this Bill wholeheartedly and I do congratulate the Minister in bringing forward this Bill.

**Shri Raghavaiah** (Ongole): I would be second to none in supporting this piece of legislation brought before this House by the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry, but for the incalculable harm this restricted measure in its own way is bound to do to the handloom weavers, because of the half-hearted appreciation of the gravity of the crisis on the handloom front by the Government of India today.

The Statement of Objects and Reasons appended to the Bill says:

"Both the khadi and the handloom cloth industry have a definite place in our national economy. Khadi makes its contribution towards the relief of rural unemployment and provides a supplementary source of livelihood to our agricultural population."

It is true that khadi makes some contribution towards the livelihood of our agricultural population. But to say that it will relieve rural unemployment is a travesty of fact and truth. Unemployment is highly rampant in the country-side as also in the cities and towns. To say that this

is going to relieve the problem of unemployment even to an infinitesimal degree is against facts and truth.

**Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava** (Gurgaon): Will it add to unemployment?

**Shri Raghavaiah**: Perhaps even that.

The Statement of Objects and Reasons further reads on:

"Both these industries, however, have been suffering from many handicaps of late, mainly in finding an adequate market for their products."

It is true that the handloom industry has been suffering from many handicaps. But if this realisation had come on the Government, they would not wake up from their slumber at such a late hour as this, when the entire Press—both the Congress and the leftist sections of the Press—is full for the last one year and more of deaths of weavers in almost all parts of the country. I come from a constituency (Chirala) which is well known for handloom cloth. It produces some of the finest and best varieties of handloom cloth. But on account of the plight to which they have been put, one of the women and her children committed suicide recently. Mr. C. Rajagopalachari has come forward with a suggestion of reservation of production of cloth by the mills. But even that move has come after so many deaths due to the crisis in the handloom industry. It is a well known fact that handloom cannot compete with the mills. The continued and gradual development of a crisis in the handloom industry resulting in innumerable deaths of weavers in all parts of the country, has made the Government to realise at this late hour the gravity of the situation. At any rate late realisation is somewhat better than no realisation at all. Better late than never.

But this half-hearted measure is going to do incalculable harm. This piece of legislation is not going to solve this crisis, or meet the demands of the weavers even to a small extent. Coming to the facts and figures given by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry—for which I am very grateful to it—there are 30 lakhs of handlooms in the country. About five heads are dependent on one loom. It means that about one and a half to two crores of people live on the handloom industry. This problem is not going to be solved by distributing the cess of about

rupees six crores to these looms. If you distribute these rupees six crores to the two crores of people who are living on this handloom industry, it will not come to even rupees three per weaver. This itself shows how this measure is a half-hearted measure. This is no solution at all even temporarily. When we view the figures before us, the figure of the number of people living on the handloom industry and the figure of the total amount that will come as a result of the collection of this cess on all varieties of mill-made cloth, these figures abundantly prove that this amount of rupees six crores is not going to meet this crisis at all

This Government is subsidising the jute industry because there are so many workers unemployed. It subsidises the tea industry, this, that and so many other industries. But it has not given even a modicum of sympathy for this handloom industry, for which it sheds crocodile tears in its Statement of Objects and Reasons. If it has got even an iota of sympathy, and if, as it states, this industry is meeting much of the demand of the people in this country from a long time, if all this is true, let me submit with all humility that if the Government has got even the least sympathy for this industry, it has got to set apart a large amount, something like rupees twelve crores or even rupees six crores, to see that this industry comes to occupy a stable place in the economy of our country. The setting apart of even that much of money will at least show that this Government has got some sympathy for this industry. This paltry sum of rupees six crores which is going to be collected by way of cess on mill-made cloth is not at all going to meet the requirements of the two crores of weavers in the country, who comprise one-fifteenth of the population of our country.

I might cite some more instances to show that this is not really a genuine relief measure brought before this House. The question of reservation of production has been spoken of on many an occasion to show that this is a measure that is going to bring salvation to the weavers in this country. With regard to this reservation question, if I were to be a little unjust and a little bit harsh to the Ministry and to the Chief Minister of the Government of Madras who has been praised to the skies by hon. Members even in this House also, this is the result of...

**Mr. Speaker:** Order order. I think we need not criticise the Chief Minister of Madras here. He is not here to

answer. The hon. Member might discuss the measure on its merits.

**Shri Raghavaiah:** Coming to this question of reservation of production of certain varieties of cloth, I may submit that this is the result of a certain amount of understanding that has come into existence between the millowners and the Government of India after the intensification of this handloom crisis. I may give some proof to show how this is the result of a conspiracy between the Government and the millowners. After the war the purchasing power of the people has fallen. Dead stocks have started accumulating with the millowners and they cannot dispose of them. The stocks are mounting up day by day. How to solve this? The Government had to find a safe, easy and smooth-going way out for this. So they thought that it will be, in a way, saving the handloom weaver and getting all applause from the handloom weavers and their sympathisers, and another way of pleasing the millowners by allowing them to restrict the production of cloth and giving them a safe way out for the sale of all the dead stocks that have been accumulating with them from a long time. As a result of this understanding, perhaps, consciously or otherwise—I do not attribute any motives, nor have I any such intention—between these two parties in this country, they have come to the conclusion that the best way of solving the crisis in this industry and the best way of finding a way out for the sale of the dead stocks that are accumulating with the millowners and of satisfying the millowners is by restricting the production of certain varieties, which will also satisfy the demands and win the appreciation and applause of the handloom weavers. This is a fact, and I will give the figures also. I think it will be just on my part to substantiate my statement with some figures. (*An Hon. Member:* Have you seen the secret agreement?) The face is the index of the mind, and this Bill is an index of the understanding between the two parties Government and millowners for months and years.

The mills have cut down their production from 50,000 bales to 30,000 bales of dhoties. This cut in the production of mill-made cloth itself shows how the understanding has successfully worked out and gives results. That is why my hon. friend Mr. Somani, representing as he does and true to his class interests, has spoken eloquently about the measure that has been brought before this House, which is also satisfying their demands, wishes

[Shri Raghavaiah]

and aspirations by solving the crisis in which they are neck-deep today.

**Shri G. D. Somani** (Nagaur-Pali): May I intervene to say that the textile industry will be grateful if the "conspiracy" or "secret agreement" between the millowners and the Government is broken and the industry is allowed to go on with its own way of manufacture without any sort of reservation or restriction of production?

**Shri Raghavaiah**: I commend the suggestion of my hon. friend, because let me remind him that there is a large amount of retrenchment that is going on and also taking place, not in the spinning section but in the weaving section of the textile industry, and if the textile industry is to go into full production, which the entire country wants today, the production will be greater, and the level of the purchasing power of the people being the lowest today as a result of the increased production the prices will come down and the people will be able to purchase this cloth. That is why we welcome it in the interest of the consumer and the textile worker.

Mr. Somani said yesterday, the handloom industry and the textile industry are going hand in hand. This is untrue.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

We say that even today the textile industry and the handloom industry should go into full production to satisfy the needs of the consumer so that cloth is given to the consumer at a cheap rate and the entire demands of the people of this country are satisfied. I am not against the textile industry going into full production because it will be in the interest of the mill workers and also his own class.

4 P.M.

For the half-hearted nature of this measure there is another proof. Taking the figures supplied by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry it will be surprising to see that for the last three months they are supplying greater amount of yarn. The number of bales of yarn supplied to the weavers is increasing for the last three months continually, that is in July, August and September, 1952. I am referring to those three months in 1952. The Chief Minister of a State has come forward with a wonderful proposal of reservation of production in textile industry.

In 1948-49, 1950-51 and in 1952 it has started. From September

1951 to 1952 the supply of bales of yarn was more or less on an equal basis.—this month 49, next month 51, and the other month 50. In spite of this equilibrium maintained in the supply of bales of yarn to the handloom weavers, there was no consumption of the handloom cloth produced by handloom weavers and this cloth is lying in the co-operative societies as dead stocks. It has no market. The 25 per cent. market that we used to have in Pakistan has gone out of existence. Then the South East Asian countries do not take the cloth. The market is closed. After the termination of the Second World War, our markets also have narrowed. The Government also have not made any serious effort in this direction to find out markets. In fact I may even say that the Government has not even searched for market inside our country, not to speak of market outside our country. It has not cared to work out a satisfactory market in our own country by increasing the purchasing power of the people and by other means possible within its capacity to do so. Thus the Government has miserably failed to work out a market at home and also abroad. As a result of this, the stocks are increasing. To show to the whole world that they are supplying yarn, enough supply of yarn is maintained by the millowners but the crisis of death and hunger among the handloom weavers is not taken care of. I will give you the figures. In 1950, 1951 and 1952, the quantity supplied to the weavers is about 61,000/67,000 bales. I may also bring to your notice that while the quantity of yarn that is supplied to these weavers shows an increase, the accumulation of the bales of unsold cloth is also increasing. This itself is ironical enough to show the crocodile tears that this Government is shedding every now and then for the handloom weaver. The British Government, during its regime, cut the thumbs and fingers of the handloom weavers to kill the handloom industry for which our country is famous in the whole of Asia, perhaps in the whole of the world. This Government is not satisfied with just cutting of the fingers. It wants to cut off the throat of the handloom weaver and thus see that once for all this industry is done away with, not because of its antagonism to the handloom industry but because of the sympathy with the mill industry. This is on its very face unjust. From the statement of Mr. Somani himself we see the handloom industry and the textile industry go hand in hand but it has ceased to go as a result of these half-hearted measures. The number of

deaths that have increased is itself a proof of this wonderful art of neglecting this industry in our country. In the Statement of Objects and Reasons it is stated that the handloom cloth industry has got an everlasting place in our economy.

**Shri Algu Rai Shastri** (Azamgarh Distt.—East cum Ballia Distt.—West): What is the remedy you suggest?

**Shri Raghavaiah:** I must submit to the House that our party is second to none in supporting this legislation. We support this piece of legislation in spite of its irregularities because it is at least a sort of spoon-feeding to the weaver who is on the verge of starvation and death today. The two crores of people living on this industry will not be satisfied with this paltry sum of rupees six crores which we are going to get as a result of the levy and collection of cess on mill cloth. Even in levying this cess this Government is not at all just to the consumer. It has been a just partner and a just friend of the textile industry and the textile bosses. It has never been a friend either to the handloom weaver or to the consumer. I have already explained at length how it is not at all a friend, if not a false friend, of the handloom weaver; it is not the friend of the consumer because it starts imposing this cess on cloth of medium varieties and on all the other varieties that an ordinary man, a middle class gentleman, puts on. Superfine and fine cloth are not put on by middle class gentlemen. The rates of superfine cloth have gone up. It is the plan of the millowners today to squeeze the revenues of the middle class gentlemen. They are trying to show that the mill-made cloth is cheaper than the handloom cloth. They bring a number of arguments,—the mill made cloth is cheaper than the handloom cloth, etc. Naturally, when it is cheaper, the purchaser goes to the cheaper variety and not to a dearer variety. When the whole question of this handloom cloth is in this state of affairs, the Government has not been just to the consumer because it has not stopped levying cess on such varieties of cloth which is used by a majority of the population in our country, that is by the middle class and the lower middle class and the poor class. It is only the upper strata in our society who put on fine and superfine cloth. They must add something more in addition to the three pies cess which this Bill proposes as levy on fine and superfine only.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I can only suggest to hon. Members that if, on any

Bill, any single hon. Member goes on speaking, other hon. Members may not have an opportunity to speak. There are, I find, a large number of hon. Members who would like to speak. Therefore, I am only appealing to hon. Members to state their points and try to give some time to other hon. Members also.

**Shri Raghavaiah:** In view of the gravity of this handloom crisis, I suggest some measures for a satisfactory solution of the problem. Grave as it is today, it demands a satisfactory solution from all of us irrespective of our party considerations and political ideologies. My first suggestion is that the cess that the Government propose to levy should be different for coarse, medium and lower varieties of cloth. Government should levy all cess on fine and superfine cloth only. Perhaps an increase in the cess also should be made to compensate the non-levy of cess on lower varieties of cloth.

The Minister of Commerce and Industry should, in consultation with all the officers of his Ministry, allot one fourth of the land revenue to make purchases of the handloom cloth and distribute it at a cheaper rate to the lower classes and perhaps free of cost to poor agricultural labourers and peasants also. As a result of this, so many textile workers will be thrown out of employment. Unemployment relief should be given to those lakhs of textile workers that are likely to be retrenched. As I have already said, this sum of rupees six crores by itself is not going to solve the crisis. Some sort of Unemployment Fund should be set apart with which they can subsidise the unemployed weavers by giving them some subsidiary occupation or by working out other measures to help them to pull on.

The third suggestion that I would like to put forward is that Government should itself be a bulk purchaser of this cloth. Having gone through the discussions on the Budget in this House, I find that bulk purchases are not made by the Government from this handloom and khadi industry. You have got the best *khaki* cloth in khadi. Why should not the Government buy this best *khaki* cloth for all its military personnel, for the infantry, etc., in the Defence Services? Why should not the Government be the main customer and make bulk purchases of this khadi cloth? Every now and then you speak eloquently in this House and also outside that you are worshippers of khadi. You, Sir, must have seen in the *Hindu* of the 7th, Mr. Kumaraappa has said that all this talk of

[Shri Raghavaiah]

Gandhism by the national leaders and also by the Members of the Congress today in this country is sham sympathy for Gandhism. It is shedding crocodile tears for Gandhism; it is not Gandhism at all. You do not purchase khadi for the Defence Services; you do not purchase khadi for your own peons and chaprasis and others who are serving in your house. You do not purchase khadi for yourself. You do not put on khadi. There are some Members of the Cabinet also who do not put on khadi. As real devotees of Gandhi Government should do it.

**Shri Algu Rai Shastri:** Why do you not do it?

**Shri Raghavaiah:** I have done it for 13 years continuously from my boyhood. It has gone out of my purchasing capacity today.

The fourth measure that I would like to suggest to the Government is that yarn should be supplied at cheap rates. The fifth measure is that we should extend the objectives of this Bill so as to provide other means of relief to these handloom weavers, and to enable us to include other clauses also in this Bill. I submit to the hon. Minister to extend the objectives of this Bill to enable us to suggest more ways and better means of giving relief to the handloom weavers, to the satisfaction of you and us irrespective of any party considerations. Let us bring relief to them.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee** (Calcutta South-East): While rising to speak on this Bill, let me, first of all, extend my cordial sympathy to the hon. Minister. I appreciate from the knowledge and experience that I have of this matter, the difficulties confronting the Government in their anxiety to give effect to a beneficial scheme which would go to advance the legitimate interests of millions of handloom weavers in our country.

I would like to judge this Bill from a constructive point of view. Are we really going to achieve the objective that we have before us? In spite of the preliminary opposition of the previous speaker, even he ended by saying that on the whole he was extending his support to this measure. Let me first of all take the question of khadi. I do not know whether khadi will be an economic proposition in this country. It is a very doubtful proposition. At any rate, from the manner in which Government have considered this problem, it can be said without fear of contradiction that the Government does not believe in

Gandhiji's khadi economics. Whether Gandhiji was right or wrong, this is not the place or the time to discuss. I was going through one of his last utterances where he expressed his deep regret that even after the attainment of freedom, the possibility of khadi replacing the mill-made cloth in its entirety had not even been considered by the people or Government. Well, in any case, that is not the objective of the Government.

Let us examine the provisions of the Bill in relation to the report of the Planning Commission, because, I believe the hon. Minister intends to implement the recommendations of the Planning Commission while putting this measure on the Statute Book. What is it that the Planning Commission says about khadi? It does not take into account the production of khadi cloth at all for the purpose of consumption in the country. So, if it is proposed today to extend help to khadi organisations, and I know that they eminently deserve help, that would certainly be for gaining some, I will not say political, but spiritual advantage, perhaps, for some people. But, whether that will help the masses or not, I cannot say. The hon. Minister has failed to explain how exactly this sum of one crore of rupees is going to be utilised by the khadi organisations. When I had occasion to deal with this matter, I got myself into touch with the All India Spinners Association. If my memory has not failed me, I believe a definite suggestion that was made to the Government at that time was that if khadi was at all to be encouraged by the Government, then, a certain area should be set apart for khadi and khadi alone and that the Spinners Association should be encouraged by the Government to serve the cause of the consumers through khadi and through nothing else. If you only want subsidised khadi to be used by a small section of the people, and be rejected by a large section on economic grounds, then, obviously, this one crore which you are spending today will not bring any return whatsoever. I would like the hon. Minister in his reply to tell us what exactly is the place of khadi in the future economy of India so far as production of cloth for consumers goes. I do not find anything in the report of the Planning Commission except one sentence that some organisation is now dealing with this matter, and in due course those reports will be available to the Government. So, I do not think that the object of this Bill is really to put khadi on an economic basis. I am not blaming the Govern-

ment. Government have rejected Gandhiji's ideology on khadi and are proceeding on some other pattern. But, there it is.

Let me come to the handloom question. Here, it involves millions of people and in particular, so far as South India is concerned, I believe it will be correct to say that more than 45 per cent. of the handloom weavers come from South India. Out of a total of three million handlooms in this country, the bulk is to be found in South India. And, their condition recently, not recently, but during the last few years, has been far from satisfactory. In other parts of India, of course, the number is not so large. But, still there are appreciable sections of weavers whose ancestors, did produce quality goods which had a market not only in this country, but also abroad and they are today in a miserable condition. I know that thousands of such weavers have come from East Bengal. Perhaps Members of the House have heard of Tangail cloth or Dacca cloth. Weavers from Barisal, Tangail and from Dacca have now, in their thousands, settled in parts of West Bengal, and they find it extremely difficult to produce what they can produce because of want of certain necessary facilities. The human material is there. Their capacity to produce goods which may have a market abroad is there, but somehow, we are not able to utilise them in a proper manner.

Now, one handicap has been that you have lost the Pakistan market. It was mostly from South India that the bulk of "lungis" used to go to East Bengal.

**Shri Raghunath Singh** (Banaras Dist.—Central): From eastern U.P. also.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee:** Yes, from eastern U.P. also, but quite a good portion went from Madras. Burma also used to take a large quantity of handloom production from India, and Burma has also now virtually ceased to purchase anything from India. I find from the latest figures that we sent in 1952, 29 million yards between April and October to different countries, costing near about Rs. five crores—to countries such as the U.K., Ceylon, Singapore, Malaya, Kenya, Sudan and Aden. Now, out of these 29 million yards, as much as 26 million yards went from South India alone. Even today, the bulk of the handloom cloth which is being exported is going from South India. Therefore, the special problem of the weavers of South India naturally deserves the attention of the whole of

India and of the Government of India. But, here again let us look at the problem from the point of view of the Planning Commission Report.

At Page 446 of the big volume which has been circulated to us, a statistical table has been given, and that gives us the plan of Government with regard to textile production:

*Yarn and Cloth Production.*

**Yarn:** The present capacity is 1,669 million lbs. and it is proposed that in 1955/56 India will produce about 1,650 million lbs.

So, more or less the present rated capacity will be found in production after five years.

**Mill cloth:** At present, the rated capacity is 4,744 million yards.

And already it is reaching that figure. And the figure which is supposed to be reached in 1955/56 is 4,700 million yards. Well, we have been very fortunate in recent months, and there is no doubt that we will reach this figure, but there is no question of increasing the present capacity of the production of textile mills.

Now, let us come to handloom. I would ask the House to note this figure. The present rated capacity of handloom cloth in India is 3,000 million yards, but the present production, or rather the production in 1950 was only 810 million yards. It has gone slightly higher now. But the maximum estimate in 1955/56 is 1,700 million yards, so that when the hon. Minister brings forward this measure, I am sure he realises how modest his proposal is. There is no proposal to expand handloom production in this country. No such plan. There is no proposal even to reach the maximum capacity that India can produce through the activities of the handloom weavers. India would be satisfied if she can produce only 1,700 million yards in 1955/56 out of its rated capacity of 3,000 million yards.

**Shri S. V. Ramaswamy** (Salem): In the draft report it was 1,900 million yards, and it is reduced to 1,700 million yards in the final report.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee:** That is still more interesting. Mr. Ramaswamy may cross the floor and come to this side. I am afraid I have not studied the figures as carefully as he has. The final report gives the figures as 1,700 million yards. Mr. Ramaswamy points out to the House that in the draft report it was 1,900 million yards.

**Shri S. V. Ramaswamy:** Facts do not change sides. I shall never cross the floor.

**Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** It is 1,700 million yards in the final report.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee:** So, there has been a progressive deterioration in the desire of the Government to help the handloom weavers in India. Thank you.

**An. Hon. Member:** Strategic retreat!

**Shri K. C. Sodhia (Sagar):** Should all the activities of the Government be confined to the Planning Commission Report? That is what I ask.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee:** That, I believe, the hon. Member will have to ask the Chairman of the Planning Commission.

**Shri K. C. Sodhia:** I want to ask you because you are quoting facts and figures from the report.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee:** It is very difficult to follow what the hon. Member says, but I suppose he says something which is very interesting.

I can only speak with reference to the published Plan. If the hon. Minister says that actually his intention is to produce more than what is mentioned in the revised report of the Planning Commission, then I shall be happy because I desire that the handloom industry should be helped. He may answer and explain this point. Let us leave that aside.

Here, the question is how it is going to be done. Even if we are to reach 1,700 million yards in 1955/56, which is double the present production, how are you going to achieve it? Now, I do not wish to go into details, but broadly speaking, the difficulties that we have to face are three-fold. First, the price at which yarn is to be supplied to the weavers. Now how is that to be rectified? Will it be subsidised by Government? Government have not come out with any detailed plan as to how this help is going to be offered to the handloom weavers. Is it proposed that the rates will be subsidised?

Secondly, comes the standardization of the production. Now, unfortunately, for various reasons, we have lost some of the foreign markets. In India also, there is consumer resistance. Is it possible for the handloom weavers to switch on to other types of production which may have a

market internally or may have a market externally? That will be another point. And if that decision is taken, what is the machinery to be set up for the purpose of giving practical aid to these millions of people so that they may, by a natural process, switch on to this new production?

Thirdly, and that is most important, about marketing. The hon. Minister knows undoubtedly that a large number of these people are poor. Although there are some co-operative societies, and undoubtedly the Madras co-operative institutions have worked better than most other such co-operative institutions in other parts of India, even then, most of these weavers are at the mercy of middlemen, of moneylenders. They do not possess the minimum retaining capacity with the result that even if they produce something which is good, which is durable, which is marketable, they cannot get the market in due time, and they have to sell at a price which is less than economic, with the result that within a short while they have to close their shops down. Therefore, the establishment of a marketing organization,—which will be able to purchase the production of these people, hold it on, and sell it to the consumers, perhaps at subsidised or economic rates—will have to be planned. The crux of the problem is that while khadi, of course, has become uneconomic, even handloom production, if there is consumer resistance, can never go on functioning in this country, because, after all, the ultimate tribunal will be the consumers, and in our anxiety to keep alive a certain type of economy in the country, however desirable it may be, we will not be able to force the consumers to purchase the goods unless they find that the prices are acceptable to them. Now, that brings us to the question of the future of the mill industry. Here let us not think in terms of rivalry. The policy of Government is—and I believe there can be no other policy—that you cannot do away with the textile mills. They have come to exist in India today, and it will be the height of folly suddenly to destroy them. You can nationalise them; if they are not working properly, take them over; you can control them, you can regulate them, but to destroy one of the biggest organised industries in India because of our anxiety to get something in other directions which may not be economically attainable and realisable, will be a first class mistake. This thing has to be done through a process of co-operation. In my time, in 1949 or 1950 a few months before I resigned, although at that time Government had no legal

power, I persuaded the mill industry voluntarily to accept a certain programme which meant that about ten or twelve varieties of cloth should not be manufactured by mills, but should be exclusively manufactured by the handloom industry. I have not got the figures, but from memory I can say that within a few months, it produced a most salutary effect on the handloom industry, especially in the South, and I believe the South Indian handloom weavers produced those varieties of cloth to the tune of about Rs. 20 lakhs a month, or about Rs. 240 lakhs a year. I do not know what happened subsequently, but the possibility of that has been envisaged by the hon. Minister, and I extend to him full support in that direction, subject to one important qualification that we must see to it that our mill production is not artificially reduced. Our aim will have to be this that the mill production must come up to its maximum capacity, because that is the pivot of your planning scheme. It will be fatal to adopt a scheme which will keep your machinery, plants etc. in the mills idle, which will result in large scale unemployment, and what will be most objectionable, result in the rise of prices of cloth, which is a most important commodity in calculating the cost of living in our country. Therefore on the one hand, we must be able to devise a scheme which must enable the textile mills to produce to their maximum capacity. Secondly the handloom weavers also must be encouraged to put forward to their maximum capacity, and it is for us to find out an internal market, and an external market for both. Now, the danger in overlooking this important factor has become evident during the last few months. I am referring to the cases of some mills in West Bengal, which have started operating in accordance with the previous postwar textile mill planning. Two or three of them were allowed to be opened in West Bengal. The machinery was purchased, import licences were granted to them. They have brought the machinery, they have set up everything, but now has come this recent decision of Government that 60 per cent. of *dhoties* alone can be produced by textile mills, and 25 per cent. of the yarn which they produce must be set apart for the handloom industry. I do not know whether the hon. Minister's attention has been drawn to these cases, but I am just bringing this to the notice of the hon. Minister and the House—I do not know, there may be similar other cases in other parts of India—that if we ignore these essential conditions, there is the danger of the very objective of the Bill being

defeated. Here are mills which have come into existence in accordance with a Government policy, and they have been artificially called upon not to produce to their maximum capacity. Now, what has been the result? They have set apart 25 per cent. of their yarn production. The Government of West Bengal are not prepared to purchase the yarn. They were advised that they could sell it to the Governments of Bihar and Orissa, but the latter were not willing to purchase. They were then advised to sell to nominated buyers. But buyers are difficult to get. Nor they can produce cloth out of the yarn, which is accumulating in their mills. They are giving notice to their workers, for they cannot produce because you have put a ban upon them, and you will not take over the yarn which they have produced, and which you have earmarked for the handloom industry. Something is wrong somewhere. The result is that the handloom weavers in the eastern zone do not get the yarn. Perhaps, they do not need it, or I do not know what the reason is. The mills cannot dispose of the yarn, nor can they produce cloth out of that, and there may be a minor deadlock very soon.

In Eastern India, in Bengal, Assam etc., nearly Rs. one crore worth of *dhoties* and *sarees* come from Bombay every month. Therefore to relieve the congestion in transport and for the purpose of having some sort of self-sufficiency in the eastern zone, these mills can produce the *dhoties* and *sarees* that the eastern zone wants. But artificially you have prevented them from producing such quantities, and at the same time, you are not helping the handloom weavers also. So, here what I would very earnestly urge upon the Government is that it will be a fatal mistake for Government artificially to reduce the production of the textile mills. It may be that there are some mills which cannot switch over to other production. I know when I held conferences with the textile mills, this was an objection which was advanced. I was not prepared to accept such objections in toto, for, that is a matter for technical investigation. If there are mills whose plants and machinery can be switched on to other types of production which will receive a market in India or a market abroad, by all means compel them to switch over to such production. But if they cannot, and they can only produce *dhoties* or *sarees*, then obviously it will be a fatal mistake to allow these mills even to remain partially idle, because of some scheme which you are planning for

[Dr. S. P. Mookerjee]

the purpose of helping the handloom industry. After all, that is the goose that lays the golden egg. If the textile mills do not produce, then from where will you get your excise duty? So, the need for keeping alive the maximum production of these textile mills is paramount. At the same time, I agree with the hon. Minister that unless you reserve certain categories of production for handloom industry, you will not be able to give that preliminary encouragement to this industry, which is essential for the purpose of keeping it alive.

Next, I come to the question of Government purchases. In that regard also, I remember, we had taken a decision—again I am saying only from memory—sometime in 1950, that one-third of the purchases made by the Government of India should be from khadi and handloom textiles. There was strong resistance from the different Government departments, and in particular from the Defence Ministry. Now, of course, we have Mr. Mahavir Tyagi, who is quite prepared to have a lower standard, so far as uniform is concerned. And I suppose it would not be difficult to accept this. The hon. Prime Minister said the other day on the Defence Ministry Budget that India may have second class arms and ammunitions. It will be a less dangerous thing to have third class uniforms, if that means that we succeed in helping the handloom and khadi industries. But this is a point which Government must decide. And unless you take a major Cabinet decision on this question, it will not be possible to do much in this direction. There should be no question of one-third purchase now. I believe last year's textile purchases of the Government of India came to about Rs. nine crores. Why should it not be possible for Government to lay it down as a rule that all textile purchases to be used by the Central Government as well as all the State Governments, should be taken from the handloom production, and where khadi is available and usable, from khadi also. If you do this, then you immediately create a market. I know lots of objections were taken at that time that the handloom weavers will not be able to produce the proper types, but that is all a mistake. If you give them a little guidance, and if you have some training institutes and master weavers, it should certainly be possible for these intelligent men to produce something that may be required for national purposes.

The hon. Minister said in his opening speech that much of this campaign

will have to be carried into effect through the State Governments. I know that the State Governments may not always be amenable to the instructions that the Central Government may issue. But whatever help is given out of this cess money that you are going to fake, that must be spent in accordance with an overall central policy which should be announced before Parliament by the hon. Minister and which should be loyally applied to by not only all the departments attached to the Central Government, but also by all the State Governments as well. With regard to the amount, it is a paltry little sum. I was just making a calculation. If my two basic propositions are deemed to be correct—that you will have to subsidise with regard to the price of yarn and you will have to set up a first class marketing organisation; unless you do these two things, you can never turn handloom production into an economic proposition for sometime to come—if you have to do this immediately, then what does this mean financially? Well, if you calculate, I believe about 100 crores or a little more worth of handloom production we are having now in the country. Now, even if you set apart ten per cent. of that for the purpose of subsidy, you will require at least ten crores of rupees, and at any moment. I shall say, these ten crores of rupees can be and should be spent by Government, because this not only means helping in the production of these types of cloth but keeping alive a section of the poor people of our country, practically manhandled and rendered completely desolate and useless through a deliberate policy pursued by the British Rulers. So the responsibility for keeping this section of people alive and forming them into some organisation which will be able to render useful service to the country in the modern set-up is a duty which the Government certainly owes to itself. But let us not fritter away this sum which we propose to raise. As Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava said the other day, it is regrettable that we do not see a complete picture as to what exactly Government intends to do. Khadi you have rejected; say so honestly, that you do not believe in the Gandhian economics of khadi and you have repudiated it. Give it a decent burial. If you want, build up a museum, spend a crore of rupees for some purpose which was considered to be holy and sacred in days gone by. But do not tinker with it; do not play with it. In the economic set-up that you have placed before the country,

khadi has no place. So far as handloom is concerned, there can be a place and there should be a place and that can be done provided you proceed on certain established principles, remembering this in mind that it is the consumers' point of view which will ultimately prevail. If you go on pushing up the prices of mill-made production, you will create new problems. Your cost of living will go up and people will curse you, and there will be new difficulties which you would not know how to solve. So the necessity for keeping down the prices is one important consideration. Another thing you can do is to have a proper inquiry through Cost Accountants with regard to the production of textile mills. I had got it done, but I was not satisfied with the results because the machinery at that time at the disposal of the Government was not satisfactory. If you find that there are loopholes—not only loopholes, but much bigger holes—which give the industry more profits than what they are entitled to, then you can make necessary adjustments and you can take over a small slice for the purpose of keeping alive the handloom industry and any other indigenous types of production. But please proceed always on this basis: that India wants the maximum production from textile mills for internal consumption and for capturing as many foreign markets as possible and that it is our sacred and bounden duty to strengthen the handloom weavers and also to help other producers—even if there is a small number—in such ways that this type of textile production for which India was famous two or three hundred years ago may once again come back to this country not only for internal use but also for external consumption.

**Hon. Members rose—**

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Order, order. Now, I would like to know how many hon. Members would like to participate in this. I am only trying to assess what time this may take. We have got the Appropriation Bill. From tomorrow.....

**Shri Feroze Gandhi** (Pratapgarh Distt.—West cum Rae Bareilly Distt.—East): Those who do not wear khadi seem to be most anxious to speak.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee:** Naturally. We can give it a decent burial. You can be on the Memorial Committee.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** From tomorrow we will start the Finance Bill. 55 P.S.D.

It was to have been started even today, but for want of time we have to put it off. There is the Appropriation Bill. The other day we spent two hours over this Bill and now we have spent an hour and three-quarters.

**Dr. Krishnaswami** (Kancheepuram): It is a very important Bill.

**Shri Velayudhan** (Quilon cum Malvelikkara—Reserved—Sch. Castes): It is an important Bill.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** What is the desire of the House? When should closure be applied? It is now nearing five. Shall we say, at six o'clock?

**Hon. Members:** No, Sir.

**Shri Gadgil** (Poona Central): Six o'clock will be all right.

**Hon. Members:** No, no.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Is it the desire of the House that we should take up the Appropriation Bill, finish it in two hours and then continue this?

**Hon. Members:** Yes.

**The Minister of Commerce and Industry** (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): I have to take it to the other House, Sir.

**The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs** (Shri Satya Narayan Sinha): The Appropriation Bill has also to go to the other House, Sir.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** That is all right. In view of the fact that there are several Members who want to speak, I am not prepared to close it at any particular time unless the House itself is willing. I would only appeal to hon. Members not to take more than fifteen minutes each—ten minutes if possible—in view of the large number of Members who want to speak.

[PANDIT THAKUR DAS BHARGAVA in the Chair]

**Shri Feroze Gandhi:** Discussion should be limited only to those who wear khadi.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee:** Only khadi wearers should not speak.

**Shri Gadgil:** Prospective wearers of khadi!

**Mr. Chairman:** Seth Govind Das.

सेठ गोविन्द दास (मंडला-जबलपुर दक्षिण) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं सर्वप्रथम इस विधेयक का हृदय से स्वागत करता हूँ और इस का स्वागत करते हुए बहुत थोड़ी सी बातें आप के सामने निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ। मैं ने अभी अपने साम्यवादी सदस्यों में से दो के भाषण सुने और दोनों ने एक प्रकार से इस विधेयक का विरोध किया है। श्री नायर साहब ने कहा कि यह विधेयक यथार्थ में इस देश के लिए इसलिए हितकर नहीं है कि इस से हमारे यहां के खरीदारों के हितों को घक्का पहुंचता है और गरीबों को कोई लाभ नहीं होता। यह कहते हुए उन्होंने आप के सामने कुछ अंक उपस्थित किये जो खादी से सम्बन्ध रखते हैं। उन्होंने अपने भाषण में यह कहा कि खादी पर जो कुछ खर्च होता है उस में से आठ आने कपास पर जाते हैं, चार आने कातने वाले और बुनने वाले को मिलते हैं और चार आने व्यवस्था पर खर्च होते हैं। मुझे आश्चर्य हुआ उन के इन अंकों को सुन कर क्योंकि हम लोग जो मये ३३ वर्षों से खादी का काम करते आये हैं वे इन अंकों का कुछ ज्ञान रखते हैं। परन्तु इतने पर भी मैं ने इन अंकों के सम्बन्ध में दिल्ली के खादी भंडार से कुछ जानकारी प्राप्त की और वह जानकारी इस प्रकार है। कपास के ऊपर श्री नायर साहब के कहने के अनुसार आठ आने खर्च नहीं होते हैं। कपास के ऊपर केवल तीन आने १ पाई खर्च होते हैं। जिनिंग के ऊपर ६ पाई, पूनियां बनाने पर यानी कार्डिंग पर १ पाई, कताई के ऊपर पांच आना तीन पाई, बुनाई के ऊपर दो आना तीन पाई, घुलाई अर्थात् ब्लीचिंग के ऊपर ६ पाई और इस्तरी कराई अर्थात् प्रेंसिंग के ऊपर ३ पाई और व्यवस्था पर केवल तीन आने। इन आंकड़ों से मालूम होता है कि तीन आने जो व्यवस्था के ऊपर खर्च होते हैं उन को छोड़कर सब का सब घन खादी के ऊपर जो ध्वय किया जाता है वह यहां के गरीबों को जाता है।

इसके बाद हमारे दूसरे साम्यवादी सज्जन जिन्होंने अपने को हाथ के करघे चलाने वालों का बड़ा भारी हितैषी बताया उन्होंने एक बहुत बड़ी बात कह डाली उन्होंने कह डाला कि यह विधेयक तो मिल चलाने वालों और सरकार का एक मिला हुआ षड़यंत्र है, कांसपिरेसी है। उनके दूसरे मित्र ने जो बातें कहीं वे उन्होंने नहीं कहीं। उन्होंने खरीदारों के सम्बन्ध में बहुत कम कहा। उन्होंने एक दूसरी ही चीज़ ली और वह यह ली कि यह विधेयक तो यथार्थ में हाथ का करघा चलाने वालों को कोई सहायता ही नहीं पहुंचाता।

मैं ने जैसा पहले भी कई बार निवेदन किया है कि हमारे साम्यवादी भाइयों को तो हम या हमारी सरकार कोई भी बात क्यों न कहे, वह उचित नहीं जान पड़ती, उन को वह देश के लिये लाभप्रद नहीं जान पड़ती इसका कारण है। उन की दृष्टि यथार्थ में इस देश में रहती ही नहीं, वे सदा रूस और चीन की ओर देखा करते हैं। रूस और चीन की ओर देखते हुए उन के देश की क्या परिस्थिति है, उन के देश में किन बातों से यहां की गरीब जनता को लाभ पहुंच सकता है, इन सब बातों को वे नहीं सोचते। वे चाहते हैं कि हम इस देश में शासन की व्यवस्था और समाज की व्यवस्था रूस और चीन के सदृश्य कर दें। जब तक हम यह करने को तैयार न हों, तब तक उन्हें सरकार के या हमारे किसी कार्य में कोई लाभ दृष्टिगोचर नहीं होता। जहां तक हम लोगों का सम्बन्ध है, मैं आप से कहना चाहता हूँ कि यदि उन की भी कुछ उचित बातें हों, तो हम उन्हें स्वीकार करने के लिये तैयार हैं। कम से कम मुझे श्रीयुत नायर साहब के पश्चात् जो साम्यवादी सदस्य बोले और श्री श्यामप्रसाद मुखर्जी

ने जो निवेदन किया, उस में एक बात में बहुत बड़ा तथ्य दिखाई देता है और वह यह कि यदि हम इस विधेयक को ही अपना अन्तिम ध्येय मान लें, तो हमारे देश का यद्यपि लाभ होगा पर उतना लाभ नहीं होगा कि जितना होना चाहिये। उत्पादन करने वालों को सच्ची सहायता तब तक सम्भव नहीं है जब तक कि, जैसा श्यामाप्रसाद मुकर्जी ने सुझाया और जैसा हमारे दूसरे साम्यवादी सज्जन ने सुझाया कि जो कुछ उत्पादन होता है उसकी खरीद की भी व्यवस्था न हो। हम ने अनेक बार देखा है, खादी भंडारों में और जो लोग हाथ के करघे चलाते हैं उन के यहां भी कि जो कुछ उत्पादन होता है, वह पड़ा रहता है। उसके खरीदार नहीं होते। इसलिये मुझे एक बात समझ में नहीं आई और अब तक नहीं आ रही है कि कांग्रेस की जो सरकार है, अपनी हर एक आवश्यकता, जो भी कपड़े के सम्बन्ध में हो, उसके लिए वह खादी क्यों नहीं खरीदती? इस विषय में श्यामाप्रसादजी ने जो कुछ कहा है उस से मैं सर्वथा सहमत हूँ कि सरकार, केन्द्रीय सरकार और हमारे प्रदेशों की सरकार, सब को अपनी आवश्यकता का जितना भी कपड़ा है उस के लिये खादी ही खरीदनी चाहिये। यदि उस ने यह सब कपड़ा खादी का खरीदा तो मैं समझता हूँ कि इस विधेयक से जो लाभ होना चाहिये वह होगा, अन्यथा लाभ तो होगा पर वह लाभ पूरी मात्रा में नहीं हो सकता।

फिर एक बात यहां पर और सुझाई गयी और उस बात में भी मुझे बहुत तथ्य दिखाई देता है कि हमारे जितने भी मिल इस देश में जहां भी स्थापित हों, उनके लिए एक योजना बनानी चाहिये कि मिल किस प्रकार का कपड़ा बनावे और हमारे हाथ के करघे किस प्रकार का कपड़ा। जैसे

तौलिया, टेबुल क्लाथ, परदे का कपड़ा, कई प्रकार की साड़ियां मिलों में नहीं बनना चाहिये, ये सब चीजें हाथ के करघों से बननी चाहियें और मिलों को मुमानिग्रत हो जानी चाहिये सब चीजों की उत्पत्ति करने की, वरना मिलों में और हाथ के करघों में जो एक प्रकार की स्पर्धा है वह बनी रहेगी, खरीदारों को जिस मूल्य पर यह कपड़ा मिलना चाहिये उस पर नहीं मिलेगा और हाथ के करघे के उद्योग को पूरी मदद नहीं मिलेगी। इसलिये जहां तक इस मामले का सम्बन्ध है इस में भी मैं श्री श्यामाप्रसाद मुकर्जी से सहमत हूँ और मैं यह समझता हूँ कि यदि इस बात का प्रयत्न किया जाय और पूरी जांच करके इस बात की एक योजना बनाई जाय कि किस किस प्रकार का कपड़ा मिलों को बनाना चाहिये और किस किस प्रकार का कपड़ा हाथ के करघे वालों को बनाना चाहिये तो एक सुन्दर योजना बन सकती है जिससे मिलों को भी हानि नहीं पहुंचेगी और हाथ के करघे के उद्योग को भी लाभ पहुंचेगा।

आजकल देश में एक कार्य और चल रहा है और वह सच्चा गांधीवादी कार्य है। वह कार्य है स्वावलम्बन का। कई जगह, कपड़ा बनाया जाता है, कटाई होती है, बुनाई होती है, स्वयं धारण करने के लिये मैं यह चाहता हूँ कि इस सम्बन्ध में भी जांच की जाय और जो संस्थाएं इस प्रकार का कार्य करती हैं या जो व्यक्ति इस प्रकार का कार्य करते हैं, उन को बड़े बड़े पुरस्कार दिये जाने चाहिए। वे पुरस्कार कई रूपों में दिये जा सकते हैं।

इस सारे कार्य के लिये देश में एक स्वदेशी की भावना को उत्पन्न करना नितान्त आवश्यक है। मुझे वह समय याद है कि जब सन् १९२० में पहले पहल कांग्रेस ने महात्मा गांधी के असहयोग के कार्यक्रम को

[सेठ गोविन्द दास]

स्वीकार किया था और जिस में विलायती कपड़े की होलियां जलीं थीं। सब से पहले होली बम्बई में जलाई गई थी और उस एक होली के परिणामस्वरूप जितना खादी का प्रचार हुआ था उस के सामने जो दूसरे छोटे मोटे प्रयत्न थे वे नगण्य हो गये थे।

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

इस स्वदेशी की भावना को मैं ने सब से अधिक अभी अपने वैदेशिक भ्रमण में जापान में देखा। जापान में स्वदेशी की इतनी अधिक भावना है कि जिसकी आप यहां कल्पना नहीं कर सकते। वहां छोटी से बड़ी चीज, सब की सब देश में उत्पन्न हुई काम में आती हैं। बड़ी से बड़ी मशीनरी को आप देखें चाहे छोटे से छोटे सामान को आप देखें, सब का सब जापान का बनाया हुआ है। स्वराज्य प्राप्त करने के पहले सन् १९०५ में जब वंग भंग का आन्दोलन हुआ, उस समय में तो बहुत छोटा था, सब से पहले और उस के पश्चात् सन् १९२० में जब पहले पहल हम ने असहयोग आन्दोलन आरम्भ किया तब स्वदेशी की जिस भावना को हम ने जागृत किया था वह भावना स्वराज्य मिलने के पश्चात् नष्टप्राय हो गयी है।

5 P. M.

जब तक हम स्वदेशी की भावना को इस देश में फिर से नहीं लायेंगे और सरकार भी इस प्रयत्न में जब तक हमारा साथ नहीं देगी, तब तक हमारे इन उद्योगधंधों की बढ़ती नहीं हो सकती, इसलिए मैं आपसे अन्त में यह निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ कि इन सब बातों के ऊपर ध्यान करके यह विधेयक तो बहुत सुन्दर है ही, परन्तु इस विधेयक को

केवल एक आरम्भिक कदम मान इस विधेयक के पश्चात् हमको इस दिशा की एक निश्चित योजना बनानी चाहिए.....

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I think we may stop this Bill now and take up the Appropriation Bill. This Bill may continue on some other day, and the hon. Member who is in possession of the floor now may continue his speech on that day.

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** May I make a submission? This Bill lapses on the 15th April.

**Shri Satya Narayan Sinha:** We may take it up tomorrow. Today we may proceed with the Appropriation Bill from now.

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** Unless it is taken up tomorrow...

**Shri Satya Narayan Sinha:** We will certainly do so.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I have no objection. I am prepared to sit for as long as is needed. But if it is intended that the other House must have the opportunity to pass the Appropriation Bill, then it is better to push through with it at this stage.

We will now take up the Appropriation Bill. The hon. Member Seth Govind Das may continue his speech on the next day when the Khadi Bill is taken up.

**सेठ गोविन्द दास :** उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं तो एक मिनट में अपना भाषण समाप्त किये देता हूँ। अन्त में मैं यही कहना चाहता हूँ कि हमको पूरी योजना बनाकर इस काम को करना चाहिए। यह विधेयक तो केवल हमारे कार्य को आरम्भ कर रहा है, यह मानकर चलना है, लेकिन अगर हम यह मान लेंगे कि यह विधेयक पास हो जाने से ही सब काम समाप्त हो जाता है तो हमारा काम होने वाला नहीं है। इतने पर भी मैं विधेयक का हृदय से समर्थन करता हूँ।