

[Shri A. C. Guha]

my statement and has said that this Bill has not made any effective change in the structure and composition of the Corporation. The entire charge against the Corporation as embodied in the report of the Enquiry Committee is that the executive committee was practically using all the powers of the board and the Managing Director was also exercising power much in excess of what he ought to have. These are the main charges of the Enquiry Committee against the Corporation and this Bill puts an end to those two anomalous positions. It is not merely a change in the name—'executive committee' to be replaced by 'central committee'. Apart from the connotations of the two different names the statutory rights that were embodied in the Industrial Finance Corporation have now been removed. The central committee will now just be a subordinate body of the board and it will exercise such powers as the board may decide to put in its hands. So, there will be no repetition of the excessive power exercised by the executive committee or by the managing director, which, according to the report of the Enquiry Committee, was mainly responsible for some of lapses and defects in the working of the Corporation.

Sir, I do not like to enter into further controversies, I still hope that this Corporation will be doing useful work and I hope it will get the blessings of this House which it will deserve by its deeds.

I hope now the Bill will be passed by the House.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

#### INDIAN COINAGE (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Minister of Revenue and Defence Expenditure (Shri A. C. Guha): I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend

the Indian Coinage Act, 1906, be taken into consideration."

Sir, it is very difficult to just switch over from one subject to another.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: How can any Industrial Corporation work without coinage?

Shri A. C. Guha: That is true. Anyhow, the Members of Parliament including the Ministers must have a very agile and versatile mind.

Shri Vallatharas (Pudukkottai): Sir, I want to point out a constitutional objection to the consideration of this Bill. This is a Bill which comes under the operation of article 117 of the Constitution.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: So far as points of orders are concerned hon. Members may state the point first and if I need elucidation I will ask them to explain.

Shri Vallatharas: That is what I am stating. This Bill, as it is, is a Bill, which, if passed, would involve an expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India, and such a Bill shall not be passed by either House of Parliament unless the President has recommended to that House the consideration of the Bill. So far, there is no President's sanction or permission for consideration of this Bill. This is the point which I am raising and if you permit me further I will go to further arguments on that behalf.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Is there any provision here which involves any expenditure from the Exchequer?

Shri Vallatharas: I will submit to you straightaway that in 1953 the decimalisation of coin was brought through a private Bill in the Council of States. At that time the present hon. Minister was Deputy Minister of Finance. In his own words; that is, when he opposed that Bill.....

Shri A. C. Guha: That objection was not upheld by the Chair.

**Shri Vallatharas:** That is a different thing altogether. I am only pointing out what this Bill presupposes.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The hon. Minister has given an indication as to what the Chair ought to do. Was the objection upheld by the Chair?

**Shri Vallatharas:** I do not know.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** That was not the only argument that I put forward. That was only one of my objections that it may also come within the purview of the said article. Anyhow the Chair did not uphold that contention and he allowed the Bill to be discussed.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The point is this. Wherever any expenditure is involved in a Bill, it must have the previous sanction of the president whether introduced by the Government or by any other Member.

In the present case, this Bill does not apparently have any such sanction. Now, does this Bill contain any such provision? No, I believe.

3 P.M.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** Nothing.

**Shri Vallatharas:** If the Bill is passed, what happens?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** It may or may not be passed. If cents are minted, then hundred cents are equal to 192 pies, but that may not come into being. There is not any such immediate proposal. I do not know if there is any other authority. Possibly, it may be in any other Coinage Act. I am looking into the original Act.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** Coins are still being minted and the minting of these new coins can also be done.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** If new coins are to be minted, new expenditure will have to be incurred. Whatever the expenditure, even if it is a pie, it has to be incurred. There is, however, no specified clause here for any expenditure from the Consolidated Fund. But this involves an expenditure, whatever little that expenditure might be. What is the sanction or

the authority under which these coins will be minted? Is it already in the existing rules?

**Shri A. C. Guha:** The mint has been minting new coins. They have been changing the shape of the coins and that has not required a new Bill to be passed or an amendment of the existing Bills. The old dies in the mints are being changed for the new dies.

**Shri Vallatharas:** Even apart from that question, the hon. Minister has, on a previous occasion, expressed that this Bill presupposes and will surely lead to some expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India in minting new coins, in printing postage-stamps and railway tickets, etc. There are so many things that have been considered by special committees during which the conception of the Government and the committees was that a colossal expenditure would be incurred and that the railway, the posts and telegraphs and other departments would entail an expenditure of not less than Rs. 1 crore. I am not going into the exact amount of the expenditure, but even for a single pie from the Consolidated Fund of India, sanction must exist. I never expected the hon. Minister to be light in his expression when he expressed in the Council of States that it will surely lead to some expenditure. Not to speak of the minting of coins, what about the printing of postage-stamps, railway tickets and collecting land revenues? There are so many things involved. So, it is on the face of it entailing and involving a large amount of expenditure and I can substantiate from the statement of so many persons, from the reports that have been published by the inter-ministerial committees—two committees—and by the Standards Institution Committee, and by so many other reports by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. All these things clearly indicate that the Bill, if passed into law, can not be effected or decimalisation cannot be effected without any expenditure. I presumably infer—and I leave it to more experienced people to infer whether what I say is

[Shri Vallatharas]

true or not. There is already a budgetted expenditure fixed by the administration that is now existing, and if any expenditure is further to be incurred over and above what has been sanctioned as in existing practice, certainly the President must be informed of it, so that, if it is within the competence of the financial capacity and efficiency of this nation that such an expenditure can be allowed, these things may be certified by the President. This can be certified only on that basis. That is what I presume to be the principle underlying the Article of the Constitution. Here the hon. Minister, according to law, is stopped from contending what he has been contending in 1953. He has no business for putting up any new situation as having arisen during these two years. As a matter of fact, this fact was forgotten and it is a lapse of memory, I can say, I do not think there will be any justification now for proceeding with this Bill. It is beyond the powers of Parliament to consider this matter.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** It is not a lapse of memory. I myself raised this in the other House and the Chairman did not uphold that contention. Before introducing this Bill, this matter was discussed and the Law Ministry advised that it would not attract Article 117 (3) of the Constitution. It is not true that it is a lapse on our part and that we forgot to take that point into consideration. We considered that point and it was the definite decision that it would not attract that Article.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Was there any ruling given by the other House?

**Shri A. C. Guha:** The ruling was given by the other House.

**Shri Vallatharas:** As I read in the Report, the following is found there: Dy. Chairman: "I presume that the hon. Minister is not taking any technical objection." The reply, the report says: "Shri A. C. Guha: Yes,

Sir". What that 'yes' means, nobody knows. It may mean 'no'. I do not know.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I believe he is not taking exception to it. In that context, "Yes, Sir," means 'no'.

**Shri Vallatharas:** It must be 'no'.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** What did the Chairman rule?

**Shri Vallatharas:** The Chairman did not say anything so far as I can read in the report.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** The Chairman did not uphold that contention.

**Shri S. S. More (Sholapur):** What ever happened in that House and particularly the matter which appertains to the sphere of giving a ruling, has that any precedent and value here?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The practice is this. When some discussion is going on in the present session there, simultaneously it ought not to be referred to here, unless it is a statement on behalf of Government, etc. So far as the rest is concerned, we refer to *May's Parliamentary Practice* and to various other authorities as precedents. I just wanted to know what their opinion was: not that we are bound by their rules or precedents. When this matter under discussion was pointed out as having been dealt with in the other House, the Chairman's ruling was referred to. Normally, we do not refer to the rulings of the other House, but whenever some information is necessary, there is no harm in asking for it. Concurrently, we do not go on, because they may change their views, and after all, this discussion there took place sometime ago.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** As far as I recollect, the Chair in the other House decided that if any consequential expenses are to be incurred later on, that point should not stand in the way of having the matter discussed. This Bill, as it is, does not involve any expenditure.

**Shri S. C. Samanta (Tamluk):** Clause 6 of the Indian Coinage Act says that coins may be minted and issued under the authority of the Central Government in such denominations not higher than one rupee. The other forms of the coins are eight-anna, four-anna and two-anna pieces which are at the disposal of the Government. Now, we are going to transform the eight-anna pieces and the two-anna pieces and the four anna-pieces. This transformation will not effect any financial undertaking, because, we were also transforming the one-rupee into smaller coins such as eight-anna, four-anna and two-anna pieces. In the same way we will go on making pieces in any denomination, cent or otherwise, say, in 50, 25, 10, 5, etc. So, I think nothing stands in the way of the Bill being considered now.

**Shri Mohiuddin (Hyderabad City):** The Bill proposes that the eight-anna, four-anna and two-anna pieces will continue to be in force and will be accepted as legal tender as they now are, and that the new coins will be perhaps minted on the basis of cents.

The present 8 anna, 4 anna and quarter anna pieces will have to be melted and recast into cents; that involves extra expenditure. Of course the Bill does not directly involve extra expenditure, but it does indirectly involve heavy expenditure.

**Shri Kamachandra Reddi (Nellore):** The memorandum on the adoption of the metric system was circulated to the Members sometime back and in page 5 it says:

"The general conclusion reached on the basis of the replies from these industrial units is that the metric system could be adopted without much difficulty or adverse repercussions, provided the transition is spread over a period of ten to fifteen years. As regards the cost of conversion, it is expected to be in the order of Rs. 1 crore per year if it is spread over a period of ten years."

When this Bill is passed into an Act, it envisages an expenditure

to that extent. When the expenditure is bound to take place after the passing of the Bill it is a money Bill.

**Shri Mohanlal Saksena (Lucknow Distt. cum Bara Banki Distt.):** With your permission, Sir, I submit that a similar Bill was introduced in 1946 and that caused the sanction of the Governor-General. I do not know whether we have got a copy of the Bill in the library. It was stated, in fact, in a note prepared in the Planning Commission that this thing would cost about Rs. 1 crore; it was also suggested that the proper time was when we removed the head of the King from the coins substituted and replaced it by the Lion Pillar. That was the proper time when it should have been done. But even the view of the Planning Commission was that we should proceed with this Bill. Therefore, there is no doubt in my mind that this thing is going to entail expenditure. But there is no harm in that; the President's sanction can be obtained. In the meanwhile, the Bill can wait for a day or two.

**Shri Vallatharas:** With your permission, Sir, I submit that whether this involves an expenditure or not is not an isolated consideration. Here is this book of alarming size—*Memorandum on the introduction of the metric system in India*, Planning Commission, 5th March, 1955—on which the present Bill is based. I submit that every Member should have been provided with a copy of this memorandum so that we may be prepared to discuss it. The consideration of this Bill must be postponed in view of the fact that we are not possessed of this book. All these materials are quite necessary because they form the basis of the Bill.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Wherefrom did the hon. Member get that book?

**Shri Vallatharas:** From the library.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** If it is in the library, other hon. Members also can get it from there.

**Shri Vallatharas:** Everybody cannot be expected to go to the library and



get the book. Hon. Members need being supplied with these materials so that they may be able to study the Bill in all its implications.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Order, order; I have heard enough. So far as this initial matter is concerned. Section 6 of the Indian Coinage Act, 1906—a portion of which was read out by Mr. Samanta—gives ample powers to the Central Government to mint coins for issue under the authority of the Central Government of such denominations not higher than one rupee, of such dimensions and designs and of such metals or of mixed metals of such composition as the Central Government may, by a notification in the official gazette, determine. It can mint any number of half anna, one anna or two anna coins. Section 13 refers to rupee coins, half rupee coins etc. They have added here cents also. Therefore, it is not under section 13 that the authority is given to the Central Government to mint any number of coins; it is under section 6 that the Government is given powers to mint any kind of coin of any denomination according to the notification in the gazette. It may be of any size and denomination not higher than a rupee.

**Shri Vallatharas:** I submit that my points are totally different; I say that according to this memorandum this proposal entails huge expenditure.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** That memorandum concerns not only coinage; it concerns weights, measures etc. I think that 98 per cent of the expenditure will be in connection with weights, measures and other things.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Order, order. There is no point in interrupting me either on this side or that side. All points have been stated. Even if one pie has to be spent from the Consolidated Fund of India as a result of the passing of this Bill, the recommendation of the President is necessary. We are not going meticulously into the amount of expenditure. It may be Rs. 1 crore more or less. The only point is whether it involves expenditure directly. Section 6 of the Indian Coinage Act, 1906,

gives the Central Government the power to mint any kind of coin of any denomination not higher than one rupee. That is all comprehensive. Section 13 refers to legal tender. This Bill is only a further amendment to section 13; no, this is an addition thereafter—the insertion of section 14. The cents also will be legal tenders and section 14 says that one rupee is equivalent to so many cents and so on. This is all that is proposed to be done. Therefore, directly it does not involve any expenditure.

**Shri S. S. More rose—**

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I am not going to hear the hon. Member any more. The hon. Member is a practising lawyer and he cannot be allowed to go on interrupting me like this. Irrespective of any expenditure, I have my own doubts whether this is a money Bill, because it relates to some money. Article 110 of the Constitution says:

“For the purposes of this Chapter, a Bill shall be deemed to be a Money Bill if it contains only provisions dealing with all or any of the following matters, namely,—

- (a) the imposition, abolition, remission, alteration or regulation of any tax;
- (b) the regulation of the borrowing of money or the giving of any guarantee by the Government of India or the amendment of the law with respect to any financial obligations undertaken or to be undertaken by the Government of India;
- (c) the custody of the Consolidated Fund or the Contingency Fund of India, the payment of moneys into or the withdrawal of moneys from any such Fund;
- (d) the appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Fund of India;
- (e) the declaring of any expenditure to be expenditure charged on the Consolidated

Fund of India or the increasing of the amount of any such expenditure;

(f) the receipt of money on account of the Consolidated Fund of India or the public account of India or the custody or issue of such money or the audit of the accounts of the Union or of a State; or

(g) any matter incidental to any of the matters specified in sub-clauses (a) to (f)."

Provision is made under section 6 of the Indian Coinage Act, 1906, enabling the Government of India to mint any kind of coin of any denomination. Under these circumstances, I am unable to agree that initially the President's sanction, authority or recommendation is necessary for this Bill.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** The question of the introduction of the metric system in India has indeed a long history. It was first in 1870 that the British Government raised this question. They examined it and came to the conclusion that the metric system should ultimately be introduced in India though necessarily in gradual stages. But, nothing happened after that. Somehow, the British Government did not take any action. Then, the question came up for consideration in 1944, just at the close of the last world war. Government first tried to get public opinion. Public opinion was more or less favourable to this matter and the views of the different public bodies were no less favourable.

**Shri S. S. More:** What do you mean by public opinion? The commercial community?

**Shri A. C. Guha:** The commercial community, and also the State Governments and the banks who are mainly concerned with coins.

**Shri K. C. Sodhia:** (Sagar): They are all tied to the wheels of the Government.

**Shri S. S. More:** What about villagers?

**Shri A. C. Guha:** Government decided in 1946 to bring forward a Bill in the Central legislature. A Bill was introduced and it was discussed. Their idea was to divide the rupee into 100 cents. The Bill was circulated for public opinion, in 1947, the Government decided to proceed with the Bill.

[SHRIMATI RENU CHAKRAVARTY in the Chair].

Then, the Partition came. The post-Partition disturbing factors intervened and the Central legislature also came to a sudden end. This Bill was allowed to lapse.

In this connection, I think it may not be out of place to recall that although almost two-third of the population of the world are now using the decimal system of coinage,.....

**Shri Gadgil** (Poona Central): What about England?

**Shri A. C. Guha:** The only other important countries are the Commonwealth countries. In Asia, only India and Pakistan are the two countries which have not yet got the decimal system of coinage.

**Shri S. S. More:** Are there any other countries in Asia which are Members of the Commonwealth?

**Shri A. C. Guha:** Ceylon is a Member of the Commonwealth. It is no use imitating England and laying particular emphasis on English conventions and practices in all matters.

**Shri V. G. Deshpande** (Guna): This slave mentality should go.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** In this connection, it would be proper to recall that it was India which invented this decimal system. It came into use in India in the second century B. C.

**Shri K. C. Sodhia:** Decimal coinage or the decimal system?

**Shri A. C. Guha:** Decimal system.

**Shri K. C. Sodhia:** What relation has that with coinage?

**Shri A. C. Guha:** The logical relation only.

**Shri Gadgil:** Just explain to us how it will work out. Which will be the lowest coin, one pie or a paisa? How many pies will make one anna, four annas, etc.? We will have some idea about it.

**Mr. Chairman:** The hon. Minister is getting rather fluttered by all these disturbances. I suggest that the House listens to him. Then, at the end, if there is any particular point of clarification, you can always put it.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** Though India is the inventor of the decimal system, it is just an irony of fate that India has been almost one of the last countries to make the decimal system current in the daily use of the life of the people, as regards currency, as regards weights, as regards measurements and all other things. If I am to reply to the question of Shri Gadgil, I would request him to refer to one clause in the Bill. This Bill is practically an one clause Bill. If he refers to clause 2 of the Bill, he will find the reply to his question.

**Shri Gadgil:** Which is the lowest coin?

**Shri A. C. Guha:** In the Bill it is said that the rupee will be divided into 100 cents.

**Shri Gadgil:** The cent will be called a cent or a paisa? All right; the Minister may proceed.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** I think the hon. Member has understood the position.

Then, the question came up for discussion in 1949 in connection with the introduction of the new designs depicting the Asoka Pillar. The idea at first was, when, after the war, with the attainment of Independence, new coins will be minted, we may take the opportunity of introducing the decimal coinage. But, somehow, that was not possible, particularly on account of the disturbed conditions after the Partition and after the attainment of Independence. The question was allowed to rest there. It was considered inopportune to carry through such a revolu-

tionary change in the coinage system when the economic, constitutional and administrative conditions were far from settled. The Constitution was just being framed. The House will recollect the disturbed conditions in the country immediately after and two or three years after the Partition. It was considered inopportune to take up the matter then.

In 1949, the Indian Standards Institute set up a committee and they recommended that the metric system should be introduced both in coins and weights and measurements, but in stages of 15 years. The principal recommendations made by the I. S. I. in this regard were as follows:

- (a) the metric system of weights and measures and decimalised coins should be introduced in India and legislation should be undertaken as soon as possible;
- (b) the change should take place in several stages spread over a total period of 15 years, the first period being devoted to publicity and propaganda, the second period to the introduction of the metric system in weights and measures in the Central and State Government departments and public bodies; and finally.
- (c) the stage of complete introduction. The committee recommended that it would be an advantage if the adoption of this decimalised currency precedes the introduction of the metric system of weights and measures. Previously, the decision of the Interim Government was that the metric system in weights and measures should precede the metric system in currency. But, now after the enquiry by the I. S. I. it was decided that the metric system in coinage should precede the metric system in weights and measures.

**An Hon. Member:** Why?

**Shri A. C. Guha:** Because it is much easier.

**Mr. Chairman:** Please address the Chair.

—**Shri A. C. Guha:** The Indian Standards Institute, before making this recommendation, had made extensive consultations with almost every institution, State Governments and commercial bodies who are interested in this matter.

Recently, the Planning Commission made a fresh review of the whole position. And it has now been decided that the Government should implement the decision taken on principle some years ago. The first step is this Bill introduced in parliament providing for the metric system in coinage, and later on the Commerce and Industry Ministry will bring forward another Bill introducing the metric system in weights and measures.

The position will be that the current coins will not be just now demonetised. They will remain current, but new coins also, particularly the lower denominations, will be minted. Gradually, they will be put into circulation and for some years both the new and old coins will be simultaneously in circulation. Later on, gradually we shall withdraw the old coins from circulation and the new coins only will remain in circulation.

**Shri Dhulekar** (Jhansi Distt.—South): What will be the two-pice coin equal to in your new system?

**Shri A. C. Guha:** The market will find out.

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, order. I think it is better that the hon. Minister addresses the Chair. Otherwise, he will get involved in this argument across the House.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** As has been put in this Bill, the new coins will be in the following denominations: 1 cent, 2 cents, 5 cents, 10 cents, 25 cents and 50 cents. From 25 cents up the values of the coins will remain as they are at present. Eight anna pieces and four anna pieces and the rupee also will retain the same value. There will not be any change in the value of these three coins. Whatever

changes are to be effected will be only in the value of the lower denomination coins.

The new coins, both in weight and dimension, will correspond to a suitable unit in the metric system of weights and length and measurement which will follow the introduction of the decimal coinage. Section 6 of the Indian Coinage Act to which Shri Samanta has referred gives sufficient authority to the Government to mint coins, but here by this Bill we are simply changing the names and perhaps also sizes and value of the lower denomination coins. After the passing of this Bill, it would be for the Central Government to notify the precise dimensions and designs of the coins of smaller denominations below a rupee. However, Members of Parliament—Shri Gadgil may hear this portion—will be interested to know something about the designs that the Government has in view.

The obverse of each coin will bear the LION CAPITOL of the Asoka pillar as in the present coins. It is also proposed to inscribe "Bharat Sarcar" in Hindi instead of the words "Government of India" in English which now appear in the existing coins. On the reverse of the coin a suitable design of either the Asoka bull or the Asoka horse will be used and where the space does not permit it, merely the value and date will be inserted. We have been trying to think out Hindi equivalents for the different denominations of the decimal coins and the Government will appreciate and take into consideration any views that the Members of Parliament may express, but I do not think that will much affect the provisions of this Bill. That will be done under the existing power in the Indian Coinage Act.

It may be of some interest for the Members of the House to see a tentative sample of the new coins. (interruption)

**Mr. Chairman:** The hon. Member will get a chance I am quite sure, and

[Mr. Chairman]

I think we can keep his patience and put forward his point of view later on.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** This is not the final thing we have decided. This is just a sort of sample and this has been specially brought here so that the Members will have an idea as to what will be the shape, size and inscriptions on the coins.

**Shri S. S. More:** Supposing we vote relying on these designs, it does not mean that the designs will be accepted finally.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** There will not be any voting on designs.

**Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava (Gurgaon):** Shri More is very designing.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** I think some time ago in reply to some questions it was mentioned by the Government that the Government's decision has been made to introduce the metric system both in coinage and weights and measures and all other matters. This is the first stage as I have said. I have also said that about three-fourths of the world population are under the metric system. Fifty countries of the world have this system in vogue. In Asia only India and Pakistan are the two countries which have not been using the metric system. I think some members referred to the Commonwealth countries. Even in the Commonwealth there are some countries which are using the metric system such as Canada, Ceylon and I think some other countries also.

As I mentioned in the beginning, India invented the metric system or the decimal system and it invented it more than 2,000 years ago and it was from India that the Arabs got it and introduced it into Europe. It is now known in Europe as the Arabic numerals. They are not really Arabic numerals. They were introduced by the Arabs from India. India writings

on the subject were translated by an Arab mathematician Khawarazmi by the middle of the 9th century and then they were translated into Latin, and it was only by about 13th century that Europe got this decimal system of numerals fairly in use. It is just proper that India which has been the originator and inventor of this decimal system should make the fullest use of the decimal system, and we consider that it is the most opportune time now for us to introduce the decimal system. It might have been introduced four or five years earlier when new coins were minted but for some political reasons it was not possible. But even now, the time is opportune; the greatest difficulty in other countries in introducing the decimal system is the mechanical accounting machines which have not yet come into vogue in India so much, but their number is increasing. The more we delay, the more it will be costly for the commercial public to introduce the decimal system—not in currency of course, but in weights and measures and in mechanical counting. So, it is the decision that both in coins and in weights and measures the decimal system will be introduced and this is the first Bill. The other Bill be introduced by the Commerce and Industry Ministry, and I hope the House will be pleased to pass this Bill.

It is a great step and it will be keeping India just abreast with the progressive countries of the world. We should not lag behind in such a simple but beneficial measure which would simplify much of our accounting system, will reduce the cost of many of these commercial houses and banks and also of Government offices, and of those commercial houses and banking companies who advocated this simply because it will simplify the accounting system. I hope the House will pass this Bill.

**Mr. Chairman:** Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Coinage Act, 1906, be taken into consideration."

There are certain amendments for eliciting public opinion and also two or three amendments for reference to Select Committee. Those who have sent the motions for reference to Select Committee have not submitted the list of names. They may please send them. I think we can consider both these together with general discussion of the first reading.

The other point I would like to mention to the House is that this Bill seems to have roused quite a good deal of interest and there are a large number of people who want to participate in the discussions. So, I suggest that each speaker should try and speak for not more than ten minutes, preferably a little less, because the Business Advisory Committee whose allocation of time the House has passed, has only allotted three hours for the entire passing of the Bill. I propose, if it is acceptable to the House, that we should keep about half an hour for the third reading and about an hour maximum for the second reading, so that there will be only  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours for the first reading. If that is so, and there are already about 15 people who desire to speak, I would like the House to consider how it will be possible for the maximum number of people to participate.

**Shri Mohiuddin:** Since the number of clauses is very few, the second and third stages can be finished in half an hour and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours may be left to the first stage.

**Mr. Chairman:** If that is the consensus of opinion, I have absolutely no objection to it, and we could have it, unless Shri K. C. Sodhia wants to say something else.

**Shri K. C. Sodhia:** My submission is that Government have not cared to know what the importance of this Bill is to the vast millions of this country.....

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, order.

**Shri K. C. Sodhia:** It is a very important Bill, and as has been

pointed out by the hon. Speaker this morning.....

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, order. I think he can put all that in his speech, because his point of submission is now about the allocation of time.

**Shri K. C. Sodhia:**...the time may be extended; as pointed out by the hon. Speaker, the importance of the Bill is measured by the House and if the House proposes that some more time may be given to the Bill, the time allotted by the Business Advisory Committee may be revised.

**Mr. Chairman:** The point is that he should have raised this objection when the motion for passing the allocation of time order came up for consideration. That was the proper time when he should have raised it. But he has risen now. I am afraid it is very difficult, and it is not possible, at this stage to allocate more time for this particular Bill. But I am quite amenable to allowing this House to have the general discussion for full 2 hours or even  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours, leaving the second and third readings to take place within  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour. That is quite reasonable. But at this stage I cannot allocate some time other than that which this House has already passed.

So, I think we can start with 10 minutes for each hon. Member, and then if anybody wants to make certain points...

**Shri Bogawat (Ahmednagar South):** Within ten minutes, it would be difficult.

**Shri Kamath (Hoshangabad):** May I suggest that hon. Members who have given notice of amendments should be given priority?

**Mr. Chairman:** I do not agree with the hon. Member's submission, because there are certain other people who have not tabled amendments but who are eminent in this particular field, and I think they should get a chance.

**Shri K. C. Sodhia:** My submission is.....

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, order. There is no point for submission now. I have dealt with his point, and I think that it is not possible now to extend the time.

**Shri K. C. Sodhia:** My submission is that I want to speak on the Bill, as I have given notice of an amendment for circulating this Bill for eliciting public opinion thereon.

**Mr. Chairman:** I do not think he need plead his case at all, because he will be getting a chance. I am sure he will get up and he will be catching my eye.

**Shri S. S. More:** May I point out to you that it has been the practice of this House that whenever any Member has tabled a motion for circulation, he gets the first chance to plead his case? Supposing that motion is accepted, then the other amendments would not have any relevance.

**Shri Kamath:** That is the point.

**Mr. Chairman:** If he had heard me correctly, I think he would have understood the point. I said that I shall take up the motion for circulation, the motion for reference to a Select Committee and the motion for consideration together. So, I think there is nothing to prevent anybody else from participating also. Of course, those who have put their names down in the motion for circulation and the motion for reference to a Select Committee will be getting a chance.

**Shri S. S. More:** It is not for purpose of getting a chance that I am pointing out this factor. But it has been consistently the convention of this House, and Members have been for that very reason tabling motions for circulation, that they should get the first chance.

**Mr. Chairman:** I am going to put all the three things together. When the voting takes place, firstly I shall put the motion for circulation to vote,

then I shall take up the motion for reference to a Select Committee, and then only I shall take up the motion for consideration.

**Shri Ramachandra Reddy:** May I point out that the two motions, the one for circulation and the other for reference to a Select Committee, must be moved and spoken upon first; then only the three motions can be taken as moved.

**Mr. Chairman:** They can be moved. I do not see any reason why they cannot be moved. But certainly, you are right in saying that these two will have to be dealt with first. The voting will have to take place first on these two motions, and then only we can go on to the consideration motion.

**Shri Ramachandra Reddy:** Before they are moved, they cannot be discussed.

**Mr. Chairman:** Preferably, I shall take up the motion for circulation first; then, I shall take up the motion for reference to Select Committee.

**Shri S. S. More:** Is it your pleasure that all these motions shall be taken to have been moved and discussed?

**Mr. Chairman:** Of course, they have been taken as moved.

**Shri S. S. More:** That was not clear to us.

**Shri K. C. Sodhia:** I beg to move:—

“That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st December, 1955.”

**Shri Kamath:** I beg to move:—

“That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 28th January, 1956.”

**Shri Raghbir Saha** (Etah Dist.—North-East cum Budaun Dist.—East): I beg to move:

“That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion



thereon by the 29th February, 1955."

Mr. Chairman: Amendments moved:

"(1) That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st December, 1955."

"(2) That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 26th January, 1956."

"(3) That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 29th February 1956."

Shri Meghnad Saha (Calcutta—North-West): I wholeheartedly support the proposal which has been made by the hon. Minister of Revenue and Defence Expenditure. This is a measure of very great utility and of very great importance for this country.

The decimal system of weights and measures was introduced in Europe at the time of the French Revolution. They introduced the metric system there, and after that almost all the countries of the world have adopted the metric system. Only a very few backward and very conservative countries have not accepted the decimal system.

The metric system closely simplifies accounting, calculation and arithmetic. And its utility has been accepted in all the countries. It is only conservative England which has kept her obsolete pound, shilling and pence, and feet and inches and so on, which are a headache to every student.

Coming to India, you will be surprised to know that the metric system or the decimal system was advocated as early as 1869 by a responsible committee of the Government of India, and actually the metric system was passed into law in 1870. It was actually on the statute-book for 70 years, till it was repealed in 1939. Though the Act was passed, it

was never carried into practice, because the railway interests of Britain were opposed to it. And what was the reason? It was that we were linked with Great Britain. While the continent of Europe was having the metric system, England, however, wanted that. The railways were a great buyer of materials from England. Steam engines, coaches and everything else used to be bought from England. They had their old obsolete system, and they wanted that we should follow them so that it would not be possible for us to go out of England and place orders in the continent where there was a cheaper market. That was the reason—namely the persistent objection of the railways—why this system was not adopted. It remained therefore on the statute-book till 1939 when it was repealed formally.

Now, after we have got independence, there is no reason why we should continue to be tied to the wheel of England. It causes a great deal of inconvenience. First of all, air travel has become a very great necessity these days. And when you travel by air, you will see that the aircraft will have to carry a lot of spare parts. And if you go through most of the countries of the world, you will find that the spare parts are all according to the metric system, and are expressed in terms of the decametre, the centimetre and so on. But when you go to England you find there is a great difficulty. You have to calculate the whole thing in feet, inches and all that absurd sort of thing. I am told however, that England is also now considering to adopt the decimal system, because they find that their old system of weights and measures is very inconvenient.

So I cannot understand why there is this opposition to the introduction of this decimal system. As the hon. Minister said, if you take the old methods of arithmetic, writing out numbers, they were very cumbersome, and it is considered to have been a great contribution—in fact, the greatest mathematical contribution—17

[Shri Meghnad Saha]

India that the decimal system of notation was invented in this country between 500 and 600 A.D. And the decimal system of writing numbers was transmitted to Europe and adopted by 1300. But from the introduction of weights and measures, coinage, land measures and every other measure, it took a long time and the old superstitions could not be removed till the French Revolution came. After the French Revolution almost every country had taken to the decimal system of measures.

I think it is a very sensible measure, to which the attention of Government has been seriously drawn after seven years of independence. Shri Pitamber Pant had collected the whole matter, archives and so on, and prepared a valuable memorandum showing the history of the whole thing. He has unearthed the fact that it was Emperor Akbar who first conceived the idea that the decimal system of coinage, weights and measures should be introduced in this country. Somehow it miscarried. So this is a measure which has engaged the attention of all great administrators and liberal people throughout the ages and I think it should be accepted and there should be no opposition to it.

In India, if you take the land measures, they are so different in different parts. You have got bigas and acres; you have got all kinds of land measurements in different parts of the country. It is a headache for the surveyor to convert one measure to another kind of measure; innumerable mathematical calculations have to be carried out. All that will be completely swept off. If you take accounting, practical accounting and so on, I do not know how much headache it has caused. All that will be swept away.

**Shri Kamath:** There has been no headache so far.

**Shri Meghnad Saha:** Very much headache. I am a mathematician myself.

**Shri Kamath:** I am also a bit of a mathematician. I have been a scientist also, though not as big as you are.

**Shri Meghnad Saha:** If you introduce this system throughout the whole of India, it will unify the country to an extent which you do not think of at the present time. So this is a very very beneficial measure. We should welcome it with all the emphasis which it needs and it ought to be passed with acclamation by this House.

**Shri K. C. Sodhia:** I have just heard the speech of the hon. Minister and then of the learned doctor. Well, this country is not inhabited by a Minister or a learned doctor. It consists of 36 crores of people, and it is one of the duties of this Government—the paramount duty of this Government—to see whether a measure which they are going to introduce in this House is conducive to the welfare of those millions entrusted to their charge.

I will not speak about the merits or demerits of the decimal system. The decimal system is existing. It is very scientific; it always reduces the time and the difficulty of calculation. Well, all these things are known to us. But because India was the inventor of the decimal system, therefore, there is no reason why without considering the convenience of the vast millions of this country we should have recourse to that system. We should not adopt that system blindfolded, simply because some of the scientists and some of the experts of the I.S.I. advise this Government to do that sort of thing. My submission is that our millions do not know about 100 rupee notes, 10 rupee notes or even 5 rupee notes. They deal with one rupee notes and coins of the denomination of 8 annas, 4 annas and so on. Now, we have to look to what they think convenient and to what loss they are likely to be put by the introduction of this system. I know that the Government want to change the face of this country with great speed. But they ought to remember that they have to

take all these millions with them. If they do not take these millions with them, they will be left far away from the populace and that will be the end of their government. Therefore, my submission to them is that at this time when we are engaged in a mighty endeavour of raising the income of our country, having plans after plans—about which I, personally, entertain great doubts—at this juncture it is no use playing with things like that. They say they will be spending crores, one crore of rupees a year for 15 years over this measure. They think that 15 crores of rupees is nothing to them. It is the bane of the chairs of the Government that has produced this mentality on them. I say wasting even one pie, one hard-earned pie, of the poor of this country is a sin, a sin which will bring them to the level of those *koris* who are standing at the gate of Jagannath. With all the emphasis, I tell them that they ought to think of the change, the mighty change, they are going to introduce. Simply because they have introduced a Bill of one clause, they say: 'well, it is a very simple Bill; it ought to be passed within three hours.' Therefore, they are going to put a big chain round the neck of the poor of this country, when it is not advisable to do so at all. I say, let us look to the times, and when a propitious time comes, when we are through so many problems, then you will introduce it. First, you ought to know what is the opinion of the country about it. Any government which want to govern properly ought to know what their measures are likely to do the general public of the country. Now, has this measure been brought before the public? Have any of our merchants or their associations—there are so many of them, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and so many federations and chambers of commerce in all the States—been consulted? The Minister was pleased to say that they were consulted some eight years back. Well, what is the use of saying that? Has their advice been taken at this time? Even if

they had accepted your Bill, it is doubtful, unless you place in the hands of the Members the opinions of the business community and of the State Governments. My submission to the House is that they ought not to accept this Bill. First, this Bill ought to go to the public; their opinion ought to be invited and it ought to be consulted; it ought to be placed in the hands of Members of this House. Then we may consider the Bill on its merits; we may pass it or we may not pass it—that is another matter.

I say in all humility that this is not a measure which is very simple. It will revolutionise the condition of the people of this country and they will be cursing us if we do not pay proper attention to this measure, as to whether it ought to be introduced now or it can wait for some time. This is a point on which I invite the attention of the House. They should take it very seriously. It is not a matter of 500 Members here; we are educated people. The danger is that they have the two-anna piece. They will go to the merchants. They ought to know what is the proper exchange for that. One of our Members was saying: What will be the exchange for one anna? What will be the actual exchange in new coins for two pice? Even hon. Members of this House cannot readily calculate and so what can you think of the position of the illiterate villager? People at this time are afraid of the huge difficulties that is likely to come out of the haste at which we are passing legislation; they do not know what legislation we are going to put further. They are mightily afraid of us, mightily angry with us. We ought not to take it that because certain Members have been returned on the Congress ticket, the people are liking this Government. I say that the people are looking at us from the way in which they are being treated. I tell this House and the Government very seriously that they ought to know what the opinion of the people on this measure is.

**Shri Kamath:** I am afraid this will be one of those measures, of which

[Shri Kamath]

4 P.M.

it will be said that we enacted in haste and repented at leisure. The hon. Minister has given us a resume of the various developments which took place in this country since the second century A.D.

Shri S. S. More: B. C.

Shri Kamath: He has now categorically stated that public opinion is behind this measure. By that public opinion is apparently meant the opinion, according to his own words and showing, of bankers, commercial organisations and various State Governments. It appears as if the Government does not think very much of the millions of the ordinary people, the common people in the villages and in the smaller towns. They think of them only when the vote-catching season arrives, and not on other occasions. Here, there has been absolutely no publicity about this proposed measure in the rural and semi-urban areas, and if the Minister's statement is to be taken at its face value, this measure is intended, at any rate, for the urban population. He did not have the rural population in mind at all. I myself had several occasions recently to mention this proposed Bill to the rural population in my own constituency in Madhya Pradesh, and they were surprised, nay, they were also taken aback at the proposed measure the Government had in view. They were wondering why this measure should get this importance, urgency and priority. I told them that this Government has a very fine sense of inverted priorities and because of that sense of inverted priorities this measure is coming before the Parliament long before, and earlier than many other measures, economic and otherwise. Here I may refer to the memorandum of Pitambar Pant (Planning Commission). In the Assembly of 1946, the Congress Party also opposed, or at least did not welcome, this measure. Shri Mohanlal Saksena, speak-

ing on behalf of the Congress Party, said on this Bill:

"I may say that so far as we are concerned, we are not opposed to the introduction of the decimal system coinage as well as for weights and measures, but instead of proceeding with these decimal measures piecemeal, we would like to have one comprehensive Bill".

"Instead of the difficulties decreasing, they will on the other hand increase." This was the Congress attitude in 1946 and they were then in the opposition, before the Interim Government was formed. Now, they are in power, and now that difficulties of partition and post-war difficulties have come to an end—I don't admit that—the Government have thought the present time good enough for them to proceed with decimal coinage. Some time back in 1946—I am sorry I could not get hold of the authority, but I remember to have read it—Mahatma Gandhi also wrote in his weekly *Harijan* saying that this was not a necessary measure and would not promote the welfare of the people and the Government should therefore withdraw it. He indicated his opposition to the measure in those terms and I am sure those colleagues of mine here who are more conversant with Gandhiji's writings will bear me out in this particular matter.

Coming to the other point, public opinion, as I have already indicated, is not behind this measure at present, because public opinion has been ignored so far as the tabling of this measure in Parliament is concerned. The measure was completely forgotten in the First Five Year Plan. There was a huge publicity machinery and they spent lakhs and lakhs—even a crore of rupees for publicity—but nowhere and at no time has the publicity machinery of the Five Year Plan put forward this proposal before the public of India, rural or urban, and that is a very serious charge which, I hope, the Minister will answer. If they wanted to bring this measure before Parliament, why was the

machinery of the First Five Year Plan silent as regards this measure? Why did they not inform the people by even one-page or two-page pamphlets or leaflets distributed in thousands and millions in the rural and urban areas? That was not done at all. I, therefore, suggest that this measure as it is—though it may be all right a few years hence,—and this memorandum itself says that it needs to be spread over a couple of years before it can be finally implemented—should be withdrawn and that two years' publicity should be given before it is taken up by Parliament; and people should be apprised of the implications and complications of the measure. The first result of the measure, if passed, would be complete dislocation, confusion and upset in the rural areas. Millions of our people have not even heard of the word "cent". The word 'cent' itself is foreign. When we are adopting Hindi here, why should we go back and import such a foreign word. Originally the word came from French; later on America adopted it. As a matter of fact, the English word 'rupee' came from the Hindi word 'rupya'. Now when we are going to adopt Hindi in another ten years' time, why should we take in word like 'cent'? Government may instead change it into *sathakam* or *satham*. In Travancore-Cochin there was a currency called *chakram*. We may call it *chakram*; we have adopted the *chakram* in our national flag and the *chakram* may replace 'cent'. But that is not the main point.

**Shri V. G. Deshpande:** *Chakram* is the real description.

**Shri Kamath:** The Government, in keeping with its capitalistic traditions all these years has consulted only the bankers, the chambers of commerce, and their own satellite Governments—I do not want to use that word—or the State Governments. To my mind that is not at all adequate. No rural organisations, no co-operative societies, no *kisan* organisations, no trade unions have been consulted about this matter at all. They do not

even know that this measure is going to come up before Parliament and if the Government is really democratic—which I am afraid it is not—I suggest that the Bill be withdrawn at present. If it cannot be withdrawn, I suggest that it may be circulated for public opinion thereon by the 26th of January 1956. That is an important date for us, and I hope by that time people will express their view against this Bill because there are other measures that must get priority—economic measures, educational measures, industrial measures. Our industry, our economy and our education can go on with rupees, annas and pies; it will not suffer if this measure is not passed. The economy of Britain has been built for centuries upon pounds, shillings and pence and not upon decimal coinage; yet it has shown much resiliency. The decimal coinage will not necessarily promote unity in our country or economic prosperity or economic peace. If that is the first consideration of the Government, I do not see the reason why this measure should be proceeded with any further at all. I would appeal to the House to support my motion. If they are agreeable to have it withdrawn completely, I will be happy, but if they are not agreeable to do so, I would appeal to the House to support my amendment that this may be circulated for eliciting public opinion—real public opinion and not some quasi-,pseudo,—public opinion which, the Government thinks, is public opinion, the opinion of the chambers of commerce, bankers, capitalists, big industrialists and the satellite Governments in the States. That is public opinion according to the present Government and they forget completely the opinion of the millions of *kisans* from whom they get the votes. They remember them, as I said, when the vote-catching time arrives; after that they are completely forgotten, and this welfare State which is supposed to work for the welfare of millions of *kisans*, who live in the villages ignores completely their opinion. The Government that is based on democracy, working for

[Shri Kamath]

the socialistic pattern of society—and what not—for the Avadi brand of socialism, the Avadi slogan, Avadi hoax and Avadi sham, has ignored the millions of people so far as this measure is concerned. I, therefore, move my amendment and commend it for acceptance of this House.

Shri Gadgil: I have no objection so far as the introduction of the system of decimal coinage is concerned. What I would suggest is that one must definitely know what the lowest denomination coin is in this system and what the first cumulative coin is. In other words, if the rupee is to be divided into hundred cents, then which is the cumulative coin? One cent is the lowest denomination coin. But what is the lowest cumulative coin? Is it one anna, two annas or four annas or eight annas? You must precisely tell us which is the first cumulative coin because on that depends very much the facility in exchange and ease in transactions.

In rural areas a number of transactions are done even in smaller coins. If you have no intermediary between the cent and the rupee, then we have to carry 50 cents or hundred cents. Therefore, let us have a complete picture and let us know whether it is the one anna which will be the first cumulative coin and whether below that only the cent—or you can preferably call it a pie, or *pie* or a *satam*—will be the next lowest coin. Whatever it is, then it will be readily accepted by the general mass of people.

What I suggest is, if you are going in for the decimal system, let it be methodical. Whatever is your lowest denomination,—you may call it pie, *pie* or *satam*—then ten of that should be one anna and ten such annas should be one rupee so that it will be perfectly logical and understood by everybody.

The only difficulty in this would be that till the old coins are withdrawn, the money-changers will earn a good lot because ignorance of the mass

has been always the capital of the shrewder people in this country much more than any other thing. I am not talking about the big banker like my friend here but the petty money-lenders in the villages. They will earn much. What I therefore suggest is that there should be no half rupee, this that or the other. There should be one lowest cumulative coin—call it by whatever name you like. Then, there will be ten of that coin which will go to make one rupee. Then, there will be great ease and facility in changing and people will understand much more quickly. Otherwise, for three or four years, annas will be there, cents will be there, pies will be there, four annas will be there and there will be greater confusion than what is sought to be avoided for the benefit of a few bankers, accountants of the Government of India etc.

The present system is not bad. We understand that four pice make an anna and sixteen annas a rupee. With this there is no difficulty at all. But assuming there is difficulty and we want to be progressive—if in nothing else, at least in this—then let there be some method. I, therefore, very respectfully suggest to the Member in charge to have complete decimal system—100 *satams* or cents one rupee. Ten *satams* will make an anna and ten annas a rupee. That is what I would propose by way of a concrete suggestion.

Shri Tulsidas (Mehsana West): I would like to make a few observations on this important measure. I consider this measure as very revolutionary in its character. It changes the whole basis of our coinage and our fiscal or monetary system for the whole country. The implications of this will, to my mind, be quite deep because for generations we have been used to a particular type of currency and it will be difficult to change over to this very drastic change. The inherent difficulties to my mind will be the economic difficulties of mak-

ing the public understand how to convert the old coins into new ones, secondly the psychological difficulties in changing the mind of the public to the new ways of calculations, thirdly the absence of a guarantee that the farmers and the illiterate people will not be cheated by the others, and fourthly the repetition of the same difficulty experienced with foreign countries in the adoption of the decimal methods.

I would like to bring to the notice of this House that although we had adopted a particular system in our monetary unit, there are also different countries in the world adhering to the old or conservative type of monetary units. There have also been countries who have tried to change over to the metric system, but they have done it with the least possible disturbance in the country. In this country literacy is at the lowest level. Even in the most advanced countries it has taken quite a long time before they changed over to the entire decimalisation. Even in America today you cannot call it a completely metric system because there, excepting coinage, other system functions. The countries which have adopted the metric system fully are: Brazil, Japan, Philippines, Thailand and U.S.S.R. There are still countries in the world which are more important and with which our country does much trade. They are still considered non-metric countries—Australia, India, Burma, Pakistan, United Kingdom and the United States of America. I would like to point out that our trade with the non-metric countries is 67 per cent. and our trade with the metric countries is 33 per cent. Now, I do not know how far repercussions will take place when trade with these different countries will have to be carried through. We shall have to consider that aspect also besides the most important thing that if at all metric system is to be accepted it should be in the weights and measures because there, in this country, chaotic conditions exist.

In different parts of the country different types of weights and measures exist and it is in that sphere that we should have first made our change-over instead of going on with this coinage. The question of coinage should have come later on. I feel that the coinage should have been changed after changing the weights and measures and seeing how difficulties have arisen. Therefore, we should wait till we see these difficulties, find out how they could be overcome and change the coinage later on.

I know metric system is a very scientific and proper system. But, we have yet to educate our people. We have yet to bring literacy in this country and unless and until we bring that I do not know how far we will be able to make the people understand the new coins and the new method of monetary units.

The hon. Member here pointed out that as a mathematician he thought that for accounting this is not very difficult and that the other system is much more difficult. I would like to tell him that in accounting we have adopted a particular way by which our system has functioned perfectly well and in our mathematics we have framed a certain amount of idioms by which we have worked our system so well that it does not take much time for an accountant to calculate the interest or anything of that sort on the basis of non-metric system. It is not much difficult for those who are accountants to calculate or to put non-metric system into proper use for accounting. Therefore, I do not see any reason why those people who are now used to this system of accounting will have to change to metric system. It will be difficult for them to adopt this system. However, as it has been pointed out, this being a more scientific and proper method we should adopt this method. I am not saying that we should not adopt this system. If you feel that it is really a good system, then adopt it, but we must take some time before doing so.



[Shri Tulsidas]

I would rather urge upon the hon. Minister to consider whether weights and measures are much more important, where chaotic conditions exist in this country, and that should be taken in hand first. After gaining the experience of those changes the coinage should come later on. That is how I feel.

Then there is another thing. If at all the metric system is to be accepted I do not think that cents should be accepted at all. I agree with my hon. friend Shri Gadgil that it should be pias and annas—I would say, 100 pias or ten annas a rupee. That would be much more suitable to our country. We all understand annas and pias and we should not change that at all. That would lessen difficulties which would otherwise be much more.

श्रीधर ठाकुर दास भर्गव : जनाब चंजरमैन साहब, अभी हमारे कामध साहब ने जब यह फरमाया कि कांग्रेस पार्टी ने सन् ४६ में इस नयी तबचीब को मसख्त किया था, तो मैं यह सुन कर बहुत हैरान रह गया। फिर बाकया मुझे याद है कि जब हाउस में यह तबचीब आयी थी तो कांग्रेस पार्टी की तरफ से अपोजीशन नहीं था, बल्कि कांग्रेस पार्टी के कई मंत्री साहबान ससुसन् मुझे नाम याद हैं, श्री सत्यप्रिय जी का, जो कांग्रेस के मंत्री थे उन्होंने इसको बहुत अच्छा बतलाया था और इसकी बड़ी तारीफ की और इसको पसन्द किया। अभी जो कामध साहब ने पढ़ कर सुनाया कि श्री मोहनलाल सक्सेना ने यह फरमाया था कि यह दोनों चीजें साथ आनी चाहियें, यानी बट और मंत्रस और पैसा एक साथ आने चाहियें, लेकिन मैं उनको बतलाना चाहता हूँ कि उन्होंने यह कभी नहीं कहा कि हम इस को अपोज करतें हैं....

Shri Kamath: 'But' है न ?

Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava: But we are not opposed to it. We want that it may come simultaneously, where is the opposition?

आज भी यही चीज सामने आ रही हैं। तुलसीदास किताबन्द जी की स्पीच सुनी। इस में कोई शक नहीं है कि जब भी कोई नई चीज आयेगी, जब भी आप एसी किसी चीज को तबदील करेंगे, तो कुछ न कुछ दिक्कत साइकालॉजिकली होगी। सवाल यह नहीं है कि इसमें दिक्कत होगी या नहीं होगी। सवाल यह है कि यह तबचीब दुरुस्त है या नहीं। उनके कहने के मुताबिक दिक्कत दो वर्ष में खत्म हो जायेगी। यह दिक्कत तो बढ़ाकर करनी होगी अगर आपको यह चेंब लाना है, जाहिर है कि कोई चेंब बगैरे दिक्कत के नहीं होता है। अभी हमारे दोस्त श्री तुलसीदास किताबन्द जो इतने तर्जुबकार हैं, बतलाया कि मॉट्रिक सिस्टम बहुत अच्छा है। इनके अलावा श्री मेघनाद साहा और सांधिया साहब ने बतलाया कि यह सिस्टम निहायत अच्छा है। यह बड़ी खुशी और फल की बात है कि इतने उम्दा सिस्टम की तरफ अपनी पुरानी सभ्यता की तरफ हम आज वापस जा रहे हैं, यह तो सन् ४७ के बाद सन् ४८ में होना चाहिये था ताकि लोगों को महसूस होता और वह समझते कि अंग्रेजों का राज्य उस देश पर से समाप्त हुआ और सिक्कों पर असाक चक्र लगा हुआ जाता और उसके नीचे हिन्दी में खुदा हुआ होता "हिन्दुस्तान की सरकार", अगर उस वक्त एसा हो जाता तो लोगों पर इसका एक साइकालॉजिकल एफेक्ट पड़ता कि हां बाकई अंग्रेजों के राज्य का हमारे देश से खारजा होगया और हम खुद मुक्तार होगये। यह चीज उस वक्त नहीं आ सकी, खैर, आज हम इसे करने जा रहे हैं, आज भी दर नहीं है। प्राचीन भारतीय सिक्कों की बदौलत ही हमें आज पुरानी हिस्ट्रियां मालूम होती हैं और सिक्कों के ही बल पर मुहंजदारो सभ्यता का पता लगता है और पता चलता है कि उस समय भारत की क्या अवस्था थी। उन सिक्कों के ही आधार पर हमें सात हजार वर्ष अपनी पुरानी सभ्यता का पता लगता है और मालूम होता है कि उस वक्त में हमारे देश और सनाब की क्या

अवस्था थी। आज का दिन बड़ा मुबारक दिन है कि हम अपने सिक्के को नेशनलाइज करने जा रहे हैं और नेशनलाइज एक ही संस में नहीं कि हम उसके अन्दर क्वीन की तस्वीर नहीं रखना चाहते, या गवर्नमेंट आफ इंडिया अंग्रेजी अक्षरों में लिखा हुआ नहीं रखना चाहते, वरन् हम अशांति चक्र को फिर अपनी जगह पर कायम रखना चाहते हैं, हम उस सिस्टम को फिर कायम करना चाहते हैं जो हिन्दुस्तान का सिस्टम है और जिस देश के अन्दर सबसे पहले डीसिमल सिस्टम मालूम हुआ और जैसे कि मैं कई दफा यह कह चुका हूँ कि दुनिया के अन्दर हमारा सिर ऊंचा है कि डीसिमल सिस्टम हमने कायम किया और मॅथमीटक्स में दुनिया आज तक उतनी तरक्की नहीं कर सकी जितनी हमारे पूर्वजों ने की थी। मैं नहीं समझता कि डीसिमल सिस्टम को अपने काम में लाने में हमें क्या दिक्कतवाहता हो सकती है। श्री के० सी० सांधिया की तकरीर को सुनकर तो मुझे हैरानी हो गयी क्योंकि उन्होंने कहा कि डीसिमल सिस्टम तो जरूर हमारा है, लेकिन यह क्या बजह है कि हम अपने सिस्टम को एंडाट कर लें। मैं अदब से अर्ज करूंगा कि इसका सारा देश में साइकोलॉजिकल एफेक्ट होगा और चीज यह सिस्टम हमारा है, सारा देश इसको मुबारकवाद करेगा और करेगा कि ठीक किया। अब इस के सम्बन्ध में जो एक प्रीक्टिकल दिक्कत है, उसको मैं जरूर चाहता हूँ कि वह किसी तरह से हल हो जाये। मैं चाहता हूँ कि इसका नाम शतांश न रक्खा जाये और न ही इस का नाम सतम्बु रक्खा जाये, वरना इसको लोग शौतान करेंगे। मैं चाहता हूँ कि इस का नाम पैंसा रक्खा जाये। मैंने कारमीर में दस्ता है, वहां पर दूर दूर से गांव के अन्दर बच्चें आते हैं और पैंसा, पैंसा मांगते हैं। आज हिन्दुस्तान में कारमीर से कन्या-कुमारी तक यह पैंसे का लफ्ज इमारत जिस्म के अन्दर और इमारत रंग रंशों के अन्दर अच्छी तरह से पंक्च हो चुका है और मैं

यकीन के साथ कह सकता हूँ कि आज इस मुल्क के अन्दर कोई शस्स ऐसा आपको नहीं मिलेगा जो लफ्ज पैंसे से नावाकिक हो। आज लोग लफ्ज पैंसे को नेशनल एफेक्शन से देखते हैं। इस वास्ते मैं चाहता हूँ कि आप इसका नाम पैंसा रखें ताकि उसके अन्दर कोई तबदीली नहीं होगी। दिक्कत यह हो सकती है कि आज जो हम बिल पास कर रहे हैं, उसकी दफा २ में यह दर्ज है कि यह एक्ट तब फोर्स में आयेगा जब सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट उसके लिये गजट में डेट मुकर्र करेगी और इसके मुताबिक नया सिक्का लीगल टैंडर नहीं बनता, अलबत्ता यह पैंसा लीगल टैंडर है जो आज मौजूद है। नया सिक्का जो बनेगा वह तो गवर्नमेंट जब उसके रायज होने की तारीख मुकर्र करेगी, तब से वह लीगल टैंडर बनेगा। इसी वास्ते हमारे डिप्टी स्पीकर साहब ने रूतिलग दी कि इसके बिल के जरिये हम कुछ नई, चीज नहीं बना रहे हैं। इसके अन्दर हम एक डेट मुकर्र कर रहे हैं कि जिस तारीख से यह लीगल टैंडर हो जायेगी जो बिलकुल सही चीज है।

मैं अर्ज करना चाहता हूँ कि अगर आज हम यह समझें कि तीन वर्ष के बाद यह चीज रायज होगी तो क्या नतीजा होगा, अगर यह दोनों सिक्के साथ चलते रहे या पुराना पैंसा भी चलता रहे और नया पैंसा भी चलता रहे, हमारी इकन्नी भी चलती रहे, दुअन्नी, चवन्नी भी चलती रहे और साथ ही नई इकन्नी, दुअन्नी और चवन्नी भी चलती रही तो गड़बड़ी होगी। जैसा गाइगल साहब ने कहा, हमारे तुलसी दास क्लिचन्द साहब ने फरमाया, इन दोनों सुरतों में लोगों को एक आने में ५ पैंसे का और दुअन्नी में १० पैंसे का मुगालता हो जायेगा। इस में बिल्कुल शक नहीं है। अगर गांव वाले २ आ० दूंगे तो उन को ८ पैंसे की ही चीज मिलेगी, १० पैंसे की नहीं मिलेगी। इस वास्ते मैं तजवीज करता हूँ कि गवर्नमेंट आफ इंडिया एक दिन मुकर्र करे, जो डार्ड, तीन स्यास बाद हो।

[पंडित ठाकुर दास भार्गव]

उस से पहले सब क्यायन्स बनी रहे। इस डाई, तीन साल के अन्दर गवर्नमेंट लोगों को अह्लियार दै कि अगर वह चाहें तो अपने पुराने क्यायन्स को नये क्यायन्स से तब्दील कर लें, ताकि जिन के पास ६४ पैसे का रुपया है उन को ६४/१०० का नुक्सान न हो जायै।

श्री कामत : नुकसान होगा ही।

पंडित ठाकुर दास भार्गव : नहीं नुकसान नहीं होगा चाहिये। इस तरह से हर एक आदमी को दिक्कत होने का जो खतरा है, वह नहीं होगा और वह अपने पैसे, दुबन्नी, धबन्नी की पूरी कीमत सरकार से एक्स्चेंज में ले लेगा। नये एक्स्चेंज में लेने के बाद भी अगर दोनों सिक्के चलते रहे तो या तो आप यह करै कि दो मेटल्स के क्यायन्स बनायें या अगर एक कापर का पैसा हो तो दूसरा किस का पैसा हो। ऐसा करने से दिक्कत कम हो जायेगी। यह कहना कि यहां के लोग बेवकूफ हैं, दिक्कतान्सी हैं, इस को समझ नहीं सकेंगे, यह बिल्कुल गलत है। कुछ अर्सा हुआ पंजाब हाई कोर्ट में एक मुकदमे के सिलसिले में जब वकील ने कहा कि यहां के लोग पुराने जमाने के आदमी हैं, चीजों को समझते नहीं हैं, तो अपीलत ने कहा कि यह क्या कहते गलत है। आज यहां के गांव के रहने वाले बड़े होशियार हैं, अपने नुकसान और फायदे को समझते हैं। अगर आज एक कानून को पास किया जायै तो दो महीने के अन्दर आप दलैंगे कि सारं हिन्दुस्तान में डिडोरा पिट जायेगा। मुझे याद है, सन् १९०० की बात है, जब मैं कलकत्ते में पढ़ता था तो एक चीज हुई। जब नया पैसा चला था तो एक अफवाह फैल गई कि जो नया पैसा सरकार ने बनाया है उस के अन्दर सोना है। नतीजा यह हुआ कि एक एक पैसा डाई डाई आने और तीन तीन आने में पिका। प्रीगिडन्सी कालेज में इस का तजुर्बा किया गया कि आधा दस पैसे के अन्दर सोना है या नहीं। क्या

उस वकत की सरकार इतनी बेवकूफ थी कि कापर का पैसा दै कर उस में सोना रख देती। लेकिन सारं हिन्दुस्तान के अन्दर यह डिक्कत हुआ और बच्चे बच्चे ने अपने पैसे बाजार में ले जा कर उस की कीमत बसूल करनी शुरू कर दी। मैं अर्ज करना चाहता हूँ कि यह खयाल गलत है कि हम को इस के समझने में इतना अर्सा लगेगा या जमींदारों और मजदूरों का नुकसान होगा। आप एक पुराने पैसे के एक्ज दो नये पैसे दाने शुरू कर दै तो बिजली की तरह यह बात फैल जायेगी कि नया पैसा बन गया है। वॉर सारं पुराने पैसे फॉरेन बापिस आ जायेंगे। इस वास्ते मंत्री गिहायत अदब से अर्ज है कि आप इन सिक्कों को दो, डाई साल बाद रायज करै और लोगों को खुली छूट हो कि वह अपनी चीजों को एक्स्चेंज कर लें, या उन्हें इस के लिये ६ महीने का टाइम दै जिस में वह लोग ऐसा कर लें। सिर्फ गवाल यह रह जाता है कि जब लोग अपने सिक्कों को चेंज कर लेंगे तो वह उन को अपनी जेब में नहीं रखलेंगे, वह उन को इस्तेमाल करना चाहेंगे। इस में थोड़ा सा कन्फ्यूजन हो सकता है, लेकिन अगर आप सिक्का जरा दूसरं किस्म का छार्ट, अगर यह पैसा कापर का है तो दूसरा नया पैसा किसी और दूसरं रंग का हो, किसी दूसरं मेटल का हो, तो इस से बहुत ज्यादा कन्फ्यूजन नहीं होगा। लोग जानेंगे कि एक तरह के पैसे रुपय में ६४ मिलते हैं और दूसरी तरह के १०० मिलते हैं। लेकिन अगर आप को कन्फ्यूजन का डर है तो आप यह कीजिये कि नये सिक्के को लीगल टेंडर कर दै और उन को एक या दो वर्ष बाद रायज करै। दोनों को साथ न चलाइये। दूसरी तबजीब यह है कि दोनों सिक्के साथ चलते रहे तो ऐसा कर दै कि दोनों इन्टरचेंजेबल न हो सकें। इस की तरकीब यह है कि नये सिक्के का रंग और मेटल ऐसा बना दै जिस से लोगों को साफ मालूम हो जायै। या इन

दोनों पैसों की एकसचेंब बल्क्य मुकरर कर दें तां कोई दिक्कत नहीं रहेगी।

जहां तक इस सिस्टम का सवाल है, इस कं अन्दर दरहीर्गज नहीं करनी चाहिये। यह बहुत सही चीज है। मैं एक लायक दोस्त ने फरमाया कि हमारा टूंड विलायत से ज्यादा है, काटिनेन्टल कन्द्रीज से कम है, इस कं फिगर्स भी दिये। लेकिन मुझे मंत्र दोस्त माफ करूं अगर मैं उन की तबज्जह इस तरफ दिलाउं कि हमारा टूंड का टून्ड बिल्कुल दूसरा होता जा रहा है। हमारा गूट बिट्टन से जां पहले ५० परसेन्ट के करीब टूंड था, अब वह उतना नहीं रहा, आज वह दूसरी तरफ चल रहा है। आज ट्टिनियां की जितनी प्राग्गीसब कन्द्रीज है उन कं साथ हमारा ताल्लुकात बढ़ रहे हैं। आज हम कल के साथ बंधे नहीं रहना चाहते। इस वास्ते मैं अर्ज करना चाहता हूं कि किसी भी नुक्ते खयाल से यह जां रिफार्म हम आज करने जा रहे हैं वह अब्बल दर्जे का रिफार्म है, साइकालीजकल रिफार्म है। अपने सिक्कों के अन्दर अब जां हम तस्वीर ईलिंगे वह हम को इन्स्पेरेशन देंगी कि आज हिन्दुस्तान के अन्दर अंगरंज की हकूमत नहीं है, आज हमारा सिक्कों पर क्वीन विक्टोरिया की तस्वीर नहीं है। मैं बहुत अदब से अर्ज करता हूं कि मैं इस बिल कां सर्पाट करता हूं और मैं इस में कोई दिक्कत नहीं देखता। जब इस के अन्दर यह चीज मौजूद है कि हम लांग एक तारीख मुकरर कर सकते हैं जिस तारीख से हम नये सिक्के को लीगल टैन्डर बना देंगे। आज आग इस कां लीगल टैन्डर नहीं बनाते, इस का भी आप को अह्वार है।

[Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair.]

एक सजेरचन यह आया कि जिस तरह के बेट्स बगैरह हैं, उन बेट्स बगैरह को भी साथ ही ठीक कर दिया जाय।

मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि जहां तक लैंड का ताल्लुक है, आज भी हिन्दुस्तान के बड़े हिस्से में

२० बिस्वांसी का एक बिस्वा होता है और २० पिय्या का एक बीघा होता है। हिन्दुस्तान के बड़े हिस्से में यह लैंड रिफार्म हो चुका है और वह बड़ी आसानी से इस मीट्रिक सिस्टम में फिट इन हो सकता है। २० भी तो १०० का पांचवां हिस्सा ही है, इस में कोई दिक्कत नहीं होगी।

**Shri V. G. Deshpande:** It is not prevalent anywhere.

**Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** It is prevalent in the whole of Punjab and in U.P. also.

**Shri V. G. Deshpande:** That makes only one-tenth.

**Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** It does not mean one-tenth; it means much more. खैर, यह दूसरी चीज है। आखिर आप इस बिल में यह चीज मानते हैं कि आप के यहां वह मीट्रिक सिस्टम चलें। एक बड़े हिस्से में यह राज्य है, आप ने भी मान लिया है कि इस को जल्दी से जल्दी एंटाट करना चाहिये।

इस वास्ते मैं ने दो बातें अर्ज की हैं। एक तां यह कि मैं चाहता हूं कि जां सेंट का नाम है उस को पैसा ही रखना चाहिये, उस का नाम सेंट बगैरह न रक्खा जाय और न उस का नाम शतांश ही रक्खा जाय, जिस में लांगों को नाम की दिक्कत न पड़े। इस का नाम पैसा ही रक्खा जाय और जैसा जनाब वाला ने फरमाया है, उस को दो साल तक लीगल टैन्डर न बनाया जाय, इतने असें के बाद ही इस को लीगल टैन्डर बनाया जाय, जिस में लांगों को कन्फ्यूजन न हो और इस को आसानी से एंटाट कर लिया जाय। लेकिन यह खयाल दिता से निकाल दिया जाना चाहिये कि यहां के लांग बंधकफ हैं और काफी असें तक उन को तकलीफ होगी। ऐसा होने का कोई चांस नहीं है।

**Shri Ramachandra Reddi:** I join those who have opposed this measure. Even in the Statement of Objects and Reasons that has been appended to this Bill, sufficient opportunities have not been given to the Members to know why the change is so very urgent and why this change is necessary and in what way the change is going to be effected and whether it is going to be immediately taken up or whether time will be taken to implement it and how much money will be spent. We have not also been told about the financial commitments that the passing of this Bill will entail and to what extent the exchequer will be touched to implement this Coinage Act.

It has been pointed out by several hon. Members that it is going to affect mainly the rural population. It is absolutely true that confusion will certainly prevail in the rural area and the money-changers or dealers would take that opportunity of harming the poor and innocent people. It has, therefore, to be noticed very seriously that a lot of propaganda is to be done before this Bill is passed into an Act. Even from now on, I think in all schools it must be made possible to teach the changed system and after some experience in the calculation of this system is gained, then probably it will be possible to put the scheme effectively into practice without creating any confusion.

**Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Will two years be sufficient for propaganda?

**Shri Ramachandra Reddi:** It might be sufficient, or probably three years.

**Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Then this Bill is all right.

**Shri Ramachandra Reddi:** I do not think they will introduce it within three years

Literacy in this country is at a very low standard and it takes a very long time to achieve the objective of having cent per cent literacy. We have not made any attempts to improve literacy in this country in the way it ought to be done, and in the meanwhile we are going to introduce confusion where it is not absolutely necessary.

It has been pointed out by my friend Shri Tulsidas how certain countries which are having the largest trade and industrial development in the world are still maintaining their old system and have not adopted the metric system. All the advanced countries like the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Pakistan, Burma and Australia are still having the old system and they have not changed over to the metric system. In the memorandum that has been placed before us, it has been clearly stated that it will take a very long time to establish the metric system in this country. They say that about 15 to 20 years may be the period in which the metric system may become popularised; and the expenditure involved is Rs. 1 crore per year during the transition period of nearly ten years. This should be taken with very serious consideration because it involves not only confusion but also a lot of expenditure. It might be possible for the big industries to consume this new system more easily, because they deal with thousands of rupees and not in rupees, annas, pies. Annas and pies are used mainly in the rural areas and people in those areas will have to be thoroughly educated in this respect. If this system is so good, I fail to see why the advanced countries like the United Kingdom and the United States have not so far adopted this system.

It has also been pointed out that there should be a change in the system of weights and measures. But that has been abandoned for the present and only coinage has been

taken into consideration. I would suggest to the Government that they should first try to make the system of weights and measures uniform before they take up the coinage system. The whole of India has a uniform coinage system now and it has not so far caused us any difficulty in the matter of calculations. But in regard to weights and measures, every province and part of a State has got its own peculiar system and it is much better that uniformity is secured and maintained with regard to weights and measures before taking up this metric system. There is already uniformity in the monetary system; only with regard to weights and measures we have to secure and maintain uniformity. With these words I oppose this Bill; and if possible, I would suggest—rather support—the proposition that the Bill be circulated for public opinion before it is once again brought into this House.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I was surprised—and greatly surprised—at the assertion of a gentleman like Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava when he said that no Congressman opposed this measure in 1946. I was simply amazed, when during question hour in the last session I had pointed out to the hon. Deputy Minister that this measure was strongly opposed by Mahatma Gandhi and the Deputy Minister denied it. I will now read out what Gandhiji himself had written in *The Harijan* dated 24th March, 1946. There could not be a greater Congressman than Mahatma Gandhi; nobody can dare to say that. I do not want to take up much of the time of the House by reading the whole thing; I would read out some extracts. The last sentence is very important:

“It is to be hoped that the Central Legislative Assembly will throw out this Bill, if on reconsideration, the Government do not withdraw it.”

Shri Kishorlal Mashruwala wrote a strong article in *Harijanbandhu* on

this point as to why it should not come into force. We have evolved certain mathematical formulae—my friend Mr. Tulsidas called them idioms—by which the ordinary small trader, the man in the street, the hawker, calculates at what rate he is selling.

इतने रुपये का एक मन ताँ एक रुपये का कितना होगा ।

एक रुपये का इतने सेर ताँ एक आन का कितना होगा ।

इतने रुपये के इतने सेर, ताँ एक आन का कितना होगा ।

इतने रुपये गज ताँ एक आन का कितना होगा ।

These are our methods of calculation. One seer is divided into 16 *chhataks*, one rupee is divided into 16 annas and one yard is divided into 16 *girahs*. That is why our mathematical calculations have been so easy. It is not only on this point that I oppose this Bill. We have learnt in our childhood certain things and we cannot forget them. We have been repeating for a number of years:

इनकिलाब जिदाबाद, इनकिलाब जिदाबाद

इनकिलाब जिदाबाद, इनकिलाब जिदाबाद

and hence, we want some change here. If you thus merely want a change for the sake of ‘*inquilab*’, have it. But do not say that the Congress did not oppose it. The greatest Congressman of our country opposed it and forced that Government, the Government of the day, to withdraw it. I therefore say that there is no force in the argument about this Bill.

Being born mathematicians we have developed the system of decimals; that however does not deprive us of our power for more mathematical calculations. At the same time, let us take the example of England.

[Shri U. M. Trivedi]

What has England lost by having the Fahrenheit system? It is not necessary that the Centigrade system must be adopted. It is not necessary that we should adopt the cents. They have got their £. Sh. d. They deal with pence and shillings, shillings and pounds, units not decimally related to one another. They have got their own yard, foot and inch. We have also adopted them. But our cloth merchant in the street does not know the inches; he has got a yard divided into 16 parts and he calls each part गिरह ; he does the calculations immediately. Why should you not come down to this system, a system which is flowing in the veins of our people? **बर्फ सोलह आने सही है** is our ordinary common talk. The *solah annas* has entered his whole system. There is absolutely no reason for adopting this change. Everything is depending on the *solah anna*. This is what Mahatma Gandhi has said at page 53 of *The Harijan* dated 24th March, 1946:

"It is unnecessary here to summarize his convincing arguments...."

He refers to Kishorial Mashruwala's arguments—

"...in support. It is given in full in the columns of the *Harijan-bandhu*. It is sufficient here to state that even in the country of the rulers the decimal coinage has not been introduced. Public opinion there commands respect and affects the decisions of the House of Commons."

Here in India, we have to see that public opinion is respected. Have we told the public that we are going to introduce this change? Have we gone before them with this idea that we are going to have something like cents, *sote paisa ka ek rupya*? Why are you telling them four annas, eight annas and 12 annas even in the bill? Why are you introducing these

changes? There is no justification for making the changes.

Here, Mahatma Gandhi goes further and says:

"It will be improper for the Government to embark upon an experiment, even though claimed to be scientific, yet manifestly against the immediate interests of the poor."

Our country still consists of hundreds of millions of people who are entirely illiterate. The idea of 16 annas has come to stay; the idea of 64 pice has come to stay; the idea of man, seer and chhatak has come to stay. The idea of 16 *girah* has come to stay. We must do something for their benefit, not because it pleases our mathematical brains. We know sufficient mathematics to solve any difficult problems. It will not be difficult for us to calculate. I most respectfully submit that you should not forget the year 1946 and the greatest man. You will remember these words of Mahatma Gandhi and respect them. Let this Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting public opinion. Throw out this Bill. These are my words.

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): I must confess I have not quite followed the arguments in this case although here and there I have been present. From what I have followed, at least so far as some of the critics are concerned, it seems to me that there is a grave misunderstanding, a misapprehension. This is not merely a question of a new nomenclature. This is not merely a question of changing something old for the sake of changing something that is old. It is a basic approach not only in regard to coinage, although this Bill deals with coinage, but with other matters too, with weights and measures. We should be coming to this House later on with a Bill regarding weights and measures and several



other connected matters. It is intimately connected, I submit, with the whole process of, you might call, Five Year Plan or India's development, whether it is industrial development, agricultural development or whatever it is.

Take weights and measures. Everybody knows that there is a variety all over India. There is no uniformity. Everybody agrees that there has to be uniformity at least, whatever the system might be. Take the seer; there are various kinds. There must be uniformity. Otherwise, we cannot have uniform development. That is to say, we have grown, naturally, not in a uniform way all over India in regard to these matters. We have adhered to the old local customs and practices. There is no harm in that except that when you plan on a big scale, when you go ahead, all these things come in the way of that. Of course, so far as any industrial or scientific advance is concerned, it makes all the difference in the world as to what your measures are. In fact, all over the world, so far as science is concerned, there is only one measure, that is, the metric system, even though in popular parlance something else may be used. In fact, even in some of the very very conservative countries like England,—England is a very conservative country—they are being compelled to get out of their old ruts. Otherwise, it comes in their way. Take the question of coinage. Even in our daily transactions, in everything, because we are used to something, naturally, it is a little easier for us at the moment. But, actually it is a much more complicated system whether it is your accounting, your petty shop-keeper's accounts or the Accountant General's or Auditor General's accounts. It all comes in the way. It comes in the way much more in your statistical apparatus. Hon. Members may know that there are machines which do statistical work. It is something amazing. We have got what are called thinking machines. We have

got machines that memorise. We have got machines which do a work say in five minutes, a work which it may take six months to do with a corps of people sitting down to do it. All this cannot be done unless there is some definite system like the metric system. It is quite impossible for a machine to think. When I say think, it does not actually think. It only reproduces what you have told it before. If you tell it, the machine memorises it. All these advances are held up. In fact, even in India, we have produced recently not very complicated machines, but nevertheless, fairly good calculating machines. We do surveys and other things. These surveys would be tremendously complicated unless we have machines which memorise and tell us census surveys, etc.

What I wish to submit to the House is that in our planning and development work, to which we are committed in a big way, we have to adopt certain systems and standards which, apart from being internationally recognised, are the easiest for the purpose. Otherwise, we are held up. Otherwise, we have to proceed in two separate grooves of thought and action. That is, in one compartment of our life, in our industrial and other work we do things in one way and in other smaller things, we do in another way, which again produces confusion. It is true that every change involves some initial difficulty. The first thing that I would like this House to remember is, if any country can be said to have evolved the metric system, it is India. It has been the proud privilege of India, not today but, I should imagine, about 1500 years ago or more—no exact date is available—to evolve the basic things on which the metric system has developed. The very first thing, of course, was that wonderful discovery of a genius, the zero sign, *sunya*, which completely changed the whole mental picture of the world as it spread towards the Arab world and then towards Europe and other countries

[Shri Jawaharlal Nehru]

there. Almost a part of that was, not exactly the metric system, of course, as we know it, but the very basis on which it was evolved, so that it is essentially an Indian system in so far as its origin is concerned. It was developed more in other countries because we became rather static. It should be our pleasure and pride to revert to something which originally saw the light of day in the mind of an Indian genius or geniuses. This is a sentimental argument.

The real thing is that this change has to come, if I may say so, in every country in the world today. It cannot escape it. The more you delay it, the more difficult it becomes. Because, if things are calculated in the other way, you have to change them, convert them and translate them at every step and that means not only delay now, but confusion later.

I do not quite know what papers have been circulated. This particular question has been before the country for a large number of years. There have been all kinds of reports, carefully analysed reports. I do not know the exact period; I know that one of the very first things that we as a Government had to consider when we came into the Government of India, I think it is nearly 8½ years ago, was this business. We approved of it as a Government. But, then, as the House knows, all kinds of trouble took place. Independence came; there was the partition and other troubles. They came in the way. This was postponed. Now, lately, we have been feeling, more especially in connection with the Second Five Year Plan, that if we do not start this process of change now, because the process itself will take time—I am not merely referring to the coinage but to the other things, but undoubtedly we should go on gradually with public education and all the

rest of it; it may take two years, three years, four years, five years, for the complete change to come, I cannot—if we do not start it now, it will seriously affect our developmental and planning work and impede it in various ways and we may have to come back, change our calculations later. It is this that brought a sense of urgency apart from the normal desire to do so.

5 P.M.

Now, I can understand very well some of the sentimental arguments,—I do not use the word “sentimental” in a bad sense because we are all sentimental in regard to very many things to which we are attached, sometimes rightly so—nevertheless one cannot be swept away by those arguments when we have to face a hard problem and when we see that something is really for the good of the country, which may really on the one hand bring a great deal of help to the country in proceeding on its way, and on the other, if we do not it will hinder it.

An hon. Member who was just speaking said something about consulting the country. As I said, this is not a new thing, but I must confess that in a matter of this kind, rather scientific, technical kind, one does not normally consult the country. One does not consult the country, let us say about mathematical formulae or about the theory of relativity. It is not fair to go about. We must take the responsibility for it entirely and explain it to the country. If we think it is right, then it is right.

As I said, so far the nomenclature was concerned,—I am dealing with coinage only—there is the question of the rupee. Well, the rupee is a well known term in India, not today but for a long time past. There is the past, there are other words. Of course, there is no question of changing the rupee. For my part—I do

not now exactly what the terminology here is—I am inclined to think *paisa* is a good word and it will be a good thing if it remains. Maybe the value of the *paisa* may be slightly different, but that does not matter. Let us have *paisa* by all means. There is only one difficulty about it and that is during a slight period of transition there will be confusion about the value of the *paisa*, not the rupee. There might be some confusion and some people may make undue profit by that confusion. One can consider that matter carefully how to avoid that. It is a matter for consideration. So that you have this old well-known term of rupee or *rupya*. Perhaps the House knows that even in Indonesia the coin is *rupya* as it is called. It has a different value.

**Shri Gadgil** (Poona Central): Baniyas always stand to gain whatever we do.

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru**: Of course, the *rupya* in Indonesia is worth considerably less than our rupee, but that is a different matter. But, obviously, the word has gone from India to Indonesia, so that it is not very much a question of changing the name. The rupee obviously is firmly established. In Ceylon you have the rupee also, but there, apart from the rupee they have cents for a long time past. In fact, when the change came there in

Ceylon, I forget when, but a long time ago, even then, I remember it, there was some talk of bringing it in India, but it did not take place. So that, I submit that from the point of view of getting on the right track in regard to all these tremendous developments in modern technology, science etc., we should adopt this metric system which is a product of an Indian mind original and adapt it.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker**: Decimal.

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru**: The decimal system, you are right, but this has come out of it.

In regard to nomenclature, we should endeavour in so far as is possible to keep the old Indian names. I do submit that this question, viewed objectively, is not open really to argument in the world today, and we have to face in any change certain difficulties, but the difficulties will be far greater if the change comes later, and somehow or other the change will have to come.

So, I submit that this House should whole-heartedly adopt this measure.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker**: The debate will continue tomorrow.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday the 29th July, 1955.*