

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

SIXTY-FOURTH REPORT

Shri Ramachandra Reddy (Nellore):
I beg to move:

"That this House agrees with the Sixty-fourth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 28th November, 1956".

This Report fixes the time-limit for the Resolutions.

Mr. Chairman: The question is:

"That this House agrees with the Sixty-fourth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 28th November, 1956".

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Chairman: This means that we have 2½ hours. We are beginning at about 14.15 hours and we shall go on till 16.30.

Regarding the Resolution to be moved by Shri Nambiar, it will be moved by Shri T. B. Vittal Rao as he has been authorised by the Speaker to do so.

Dr. Rama Rao (Kakinada): May I point out that in regard to the fixation of time, we have to look to the convenience of the Members? All Members desire that we should rise at 17.00 hours. So if we can just leave five minutes for Dr. Ram Subhag Singh, that would be sufficient. So the time may be so adjusted that we can rise at 17.00 hours.

Mr. Chairman: I will just work it out. The Finance Minister has also to be consulted.

I shall make the announcement a little later.

RESOLUTION RE NATIONALISATION OF COLLIERIES

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam):
I beg to move:

"This House is of opinion that immediate steps be taken to nationalise collieries in India".

I am doubly glad that when I move this Resolution, our Minister of Production, who has just now returned from Bihar, which has the proud privilege of producing 52 per cent. of the coal raised in India, is present here. I hope that during his busy time at Patna and elsewhere, he must have had taken some time to go round the coal mines.

May I draw the attention of the House to the chapter in the Second Five Year Plan on Minerals and Mineral Development? It has been stated therein that a country's economic development is indicated by how a country prospects, exploits and uses its mineral resources. As regards coal, the Report says:

"In view of its basic importance as a fuel and also as a raw material for industries like iron and steel, coal carbonisation etc., coal has the first place in the programme of mineral development".

I need not, therefore, emphasise the importance of coal any more for the industrial development of our country.

Mining of coal in India started about the year 1774. That means that today, India has the experience of nearly 200 years in the mining of coal. Our production last year was 38 million tons, raised from the various collieries in India. There are 850 coal mines raising this coal employing about 3,40,000 persons. These mines are spread over the various States of India. Bihar produces 52 per cent., West Bengal 28 per cent., Hyderabad 4 per cent., Madhya Pradesh 10 per cent., Assam and Vindhya Pradesh also produce coal to a small extent. These coal mines developed in those days as

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feeders either to industries like cement or to iron and steel or other industries.

We have in India today coal deposits estimated several years ago at several million tons. In some parts, it is said that there are more than 6,000 million tons of coal deposits. There are coal mines raising different categories of coal. There is a coal mine producing steam coal, of which we have got enormous deposits. There is metallurgical coal, of which we have got limited resources. As regards lignite, I do not want to say anything about it, as I do not know much about it.

Out of the 850 coal mines, about 233 employ less than 50 persons each on a daily basis. There are 260 coal mines which produce annually 5,000 tons each. But out of these 850 coal mines, there are 9 coal mines which produce more than 3,00,000 tons a year. Calculating it company-wise, the figures are as follows: Limited companies 370, Companies 290 and others 200.

It is very essential that these deposits in our country should be exploited properly. But in the past few years, coal has been exploited in a manner which was not planned for the industrial development of the country but which was governed by sheer private profit motive; so much so that today there are several mines in India which, due to unplanned working, are either flooded or have fires raging in them which we are not able to combat even after several years. What does this mean? This means that so much of national wealth which should have been dug out of the bowels of the earth is wasted. Nobody could tell us how much has been wasted by fire, inundation and floods.

I will quote only a few instances which have occurred. The Porbella colliery, which has been producing one of the best grades of coal, of which we have run short, I mean, metallurgical, high grade coal, has been on fire. Nearly 3,000 workers who were employed there were thrown out. Of

course, some have been absorbed elsewhere. The Chief Inspector was saying that it could be worked in 8 or 10 months. Now he wants a few more months before it could be worked. The same thing has happened in the case of the colliery in the State from which my hon. friend, Shri K. P. Tripathi, comes; fire has been raging in the Tapping colliery for the last so many months. Only during the last fortnight, the Deputy Chief Inspector of Mines has gone there with a rescue team. I do not know what are the results of his work.

Then again, take the case of the Newton Chickli colliery. There was flooding in 1954. For two years that mine could not be worked. The same is the case with the Amlabad colliery where there was an explosion and the mine could not be opened for one year. This mine was producing one of the best varieties of coal in India.

I have been pointing out these things with a view to impressing upon Members how unplanned or unscientific working results in enormous loss to our country. In these conditions, how much of coal is being raised in the public sector? Today we raise only about 8 per cent. of the total production in the public sector. The remaining 92 per cent. of the total production is under the private sector. The Minister might come forward and say that they are going to increase it. To what extent are we going to increase it? If our target under the Second Five Year Plan is fulfilled—which I doubt under the present circumstances—we can raise only up to 25 per cent. of the total production under the public sector. Still 75 per cent. will be under the private sector. That is to say, out of 60 million tons, 15 million tons will be raised in the public sector, the remaining 45 million tons being raised under the private sector.

Then we are told that plans are being made or are under consideration under the Third Five Year Plan whereby we are going to raise production to the tune of 130 million tons. When we compare our production with

the production of other industrial countries or countries which have recently gained independence, we can see how far we lag behind in this respect. We produce in India 38 million tons. In the United States of America, the annual production is 456 million tons; in the U.S.S.R. it is 391 million tons. In U.K., such a small country compared to ours with deposits far less than ours, they produce 228 million tons. West Germany produces 123 million tons; China, which only a few years ago had produced up to 60 or 70 million tons, are going to reach a target of 120 million tons in 1957. This shows how far we have progressed. Even after the third Five Year Plan period we will have only 130 million tons. That shows that if we want to industrialise our country, if we want to go ahead with our plans for industrial development, there is an immediate necessity to step up our coal production. Even the 60 million tons, which is the target under the Second Five Year Plan will be short of our demands. Even if we achieve that target, we will not be meeting the demand resultant on industrialisation.

Have we any alternate source of fuel in the place of coal? At the moment, it is not also there. We produce only 4 lakh tons of oil as against an annual consumption of 40 lakh tons. This will show how much dependent upon foreign supply we are. We were told by our Minister for Natural Resources and Scientific Research that in the Second Five Year Plan he is going to spend Rs. 30 crores and he is going to see that we have 4 million tons of oil. But according to the calculations made by the Planning Commission, our requirements at the end of the Second Five Year Plan will be about 7 million tons. So, there is no alternate fuel available. This is the position.

Then, there are the various mining leases. Of course, the recent legislation which we passed in September has modified the mining leases to a great extent. It has reduced the area to 30 sq. miles or so. Some of the British Companies which held mining leases for 999 years spread over many

hundreds of acres of land like Bird and Company, the Bengal Coal Company, the Equitable Coal Company etc. which companies are always taken into consideration by our Government in fixing the price of coal. The question was raised as to how we could step up production and how we could bring up the small companies and make them bigger units. A committee was appointed. I am glad that Government have put in a very able person as the Chairman of the committee. They have produced a report after one year or so. Only one or two recommendations of that report are given to us, and that too only last week. It was said that some legislation will be undertaken for amalgamation of these companies. Knowing as I do how the Ministry of Production works, I do not know when their conclusions will be finalised. I have been hearing statements made by the hon. Minister of Production from time to time that legislation is being brought forward to take over unworked coal mines and that it will be introduced during this November-December session.

The Minister of Production (Shri K. C. Reddy): It is coming up this session.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: I am glad. I do not know when this amalgamation of collieries will come. I wish it comes very soon.

Let us see how people are thinking about these coal mines. Political parties like the Praja Socialist and the Communist Parties have passed resolutions urging on the Government the nationalisation of coal mines. We cannot tolerate any more waste of our natural resources.

The All India Trade Union Congress and the Indian National Trade Union Congress have been demanding on several occasions the nationalisation of coal industries. Just before the Second Five Year Plan was being drafted our Minister used to give us some hope that nationalisation of coal mines is under consideration. But, when the final policy was laid down actually he gave us a different statement...

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What has been our experience with these private owners? Still the British-owned managing agencies are there. In 1947 we had a production of 30 million tons. In 1955, the production was 38 million tons. During the Second Plan period what are we going to get? During all these 8 long years when the coal mines were under the private sector we could increase only to the extent of 8 million tons. Can we any more rely on this private sector to produce 22 million additional tons of coal? Ten million tons have been given to the private sector and 12 million tons to the public sector. Let us see what has been the progress during these months of the first year of the Second Plan period. During the whole year they have increased their production only to the tune of 8 lakh tons. I doubt very much whether they are going to raise that 45 million tons expected of them. If one reads *Indian Coal News*, which is a fortnightly brought out by the coal magnates, it will be found that they have said that the only reason for not stepping up production was because the Ministry of Production did not make clear their plans. Only recently, it seems that the Coal Development and Production Commissioner had asked them to go ahead with their work and they are going ahead.

We have been demanding in this very House to know what yearly targets have been laid down. It is said that they are being worked out. Till this day yearly targets have not also been given. We have been urging on the Ministry time and again to devise a machinery to check up whether the private sector will keep to the targets. There is no machinery yet forthcoming.

The question of price policy is also there. It has been announced that a decision has been taken that a uniform price for coal will be charged at different rail heads, but they have not been able to come to a decision. No one can comprehend when they are going to announce this. Why is it so? It is because there are so many coal

mines and so many interests that they have not been able to go ahead. Even though you have taken a decision long ago, you have not been able to announce it. But with regard to fertilisers you are quick enough to do that; you did it very quickly. In regard to this basic commodity, even many industrialists have been urging that they are charging different rates or prices for coal due to the question of freight and that they are not able to stand up competition from other quarters and they could not economically work their factories. You have not been able to do this because there is no uniform control or rather uniform policy with regard to these things.

You have got a Coal Board. There is a legislation for coal conservation and some subsidies are given. Now not a day passes without some controversy or other with the private owners as well as the Government. Always the controversy goes on and you could not satisfy either of them.

May I refer to the working conditions of those who dig out coal from the bowels of the earth? Everybody is agreed that they perform a most heroic job in digging coal, they risk their lives. But what are their wages? Their wages are the lowest among the industrial workers. Even out of the Tribunal where some sections of the workers or categories of the workers are benefited, if you compare the wages of the coal miners with those of any other industries, you will find them to be too low. This was also the case in England before the war; coal miners' wages or rather the rank of their wages used to be 88 if 100 industries were taken; but today a coal miner in England gets much above any industrial worker. But in India, he still continues to be in that low level, which is most deplorable. It should be bettered. Now, only 30,000 houses are provided for 3,40,000 workers. Annually, 330 workers die in coal mines due to various accidents, roof falls, etc. Those who are maimed,

loss of a limb, hand, leg or any other part, number about 3,000. This is the position with regard to the workers. If our plans have to succeed, you must see that the condition of these workers is improved.

Then I come to another set of employees, with whom I have had talks—they are the managers. They are the people who get some salaries ranging from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,500 a month. Whenever I talk to them about the production and other things, they feel far insecure under the private employer. Any regulations, any rules for safety measures they have to implement will involve additional expenditure, and if any additional expenditure is involved, their proprietors say "Don't do that". If these managers insist on it, they are afraid they will be bundled out. Even those highly paid employees, managers, have told me that even if Government is not going to nationalise the coal mines, let them at least nationalise the service of managers. They want that Government should be responsible for supplying to the proprietors these managers and their salaries should be drawn from the Government. So, all is not well with this industry.

I have said that during the course of eight long years, the private sector has been able to step up only 8 million tons, from 30 million in 1947 to 38 million in 1955, which includes also our production to some extent. If we want to improve this industry, if our country has to prosper, if our country has to go towards the goal of industrialisation, we have to develop this industry, we have to work these coal mines efficiently and economically because the other industries depend upon this. Therefore, there is no other go except nationalisation of the coal mines and the working out of a national, co-ordinated, uniform policy for it which is only possible if nationalisation is done. We have been able to nationalise the insurance business; we have been able to nationalise the Imperial Bank of India. This important industry, which is a key industry,

must be nationalised here and now. Otherwise, I am afraid our Second Five Year Plan may not be successful.

Mr. Chairman: Resolution moved:

"This House is of opinion that immediate steps be taken to nationalise collieries in India."

Shri K. P. Tripathi (Darrang): I welcome the very constructive speech of Shri Vital Rao on this question. We have also given a good deal of thought as to whether this basic industry should be nationalised. Last time when I went to one of the collieries in Bihar and looked at the condition of the workers there, I saw that they were housed in such a way that even beasts should not be housed. There was one room in which 21 persons were housed. It was barely 8 feet broad and about 20 feet long. A series of rooms were there, and in one room I found that some of them had got their wives. I asked them how a few wives and about 20 men were living in that small room. Was it a community living? Nobody could explain as to how the morals improve under such circumstances. The house was so near the colliery that all the smoke and the coal which is permeated in the air came down on the people and made them miserable. Some of the illness to which the workers are prone is because of their condition of living. The more I see the condition of living of the workers in the collieries I come to the inevitable conclusion that unless collieries are nationalised, it will not be possible to improve their lot.

I had a discussion with some managers. They told me that coal is a wasting asset, and, therefore, employers are not interested in investing money for the purpose of housing and other working conditions so that labour might be looked after well. They think that after some time the houses might become unnecessary.

[**MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER** in the Chair]

Obviously this is one of the main reasons why collieries should be nationalised, because this consideration of the wasting asset which is be-

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fore the private employer might not be before the Government, which will necessarily think in terms of the industry being for the good of the workers rather than for mere profit. Therefore, the more I think from this point of view of miners there is no conclusion other than that the collieries should be nationalised.

I know that the Government will not launch upon this task of nationalisation merely for the sake of workers. The main considerations will obviously be: economic considerations, considerations of personnel which will be needed for implementing the Second Plan and undertaking the limited amount of colliery expansion under the public sector which they have in view. Therefore, it would be necessary for us to consider whether nationalisation of collieries would be helpful in that direction also or whether it would be a hindrance. From that point of view, I think nationalisation would be a help rather than a hindrance.

Where shall we get the personnel for undertaking this huge task—Government might ask. The task seems to be difficult with the limited personnel. There are people who are forecasting that Government will not be able to fulfil the tasks which it had undertaken.

I feel that, if the collieries were nationalised, the personnel would be released for doing more work than at present. Why hon. friend, Shri Vittal Rao, pointed out that there were collieries which were too small. There are medium collieries and large collieries. As soon as they are nationalised, it will be possible for us to rationalise the management. One of the tragedies of Indian industries is the co-existence of uneconomic units along with economic units and so, in every one of them, there is a heavy cost of management. One very important thing so far as industries in India are concerned is rationalisation of management and it is most necessary in collieries. With

nationalisation, it will be possible to manage the existing collieries with far lesser number of personnel at the managerial cadre than at present. All that surplus would be released for the purpose of manning new collieries. So, from the point of view of personnel, I have come to the conclusion that it will be wise for the Government to undertake a general nationalisation of the collieries so that the management might be rationalised.

So far as workers are concerned, the same arguments apply. What about money—the Government may ask. We have to compensate the owners to bring them under public ownership. The Government would say that it would be better to permit the sector continue and to utilise whatever money is available for the purpose of floating a new sector or to expand the public sector. This is an interesting point. I feel that if we can take over zamindaris in a particular way, we may utilise the same method for the purpose of taking over the collieries. It is not that all the compensation should be paid at once; it may be paid in a phased programme. If we do that, I have no doubt that it would be possible for us, without incurring immediate financial liabilities of a very great nature, to nationalise the collieries. Whatever money will be paid to the owners in cash right now, will be utilised by them for the purpose of developing other industries. In that way, we would be helping the private sector to undertake those industries which we are now unable to undertake.

Therefore, I feel that, either from the point of view finance or from the point of view of personnel, there is no difficulty before the Government for nationalising this industry. The House will remember that coal was one of the first industries to be nationalised in England. Why? This question has been asked and answered. Shri Vittal Rao was saying that this was a basic industry. It is true that in a planned modern economy,

everything depends upon certain bases which are the foundations of great nations. What are those bases? If you consider them, you will discover that coal is one of the bases. If the production of coal, its price and distribution are not rationalised, the expansion of industries in different parts of the country will be held up and that will be unfortunate, in the sense that our Plan will be held up. Therefore, the entire success of our Plan depends upon the proper and timely execution of these bases—one being coal. If this industry is nationalised and is taken over by the public sector in the Second Plan, Government will be able to go forward far more speedily than the private sector. The private sector has qualms and doubts as to what is in future, in spite of the assurances of the Government. It may not be able to expand corresponding to your plans. If it is not done today, possibly it will be discovered in the middle of the Plan and you will feel that you had been unwise in not doing it. Therefore, Government should think over it coolly. If it comes to the conclusion that the Five Year Plan has to be implemented, then there is no escape from the fact that at least this base of the Plan, namely, coal should be nationalised. This Ministry should be expanded to undertake this huge responsibility so that the target in regard to coal may be achieved.

Coal is a wasting asset. There is metallurgical coal which we are short of. What is the interest of private sector to conserve that coal? Its interest is in quicker profits. It does not look to the national interest. If it is nationalised, then Government would be able to plan in such a way that the natural resources are not wasted; that they are utilised. That is possible only if coal came under the public sector.

There was a discussion in the labour panel of the Planning Commission. I was also present there. The question was with regard to wages. We wanted uniform rates.

There are small collieries and big collieries. The smaller ones say that they cannot pay the same wages as the bigger ones. It is for this reason that in the last award it was deemed that the small collieries would not be able to pay the wages and therefore, the coal prices had to be raised and the consumer had to pay for the inadequate wage given to the workers. Yet, the bigger collieries are making stupendous profits. If amalgamation is to be brought about, I have no doubt that if it comes under the public sector, it is possible. If it remains in the private sector, it will not be possible. The same question was raised with regard to tea gardens. Some time ago, the question of amalgamation was deemed to be necessary, and since it continues to be in the private sector, it was not possible. We worked hard for the last 9 years and completely failed. The Government will not have the machinery, and the legal sanction whereby amalgamation might be brought about within the five year plan so that efficiency and production might increase.

15-00 Has.

Therefore, I think, that the Government should apply its mind seriously to this task just as England applied. What England did was that India shall have to do. It is very true that so far as fuel is concerned, there should be a concerted, unified policy. We are going to have hydro-electricity, for instance; we are going to have thermal electricity; we are going to have coal power. All these are existing there. All these are forces of power to be distributed in the different areas of the country.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I think the hon. Member had already taken the normal time.

Shri K. P. Tripathi: I am concluding shortly. I was saying that a unified fuel policy in a planned economy is absolutely necessary. If you do not have the price structure in such a way with a uniform price available for power, then where

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cheaper power is available, there would be industrialisation and where it is not available, no industrialization will take place. There will be a disparity in the regional development and that will lead to heart-burning and suffering also, because where there is development, higher standards will be there and where there is no development, lower standards would prevail. So far as the Plan is concerned it is based on fuel and power and Government should have fuel and power in its own hand, so that it might make them available in the different parts of the country at the same price.

My hon. friend was saying that so far as coal is concerned, the Government thought that it should be distributed at rail heads, at the same price. It has not been possible for the Government to bring it about, because it is in the private sector. I have no doubt that this Plan or the third Plan can never succeed until and unless the Government comes to the firm conclusion that so far coal, fuel and power are concerned, it must be in the Government sector. If the Government have these three things in its own sector, then it will be able to distribute equally to all the States and all the areas, so that there may be equal regional development. Then only you will satisfy the country's requirements. The way in which the capitalist development of the country occurs is known, it conglomerates; it does not go out; it does not spread, because the cost of development of an under-developed area is far greater than that of a developed area. Therefore, from the point of profits it is certainly better that it takes place in the same area. From the point of view of the development of a socialistic pattern of society, it is necessary that it may be scattered and this policy of scattering the industry is impossible unless and until you have a policy of nationalizing the fuel and power structure

of the country. This is the base on which you must start the Second Five Year Plan and you must conclude the third Five Year Plan with other power like electricity and gases. Then only, it will be possible for you to distribute power equally, so that regional development may take place and in this way your goal of socialistic pattern of society might be reached.

Dr. Jaisoorya (Medak): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I am not going to say very much, but I think it will be realized by now that we are not using our coal resources and our coal production properly. First of all the methods that we are using are very antiquated. The machinery is very old; the method of doing it is very old. In fact, Britain was notorious for its antiquated methods as compared to Germany or United States or even China or Russia. So our methods, our machinery and our approach—I mean in the private sector—are of very low efficiency.

The Fuel Economy Research Centre has recently issued its report in which it has pointed out that having produced coal, we are allowing many things to go waste, which could be utilized advantageously. Take, for instance, coal dust. This is available in a very large quantity. Still we do not know how to make briquettes. I would like the hon. Minister or his Department to inform me whether they know anything as to how to make briquettes. (*Interruption*) I know what I am talking about.

Secondly, there is a peculiar idea in India; I do not know how planners or advisers to the planners have given an exaggerated importance to hydro-electric power. In a country where the potentialities are very great—there is no doubt about it—it is an important source, but the capacity to produce hydro-electric power is small and the cost of purchasing the machinery is very great. As compared to the unlimited amount of low grade coal which

could be converted into thermal power, I certainly consider it is foolery to lay over stress on hydro-electric power. These are some of the useful points for the hon. Minister to think over.

Thirdly, I find a large amount of coal is unnecessarily transported; a large amount of coal is unnecessarily used by the Railways. The Whittaker report suggested that low grade coal which is produced should be converted into thermal power at the pit-heads.

Then I wish to inform the House that now we have processes by which coking can take place out of low grade coal. We have still no use for the by-products in India and nobody is making use of the coal tar products. All these should be considered. If the Government takes over these things, it can have an integrated plan. I do not pretend to know all about the coal question. I think that Government can work out an integrated plan by which the cost of production plus the utilization and the exploitation of bye-products of coal can be more satisfactorily done than in the private sector.

My hon. friend Shri Vittal Rao was referring to very small coal mines; some of them are so small that they employ only 50 people; their activity is limited to distributing coal in the neighbouring regional area. Ignore them; leave them aside. It is not desirable to think of nationalizing little coal mines, but certainly there are 29 coal mines which produce each 2 lakh tons of coal, and certainly you can take them over, because not only can you improve them but you can utilize them properly. I think given efficient people in the Government to direct the affairs, I see no reason why our returns should not be very much higher.

Because, we are exploiting things in which the private capitalists have no interest whatsoever. This is called 'integrated planning'. As I told you, 60 per cent of coal and traction

power is used by the Railways themselves merely to transport coal. Now, we have ordered 1635 W.P. engines and what not. They have got a life of about 40 years and we have got to exploit these wretched steam locomotives for 40 years to get back our money. That means our electrification plans will be set back, or not given the actual priority they should get. The important thing is to reduce your silly ideas about hydro-electric power and to increase your ideas how to exploit thermal power. If you do that then some things can take place.

I think, with that I have exhausted all that I wanted to say. I am not an expert on coal like my hon. friend, but I have drawn your attention to this, which I have not found in your Plan.

Shri S. L. Saksena (Gorakhpur Distt.-North): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I congratulate my friend Shri T. B. Vittal Rao for having brought this very important resolution. It was in 1931 that the Congress at Karachi passed a resolution for nationalisation of key industries. Even after nine years of independence this most basic industry has not been nationalised. I had thought that at least in the Second Plan they will do it. But I find even now they have only tried to reduce the period of lease and their areas. This will not really help the progress of our country.

The coal industry is treated as the most important industry in all advanced countries. The highest wages in the Soviet Union are given to coal miners. The average wage of a coal miner in the Soviet Union is about 1200 roubles per month and the highest wage paid is 6000 roubles. A rouble is equal Rs. 1-3-0 in exchange value. In China also coal industry is given very great importance. In Britain, the coal industry has been nationalised and the average wage of a coal miner there is about £13 a week.

[Shri S. L. Saksena]

Sir, from Gurakhpur, the district from which I come, many labourers have gone to work in coal mines. I know the condition of their families. They are not able to send even Rs. 15 a month to their families. The way they live in the mines is more deplorable. After a few years they will be reduced to nothing and they will die. That is the condition of our coal miners. Just now my friend told you about the number of hospitals they have got, the way they are treated and all that.

Everywhere I have gone, people have wondered why India has not nationalised coal mines so far. In most cases they belong to Britishers. If you examine as to how they were given to them on lease you will find that they were merely acts of favouritism to certain persons. In such cases, I do not think we are called upon to give them full compensation. We should enquire how the present owners got them. I do not think we should pay anything if they were not purchased with the sweat of one's labour. I appreciate the sentiments expressed by Shri Tripathi in regard to nationalisation of zamindari. Still we have to make some difference. If they are owned by British coal miners and they acquired the mines merely because they were favourites of the old rulers, I do not think for having exploited them they should get any compensation. Therefore, all those mines should be taken over without any compensation being paid. Only in cases where the present owners purchased them some compensation need be paid. There is no reason why this industry should remain with the foreigners or other private owners any longer.

The condition of workers in other countries is the best whereas the condition of coal miners in our country is the worst. The number of accidents, as my friend said, is about 350 every year. I particularly enquired about accidents in the coal mines of Soviet Union, China and also Britain. I was surprised to find that the

number is very very small, sometimes two or three per thousand in a year. In the last seven years this has risen in our country. The reason is that in other countries they spend huge amounts on safety measures. Our colliery owners do not spend a pie. They do not know when the industry will be nationalised. They are fully aware that nationalisation is bound to happen and, therefore, they do not spend anything on safety measures. The result is that 350 people died last year and, probably, that will continue in future also.

Then again, the most up-to-date methods are being used for mining coal in other countries. Even in China, which has so far been a backward country, most up-to-date methods are being used for mining coal, for transporting coal, for loading coal and so on. This can only be done by the Government. Why should a private owner invest large sums of money on modern machinery when he does not know when nationalisation will take place?

Therefore, from all points of view it is of the utmost importance that this industry should be nationalised immediately. In that case you can have a planned programme of investment on new machinery so that mining of coal may be made more economical with the least amount of hardship to labourers. Secondly, with nationalisation when the condition of the labourers is improved there will be better production of coal. Even if you spend any amount on other methods, the workers have to be kept in such a manner that they produce the maximum amount of coal. Safety measures can also be provided if the Government is the owner of coal mines. The present colliery owners will never provide them.

Once the industry is nationalised, Government can amalgamate the various mines and thus have very little overhead charges. That will give us cheaper coal, more coal and better coal.

Then, the best coal is now being used in the Railways. It is almost a criminal folly. Metallurgical coal should never be used for that. At present our coal miners are interested in profit. They sell away the coal to the highest bidder. This will not be possible when the industry is nationalised. We can say as to which coal should be used for which purpose. We can decide whether a particular job deserves good quality coal or an inferior quality coal.

My friend Dr. Jaisoorya pointed out the difference between hydraulic energy and thermal energy. I do not agree with him that we should not give importance to the development of hydraulic power. I do think that the importance of coal cannot in any way be ignored because of the presence of thermal energy, because even in the most advanced countries where they have thermal energy they are not able to dispense with coal. Therefore, when we have a large amount of coal in India, I do not know why we should not give proper attention to it. This must be done without any delay and without it you cannot make any progress.

You must be aware, Sir, that our production of coal is only 38 million tons a year whereas in China they will be having 120 million tons next year. We always compare ourselves with China, but in the matter of coal production it is only just one-third of what they are doing. That is something which is very deplorable. We want to increase our production. The foreigners and private owners have no interest in it. Only if the Government is the owner can this industry flourish. We should not be frightened by the amount of compensation we have to pay. If only we analyse and see who are properly entitled for such compensation, we will be able to do it. When we have paid crores and crores to acquire zamindari we can acquire this also. If we do not nationalise this industry immediately we will still be under economic slavery and the foreigners

will exploit our mines to their advantage. I, therefore, support the resolution and thank my friend for having brought it.

श्री सिंहासन सिंह (जिला गोरखपुर दक्षिण) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, यह प्रस्ताव जो सदन के सामने है वह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण है और इस को आने वाले माननीय सदस्य को मैं धन्यवाद देता हूँ। इन को बचाई है कि उन का इस को लाने का अवसर मिला। महात्माजी के शब्दों में भारत के उन सब व्यवसायों का राष्ट्रीयकरण कर देना चाहिये जिन से हम अपनी नित्य के उपयोग की चीजें पैदा करने वाली मशीनों का निर्माण करते हैं।

आज दो प्रकार की वस्तुयें हैं। एक तो उपभोक्ता वस्तु और दूसरी वस्तु वह है जो इन चीजों को बनाने वाली हैं, जिन के जरिये से प्रोडक्शन (उत्पादन) होता है। इन दोनों प्रकार की वस्तुओं में उन वस्तुओं का जिन के जरिये व्यवसाय के सामान पैदा किये जाते हैं, राष्ट्रीयकरण होना नितान्त आवश्यक है। उन में भी कोयले का प्रथम स्थान है। कोयला ऐसी वस्तु है जिस के जरिये हमारी सारी इंडस्ट्रीज काम करती हैं। अगर कोयला न रहे तो जितने बड़े बड़े कल कारखाने हैं शायद वह बन्द हो जायें। हम ने छोटे बड़े कारखानों को ले लिया, हम ने आज लाइफ इश्योरेस (जीवन बीमा) को नेशनलाइज (राष्ट्रीयकृत) किया, जमींदारी को ले लिया, तब कोल (कोयले) का, जिस पर हमारे सारे व्यवसाय निर्भर हैं, अब तक राष्ट्रीयकरण नहीं हो पाया है यह बड़े खेद की बात है हमारे लिये। जब कि गवर्नमेंट की इंडस्ट्रियल पालिसी (औद्योगिक नीति) में भी है कि कोल का राष्ट्रीयकरण होगा और जितनी कोल मइन्स नई खोली जायेंगी वह सब राष्ट्र की होंगी तब इस पर ध्यान न देना उचित नहीं है। अभी मेरे पूर्व वक्ता ने काफी आंकड़े दिये और बताया कि कोल का राष्ट्रीयकरण होने के कारण राष्ट्र के व्यवसाय में कितनी दिक्कतें पैदा होती हैं, किसी ने बिजली पैदा

[श्री सिंहासन सिंह]

करने के बारे में बताया, किसी ने दूसरी चीज के बारे में बताया। मैं सदन का ध्यान दिलाना चाहता हूँ कि कोल ऐसा व्यवसाय है जिस पर हमारे भारत का जीवन निर्भर है। चाहे हम अपने जीवन की आवश्यक वस्तुओं के लिये मूजीवादियों पर निर्भर करें या अपनी राष्ट्रीय योजनाओं को चलाना चाहें, उस में दिक्कतें हो सकती हैं। जब तक कोयले की खानें राष्ट्र की सम्पत्ति नहीं हो जाती एक तरफ तो मुआवजे की वृत्ति होती है। दुख की बात है कि आज लोगों का ध्यान समष्टि की तरफ कम है, व्यक्ति की तरफ ज्यादा है। हर एक आदमी हर काम में देखना चाहता है कि इस में उसका क्या लाभ है। राष्ट्र के लाभ जैसी कोई चीज उस के सामने नहीं है। सब अपना निजी लाभ देखते हैं। सब से पहले लोगों को निजी लाभ के बजाये राष्ट्र के लाभ की ओर ध्यान देना चाहिये। आज कोयले की इंडस्ट्री का राष्ट्रीयकरण न होने के कारण हमारे बहुत से व्यवसायों को घक्का पहुंच सकता है क्योंकि आज व्यवसाय निजी लाभ की दृष्टि से चलाये जाते हैं, राष्ट्र के लाभ की मनीवृत्ति से नहीं चलाये जाते हैं।

दूसरी बात मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि हम भूमि का तो, जो कि अन्न पैदा करने के लिये चार या पांच इंच खोदी जाती है, राष्ट्रीयकरण भले ही न कर सके हों, लेकिन हम जमींदारी प्रथा को तोड़ दिया। जमीनों को तोड़ कर छोटे छोटे आदिमियों को दे दिया, जो आदमी जहाँ जोत में था, उस को वहाँ का बिज बना दिया, लेकिन कोयला भीतर की जो चीज है, जो हम खानों के अन्दर पैदा करते हैं, उस के राष्ट्रीयकरण की योजना हम अभी तक नहीं लाये। हमने जमींदारों से जब जमीन ली तो उन को मुआवजा जरूर दिया, लेकिन मुआवजा देने का जो ढंग था वह कुछ इस तरह का रहा कि मुआवजा पाने

वाले को कुछ विशेष मुआवजा नहीं मिला। उनकी अलग शिकायत है इस बारे में, लेकिन गवर्नमेंट को हमेशा यह डर बना रहा करता है कि मुआवजा अधिक देना पड़ेगा। मुआवजे के मामले में भी हमने देखा कि गवर्नमेंट की दो पालीसियां (नीतियां) हैं। जमींदारों को मुआवजा देने के वक्त तो उसूल एक रहा और पूंजीपतियों को मुआवजा देने का उसूल दूसरा है। जब लाइफ इश्योरेंस का नैलशन लाइजशन हुआ तो उन को बाजार भाव से मुआवजा दिया गया। आज गवर्नमेंट को कोल के सम्बन्ध में भी वही डर हो सकता है। मेरे विचार में कोल के सम्बन्ध में अगर मुआवजा देना है तो संविधान के अनुसार मुआवजे का उसूल वही हो सकता है जो कि जमीन के ऊपर पैदा करने वाले लोगों को हमने दिया है। कोयले की जमींदारी पूंजीपतियों से खरीद कर कोयले के कारखानेदारों को रुपया गवर्नमेंट को देना है। वैसे तो जो रुपया कारखानेदारों ने लगाया है उस का कई गुना तो वह कमा चुके होंगे। लेकिन अगर उस के बाद भी उन को मुआवजा देना है तो उसी हिसाब से उन को दिया जा सकता है जिस हिसाब से जमींदारों को जमीन लेते वक्त आपने दिया था।

कोयले की खानों के सम्बन्ध में अभी हमारे आई सिम्बन लाल जी ने बताया है कि बहुत से आदमी कोयला खानों में दब कर मर गये हैं। उस के बारे में मैं आप का ध्यान दिलाना चाहता हूँ कि जो जमींदारी ऐंबोलीशन (उन्मूलन) के वास्ते 50 पी० असेम्बली में बिल पेश था उस के लागू होने में करीब पांच, छः साल लग गये। इस बीच में जमींदारों ने अपना रहा सहा जंगल भी काट लिया क्योंकि जंगल तो उन के हाथ से निकलने वाले थे। एक तरफ हमारी सरकार जंगल लगाने की व्यवस्था करती थी, ताकि पानी बरसे, इधर सहयोग से पानी भी बहुत ज्यादा बरसा है, और दूसरी तरफ जमींदार अपने अपने बगीचे काट रहे थे क्योंकि वह जानते थे

कि जंगल उन के हाथ से निकल जायेंगे । वह उन जमीनों से भविष्य में अपना कोई लाभ नहीं देख रहे थे । वैसे ही कोल वाले हैं । इस सदन के सामने राष्ट्रीयकरण की व्यवस्था है और उस पर बहस हो रही है, मैं भी राष्ट्रीयकरण के पक्ष में बोल रहा हूँ, तो जितने भी कोल क्षेत्र हैं उन के मालिकों के दिल में यह डर हो सकता है कि पता नहीं किस दिन उन के कारखानों का राष्ट्रीयकरण हो जाये और वह थोड़े बहुत मुआवजों के ही मुस्तहक रह जायें इसलिये वह अपने खदानों में किसी कमी की रोक थाम नहीं करते । इस के ऊपर मैं खास तौर से ध्यान दिलाना चाहता हूँ । हमारे गोरखपुर, देवरिया और बस्ती के लोग कोयला कारखानों में काम कर रहे हैं । उन के लिये कोई जरिया माश घर पर नहीं है । वह करें भी क्या ? उन के लिये कोई और धंधा नहीं है इसलिये वह कोयला खानों में काम करने जाते हैं, वह एक वर्ष में ही काम करने के बाद टूटे हुए, मरे हुए घर लौट आते हैं । जो आदमी वहाँ काम करने जाता है वह मरा हुआ ही समझा जाता है, लेकिन भूल क्या नहीं करवाती । अपनी आजीविका के लिये वह जाते हैं, लेकिन वहाँ पर उन की रक्षा का कोई प्रबन्ध नहीं है । अभी कुछ थोड़े दिन से सरकार की तरफ से ऐसा प्रतीत होता था कि भर्ती कुछ कम हो गई है, लेकिन व्यक्तिगत रूप से बहुत से एजेंट मालिकों के आकर मजदूरों की भर्ती करते हैं, वह उन को ले जाने के लिये तरह तरह का प्रलोभन देते हैं, कम्बल देते हैं, जूते देते हैं, कपड़े देते हैं । लेकिन फिर भी जब थह वहाँ से एक साल बाद लौटते हैं तो बिल्कुल टूटे फटे लौटते हैं, यहाँ तक कि उन को बुझारा जाने का मौका नहीं मिलता । वहाँ पर बिल्कुल रक्षा की व्यवस्था नहीं है । राष्ट्रीयकरण हो जाने से कुछ सरकार की जिम्मेदारी होगी कि वह मजदूरों की अधिक रक्षा करे, साथ ही मजदूरों पर अधिक ध्यान दिया जा सकेगा, उनके पठन पाठन का और जान की रक्षा का प्रबन्ध अधिक होगा । दो तीन वर्षों में न जाने कितनी कोल

माइन्स (खानें) घंस गईं । अभी सुना कि कोल माइन के घंस जाने पर कई आदमी उस में फंस गये और १५ दिन तक मछली खा कर जिन्दा रहे । लेकिन उन के निकालने की व्यवस्था में बड़ी ढील ढाल रही । अगर उन को सरकार ले ले तो मजदूरों के कल्याण की भावना से वह काम करेगी क्योंकि उस के सामने पैसे का ख्याल ज्यादा नहीं रहेगा, मुनाफे का ख्याल ज्यादा नहीं रहेगा । कोल माइन ठीक तौर से चले, मजदूरों के जान की रक्षा हो, अधिक से अधिक माल कम से कम मुनाफे में खोदा जाये और अधिक से अधिक पैसा मजदूरों को दिया जाये, इस की व्यवस्था रहेगी ।

अभी सरकार की योजना थी कि बड़ी बड़ी इंडस्ट्रीज में मजदूरों का भी व्यवस्था में हिस्सा दिया जाये । लेकिन अभी तक कोई इन्तजाम उस का नहीं हुआ है । यह बहुत दूर तक की चीज है, लेकिन कोयला एक ऐसा विषय है कि मैं उम्मीद करता हूँ कि हमारे मंत्री महोदय उस पर ध्यान देंगे । इस विषय को अब अधिक दिन तक टाला न जाये क्योंकि वातावरण में और वायुमंडल में कोयले के राष्ट्रीयकरण की चर्चा चलती रहेगी तो कोयला खानों के मालिकों के दिल में एक चक्का जरूर रहेगा और वह लोग कोई अच्छी व्यवस्था नहीं करेंगे । मगर आप ने इस में देर की तो यू० पी० के जंगलों का जो हाल हुआ, यानी वह बिल्कुल साफ कर दिये गये, वही कोयला खानों के बारे में भी होगा । मैं ने कॉलिअरीज (कोयला खानों) को देखा तो नहीं है, लेकिन मजदूरों के अनुभवों से मैं यही समझता हूँ । इसलिये मुझे महात्मा गांधी के शब्द तो याद नहीं हैं, लेकिन जहाँ तक मुझे स्मरण है उन्होंने ने कहा था ऐसे व्यवसाय सब राष्ट्रों के हों, किसी व्यक्ति के न रहें ।

आज हम सोशलिस्ट पैटर्न अर्थात् समाजवादी ढाँचे की चर्चा करते हैं, लेकिन इस के लिये आवश्यक है कि पहले हमारे व्यवसाय ठीक हों । मैं ने आप से पहले भी कहा है कि

[श्री सिंहासन सिंह]

उस की ओर अग्रसर होने में, उस की ओर आगे बढ़ने में यह सब चीजें सार्थक हो सकती हैं। अगर इन चीजों को हम ने सामने न रखा, उन को देर तक ठहरने दिया और वह क्योंकि त्यों चलती रहती तो सामाजिक ढांचे को आगे बढ़ाने में बड़ी स्कावट पड़ेगी। समाजवादी ढांचे की ओर बढ़ने के लिये जिस की भरत के लिये जरूरत है, यह आवश्यक है कि देश की कोल माइन्स जो हैं वह सारी राष्ट्र के हाथ में हों। कोयला जो है वह बड़ी शक्ति है, वह अग्नि है। अगर हम ने अग्नि पर अधिकार कर लिया तो हमारा सब काम चल सकता है, लेकिन अगर वह दूसरों के हाथों में है, अगर सरकार दूसरों के सहारे चलती है, कम्पनी के ऊपर आश्रित हो कर चलती है तो काम बिगड़ सकती है। इसलिये इस शक्ति को जिस से दूसरी शक्तियां पैदा होती हैं, राष्ट्र के हाथों से अलग रहने देना राष्ट्र के हित में नहीं है।

इसलिये मैं प्रस्ताव का स्वागत करता हूँ और मंत्री जी से अनुरोध करूंगा कि जितनी जल्दी हो सके इस काम को करें। यह सदन तो अब खत्म हो रहा है, अगले सदन में गवर्नमेंट का पहला प्रस्ताव वह होना चाहिये कि कोल माइन्स का राष्ट्रीयकरण कर लिया जायें।

Shri H. N. Mukerjee (Calcutta North-East): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, when the debate started, I had no intention of participating in the discussion. But, I remember how, last month, I had been to two hospitals in Asansol to see the 11 colliery workers who had been entombed for more than 10 days and yet had the courage and tenacity to cling to life, were rescued, men, whose life underneath mother earth was itself a symbol of the heroism of the workers who man our coal mines. I felt, therefore, that I owe it to them, to the heroism of those who go down the bowels of the earth to produce wealth for the community, to say a few words in support of the resolution.

I see also that the hon. Minister for Production is now sitting side by side with the Minister for Finance and I feel that in regard to a matter of such importance as the nationalisation of coal, which is suggested in this resolution, the Cabinet, as a whole, should have some sort of a definite policy which this House has a right to be informed of. I say this because we have been told about a socialist pattern of society and, naturally, it involves the co-existence for a foreseeable period of time of the private sector along with the public sector, the latter occupying strategic positions. If we conceive of a socialist pattern of society, we do not foresee an indefinite continuance of the private sector, particularly in those strategic areas of our economy which the public sector should control as soon as ever that is possible. It goes without saying that coal is a sector of the economy which the State ought to control as soon as ever that can be done. That being so, we must have a definite idea and the private interests who are operating in the sphere of coal should, in fairness, be told what exactly to expect.

For the time being, what happens is that a large part of the production of our coal is controlled by foreign interests. We see also that while large profits accrue, there is an amount of anarchy in so far as there are some large and well-run establishments, and there is also a plethora of small collieries which have a hand to mouth existence. If this is so, if there is a kind of anarchy in the sphere of production as far as coal is concerned, if we see certain foreign interests still operating, if we think that coal is an element of our economy which should come under the direct control of the State, surely, we should make up our mind about nationalisation as soon as we can.

The private sector has its arguments which it does not hesitate to advertise. I have seen it said that the private sector manages the production

of coal a great deal better than the State. The private sector has come forward to say that if we had the money which the State proposes to spend under the Second Five Year Plan, we could have produced more tonnage. The private sector says that they could produce the State's allocation of production in the Second Plan period at a much cheaper cost. The private sector does this kind of propaganda and advertises its superiority and its greater efficiency only because, I fear, the public sector has suffered so far and it continues to suffer from the weight of bureaucracy. If our Government is at all serious about the socialist pattern objective, it should adopt steps here and now to remove that load of bureaucracy and to enlist elements from the private sector in the service of the State. I say this in a very serious way because we have very often heard representatives of the private sector in this House, whom I do not see today for some reason or order, say that they are just as patriotic as any other section of the community. If that is so and if the country has decided upon the socialist pattern of society to be its objective, it is for the private sector to supply the talent and organisational strength to the State. It is for the State to make it possible for the people in the private sector today to come forward and make their contribution. I say, therefore, that it is for the State here and now to decide on certain steps of development. I can certainly conceive that, let us say, after 3 Five-Year Plan periods, let us say, after 15 years from today, surely, in a basic element of our economy, coal, you are not going to have the private sector at all. How are you going to work out the elimination of the private sector from control of an important and strategic item in our economy in, let us say, 10 or 15 years time? That is a very serious problem and that is the problem to which, surely, the Cabinet ought to apply its mind. Therefore I say that I wish the Government comes forward and says definitely that since a socialist pattern of society is its objective and

since that pattern is likely to be largely achieved in the course of the next 2 or 3 Five Year Plans, surely in the sphere of coal, certain objective steps are going to be taken. May be not immediately; but this House has a right to know what it is going to do about it. As far as we are concerned, we suggest that steps should be taken here and now for the purpose of nationalisation.

My hon. friend Shri T. B. Vittal Rao has already given so many reasons. He has shown how our production will fall far below the target if you do not take steps betimes and if you do not adopt nationalisation methods. I wish also to repeat the argument which he only suggested which was that we can save a great deal of foreign exchange if our fuel resources can be developed. We do believe that, because, in spite of all endeavour to find oil in different regions of our country so far, estimates are not particularly happy, a large amount of foreign exchange should be saved by means of the development of our coal production. Therefore, I feel that nationalisation, rid of all dangers of bureaucracy, is certainly a solution which we should try to adopt. Shri T. B. Vittal Rao also tried to point out how there are people who are working in our collieries in managerial positions, who are Mining engineers and so on, can give us many ideas about the development of production. It so happens that these people, working under private capitalists, are afraid of giving expression to their ideas, because, these ideas initially would entail certain costs which the private capitalist does not wish to bear. At the present moment, working under private capitalists, these experts, whose services should be mobilised for the purpose of the community, are not able to give of their best. Apart from that, the workers can contribute their ideas. The experience of the Soviet Union or China is quite eloquent on this point. The average rank and file worker in the coal mining industry can offer ideas which would revolutionise the whole

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quality of production and also its quantity. Apart from the rank and file worker, even those in the managerial level today have their own ideas which they can contribute, which in private discussions they talk about. But, those ideas are simply wasted because, generally speaking, these ideas entail some special expenditure which the private capitalist wants to avoid.

Then, again, there is the question of safety measures. I began by saying how there was in Asansol a very serious accident in which a number of miners were killed, in which 11 people, by a miracle, survived. I saw the survivors, as I said before. Safety devices have got to be improved and provided for in as large a scale as possible. Safety devices to be adopted on that scale naturally entail expenditure. In England when they had nationalisation of the coal mines, the question came up that the State had to spend a great deal more on certain items than private capitalists would, but the State decided that in the interests of not only the workers in the coal mines industry, but in the interests of the entire community, it was necessary for the State to undertake the expenditure for that purpose, and therefore, for the development of our coal production, for safety devices, for all kinds of welfare and amenity provisions in our coal mines, certainly it is for the State to come forward.

Then, reference has been made in the discussion to the case of the smaller collieries. There are quite a number of these small collieries scattered all over the place, and they find it very difficult to compete on equal terms with the larger collieries. Now, there is a move to secure amalgamation of these smaller collieries. How is that amalgamation going to be done? I know it is pending investigation, but it is for Government now to come forward and say that perhaps for an interim period, perhaps tentatively speaking, Government

might enter into a sort of relationship with these small men who own small collieries. There might even be, tentatively, for an interim period, State-cum-private enterprise collieries. There might be certain co-operative organisations where the State has the whip hand. Now, Government must have certain ideas in regard to this matter, and this House has a right to know how Government is proceeding in regard to such things.

Then, in regard to prospecting, we have the other Ministry of Natural Resources and Scientific Research, we have the Ministry of Education. Now, prospecting can be done on a nationwide scale only when you link up the work in the universities, in the geological institutions, with the work in the industry, with the work on the production sector. Unless, therefore, the State comes into the picture, unless the State, therefore, mobilises so to speak, the patriotic instincts of our people, our students, our young people who are working in the Geological Survey and elsewhere—we can get voluntary services in this regard also—this cannot be done. Prospecting has got to be linked up with production. Prospecting, mining, marketing, transport—all these belong to the sphere of the State. Unless the State, with the objective of welfare for the maximum number of people, comes into the scene effectively, our objectives will not be realised. That is the main point. It is for the State to come into the picture and properly. It is for the State to pull its weight in favour of the overwhelming majority of the citizens.

What happens now is that the price of coal is raised because the wages of the coal miners is very grudgingly increased, not to the satisfaction of the generality of the coal miners, but the mine owners point out how the price of coal has got to be raised because some more money has to be given to the miners. The common people would naturally object to that sort of thing altogether. If, therefore,

the bias is in favour of the overwhelming majority of the people, that is to say if the State is conditioned by the interests of the overwhelming majority of our people, then, the State would intervene in favour of welfare for as many as we can provide welfare measures for. And therefore I feel here is an industry which is basic to our industry, here is an industry which is absolutely important as far as our planned programmes are concerned, here is an industry which we cannot indefinitely leave in the control of the private sector, here is an industry where the private sector, if it has any points in its favour in regard to efficiency, should be mobilised and its services enlisted by the State, here is an industry where there are some small collieries which are in a very chaotic condition, which could very well either be taken over or be co-operatively organised under Government direction, here is an industry a large part of which is still controlled by foreign interests, here is an industry which we can develop and thereby save a great deal of foreign exchange, and therefore, here is an industry where we should certainly see the State playing a very much larger role than it has done so far.

I do not expect the Minister to tell me that he has decided on nationalisation. But let him tell us in view particularly of the almost unanimous view expressed by Members of this House who have spoken this afternoon—it may be an accident, but it so happens that almost unanimous support has been given to the resolution—what Government feels in regard to this matter, and even if he says that he cannot accept this resolution, I would like him to point out what exactly are the steps he envisages. It is no good merely saying we cannot take over the coal mines straightaway. I want the Government to come forward and say that Government does have a real plan in regard to coal, and that that plan is in conformity with the entire phasing pattern of the movement towards a

socialist form of society. That is why I support the resolution which has been moved by Shri Vittal Rao.

Shri L. Jogeshwar Singh (Inner Manipur): I wholeheartedly support the nationalisation of coal mines, and would draw attention to one aspect of this resolution. My complaint in this connection is that the production of coal has been totally neglected and has suffered. And particularly for instance, during the last one year or more the Ministry has been sleeping over files of prospecting coal in Manipur. I have drawn the attention of the Minister to the development of underdeveloped areas where there is a belt of coal mines, especially in the eastern part of India. There is large amount of production in certain parts of Assam, especially in Shillong, and prospecting can be done in other parts of that area, especially in Manipur. I have placed this matter before the Ministry. In this connection I also consulted the Ministry of Natural Resources and Scientific Research, but their attitude has been cold towards the exploitation of certain mines in that part of the country. They say: "What is the use of coal here, because there is no transport." I wonder, how many lorries will be required to transport coal from this part of the country while we have hundred of lorries daily carrying essential commodities. I think it is a very fantastic statement for the secretariat to make. For instance, they say, there is the gold mine in Kolar which has not been properly utilised. They say: "What is the use of small particles of gold being available in that part of the country? No transport is available." I wonder how many lorries will be required to transport gold and I also wonder at this attitude of the secretariat, especially that of the Secretary for Natural Resources. I met them more than one year ago.

I refer to this matter because the Secretariat has got a more or less bureaucratic mentality. They have not so far changed their attitude in spite

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of changed conditions after freedom. At least they should be sympathetic to the problems brought before them so far as the under-developed areas are concerned. Production has been totally neglected and that is why I approached them and also the people there.

Coal has been found in some parts of Manipur which is of good quality, but how attention has not been paid to it so long I do not know. If they do not want to nationalise these coal mines, I think production of coal will be adversely affected, because I have seen that they have given very little attention to the problems of exploitation of coal and other mineral resources in the under-developed areas. If you want to have progress in the different parts of India, your mind should be applied to the problems of the under-developed areas also. Therefore, I fully support the nationalisation of coal mines.

The Deputy Minister of Production (Shri Satish Chandra): This subject has been discussed in this House on several occasions during this year. During the debate on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Production, many Members raised this question. There have also been several demands for policy statements during the Question Hour.

The Minister of Production gave a detailed explanation of the policy of Government in this matter during the last Budget debate. The repeated demand that the policy of Government should be made clear is not easily intelligible. It has been stated more than once on behalf of Government that the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948 and now the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956, clearly lays down the policy which is being followed in this matter. This question has been before Government from the very time that the Interim National Government took over the reins of

administration in 1946. Several committees have since then, been appointed. They submitted reports, and if the policy, as it has developed gradually during these few years is studied, it will be seen that we are moving very much towards the objective which hon. Members have in view. Anyway, my task has become lighter on account of the interpretation given to the Resolution by the Deputy Leader of the Communist Party. I cannot accept the Resolution in the form, it has been moved by Shri T. B. Vittal Rao, but if he has in mind what his Deputy Leader has said, that in a period of 10, 15 or 20 years, we should be able to nationalise this basic industry, then I can say that we are working towards the same end.

Shri S. L. Saksena: 15 years.

Shri Satish Chandra: That is what has been said by the hon. Member to his right.

Shri S. L. Saksena: He never said 15 years.

Shri Satish Chandra: In 1946, the Government decided that State ownership and operation of the entire coal industry was not a practical issue. That was the decision then. Nevertheless, State ownership and operation could be extended in certain eventualities. That was the position in 1946, the pre-independence period. Later on, the hon. members will find a gradual evolution of that policy. The Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948 declared that the State would be exclusively responsible for the establishment of new undertakings except where, in the national interest, the State itself found it necessary to secure the co-operation of private enterprise, subject to such control and regulation as the Central Government might prescribe. The Government decided to let existing undertakings develop for a period of ten years during which they were to be allowed all facilities for efficient working and reasonable expansion.

This policy was reviewed one year later. It was decided that if the right to work new undertakings had already been conferred by grant of prospecting licences or mining leases on any party, that party would be permitted to develop the undertakings, unless they were taken over by the State for any special reasons. In areas where no such rights existed, each case was to be decided on merits, as to the undertaking being developed by the State or by Private enterprise.

The 1956 Policy Resolution says that all new units in the coal industry, save where their establishment in the private sector has already been approved, will be set up by the State. This does not preclude the expansion of the existing privately-owned units or possibility of the State securing the co-operation of private enterprise in the new units where the national interests so require. It might be said that this is only a paraphrasing of the previous Resolution. But if it is read carefully, it will perhaps be clear that there is a shift in emphasis, and the policy in future will be that no new collieries, except for very minor ones in outlying areas, will be allowed to be established in the private sector, except where the production can increase in areas immediately contiguous to the existing mines. This is the present policy.

As the hon. Mover is aware, the target of production at the end of the second Five Year Plan is 60 million tons. Out of the additional production of 22 million tons, about 12 million tons are to be raised in the public sector and 10 millions in the private sector. The Mover has given his figures and presented his case in a manner which might give a wrong impression. The fact is that in a period of five years, the production is to become about four times in the public sector. Some of the present collieries in this country have been in existence, as he himself has said, for 200 years. If in a period of 100 years, the public sector was able to raise only 3 million tons of coal, then to aim at

raising it by another 12 million tons in a period of five years will not be a minor achievement. I do not know why he has his doubts about this target. I hope that with the resources now available to us, the plans that have been drawn up and the prospecting and drilling that has been done and is being done, it will be possible to fulfil this target.

I can only assure the House that every effort is being made to utilise the resources to the maximum advantage. The question is very simple. We broadly agree as to our ultimate objective. It has however not been possible to take immediate steps for the nationalisation of the industry for the simple reason that the resources—both of money as well as technical personnel—which could be harnessed for this industry are limited. The question is whether it will be advantageous to utilize the limited resources that we have on nationalisation of the existing obsolete and out-of-date mines which are already working or to use them more profitably by developing new mines and producing additional coal. There is at present a genuine difficulty in finding suitable administrative and technical personnel to manage the coal mines. There are many persons in the private coal industry who possess good experience of running these mines efficiently. I wish that their response to the public sector is as good as is expected by the hon. Deputy Leader opposite. But, it was felt that it would not be possible for various reasons to utilise their services in the public sector. It would be a distinct loss if their talent was not utilized for augmenting coal production. It would perhaps be better to let them work where they are and to train additional personnel for the development of fresh mines.

16 hrs.

The development of the coal industry is, to a large extent, controlled and regulated by the Government.

[Shri Satish Chandra]

The private sector is not left completely free to do what it likes. There are all sorts of controls. In fact, the production, distribution and prices are all controlled. No lease can be given today for prospecting or mining of a new area without the sanction of the Central Government. Permission of the Coal Board is necessary to start new work in a colliery. New coal undertakings can be started only subject to permission being granted under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act. Then, there are provisions for the inspection of mines, for safety measures to be adopted, for conservation of higher qualities of coal etc.

A friend asked as to why the production of metallurgical coal has not been increasing. In fact, we do not want to increase production of metallurgical coal. Whatever metallurgical coal is being produced today is not being utilised for the purposes that it should be. The idea is that all of it should be gradually diverted to the steel plants as they go into production. Some of the present consumers of metallurgical coal should be given an inferior grade of coal. It is not in our interest that metallurgical coal should be extracted indiscriminately.

The rules framed under the Mines Act have imposed many limitation on the private colliery owners regarding safety of the mines and conservation of coal. There are provisions for the provident fund bonus and we are taking measures. There is a cess of 6 annas per ton, on all production of coal, a substantial part of which is spent on labour housing. It will be possible to build gradually more houses for the colliery labour.

These are just the examples to show as to how the private coal industry is being controlled by the State. The only thing that we have not done is to acquire ownership rights and physical control of these collieries and to take them under our direct charge, because we felt that more emphasis should be laid on additional production rather than

on some sort of satisfaction as a result of taking over the mines which are already engaged in production. Some of these mines as I have said are really not worth taking due to their being obsolete and out of date. The limited resources that we have, must be utilised in the best manner possible. There is, therefore, only a slight difference in the approach of the Government and the Mover. The problem really is how to proceed in the matter. If the Government had tried to acquire the existing mines, the programme of additional production would have probably been curtailed. That would not have been in the interest of the economic development of the country.

Many hon. Members have spoken about the small and inefficient collieries. The House is aware that a committee was appointed some time ago to study the problem of small collieries lying in between bigger collieries and to suggest ways and means of tackling that problem. That committee has just now submitted its report. The Chairman of the Estimates Committee of this House was the Chairman of that committee which has given a very useful report making important recommendations. It has been received only a few weeks back and the recommendations are being examined. I hope that small colliery owners will in their own interest be persuaded to amalgamate voluntarily into larger units. If that is not possible, some legislation may have to be brought forward before this House to compel the smaller collieries to amalgamate so that they can be turned into more efficient units than what they are now. This question has not been ignored. It is now being examined and I hope that some decision will be arrived at very soon.

Dr. Jaisoorya has made some very constructive suggestions. It is not as if those problems have not engaged our attention. The council of Scientific and Industrial Research has several times discussed the question of utilisation of coal and the deve-

development of chemical industries. A Coal Council has recently been appointed. The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research is represented on the Council. Dr. J. C. Ghosh of the Planning Commission and some other persons with knowledge of the coal industry are members. The Council will examine how we can utilise in the best manner possible our coal resources, develop new industries and coal tar distillation processes. Only this morning I was replying to a question about the utilization of low grade coal for the production of synthetic petroleum.

The House is aware that big thermal stations have recently been set up, for instance the Bokharo thermal station. A big thermal station is included in the lignite project. Wherever, there is a shortage of power and wherever coal or lignite can be usefully utilised for generation of electricity, the intention is to use such coal or lignite on the spot, to generate power for the development of various industries in the region. There can be no difference in principle about this matter. I cannot, however, agree with the hon. Member that we have given lopsided attention to our hydro-electric power. That is not a matter immediately concerning me. But, in our multi-purpose projects we have tried to utilise our water resources for the generation of electricity and this has helped our industrial progress. The hon. Member Dr. Jaisooraya is aware that river valley projects are not single-purpose schemes. Flood control, irrigation and other things come in. These hydro-electric power stations have given us very cheap power. It is difficult to imagine that cheaper power can be generated in thermal station even if these power stations are set up right in the centre of the collieries.

Much has been said about the wages of the labour in the coal fields. The House is aware that only a few months ago, an Industrial Tribunal

gave an award and the wages of the workers were increased by about 40 per cent. on an average—there may be some exceptions—and some of the Unions, with which the hon. Mover of the Resolution is probably connected, have filed an appeal. That award has already been implemented. The matter is, however, still *sub-judice*; the appeal is being considered by an Appellate Tribunal. The Industrial Tribunal has gone thoroughly into the economic structure of the coal mines, the cost of raising coal, the price that is charged, the profits that are earned by collieries, and after considering these factors has given a fair award. If the hon. Member is still not satisfied with it, the Unions in which he has influence have still got an opportunity to press their view before the Appellate Tribunal. It is not very fair that so soon after a big rise in wages the question should be agitated again in this House especially at a time when the matter is being reviewed on an application moved by some of the Unions. What I say is that the wages have increased by 40 per cent. recently.

Dr. Rama Rao (Kakinada): 40 per cent. on how much? The percentage is 40; but on how much?

Shri Satish Chandra: I think it is a fair amount. If a man had been getting Rs. 50, he now gets Rs. 70 per month. It is a big jump. In some of the areas it will be still more. In Bengal-Bihar fields, the increase is about 40 per cent; in other areas where the wages were lower, the percentage of increase will be higher as the wages have been made uniform all over the country. So, I think that this matter should rest at least for some time, till, say, the end of the second Plan period. It can be agitated at a later stage. Government is very mindful of the amenities of the workers, their housing, their welfare, etc., but progress can only be made within the limited resources available and in the context of the

[Shri Satish Chandra]

fancy for such organisations because general labour conditions in the country.

It is no use, as an hon. friend has done, trying to compare the production of coal in India with that in U.S.A. or Russia.

Shri S. L. Saksena: In China.

Shri Satish Chandra: Our present production may be comparable to that of China.

Shri S. L. Saksena: You are wrong; it is less than half.

Shri Satish Chandra: I do not claim to be an expert on China. I do not know the wages paid there, what is the production, how much they have increased, but the figures that Shri Vittal Rao gave were not very startling.

Shri S. L. Saksena: I happened to study them and compare them with our figures.

Shri Satish Chandra: I have no comparative assessment before me. I think in many matters we can stand a fair comparison with China. Moreover, we have to think in our own terms, in the context of the general industrial conditions in this country. I have no doubt that given a period of 20, 25 or 30 years, this country will be able to catch up with any advanced country in the world. Russia has caught up with other advanced countries of the world in a period of 40 years. I would be perfectly willing to compare our achievements with the progress made in the First Five Year Plan in U.S.S.R. or in China.

Shri S. L. Saksena: Compare them.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: That comparison may be done at some other time.

Shri Satish Chandra: In the end, I would only repeat what I said in the beginning, that Government wants to have as much control over this industry as is possible. This is

a basic and important industry. We are proceeding towards the same objective which the hon. Members who spoke on the Resolution have in view, but wholesale nationalisation in the immediate future is not a practical proposition. Taking an objective view of the whole thing, it has been decided that new areas should be worked by the State, while the old collieries should be allowed to function and should be encouraged to increase their production by extending their operation in the immediately contiguous areas. That is the policy which is being followed, and in the present circumstances, it is perhaps the best policy. I thank the hon. Mover of this Resolution because such discussions focus attention and help us in moving towards our objective even though it may not be possible to realise it immediately.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: I will be very very short in my reply. I rise to express my thanks to the various hon. Members who have supported my Resolution. All those who took part in the discussion this afternoon, excepting the hon. Deputy Minister, have supported the Resolution. Even he accepts some of it. What I say in this Resolution is only "steps be taken to nationalise collieries". That is all; I never demanded that the nationalisation should be done here and now.

Shri K. C. Reddy: Please read your Resolution carefully.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: I was speaking about some mines in the private sector and the Deputy Minister has tried to confuse to some extent that I wanted him to take over the mines absolutely. I never said that. He is depending upon the very mines to produce 45 million tons per year in the Second Five Year Plan. Therefore, they could not be obsolete. If these mines were taken over and if they are planned and regulated, we would be able to carry out successfully our plans of industrialisation. That was my view.

Secondly, about the labour welfare fund, I wish to say this. It is true that we are collecting six annas on every ton of coal. But all that amount does not constitute this fund for housing. It is distributed in the ratio of 7:2 and only 2/9ths of that amount, that is Re. 0-1-4, per every ton goes into it. This may kindly be taken note of.

Then, again he referred to the constitution of the Coal Council. In that body, representation is given to some of the Government officials and some important magnates in the coal industry. They have forgotten the mining engineers, except those mining engineers who are in Government Service. The others have been omitted. I say that the Government is not at all properly advised in matters regarding the coal mining industry. I am sure that they will realise it at a very great cost, if they do not review the situation quickly. Today, the capital investment in the coal industry does not amount to more than Rs. 22-23 crores. By taking over the mines and agreeing to pay a reasonable compensation spread over, say, twenty years, the Government need not spend any heavy sum now. Anyway, the support extended by the friends here to my resolution clearly shows that it is in keeping with the aspirations of the people.

Mr Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

"This House is of opinion that immediate steps be taken to nationalise collieries in India."

The motion was negatived.

RESOLUTION RE. SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF POLITICAL SUFFERERS

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh (Shahbad South): Sir, I beg to move:

"This House is of opinion that the Government should award scholarships to the children of such political sufferers in the

country as have not got adequate source of income for their education."

I think that this resolution ought to have been moved in this House and accepted also on the very day the country achieved its Independence. I am sorry that it has not been done so.

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs Shri Satyanarayan Sinha: Better late than never.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Anyway, it has been moved to day and I am confident that this will find unanimous acceptance of the House. Most of the hon. Members who are present here had actively participated in the struggle for freedom of the country and they are well aware of the sufferings of their fellow political sufferers who have not got adequate sources of income. They also know to what difficulties these people are put at present because of the high cost of living. In such conditions, it is very difficult for those political sufferers to send their children even to schools.

This resolution which I have moved is intended to cover all the political sufferers who had participated in all the Movements since 1905 till 1942, irrespective of their present party affiliations. They may belong to any party today. I think they must be given the benefits of this resolution. The number of such persons may go up to hundreds of thousands but we can certainly exclude all the political sufferers who have at present some source of income. We can also exclude the members of the legislatures, local bodies and Ministers who are privileged to hold very high positions in the Government. I myself know a large number of political sufferers who bore the brunt of bullets and lathi charges. I know quite a few of our revered patriots who were sent to gallows and heroically fell a victim to bullets and lathi charges