

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

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(Part II—Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)
OFFICIAL REPORT

3433

HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Wednesday, 1st April, 1953

The House met at Two of the Clock

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(See Part I)

2-58 P.M.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The House will now take up the Demands for Grants relating to the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply.

Kumari Annie Mascarene (Trivandrum): There is a Short Notice question, Sir.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: It is not on the Order paper. Possible it may come tomorrow.

DEMAND NO. 102—MINISTRY OF WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Motion is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 19,98,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply'."

DEMAND NO. 103—SUPPLIES

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Motion is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,52,67,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st

20 P.S.D.

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day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Supplies'."

DEMAND NO. 104—OTHER CIVIL WORKS

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Motion is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 13,54,26,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Other Civil Works'."

DEMAND NO. 105—STATIONERY AND PRINTING

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Motion is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,52,36,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Stationery and Printing'."

DEMAND NO. 106—MISCELLANEOUS DEPARTMENTS AND EXPENDITURE UNDER THE MINISTRY OF WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Motion is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 42,54,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Miscellaneous Departments and Expenditure under the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply'."

DEMAND NO. 139—NEW DELHI CAPITAL OUTLAY

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Motion is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,37,16,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which

[Mr. Deputy-Speaker]

will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'New Delhi Capital Outlay'."

DEMAND No. 140—CAPITAL OUTLAY ON BUILDINGS

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Motion is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 8,48,70,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Capital Outlay on Buildings'."

DEMAND No. 141—OTHER CAPITAL OUTLAY OF THE MINISTRY OF WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Motion is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 8,16,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Other Capital Outlay of the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply'."

3 P.M.

Economy and efficiency in administration

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy (Mysore): I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Corruption and nepotism

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Inadequate measures in industrial housing

Shri Tushar Chatterjee (Singapore): I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Corruption and nepotism

Shri R. N. Singh (Ghazipur Distt.—East cum Ballia Distt.—South West): I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Ministry of Works, Hous-

ing and Supply' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Retrenchment of C.P.W.D. workers

Shri Nambiar (Mayuram): I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Need to extend Provident Fund Pension Rules and gratuity facilities to permanent and temporary works charged staff

● **Shri Nambiar:** I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Steps to confirm all temporary staff and to stop contract labour

Shri Nambiar: I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Price policy re petroleum products particularly furnace oil

Dr. Amin (Baroda West): I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Corruption and waste stores pruchisr of Stores

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Supplies' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Failure to improve Power House in Agartala

Shri Dasaratha Deb (Tripura East): I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Supplies' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Inordinate delay in obtaining spare parts of buses and lorries for Road Transport Department, Hyderabad State

Shri Vital Rao (Khammam): I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Supplies' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Economy in expenditure on India Supply Mission in U.S.A.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty (Basirhat): I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Supplies' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Reduction of expenditure on India Stores Department, London

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Supplies' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Scrutiny of stores indents of various departments before actual indent is placed in foreign countries

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Supplies' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Corruption, bribery and nepotism

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Other Civil Works' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Failure to absorb all work-charged temporary employees

Shri Raghavaiah (Ongole): I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Other Civil Works' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Grievances of Central Government Press employees

Shri T. K. Chaudhuri (Berhampore): I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Stationery and Printing' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Delays in printing of proceedings of House of the People

Shri Vittal Rao: I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Stationery and Printing' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: All these cut motions are now before the House.

Shri Mohanlal Saksena.

Kumari Annie Mascarene: Sir, I have received intimation about the Short Notice Question. It is mentioned here as coming up on Wednesday the 1st April.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I am sorry. I will find out.

Shri Nambiar: It is 1st April, Sir.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I called Shri Mohanlal Saksena. But I did not see him stand up. Merely because I am given a list of names, which is only for purposes of guidance to me, hon. Members cannot avoid standing up. Hereafter, all hon. Members must stand up; unless they do so, I will not call them. Only if they stand up, I will have an opportunity to see who are the hon. Members that stand up from time to time, and give a chance accordingly.

Sardar A. S. Saigal (Bilaspur): That is the rule also.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I find that no hon. Member has stood up. Shall I call upon the hon. Minister?

Several Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Hereafter, I will not go by the names. I will call hon. Members from among those who stand up. Now, Mr. Raghavaiah will speak.

Sardar A. S. Saigal: That means, in future, there will be no lists.

Shri Raghavaiah: My intention in moving the cut motion under Demand No. 104 is to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Works, Housing and Supply to the fact that the industrial housing that he contemplated in his last year's report has not met with any result at all, as we find from the report that has been given to us this year. Another point to which I wish to draw his attention is that in the C.P.W.D. and the Printing and Stationery Department there is retrenchment going on. In the Cochin aerodrome some forty workers have been proposed to be retrenched. The repairs, upkeep and maintenance of the aerodrome has taken over from the C.P.W.D. by the Defence Ministry, but the Defence Ministry having taken over this responsibility, is not willing to employ these forty workers who have been working there already. It kept cool and calm when they were kicked out of employment.

[Shri Raghavaiah]

I will give another instance. For the maintenance of Rajgnat there is a caretaker and fifteen work-charged employees. A proposal is under consideration to transfer the maintenance and upkeep of Rajghat—a holy place for the entire nation—to the Gandhi Memorial Committee. But it is understood that the Memorial Committee is not prepared to take over the fifteen work-charged employees, who are going to be retrenched and thrown out of employment.

Last year, the hon. Minister in his reply to the debate stated that employees retrenched from one circle or department will be absorbed in another circle or department. I can give you any number of instances where this rule has been violated, but I will give you just one instance. In Delhi, in the First and Second Circles, retrenchment has taken place, but in the Rehabilitation and Central Circles fresh recruitment has been made of raw hands and the people retrenched from the First and Second Circles have not been given employment in these Circles. This is how things are going on. These experienced and trained hands were not given employment even when vacancies existed in other circles.

I shall mention how retrenchment is going on in the Printing and Stationery Department. The hon. Minister is in the habit of refuting figures that come from this side. Last year, he said that this side and the other side will never agree on figures, let alone policy questions. He styled the figures supplied by responsible trade union organisations as the figures of irresponsible informants. Those very organisations are recognised and registered by the Central and State Governments. Anyhow, I would like to give some figures and ask the hon. Minister to refute them with any proof that he may have. The staff in the Stationery and Printing Department at Calcutta in pre-war time was: permanent 355 and temporary 25; total 380. During the war, the staff was: permanent 380 and quasi-permanent 510 and the total was 890. Some retrenchment took place on 30th June 1952 and the figures were: permanent 380 and quasi-permanent 435; total 815. Here I have a petition submitted by the concerned association to the Ministry. It says that 75 experienced and old staff have been reduced as from 1-7-1952 and some 35 new and inexperienced staff have been recruited temporarily during October and December 1952 and

January 1953. The staff of the Store Department which has been mainly affected has been made to work extra hours illegally. I am prepared to give a copy of this petition to the hon. Minister if and when he wants.

Another point that I may bring to his notice is that legitimate leave is being refused. A petition in that respect is also with me here, and I can supply a copy to him if he wants.

Heavy pressure of work caused the death of an employee. He fell unconscious while on duty on 20-1-1953. He was sent to the hospital in an ambulance, and on 21-1-1953, after twenty-four hours of his removal from the office, he died in the hospital. This is the havoc caused by the workload. This is the mischief caused by the appointment of a Commission called the Eastern Beaudaux Company. It has been appointed with the express purpose of retrenching workers and increasing the workload. I shall deal with this Company in due course.

Before that, there are one or two other points I wish to mention. When an employee has passed away due to heavy workload, no compensation is given. One employee fell unconscious in office on 6-2-1953 and he was sent to the hospital by ambulance and sent back from there as a case of T.B. In spite of the presence of the office staff car, it was not given by the Deputy Controller to send the employee to his residence. The employees had to send donations. Government did not even take care to pay a few pies for the ambulance or to the man who carried this sick person to his residence. Even this minimum humanistic outlook was absent from the officers there, as it is absent at the Centre here. The staff who were reduced and who had put in three to ten years of service were given alternative employment. Most of them are working in quasi-permanent jobs in Aligarh Press, Delhi Press etc. This is the tragic story of the employees in the Printing and Stationery Department in Calcutta and elsewhere.

Another point is about leave facilities. Leave facilities, leave reserves and all other amenities given to a Central Government servant employee are not given to these employees.

[PANDIT THAKUR DAS BHARGAVA in the Chair]

I demand that these facilities should be given to them. I have to raise this matter on the floor of the House, because there has been no response to the

petitions sent to the hon. Minister and the officials responsible for the administration of this Department at Calcutta. It was observed by the hon. Minister on a previous occasion that hon. Members on this side of the House are in the habit of bringing these small things on the floor of the House. We have definitely to bring these matters here because a humanist outlook is absent in the administration. That is evident from an instance which I am going to point out. I have a full file—unfortunately I have not brought it here—containing hundreds of petitions sent to the State and Central Governments by the employees of the Stationery Office, but not a single one of their grievances has been redressed. In the meanwhile hundreds of people have been thrown out of employment. That is why we bring these matters before the House and seek redress of the grievances of these employees. We do not raise them in a spirit of criticism. We are not here simply to criticise for criticism's sake.

Let me in this connection draw the attention of the hon. Minister how this Beadaux Company which was appointed worked. They adopted a method which was employed in the United States of America, that abode of experts, from where we are in the habit of importing experts. Even to teach us how to take food we import experts from that country. The Beadaux Company was appointed with a view to studying the working hours, for increasing the workload and for decreasing the number of workers in each industry. As was observed by the employees of the Association:

"The appointment of the Eastern Beadaux Company casts a direct reflection on the efficiency of the Government administration and proves the dearth of experts in the Governmental machinery for such inspection work. Moreover the appointment of such a foreign body authorising them to have free access to the secret and confidential files of the Government is out and out detrimental to the interest of the country as a whole."

* * *

After the termination of the last Great War actual retrenchment was made in the Stationery Office by way of staff retrenchment and discontinuance of filling in vacancies caused by death, dismissal and retrenchment.

Before retrenchment Government assured that the retrenched

staff would be given alternative job and this was actually done.

Shri Neelakantam, who had an opportunity to see things from closer quarters as Deputy Secretary and Controller of Printing and Stationery was fully satisfied with the working of the Stationery Office and recorded his views: 'There is no scope for retrenchment, but definite scope for augmentation.'

Further retrenchment will bring a complete deadlock in the administration.

* * *

When the inspection of the Eastern Beadaux Company, a foreign firm, appointed by the Government to effect economy, was already causing great alarm to the temporary staff, rendering 5 to 10 years of valuable service, the report of the Estimates Committee was a bolt from the blue.

* * *

The unsoundness of the nature of the Estimates Committee's report can be rightly proved. As to Beadaux Company's report on better result can be achieved on account of the fact that they inspected the working of some record supplies or junior clerks in piecemeal without having any knowledge of the working system of the Department as a whole from the heads of the office, branches or sections. Their procedure was to note the time taken in completing a particular type of work with the help of a stop-watch and apply the simple rule of one in arithmetic to arrive at the proportion of workload and strength of the staff, completely ignoring the intellectual, administrative and psychological side of the affair. This procedure may bring good result to a factory for the improvement in output, but a total misfit in an administrative office."

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member has already taken fifteen minutes; he must now conclude.

Shri Raghavaiah: I understood that the Deputy-Speaker had allotted me twenty-five minutes, as I am the main speaker from my party.

Mr. Chairman: That does not mean that one Member can take twenty-five minutes nor is it the absolute right of any Party or Member to take any absolutely fixed quota of time. After all every Member is expected to finish

[Mr. Chairman]

his speech in fifteen minutes. Anyhow, the hon. Member must conclude in three or four minutes.

Shri Raghavaiah: In regard to permanency of staff I may make one or two points. The Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply promised in 1946 that they would prepare a list of all the employees employed in permanent buildings. There is a provision in the employment rules of this Ministry that all the employees working in permanent buildings will be made permanent and an assurance to that effect was given in 1946. But seven years have elapsed and unfortunately not even a list of such employees has been prepared. The result is that all the people working in these permanent buildings are still temporary. Even the sound assistant who is working in this building is temporary. He has a service of five to ten years. These are all permanent buildings. No revolution is going to wipe them away. After all whatever might be the nature of it, there will be a House of the representatives of the people. So, I would request the hon. Minister to prepare that list as quickly as possible and see that these people are made permanent.

Coming to the question of housing, I may just refer to one or two points. The report speaks so much about the Ministry's achievements in the field of housing. The figures given by the hon. Minister in the report are a proof of the bankruptcy of the housing scheme so far as the lower rungs of the ladder of the administrative machinery—that is Class III and Class IV servants—are concerned. While 68 per cent. of the officers drawing above Rs. 500 have been provided accommodation hardly 30 per cent of class IV employees have got accommodation. This is sufficient proof that the hon. Minister is not prepared to build any houses for Class IV employees.

I now come to industrial housing. It has been claimed that 17,000 tenements have been built for industrial workers. The number of industrial workers in this country is more than one and a half millions. This itself is proof of the fact how the industrial housing scheme is going on.

It has been a complaint of the Government that there is not enough initiative from the side of the people. A responsible man who has written a wonderful and really informative book

relating to corruption, giving facts and figures, came to me and said that the hon. Minister has threatened him. It appears he was asked: "Why do you write such books? Why do you give facts and figures? Supposing those people are punished what do you gain." It appears he was threatened with death. I may also bring to the attention of the hon. Minister that the caretaker of Raighat, that holy place, for having brought some instances of corruption in the maintenance of Raighat was threatened with death and punishment. How can the Ministry command the confidence of the people? How will people help them when people who bring instances of corruption to their notice are threatened with death. The initiative of the workers for the successful implementation of the industrial housing, or any other programme, can come only when you make them realise that these houses are built for them and will be owned by them, if not today in course of time. The initiative from the people can come only when there is a real thirst to build houses to be owned by them. During the Question Hour just now reference was made to the construction of cheap houses and so on. You are aware of what one hon. Member, Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani, said last year when she gave a talk on her visit to Vienna, Berlin and other places. She asked the workers there, "What houses are you building? Do you not know about these pre-fabricated houses and all that?" and they told her "We do not know about them". This is what she said. Switzerland is nearer to Germany than to us. But all these pre-fabricated houses and cheap houses and all these constructions are not known to Eastern German workers, are not known to the Eastern German Government—which is building houses for all time and not for the hour. We must think of building tenements and houses for all time and not for the hour, to be wiped out in summer and again to be put up in winter and the same thing repeated. That should not be the industrial housing we should adopt. In all humility I appeal to the hon. Minister to build houses for all time for the workers so that the workers may take the initiative and utilise all their energies in the direction of making the housing programmes of the Government a phenomenal success.

It may not be out of place if I were to refer to a very important case of corruption in this Department. And

may I say that the case to which I have referred in last year's debate, namely the Wells Hangerettes case has not been replied to at all? This one was in 1951 and relates to the Chief Director of Movement in the Food Ministry. He was prosecuted for corruption by the District Magistrate, Delhi. His name is N. D. Rekhe. That is the name of the man who was prosecuted. But in the list of prosecution witnesses there was the name of one who died thirteen years back! The Special Police establishment conducted the prosecution. I just want to bring to notice how the Special Police establishment is working and all these things are going on. With regard to corruption in the C.P.W.D. I will just present the hon. Minister with a book on corruption which contains this case and other cases and with which the hon. Minister is quite familiar. He knows them.

Before concluding....

Mr. Chairman: He has already taken twenty-two minutes.

Shri Raghuvaiah: I am finishing, Sir. Before finishing I would just like to advise the hon. Minister in all humility that he should not threaten people who are prepared to come forward to offer all co-operation and help. The author of that book is one who hoisted the National Flag in Quetta in 1939. Hoisting the National Flag in Quetta then meant the risk of being threatened with death by the then British Government. He was such a patriot. He is such a patriot, and will be such a patriot. But such a patriot has been threatened with death, he was manhandled in the Reserve Bank building. (An Hon. Member: What is his name?) His name is Mohindar Singh Kalse. Such a patriot has been threatened with death simply for having brought this case to the notice of the people and the hon. Minister. So I hope the hon. Minister will take the co-operation of all these people in rooting out corruption in this Department. And he should also make an attempt in all the programmes.....

Mr. Chairman: Order, order. The bell has been rung thrice and the hon. Member has been asked to conclude. He is still going on. I deplore this conduct very much. When the Chair stands the hon. Member should resume his seat. **Shri Mohanlal Saksena.**

Shri Mohanlal Saksena (Lucknow Distt. cum Bara Banki Distt.): Housing is recognised on all hands to be one of the most important and stupendous problems, next perhaps only

to food, which confronts the people and the Government. For some time I have given thought to this problem and studied its different aspects and how it is being tackled in other countries. I have come to certain conclusions as to how best it can be tackled in this country, and these conclusions have been published and also forwarded to Government for consideration. I do not participate in the debate with a view to repeat the conclusions over again but under a sense of duty. I feel I owe it to the House as also to the newly formed association, the All-India Housing Association, with which I am intimately connected and which has been formed to rally popular support and co-operation in the Government's effort in solving the housing problem on the imperative need of which the hon. Minister laid great emphasis in his speech last year. I feel it my duty to place the popular view-point and also place my views before the House about the working of the Housing Ministry during the year. If in discharging this duty faithfully I have to make observations or criticism which are not palatable. I hope the hon. Minister in charge will take them in the spirit underlying them, for they are directed mainly to strengthen his hands and the position of the Ministry vis-a-vis the competing claims and demands of other Ministries on the finances of the Government of India. They are directed to ginger up the activities of the Ministry and also to stimulate the housing activity in the country.

I have carefully read the report for the year, both the original and the summary circulated, and I am sorry to state that I have found it disappointing. This disappointment is perhaps due to the fact that when this Ministry was formed hopes were raised in the minds of the people that we are going to tackle this problem seriously and in an effective manner, and still more by the first speech made by the hon. Minister in which he had stated categorically that housing was going to be one of the important activities of his Ministry and that housing would not be in the general sense of the term, that is housing of the Government offices and Government servants, but will include the housing of the people at large. It was indeed an excellent speech which raised the hopes of the people. He said:

"Apart from industrial housing, housing in general, that is clearance of slums, and rural housing, is also engaging the attention of Government. The main question

[Shri Mohanlal Saksena]

will be that of finance. But apart from finance, there are other matters also which, if properly investigated, will go a long way to remove this great grievance of the general population of this country."

The question of finance was there. He said that apart from this industrial housing for which he had already allotted to certain firms and for which he had prepared schemes, this more important question was engaging his attention. Now what do we find in the report? He says no doubt the general problem of housing is very important, but the industrial workers are living in conditions which are the worst and therefore the Government has undertaken industrial housing first. As regards other sections, he has made only general remarks.

About finance, he himself had admitted that it was a secondary question. Pandit Nehru, the Prime Minister, while inaugurating the Symposium on housing in Delhi in January last said something to that effect. I have got his words. He said:

"I am not in favour of building these horrid cement structures, etc., what we want is, we must give them healthy sites with proper conveniences and services before we build a wall or a roof over there".

Not only that. He also remarked that this is a stupendous problem and when we make calculations, the figures are simply staggering. That should not defeat us. We have to tackle the problem. I would like to quote what he said:

"The cost of all these houses, when calculated would come up to a staggering figure. But finance should not be the primary factor, and it should always occupy a secondary place in a nation's economy. Human welfare, might be emphasised a little more."

We have to look to the human aspect of it. We find that in other countries Housing Finance Corporations have been formed long ago. We were expecting some such thing this year because the Minister had stated last year that the State would come to their aid for securing proper sites and materials and in certain cases propose also to give a certain amount of financial help in one form or another.

Therefore, I want to know what were the difficulties in forming this Finance Corporation. I know something about this because a few years back I tried and there were persons in the Finance Ministry who were opposed to the idea because their view was that in our country more money was invested in housing as compared to industry. I beg to differ from that view because I feel our industry is not confined only to a few factories in cities and towns. Our principal industry is agriculture and if we take the amount of investment in agriculture itself, we will come to the conclusion that the amount invested in housing is very very low. Not only that. At that time I had also suggested that from the Gandhi Memorial Fund, a sum of Rs. three to five crores might be set apart and the Government might find an equal amount to start a Gandhi Memorial Housing Trust and the Government might guarantee a minimum of three per cent. interest and that may be invested in building houses for the poor and the lower middle classes. That was turned down, of course, by the authorities of the Gandhi Memorial Trust but I am sure if the Finance Ministry were favourably disposed that could have gone through. I found in the same year when this proposal was turned down, an amount of Rs. 3,35,00,000 was invested in 1964 bonds at 3½ per cent. issued by the Industrial Finance Corporation. I do not know how far the Trustees were justified in investing the money raised from the poor people in big business. When I examined the list of the loans which were given by this Corporation, I found they were mainly advanced to big industries—textiles, chemicals and some big industries. Loans being never less than a few lakhs of rupees. I could have understood if this money were invested in some cottage industries, Finance Corporation or in small scale industries and I think it has defeated the very purpose of the Memorial. I find that in certain countries to encourage housing loans Governments guarantee them upto a certain extent. Not only that. They also have created agencies for giving cheap credit facilities to the house builders. I have got a report of the Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation. This deals with housing in other countries and they have been able to build houses in lakhs. The insurance companies can also invest a great deal of their funds in housing. But again the argument is raised that if we allow them to invest in housing then so far as the Government

loans are concerned, the investments will fall proportionately. Personally I am not of the view that they will. Even if that is so, if the Government raises loans and then invests in housing, it is obviously more expensive because the costs of construction as also administration charges are higher as compared to the houses built by insurance companies. Therefore, if the object is that we must have more houses in the country, we will have to create cheap credit facilities, especially for the lower middle classes and the middle classes. This is one thing and I hope the hon. Minister will see to it that these agencies are created and insurance companies are allowed to invest more money in approved housing schemes. The schemes can be approved by the Ministry of Housing. So much for finance.

The hon. Minister said that he would make sites available. We know that there is a shortage of housing. About six lakhs of persons are without houses according to the report of the Delhi Improvement Trust Enquiry Committee. It also recommended that at least 6,000 acres of land should be developed. Not only that. In other places the Improvement Trusts charge a nominal rent while realising the full premium. Otherwise they charge only interest on the bid. They have not invested the whole money. Therefore they have recommended that the Delhi Improvement Trust should also follow that policy. I have already submitted this to the Government and also brought this to the notice of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has repeatedly stated that our policy is a policy of control and control at a strategic point. We know that a house cannot be built without a housing site. Therefore the housing site being strategic point the price of land should be controlled. We find in Delhi that the Improvement Trust has become the biggest hoarder of land and our policy is of selling them to the highest bidder whoever he may be. In certain countries they have even banned the building of more houses by persons who have already got houses. They cannot build houses because they have got money, because they have got a mistress to keep but here anybody can build any number of houses provided he has got the money. In England a non-residential house can come up only when it is of national importance and they have banned all these huge buildings.

I have found that in other countries they have got house rationing as we

have got rationing of cloth and rationing of food. The principle is obvious. So long as there are large numbers of people living in misery, nobody can be allowed to live in luxury. What greater misery can there be than more than one family having to live in one room? There are persons living on the road side; there are persons living in slums. This is the greatest misery. So long as such housing conditions prevail, to talk of social justice or equality of opportunity simply sounds hollow. The report says that for slum clearance they have invited schemes from the State Governments. Personally, I think that is simply evading the issue. I think it would be much better to say that we have not been able to tackle the problem, we have not got the requisite funds. Where are the funds? The schemes are already there. You had the Environmental Hygiene Committee. You had the Delhi Improvement Trust Committee. You had the Madras Housing Committee report. We have had Housing committees in other States. They have already made recommendations and suggested the schemes. Madras has got 251 slums to be more precise. It requires crores of rupees to clear the slums. The hon. Shri Rajai has come out with a new idea. He said, it should not be slum clearance, but slum improvement. He was able to improve a slum area at half the cost, without removing the people.

I will make two suggestions and then conclude. We must impose price control on building sites and change the way the Improvement Trust disposes of the land. Not only do they auction to the highest bidder they do not dispose of all the land that they have developed. They dispose of bit by bit. The Birla Committee made certain recommendations. One of the recommendations was that in New Delhi you should allow the building of double storeys without charging any premium. Why should not the Government implement it? It does not require finance. At least the accommodation will be increased forthwith.

As far as Government servants are concerned, the housing shortage is there. The figures have been given in the report. I am unable to work out the percentage. I find that for officers getting Rs. 500 and less, there is a shortage of about 22,000 units. Similarly, there are shortage for Government employees in other categories. How are you going to remove this shortage? We have been reading

[Shri Mohanlal Saksena]

in the papers since 1947 about the removal of certain offices from here to other places. Every time we find that a decision is taken, it is not implemented. Somebody proposes; others dispose of. I want to know how long will this go on. Even the Cabinet has taken decision: but no office moves. If you just take a census, you will find that you have got more offices in Delhi today than there were in 1947 and you have got more people on the waiting list than there were in 1947. I suggested that instead of building houses in far off places like Vinay Nagar, etc., it will be much better if you demolish the existing single storeyed houses and build multi-storeyed houses. That would be much better and cheaper in the long run. There will be people who will be prepared to invest money. Even Government servants can invest money. There was a suggestion that I made to the hon. Minister. I suggested that just like the Industrial Housing scheme, where you have provided that the employees have got to pay or contribute three per cent, similarly, you may make a provision that every Government servant will have to contribute from 2½ per cent to five per cent to Housing Fund. That would bring in a substantial amount. I do not know what was the reaction of the hon. Minister to this suggestion. But, I have got the reaction of the Ministry. The Ministry said that they have already the Provident Fund scheme. But that is a voluntary scheme. There are Government servants who do not contribute to the Provident fund. If they do not pay to the Provident Fund, they should be made to contribute to this compulsorily. This would be a proper use for their money. They will get interest and also houses. They will get places to live.

If you go to clerks' quarters, they are worse than slums. In a quarter which was meant for one family, you will find more than two or three families living. Not only that. There is a letter from a junior officer saying that there is a racket going on in Delhi: that these big officers who have got big palatial quarters, Secretaries and Joint Secretaries and other officers, sub-let one room and charge exorbitant rents of Rs. 100, 200 and 300, and that the Secretary of the Ministry was alleged to be himself involved. I brought it to the notice of the Minister in charge, late Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar and the Home Minister. Yesterday I was told that some action had been taken and that a rule has been made that nobody

can sub-let without the approval of the Estate Office. I would like a rule to be made that these big houses should not be allowed to single families. The small bungalows can be allotted to persons who want to have whole bungalows. These big bungalows should be allotted to two or three officers. Then, there are expansive grounds. You can build additional houses. Not only that. This very officer, of course, I do not know, but I found that he has been promoted to a more responsible post and was feted when he went. (Some Hon. Members: Who?) I do not want to disclose names. I was only surprised that a person who is in the Housing Ministry was just carrying on something like that. The junior officers have got a general grievance. I think we must have rationing of houses. If in other countries, they have got rationing of public houses, why cannot we have rationing in regard to Government quarters. It may inconvenience a few persons. But, 22,000 persons are in the waiting list. With no programme before us, how long will it take to provide them with houses? I would say.....I suppose I have two minutes more. Sir.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member has already taken 21 minutes. He can go on for a minute or two if he wants to develop the argument.

Shri Mohanlal Saksena: I will conclude, Sir. I want to say one thing more. The other day, in the report of the Education Ministry I found that we are going to have a new building for a museum at the junction of the Queensway and Kingsway. The hon. Minister thinks that the Rashtrapati Bhawan is not suited for that. To begin with it would cost only Rs. 50,000/- That is only the beginning. Personally, I think that no such building should be constructed. Some time back a statement had been issued explaining the economies in the Rashtrapati Bhawan. I would like the Rashtrapati to live in one of the Princes' houses and leave the whole building for the use of the public. We have got so many persons lying in the streets. We have got so many persons being refused admission in hospitals.

Some Hon. Members: A very good suggestion.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance (Shri B. R. Bhagat): He is living only in a room.

Shri Mohanlal Saksena: I do not know. He may be living in one room. But, there is the whole estate. In the President's Estate, we have got such expansive grounds.

Dr. N. B. Khare (Gwalior): A Daniel come to judgment.

Shri Mohanlal Saksena: I am fully conscious of my responsibility. Whatever shortcoming there may be in the Ministry, I cannot be absolved of my share and I equally share with them. I also know that whatever the consequences of our inability to redeem our pledges or implement the election manifesto, we have equally to suffer the consequences. If I have spoken out my mind, as I said in the beginning, it is with a view to do my duty by the people, as well as to strengthen the hands of the hon. Minister and his Ministry. I hope he is not satisfied with the report that has come out.

Shri K. R. Desai (Halar): Though the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply looks like a minor Ministry, and a much attenuated one, I think it is one of the Ministries which has got a substantial voice in the expenditure. From the figures supplied to us, it is clear that it is spending on behalf of itself and other Ministries 140 crores for the supply of material to the various Ministries. It has also got under its charge construction of various buildings in Delhi and other places which belong to the Government of India. All the construction work is undertaken by this Ministry. It is very difficult to find out overall what is the total expenditure incurred on maintenance and repairs as far as this particular Ministry is concerned. But, if that is also taken into consideration, we will find that a considerably large amount of money is being spent through this Ministry. Then, it has also taken up the question of housing. So, I believe that this Ministry, along with the Finance Ministry, are the two Ministries with very wide ramifications, and if very proper care is taken by the hon. Minister of this particular Ministry, I am sure that crores of rupees can be saved. It is said that the constructional work, as also the procurement of supplies to various Ministries, is being done in the usual traditional style through contractors who have, more or less, during the last generation, and particularly during the last decade, become a sort of vested interest. I do not know how far it is true, but it is being said outside that if Government wants to purchase any material for its own use,

it has got to pay 30 to 40 per cent. more for that article. I am glad that a sort of expert committee has been appointed this year under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Minister to investigate this particular matter, and I hope some new methods and techniques may be evolved so that all the purchases made through this Ministry compare favourably with the purchases of the same articles made by private people. I do not think there should be any difficulty in investigating the price list of a particular commodity at a particular time—what other people pay for that commodity and what the Government of India pays for it. I think it will be desirable and wholesome if the Ministry, at the end of every year, places before this House the various items which it has purchased through itself, with the quantity purchased and the total value, because it will have the public eye on these articles, and the Ministry will be called upon to explain if we on the floor of this House find that for a particular commodity it had paid out a higher price than that obtaining in the market. This is the remark which I would make with regard to the supply part of the Ministry.

Now, with regard to the constructional work, I have to offer a few suggestions. The report says that the Ministry have constructed buildings worth about Rs. 12 crores, and in the budget year they propose to construct buildings to the extent of about Rs. 16 crores. It is a very big item. Has the hon. Minister or his Ministry considered the possibility of reducing the expenditure on these buildings? Probably, the estimates which may be placed by the various Ministries for construction may have been in the old, traditional style, and the Public Works Department has, of course, got, throughout the country, a very bad name. I suggest that a full enquiry, just as it has got an enquiry or investigation which is being made by the Committee under the chairmanship of the Deputy Minister, should be made to deal with all the constructional work that the Ministry is doing.

With regard to the question of housing, for the last four or five years, some of us have had occasion, at the time of the budget, to refer to the appalling condition of housing in all the industrial and urban cities of this country. Every time promises were made.

Shri K. K. Basu (Diamond Harbour): But never fulfilled!

Shri K. K. Desai:....schemes were placed, but some concrete steps have been taken only during the course of this year, and I must say that I should be grateful to the hon. Minister for bringing in this scheme even though late, for late is better than never. I would like to place before this House the magnitude of the housing problem. Probably, the House knows that the population of the urban areas has increased. According to the Planning Commission's Report, for the first decade it has increased by eleven per cent—total; in the second decade it is 14·3 per cent, in the third decade it is 13·4 per cent. That is the overall increase in the population of the country. But there is a different picture as far as urban areas are concerned. It is 20 per cent, for the first decade; 32 per cent, for the second decade; and for the third decade, that is, 1940-50, it is 54 per cent. We know that most of the large urban areas have got their population more or less doubled, and it has been mentioned by the Planning Commission that during the last decade, the construction of houses has not kept pace with the rise in the population. Not only has the construction not kept pace, but, because of the absence of materials and other things, the old houses which were there have also become dilapidated, and some of the houses must have gone out of use. Now, a paltry sum of Rs. nine crores has been provided in the last year, out of which, according to the figures, sanction has been given for about Rs. five crores. It is a matter for satisfaction that the balance Rs. four crores is not going to lapse. And for the next year, some amount has been granted. Assuming that the housing problem is going to be solved even at the rate of investment of Rs. ten crores, it will take the next generation, because, even at the rate of Rs. 2,750/- per house, including the land, even if the estimate of one million houses, which the Government itself placed before the country about four years back, is going to be implemented, it will mean about Rs. 275 crores. Now, at the rate of Rs. ten crores per year, it will hardly provide houses to the extent of 35,500 per year. And the Planning Commission has provided only Rs. 38·5 crores including Rs. two crores in the form of subsidy. Should we wait for 30 years before this problem of housing in the urban areas can be settled satisfactorily? In the report which has been placed before us, the Ministry says that this is only a fraction of the problem. There is the question of rural housing. And as far as rural housing is concerned, the Planning

Commission has made certain concrete proposals. Then, in addition to that, there is also the question of slum clearance or slum development, wherever they are. Now, slum clearance is also a very big problem. I would suggest to the Ministry that instead of giving subsidy—the Planning Commission itself has made the suggestion—to the co-operative housing societies for industrial workers, they must give that subsidy in the form of development land, because there are various technical and red-tape difficulties for the workers, if they form co-operative societies to go through. And again, the question of acquiring land is also a very important thing. I think the hon. Minister knows that as far as the lower middle classes are concerned, if a small house with one room, one kitchen and a verandah is constructed, 50 per cent of the cost, more or less, will be the land. Land prices during the last ten years have gone up considerably. One acre of land in the larger cities will cost anywhere between Rs. 50,000/- and Rs. one lakh. Now how are these poor people, who are showing some initiative to own their house, going to acquire the land? The Planning Commission has suggested that the acquisition can be made under the Land Acquisition Act, which should be suitably amended, so that all these lands can be immediately acquired. The holders of these lands are holding them for profits. It is more or less an unearned income. In my opinion, therefore, it will be wise and statesmanlike and also just, if an Act is placed on the statute book, enabling the acquisition of land within a radius of one mile from any urban or industrial area, and the compensation, which you may have to pay for the purpose, may not be, according to the Constitution, the full price. After all, how have the land prices gone up? They have not gone up because these landlords who are in charge of the lands have made any improvements. On the other hand, they have gone up, because these people are simply exploiting the needs of the country during the time of its development. Because in a particular city, a certain industry has come into existence, they have tried to exploit the situation very thoroughly. I would suggest therefore that it would be fair and just, if we acquire all the lands within a radius of one mile from an urban area, or industrial city, and utilise them for housing purposes.

4 P.M.

The last point that I would like to make is regarding co-operative hous-

ing. The industrial workers have been called upon to contribute something in order to own a house. They are being given about 25 per cent. of subsidy to build a house, but I think if you really want to create any initiative in them, they should be treated on a par with the State Governments, which are being given 50 per cent. subsidy and 50 per cent. loan. But unfortunately the industrial workers have been treated on a par with the employers who would like to build the houses. After all, all these sums are to come, as it has been said in the report, from the provident fund which will accrue every year. My suggestion to the Ministry therefore would be to raise the amount to be given to the co-operative societies to 50 per cent., instead of 25 per cent., and I can assure the hon. Minister that if the subsidy is given in the manner I have suggested, in quite a large number of areas, co-operative societies of the industrial workers will grow up, and will also help the Government in the solution of the housing problem.

As I said in the beginning, the housing problem is of tremendous magnitude. With the paltry provision of Rs. nine or ten crores a year, it will take about 30 years before the housing problem in this country in the urban areas may theoretically be solved. But we have seen that during the last three decades our population has gone up by about one hundred per cent. in urban areas. So, what is the guarantee that during the next generation it will not go up by another hundred per cent.? Now that a beginning has been made, I would appeal to the Government, through the hon. the Minister of Housing, to accelerate the programme of housing, and just as they are doing their best to try to solve the food problem, they must also take up this question of housing and give it a priority, so that the problem may be solved during the next ten years.

With these words, I support the good intentions of the hon. Minister of Works, Housing and Supply.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: There is an interesting story in the *Panchatantra*. In a village there were three scholars living. One day, they wanted to test their level of scholarship. They went to a forest. On the way they found bones of a lion scattered on the ground. They thought that they might try to show their ripeness of scholarship there. One member of the group collected all the bones, another member gave flesh

and blood to it, while the third member gave the breath of life. After that, there was a lion. The lion roared and killed all these scholars. In the same way the Public Works Department here is producing another monster of the same type, the master of corruption. Since India got independence, since the Congress came to power, corruption and bribery are becoming rampant, particularly in the Public Works Department. After the British Empire, we are seeing another empire being created, the empire of corruption. We have seen the devaluation of the currency after the Congress Ministry came into power. Now we are seeing the deva'uation of the nation, the devaluation of the administration, and the devaluation of themselves.

I do not want merely to dwell upon generalisations. I want to refer to one or two concrete cases, just to bring home to the hon. Minister, how corruption, nepotism, and bribery are rampant in this Department. I would like to refer to two particular cases, regarding the construction of the Bahadurgarh aerodrome under the Delhi Aviation Circle. These two very cases were brought to the notice of the hon. Minister in 1947. They involved defalcation to the extent of about Rs. 11 lakhs. But the Ministry did not take any action. A private complainant got the case registered by the Special Police Establishment in 1948. But there was no proper investigation of the case at all. The C.P.W.D. officials colluded with the Home Ministry and the Special Police Establishment, and many documents were deliberately and intentionally withdrawn from investigation, and many others were deliberately destroyed. So the case was inordinately delayed, and as a result of that, no action has been taken till now.

This matter was brought before the House often. I may give the dates also: 29th March 1951, 3rd April 1951, 1st June 1952, and 8th July 1952. The hon. Minister replied once that action was being taken against one of the officers, and that regarding another Government were considering the question of launching prosecution. But till now, nothing has been done in these cases. I heard only recently that a chargesheet is being framed by the Department itself against one of the official's. I learn also that the official has since retired and is drawing his pension. This is the way that this Department is dealing with corruption.

If this tendency of tolerating corruption continues, how can we purify

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and tone up the administration? Is that the way that democracy should function, I want to know? Is it for this that we agitated and suffered for freedom? I am really amazed at the supine and the leisurely fashion in which this Ministry is functioning.

There were many other cases of corruption, but I cannot go into all of them individually, because there is not much time. But I would only refer to one aspect of the question. The other day, the Railway Minister stated on the floor of the House that a Parliamentary Commission of inquiry to enquire into corruption in the Railways will be set up. In the same way, this Department also should be thoroughly gone into by a Commission, an independent Commission, which should consist only of Members of this House. Only by doing so, we can think of a solution to this problem, and also deal with the various cases of corruption, which are being shielded from time to time by the corrupt officials.

I next pass on to another important question that is, about the lower grade staff in the P.W.D. There are so many grievances about this staff. The officers who are occupying the Class I cadre are enjoying all the privileges. I may draw the attention of the House to an interesting case. A Chief Engineer was confirmed after he served as Chief Engineer for only 20 days, whereas many people who are in the second and third cadre have not been confirmed till now, and if there are any confirmations, they have been unduly delayed. I do not know the reason why such inordinate delay should take place in the case of the lower grade staff. Even here I want special tribunal. I do not mind a departmental tribunal. It may be set up and all the grievances of the lower grade staff may be inquired into, proper evidence collected and proper redress given to them.

I refer to another important question. That is the problem of housing. Many hon. Members have referred to this problem. It is a very important problem. The Planning Commission has recognised the importance of the problem. There it stops. The Chapter on Housing in the Five Year Plan makes a very disappointing reading. While the Plan gives a bird's eye-view of the housing conditions, it does not suggest ways and means of tackling and solving this problem. The Planning Commission says that if we provide 43 lakh houses, then that will be sufficient to meet the needs of

industrial population. The Planning Commission has erred on the conservative side. It is not a proper estimate. Many factors have not been taken into consideration. The most important factor is replacement. Every year a fair percentage of the houses have to be replaced normally. If you consider the life of a house is 50 years, then two per cent. of the houses has to be replaced every year. That factor has not been taken into consideration. Again, there is no consideration given to the question of repairs. Moreover, the number of houses which have been recommended by the Planning Commission for refugees is very low. They have recommended ten lakh houses. When we consider the refugees from East Bengal, I think the estimate has to go high. If due regard is paid to all these factors, then the total number of houses that is required to house the urban population—industrial population—alone will be near about one crore.

The Planning Commission has completely failed to tackle the problem of rural housing. Millions and millions of people are homeless today. The Prime Minister the other day waxed eloquent about house-keeping. How can there be house-keeping when there are no houses—I want to ask? Many hon. Members on the opposite were waxing eloquent that ours is a Welfare State. How can there be a Welfare State when millions of people have been denied even elementary home life? Is it not a mockery? Housing, clothing and food represent the trinity of fundamental necessities. If we do not tackle this trinity, we cannot rightly think of speaking of a Welfare State. Today, we are seeing anything but a Welfare State in India.

I refer to another aspect of the question of housing. The great necessity of today is to provide cheap and adequate housing. The land cost has increased terribly after the war. The Government are widely talking of controls. But till today they have not controlled the price of land. If the building sites are sold by auction or at high prices, then how can they provide cheap houses for the lower middle class and the workers? It is impossible. So, whenever we think of strategic control, we must honestly follow it. Today the profession and the preaching of the Congress Government are different. Now, some hon. Member suggested that strategic control should be applied to this building problem. I entirely agree with this view. Every available bit of

and should be controlled and the price should be fixed and the land should be sold at cost price. There should not be bidding or auction. If the sites are sold in auction, then there will be speculation and it will drive the cost of buildings enormously high. Then it is very difficult for you to control the rents.

Here is a curious paradox. You want to reduce rents of houses. Thereby you want to follow a socialistic theory in regard to fixation of rent. But on the contrary you are following a capitalistic theory with regard to the allotment of building sites. This is really paradoxical indeed! I cannot simply explain this paradox. So if you are honest if you want to provide cheap, good and clean houses to the millions, then fix up the cost of building sites at a lower level and also ration all the sites available in the country. Let no one be allowed to own more than one house. That should be the principle. That is a socialistic principle. So, I want a very thorough policy to be followed in this respect.

I want to refer to another important question. That is about the MPs' flats. Only last year we were provided with some flats. And some flats are being constructed. They are not adequate for the MPs. You cannot house the 500 and odd MPs, but now you are thinking of housing the entire country—entire nation! I cannot understand this. What is the standard and quality of these houses? If you put some water in the first floor you will get that amount of water below. It is so porous and so transparent! Now, within a short period of nine months there has to be a lot of repairs and there will have to be replacement. I have heard so many things about MPs' flats. I was told that for furnishing these flats, tenders were called and the tenderer was given more opportunity to swindle money. So the cost of furnishing was increased terribly and we are made to pay. It is so curious that even Parliament Members are obliged to support this corruption and are really paying for this corruption.

Then the contractors are making a lot of money in Delhi. I can give you various instances in Delhi, but I have no time. They are amassing enormous fortunes. So a Committee of Inquiry should be set up to see how many contractors have made money and since how long. Preferably a Parliamentary Committee may be set up and a thorough inquiry held.

In this connection I will say one word more before I take my seat. The Estimates Committee made so many recommendations regarding the Public Works Department. They drew the attention of the Ministry to the fact that the sub-letting of Government quarters is going on and that it should be stopped, but the Government said that they are helpless. They said that they cannot produce evidence to prove it. For this the Estimates Committee said, and I am quoting from that Committee's report:

"The Committee feel that the Government should not say that they are helpless in the matter; with all the available machinery of Government at their command they could easily detect such mal-practices and bring the culprits to book."

Till today I have not seen any action being taken on the recommendation of the Committee. Further, many quarters belonging to one income group are allotted to another income group leading to so much of inconvenience to the officers of that group. Such things have not been stopped though the Estimates Committee has drawn the attention of Government to it.

Further, the Estimates Committee have asked the Ministry to cut down the expenditure by 30 per cent. That has not been done. Moreover, they asked the Ministry to remove the Superintendent cadre; they have not removed it. I am amazed to see this Ministry is so supine, callous and indifferent to the recommendations and advice given by this House through their Committee.

श्री एन० एन० जोशी (इंदौर) : जहाँ तक मनुष्य की आवश्यकताओं का सवाल है उसमें तीन चीजें मुख्य हैं, खाना, पहिनना और रहना। जहाँ तक खाने और पहिनने का सवाल है उसका सम्बन्ध इस मिनिस्ट्री से नहीं है किसी दूसरी मिनिस्ट्री से है। योजना कमीशन ने इसके सम्बन्ध में योजना आयोग में कई बातें की हैं, और किस तरह से खाने की समस्या हल की जा सकती है, किस तरह से पहिनने की समस्या हल की जा सकती है इसके सम्बन्ध में कई उपाय सुझाये हैं। रहने के सवाल के मुतालिक भी उसने एक योजना बनायी है और लगभग ४०-

[श्री एन० एल० जोशी]

करोड़ रुपया इस काम के लिये पांच वर्ष में खर्च करने के लिये उसमें रखा है। अभी हमने यह भी देखा कि पिछले दो सालों में उस में से लगभग १२ करोड़ रुपया खर्च हो चुका है और इस साल भी कुछ रुपया खर्च करने की आयोजना रखी है। सवाल सिर्फ यह है कि जिस तरीके से रुपया खर्च करने का आयोजन किया गया है और जितना रुपया खर्च करने के लिये रखा है, उतने रुपये से क्या इस देश में रहने की समस्या हल हो सकती है? यह मुख्य रूप से हमारे सामने सवाल है और इस पर हम को विचार करना है। वास्तव में अगर इस समस्या के विस्तार को देखा जाय और यह देखा जाय कि यह समस्या कितने उपरूप से हमारे सामने है तो हमें यह मालूम होता है कि जितना रुपया इस काम के लिये बजट में रखा गया है वह बहुत ही नाकाफी है। जहां तक शहरों के मकानों का सवाल है, या गांवों के मकानों का सवाल है, दोनों में हमें मालूम होता है कि रुपया किसी तरह से भी काफी नहीं हो सकता। अगर हम शहरों के मकानों को भी ले कर दें तो हमें यह मालूम होता है कि जितना रुपया इसके लिये रखा गया है उसमें उस महकमे ने जो योजना मकान बनाने के बारे में शहर के मजदूरों के लिये रखी है उसमें २,७५० रुपया एक मकान बनाने के पीछे रखा गया है। अब २,७५० रुपये से जिस तरह के मकान बनाने की योजना है, उसमें एक १२ वाई २२ फुट का कमरा होगा, एक छोटा सा वरामदा और उसके पीछे एक टट्टी और एक स्नानघर, वस इतना ही काम २,७५० रुपये में किया जायगा। अब थोड़ी देर के लिये यह भी मान लिया जाय और थोड़ी देर के लिये यह स्थाल कर लें कि एक मकान में एक मजदूर पांच आदमियों के सहित रहता है, उसकी बीवी, उसकी माता और उसके तीन बच्चे,

तो भी क्या उसके और उसके परिवार वालों के पांच आदमियों के लिये यह १२ वाई २२ फुट का कमरा और एक छोटा सा वरामदा काफी होगा? मेरा तो यह कहना है कि अगर इस तरह के मकान बनाने का भविष्य में कोई कार्यक्रम हो तो उसे अमल में लाने की जरूरत नहीं है और उसको बन्द कर देना चाहिये और कोई जल्दत नहीं है कि आज के समय में हम इस तरह के मकानात तैयार कर दें कि जिससे उन लोगों का त्रिन लोगों के लिये हम मकान बना रहे हैं, स्वास्थ्य खराब हो, ठीक तरह वे रह भी न सकें और उन लोगों का इतने छाटे मकान में रहने से चिन्त्र भी खराब हो। भला बतलाइये जब एक ही कमरे में माता-पिता और उन के बच्चे रहेंगे और एक साथ सोयेंगे, तो उस १२ वाई २२ फुट के कमरे में वह सब कैसे रह सकेंगे? और अगर कभी कोई मेहमान आ गया तो उसके लिये गुंजाइश ही नहीं रहती? इस लिये मेरी राय में इस तरह के मकान बनाने में २,७५० रुपया व्यर्थ खर्च करने से कोई लाभ नहीं होगा, इससे तो हमारे देश की हालत बहुत खराब बनेगी और मकानों की स्थिति भी बहुत खराब बनेगी। इसलिये मेरी समझ में इसके लिये कोई दूसरा तरीका अथवा उपाय सोचा जाय तो अच्छा होगा। हमारे लिये सब से बड़ी आवश्यकता की बात यह है कि मकानों के लिये जरीन हम उपलब्ध कर सकें, बड़े से बड़े पैमाने पर अधिक से अधिक एक साधारण कुटुम्ब के लिये एक एकड़, आधी एकड़, और वह भी नहीं, तो पाव एकड़ या उसका भी अष्ट भाग इतनी बड़ी हो तो हम एक मकानदार को मकान बनाने के लिये उपलब्ध करायें ताकि वह वहां पर मकान बना कर अपने कुटुम्ब के साथ ठीक प्रकार से जीवन व्यतीत कर सके। जैसा अभी माननीय देसाई साहब

ने फरमाया शहर के आसपास की जमीनों की कीमत की एक बड़ा सवाल पैदा हो जाता है और कीमत ज्यादा होने की वजह से मकानदार जो जमीन ले कर मकान बनाना चाहते हैं, वह उतनी बड़ी हुई कीमत अदा नहीं कर सकते, जो लेना चाहते हैं वे ले नहीं सकते। इसलिये यह काम शासन का होगा कि वह जमीन उस मकान वाले को उपलब्ध करा दे जो वहां पर मकान बनाना चाहता है और जमीन उपलब्ध कराने के बाद शासन का दूसरा काम यह हो जाता है कि वह मकान बनाने के लिये जो सामान आवश्यक हो वह सार्य सामान सस्ते मूल्य पर उस मकान वाले को उपलब्ध कराये। तीसरी बात जो और करनी चाहिये वह यह है कि उस मकान बनाने वाले को जो रुपया आवश्यक हो, वह कम से कम सूद की दर पर सरकार उस को उपलब्ध कराये। सस्ती जमीन कम सूद पर रुपया और सस्ता सामान उपलब्ध कराना, यह तीन बातें शासन द्वारा करनी चाहियें। मैं समझता हूं कि अगर इन बीज़ों का प्रवर्ण हो जाय तो वह उस २,७५० रुपये में अपनी सहालियत के अनुसार कहीं उम्दा मकान बनायेंगे जो उनके कुटुम्ब के लिये ही पर्याप्त न होगा बल्कि वह एक और कुटुम्ब को भी उसमें रख सकेंगे। इसलिये इस सुझाव पर सरकार को बहुत गौर के साथ विचार करना चाहिये।

इसके अलावा जिस तरह से आज सरकार द्वारा मकान बनाने का सिलसिला चलता है आप जानते हैं कि उनके बनाने में जो ठेकेदार होते हैं वह बहुत सारा रुपया खा जाते हैं, और दूसरे जैसा यहां पर पब्लिक वक्स डिपार्टमेंट के बारे में अनेक शिकायतें की गयीं कि जिस तरह वहां पर करण्यान का दौरदौरा है, उस महकमें में भी बहुत सा रुपया करण्यान की भेंट हो जाता है। करण्यान 20 P.S.D.

को हम सब दूर करना चाहते हैं, इस पर तो सब सहमत हैं, लेकिन इसके लिये हमें प्रयत्नशील होना चाहिये और जिन साहबान के सामने, जिन मेम्बरान के सामने इस तरह के करण्यान के सावल पेश हों, उन केसेज को आनरेबुल मिनिस्टर के नोटिस में जरूर लाना चाहिये ताकि मिनिस्टर महोदय उन पर पूरा गौर फरमा सकें और उनके बारे में और उन जिम्मेदार महकमों की तहकीकात भी कर सकें। मैं, जैसा डिप्टी होम मिनिस्टर साहब ने फरमाया था कि हमारा काम केवल आलोचना करके चुप हो जाना ही नहीं है, उनके विचार से पूर्ण सहमत हूं। हमारा सिफ़ इतना ही काम नहीं है कि आलोचना करके या यह कह कर के कि महकमे का फलाना अधिकारी रिश्वतखोर है और रिश्वतखोरी चलने से शासन का काम सुचारू रूप से नहीं चल रहा है, हम बैठ जायें और कुछ न करें। पार्लियामेंट के सदस्य होने के नाते हमारा यह कर्तव्य हो जाता है कि हम ऐसे करण्यान के स्पेसिफिक केसेज मिनिस्टर साहब की नजर में लायें और वह उन पर गौर फरमा कर मुनासिब एकशन लें। हमें इसके लिये कोशिश करनी होगी कि आज जो सरकार के अधिकारी और ठेकेदार मकान बनावाने के काम में रुपया बीच में खा जाते हैं यह ईविल प्रैविट्स खत्म हो और हम सरकार द्वारा शहर के मजदूरों को सस्ते से सस्ते दाम पर मकान दिलवा सकें। अभी जैसा माननीय देसाई साहब ने फरमाया आज जब कि कोई मकान बनाये, तो कोई कारण नहीं है कि पचास प्रतिशत रुपया तो गवर्नरमेंट को बतौर सबसिडी दे, पचास रुपया सरकार खर्च करे, प्राइवेट्सी अगर कोई कोआपरेटिव सोसाइटी मकान बनाना चाहे तो पच्चीस प्रतिशत सबसिडी गवर्नरमेंट दे और साढ़े सेतीस परसेंट उसके लिये लोन दिया जाय। जिस तरह से पचास प्रतिशत सबसिडी केन्द्र देता है उसी तरह से यह आव-

[श्री एम० एल० जोशी]

श्यक है कि पचास प्रतिशत सबसिडी उस मजदूर कोआपरेटिव सोसाइटी को भी मकान बनाने के लिये दिया जाना चाहिये। मैं समझता हूँ कि अगर यह हो जाय और उस को पचास प्रति शत रुपया बतौर सबसिडी मिल जाय और पचास प्रतिशत रुपया लोन के रूप में मिल जाय तो वह ठीक ठीक और आवश्यकता के अनुकूल मकान बना सकेंगे। अगर यह दोनों चीजें इस तरह से मिल जाती हैं तो मैं समझता हूँ कि मजदूरों की कोआपरेटिव सोसाइटियां बहुत बड़े पैमाने पर बहुत अच्छे और बहुत सहूलियत वाले मकान अपनी सहूलियत के लिये जिस तरह चाहें शहरों में बनवा सकती हैं। मेरी गुजारिश यह है कि अगर इस तरह से हम ने काम किया तो जहां तक शहरों का सवाल है, हम शहरों की इस मकान की समस्या को हल कर सकेंगे।

जहां तक गांव के मकानों का सवाल है, बहुत बड़ा और विस्तृत क्षेत्र है, करीब साढ़े पांच लाख के हमारे गांव हैं, और वहां के मकानों का सवाल बड़ा टेढ़ा है। उनकी बड़ी भयंकर दशा है। जो गांव में रहने वाले लोग हैं वह जानते हैं कि देहातों में लोग कैसे रहते हैं। ऐसा मालूम होता है कि वह मकानों में रहते ही नहीं हैं। वे ढोरों जैसी जिन्दगी व्यतीत करते हैं। उन के रहने के स्थानों को मकान तो कहा ही नहीं जा सकता, चाहे मजदूर का मकान हो चाहे किसान का मकान हो। मजदूर के ज्ञौपड़े की हालत तो यह है कि वह दस बाई दस का भी नहीं होगा। मुश्किल से दस बाई आठ की कोई जगह होगी। वह लोग फूस के छप्परों के नीचे रहते हैं। उन्हीं ज्ञौपड़ों में वह अपनी हंडिया रखते हैं, वहीं उन का बिछौना रहता है, वहीं सोते हैं, सोते क्या हैं, जिन्दगी बिता रहे हैं। इस में कोई शक नहीं कि शहरों की

अपेक्षा गांवों में मकानों के आस पास सुला आंगन ज्यादा रहता है, इस की वजह से वह खाना बनाने का चूल्हा और मटकी तो ज्ञौपड़ी में रख लेते हैं बाकी चीजें बाहर ही रखते हैं और बाहर ही सोते हैं और बाहर ही सारे काम करते हैं। उन के लिये मकानों का सवाल बड़ा भारी सवाल है। जहां तक गांवों के मजदूरों का सवाल है उसकी दशा किसानों से भी स्वराब है। मजदूरों का हाल यह है कि वह जहां रहते हैं उसी में ढोरों को बांधते हैं, उसी मकान में खाना बनाते हैं, उसी में सारा सामान रखते हैं। अगर आप उस में चले जायें तो ऐसा मालूम होता है कि वह एक बिल्कुल अन्धेरी काल कोठरी है जिस में इतना घुआं भर जाता है खाना बनाने से कि सांस लेना भी कठिन हो जाता है। देहात के मजदूरों के मकानों का जो सवाल है वह बड़ी गम्भीर समस्या है, वह इतने निकम्मे हैं कि इस बात की बहुत जरूरत है कि किसी प्रकार की योजना तैयार कर के उन को सुधारा जाय। आज आवश्यकता इस बात की है फिर नवे सिरे से देहात के मकानों को, चाहे वह मजदूरों के हों या किसानों के, विशेष रीति से बनाया जाय।

जहां तक शहरों का सवाल है यह बड़ी भारी समस्या पैदा हो गई है। शहरों के आसपास की जमीन बड़ी महंगी हो गई है, इतनी महंगी कि शहर के लोगों के लिये आस पास के गांवों में मकान बना लेना बड़ा कठिन हो गया है। गांवों में ऐसी बात नहीं है। वहां तो कायदा है, कम से कम हमारे मध्य भारत में है, कि बीस गुनी तोड़ी दे कर के सरकार देहातों की जमीन ले सकती है। हो सकता है कि कहीं किसी राज्य में ज्यादा हो, बहरहाल बीस गुना तोड़ी दे कर के गवनरमेंट आस पास के खेतों को ले ले और हर किसान और मजदूर को उस १ हैसियत

के हिसाब से दे दी जाय तो किसी तरह से मकान बनाये जा सकते हैं। इस के लिये भी इस बात की बड़ी आवश्यकता है कि ऐसे लोगों को ही वह जमीन दी जाय जिन की इच्छा मकान बनाने की है चाहे वह खुद बनायें या कोआपरेटिव सोसायटियों के जरिये से। जो लोग सरकारी प्लैन के मूत्राविक बनवाना चाहते हों उन को रुपया दिया जाना चाहिये। इस तरह से अगर शासन इस समस्या को हाथ में ले तो हमारे मकान की समस्या बहुत हद तक हल हो सकती है।

Shri M. Khuda Baksh (Murshidabad): An English Parliamentarian once said that whenever he got up in Parliament to speak, he had a queer and uncomfortable feeling in the pit of his stomach. I confess that I have a similar feeling, and in my case it is much more aggravated.

Some hon. Members have spoken on the relative importance of this or that Ministry. To me all Ministries are important. If anything, this Ministry is more important than many others. In offering my remarks within the short space of time at my disposal, and for convenience, I shall follow the report for 1952-53 which has been circulated to us.

The first thing that attracts notice is that under the heading "Establishment" the Ministry say that they have been able to accept the recommendations of a Committee which was presided over by Shri Kasturbhai Lalbhai—an independent personage, who has no axe of his own to grind. It is in refreshing contrast to perhaps many other Ministries that this Ministry has been able to accept all the major recommendations of that Committee, which has resulted in terms of R.A.P., that is, rupees, annas and pies, in a saving of rupees eleven lakhs. The Ministry has succeeded in doing away with three Superintending Engineers' offices and as many as five divisions. Any one who has studied and is at all familiar with the working of the C.P.W.D. would at once realise the magnitude of the savings. The abolition of three Superintending Engineers' offices and five divisions is not an inconsiderable economy.

Another noteworthy thing is that these recommendations were made in July 1952, and with very commendable promptitude the Ministry has implemented the recommendations. As a

result of the acceptance and implementation of the recommendations, certain retrenchment of staff became unavoidable and necessary. But the Ministry worked out a scientific basis, whereby they have spread the retrenchment over the whole of India. Of course, in this retrenchment the worst affected would be the lowest paid staff, because the higher paid ones may be regarded and asked to accept lower paid appointments. But it is the lowest paid staff who will be in difficulty and some of them certainly will have to be retrenched. It is good to note that the Ministry is trying to provide them with alternative employment. It would be interesting to know from the hon. Minister when he gets up to reply how many persons were retrenched; how many were regraded; and of the persons retrenched, how many have been provided with alternative employment. From the little information that I have been able to gather from the Ministry, I understand that only 64 persons are affected and strenuous efforts are being made to get them fresh employment. In this connection, I would make a humble suggestion, viz. when they are re-employed, they should be so re-employed that there will be no break of service.

About accommodation, hon. Members have drawn the attention of the hon. Minister pointedly to the leeway that has to be made up. I refer particularly to the officers drawing less than Rs. 500. These are the most unfortunate men. They require the kind of accommodation that the Estate Office under this Ministry provides. The lower paid staff can find their own accommodation. But this pay group is the worst affected. They cannot find their own accommodation, and such accommodation as they can find is not suitable. Therefore, I would urge upon the Ministry to concentrate more on the building of houses that would cater to the needs of this particular class of officers.

It is interesting to note the following observation made by the Ministry in their report:

"With a view to reducing pressure on accommodation, both office and residential, the possibility of shifting some of the offices now located in Delhi to places outside is under examination."

This is commendable. It is high time that it was done and done with a little more expedition than is associated with Government working. I understand that Government from time to time give their special consideration to this matter, but the officers of the Departments that are likely to be touched

[Shri M. Khuda Baksh]

make out such a tremendous case for their continuing in Delhi that it becomes in the long run impossible for the Ministry to shift them outside Delhi. There is a lot of surplus accommodation in the hill stations and also other places like Hyderabad etc. outside Delhi. On this question, I should urge upon Government to be firm, and take a firm attitude. I suggest that a Parliamentary Committee should be set up to go into the question of the relative importance of this or that Department for the purpose of establishing their claims to remain in Delhi. The question of accommodation is assuming such an importance and becoming so acute, it is time Government to use a common expression—put its foot down and decided which of their Departments should be located outside Delhi. The considerations of Government servants and for that matter Secretaries, should not weigh with the Government. If the Government, or any Ministry felt that it was not possible or politic, for any reasons, then this House, this sovereign body should be entrusted with the job and they should find out and make recommendations to the Government and Government should be guided by the findings of a Committee set up by this House.

Some hon. Members waxed eloquent on corruption, but instead of offering any constructive suggestions to the Government as to how it should be met in this particular branch of Government they have given instances of corruption, that have come to their notice, which may on enquiry be found to be without any substance or without any basis. Be that as it may, the Minister surely should go into it and if officers are guilty of corruption they should be severely dealt with. We have no truck, on this side or on the other, with corruption and if an officer is found corrupt he will be and he must be severely dealt with. In order to minimise corruption, it is said in the report, Government have devised a new system which they describe as a system of administrative audit which aims at eliminating corruption at all the stages of contract, supervision and execution. If it is an independent audit, it is quite welcome. I hope the hon. Minister will tell the House in the course of his reply what is meant by a system of administrative audit. If he is thinking of setting up another organisation which will supervise, not only supervise but will keep an eagle's or a hawk's eye, on the activities of the Department, in the contractual stage, supervision and erection stage and in the final settlement and payment of bills, it is welcome.

Coming to housing, it is obvious that Government with the efforts that they are putting in, will not by itself be able to tackle this task. To my way of thinking, we must be able to attract and invite private capital in this field of investment. It is time for the Government to examine whether the Rent Control Acts in the Centre, administered by this Ministry and also in the provinces do not act as a retarding agent, or as a deterrent, to private investment. It is, I think, time when we shed our pet theories and also any inhibitions that we might have come to acquire when we were not in Government. It is all right to talk about acquiring land within one mile perimeter without giving much compensation. My hon. friend from Bombay said that we can do this. It is an easy way of solving the housing problem—one mile perimeter of land confiscated. He said under the Constitution it is not permissible to confiscate land, without paying any compensation. But he went so far in this House as to say that that compensation need not be the price, the market value. I call that dishonest.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member must now conclude.

Shri M. Khuda Baksh: This is the second time I am speaking in the House: I would ask for a few more minutes.

If we have to encourage and attract private capital into this field of investment we ought to see that they get adequate returns for the capital invested. There is another thing and it is this. Private capital would not be interested in or attracted to this field if it finds that there are a lot of difficulties in obtaining building materials. A house cannot be put up by just writing it on a piece of paper. Cement, lime, bricks, structural iron and steel, they will all have to be supplied to him. Therefore, I suggest to the hon. Minister of this Department that there should be a coordinating organisation. Private capitalists who want to invest money in this scheme should not have to go from department to department for each and every item. He should be able to approach one Central Department where all his needs will be met and he will be given facilities for acquiring all the building materials number one and number two facilities for transporting the same to the building sites.

Regarding rent control, I also suggest that a Parliamentary Committee should be set up to study the Rent Control Acts obtaining in the Centre as also in the provinces, to find out whether

and how far they are in relation to the needs of the moment.

In regard to purchases I wish to make one small point. It is often said that in regard to purchase for the other Ministries there is a lot of red tape, involving inordinate delay. We are now at peace; there are not very many urgent demands. Most of the demands emanate from the Defence Ministry and the Railway Ministry—they are the largest indentors. Therefore, the Ministry should devise ways and means of expeditiously dealing with them. Connected with this is the question of effective screening, with a view to finding out whether the indentors' demand can be met indigenously. Too often we rush to Europe and America and other places for our goods. Before doing so we should see whether such things are available locally. In the consumer goods' field, even if we have to relax the specifications somewhat we should not go out of India for making these purchases. I am not one of those who would wish to sacrifice quality. I am a stickler for quality. The very basis of international trade is that if India cannot produce something which it needs up to a certain standard there is no harm in going outside the country to purchase that. But in this there should be effective screening. Therefore, I want to fix the responsibility on this Ministry before anything goes out of this country by way of an order. This Ministry must be able to issue a certificate that the thing is not available indigenously.

Mr. Chairman: I am afraid the hon. Member has taken more time than could be allotted to him. Already he has taken 17 minutes; there are many other hon. Members anxious to speak.

Shri M. Khuda Baksh: I shall conclude in a minute.

In the matter of tenders also, the hon. Minister will see in the purchasing machinery how far there is room for corruption, and how far there is room for improvement, to root out corruption.

My plea to this Government is: Centralise purchase. When you have a purchasing organisation the different Ministries should not go on purchasing things from abroad. This is how corruption comes. To my way of thinking, if the Railway Ministry, or any other Ministry for that matter, were allowed to go out of the country independently on a purchase mission to America or England, there would be room for corruption: there may be scandals. But if we can pin this Minis-

try down for every purchase made abroad, then we have fewer men to tackle and we can establish a procedure whereby all this corruption can be eliminated. Therefore, my plea is that the demands of these Ministries, whatever they are, must be routed through this Ministry, and if we have to make any purchases abroad it must be done through this Ministry so that we know who is responsible and if any corrupt practice is brought to our notice we know whom to catch hold of, and then we can come down on hon. Minister like a ton of bricks.

Sardar Lal Singh (Ferozepur-Ludhiana): This main report as also the summary supplied by the Government give us information about the total number of houses that have been built. So far as the total output is concerned, I must say the progress is very gratifying; in fact it is highly creditable. The report also indicates the total accommodation available, the total demand, and also the outstanding demand still to be met, which is very considerable indeed. We also know that there are a large number of refugees clamouring for accommodation. In short, it cannot be denied that the housing problem, although somewhat easier than before, is still rather serious. This is also evident from the fact that even at present abnormally high rents are being charged. So, while admitting the seriousness of the problem we have to tackle it from two angles, firstly improving the efficiency, that is, plugging the holes to avoid wastage, and secondly intensifying our effort to secure the greatest output of work. I have no doubt that the hon. Minister of Housing, whom I have had the privilege of knowing for many years, would consider my suggestions with an open mind. And on my part if the information or the figures that I have been able to collect from various sources, happen to be wrong I am open to correction and he would not mind telling me.

The present practice for the Government is to acquire land from private people according to certain formulae. After the land is acquired it is developed and sold to displaced persons at cost price. Or alternatively houses may be built on the same and they are also sold to the displaced persons on a no-profit no-loss basis. So let us examine this matter under two separate heads, that is acquisition of land and developmental expenses, and secondly the cost of buildings, so that we may be able to compare the relative efficiency of Governmental agency with that of private enterprise.

[Sardar Lal Singh]

For this purpose I take two-roomed houses with an area of about 200 square yards offered by Government for sale to the displaced persons of small means. The Government charges Rs. 6,000 per house. And it is not a free-hold because the refugees have got to pay a yearly ground rent of Rs. 72 per house. This is at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the total value of the land. So on the basis of free-hold, the price of Rs. 6,000 would easily go up to Rs. 7,000 if the ground rent is calculated for fifteen years, or Rs. 7,500 if the ground rent is counted for twenty years as is the usual practice. Against this, there are private companies in the same locality which for similar buildings, with better specifications, are only charging Rs. 5,000: so that the Government charges are about, 40 per cent. higher than those of private companies.

Coming to the land, for a plot of 200 square yards Government is charging Rs. 1,000 or so for developmental expenses. That comes to about Rs. five per square yard. If we calculate the rent for fifteen years only, at the rate of Rs. 72 per annum, it comes to another thousand rupees or Rs. five per square yard, making a total of about Rs. ten per square yard. As against this, we find that the private companies are selling fully developed land, free-hold, in the same locality at Rs. six to Rs. eight per square yard, which is lower than the Government rate by 25 to 40 per cent. This means that while Government do not earn any profit whatsoever, because the scheme is run on a no-profit no-loss basis, the refugees have got to pay anything like 25 to 40 per cent. higher rates. Even if the difference in fact be only half of that, that is only 20 per cent. it is a serious matter because it involves expenditure of crores of rupees.

The Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Sardar Swaran Singh): May I know as to what is the locality in the mind of the hon. Member?

Sardar Lal Singh: The same localities as given in the information supplied by your office: Tilaknagar, Kalgaganj, Motinagar are the places.

The question naturally arises if there is so much difference why cannot the private companies do this work on a much bigger scale than they are doing at present. The answer is very simple. There is the financial difficulty. The market rate of interest is too high. Private people cannot borrow money at less than 12 per cent interest which middle class peo-

ple are not able to pay. So the main attraction for the refugees to get these houses from the Government, is the facility of paying the price in the course of three, five or six years.

So in my humble opinion if the hon. Minister kindly looks into the desirability of offering more liberal loans to the co-operative societies at cheap rates of interest, it should solve the problem to a very great extent. It will mean no loss to the Government and no worry, and above all it will be safe investment against good security. I understand that the Bombay Government has got a similar scheme, the Bombay Housing Scheme, involving a sum of Rs. four crores or so, meant to give only loans to the co-operative societies and others. It is working very well and has proved very successful. This has got additional advantage in so much as the Government by this method is able to attract private capital by encouraging private enterprise and particularly co-operative effort.

In this connection I feel that just as Government have started the Industrial Finance Corporation it might also consider the desirability of starting a similar organisation for house building to provide loans at cheap rates of interest to the co-operative societies and others.

5 P.M.

Another fertile field which Government would do well to explore is, that of insurance companies which are controlled by capitalists or a group of men who generally exploit the funds of the insurance companies more or less in their own selfish interests, by directly or indirectly financing their own pet schemes, and many a time, greatly to the detriment of the insured public. In fact, right at present, there is a case of a certain insurance company pending in the court involving an amount of Rs. 50 lakhs or so. So I suggest why should not the Government devise ways and means to make these insurance companies to invest, if not all at least a good portion of their funds in such building schemes as may be approved by the Government. While this will be to the interest of the insured public it will also provide colossal funds for the purpose of buildings which are, of course, so badly needed.

Then there are foreign insurance companies which are doing work on a gigantic scale and earning premia to the extent of crores of rupees. Why should not our Government likewise look into the desirability of

making these foreign insurance companies to invest money right in India for purposes like building instead of this national capital going out of India and being utilised for other purposes?

Shrimati Sushama Sen (Bhagalpur South): Much has already been said on the housing problem, and I think as it is our own National Government, the house-wife has to set the house in order. But we find that the problem of housing for the daily increasing population of India is one of the burning questions of the day and as was said by a previous speaker, Mr. Mohanlal Saksena, it is indeed a problem next to food and I may add that it is also next to clothing and health measures for the well-being of the millions in our country. The situation, of course, had been aggravated on account of the large influx of refugees from West Pakistan as well as from East Pakistan and we have to sympathise not only with the refugees because they have to put up with all sorts of living conditions but also with the Government which had to provide shelter for so many lakhs of people. We find from the record that the number of displaced persons from Pakistan as disclosed by the all-India census of 1951 was 74.80 lakhs—49.05 lakhs from West Pakistan and 25.75 lakhs from East Pakistan. Added to this, during May-October 1952, there has been a substantial influx of displaced persons from East Bengal and the total population of displaced persons from East Pakistan may be roughly estimated at 31 lakhs. These persons from West Pakistan are distributed mainly over Punjab, PEPSU, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and other places but the displaced persons from East Bengal are chiefly concentrated in West Bengal, their number in that State, as we see from the report, being 26 lakhs in a total of about 31 lakhs. Although it is impossible to cope with all the demands, on the whole, Government has been able to do a good job of it.

New colonies have sprung around in Delhi and round about Delhi, such as Rajendra Nagar, Patel Nagar, etc. Roads and shops have been built and amenities have been provided for the refugees and for other population too.

I would like to say a few words about industrial housing. Much has already been said and I am glad that efforts are being directed now to improve industrial housing. It is admitted on all hands that amongst the badly built houses those of the industrial workers in the larger cities are

the worst. The Five Year Plan Report says that in the past the Government offered a few concessions to the private interests to promote building activity but the response was very poor. The Report says that early in 1952 a new policy was announced whereby the Central Government were prepared to pay subsidy upto 20 per cent. of the cost of construction including the cost of land provided the balance was met by the employers who would also let out the houses to genuine workers at a rate suggested under the earlier scheme. The house thus constructed would remain the property of the employers.

The industrial housing problem vis-a-vis the subsidy that may be given to co-operative house building societies has already been discussed. So I shall not go into details again, but I do think if the subsidy and the concessions from Government are correlated to voluntary labour from the employers, it would enthuse the workers and evoke in them the spirit of healthy competition and even the amount as has been provided in the Plan, may be made to provide shelter to a much larger number of workers.

It is gratifying to note that as regards rural housing, the Planning Commission has favoured an aided self-help scheme on the model of one now in force in Puerto Rico. Besides schemes of self-help and construction of model houses in villages, the Government should also adopt a policy of reserving a new site for each village, for in the long run it will be easier to build a new village than to renovate an old one. It is better to have permanent buildings.

I have just visited the DVC works and there I saw that for the displaced villagers whole villages have been built and they are permanent buildings. Although there is a lot of criticism that so much money has been spent on constructing such houses, these are permanent structures. Even after the work of the DVC is finished, large industries are bound to spring up there because there will be plenty of water and also power. So industries are bound to grow up and I am sure that these houses will be of value for all time.

I think the State Governments should prepare a plan for the new village, mark out road sites, sites for panchayats, schools, tanks, etc., and provide a little money for initial expense to support the construction work through the voluntary labour of the villagers themselves. The Plan

[Shrimati Sushama Sen]

should provide for a scheme by which the villagers could, if they were so minded, build a new and more healthy village.

I am very glad that slum clearance is another important matter which is engaging the attention of this Ministry. This is of the utmost importance, and should be done on a proper plan speedily.

Now a word, regarding office accommodation, I find in the report that the Princes have given up their houses for this purpose. I should think that this example should be followed by others who have got big houses. In this city of Delhi, there are many who have very large houses, especially Ministers' houses with large compounds. I do not see why a portion of these houses and compounds should not be shared with less fortunate persons in order to meet the housing difficulties. The Deputy Ministers also have large houses with spacious compounds. This has been noticed by outsiders who come to Delhi. They point out to us that while the MPs live in flats of two rooms, the officials and Deputy Ministers live in palatial houses. This is a point which has to be considered and I hope the Government will take note of this.

श्रीमती उमा नेहरू (जिला सीतापुर व ज़िला खेरी—दास्वम) : अभी थोड़ी देर हुई मैं ने दूसरे तरफ के आनंदेबल मेम्बर श्री गुरुपादस्वामी का व्यास्थान सुना। मुझे भी उन की तरह से एक कहानी याद आई लेकिन वह कहानी बहुत लम्बी है, मैं सिर्फ उस का इशारा यहां करती हूँ। 'किसान ए आजाद' में एक मियां दुश्शू का चिक्क है। अंगर किसी ने 'किसान ए आजाद' पढ़ा है तो वह जानता होगा कि आनंदेबल मेम्बर का कैरेक्टर बिल्कुल मियां दुश्शू से मिलता है। यह बात मुझे बार बार याद आती रही।

बात यह है कि मूल्क को आजादी के बाद हम आज इस बात पर गौर कर रहे हैं कि आजादी के बाद मूल्क का निर्माण शुरू होता है। आर्थिक और सामाजिक जो

पी बातें होती हैं उन का हमें निर्माण करना होता है। लेकिन जब तक हिन्दुस्तान के रहने वालों को रोटी, कपड़ा और रहने के लिये मकान न मिले तब तक देश में परेशानी बनी रहती है और देश का निर्माण भी पूरी तौर से नहीं हो सकता है। इस लिये आज हमारे सामने यह प्रश्न है कि जो हमारी सरकार है उस का क्या फैज़ है। वह किस तरह से इन प्रश्नों को हल कर सकती है। मुझे अपनी सरकार से यह कहना है कि मुझे उन से कोई गिला और कोई शिकायत नहीं है। मैं भी जानती हूँ कि उन के सामने कितनी मुश्किलें हैं, मैं यह भी जानती हूँ कि हमें एक तरीके के साथ साथ चलना है। अगर आप इस काम में अलग अलग टुकड़े में चलेंगे तो आप जरा भी तरक्की नहीं कर सकते हैं। वह तो एक विश्वस सकिल है। अगर आप को तरक्की करनी है तो बुनियाद बदलनी होगी तब सभी चीज़ें दुर्घट हो जायेंगी।

मैं जब आजकल मकानों को देखती हूँ तो बड़े सोच में पड़ जाती हूँ। चाहे दिल्ली हो, इलाहाबाद हो, लखनऊ हो। चारों तरफ अगर आप शहरों में जायें तो वही एक पुकार मकानों के लिये है। लोग कहते हैं कि हमारे पास रहने को मकान नहीं है और जब से हिन्दुस्तान की बदकिस्मती से पाकिस्तान हुआ उस वक्त से तो यह पुकार और भी बढ़ गई है। हम बराबर यह देखते चले आ रहे हैं कि लोग कह रहे हैं कि हमारे पास रहने को मकान नहीं हैं, हम देखते हैं कि लोग सड़कों पर पड़े हैं, हम देखते हैं कि पेड़ों के तले लोग पड़े हैं, हम गरीबों को चार बांस लगा कर और उन पर छप्पर लटका कर रहते हुए देखते हैं। दूसरी तरफ यहां

जाते हैं तो देखते हैं कि एक इन्सान या दो इन्सान चार बड़े कमरे के मकानों में रहते हैं। हम देखते हैं कि पैलेशियल विल्डप्स हैं। तब हमें जरूर खयाल आता है कि अगर हम हिन्दुस्तान का निर्माण करने लड़े हुए हैं तो हमारा फर्ज़ है कि हम देखें कि मकान, कपड़ा और साना सब को एक सा मिलना चाहिये। यह न होना चाहिये कि समाज में एक तरफ रईस और अमीर हों और दूसरे तरफ फाके मस्ती हों। ऐसा न होना चाहिये। समाज के व्यक्तियों को हमें बराबर एक सा करना है। यह हमारा भी फर्ज़ है और हमारी कंप्रेस सरकार का भी।

इस के बाद सवाल आता है कि हम मकानों को कैसे बनायें। इस के लिये स्कीम तो बनाना ही होगा। कल रात मेरे एक भाई जो अमेरिका से आये हैं मुझ से यह कह रहे थे। कहने लगे कि चूंकि हम को यहां इन्डस्ट्रीज़ कायम करनी हैं इसलिये नीचे की जमीन काफी नहीं है। हम को मकानों को ऊपर ही ऊपर बनाना है। यह बातें सुन कर मैं ने कहा कि मुख्तलिफ़ मुक्त होते हैं। अलग अलग रहने के तरीके हैं, यह सोचना कि हम भारत को अमेरिका बना दें यह स्वाब सेरी समझ से बिल्कुल व्यर्थ है, किन्तु है। इसलिये यह बात भी ऐसी है जिस पर हम को विचार करना है। मैं आप को बता दूं कि मुझे यह बात कभी अपील नहीं करती कि अमेरिका में ऐसे मकान हैं या फलां जगह में ऐसे मकान हैं। मैं चाहती हूं कि अपने देश व प्रान्तों के मौसम के अनुसार मकान हम को बनाने चाहिये। मेरी राय है कि मकान बनाने में इस का खयाल रखना चाहिये कि ऐसे मकान हों कि जहां थोड़ी थोड़ी जमीन हम को मिल सके जहां हमारे बाल बच्चे खेल सकें। मेरी राय है जब देहतों में खास तौर से देहत वालों के लिये मकान

बनायें उन में इस बात का ज्यादा खयाल रखता जाय। आज कल जब हम देहतों में जाते हैं तो हम को बहुत सी चीजें तक़जीफ़ देह दिखाई देती हैं। वहां को नालियां ठीक नहीं हैं। वहां मच्छर ही मच्छर हैं क्योंकि पानी का निकास अच्छा नहीं है। बेवारे मिट्टी खोद खोद कर दीवालों में थोपें हैं जिस से वहां गड़े हो जाते हैं और उन में पानी भरा रहता है। सरकार का फर्ज़ है कि इन सब चीजों को दूरस्त करें। लेकिन यह कहते हुए मैं एक सोच में हूं कि हम यह कह दें कि ईटों के मकान आप देहतों में बनाइये लेकिन पेड़ तो देहतों में हैं नहीं, वह तो सब कट गये हैं। छोटे-भोटे आमों के ग्रोव यहां-वहां भले ही हों। अगर ईटों के मकान बनायें जायें तो बेवारे देहती बिल्कुल जल भूत जायेंगे। देहतियों के मकान तो मिट्टी की मोटी मोटी दीवारों के होते हैं और उन में बड़ी ठंडक होती है। हमें इस का भी विचार करना है ताकि उन का जीवन ठीक से बीते।

अभी मेरी बहन ने और दूसरे भाइयों ने भी इन्डस्ट्रियल लोगों के मकानों का जिक्र किया। वह स्लम्स में ने भी देखे हैं और मैं समझती हूं कि गवर्नरेंट के सामने स्लम्स का भी सवाल है। स्लम्स देख कर बहुत तकलीफ़ होती है। रहने को जगह नहीं होती है, एक जगह में खान्दान का खान्दान पड़ा रहता है। भारतवर्ष में बदकिस्ती से पापुलेशन की हालत यह है कि वह बजाय घटन के रोज़ ब रोज़ बड़ी ही चली जाती है। इन सब चीजों के बास्ते, मकानों के लिये, खाने पीने के लिये, हर चीज़ के लिये लैनिंग की जाय तभी कुछ हो सकता है। बिना इस के काम नहीं चल सकता है। और यह सब करना हमारी सरकार का काम है। जिस बक्त हम को शहर में जमीन की ज़रूरत होती है उस बक्त हम

[श्रीमती उमा नेहरू]

को जमीन नहीं मिलती लेकिन पता नहीं क्या बात है कि हर सड़क के कोने में एक सिनेमा हाउस फौरन तैयार हो जाता है। अगर आज हम मकान बनायें तो हम को सीमेन्ट नहीं मिलता है, हम को इंट नहीं मिलती है, कोई चीज़ नहीं मिलती है, लेकिन सिनेमा हाउस जब बनता है तो वह बहुत जल्दी बन जाता है। सरकार का यह भी कर्तव्य है कि वह इस की भी जांच करे कि अगर सिनेमा हाउस बनता है तो किस तरह से बनता है, ब्लैक मार्केट से सामान आता है या क्या होता है, किस तरह से चारों तरफ सिनेमा हाउसेज बनते जा रहे हैं।

और दूसरे जिस बक्त एक संगठन होता है निर्माण होता है उस बक्त ऐसे सिनेमा हाउसेज चारों तरफ बनने से नुकसान भी होता है।

अब रहा करप्शन के बारे में। मैं उसके बारे में बराबर सुनती चली आ रही हूँ। अभी एक आनेरेबिल भूम्भर की राय थी कि गवर्नरमेंट की जितनी खरीद-फरीद हो वह सारी हमारे बक्स एंड माइन्स डिपार्टमेंट के जरिए हो। मुझे हँसी आ रही थी कि इतनी सारी मिनिस्ट्रीज हैं और उन सब का दोष इस एक मिनिस्ट्री पर पढ़ने वाला है। मेरा ऐसा विचार नहीं है। लेकिन करप्शन का रोकना ज़रूरी है। मेरी समझ में नहीं आता कि अगर पार्लियामेंट के भूम्भरों की एक कमेटी बनायी जायगी तो वह क्या करप्शन रोक सकेगी। इन्सान की तबीयत इतनी कमजोर है कि मुझे नहीं मालूम कि जब यह कमेटी बनेगी तब क्या रंग लावेगी। इसलिए मैं तो यह समझती हूँ कि चाहे कुछ भी हो यह बात तो कैबिनेट के सामने जाने वाली है और कैबिनेट ही इसका निश्चय भी करेगी। करप्शन एक बहुत गहरी चीज़ है। इसका निकालना तभी मुमकिन हो सकता है जब हमारे जितने मिनिस्टर हैं वह

और जो हमारे आफिसर हैं वह इस पर गौर करेंगे और गौर करके इसको अलग करेंगे।

इसके अलावा मुझे गवर्नरमेंट से एक बात और कहनी है। मैं देख रही हूँ कि मकान बनते चले जाते हैं लेकिन मुझ से कहा जाता है कि हर चीज़ बहुत मंहृणी मिलती है और कई चीजें तो मिल भी नहीं सकती हैं। इस हालत में गवर्नरमेंट का यह कर्ज है कि वह मकान के मैट्रियल को इस तरह से कंट्रोल में रखे कि वह सस्ता हो और आसानी से मिल सके।

मैं ज्यादा बक्त न लेकर एक बात यह भी कहना चाहती हूँ कि यह जो इम्प्रूवमेंट ट्रस्ट म्युनिसिपल बोर्ड और कंटोरमेंट जमीन को नीलाम करता है इसको बन्द किया जाय। अगर गवर्नरमेंट एक सोशलिस्ट स्टेट बनाना चाहती है तो उसका यह फर्ज होना चाहिये कि वह जमीन को कास्ट प्राइस पर दे और जो गरीब लोग हैं उनको मुफ़्त जमीन दे ताकि वह आसानी से अपने मकान बना सके।

आखिर मैं मुझे एक बात यह कहनी है कि मेरे सामने इस महकमे का बराबर जिक्र आता रहता है। इस महकमे में पी० डबल्यू० डी० का बहुत जोर है। और इस पी० डबल्यू० डी० के मारे चारों तरफ दूहाई से मच्छी हुई है। इस भक्त के साथ एक एस्टेट आफिस भी नत्यी है। उसकी हालत भी मैं आपको बतलाती हूँ। मैं आजकल कांस्टीट्यूशन हाउस में रहती हूँ। वहां इसका इंतजाम देखकर मैं इसके बारे में बराबर सोचती हूँ। कोई दिन खाली नहीं जाता जब कि वहां पर कोई मरम्मत न होती हो। मैं ने दरिया-फैत किया कि कांस्टीट्यूशन हाउस पर सालाना मरम्मत में क्या खर्च होता है तो मालूम हुआ कि एक लाख रुपया मरम्मत पर खर्च होता है। असल में यह मकान जिनमें हम रहते

हैं बहुत सस्ता हो चुके हैं और इनकी मियाद पूरी हो चुकी है और इनको अब सत्तम हो जाना चाहिये था। लेकिन एक लाख रुपया सालाना सर्व करके इनको जिन्दा रखा जा रहा है।

एक नयी बात और भी यहां देखी। मेरी कुछ समझ में नहीं आई। मैं सोचती हूँ कि यह ऐस्टेट ऑफिस के इंजिनियरों का अजीब विचार है। कान्स्टीट्यूशन हाउस में कुछ लोगों को रसोई की ज़रूरत थी, वह नहीं चाहते थे कि वहां का स्थान खायें। तो यह हुआ कि हमारे पीछे जो छोटे छोटे बरामदे हैं वह रसोई खाने बन गये। यहां पर ऐसा करना आसान था। दोनों तरफ दीवारें तो थी हीं। उनमें दरवाजे लगा दिये गये और वहां किचन बन गये। मैं ने तो अपने कमरे में ऐसा नहीं होने दिया लेकिन मैं यह देखकर परेशान हूँ। एक ही कमरा रहने के लिए है। उसमें अगर इस तरह किचन बना दिया जायगा तो घुआं, धूल, साने की बूंदें आती रहेगी। यह भला कहीं हैल्दी चीज़ है। मैं समझती हूँ कि यह मामला भी विचार करने योग्य है।

अब और ज्यादा समय न लेकर के मुझे गवर्नरमेंट से इतना ही कहना है कि वह दो तीन बातों पर विचार करे। एक तो यह कि मकान बनाने के लिए ज़रीन मृष्ट देनी चाहिए और हाइएस्ट बिडर को नीलाम में ज़रीन देना बन्द कर देना चाहिए। जो बड़े बड़े पैलेशियल मकान हैं या जो बनेंगे और सिनेमा घर हैं उन पर डबल टैक्स लगाइये और उससे जो रुपया मिले उससे गरीबों के लिए मकान बनाइये। मैं समझती हूँ कि अगर गवर्नरमेंट सख्ती से ऐसा करेगी तभी वह पांच साल की योजना में जो उसने अपने सामने रखी है कामयाब होगी।

Dr. Amin: Just as all roads led to Rome all our efforts must be

directed to the successful implementation of the Five Year Plan—whether we are Congressmen or not. The Planning Commission has rightly stated that the success of the Plan depends on public co-operation, and the Commission has shown a realistic attitude by saying that in order to secure public co-operation, there must be efficiency and integrity in administration. So, it is the responsibility of the Government to have clean and efficient administration, and it is the duty of the people to help the Government in purifying the administration, wherever necessary. Actuated by such a motive, I want to say something about the working of this Ministry, for, I am afraid, if the matters go on the merry way as at present, this Ministry will have to its credit a great scandal almost rivalling the other scandals known so far.

Mysterious is the working of the Petroleum Division of this Ministry. The way in which the prices of petroleum products are fixed, the manner in which the interests of the foreign oil companies are safeguarded, and the ways in which the interests of the Indian consumers are neglected are all unexplained mysteries about the working of this Division.

You know we are dependent on foreign countries for our requirements of petroleum products like kerosene, petrol, furnace oil, crude oil etc. The foreign oil companies are holding the monopoly of oil trade and they are making huge profits by charging us higher prices for petroleum products and by exploiting the present situation.

I may just give an example as to how the price of one of the petroleum products, that is furnace oil, was increased from time to time. The average price per ton of furnace oil, during the years 1941-52, has been:

1941	...	Rs. 40/-
1943	...	Rs. 50/-
1947	...	Rs. 60/-
1950	...	Rs. 90/-
1952	...	Rs. 180/-

It can be said that since 1941, there has been more than 400 per cent. increase. I want to ask: can this price increase be justified by the Ministry? I am told this Ministry is dictated to by oil companies. If I am wrong, I would like to be corrected.

A further analysis of the prices will show that in one year, that is, 1951/52,

[Dr. Amin]

100 per cent. price increase was given. The reason given by the Ministry in support of the abnormal increase in price is that the price has been increased due to the extra transportation cost, which the oil companies have to bear for bringing furnace oil from distant places. Not being satisfied with the reasoning of the Ministry, I put a question—Starred Question No. 2268—on 29th July, 1952, in reply to which the hon. Minister gave certain information regarding imports and shipping freights. On the basis of this information, the average freight calculated per ton, comes to:

1950	Rs. 21/-
1951	Rs. 32/-
1952	Rs. 46/-

If the increased transportation cost was the only factor which contributed to the price rise, then the price could only be increased, at the most, by Rs. 25, which is the difference between the freight rates of 1952 and 1950, and not Rs. 90 as has been done now. Therefore, one is led to believe that there are other factors which influenced the decision of this Ministry. The price of furnace oil during 1950 was only Rs. 90, and after adding the difference in transportation cost, the correct and reasonable price would be Rs. 115 only, instead of the exorbitant price of Rs. 180 charged by the oil companies during the year 1952. In other words, the oil companies have made a profit of Rs. 65 per ton of furnace oil imported during the year 1952. This Rs. 65 is an extra profit over and above the regular profit they might have been getting. Our consumption of furnace oil during the eleven months of 1952 was about 7,50,000 tons. And, at the rate of Rs. 65 profit per ton, the oil companies have made an excess profit of approximately Rs. five crores, during eleven months only, on this one single product. We are importing all our requirements of petroleum products from foreign countries, and if the profit on one petroleum product, namely furnace oil, during the last eleven months, amounts to such a huge figure of eight digits, the profit by these oil companies during the last ten or twelve years would amount to several crores of rupees. We are trying to mobilise all our resources for the successful implementation of our Five Year Plan, and we are trying to get foreign aid also, but we have never thought of putting a check on the profits earned by the oil companies. We have allowed the Indian consumers and industries to

be exploited by these oil companies. As there was no case for allowing a higher price increase to the oil companies, the Government reduced the prices of petroleum products including furnace oil, with effect from 1st December 1952. In spite of this reduction, the oil companies are still charging more than a reasonable price. Our annual consumption of furnace oil is about nine lakh tons. And at the present rate, the oil companies are still making huge profits on this product. The time has come when the Government should act and see that the prices charged by the oil companies to the Indian consumers compare favourably with those ruling in the world markets.

Then, I would like to come to the question of refund of increased prices.

Shri Morarka (Ganganagar-Jhunjhunu): What are the prices ruling in the world market?

Dr. Amin: About Rs. 90 per ton or less than that.

Shri Raghavachari (Penukonda): It is Rs. 180 here?

Dr. Amin: Yes, it was, but it has been reduced to about Rs. 135 now.

I would now come to the question of refund of increased prices charged by the oil companies. If the oil companies have increased the prices, and if the Government have allowed a price increase to the extent of the increase in transportation cost only, then there cannot be any ground to complain against the Government or the oil companies. But I feel that the Government have shown a very liberal attitude in allowing the price increase. It would therefore be fair and reasonable to force the oil companies to refund the excess amount charged to the users of furnace oil, from January 1952.

I shall now refer to the question of the price increase allowed on stock of furnace oil, held by the oil companies on 19th January 1952, the date on which the price increase was allowed. May I know the justification for allowing price increase on stock of furnace oil, on which no extra transportation charges have been incurred by the oil companies? I do not know the actual quantity of furnace oil in stock, with the oil companies on the date on which the price increase was allowed. But I believe that the oil companies had

considerable stock of furnace oil on that date, which was sufficient for our requirements for about twelve months. It would have been reasonable if the Government had allowed a fair price increase on furnace oil imported after 19th January 1952, but to give price increase on stock is something which gives ground for suspicion. All these facts lead to the only conclusion that the Government have not exercised enough care to scrutinise the cost structure of furnace oil before allowing the price increase, or that the oil companies have dictated their terms to the Government, taking undue advantage of the situation, or there may be some one in the Petroleum Division, who may be very sympathetic towards the oil companies, and may have purposely given a liberal price increase. After all, oil in any form is capable of greasing the palm.

I would now like to make a passing reference to the refineries to be set up at some of the ports. Though this question does not strictly fall within the scope of this Ministry, I believe, the hon. Minister will be able to throw some light on the progress achieved in this direction.

Sardar Swaran Singh: I think you may reserve that for the Production Ministry, because they are dealing with it.

Dr. Amin: What about the price policy?

Sardar Swaran Singh: In relation to the refineries, this matter is being looked after by the Production Ministry.

Dr. Amin: Then I shall leave that. I would now come to the staff working in the Petroleum Division of this Ministry. I am led to believe that some officers of this division are very sympathetic towards the oil companies, as I have stated before. If that is the case, I humbly request the hon. Minister to investigate the affiliation in the past of such officers and whether the Public Service Commission has concurred with all the appointments.

As we have already a large number of Ministers, perhaps as big as the Legislature of a Part C State, one more may be allowed to join it. I suggest that a new Ministry be created, called the Ministry of Anti-Corruption, which will be the eyes and ears of the Government.

I request the hon. Minister to give very clear and not evasive answers

to the questions raised. I only hope and pray that all I have said is based on incorrect information. But if what I have said is true, if there is a reasonable certainty that it is true, and if the Ministry does not take immediate steps to eradicate the evil, I must say what Lord Acton said:

"All power corrupts; and absolute power corrupts absolutely".

And I would end by saying:

"All power corrupts, and Power Alcohol corrupts absolutely."

Shri T. Subrahmanyam (Bellary): There has been a lot of criticism offered against the working of this Department, from the Opposition. We have heard one hon. Member saying that there has been unnecessary retrenchment of some circles, and that human outlook has been lacking in the working of this Department. Another hon. Member was saying that there is a lot of corruption everywhere.

First, I would like to deal with these criticisms, with regard to corruption, briefly. One hon. Member also said that there has been devaluation after independence. I would like to point out here that there is certainly devaluation, but the devaluation has been in the spirit of helpfulness, in constructive criticism, and in trying to see what is good in the Departments. There is no purpose served in trying to spotlight the public attention on one or two cases, which may be scandalous. If there are such cases, then I am sure, the Ministry will bring the offenders to book and give them deterrent punishments. There is absolutely no doubt about it. But to make sweeping generalisations and say that all departments, the Public Works Department, this Department, that Department, and every Department is corrupt, and that we should have a Parliamentary Committee to go into this or that—just now one hon. Member said that there should be a Ministry to deal with Corruption—is not proper.

Dr. Amin: Ministry of Anti-Corruption.

Shri T. Subrahmanyam: All this, I would say, is singularly lacking in the spirit of helpful thinking and constructive criticism.

Now let me take up the first criticism, that as a result of the working of the Committee presided over by Shri Kasturbhai Lalbai, there was some retrenchment. Now, retrenchment is necessary. There is criticism

[Shri T. Subrahmanyam]

that there is so much of wastage or extravagance, and that the establishments and departments have grown to monstrous lengths; and therefore there should be retrenchment. As a result of this, about three circles and about five divisions have been recommended to be abolished. But even then, the Ministry has taken care to see that hardship is avoided.

"As a result of the reduction of establishment, considerable retrenchment of staff became inevitable, mostly in the ministerial grades. With a view to mitigate hardship to the persons concerned, retrenchment was made on an all-India basis and was spread evenly all over the Department. Every endeavour was also made to get the retrenched staff absorbed in other Central Government undertakings."

This is the most important thing I claim that the Ministry have conscientiously tried to absorb those people who ought to have been relieved. I shall just give a few figures. The Committee had recommended that eleven Assistant Engineers and 36 section officers should be relieved, but they have not been relieved; they have been absorbed. And then with regard to the 139 ministerial staff, 75 people have been absorbed and attempts are made to absorb the other 64 people also. Then, out of 28 draftsmen, only three have been relieved.

I will next go on to the question of accommodation in Delhi. Delhi has grown enormously. There have been Embassies working here, and there has been the State Legislature working here and many businessmen and others have come from the former Western Punjab. The population of Delhi has increased enormously. As a result of this, there is acute shortage of housing, both for office and for residential purposes. With a view to reduce the pressure of accommodation, both office and residential, the possibility of shifting some of the offices now located in Delhi to places outside is under examination. I would like to make three concrete suggestions in this connection. One is, that there are some old cantonments where previously the Army was located. For instance, take Secunderabad. There, formerly an Army of nearly 10,000 people was stationed. They have huge buildings. Now they must all be practically rusting, probably unswept also. There must be a skeleton of an army there just at present functioning. Therefore, I suggest

that these may be made use of. Secondly, there are hill stations also. Immediately I think of Ooty in Madras State. It is a lovely, beautiful hill station. There are a number of palaces, also there belonging to these Princes and Rajpramukhs. And then there are a number of other buildings. Now that communications have improved and aerodromes have also been located here and there, we can certainly make use of these hill stations also. I am thinking immediately of Ooty. There must be others also. Thirdly, we have a number of these multi-purpose projects. In my own district, there is the Tungabhadra project which will be completed within next June. A number of big buildings are going to be there. Either they will be demolished or sold in auction or even kept waste. I strongly feel and suggest that these buildings which are built in the multi-project areas in various places may be utilised. Electric current is made available there; water supply and other facilities are there and then communication facilities are also there. Therefore, I suggest that these places may be utilised for dispersing these attached offices which may be found unnecessary to be in Delhi.

I go to the problem of housing which has an intimate bearing on our standard of living. We have to raise the standard of living. Every person has been saying that we must find an adequate solution for our housing problem. One Member has already stated that in urban areas the population has been increasing at the rate of 21 per cent. for the first decade since 1921, 32 per cent. in the next decade and 54 per cent. in the last decade. Government are doing their best to introduce housing schemes, also in the urban areas. To the State Governments they have promised a subsidy of 50 per cent. for State housing projects and then 50 per cent. loans spread over a period of 25 years for repayment. This is a very liberal and generous measure and I am sure that all the State Governments will take advantage of it. With regard to the private sector—the industrial employers and employees also—the Government have stated that they will give 25 per cent subsidy which will be involved in the expenditure on these housing projects and then 25 per cent. as loans spread over a period of 15 years for repayment.

In this connection I think that the Madras State Government must have also recommended some projects. The industrial sector must also have

recommended some schemes for sanction. Immediately I am thinking of the Rayalaseema Mills of Adoni. They must have sent a proposal for sanction. I request the Government to speedily expedite the sanction of this project. There is also a sugar factory in Hospet. They must have also sent up some proposals. I strongly urge that these proposals also may kindly be sanctioned and expedited.

I suggest that help be provided to Housing co-operative societies. The Government must be more liberal and generous to them. One Member suggested that the loan must be to the extent of 37½ per cent. I fully concur with that. For instance, I am thinking of Yemmaganur, a small town in Bellary district. The hand-loom weavers have got a co-operative society there. They have developed a model colony with simple and neat houses. It is located in a rural area—a small town. If this housing problem is to be solved effectively, we must take the help of private people also and utilise their resources and bend all the energies to solve this problem. I suggest that Government help to co-operative societies must be made more liberal and generous.

Only one suggestion with regard to research. Research work has been undertaken by the Government. Last November a Seminar was also organised in which cheap housing designs were examined. I suggest to the Government that the results of that Seminar may be implemented as early as possible and an experimental station started. In the next year there is going to be an International Exhibition in India. I suggest that it should not be a mere show or window-dressing. Houses must be put up on a permanent basis for actual occupation by the people and we must evolve a housing design for the rural areas so that people can make houses with the available local material and local labour. It is only that way that we can solve the problem of housing.

I support the Demands in respect of the Works, Housing and Supply Ministry.

The Deputy Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Shri Buragohain): I wish to intervene at this stage only very briefly. In the first place, I wish to reply to some of the things said by my hon. friend Dr. Amin. I am sorry he is not here in the House. He said certain very harsh things against the Petroleum Division which are absolutely unwarranted. I find that this hon. Member has been taking some considerable

interest in the matter of oil, and more particularly furnace oil. He has had certain questions put down and they had been duly answered in this House. He also took this matter up with my hon. colleague, the Minister, and with me, and satisfactory replies had been given to him in this matter of furnace oil.

I would like the House to realise the situation with regard to our oil supplies. We are dependent on the trade for the supply of oil. It is a very vital product to the country. Although we produce in this country in Assam, where we have got a small refinery and a small oil-field, the production is hardly enough for that State only. So for the rest of the country, we have to depend on these oil companies who keep us supplied with this product.

As far as we are aware in the Government the whole of this oil trade follows a common pattern in the world. There is no statutory price control or any formal control over oil in any part of the world, and the price structure is also similar all over. That price structure is based on two factors over which the Government has no control. One is the free market price. The biggest free market of oil is the Gulf of Mexico and this free-market price that rules at a given time is a factor over which we have no control. The other matter, another important factor, is the ocean transportation charges. Regarding ocean transportation also, it will be appreciated that we have no control. So, these two are the chief elements that make up the price. It will be remembered that in the middle of 1951, when suddenly the Abadan Refinery, the world's biggest refinery, from where we were getting 75 per cent. of our supplies, was closed, these oil companies had to look for supplies for us from elsewhere. Our supplies had to come from the Western Hemisphere. For this reason they had to incur extra ocean transportation charges. Although the Government permitted them to charge a surcharge in view of this extra ocean transportation, the Government still went into the question and examined it from time to time and authorised the surcharges by the oil companies. Recently, during the latter half of 1952, ocean transportation charges came down for various reasons including the international situation and, as a result, we had last revised the oil prices on the basis of this reduced ocean transportation charges and the largest share of this reduction actually went to

[Shri Buragohain]

furnace oil. The reduction for it has worked out to Rs. 43 to Rs. 46/- per ton and it took effect from 1st December or the beginning of December, 1952.

This question of the oil prices has been gone into by Government more than once. It was gone into through the assistance of our Trade Representatives and our Missions abroad as far back as 1947 and we went into this question with the assistance of some of our Missions abroad also in 1951. Government are satisfied that the prices charged by these oil companies follow a common pattern and the prices paid in other countries also are very much the same. There may, however, be a slight difference here and there, as, in this case, there may be a slightly greater burden on the furnace oil perhaps, although there is definitely less burden on the common man's commodity kerosene oil. So, that is the position with regard to oil and the price structure of oil.

There is no question of anybody in the Petroleum Division being kindly towards the oil companies. There is nothing of that kind. This Petroleum Division is one of the smallest units under this Ministry, and those persons have been working at considerable strain. It may be recalled that in the middle of 1951 our main source, Abadan was closed. It was mainly due to the vigilance of this Division and also of the oil companies that India could go without rationing. We had not to take recourse to rationing in spite of this difficulty.

Next, I will deal with one or two points raised—not in a spirit of bitter comment but in a spirit of constructive suggestions—by my hon friend Mr. Khandubhai Desai and also by my hon. friend, Mr. Khuda Baksh. Both of them have rightly laid stress on the volume and magnitude and the variety and complexity of the stores that are being purchased by the Central Purchase Organisations of this Ministry.

There must be some misapprehension in minds of these hon. Members—and may be in the minds of others also. This system of centralised purchase operates in a very peculiar way. It can be compared very much to, I should think, the Public Service Commission. It is well known that the Public Service Commission has to advertise for posts to be filled up; it has to specify the special qualifications that are necessary and it also stipulates for other qualifications. Similar is the

case with the Central Purchase Organisation. The Central Purchase Organisation advertises its demands. It gives a fair field of competition to all those who are eligible for it and then it puts severely to test the products also. As may be recalled by the hon. Members, we have got two Test Houses, where the products are tested by experts. One is the Government Test House at Alipore and the other is the Metallurgical Laboratory at Tatanagar. These are the two places where our main products are tested. We have got specifications for the stores and those specifications are very strict and a successful contractor has to comply with those specifications. Therefore the whole matter of stores purchase is so devised that there can be no room for an officer who undertakes this purchase to favour a particular party because there will be so many other parties. He does the thing not anywhere in a dark room. He does it in the open light. These demands are advertised in the Indian Trade Journal which is published by the Government of India in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. When contracts are placed, they are also advertised with all the particulars in the Indian Trade Journal. In this way the Supply Department acts always in a kind of light. There can be nothing very much shady about it and that is why I find that no hon. Member has been able to cite any kind of instances where things could be said to have gone wrong in the Supply Department.

It may be true that certain things might have gone wrong here and there in our purchases abroad. But, in those cases, I might mention to the House that it was not our Central Purchase Organisations in London and in Washington which had to blame. It was perhaps because of certain direct purchases undertaken by some of the Departments of the Government of India and because of their lack of proper information, or lack of experience or lack of technical skill. It was just possible that they could not properly arrange things.

It is primarily because that the Supply Department under the Central Government has been established more than 30 years ago, that we have just now undertaken a review, a thorough review, of all the three organisations. In fact, the two regional committees set up for the London organisation and the Washington organisation have recently completed their work and have reported and their reports are before the Government.

Another Committee has been set up with experts, people who represent the various Departments and Ministries of the Government of India and who are experts in this particular line of stores purchase. This Committee will not only go into the Indian Organisation but will also go into the reports submitted by the two other Committees in London and Washington, who in their turn were also expert committees. The whole idea is to see whether we could increase efficiency—it is not that the Organisations are now working unsatisfactorily—but it is our intention to go more fully into them with a view to see whether we could improve the efficiency of these Organisations so that economies could be effected in the volume of our purchase, in the quality and in all other matters.

With regard to the screening of indents or purchase orders before they are sent out to our Organisations abroad—a point raised by my hon. friend Mr. Khuda Baksh—we have got a machinery in the Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals. It is compulsory for the various Government Departments to go to this organisation before they can ask for any stores from abroad. It is the function of this Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals to forward the indents to the India Store Department in London and the India Supply Mission, Washington, after doing what are called "Screening" and "cross-mandating." This practice is there, but we are trying to see how best we can tighten up that screening procedure.

I would not like to take any more time of the House and would leave all the other points to be answered by my hon. colleague, the Minister.

Shri Raghavachari: May we know what are those countries in which you suspect that there may be something wrong about purchases, except the U.K. and Washington Purchasing Missions. The Deputy Minister was saying that there was nothing wrong with the stores purchased in the U.K. and Washington.....

Shri Buragohain: What I said was that nothing went wrong so far as the purchases undertaken by the Central Purchase Organisations of this Ministry were concerned. It was just possible that in one or two individual cases like the purchase of jeeps, of which this House is no doubt aware, certain things might have gone wrong because these purchases were undertaken directly by the various Departments of Government.

20 P.S.D.

Prof. D. C. Sharma (Hoshiarpur): I am afraid I speak at the fag end of the day when the debate is practically over. I must say that the points raised by the Opposition boil down to a very simple formula. They divide the achievements of the Government by 10,000 and multiply the shortcomings by 1,000. The result is happiness, that is, happiness for the Opposition. As I listened to the speeches from the Opposition Benches, I felt that they brought up just a small point here or there in order to paint the Government as black as they can. The P.W.D. has come in very handy. We are all in search of scapegoats, and I think it serves our purpose very well to make a scapegoat of the P.W.D. I do not say that all the P.W.D. men are honourable and godly, but I do say that they do not deserve to be tarred by the brush used by some Opposition Members.

The problem of housing is a stupendous one. Those of us who have read about the housing problem in other countries know that there have been many mistakes made, many blunders committed. In fact, those of us who know a little of English have read that new words came into being because of the scandals connected with housing in some countries. When I read the report—and read carefully both the report and the summary—I came to the conclusion that our Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply has done splendidly and it is not a joke to put up 15 thousand and odd houses in such a short time. The Ministry deserves congratulations for making this very good beginning in this very difficult task of house construction.

The real problem before us is one of rural housing. I come from a constituency—in fact, most of us come from such constituencies—where there are very few towns and the places are rural. If our Ministry of Housing is to do justice to the problem, it should not confine its activities to building houses for officers. They build houses for officers drawing above Rs. 500 and below Rs. 500 and all that. These officers are there and will be there. They should have accommodation. I do not say that they should not have. But the point is that instead of providing accommodation at the top, and instead of making a drive for making accommodation available at the top, we should make a drive for making accommodation available at the bottom. I think we should take the bottom and then go to the top. This is what Free India needs.

[Prof. D. C. Sharma]

Only this morning I asked a supplementary regarding rural housing. I wanted to know if in the proposed Exhibition we will have those model houses which will fit into the scheme of life in small villages, in villages of medium size, and in villages of large size. I know the Ministry is already doing something to capture the imagination of the people. But why should we not have a National Museum? Every country has a great National Museum. I do not see why we should not put up a building which can be an index of the greatness of our country.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: But not palaces.

Prof. D. C. Sharma: We should have palaces. Every country has its palaces. I do not know which country you fancy, but whichever country you fancy, it has so many palaces.

Shri Nambiar: Let us utilise the existing ones properly.

Prof. D. C. Sharma: We are utilising them much better than the country which you love is doing. I can assure you that we would like to have palaces, but they would be palaces for the people. We would like to have bungalows, but they would be bungalows for the people.

At the same time, the fundamental problem facing this Ministry is that it should change the structure of the villages. We have been talking of slums. I have seen and been to many of them. I am not exaggerating when I say that most of our villages are slums. Unless we can turn them into beautiful places, I think we will not be doing justice to this problem. I am glad that the Ministry is going to have a National Building Organisation to bring down the cost and make use of indigenous building materials. I would request the hon. Minister to see that this organisation does not remain only in Delhi. I read a report that it may have branches at Ahmedabad, Bombay, Gauhati etc. All that I would say is that this organisation should extend its activities to sizable villages also. This National Building Organisation should not confine its activities only to towns, but its ramifications and branches should percolate to and infiltrate into small villages, so that the structure of India may become fine and we can have houses in India which are fit houses for our people.

Another point that I want to make is this. I have read through the cut motions which my hon. friends have proposed. On the one hand, they are fond of talking of economy. On the other, they say that there should be no retrenchment. I am glad that the Ministry has effected economy to the tune of Rs. eleven lakhs. I am also glad that the entire administrative set-up of the Ministry is given in the report.

I have one more point to make, and that is in regard to the hostels run by Government. I have been sometimes a resident of some of these hostels. Of course, the Estate Office is a place of mystery. I think some writer of mystery stories should be brought to unravel the mysteries of the Estate Office. I do not mean that there is anything underhand, but it is a very fascinating thing and if I had time I would like to explore its bye-lanes and labyrinths and see how it works, because at present I do not understand how it works. Very few people understand it. What I wish to say is that the food in these hostels should be improved. The food contains everything except the vitamins of life. It is neither appetising nor body-building. I do not know for whom it is meant. I sometimes used to wonder why these ladies and gentlemen came there finely dressed to eat their dinner at the table, because I thought the food would not appeal to anybody. I would therefore say that the Estate Office should do something in this matter and improve the quality of the food. I think these Government hostels are a standing advertisement of the inefficiency of the Ministry, unless their food is improved.

I want to say one thing about the Stationery and Printing Department. I am glad that the Simla Press is being brought to Faridabad. I am glad about that. But I would request the hon. Minister to improve the quality of printing of the proceedings of the House of the People. I get the proceedings of the Punjab Assembly and I cannot say that they are produced in a Government Press. When I compare the proceedings of the House of the People with the Hansard—I would say, well they are done by a Ph.D., while these are done by a matriculate. I would, therefore, say that the efficiency of the Government Press must be improved.

On the whole, I would say that the Ministry has done a very good job. Of course, one can point out shortcomings. I must say that the job of

housing has been done splendidly well by the Ministry. If I have made these two suggestions, it is because I feel they require looking into. I am sure under the supervision of our new Ministry these shortcomings, will be overcome.

Shri Ranjit Singh (Sangrur): Those who live in Delhi know that to hire a house in Delhi is a problem. No doubt, Government have constructed numerous houses for the refugees and for the Government servants during the last four or five years. But Government have not paid any attention to the demands of the growing population of the capital town of India. Today a man wanting to hire a small living room with kitchen, bathroom and a servant's quarters cannot get it even by paying Rs. 5,000 as advance rent for two years, though such accommodation can be easily constructed within that amount. Such are the hard conditions that are prevailing in Delhi these days.

I understand that several thousand Government employees are on the waiting list for accommodation. They are waiting to get accommodation from Government when it is ready. If accommodation is constructed at the present pace, it will take several years to accommodate Government servants alone. The city of Delhi is overcrowded and congested. People are hard-pressed for want of accommodation. It is the duty of the Government to construct accommodation for their employees and release the accommodation which has been requisitioned by the Government during the last ten or twelve years.

Well, Government with its vast resources can certainly tackle this problem by accelerating the building programme. Government should encourage people to construct their own houses by giving them cheap lands and materials at cheap rates. Government should allow people to construct second storey on Single storey houses. Government should arrange sufficient building materials at controlled rates or if possible even at cheaper rates. Government should give concessionary railway freights on the building materials that would be required for the construction of these buildings. The brick rate these days in Delhi is very high. If proper arrangements are made, bricks can be manufactured and supplied at cheaper rates. Government should give subsidy from five per cent. to ten per cent. on the newly built houses. Government should encourage their officers and employees to construct their own houses by giving them subsidy and advance against provident fund, if necessary.

Last year and this year Government have sold lands in Delhi for the construction of houses at Rs. 1,50,000 per acre. I would like to point out to the Government that these very lands, which are being sold at such high and exorbitant prices these days, were acquired by the Government of India for the construction of New Delhi in 1912 or 1913 at Rs. 150 per acre. A man desiring to construct a house on a plot of 1/5th of an acre will have to pay about Rs. 20,000 as the cost of the plot and he will have to spend another Rs. 60,000 for the construction of the house. Thus when the house is completed it will cost about Rs. 80,000. Besides this he will have to pay Rs. 3,500 or Rs. 3,600 per year as ground rent, municipal taxes, income-tax and repair charges. That is about Rs. 300 per month are the other expenses. I would like to ask from Government how many people can afford to spend Rs. 80,000 as hard cash and Rs. 300 as other expenses per month with a view to living in their own houses. The land prices are very high and particularly in these days when the income-tax rates are very high—the value of the rupee is now equivalent to four annas of prewar days—house building activity is deterred. How is it possible for Government to bring socialism and equality in the country?

So, Government should bring down the prices of these lands and building materials considerably. When there is a demand for 200 plots they generally sell about 100 plots to get high and exorbitant prices. Government should offer more plots than the demand. Government should encourage building societies. These building societies, working under experienced engineers, builders and architects would be able to do very good work and they would be very useful to the country in the long run. Such societies should be encouraged and should be given cheap lands and given long leases and loan if possible. Houses constructed under the supervision of experienced engineers and architects on cheap lands with less costly materials would be sold to the needy people in no time.

In the end I suggest that the labourers who have constructed this city of Delhi are now wandering from place to place for shelter. These labourers who have constructed these big buildings like the Parliament House in which we meet, should be provided a shelter so that they may live comfortably and peacefully under the regime of our National Government.

Sardar Swaran Singh: it may not be possible for me within the short time at my disposal to attempt an answer to the various suggestions or points of criticism that have been raised by the hon. Members on various scores, but I may assure the hon. Members that I will carefully go into all the suggestions which have been made on the floor of the House. I will look into the points of grievance which have been made and also attempt to answer some of them. But such hon. Members whose points are not covered by my reply may take it from me that I will go into those points and will examine them; and such of the suggestions as, after examination, are capable of being implemented will be certainly implemented.

The work of the Ministry so far as the Supply side is concerned has been reviewed by my hon. colleague the Deputy Minister and I will not cover the ground which has already been covered by him.

The other two important functions of the Ministry, namely, Housing and the Public Works Department have come in both for praise as well as for a certain amount of criticism. To those who have said a good word I acknowledge them with grateful thanks, and to those who have levelled criticism I.....

Shri Nambiar: Curse!

Sardar Swaran Singh: I assure them that I have no curse for them either, as is in the mind of my hon. friend there, because his mind thinks only in terms of curses whereas mine is an open mind and even those points of criticism, I can assure him, will be examined in a dispassionate spirit and not in that attitude of cursing, which unfortunately is the greatest curse in that quarter.

Now, so far as Housing is concerned I can say with a certain amount of confidence that in the short period within which this work has been undertaken, remarkable progress has been made. In respect of my friends who have any doubts or have any scepticism, I may complain against them that they did not take any opportunity either to have a look at any of the places where those tenements are coming up or, unfortunately, to try to acquaint themselves with the reactions of the people for whose interest, for whose comfort and for whose lodging those tenements are being built. These industrial housing tenements that

are coming up in almost all the industrial centres, or are likely to come up in the near future, are serving a very useful purpose in relieving congestion. It is true that the actual direct aid in the form of financial assistance, in the form of subsidy or loans at the moment is being extended only to the industrial worker. But it is forgotten that to the extent that we give this relief to the industrial worker, and as a result thereof actually produce those tenements in the various congested localities, to that extent the general housing position in that locality also gets eased, and to that extent it is a relief in the general housing set-up of that particular city also.

So far as the industrial housing tenements themselves are concerned the Government scheme of direct aid, I can say without any fear of contradiction, is the most revolutionary that has been undertaken in any part of the world, including perhaps those parts for which my friends (who have got a particular approach, by way of curses) have got such admiration—even those countries have not been able to do so much by way of direct help. That scheme is now well known and I will not take the time of this House in giving the details of it, but I cannot help giving a certain broad pattern of that scheme. When the industrial tenements are put up by State Governments or by statutory Housing Boards, the Central Government comes to the financial aid of that constructing unit practically cent per cent, giving 50 per cent. by way of loan and 50 per cent. by way of subsidy. The fifty per cent. that is advanced by loan on interest, which is quite reasonable, is recoverable in easy instalments spread over a period of twenty-five years. This is a very great and substantial help. Even to those who want to construct tenements in the private sector, whether they are employers or employees, the Central financial aid is to the tune of 62½ per cent, 25 per cent. being by way of subsidy and 37½ per cent. being by way of loan. This is a very substantial help, and I am glad to say that the reactions to this scheme have been very favourable from all quarters, because I have gone all over the country and I have had occasion to visit all those industrial centres where these tenements are coming up. Advantage has been taken of this financial assistance not only by the State Governments or by the Statutory Boards but also by employers and employees. A scheme of this nature cannot spring up in no time. It takes some time for land to be acquired, for land to

be developed, for material to be collected, and for the tenements to come up. But although the scheme actually got its final shape some time in September, 1952, it is gratifying to note that by June 1953 there will be as many as, roughly, 17,000 tenements actually put up and they will be available for occupation. A correct appreciation of this can be had actually by visiting a place like Kanpur or Bombay where there is so much congestion, and by the coming up of these new colonies that congestion has been greatly removed and a new shape to the entire town and the entire city has been given by the addition of these well-planned and neat colonies of these industrial workers. During the next year also the provision in the budget is there, and Finance have been very helpful and they have agreed that the schemes relating to both these years might be phased in such a manner that the provision for the year 1952-53 can also be utilised during the year 1953-54, subject to the overall limit suggested by the Planning Commission. That was necessary regard being had to the nature of these projects that are being undertaken.

I am aware of the criticism that has been offered from various quarters that the type of accommodation that is provided is too meagre. It is said that just one room, a verandah, a separate kitchen and a separate W.C. is too little for one family. I have no hesitation in saying that this cannot be regarded as a very luxurious apartment but, on the other hand, very black pictures are painted here that the workers are living in horrible conditions in the slums; that there are so many of them huddled together in just one room that there is no light or sanitation or space. The type of tenements that are now being put up are thousand times better than the places where they are living. Not only that. I felt surprised to find certain criticism from quarters whose representatives were consulted when the scheme was finalised. I may, through you, Sir, inform this House that this scheme was finalised at a meeting at which the employers' representatives, the representatives of labour including INTUC and also representatives of the Communist Party were invited.

Shri Nambiar: No. Communist Party does not come in.

Sardar Swaran Singh: The Communist Party was also invited and their representatives actually attended the meeting. It is true that my hon. friend himself was not there but one of his other friends was there and he made very useful suggestions. For the

information of my Communist friend I might say that the stand which was taken by the Communist Party was throughout this: "We do not want any luxurious apartment or luxurious tenements with any large accommodation, but the accommodation should be extremely modest," because the viewpoint that was expressed was: "We want a larger number of units, rather than a smaller number of units with a larger number of rooms". Actually the employers said: "We want actually such tenements where there may be two rooms" but the labour representatives, both the Communist wing and the other wing, were almost unanimous that there should not be more than one room and positive suggestions were made to cut down certain amenities which are now provided. We effected a sort of compromise and produced a scheme which had the remarkable fortune of being acceptable to employers, to representatives of labour, to representatives of State Governments and to the Central Government. This cannot be regarded as a mean achievement. When a scheme of that nature is evolved in which various conflicting view-points have got to be compromised both from the point of view of the accommodation that is provided as also the cost element, there are bound to be criticisms from either side, some saying that it is too modest, others saying it is too lavish and some saying we are using the traditional methods. I fully appreciate all those view-points because they represent the various conflicting view-points and we have produced something which is not too lavish, not too modest but a judicious combination of all those various viewpoints, and the scheme had the blessing of almost every individual who attended that meeting. Now, we actually have gone ahead with its execution and it is not like those earlier paper schemes with regard to which not much could be done. Actually the tenements are coming up under the Scheme.

I do not want to say much on that except to notice one point. A suggestion was made by my hon. friend Mr. Khandubhai Desai, supported by another hon. Member from there that we should do something to give to the industrial housing co-operatives and the employees enhanced financial assistance. This is a point which is already engaging the attention of the Government and if the quantum of financial assistance that is inherent in the scheme is adhered to, Government is willing to convert that financial assistance given in cash into the form of land, because we are really endeavouring to evolve such a method by

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which all these difficulties may be removed. I may go a step further and say that in the matter of accepting the various schemes, we have not actually stuck to our own standards, but regard being had to the local conditions prevailing in different parts of the country, we have accepted suitable changes in the specifications. The scheme from that point of view has been sufficiently elastic, so that utilisation of the local material, social habits prevailing in any particular locality and the type of accommodation that is most suitable in any particular place consistent with the minimum of expenditure that might be incurred, have actually been taken into account by Government while sanctioning each individual scheme. I may assure the House that we have not spared pains, really to see that the schemes for any particular locality are really suited to the environments and the conditions prevailing in the locality and, wherever any relaxation was necessary, we have not at all hesitated to go ahead with those relaxations.

Then again, while on this subject of housing I might mention one or two things in passing. The Housing Ministry are setting up shortly a National Building Organisation which will bridge the gap between research and actual practice in the building trade. This organisation will be a repository of knowledge on designs, specifications and construction techniques and will stimulate research into the question of lowering down the cost of construction. We have ensured that a Division is set up which actually produces the prototypes upon which those various ideas which have emerged by research are translated into actual practice. It will not be a mere research organisation in the sense of producing ideas, it will actually translate those ideas into shape for everyone to see, so that therefrom new ideas might flow and those new ideas may be adopted either in Governmental construction or in the private sector. This will, in that manner, go a long way in improving the position.

We are, as already remarked by some of the hon. Members, organising in about less than a year's time an international exhibition and seminar on cheap housing. It has been ensured that while organising this exhibition, we will take good care to see that the various units that are put up to represent the ideas of cheap housing, either by the Central Government or by the State Governments or by the private individuals or by the interna-

tional countries which participate in that exhibition and seminar, are actually located in such a manner that we can later on make use of them, so that we are not faced with a situation where we have either to demolish or remove them. Those units will be there and the plan of that locality will be suitably amended and the layout modified so that the types that are put up may be befitting the locality and can actually be used. Whatever might be said of these ideas, by the lapse of time, by use, by the climatic effect, by the reactions of people who actually use them, certain new ideas might emerge and, unless those are actually put to test—by whatever use, sometimes merely with a theoretical plan—the result may not be so encouraging. Therefore, it is hoped that this international exhibition and seminar on cheap housing will be really helpful in focusing attention and stimulating thought in the direction of cheap housing and the layouts and the types that are put up will be helpful for effecting considerable economy on that score.

I may at this stage mention one or two points which have been made out by my hon. friend Shri Mohanlal Saksema. Most of his criticism was directed towards finance. He naturally laid great stress upon the human aspect and not so much upon the financial aspect. As a Government, and as practical men, howsoever much we may have respect, regard and feeling for the human approach, when we are faced with a financial problem, we have to face it squarely. We cannot embark on schemes which may sound very good theoretically, but which, when examined from the financial point of view, may not be as promising and practicable. The obvious course then is to choose the practical side though it may be less spectacular.

His suggestion that private agencies could perhaps do this work better if some aid is given to them is an idea which requires examination. If the type of aid that these agencies expect from the Government can be defined or can be ascertained, it will be a matter which can be gone into. But, I want to make it clear that it is not the intention of the Government to set up any agencies of a more or less capitalistic texture, set up with the objective of profit-earning. If, apart from that, the hon. Member is able to produce any scheme, which might be practical, it will be worth examining.

Shri Mohanlal Saksena: I never made any suggestion that any private agencies should be set up. I only suggested that insurance companies could be encouraged to invest more in housing and that could be done by the Government. I do not want any private agencies to be set up. Of course, if they are to be set up, they have to satisfy all the conditions which the hon. Minister has pointed out.

Sardar Swaran Singh: I am glad for the clarification and I am grateful to him for that. So far as insurance companies increasing investment in housing is concerned, this is a matter which is principally for the Finance Ministry to tackle. If really their mode of investment is to be changed from one form to another, it really amounts to changing that from one drawer in the chest to another. This is a matter which could be looked into by the Finance Minister. Because, so far as my limited knowledge with regard to restrictions on the investment of insurance companies goes, I think, they are, at the moment, required to invest a certain percentage in Government securities or in Government loans. If that money is with the Government whether as a loan or in any other shape, whether it should be taken to finance these schemes or whether the insurance companies should be permitted to do something else, is a matter about which I cannot say one way or the other. It is really for the Finance Ministry to examine that point.

Shri Nambiar: The Finance Minister will never give that money. You need not worry about that.

Sardar Swaran Singh: He is not so hard as you are prone to paint him.

Then, Mr. Mohanlal Saksena also said that there was a proposal at one stage that as many as 6000 acres should be developed round about Delhi to relieve congestion. I may inform him that the achievement on that score has not been so inadequate as he attempted to make out. Because, for rehabilitation alone, the Ministry of which he held charge for some time, as many as 2500 acres have been developed and handed over to the Rehabilitation Ministry for putting up tenements. Another extent of 350 acres was developed for general purposes. Therefore, out of that target of 6000 acres, practically half has already been developed: not only developed, but handed over to the various construction agencies for putting up tenements.

Shri Mohanlal Saksena: I never said this. I said it was the recom-

mendation of the Improvement Trust Enquiry Committee appointed under the chairmanship of Mr. Birla. This report was submitted after I had resigned and handed over charge. So, whatever had been developed after that, in addition to what had already been done, should be mentioned.

Sardar Swaran Singh: I thought when he referred to a particular recommendation in the report of a particular Committee, he was arguing that it was a good recommendation and that it should be adopted. That is the only possible explanation to a reference to such a recommendation, and I am only trying to show that of that recommendation, 50 per cent. has already been implemented and developed land handed over to the various constructing agencies in the rehabilitation construction side and in the general pool.

I must say that with reference to the Rashtrapati moving to a smaller tenement—I do not know what his own view on that point is—our Rashtrapati is certainly not a person who is fond of these big houses. Of that big house, the part that he is actually using is insignificantly small, and the rest of that is actually at the disposal of the Government for public purposes, and the National Museum, our Planning Commission wing and other offices are actually accommodated there. So, I may assure him that Rashtrapati Bhavan is not actually the private residence of the Rashtrapati, but is being utilized for public purpose, and only a very small part is actually used by the Rashtrapati. Knowing, as most of us do, the Rashtrapati himself would perhaps be only too pleased to relinquish even those few sets that are with him, and may perhaps be quite willing to go to a smaller place. But, as things are, I may assure him that the Rashtrapati Bhavan is being put to very proper and very good use, and in the light of the international prestige this country enjoys, it is in the fitness of things that the head of such a big State like India should be at a place which befits him.

Shri Mohanlal Saksena: Again on a point of personal explanation.....

Sardar Swaran Singh: I do not give way, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Minister is not giving way.

Sardar Swaran Singh: I may, also say that my friend Mr. Mohanlal Saksena was a little unfair to an officer who is no longer in the Ministry while he said that he had made certain complaints about sub-letting and charging

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high rate by an officer of this Ministry. I explained to him yesterday that the matter was looked into, and nothing shady was found in that transaction and the whole thing has actually now been placed on a satisfactory basis, and such sub-letting as is now permitted is always scrutinised by the Estate Office, and even before that scrutiny, there was nothing either suspicious or underhand in that sub-letting. And I want to say categorically that any insinuation on that score against a high officer who is not present here to contradict those allegations was hardly necessary.

Shri Mohanlal Saksena: You can explain on his behalf. Was it not sub-let to a non-official private person who was employed by an Embassy? Was he not charging Rs. 300?

Shri Nambiar: There are several such cases, not one.

Shri Mohanlal Saksena: I never blamed the man. I passed on a letter to him and to the other Ministers, and I did not receive any acknowledgment from him.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Minister is not giving way, and he has explained matters in his own way.

Sardar Swaran Singh: I am confining this to a small issue, that in a case of that nature where allegations of that character are made against a senior officer, there should be a complete scrutiny before those points are raised on the floor of the House, and I want to say categorically that even before that complaint, there was nothing either suspicious or shady about that sub-letting.

Now, I may say a few things about the Public Works Department. When one of my hon. friends Mr. Gurupadaswamy started his speech by reference to a certain story from some *Shastras*—I thought Socialists do not believe in *Shastras*—I was all attention to find out whether he was going to say something big and bring in perhaps some big charges of corruption. I thought that what he was going to say might be helpful to me, because I can assure him that in my own little way, I am as keen in uprooting corruption as he is. But I was actually trying to find out what were the specific things about which he was making mention, apart from those very huge and beautiful adjectives that have unfortunately become a certain fashion in certain quarters for being used on the floor of the House. When those adjectives are removed, then, the only

instance that he cites relates to a case about the Bahadurgarh aerodrome. On that basis, he said that after partition, and after Independence, it has become this thing and that. When I looked up that case, I found that it related to a year roundabout the forties, and the officer against whom these allegations were made had actually been retired in the year 1943. That case related to a very small matter. The facts of the case were that payment was made for three wells, on the basis that they had been sunk to a depth of 80 feet, while in fact they had only been sunk to a depth of 65 feet. In those three-wells, how much difference would it have made? To base all the big theory upon this old case, which is about ten years old, is something which I thought, was hardly justifiable. Even this case was actually looked into, and I found that one officer had actually retired in 1943, while in the case of the officer who was still with us, action has already been taken.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: What action?

Sardar Swaran Singh: This was the only case to which he made a reference. I leave it for this House to decide whether with all those strong adjectives—which on account of my poor English knowledge, I must confess I am not at all accustomed to use—this one particular case could be made the basis for all that condemnation and indictment. My respectful submission is that there was hardly any justification for making such allegations of a sweeping character as the hon. Member was pleased to indulge in (*Interruptions*).

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: I have got a number of cases in my hand.

Sardar Swaran Singh: Then again, a reference was made to a certain pamphlet which was laid in the Table of this House and has been referred to on so many occasions. My hon. predecessor in office, Mr. Gadgil, on one occasion, had laid a statement on the Table of the House, giving the details of the departmental action that had been taken on the basis of all these various points which were mentioned in that pamphlet. After all, there should be a limit to such things. There were certain allegations which were made by an ex-employee, who himself had certain grievances of a departmental character, and on the basis of that certain allegations were made. I shall not rule out those allegations merely on the ground that he happened to be a person who had a grievance.

against his officers—a person who may have grievances may sometimes disclose useful information—but when all those various points which he gave had actually been examined, and a full and detailed statement covering all the various points which were mentioned in that pamphlet were placed in a detailed manner before the House, there should be an end of it, and there is no real good point in raking up those matters which have been once gone into. I hope I may not be understood as defending all officers. There are good officers, and there are bad officers. (*Interruptions*). But we must have a good word for the good officers, and these sweeping remarks of generalisation, if anything, result in the demoralisation of officers who have already started to act in a timid manner, and in their having considerable hesitation in taking decisions. Therefore, we should not say anything in a sweeping manner or make these general remarks. If there are any specific remarks on the floor of the House and outside, I am always prepared and most willing to go into them, and I will be grateful, if those allegations could only be forwarded to me. I can hold out an assurance that I will go into those allegations and points with the utmost care and thoroughness that can be brought about in a matter of this nature.

Now, apart from this one case, I cannot recall now whether any of the other hon. Members had anything to say with regard to this vague allegation of corruption.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: What about retrenchment?

Sardar Swaran Singh: I am coming to retrenchment. If you will keep sitting for another five minutes, I will touch upon it.

Shri Vittal Rao: We are prepared to sit for one hour. (*Interruptions*).

Sardar Swaran Singh: I am very grateful at least for that little concession to me.

Shri Vittal Rao: All the cut motions must be answered.

Shri Nambiar: We are prepared to sit till 10 P.M.

Mr. Chairman: Only three minutes more and the guillotine will be applied.

Sardar Swaran Singh: Right, Sir.

Shri Vittal Rao: What about those cut motions?

Sardar Swaran Singh: With regard to the improvement of the P.W.D. organisation, I may hurriedly say that the implementation of the Kasturbhai Lalbhai Committee's report has been undertaken and considerable economy has been effected as is clear from a mention of the same in the Ministry's report.

A system of internal audit is being introduced in the course of the year and this administrative audit is going to be of an independent character. That was a long-standing demand and I am glad to announce that during the course of the year we will be able to introduce this administrative audit which will independently check the execution of the work and will also be responsible for drawing up the contracts; it will also look into the final settlement of the contractors' claims and things of that nature.

For rationalising the contract system, an *Ad Hoc* Committee has been set up to examine this aspect and it has been charged with the duty of revising the contract form and to recommend measures for rationalising the system of giving contracts by the Central P.W.D. It is hoped that with these internal checks and with the insistence upon more stringent supervision the complaints would be removed.

Much has been said about retrenchment—and retrenchment on two scores: one in the Stationery office at Calcutta and the other in the P.W.D. In the P.W.D., I may say that as recommended by the Kasturbhai Lalbhai Committee, three Circles and five Divisions have been closed. That necessarily entailed a certain amount of retrenchment—as a result of this reorganisation. But the actual result has not been so bad as is pointed out or is attempted to be painted in certain quarters. Of the gazetted staff, 22 became surplus, out of which 17 were absorbed and the number that was retrenched was only five. Of the ministerial staff, 139 became surplus, 75 were absorbed and 64 was the number that was retrenched.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: Fifty per cent.

Shri Nambiar: That is all right!

Sardar Swaran Singh: More than 50 per cent. has been absorbed. Even with regard to the 64, efforts are being made so that they might be absorbed in other places.

I want to make it absolutely clear that the P.W.D. organisation is not such that we can always carry on all the employees with us as time passes.

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on. If the tempo of construction comes down, if the works are done and the buildings are completed, we cannot continue to burden the national exchequer by retaining on our pay rolls people who are no longer necessary. The very nature of the work of the P.W.D. is such that with the completion and execution of certain works, it may be necessary to really retrench some people. But, we have ensured that if any retrenchment is inevitable, that should be on a rational basis and in this particular case, the rational basis was the all-India basis and such of them as have inevitably to be retrenched, for them we should try to do something by way of finding alternative employment. Therefore, when we keep in mind the total strength of the people on the pay rolls—it runs into the huge figure of 15,000 to 16,000 and even more than that figure—this figure that I have given cannot be said to be alarming and the point raised is not really such from which so much capital is sought to be made.

7 P.M.

Shri Nambiar: You have not given the number of workers retrenched; you have given only other figures.

Mr. Chairman: Now, the guillotine is to be applied. If the hon. Minister wants to say anything more then he can do it in the form of a memorandum on the points raised by the hon. Members.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: May I ask a question, Sir?

Mr. Chairman: This is not the time for asking questions. The guillotine is being applied. Order, order. I will now put the cut motions to the vote of the House.

The cut motions were negatived.

Mr. Chairman: The question is:

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper in respect of Demands Nos. 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 139, 140 and 141 be granted to the President to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of the corresponding heads of Demands entered in the second column thereof."

The motion was adopted.

[The motions for Demands for Grants which were adopted by the House are reproduced below:—Ed. of P. P.]

DEMAND NO. 102—MINISTRY OF WORKS HOUSING AND SUPPLY.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 19,98,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply'."

DEMAND NO. 103—SUPPLIES

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,52,67,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Supplies'."

DEMAND NO. 104—OTHER CIVIL WORKS

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 13,54,26,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Other Civil Works'."

DEMAND NO. 105—STATIONERY AND PRINTING

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,52,36,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Stationery and Printing'."

DEMAND NO. 106—MISCELLANEOUS DEPARTMENTS AND EXPENDITURE UNDER THE MINISTRY OF WORKS HOUSING AND SUPPLY

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 42,54,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Miscellaneous Departments and Expenditure under the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply'."

DEMAND NO. 139—NEW DELHI CAPITAL OUTLAY

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,37,16,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment

during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'New Delhi Capital Outlay'."

DEMAND NO. 140—CAPITAL OUTLAY ON BUILDINGS

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 8.48.70.000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Capital Outlay on Buildings'."

DEMAND NO. 141—OTHER CAPITAL OUTLAY OF THE MINISTRY OF WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 8.16.000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1954, in respect of 'Other Capital Outlay of the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply'."

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

PRICES OF JUTE

Shri B. K. Das (Contai): This discussion arises out of a question that I put on the 3rd of March. I wanted to know what exactly were the results of the steps that were taken by the Government to ensure an economic price to the jute growers. It was not clear to me how far those steps produced results. The *Fatka* market was closed and certain other steps have been taken by the Government but we have seen that those steps that have hitherto been taken have not produced any tangible results. The situation is such that it calls for immediate action and my purpose in raising this discussion is to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to this miserable condition of the jute growers. I admit that the hon. Minister is already aware of the situation. In November last, he said:

"The price of raw jute in the middle of November this year was half the price prevailing in the middle of November last year. I consider this to be a most dangerous development for the future of the industry, and I hope I shall have the willing cooperation of all in maintaining raw jute prices at reasonable levels."

This reasonable level has not been maintained. Prices are going down further and further, and the suffering of the growers knows no bounds. In view of the fact that the sowing

season is near at hand, we are at a loss to know what will be the effect of this on the next crop.

The other day, the Minister of Agriculture gave some idea to us of the steps he is taking to step up production, or at least to maintain the production at the last year's level. If prices are not maintained, it is very doubtful whether the crop will maintain that level.

We have been told that the industry also is suffering a lot. There is accumulation of stocks which do not find a favourable market, and the prospect also is not good. It is argued that because of the accumulation of stocks and the difficulties of the industry, they are not able to offer a fair price to the growers. This is a most important point in tackling this problem. To my mind, the question is whether the sacrifice which the growers have been called upon to make is proportionate to the sacrifice which the industry is making. I think the industry has not been called upon to make any sacrifice at all. It may be that the prices have fallen much below what they were in 1952. There was great inflation of prices in the beginning of 1952 and at the present moment they have found a normal channel of demand and supply. If we compare the fall in prices of raw jute and of hessian, we find that while the proportion of fall in hessian prices would be something like 23 or 24 per cent, the fall in raw jute prices is something like 63 or 64 per cent. As regards the prospect of the market, I would only quote what has been said by Mr. William A. Nugent, Vice-President of the Burlap Council of America. He is also the American representative on the Indian Jute Mills Association of Calcutta. He was going to make a report to the Indian Jute Mills Association in its annual meeting, and it is reported in the *Jute Bulletin* of January 1953 that in his opinion:

"The outlook in the burlap industry in 1953 is the brightest for any year—since the end of World War II. Many burlap consumers who have been forced to use substitutes in recent years are gradually resuming the use of burlap for packaging and other purposes."

So, the industry, in my opinion, is not facing such a crisis as the jute-growers are facing. As the time is very short, I will just close with one remark that the Chief Minister of West Bengal made the other day during discussion in the West Bengal Legislative Council. He said: "While the sale in January and February