

**RESOLUTION RE: SAFEGUARDS  
FOR BUDDHIST CONVERTS**

**Shri B. C. Kamble** (Kopergaon):  
Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I beg to  
move:

"This House is of opinion that all the constitutional safeguards, except those relating to the reservation of seats in the legislatures, granted and provided to the Scheduled Castes, be extended to the Buddhist converts from the Scheduled Castes and recommends that Government should bring suitable legislation to amend the Constitution, if necessary."

Of the five crores of people who have been condemned to untouchability and who have been consequently economically oppressed and socially tyrannised for thousands of years nearly a crore of people have been converted to the Buddhist faith. Sir, it is on behalf of these people that this Resolution has been tabled.

Sir, above the head of your chair there is a motto *Dharma Charkra Pravartanaya*. I do not know others think of what is the significance of it. But, I believe that the course that these people have taken is the actual implementation of what is written above. I think, therefore, that they have taken the right course.

Now, the conditions of these people are well-known. They have no land; they have no trade; they have no influence in the administration and they have no independent means of livelihood. These are the sufferings for hundreds of years together that they have been undergoing. But now on the top of it when they have taken recourse to Lord Buddha, the path of light and enlightenment, social boycotts are going on. I have toured at least in three districts and visited a number of villages. I have met villagers. I could see in as many as fifty villages, social boycott is in full swing merely on the ground that they have been converted to Buddhist

faith. Consequently, they have refused to do the menial or dirty works that used to be done in the name of untouchables. That is the position. What is the Government doing?

I referred to the three districts in the State of Bombay—North Satara District, South Satara District and a part of Ahmednagar District. The State Government is watching the situation as a spectator. That is also the case of the Union Government. When I raised certain matters in this House, those matters were turned down as being within the jurisdiction of the States. I have no quarrel over that. But this is the position of these Buddhists and therefore, these people are anxiously and restlessly watching what is going to be the outcome of this resolution.

I am happy that there are no amendments tabled to this Resolution. It is quite possible that hon. Members might have been appreciative of this resolution or at any rate they may not be hostile to the contents of this resolution. It is quite natural because, if I can say so, the resolution is so modest and contains, if I can use that expression, the minimum demands of the Buddhists. They are not asking for reservation of seats in the legislature—Parliament and the State legislatures. What they are doing is to reduce that demand. This is no small sacrifice. I am quite sure that they are perfectly entitled to the reservation of seats in the Parliament as well as in the State Legislatures. But they are prepared to make a sportive offer. They expect that the Government will be equally sportive.

If we consider from this standpoint, what is that they are asking through this Resolution?

15.24 hrs.

[SHRI C. R. PATTABHI RAMAN in the  
Chair.]

Broadly speaking, their demand is three-fold. That is to say they want certain safeguards in the public services in educational matters and in

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economic matters. These people would not have demanded these safeguards but for the discrimination that is going on day and night. They are compelled to ask for these safeguards.

What is the underlying principle? To me the underlying principle has been made quite clear long back. The principle is this. All communities should be represented in the administration in the prescribed proportion and no single community should be allowed to have a monopoly. That is the principle. This principle has been accepted long ago by the Government of India in 1934 by a resolution. Similarly, by a similar resolution, the same principle was later on adopted in the year 1943. The same principle was adopted by the Constituent Assembly and I may take the privilege of reading from the reports of the Committee of the Constituent Assembly. It is at page 40. It says "due share to all minorities be guaranteed: in All India and provincial services, the claims of minorities shall be kept in view in making the appointments to these services consistently with the consideration of efficiency of administration". The expression used is "Due share guaranteed".

Therefore, my submission is this. Are these Buddhists not a distinct community? Are these Buddhists not a distinct minority community deserving these safeguards? This is a legitimate question to which the Government must give a reply. I am quite sure a reply cannot be in the negative. The reply must be in the affirmative.

I need not speculate over the position that the Government is going to take with regard to this resolution. But I would like to tell the Government and the hon. Members in this House that when the principle is accepted, the principle cannot be turned down. It is no ground for the good parents to say that the child

when it was born was legitimate but when the child grows up and attains a majority, it is illegitimate and it is not theirs. The Union Government cannot take that position so far as this principle is concerned.

I hope that the Government will take quite a considerate and reasonable view of this matter. Perhaps I am hoping too much with regard to the attitude of the Union Government. I have great hopes and I believe that reason to some extent does prevail either in this House or in the Government headed by the Prime Minister, hon. Shri Jawaharlal Nehru.

Even with all these hopes, I would like to deal with the position that the Government has taken on certain occasions when this matter was referred to in this hon. House. I had put a question. The question was whether the Scheduled Caste converted Buddhists are entitled for these safeguards. The answer given by the hon. Home Minister was in the negative. It was also stated that the Law Ministry was consulted. I am afraid that the position the Government has taken with the advantage of the Law Ministry is not correct. It is absolutely absurd. I say so because of this. Whatever provisions are there in this country or in other countries, this attitude goes directly contrary to what the Government is saying. I will tell you briefly what is the trend with regard to such matters in two sets when the people get converted.

Take for instance an Act which was passed ago—hundred of years ago. It is the Caste Disabilities Removal Act of 1850. It is also called the Freedom of Religion Act. Formerly, when a person converted from one faith to another or from one caste to another, there was a kind of forfeiture. That was prevented by this Act. That is to say a change of caste and change of religion was made absolutely permissible. The rights ceased to be forfeited. There are a number of rulings by several High

Courts that in such circumstances, there is no forfeiture of the rights of inheritance or, in case it is a conversion of woman, of the woman's right to maintenance; or if it is a case with regard to the custody of the child, about the child's custody. But if it may not be sufficient to convince this hon. House as well as the Government. I would like to point out to the Government what is the position in other countries on this matter, namely, whether there is any relationship between religion and any right including political rights. I take the liberty, Sir, of reading certain provisions from a book called *Constitutional Precedents*. In article 49 of the Constitution of Switzerland it has been provided:

"The exercise of civic or political rights may not be limited by ecclesiastical or religious requirements or conditions of any kind whatsoever."

It is true that the word used here is "may" but, at the same time, there are the words "conditions of any kind whatsoever".

Then, turning to the Constitution of Germany, in article 136 of their Constitution it has been provided:

"Civil and political rights and duties shall be neither conditioned upon, nor restricted by, the exercise of religious freedom."

And, further,

"The enjoyment of civil and political rights shall be independent of religious belief."

The important expression is that these rights including political rights are independent of the religious belief.

Now I turn to Yugoslavia. There also in article 11 of their Constitution the provision is:

"The enjoyment of civil and political rights is independent of the exercise of religion."

Again, in article 9 of the Constitution of Finland it has been provided:

"Profession of religion or the fact of belonging to no religion shall have no influence upon the rights and duties of Finnish citizens."

Are these provisions sufficient to convince this hon. House the fact that there is no relationship whatever between any right, including the political rights, and the religious faith? Therefore, the reply that the Government has given is not only absurd and untenable but even, I must say—and I may be forgiven for that—it is a stupid reply. Only a stupid Government can give such a reply, and that is why I would like Government to reconsider the whole position.

Then I would like to deal with what other hon. Ministers have said. The hon. Prime Minister has not said anything on the floor of this House. I wanted something from him. But during the course of his correspondence with Shri Valisinha, Secretary of the Mahabodhi Society, it is true he has given expression to his views. In that correspondence he says that he has no desire to penalise the Buddhists. We Buddhists are very grateful to him. If that is the intention nobody will be so much grateful as we are. But, whether, that is the intention is the question. I think the Prime Minister will carry his wishes if he so desires. In the same correspondence he says: "We are bound by the Constitution". That is correct. But, at the same time, he says: "There is difficulty in changing the Constitution". Sir, I take the liberty of reading this correspondence because it has been published; otherwise I would not have read it. He says:

"The Government are, however, bound by the Constitution, and..."

The Deputy Minister of Home Affairs (Shrimati Alva): May I know what the hon. Member is reading from?

**Mr. Chairman:** I remember the hon. Member telling the House that it is a letter from the Prime Minister to Shri Valisinha.

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** It is a letter from the Prime Minister. I can give a copy.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty (Basirhat):** Documents are always quoted without their copies being put on the Table. Yesterday many things were quoted by the Minister without placing copies on the Table.

**Mr. Chairman:** The genuineness of documents is always there. Once I get an assurance from the hon Member, that will do. I take it that the hon. Member has got the document from which he is reading

**Shrimati Alva:** May I know the date of the letter?

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** The letter is dated 31st July, 1957. In that letter he says:

"As you know, it is not possible to change the Constitution without going through certain elaborate process. If, however, the Government violate the Constitution even for good purposes the matter would go to the High Court and to the Supreme Court."

I am grateful that he has kept an open mind. I feel that he is desirous of changing the Constitution. His only difficulty is that the matter may be taken up to High Court or Supreme Court.

To him I would like to submit only this. See the case of Negroes in America. That is a sufficient example because in America three constitutional amendments out of the 22 amendments to their Constitution were made to protect the Negro minority. Five major laws were made and as many as 400 anti-discrimination and anti-bias laws were enacted in order to protect the Negroes. Has any single law been made in order to

protect these Buddhists? Why is it that the Prime Minister is hesitating, if he is so convinced, to bring an amending Bill even to the Constitution? I think that will be a great act which will go deep into the history for his truthfulness, about his attitude towards the Buddhists.

However, the Prime Minister has also to maintain that which has been maintained in this House by the Home Minister, that these concessions are given to the Scheduled Castes—and when you cease to be a Scheduled Caste you cannot get these concessions. I am afraid, this kind of argument is not tenable. I want to ask whether it is to the caste or religion that these concessions are given. What is the nexus? What is the crux? To me it appears the crux is not the religion or caste at all. It is the discrimination which flows from it, and in order to prevent that discrimination these safeguards are to be given. This act of discrimination flows not from the Scheduled Caste people or the converted Buddhists, but it flows from the hearts of other caste Hindus who are highly placed and who feel that these inferior human beings should not come up. So it is a remedy, a guarantee against the irrational attitude that is taken up by others. It has no relation with caste, it has no relation with religion. Therefore, this position must be correctly understood by the Government and such more so by the Prime Minister.

The hon. Home Minister also gave a reply. He said here when he was replying to the debate on the Home Ministry's Demands: "I have to administer the mandate of this House. The law is clear." I am so sorry that he has misled the House. Where is the law? The law is there with regard to the Scheduled Castes. Where is the law about the Buddhists? What was the reason for him to mislead the House by saying: "I have to administer the law and carry the

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mandate of the House." It is a wrong thing. It is misleading the House. It is an injustice done to the House.

It is not proper.

It is a fact that there is no law regarding the Buddhists.

Therefore, my point is this. State the position categorically. They should be quite fair to these people: There is also a likely argument—I have heard about it—that if the concessions and safeguards would be granted to the Buddhists then it will amount to discrimination between religions and religions. I am anticipating this kind of an argument. Again, I am afraid, this will be a wrong argument. We are not asking for the Buddhists alone. We are asking for the community which is just helpless in being discriminated against. That is the crux of the problem; not because we are Buddhists, but because we are discriminated against. Let any community profit and that community is entitled for the safeguards.

Then, it is quite possible that it may be said "how to schedule them?" I say they may be scheduled as Buddhists, so long as the other castes have not been converted to the Buddhist faith. The difficulty does not arise at all. At the most they could be described as Buddhists (converted from the Scheduled Castes)—the other words being put in brackets. That is sufficient. That is to say, barring those articles which refer to the reservation of seats in the legislature, with regard to the other articles, namely, article 335 and article 48, these people, as Buddhists, without being humbled down, can be scheduled in the Constitution. That is my submission. This can be done or this cannot be done. I am quite sure that this can be done but only when the Government will change its philosophy and conception of a Government.

The Government has got to change the philosophy and conception in the progressive way towards equality, towards enlightenment and not against equality or enlightenment.

It is already given under article 16(4) of the Constitution which reads as follows:

Whether the Union Government have power to do so?

"Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the State, is not adequately represented in the services under the State".

That is to say, the Government is already empowered. Therefore, when it has accepted the principle, the Government cannot refuse to accept the principle embodied in this resolution.

Now, I would like to bring to the notice of the Government and to this House two factors, and those factors are, in case the Government rejects this resolution, what is likely to happen. I do not bother personally what is going to happen to it today or later on. But I must indicate the possibility and that possibility is arising out of two factors which are taken into consideration. One is of oppression and the other of religion. This community may develop, then, into a kind of nationality. Let there be a compromise now. Otherwise, if the political oppression will continue, and it is continuing, then, I am afraid that—of course at that time we may not be alive also—it will take such a form that it will be impossible to erase, the development of that nationality. That may happen.

In this connection, I may read out a small portion with regard to what happens when there is oppression. I am reading from the book *Nationality* by Bernard Joseph. He says as follows about oppression:

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"The influence of oppression on the development of nationalities in modern times was analogous. Professor Zimmern says, 'in Europe nationality is an instinct which has been stung into morbid and acute self-consciousness by political oppression.' The essential elements of nationality may exist though the sentiment of nationality be entirely dormant, and it is by stirring this dormant sentiment into wakefulness that oppression renders aid in the process of the formation of nationality".

Similarly, the factor of religion is there. What we want is the eradication of the bitterness. And as the Prime Minister is so much fond of the co-existence, we want peaceful co-existence. If we cannot be assimilated, allow us to live separately and let us have the principle of co-existence. Therefore, I have moved this resolution.

There are certain people who say,—and I have also heard from the Prime Minister,—that there is some politics here. The Prime Minister has written a letter which is addressed to our group leader, Shri B. K. Gaikwad. He says that people say there may be some politics in it. I am not able to understand what is meant by this. Just as Hindus, Christians and Muslims have all politics, the same way, the Buddhists must have politics. I am not able to understand what is meant by this. But then I am quite sure of the one thing. That thing is, there is close relationship between religion and politics.

**Shri C. K. Nair** (Outer Delhi): When there is mass conversion, politics can be suspect. If it is an individual conversion, then on that theology or something like that, there is no fear of politics.

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** One may suspect that all these are dacoits. Suspect has no meaning. It must be reasonable. It must be argued and the facts must be given. You may

suspect many things. I am not concerned with suspecting, and I am not concerned with things which make no sense.

**Shri C. K. Nair:** This is a quality which we welcome—that politics is there. But that is a quite different thing. The fear is created because of the mass conversion.

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** I would like to tell the House what is the purpose of this conversion. The purpose of the conversion is to eradicate the evil of caste. We are very much afraid that in this country there will be a kind of civil war between caste and caste. I am quite sure that the incidents at Ramanathapuram give sufficient illustration to this. That is a sufficient indication of what is going to happen and what is happening. I think all the hon. Members will agree that they want equality, and if equality is to be sustained, caste must go. Therefore in order that caste must go Lord Buddha's religion came, a religion where the caste distinctions are not maintained. That is the one purpose for which you have to accept this resolution.

Secondly, the other purpose is, how to eradicate it? I have put a question.

**Mr. Chairman:** The hon. Member has very nearly reached the 30-minute mark. I request him to bear that in mind. There are a number of other Members wishing to speak.

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** I shall end within five minutes. I have put a question, namely, "in how many towns, cities and villages, the practice of untouchability is abolished? That question was not admitted. I was told that if the answer was given, it would mean that in all those villages, towns and cities, untouchability was still practised which is against article 17 of the Constitution which declares that untouchability is abolished, which in turn means that the whole of the administration is going against the Constitution. If it is the other way about, and if it is said that there is no untouchability in any vil-

lage, town or city, the question arises as to why the law and the statute for the Harijans—the Harijan law—should be there. Where is the necessity for it? Scrap it. Let it go.

Therefore, the simple thing is this. The conception with regard to the removal of untouchability is not clear before the Government. It cannot be clear. Untouchability will go only when the very basic crux of the society which is based on inequality of castes goes. Otherwise not. Spend any amount. That is of no purpose. This is the second reason. There is no political purpose at all. As a matter of fact, to eschew the political purpose, we are giving up the political rights. The seats in the legislature relate to political rights. The rights we are seeking are not political rights at all. They are non-political rights and safeguards. Therefore, to suspect that thing is wrong.

Finally, I would like to appeal to this House in this way. This is the House of the People which also means a House of justice. This is the very essential character of the Houses of Parliament. I am saying this on the authority of May, who has written the book called *Parliamentary Practice*. I think many times this House has completely ignored many things and only on the technicalities the speeches are made. I say that this is not only an essential character of this House but an inseparable character of this House and its simple meaning is, if there is any injustice and the House is convinced that there is an injustice, then ways and means must be found. That is the meaning that attaches to the House of justice. If the ways and means are not found, then it is not a House of justice at all. We will destroy the very foundation upon which the House of the People is created. That is why my prayer to the hon. Members of this House and to you, Sir, is that this modest resolution should be accepted by the House. But if that is not the attitude taken by Government, I perfectly concede that the Government have a big majority—I do not want to describe

it as 'brute majority' as it is sometimes described—but then because of the strength of the majority, they can swallow us. Still, I would like to tell them that the Government will not be able to digest it for the simple reason that the whole trouble is that all these masses are enlightened now. They are helpless no doubt and have no means, but they are enlightened; that is the whole difficulty. Otherwise, they can be kept down.

I may end my speech by making a reference to what the Prime Minister has said. He said that the head of our country must be held up in respect. Do the hon. Members of this House want the people's heads also to be up or do they want the people to be suppressed down? Therefore, my humble submission is, do not perpetuate this untouchability in the name of the Scheduled Castes and others. Expecting that good grace would spread, I have moved this resolution and I hope that the Government and this honourable House will help all the communities to hold in self-respect their heads erect.

Mr. Chairman: Resolution moved:

"This House is of opinion that all the constitutional safeguards, except those relating to the reservation of seats in the legislatures, granted and provided to the Scheduled Castes, be extended to the Buddhist converts from the Scheduled Castes and recommends that Government should bring suitable legislation to amend the Constitution, if necessary."

I have got a list of speakers before me and I request them to confine themselves to the 15 minute-limit. I have got the list prepared by the Deputy Speaker. Mr. Dige will now speak and then Mr. Yajnik.

Shri Dige (Kolhapur—Reserved—Sch. Castes): I rise to support the resolution moved by my learned friend, Mr. Kamble and to say a few words regarding this matter. Our Constitution guarantees equality among people, but really speaking, our present Gov-

[Shri Dige]

ernment has failed to achieve the goal of abolition of untouchability. The Scheduled Castes people are still there in many parts of the country facing the grave consequences of the caste system in the society. When the Scheduled Castes people say that Government has failed or is unable to redress their grievances, they have tried themselves to remove the so-called barriers of the caste system in present day society by embracing Buddhism, which is the only religion which abolishes all differences among the different groups of people.

The Scheduled Castes people have been successful in achieving a novel achievement and today we find that about one crore of people have embraced Buddhism and this number is increasing day by day rapidly. But the fact remains that they are still in minority and therefore they need protection. As they are in minority in every village, the caste Hindus are trying to oppress them, as they have converted to Buddhism. I may cite an example. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. House to the news item published in a Bombay weekly by name *Prabudha Bharat* dated 23rd November, 1957 under the heading "Attack on the new Buddhists in villages". The village mentioned is Akambe village, Koregaon taluk, North Satara district. By going through this news, even a layman can say how much oppression is being done by the caste Hindus on those who have embraced Buddhism. It shows clearly how much malice those caste Hindus have, because they know that by embracing Buddhism, those people have to be treated on a par with them. This will show that caste Hindus never like the idea of upliftment of the new Buddhists. For this reason, the Hindus will always try to suppress the new Buddhists in every possible way.

15.56 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair.]

The new Buddhist people are mostly uneducated, but they are

trying to cope up with the present day changing circumstances. Therefore, Government should give all kinds of facilities to the new Buddhists because they still require those facilities which were previously given to them when they were Scheduled Castes for their further development. The new Buddhists are also part of the society and their development means the development of the society as a whole. The new Buddhists cannot compete with those who are in a better position. Therefore, I would suggest that they should be given the facilities of reserve seats in the services and they should also be given facilities for their education.

I may also point out that since the Scheduled Castes people have embraced Buddhism, they are considered by the Government as being among the category of the other backward classes, thereby depriving them of the rights enjoyed by them hitherto. It is unjust on the part of Government to snatch away the rights mainly due to the fact that they have embraced Buddhism. They have embraced Buddhism for no other reason except to help the Government in solving the age-old problem of untouchability.

Therefore, I would once again warn the Government that if they do not take any steps to safeguard the interests of the new Buddhists and give them the facilities and privileges which they hitherto enjoyed, there will be a lot of heart-burning and discontentment among one section of the society, which is injurious to the society as a whole.

I fully support the resolution.

16 hrs.

Shri Yajnik (Ahmedabad): Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I support this Resolution, not only because I see the justice of this Resolution, but because I have been interested in the uplift and the education of the children of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes for more than 30 years past.



Now what is the question before us? The question is a simple one. The question is: whether in view of the words of article 46 of the Constitution and the other article which defines the castes and tribes that are to be treated as Scheduled Castes, the advantages and benefits that have been accruing to them up till now shall or shall not continue on the conversion of the father to another faith.

The statute, that is to say, article 46 of the Constitution lays down the duty of the State. It says:

"The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.."

This is a duty binding on the Central Government. Then, the second article, that is, article 341 says:

"The President may with respect to any State or Union territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor thereof, by public notification, specify the castes, races or tribes or parts of or groups within castes, races or tribes which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Castes in relation to that State or Union territory, as the case may be."

These people who have been converted recently to Buddhism—I am speaking as a non-Scheduled Caste person—these people have been registered from their birth as members of the Scheduled Castes. They have been treated and their children have been treated as members of the Scheduled Castes right up to a few months ago. What has happened since then that can deprive them of the right, that has already accrued to them since their birth, according to the notification under this Constitution? Has any overt act been done by these men of the Scheduled Castes? Has any document been registered by them and submitted either to a Collector

or to any revenue authority or to any court that can possibly take them out of the purview of the Schedule of the said article?

Maybe, these friends, these followers of Dr. Ambedkar have, under his advice and guidance and under his inspiration, proclaimed their new faith in Buddhism. May I ask: has not Buddhism been taken as a part of the Aryan religion in many ways? Has not Buddha avatar also been taken as one of the avatars of God? Dharma chakra, that idea we have taken from Buddhism. Asoka chakra is enshrined in our flag.

Do we despise Buddhism? Have we not far greater affinity with Buddhism than with any other religion in the world? Because our friends, under the guidance of a great son of India, Dr. Ambedkar, one of the makers, if not the maker of the Constitution, have taken to that religion that is professed today by the largest majority in the world, shall we, on that account, exclude them from the benefits that have accrued to them from their very birth?

Shri C. R. Pattabhi Raman (Kumbakonam): There seems to be a misapprehension. The definition section, that is, article 366, defines "Scheduled Castes". It says:

"'Scheduled Castes' means such castes, races or tribes or parts of or groups within such castes, races or tribes as are deemed under article 341 to be Scheduled Castes for the purposes of this Constitution."

To say that they are excluded on account of religion is not correct.

Shri Yajnik: I couldn't catch you.

Shri C. R. Pattabhi Raman: You said that simply because they became Buddhists, they were excluded.

Shri Yajnik: There is nothing about religion here that I can see. Maybe, they are reformers and they have new faith in their hearts. I challenge even the Law Ministry to show how any person, because he has proclaimed some religion in a public meeting, or

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he is going about preaching a new faith and a new religion, how can he be possibly excluded from the rights that have accrued to him on his very birth? That is my first contention.

Secondly, should justice be tampered with equity? After all, as the Prime Minister has said....

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** What about the children of those who are converted to this belief?

**Shri Yajnik:** That is another point and it is an important point. At the moment, it is an important question in the Bombay State. There we have the largest number of these convert friends. There the position is that the education of children under 18 or under 21 is vitally affected today.

A child, when he was born, has been inscribed in the municipal rolls as a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe. The father has changed his religion. The Law Minister may say that the father is excluded from such rights. But what about the child? I say that this matter has been completely overlooked. A child cannot change his religion. After all, under the age of 18 or 21, nobody can change the religion when the child is born as a Scheduled Caste. With all respect to my Buddhist friends, I would say as a non-Scheduled Caste citizen of India that we would be committing the greatest breach of this Constitution and trampling upon the privileges of children under 18, millions of children of these Scheduled Caste people, who cannot possibly change the religion. They can convert themselves. But how can their children be deprived of their rights?

I am sorry to set out before you the procedure that has been followed by the Bombay State, the most inquisitorial procedure. When children go to school, forms are given to them. Directions have been sent to me. As the Director of a Backward Class hostel, I received a notice from our benign Government of Bombay, asking me to take jolly good care to

see that no children, no Buddhist children, children of Buddhists who were born as caste Hindus, that is to say, the Scheduled Castes people are admitted. That means, it wants to assure himself that no children of the new converts should get the benefits of the free education and free boarding that is given in my hostel. It is a matter of shame. I understand on the highest authority, most reliable authority that circulars are sent to Headmasters and all the boardings and their heads are asked to make inquisitorial enquiries into, not the change of religion of the child, but into the change of religion of the parents of these children. If they are honest enough to say, we have converted ourselves then,—it has no sanction in law, I think that document is worth nothing—even so, the Bombay Government proceeds immediately to deprive the children of all these benefits of free boarding, free education, free fees. Fee is also very important, because fees are not easily found any they are rising every day. They are deprived of all their benefits by a fiat of the Bombay Government.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** It is not of the Bombay Government. The hon. Member should not lose sight of the law that we passed ourselves.

**Shri Yajnik:** The children are not affected by the law.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** That is different. If it is decided here, that this is the interpretation, the Bombay Government has only to implement that.

**Shri Yajnik:** I am coming from the Bombay State. I see it in the Bombay State. I think I am perfectly right in saying how they are proceeding. I do not know how they are proceeding elsewhere in the implementation of the new interpretation of the Act that they have got before them from the Centre.

With that, I come to the other point. This matter has been brought up before the Home Ministry. The Home

Ministry took legal advice and according to the advice that they got, they have written to all the State Governments that under the law, they may not be entitled to all the privileges that they used to get up till now ....

**Shri C. R. Pattabhi Raman:** Is it public knowledge: the advice of the Central Government to the Government of Bombay?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Perhaps this was an answer given by the Home Minister in the House.

**An Hon. Member:** He said so here.

**Shri Yajnik:** There is more to it.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The Home Minister declared it here in the House.

**Shri Yajnik:** I know that something has happened behind the screen....

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** This is what the hon. Member objects. Behind the screen things may not be disclosed.

**Shri Yajnik:** It is not a very great secret. I venture to say that in spite of the fact that the legal interpretation of the section as given by the Home Minister stands, the Home Ministry—I would not make it a personal matter—has advised the Bombay Government—I know about the Bombay Government; I think it applies to all the Governments—to continue the benefits that have accrued to the children at least so far as free education and free boarding facilities are concerned.

Questions have been put in the Bombay Assembly—I know about it and therefore, you will excuse me if I mention Bombay Government again—and the answer has been given that they have received advice to the effect that they should extend or they should continue to extend all the benefits that have accrued to the children in the matter of education up till now. But, the Minister in the Bombay State says, I have not received a directive. What is a directive? What is an advice?

**An Hon. Member:** A directive is binding.

**Shri Yajnik:** My humble request to the Home Ministry and the Central Government is this. Shri B. C. Kamble may talk in fighting terms. He is entitled to do so according to his lights. I humbly request the Government to send a genuine directive in the manner of an earnest advice to continue to give all the benefits and privileges that have accrued to the children under 18, because, I believe the Government would have to look into the legal implications of the status of the children under eighteen, though their fathers or their parents may have changed their religion. That is a question of law. I invite the attention of the Central Government to this question of the legal status of the children. In view of their tender age and their difficult circumstances and the possibility of interruption of their education due to the loss of the privileges and benefits that they have got up till now, I would request that the Central Government once again send a stronger advice, a stronger directive as is possible under this Constitution to see that the State Governments continue to give the benefits and privileges at least as far as education of the minor children is concerned.

I second the proposition.

श्री बालकृष्ण बासनिक् (भंडारा-रक्षित-अनुसूचित जातियां) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, यह प्रस्ताव जो यहां पर लाया गया है, इस पर मुझे आश्चर्य हो रहा है और वह इसलिये कि कुछ दिन पूर्व यहां पर गृह मंत्रालय की रिपोर्ट की चर्चा के उत्तर में गृह मंत्री महोदय ने जो भाषण दिया था, उस में इस सवाल के सम्बन्ध में पूरी पूरी जानकारी थी। परन्तु आज यह सवाल एक विशेष प्रस्ताव के रूप में यहां पर पुनः उपस्थित किया गया है।

हम ने अपने विधान के द्वारा यहां पर एक सेकुलर स्टेट स्थापित की है और उस के

[श्री बालकृष्ण वासनिक]

अनुसार हम किसी भी एक विशेष धर्म को कोई विशेष संरक्षण नहीं दे सकते हैं। तो फिर यह बात मेरी समझ में नहीं आती है कि जिन लोगों ने बौद्ध धर्म को ग्रहण किया है, उन को विशेष प्रकार के संरक्षण दे कर हम सैकुलर स्टेट की नीति के खिलाफ कैसे जा सकते हैं। हमारे विधान का आर्टिकल २७ इस प्रकार है :

“No person shall be compelled to pay any taxes, the proceeds of which are specifically appropriated in payment of expenses for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion or religious denomination.”

मेरा ऐसा ख्याल है कि यदि बौद्ध धर्म के ग्रहण करने वाले लोगों की शिक्षा और ऐसी अन्य बातों के लिये लोगों से वसूल किए गए टैक्स में से खर्चा किया जाय, तो हो सकता है कि प्रागे चल कर इस देश में ऐसा आन्दोलन हो और लोग वह कहें कि हम इस बात के लिये टैक्स नहीं दे सकते कि सरकार उस का उपयोग किसी एक धर्म को पनपाने के लिये करे। मेरा कहना यह है कि हम किसी एक धर्म को इस प्रकार का विशेष संरक्षण नहीं दे सकते हैं। यदि ऐसा किया गया, तो कल चल कर यह बात भी उपस्थित हो सकती है कि जिन अस्पृश्य भाइयों ने ब्रह्म धर्म के सिवा दूसरे धर्म—जैसे ईसाई, मुस्लिम या अन्य कोई धर्म—को अपनाया है, वे भी कहें कि चूँकि हमारी परिस्थिति में कोई तबादला नहीं हुआ है, इस लिये हम को भी वही सहूलियतें दी जायें, जैसी बौद्ध लोगों को दी जाती हैं।

गृह मंत्री महोदय ने उस दिन साफ तौर से बता दिया था कि हम लोग अपने विधान के खिलाफ नहीं जा सकते हैं और उसके अनुसार केवल उन्हीं लोगों को वे फौसिलिटीज मिल सकती हैं, जो कि शिड्यूल्ड कास्ट की व्याख्या के अन्तर्गत आते हैं। परन्तु

वे जो नए बौद्ध लोग हैं, विधान के अनुसार उनको वे फौसिलिटीज नहीं दी जा सकती हैं। उन्होंने यह भी बताया था कि वे सामाजिक या आर्थिक दृष्टि से पिछड़े हुए हैं और वे एक पिछड़ा वर्ग हैं, इस नाते तो उन को सहूलियतें दी जा सकती हैं, परन्तु शिड्यूल्ड कास्ट्स के नाम पर उन को सहूलियतें नहीं मिल सकती हैं।

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, आप जानते हैं कि आज तक इन लोगों को अस्पृश्य कहा जाता है, वह उन्हें कहा नहीं जाना चाहिये और उन के साथ जिस प्रकार का व्यवहार होता है, वह नहीं होना चाहिये और अस्पृश्यता के निवारण के लिये और जातीयता को नष्ट करने की दृष्टि से इस नए धर्म को कुछ अस्पृश्य भाइयों ने अपनाया है। उसके सम्बन्ध में तो मुझे कुछ कहना नहीं है। परन्तु अस्पृश्यता और जातीयता को समाप्त कर देने के लिये उन्होंने इस नए धर्म को अपनाया है, तो फिर मेरी समझ में नहीं आता कि अस्पृश्यता और जातीयता के नाम पर अलग अलग सहूलियतें मांगने का कौन सा कारण है। वे सहूलियतें मांग सकते हैं अपने आर्थिक और सामाजिक पिछड़ेपन को बता कर, परन्तु कुछ दिन पूर्व वे हिन्दू थे, और जब वे हिन्दू थे, तो वे शिड्यूल्ड कास्ट्स थे, आज वे बुद्धिस्ट हो गए हैं, इस लिये उन को फौसिलिटीज दी जानी चाहिये, यह कारण नहीं हो सकता है। गृह मंत्री महोदय ने जो जवाब दिया था, मैं उस का पूर्ण समर्थन करता हूँ और इस प्रस्ताव का आज वह पूर्ण उत्तर हो सकता है।

अब मैं कुछ दूसरी बातें आप के ध्यान में लाना चाहता हूँ। कुछ अस्पृश्य भाइयों में इन्फोरियारिटी कम्प्लेक्स—निम्न भावना—था, उस को दूर करने की दृष्टि से भी शायद यह धर्म-परिवर्तन किया गया होगा, परन्तु वह भावना किस रूप में दूर हो गई है, उसकी मैं मिसाल दूंगा। कुछ दिन पूर्व मैंने अपने

निर्वाचन-क्षेत्र का दौरा किया। अनेक लोगों से मैंने अनेक प्रकार की बातें सुनीं। जो लोग पहले अस्पृश्य बने—हिन्दू बने—और जो बाद में बौद्ध हो गए, उन लोगों का, जो लोग बौद्ध नहीं हुए हैं, उन के प्रति जो आचारण है, उसकी तरफ आप ध्यान देंगे, तो आप को अजीब बातें नजर आयेंगी। गैर बौद्ध—भाई—सबर्ण पहिले भी और आज भी अस्पृश्यता का पालन करते हैं और अस्पृश्यता का मतलब यह है कि उन लोगों को मानव-सम्बन्ध से दूर रखना। मैंने कम से कम अपनी कांस्टीच्युएन्सी में या अपने क्षेत्र में यह देखा कि अगर कोई गैरबौद्ध किसी ऐसे व्यक्ति के दरवाजे से गुजरता है, जो कि बौद्ध-धर्म को अपना चुका है, तो वह व्यक्ति वहां पर पानी छिड़क देता है ताकि वह जगह साफ हो जाये। अगर कोई गैरबौद्ध इन बौद्धों के स्पर्श में आता है, तो ये लोग नहा लेते हैं, इस लिये कि वह स्पर्श उन को कुछ अशुद्ध कर देता है। ये बातें कुछ ठीक हैं, ऐसा मुझे नहीं लगता है। अस्पृश्यता का निवारण करने के लिये जब ये लोग एक अलग धर्म को स्वीकार करते हैं, फिर वही लोग बौद्धों और गैरबौद्धों में इस प्रकार की अस्पृश्यता मानने लगते हैं, यह बात मेरी समझ में नहीं आती है।

मैंने यह भी देखा है कि बम्बई राज्य के महाराष्ट्रीय हिस्से को अगर छोड़ दिया जाये, तो हिन्दुस्तान की दूसरी जगहों में ज्यादा लोग बौद्ध नहीं हुए हैं। मैं कह देना चाहता हूं कि बम्बई राज्य के महाराष्ट्रीय हिस्से में भी एक विशिष्ट जाति के—जो कि कामले जी की जाति है—एक ज्यादा हिस्से ने बौद्ध धर्म को ग्रहण किया है, परन्तु उस जाति का भी बहुत सा हिस्सा है, जिसने बौद्ध धर्म ग्रहण नहीं किया है।

जिन लोगों ने बौद्ध धर्म को ग्रहण किया है, वे दूसरी गैरबौद्ध जातियों के लोगों के हाथों का पानी नहीं पीते हैं, उन को नल या कुएं पर पानी नहीं देते हैं, उनसे

रोटी और बेटो का व्यवहार नहीं करते हैं और उनसे ऐसा व्यवहार करते हैं, जिसका आरोप सामान्य हिन्दू समाज पर अस्पृश्यों के सम्बन्ध में लगाया जाता है। इस प्रकार की बातें करने वाले लोगों के लिये यदि फ़ैसिलिटीज दी जायें, तो मैं नहीं समझता कि यह राजनीतिक बातों के लिये फ़ैसिलिटीज देना होगा या नहीं होगा। इस दृष्टि से ही इस प्रस्ताव पर ठीक ढंग से विचार किया जाना चाहिये।

एक बात में आप के ध्यान में और लाना चाहता हूँ। जो नये बौद्ध लोग हैं, वे बुद्ध के तत्व और उसकी शिक्षा के अनुसार चलें और शान्ति और अहिंसा के मार्ग का अनुसरण करें, तो ठीक है। परन्तु आम तौर से जो प्रचार होता है, या उनके नेता जो बातें कहते हैं, जैसे कि कुछ बातें कोर्ट में भी गईं, जिसके कारण कुछ लोग दंडित भी हुए यह गलत है। हिन्दुओं के देवी देवताओं के लिये गाली गलौज करना, उनके धर्म ग्रंथों की डिसरेस्पेक्ट करना, या इस प्रकार की और बातें कहना खुले आम, जिससे जातीयता की भावना ज्यादा बढ़े, मेरा खयाल है भगवान् बुद्ध का मार्ग नहीं है।

**उ. 18-का महोदय :** अगर वह भगवान् बुद्ध के शिष्य नहीं हुए, तब तो उनको यह हक दिये ही जाने चाहियें।

**श्री बाल गृहण वासनिनिक :** इस प्रकार की बातें आम तौर से हो रही हैं। मैं नहीं समझता कि इस प्रकार की बात करने के लिये उनको सहूलियत दी जानी चाहियें।

**श्रीमती उमा नेहरू (सीतापुर) :** जनाब डिप्टी स्पीकर साहब, मुझे आज बहुत खुशी है यह देख कर कि हमारी तबज्जह आज बुद्धिज्म की तरफ जा रही है। मैं समझती हूँ कि अगर देश इस को समझे तो हमारे यहां फास्ट, बिरादरी बगैरह के झगड़ों में भी बहुत कमी हो जायगी। आज जिस

## [श्रीमती चमा नेहरू]

भाई ने यहां पर यह प्रस्ताव रक्खा है उनको भी मुबारकबाद देती हूं, इसलिये कि आज हमारा देश बुद्धिज्म की तरफ जा रहा है और जिन लोगों को हमने शेड्यूल्ड कास्ट और अछूत कर के रक्खा था आज वही देश में लीड ले रहे हैं। आज वह देश में सामने आये हैं और देश को दिखा रहे हैं कि बुद्धिज्म से ही देश का कल्याण हो सकता है।

मैं बहुत देर से उन का व्याख्यान सुन रही थी। लेकिन उसको सुनने के बाद मैं समझ नहीं सकी कि वह इस त्याग और सच्चे धर्म को कहां तक ग्रहण कर सके हैं। आज जो वह वह कहते हैं इस हाउस के अन्दर कि अपने कांस्टिट्यूशन को बदलो, तो वह तो इस धर्म के आगे कोई भी चीज नहीं है। उन्होंने ने तरह तरह की बातें अमेंडमेंट लाने के लिये कही। उन्होंने प्राइम मिनिस्टर और दूसरे मिनिस्टरो की पूजा भी की और बताया कि कंसी की चीजें खुद प्राइम मिनिस्टर ने रक्खी और क्या क्या बातें हुईं। जब मैंने उनकी बातें को सुना तभी मुझे शंका हुई और मैंने सोचा कि खड़ी हो कर यहां बोलू। जो भी अप्रथमी बुद्धिज्म को मंजूर करता है या जो सच्चा बुद्धिस्ट होता है उसकी जवान, उस के विचार, उस की हर चीज पवित्र होती है। लेकिन कोई बुद्धिज्म का झंडा ले कर फिर पालिटिक्स में पड़े तो यह मेरी समझ में नहीं आता है कि वह बुद्धिज्म को कितना लाभ पहुंचा सकता है।

मुझे अपने भाई से कहना है कि अगर उन्होंने दिल से बुद्धिज्म को मंजूर किया है, तो आखिर क्यों उन्होंने ऐसा किया है? इसमें कोई शक नहीं कि जो कास्ट हिन्दू कहलाते थे उन्होंने उन पर बहुत अत्याचार किया, उनको अपवित्र समझा। और इसी-लिये आज उन्होंने अपनी शुद्धि की है। जो शेड्यूल्ड कास्ट्स के भाई बहनें हैं, वह जब बुद्धिस्ट हो जाते हैं तो कास्ट हिन्दू

उनको गले से लगा लेते हैं। वह उनको गले से लगाने के बाद कहते हैं कि जैसे हम हैं वैसे ही तुम हो। ऐसी हालत में मैं नहीं समझती कि क्यों उन के दिलों में यह शंका होती है और वह यह कहते हैं कि हम बुद्धिस्ट तो हुए हैं, लेकिन बैंकेट्स में लिखो कि यह लोग पहले शेड्यूल्ड कास्ट के थे। इसको मंजूर करो और यह भी लिखो कि इनको अधिकार ज्यादा मिलगे। मैं इन भाइयों से कहती हूं अगर वह बुद्धिस्ट हुए हैं और उनको वही अधिकार मिलते हैं जो हम सब को मिलते हैं तो कोई फर्क नहीं होगा। वह क्यों खास तौर पर कोई भी अधिकार मांगें।

मुझे सरकार से भी कहना है कि सरकार तो सेकुलर स्टेट है, उसका कोई रिलीजन नहीं है, कोई धर्म नहीं है। उस को हर एक धर्म की इज्जत करना है। हम तो चाहते हैं कि जो देश के बच्चे हैं, शेड्यूल्ड कास्ट्स के ही नहीं, गरीब अमीर सब के लिये फ्री एजुकेशन हो। लेकिन जो गरीब बच्चे हों, किसी भी कास्ट के हों, किसी भी धर्म के हो, हमारा फर्ज है कि हम उन सब को पढाई की फैसिलिटीज दे। हमारी सरकार को भी यह करना है, बम्बई की सरकार को भी करना है। मैं अपने भाई से यह कहने खड़ी हुई हूं कि उनको इस तरह का खयाल नहीं करना चाहिये कि चकि वह शेड्यूल्ड कास्ट के थे और अब उनकी शुद्धि हुई है तो अब फिर उनको शेड्यूल्ड कास्ट का लिखा जाय।

दूसरी बात मुझे यह कहनी है कि अगर हम बुद्धिस्ट होते हैं और बुद्धिस्ट होने के बाद इस धर्म को हम मंजूर करते हैं और उस धर्म को समझते हुए फिर हम संसार में कहें कि हमें सेफगाइर्म दो तो यह यहां तक ठीक है? हमारे भाई ने पश्चिमी मुल्कों की चर्चा की, हमें बताया कि क्या क्या चीजें वहां हैं। वहां पर कैसे कैसे एजुकेशन वगैरह होती है। मैं

उनको बतलाऊं कि पश्चिमी मुल्कों में और हमारे मुल्क में बहुत भेद है। हमारा समाज अभी तंग खयाली का है अभी हम उस में से निकल रहे हैं। हमें पूरा विश्वास है कि हम जितनी उन्नति करेंगे हममें भी वही नुबियां आ जाएंगी। जब तक तंग खयालात हैं तब तक उसे ही हमारा गुजारा हो सकता है। पश्चिमी मुल्कों से हमें मिला एक फुजूल सी बात है। लेकिन साथ साथ मैं यह भी कह दूँ कि अभी उन्होंने गवर्नमेंट के बारे में जिक्र किया। "फिलासफी ग्राफ कंसेप्शन" की बातें कहीं। क्यों यह सब बातें हुए गवर्नमेंट की इस फिलासफी को समझना है। मैं आज साफ कह दूँ कि हमारी जो गवर्नमेंट है वह मेहरार स्टेट की है उसका किसी तरह का धर्म नहीं है। वह फिलासफी को खूब समझती है। मगर उसकी इन्सानियत की फिलासफी है यानी हर एक को इन्सान समझना और इन्सानियत के साथ बर्ताव करना।

हमारे भाई श्री इंदुलाल जी भी बोले। उन्होंने भी ई बातें कहीं। बम्बई गवर्नमेंट के बारे में भी उन्होंने कुछ चर्चा की। उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि बिहाइन्ड दि स्क्रिन की बहुत सी बातें जानते हैं। वह जानते होंगे मैं तो नहीं जानती कि अपनी सरकार बिहाइन्ड दि स्क्रिन क्या बातें करती है। अगर मैं सी० आई० डी० काम करूँ तो शायद जान सकूँ लेकिन यह कहना कि हमारी सरकार जो है वह पता नहीं क्या सलाह देती है और बम्बई की सरकार का करती है यह हमारे भाई श्री इंदुलाल जी के लिए कहना जरा ठीक नहीं है। वे जगुर्ग भी हैं और ऐसी बातों में उन्हें नहीं पड़ना चाहिए। शेड्यूल्ड कास्ट्स के लिए हम दिलो जान से सब कुछ कर रहे हैं लेकिन जो शेड्यूल्ड कास्ट्स के हमारे भाई हमारे पास ब्रिटिश्ट हो कर आते हैं उनको मैं विश्वास दिलाती हूँ कि हम और शेड्यूल्ड कास्ट्स के लोग बिल्कुल एक हैं कोई फर्क नहीं है। शेड्यूल्ड कास्ट्स का होना न होना, हम इंसानों का बनाया हुआ कायदा है, यह

भगवान् की बनाई हुई चीज नहीं है। भगवान ने किसी भी जीव को जात पात लेकर नहीं भेजा है, हमने ही उसे बनाया है और हम ही उसे खत्म करेंगे।

अगर आज हमारे भाई बुद्धिस्ट होते हैं तो बुद्धिस्ट फिलासफी पर अमल करें। हम भी उसे जानते हैं। मेहरवानी करके उसके आइडियल्स को देखें जो कि इतने पवित्र हैं। उनको मंजूर करें और गन्दी पालिटिक्स में बुद्धिज्म को ला कर न फेंकें।

ज्यादा न कह कर मैं इतना ही कहना चाहती हूँ कि अब आप को हमारा विचार मालूम हो गया है। आप मेहरवानी करके अपने प्रस्ताव को वापस ले लें।

**Shri Thimmaiah (Kolar—Reserved—Sch. Castes):** I really sympathise with my hon. friend Shri B. C. Kamble who has tabled this resolution, and I really regret...

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I would request the hon. Members to be brief, because the Minister has to reply and Shri B. C. Kamble also might have to say a few words.

**Shri Manay (Bombay City Central—Reserved—Sch. Castes):** I have not spoken so far in the House. I had also given my name. In fact, I had given my name very much in advance.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I am sorry. I have got about a dozen names before me, and all cannot be allowed to speak.

**Shri Thimmaiah:** I regret that Shri B. C. Kamble should have thought that by going out of our fold, he would serve the community better. I could have very well understood if he had opposed the tyranny of the caste Hindus and their exploitation of the Scheduled Caste people, and I could also have appreciated it if he had fought against it, remaining within the fold.

[Shri Thimmaiah]

So far as I could understand, even after conversion, untouchability has not been eradicated. Shri B. C. Kamble never explained in his speech what exactly the object of the conversion was and why he wanted these safeguards. First of all, before dealing with this resolution, one has to understand the safeguards that have been provided for the Scheduled Caste people and also the reason why these safeguards have been provided. The Scheduled Caste people have been treated as untouchables in this country, and they have been so much suppressed that, they cannot come up to the level of others unless these safeguards are given. That is why these safeguards have been given.

Now, what is the object of this conversion? If it is to eradicate untouchability, then let us know whether untouchability has been eradicated after conversion. If it is for the advancement of the community, let us know whether conversion has effected any advancement in the lives of the Scheduled Caste people. As far as I understand, there is no change in the plight of our people even after their conversion. They have been treated as untouchables even after their conversion. If that is so, then what is the object of conversion? Is it political, economic or social? I cannot understand this conversion.

I really regret that people like Shri B. C. Kamble should try to mislead the illiterate mass of the Scheduled Caste people and effect mass conversion, which leads to nothing, and which will never improve the condition of the Scheduled Caste people at all. The Scheduled Caste people are still treated as untouchables even after conversion. Shri B. C. Kamble is not rendering service to the community or contributing to the solution of the problem of untouchability or the economic problem or the political problems of the Scheduled Caste people by converting them to Buddhism or to Christianity or to any other reli-

gion. On the other hand, by remaining among the Scheduled Castes, he can strengthen the hands of those who fight against social evils, who fight against untouchability and who work for the advancement of the Scheduled Caste people. If I remember correctly, the Prime Minister said that Dr. Ambedkar would be remembered as a symbol of revolt against social evils. But, of course, at a later stage, he started converting the Scheduled Caste people to Buddhism.

Now, even assuming that the safeguards are given to the converted Buddhists, it will involve a lot of complications, for those safeguards cannot be given to the converted Buddhists without sufficiently harming the interests of the Scheduled Caste people. There are not only converted Buddhists, but there are also converted Christians and converted Muslims and others. They also claim that they are also entitled for the safeguards. If all of them claim the safeguards, then, naturally, the interests of the Scheduled Caste people suffer and Government cannot serve the Scheduled Caste people as they intend to do.

Therefore, I submit that this resolution cannot be helpful either to the Scheduled Caste people or to the converted Buddhists. It is not helpful to the converted Buddhists, because my hon. friend wants only safeguards excepting those relating to the reservation of seats in the legislatures.

The main safeguards in the Constitution are the political safeguards. With political power, you can help the people. You can do a lot for the people with those political safeguards. But Shri Kamble does not want the main safeguards. He only wants other facilities like educational facilities, reservation of jobs in government service etc. Those are the other safeguards, other than reservation of seats in the legislatures.

If the conversion of the Scheduled Caste people to Buddhism is a revenge against Hinduism, I think Shri



Kamble could have very well kept quiet, without bringing forward this Resolution. I would have appreciated his independent spirit if he does not want any safeguards. But in the Resolution, he wants some safeguards but not some other safeguards.

Therefore, I would request the Mover of the Resolution that instead of going to Buddhism, he should—I request him as a friend—come back to the fold of the Scheduled Caste people. Let us be strengthened and let us advance together...

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** That is not the sphere of the Resolution.

**Shri Thimmaiah:** That is true. But I request him to come back to us and work for the interest of the Scheduled Caste people.

Lastly, he said that by remaining in the Hindu fold we perpetuate untouchability. In the Indian society, untouchability exists in a hierarchical way. It varies from caste to caste in degrees, but the Scheduled Caste people suffer the most. So untouchability is there in some form or other. As Shri Balkrishna Wasnik said—if I understood him correctly; he spoke in Hindi—the converted Buddhists cannot take water from their own brothers who are not Buddhists. So we see untouchability even there in certain degrees. Hence, even by conversion, untouchability cannot vanish. This is a common evil which we have to fight by common effort; it is not by sheer conversion, not by changing faith that we can get rid of social disabilities.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon (Mukandapuram):** Nobody from our side is speaking. May I be permitted to ask a question of the Minister? Before the hon. Minister replies, will she clarify one point? Now a big agitation is going on in Kerala State under the auspices of the hon. Minister's party that all the facilities of the Scheduled Caste be extended to the converts of Scheduled Castes to Christianity. I should like the hon. Minis-

ter to clarify the position whether she is prepared to so extend the facilities.

**Shri Maniyangadan (Kottayam):** My friends started the agitation there...

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I allowed only one question.

**Shri Maniyangadan:** I wanted to clarify the position.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** He may convey it to the Minister and the Minister will clarify.

**Shri Maniyangadam:** I only want to clarify this. It is true there is an agitation going on. The agitation is conducted by people who supported the Communist Party in the last elections believing their promise that this discrimination will be removed. After the Communist Party came to power, they did not fulfil that promise. So the agitation is conducted by those people... (*Interruptions*).

**The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas):** It was part of the Communist Manifesto.

**The Deputy Minister of Home Affairs (Shrimati Alva):** Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose this Resolution (*Laughter*). I do not know why there is so much mirth over it when I rise to oppose, because it is absolutely constitutional to oppose.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Perhaps they expected otherwise. Therefore, there is laughter.

**An Hon. Member:** It may be against her wishes.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** We have a very short time.

**Shrimati Alva:** I heard the speech of the Mover very carefully and I looked for points that could find support from this side. But I could find none.

He quoted all kinds of matter, relevant and irrelevant, beginning with the Prime Minister's letter, going to the Constitutions of countries where

[Shrimati Alva]

there is no caste system. This is the only country where there is caste system and I am amazed when Shri Kamble argues here for 30 minutes and more to introduce the caste system into a religion which does not acknowledge the caste system. (An Hon. Member: That is wrong).

**Shrimati Benu Chakravartty:** What about Sikhs?

**Shrimati Alva:** That provision about the Sikhs was accepted by the Constituent Assembly, of which the hon. Member is aware.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Not by the Constituent Assembly—I may correct her—but by this Parliament, of which she is a Member.

**Shrimati Alva:** I stand corrected.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** This Parliament has passed that provision.

**Shrimati Alva:** "The Committee accepted unanimously the proposal made by the Sikh representatives that the following classes in East Punjab, namely....."

and then

"who suffer the same disability, in the list of Scheduled Castes....".

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Yes, the hon. Minister is right so far as those four castes are concerned, not the Sikhs generally.

**Shrimati Alva:** I am sorry; I stand corrected.

But today Shri Kamble by his mass conversion to Buddhism tries to get for the neo-Buddhists certain rights which are enjoyed because of certain social disabilities. But Buddhism does not accept caste system, nor does Christianity, nor does Islam. In that sense, the Resolution itself is incomplete in so far as it applies only to Buddhists.

He admitted in his speech that we needed a human approach. It is indeed a human approach that we need

for removing these evils that are existing in this country for centuries past. We are trying to eradicate them in the shortest possible time. But we do not want to give it a colour, as he with his mass conversion wants to make it political and then give up the political rights and demand some other rights. There certainly we do not agree with him.

Then he talked of being rational and giving to these neo-Buddhists certain rights which they normally did enjoy as Scheduled Castes. I do not know how our sins of yesterday are going to be washed away in the sunshine of tomorrow, unless we apply our hearts along with our minds.

This is a problem that needs a different approach. It needs the approach of the heart more than that of the mind. If Shri Kamble and the rest of those who spoke of the Resolution could sit together and think that it is a matter of the heart, not so much of the mind, things would be different. The Government as a Government have made up their mind. We are a secular State and we want to give equality of rights and enjoyment of facilities and opportunities to everybody. We are engaged in that task. Day after day, we have made provisions and planned new schemes by which the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes are to come up higher and higher and meet us at our level. But to say that only the Buddhists—neo-Buddhists—should enjoy certain facilities is impossible to accept.

There are tangible social disabilities in this country. If one gets converted to a religion that does not accept social disabilities, one ceases to belong to that caste. And if one wants to become a Buddhist or a Christian or a Muslim, it means that one has to have a lot of courage and one must give up a lot of facilities, opportunities, rights and privileges enjoyed by one as a member of a disabled caste. The next

morning one must stand on one's own legs. There is nothing wrong if there is mass conversion. I say that when those masses are converted they must take their place in society. I fully agree that the caste Hindus are not treating you well. I have already expounded that point, that it is a matter of the heart and not of the head so much. But, we have to meet that problem on a different level and from a different angle.

**Shri Yajnik:** May I ask a question? Is there any article in the Constitution....

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The hon. Minister is not yielding.

**Shrimati Alva:** I have very little time. Since Shri Yajnik stood up to interrupt me I shall refer to the point he made when he referred to the Bombay Government.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** At least he has drawn your attention to it.

**Shrimati Alva:** He has drawn my attention and I do not exactly know what the Bombay Government is doing. The whole matter is being examined—the point that he raised—by the Home Ministry here. I do not want to dilate and claim to know more of the mind of the Bombay Government which he says he knows, not apparently but behind the screen.

**Shri Yajnik:** Excuse me, Sir, it is a matter of question and answer in the Assembly.

**Shrimati Alva:** I have already said that we are examining this in the Home Ministry whether children born at the time when the parents were belonging to the Scheduled Castes should be treated in a certain fashion, whether they should be considered as children belonging to another religion as and when the parents are converted. The whole question has to be examined properly and we are doing so. But I do not know what stand the Bombay Government has taken on this point.

Then as far as we go, the Mover and his supporters wanted special assistance to the Buddhists. I do not know why he should stop with the Buddhists. Why did he not go a step further and amend his Resolution and also include all converts to other systems that have no caste system? If he wanted his Resolution to be more comprehensive, at least, he could have placed it before Government in that manner and included converts to Christianity and Islam also. All these three religions—Buddhism is said to be a religion sometimes; it is said to be a way of life sometimes; however, we take it as a religion today—all these three religions do not accept the caste system. All these three religions do not have tangible social disabilities attached to the members of these communities. I must also admit here frankly that in all these communities sometimes you do come across the caste system. But that is no reason why we should now adopt a measure and give it the sanction of this House.

If my hon. friends in the Opposition feel that we are not fair-minded, I would like them to see our schemes that we have under the Five Year Plan and also under the Constitution, the guarantees and the provisions given, how we give social assistance of all kinds to people whom we do not recognise any more as Scheduled Castes. But we are prepared to recognise them as backward classes for certain reasons like economic and social status. I do not want to take much time of the House because Shri Kamble himself might want to say something. But this resolution, certainly, is unacceptable from all angles of approach.

This move is of a discriminatory nature. I am repeating that converts to Christianity and Islam are treated in exactly the same manner as the converts to Buddhism and Shri Kamble is ignoring the other two classes of converts. For the purpose of facilities and concessions that should be granted to all these new converts, we treat them as other backward classes and give them facilities that we are able

[Shrimati Alva]

to give to bring them up, in the sense of social upliftment or economic betterment. All schemes are now functioning to bring the Scheduled Castes up to our level.

I do not see how by amending the Constitution or by accepting the Resolution that the Mover has moved to-day we are going to bring great changes into the country. On the contrary, it will become very difficult for the Mover to throw away his political rights and to accept just drops. I think, as Shri Thimmaiah said, political rights for a set of people or for a section of the community is very important and to throw away the political rights merely for the loaves and fishes of office is not going to serve any class or any mass of people in the country.

With these words I oppose the Resolution.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Shri Kamble The hon. Member will be very brief, I hope. We ought to have concluded this by 4.48 p.m. Even now I hope the House would agree that we should give a minute or two to the Mover of the next Resolution so that she might not be pushed out.

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** I shall be very brief. I am grateful to all the hon. Members who participated in this debate, whether they have supported the resolution or they have spoken against it. I am very sorry that the hon. Deputy Minister has, so to say, missed the wood in the forest. The case that I tried to argue has been left unanswered. She asks why is it that I have not brought in a comprehensive resolution for all the communities. I am not competent. Those who are competent can do so. She made a point with regard to discrimination against the minorities. The rule we have accepted is.....

**Shri O. K. Nair:** As a Member of this House every man is competent.

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** We have accepted the rule of the majority for the simple reason that due safeguards will be given to the minority. That is the rule of the majority. You know there is a rule of unanimity that all Governments have accepted. That is to safeguard also the interest of the minority. That is the reason.

Shrimati Uma Nehru who is just like a grandmother to me has said..

**An Hon. Member:** Great-grand mother.

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** Yes, great-grandmother; she said something about my harsh words. But if I described harsh deeds in harsh words—in the language in which I must do—it is not my fault. Similarly, she said, when I quoted from the constitution of the western countries that there is a difference I am sorry We have accepted the western style. Let us give it up I am prepared. The privileges that accrue to this House are also based on the same things. Wherever the Prime Minister goes he goes on commending these principles. If it is for the Members to repudiate it let them repudiate.

My hon friend Shri Wasnik's points did not contain any substance at all. He said that religion should not be given protection. Did I say anything like that? He spoke something with regard to the treatment that the Buddhists gave to the remaining untouchables. That is absurd. What he said is wrong. It does not relate to any facts whatever.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** We have freedom of expression. Absurd and wrong things can also be said. But why use such strong language?

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** I submit that my friend, Shri Thimmaiah said we have been asking only for certain safeguards and not for political safeguards or reservations of seats. If it is their intention, we are prepared to ask for that. We are going to ask for that later on if this is going to be rejected.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The question is:

**Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** The 'Ayes' have it

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I will have the lobbies cleared.

17 hrs

(MR SPEAKER in the Chair)

**Mr Speaker:** I shall now put the Resolution to the vote of the House.

The question is

"This House is of opinion that all the constitutional safeguards, except those relating to the reservation of seats in the legislatures, granted and provided to the Scheduled Castes, be extended to the Buddhist converts from the Scheduled Castes and recommends that Government should bring suitable legislation to amend the Constitution, if necessary"

Those in favour will please say 'Aye'

**Some Hon Members:** 'Aye'

**Mr Deputy-Speaker.** Those against will please say 'No'

**Some Other Hon Member:** 'No'

**Mr Deputy-Speaker:** I think the Noes have it

*The Lok Sabha divided Ayes 25  
Noes 47*

Division No 7]

[17.03 hrs

### AYES

Buck Shri Ignace  
Braj Rai Singh Shri  
Chakravartty Shrimati Renu  
Dige, Shri  
Dhus Shri M  
Ghodasar Shri Fatehin  
Ghosal Shri  
Ghose Shri S  
Godsora Shri S C

Jaipal Singh Shri  
Kamble Shri B C  
Kodiyar Shri  
Krishnaswami Dr  
Majhi Shri K C  
Manay Shri  
Menon Shri Narayanankutti  
Mukerjee Shri H N  
Mullick, Shri B C

Paigrahi Shri  
Rao Shri D V  
Rao Shri T B Vittal  
Singh, Shri L Achaw  
Thakore, Shri M B  
Valvi Shri  
Yajnik, Shri

### NOES

Achar, Shri  
Achint Ram, Lala  
Bahadur Singh Shri  
Bhagat Shri B R  
Brajeshwar Prasad, Shri  
Chanda, Shri Anil K  
Chettiar, Shri R Ramanathan  
Daljit Singh, Shri  
Dasappa, Shri  
Dindood, Shri  
Gandhi, Shri Feroze  
Ghosh, Shri M K  
Haada, Shri Subodh  
Heda, Shri  
Hukam Singh, Shri Rard  
Kastlwal, Shri

Krishnamachari, Shri T T  
Lahiri, Shri  
Lal Shri R S  
Maiti Shri N B  
Maniyangadan, Shri  
Mehta, Shrimati Krishna  
Mishra Shri S N  
Mishra Shri B D  
Misra Shri R R  
Musafir Gian G S  
Nair, Shri C K  
Naldurgker, Shri  
Nehru, Shrimati Uma  
Pahadia, Shri  
Pattabhi Raman, Shri C R  
Pillai, Shri Thanu

Ram Saran, Shri  
Rane Shri  
Rao, Shri Jaganatha  
Sahu, Shri Rameshwar  
Samanta, Shri S C  
Stanganna Shri  
Satyanarayana, Shri  
Siddanajappa, Shri  
Singh, Shri D N  
Thakur Das, Lala  
Thimmaiah, Shri  
Thirumala Rao, Shri  
Thomas, Shri A M  
Varma, Shri R K  
Venkatasubbaih, Shri

*The Resolution was negatived.*