

14:32 hrs.

**CATHOLIC CHURCH PREMISES  
AND ECCLESIASTIC ORDER  
(RESTRICTION OF POLITICAL  
ACTIVITY) BILL—contd.**

by *Shri Nagi Reddy*

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The House will now resume further discussion of the following Motion moved by Shri Nagi Reddy on the 1st April, 1960:—

"That the Bill to restrict the use of Catholic Church for political purposes and the participation of ecclesiastic personnel of the Catholic Church in political activity, be taken into consideration".

Out of 2 hours allotted for discussion of the Bill, 1 hour and 14 minutes have already been taken on the 1st April, 1960, and 46 minutes remain.

**Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam):** May I request that the time may be extended by at least half an hour?

**Shri C. K. Bhattacharya (West Dinajpur):** May I be permitted to introduce my Bill?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I called out the hon. Member's name. He was not in the House.

**Shri C. K. Bhattacharya:** You were calling Shri Braj Raj Singh to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Finance, at 2-30 P.M. So I thought he would be continuing for some time and therefore I went out for a while.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I will give him an opportunity.

**Shri Aurobindo Ghosal (Uluberia):** The time may be extended by at least half an hour.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** If that be the will of the House, I shall have no objection.

**Some Hon. Members: Yes.**

**Shri Ignance Beck (Lohardaga—Reserved—Sch. Tribes):** I rise to oppose the Bill as it is presented. The reasons are various. I believe on the last occasion one of the hon. Members, Shri Maniyangadan, went into minute details and explained the whole position. I will merely touch on those very points here and there and try to impress upon the House certain meanings attached to the Bill.

First of all, let us understand what exactly is the meaning of the Bill. The Bill prohibits the religious authorities of the Catholic Church from taking part in politics. This Bill has been introduced in this House just after the Kerala elections. I presume that during those elections, the Communist Party suffered some reverses due to the Catholics. Perhaps their impression is that the ecclesiastical authorities have come in their way. Hence this Bill.

In order to clarify the position, I think it would be better that we understand what is a Catholic Church and what are its aims and objects. The Catholic Church is an organisation and a world association. It has, like every association, its aims and objects upon which it is based. It is an organisation purely spiritual and not temporal. But its members are all human beings, like you and I. It recognises the existence of one God, one supreme God, and its aims and objects deal with the relation of man to that supreme God. So the basis of this religion is the existence of one God. On the other hand, the Communists do not admit of God in their political or organisational system.

My Communist friends say that the issue is political. It is not political. The Catholic priests have to direct their members to do certain things, just because they want to protect and defend their fundamental ideal as embodied in the aims and objects of their association. They believe in God whereas the Communists do not.

therefore they must have been advised, as is done everywhere, not to support the Communist candidates. This is not because it is a political issue but because they want to defend the cardinal principle of their religion, namely, the existence of one God and rejection of materialism and atheistic creeds. This is not at all political. It was the duty of the priests to protect their subjects in terms of the Catholic Church's aims and objects on which is based their very existence.

So, as I said, the priests did not take part in politics. Under the Constitution, and rules and regulations of the Catholic Church, the clergy are not to take part in politics. The members, the Catholics, wherever they may be, in whatever country they may be, are free to accept any political party they like except that which is based on atheistic, materialistic or revolutionary creeds. For instance, in this very House, Shri Maniyangadan belongs to the Congress Party and I belong to the Jharkhand Party. Both of us are equally good Catholics before the Church and before the Church authorities. Likewise, there are many Catholics who are Socialists or who have chosen other political parties and organisations. So long as the organisation which they wish to join is not atheistic, materialist or revolutionary, they are free to join any political party they like. The Catholic Church does not in any way prohibit them. But it definitely forbids them from joining the Communist Party. There comes the rub; the Communists do not believe in God whereas, the foundation of the Catholics, is god.

What about the ecclesiastical authorities? How far are they free to take part in politics? Because the Catholics can choose any political party they like, other than those which I have mentioned above and because their followers belong to various political parties, the priests are forbidden to ally themselves with any one parti-

cular political party, that is, to enrol themselves as members of or take part actively in any one political party. But, as private individuals, and as citizens of the country, they do exercise their individual rights in the matter of the vote and in the matter of having their own private opinions about any political organisation. They have their followers belonging to the Congress or the Socialist party or the Jharkand or any other party—but they themselves are not allowed to enrol themselves as members to any particular political party. This is the position of the ecclesiastical authorities.

In the course of the speeches, certain things have been brought in this House as showing that the Catholics are anti-national or going against the policy of the Government. Before answering it or before even thinking seriously about it I would ask my own communist friends just to think what their position in this regard is. Are they very nationalist? I will not expand this point more but I would just point out the situation in the Indo-China border question and leave it at that.

They have also tried to impress the House that on the question of birth-control the Catholics are against it and so on. Therefore, they are not nationalists. (*Interruptions*).

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon**  
(Mukundapuram): Just now?

**Shri Ignace Beck:** In the course of the debate and not just now because I am the first speaker today.

We are not against birth-control. But, what is birth-control? If you mean the use of tablets, surgery and all the rest of it, we are against it. But if you mean birth-control by the reasonable *Brahmachari* method, by the method of restraint, we are with you. We do not say produce children like rabbits. Certainly not. But we say, have children like reasonable men, by natural means, by reasonable restraint and not use any unnatural

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means to restrict it. Wherever there is any unnatural means used, we are against it; wherever it goes against the laws of Nature we are against it.

This is our conception. I do not know what is the conception of the communists about it. They are using tablets, surgery and other things—and avoid consequences. (*Interruptions*). There is the law of cause and effect. If we cause something, there is an effect, we have to bear the consequences; that is the natural law. Nobody says that you should inevitably use the cause.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Now, he is going into the philosophy of it, leaving religion as well as politics.

**Shri Ignace Beck:** They have brought that in, Sir. I will leave it at that. (*Interruptions*).

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Order, order.

**Shri Ignace Beck:** So they are accusing us that we are against birth-control. We are not against birth-control but we are against unnatural means used.

Then, Pandit Nehru's name has been brought in; that the Catholics have been speaking against Pandit Nehru. We are all individuals. He is also an individual. I can speak against him; I can hold different views from him. (*Interruptions*). He is not all knowledge. He is certainly a great man; we do revere him; we do admire him. But then to say that because one speaks—one Catholic speaks—against Nehru's policies, he becomes anti-national, is not justified. I do not know how it can be. In that case whole of India is anti-national because many speak against him.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** Is the whole of India speaking against him?

**Shri Nagi Reddy (Anantapur):** In certain matters.

**Shri Ignace Beck:** Yes, in certain matters. But these days you are trying to flatter him. I know why!

Then Shri Neogy's report about Madhya Pradesh has also been made much of. I would not say much about it. But I would ask just to see the rejoinder of it also. To every thing there are always two sides to the picture. Examine both the pictures and then you will find for yourself what Neogy Report means. One of my friends met Shri Neogi. He asked him: "In the report you seem to impress that you are against conversion, but how is it that today you are a Buddhist with all your people of 50,000 Buddhists. Today, Shri Neogy himself is a convert to Buddhism. (*Interruptions*). Although he spoke against conversion.

Then the case of Father Mendoza has been brought in. He is an ex-Jesuit. His case has been brought in as indicating some things as very revealing, about the whole Catholic organisation and the Catholics. An ex-Jesuit or anybody who is chucked out of his association, even a Congressman or a Communist who is thrown out of his organisation, I do not think will speak good things about that organisation. So, I do not attach much weight to Father Mendoza's revelations.

Thirdly, foreign money has also been brought in. It was said that they are using foreign money in this country and so on. Has there been any misuse of foreign money? Has any definite instance been brought out? If there is some misuse of foreign money let it be brought to the notice of the Home Ministry. We would welcome that. But do not simply say that foreign money is being misused and throw dirt everywhere.

I would like very much foreign money to come in the country. We must examine how foreign money is being spent. If it is improperly spent, check it. You have every means to check it. It is spent for

educational institutions, for hospitals and charitable institutions, for the leprosy institutes and big colleges and so on. Are there so many Christians to avail of all these opportunities? Not even perhaps one per cent. of Christians are there to avail themselves of these opportunities. The money is spent for our country as a whole.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The hon. Member should conclude now.

**Shri Ignace Beck:** Finally, they seem to lay much stress on the control of the educational system by the missionaries. The educational system, among the Catholics, is a very important thing. They take up all this work with great expenditure not because they just want to convert people but because also they want to inculcate the right Christian principles. That will create godly leaders among men, in India or anywhere else.

I believe the communists are also very keen on having control over these institutions in order to inculcate the Russian system, communism. It is a very important point for any organisation or society which wants to inculcate the right principle—or even the wrong principle—that it should get control of children and inculcate its principles. Equally keen are the Catholics to inculcate the right principles in their schools. With these few words, I oppose the Bill.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Shri Aurobindo Ghosal. Now, no hon. Member should exceed the time-limit of ten minutes.

**Shri Aurobindo Ghosal:** Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I whole-heartedly support this Bill. But I must say that I would have been happier if these provisions had been extended to the mosques and temples. A time has come to take some decision on this point because we know how the Churches from the beginning have tried to control politics of our country. There is at least one very important report—Neogy's report

—which was already referred to. There are again the recent happenings in Kerala. Therefore, no religious organisation or institution should be allowed to dabble in politics. Coming from West Bengal, I know how terrible it was to carry on daily political activities when it was under the Muslim League rule, when politics was used to be cooked up in the mosques. So, religion should be separated from politics. The additional danger is that these are foreign institutions and at a time when we are trying to forge a political force in our country, we must be careful about giving them room to interfere in our political life. Most of these missionaries are guided by the policies of the foreign countries. I shall give only three examples.

Two years after the Sepoy Mutiny, the then Prime Minister of England, Lord Palmerstone said:

"It is not only our duty it is in our interest to promote the diffusion of Christianity as far as possible throughout the length and breadth of India."

Lord Halifax, once the Secretary of State, said:

"Every additional Christian is an additional bond of union with the country and an additional source of strength to the Empire."

While introducing the Missionaries to the Prince of Wales, Lord Reading of Bombay said:

"They were doing for India more than all these civilians, soldiers, judges and Governors whom Your Highness has met."

**Shri Maniyangadan** (Kottayam): Are any of them Catholics?

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** May not be.

**Shri Aurobindo Ghosal:** So, these missionaries, even at that time, were considered their second line of defence. During the British period, there was

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no necessity of their coming into politics openly but after Independence, they had changed their ideas.

**Shri Maniyangadan:** On a point of Order, Sir. The Bill is restricted to Catholic Church alone. He brings in activities of other sections and charges as if all that is due to the Roman Catholics. He seeks to create that impression. I submit that it should not be allowed. If he says anything about the Catholics, I have no objection.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** He may be arguing that there have been foreign missionaries, Catholics or otherwise, who have taken part in these things. Let him develop the argument. There is no point of order in this.

**Shri Aurobindo Ghosal:** In the report of the Ecumenical Study Conference for East Asia held under the auspices of the Study Department of W.C.C. at Lucknow in 1952, it was declared that the Churches must be prepared to recognise that the changes in the structure of society can be effected mainly through political action and that, therefore, they must be prepared to accept the necessity of political action as a means of promoting social justice. This change had been done after the transfer of power, after the British left. So, we find that their political activities had come down to some extent. We know that in Kalimpong and in Kashmir so many missionaries had been expelled from this country because of their spying. It is very difficult to prove but several missionaries are spying on behalf of their countries.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The hon. Member, Shri Maniyangadan has taken objection that it does not apply to the Roman Catholics alone. It may be any other person, even an outsider.

**Shri Aurobindo Ghosal:** It is part of their work—Roman Catholics and Protestants. We have seen it from our experience in Kerala. They have

interfered in the political sphere. Naturally, what could be said about the Protestants is also equally applicable to the Roman Catholics who are doing social work and for that reason I am extending the same motive to them also.

It has already been said that from January 1950 to June 1954, a sum of Rs. 29,27,39,000 of foreign money had come to our country through the Churches.

**Shri Maniyangadan:** Catholic Churches?

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** Ninety per cent. Catholic Churches.

**Shri Aurobindo Ghosal:** All Churches; that is the total... (*Interruptions.*) The most influential section in India is the Lutheran World Federation because they are the most numerous of all the Protestant bodies. Government should be careful to restrict them from taking part in politics. We were told on the floor of the House that some Bishops issued ex-communication orders. The previous speaker, Shri Ignace Beck, informed the House that there was a binding that the people would not join some political parties who are revolutionaries. I do not know what he means by revolutionaries. Much blood has been spilt for the spread of Christianity—whether Catholic or Protestant—and anyone who reads history of Europe knows it.

Lastly, one of our greatest poets, Tagore, has said:

*“Waka Dilo Mandhondo Rajdando rupe Phoale Sarbari”.*

In his well-known work, *Man of Destiny*, Bernard Shaw, one of the greatest of the English dramatists portrays the character of Englishmen in the words of Napoleon:

*“When he wants a new market for his adulterated Manchester*

goods, he sends a missionary to teach the natives the Gospel of Peace. The natives kill the missionary; he flies to arms in defence of Christianity, fights for it, conquers for it and takes the market as a reward from heaven."

That is the main characteristic of the whole Christian religion.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** That is the objection. He can say some nations are exploiting that in the name of religion. Now, he should conclude.

**Shri Aurobindo Ghosal:** But all these nations profess that religion. I may say that some nations are exploiting but all these nations profess Christianity. That is the point that I wish to put forward.

**Shri D. C. Sharma (Gurdaspur):** Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I do not want to go into the local controversies. There are such controversies on this Bill. I think this Bill can be looked at from three points of view. In the first place, there is the question of principle involved. It is this whether the place of worship that belongs to Hindus or Muslims or Christians or Parsis should be used for political propaganda. That is the question. I look at this Bill first of all from that point of view.

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The second angle from which I look at this Bill is this. Has the Catholic Church done more harm than any other religion so far as the political propaganda is concerned?

The third point is this. What is the definition of the sacredness so far as the temple or any other place of worship is concerned?

So far as the fundamental principle underlying this Bill is concerned, I think, there cannot be any two opinions. The place of worship should be kept sacred and inviolable. Political propaganda should not enter into those sacred places. They should be

used only for worship and for religious purposes and for nothing else. If I am a catholic, I have a right to go to a catholic church and listen to a sermon. Nobody can prevent me from that. If I am a Hindu, I have a right to go to the temple and listen to the recitations from the holy books of Hindu. I think, these are the inviolable and inalienable rights of an Indian citizen to whatever religion or group he may belong. We cannot prevent anybody from going to his place of worship or from taking part in those religious and spiritual observations which are inherent in that religion. At the same time I would say that every citizen of India has a right to belong to any political group that he wants. If I have the right to belong to the Congress Party, somebody else has a right to belong to some other party. This right is given to us by the Constitution. Therefore, you cannot say that the Catholics do not belong to this political group or that political group. Everyone has a right to join any political group that he likes. There cannot be any curb placed upon the political convictions of any person. There cannot be any restriction placed on a person so far as propagation of his political views is concerned. These are fundamental rights. The question is where should these fundamental rights be exercised, where should these great rights be practised.

Now, I feel that no place of worship to whatever community it may belong should be—if I can use the word—soiled by the preaching of any political doctrine. If a person says to me, "You are not a Hindu because you belong to the Congress Party, or you are not a Hindu because you belong to some other party", I would say that that gentleman is behaving like a member of the Spanish inquisition which was there in the Middle Ages. I would not accept the position like that.

I would ask the hon. Home Minister that if he wants peace in

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this country, if he wants good Government in this country, if he wants good public relations among the different sections of the society, if he wants that there should be no breach of peace between one group to whatever religion it may belong and the other, he should bring forward a Bill which should say that no place of religious worship should be used for purposes of political propaganda. Well, I do not want to take into account the conditions that prevail in India where we are proud of secularism, where we have laid the foundations of secular State. I am not going into the history of free India which is in the thirteenth year. But I can tell you that most of the political organisations that have tried to disrupt the unity of India, that have tried to bring about bad relations between one group and the other group, that have tried to create social and political rift between one community and the other community were born, were nourished, grew or developed under the shadow of the places of worship. I need not go into the history of the case. I do not want to mention the names of such organisations. The harm may not be there in your eyes; the harm may be there my eyes. Since I am speaking, I am judging what the facts are.

Sir, I was submitting very respectfully that the history of India during the last 100 years before India became free is the history of the great misuse of the places of worship made for furthering the political interests of one group or others. That has been the bane of my country. It is this which has resulted in so many untoward things. Therefore, I would very respectfully submit that the principle underlying this Bill should be accepted by the Home Minister and he should do something—I speak as a devout Hindu, I am a devout Hindu—to preserve in tact the sanctity of the places of worship of all the communi-

ties, of all the groups in India. That is the first thing.

The second thing is this that—I do not want to speak on the merits of this Bill—it is a Bill drafted in a hurry. It is a Bill where the definitions are very very sweeping. For instance, in clause 2, section (2) it has been said that cemetery should also be described as a part of the church premises. Now, I do not know what will happen to a priest who is going to preach to the dead some political gospel which he does not like.

**Shri Goray (Poona):** The dead may turn in the graves!

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** At the same time, political activity has been described in such general terms that anything can come under political activity. In clause 3, I find everybody has been mentioned and everybody is thought to be functioning not so much in religious capacity but in his political capacity. I think, it is very difficult to draw a distinction between the religious capacity of a man and the political capacity of a man. But all the same, I think, there are some persons who lean more on the religious side than on the political side. For instance, all these persons, the Cardinals and others, their activities are more religious than political. But I do not know how it is going to be decided what is what. At the same time, I think it would be very invidious—and I would not be a party to that kind of invidiousness—to single out the catholic church for this. The catholic church may have done something which may not be to my liking, but I can also say that the catholic church has been doing many things which are good. I know some of these Fathers, they are admirable men. I know one Father. People do not know him because he goes about in the catholic church robes and they think he comes from some other country. He is an Indian citizen.

I should say, Sir, it is not proper to single out the catholic church for this kind of approbrium, and I think my hon. friend, Shri Vittal Rao who is a very dear friend of mine will withdraw this Bill and the hon. Home Minister would be asked to bring forward another Bill which will contain the fundamental ideas underlying this Bill.

**Shri Keshava** (Bangalore City): Sir, I rise to oppose this Bill.

**Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** Why?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** If he is allowed to say something then he will say why he is opposing.

**Shri Keshava:** Please hear me. The Statement of Objects and Reasons as given by the Mover of this Bill is rather very vague. There it is said: "It has been noticed that the Catholic Church and its ecclesiastic personnel are engaging themselves in political activities." I do not know what sort of political activities he is going to complain against. The Catholic Church has been in existence in India for generations. For hundreds of years it has been in India and it has rendered yeoman service in the fields of education and health. I do not know what sort of political activities he has reason to complain of against the catholic section of the society. If there is any church which has been well organised, it is the Catholic Church. Simply because they are well organised, they are very conscious of their fundamental rights, their rights of citizenship and they go and exercise their votes in a particular manner, it cannot be said that they exercise their votes in a wrong manner or they are making obnoxious use of their religious activities connecting it with political activities. The root of all political activities is the election. Religion is almost the central point in India.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** It is not the root but the fruit.

**Ch. Ranbir Singh** (Rohtak): Root of this Bill.

**Shri Keshava:** It gives some fruit also, if you so like. Just as militarism is the central point of Germany, bargaining is the central point of U.K., and money—dollars—is the central point of America, religion in the spiritual aspect is the central point of India. It is in our bones and blood, and political activity cannot be completely wiped out of all other courses of activities we are engaged in.

Sir, as the previous speaker was saying, this Bill, unfortunately, is not properly timed. There may be some principles about which could be said a word in favour of this Bill, but I think it is most unfortunately timed, immediately after the Kerala elections.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** May I point out, Sir, that it is not coming immediately after the Kerala elections.

**Shri Keshava:** Soon after.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** It is not soon after; the Bill was introduced long before the Kerala elections.

**Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** Sir, I introduced this Bill in August, 1959.

**Shri Keshava:** In anticipation of Kerala elections. It might be in anticipation of Kerala elections, its results and the effect of exercise of votes by the catholic section of the society in Kerala in the elections. I think that might have led to the introduction of this Bill.

So far as religious freedom is concerned, it is sufficiently provided for in article 25 of our Constitution. Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion are all provided there. I do not think any additional restrictions are called for by means of a legislation.



**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** The hon. Member may read the next clause.

**Shri Keshava:** In this article it is said:

"(1) Subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this Part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion."

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** Read the next part.

**Shri Keshava:** It says:

"(2) Nothing in this article shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law—

(a) regulating or restricting any economic, financial, political or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practice;"

Certainly, if there is any objectionable activity that is associated with the religious practice in the Catholic Church, I would be the first man to support this Bill. But, unfortunately, all such activities are sufficiently provided for in the Representation of the Peoples Act. If any such obnoxious activity is resorted to in the elections, I think a petition might be filed and the whole election declared invalid. I really cannot understand if there is any scope at all for a legislative measure of this kind.

As I have already said, unfortunately it is very badly timed, it is inappropriate and unnecessary. Even the State of Objects and Reasons is very vague. I respectfully submit to this hon. House that the hon. Member may be requested to kindly withdraw this Bill.

**Shri Punnoose (Ambalapuzhal):** Mr. Deputy-Speaker. Sir, my hon. friend who spoke last opposed this

Bill in a very half-hearted way. I would like to clear up a misunderstanding. It is not the intention of this Bill to attack the Catholic Church to single it out for attack.

Well, Sir, our position is quite clear. We are not against religious functioning. We are not against any man having a particular religion. In fact, he must have full and complete liberty to have his worship as he likes. He also should have a right to propagate the religion he wants. All those rights are there for the Catholics and we are not against them.

Our only point is this, that religion shall not make inroads into the political arena. Speaking more clearly, we are against organised religion coming into the political arena and controlling it. When I enter the field of politics I might have my own religious ideas in my head, sense or nonsense. That is quite a different thing. Nobody can prevent it. The only thing is that religion cannot dictate to people to do this or do that or not to do this or not to do that with regard to politics.

If the name of Catholic Church is mentioned, if Catholic Church is specifically pointed out in this Bill, it is only because, as far as I know, Catholic Church is the only organised religion which comes in a militant way in politics. I believe my hon. friend, Shri Maniyangadan also will not deny that. They take up political attitudes. They say that their people should not be members of certain parties. During the elections they say to their people that the best thing to do is to vote for a particular party, next to another particular best is to vote for party, but they should never vote for such and such a party and they should not even go near another party.

**Shri Keshava:** They are more rightists than right.

**Shri Punnoose:** They are very often even more right than rightists. Well, Sir, what will happen to our

secular democracy? Supposing from all the churches, from all the mosques, from all the temples and all the gurudwaras people are told that they should vote for this Party or that what will happen to our secular democracy? That is the most important question.

For my part, Sir, I am not a religious man, but I respect religion because our people believe it, it is believed by millions of people. I know I should respect their rights. But, when organised religion begins to dictate terms in politics, I consider it as very pernicious and it must be discouraged.

My hon. friend, Shri Maniyangadan seems to have said that the Bill is an infringement on the rights of the Church. I do not believe like that. The Church has got its rights. We do not want to curb them in any way. But when they come in and threaten disciplinary action against people for voting for this party or that party, that is clearly a violation of the spirit of our Constitution. The Representation of the People Act says that to influence people by the threat of divine displeasure on them is an unlawful activity and is corrupt practice. That is an offence.

Shri Maniyangadan: So, there is already that law and if that law is violated, one can go to a court of law. Why another law is sought to be made?

Shri Punnoose: Does he want to say that catholic priests are doing it so very cleverly that we are not able to pin them down? If that is the point, I agree to what he suggests. Let him tell that the catholic priests do not say in the church: "You should not vote for such and such a party". They will even speak out the names. There was a time in Kerala or Travancore-Cochin when they took sides with Congress factions.

Shri Maniyangadan: No; never.

Shri Punnoose: Let us not go to battle here. It is that position which we dislike and which we oppose. Shri Maniyangadan seems to have asked my hon. friend Shri Narayanankutty Menon as to how a catholic archbishop knows for whom one has voted. Well, the question is on record. How does an archbishop know for whom we have voted? In this matter, I want help and I seek a clarification. Does not the priest know it? The priest knows it and he is bound to know it. The priest can ask the catholic who goes there to confess, as to whom he had voted. Indeed, I go one step further. As long as there is a ruling from the bishop or there is a Papal bull prohibiting a catholic from voting for a particular party, it is the bounden duty of the voters to tell the priest, even unasked for how they voted or for whom they voted. If this fact is denied, it is another matter. But it is a fact. Therefore, the catholic priest knows and is bound to know it and the voter is bound to say for whom he has voted.

Shri Maniyangadan: Not at all.

Shri Punnoose: Then the voter who has voted for the candidate opposed by the priest is excommunicated and he can be excommunicated. Shri Maniyangadan said that a special Act is not necessary. The person becomes automatically excommunicated or something like that. Now, what is excommunication? The hon. Member asked, "Will the Communist Party brook one of its members voting the Congress Party or joining the Congress Party or helping the Swatantra Party?" No; that is so with every political party.

I would like to know whether my hon. friend would like to put the catholic church on a par with the political parties. If that is so, I am quite prepared to consider it. But he wants the best of both the worlds. He wants to take advantage of a religious organisation and, at the same time, enjoy the rights and privileges of political parties.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** When the hon. Member is satisfied with the comforts of one world, why should he grudge having the benefit of both the worlds?

**Shri Punnoose:** It is a very relevant question to be put to him but not to me! So, this inroad of organised religion and this projection of religion into politics is exactly the thing which we dislike and oppose. It is not a matter of great concern that at the present moment the catholic vote has gone to the Congress. It may be a source of consolation to my hon. friend over there. The point is, it cannot be stable. It can change. If the Swatantra Party becomes powerful and if the Catholic hierarchy feels that that party will protect the vested interests more effectively than I am quite sure—of course I do not say the catholic church alone will support such parties.—In fact, during the British times, organised religion threw its weight in support with the British. I wish to be contradicted if possible. There have been Christian leaders and Christian groups who have been nationalists, but organised religion has been throwing its weight with the British. Now, it is with the Congress. Tomorrow, if the scales change, one will see that they change their idols and if there is another party powerful enough they will begin to support it.

Therefore, let there not be any misunderstanding. They declare themselves as anti-Communist. But we are not anti-catholics. We want that our secular democracy must be free and that every man and woman must have the right to vote for what he or she likes.

Now, what does excommunication mean? Excommunication does not mean merely expulsion from the church only. It does not mean only that divine displeasure descends or divine pleasure is denied. It does not mean only that sacraments are denied. These are not the only things that are

denied. It means social boycott. If I am a catholic and if I am expelled from the church and excommunicated, my neighbours, my brothers, my sisters—everybody—are prevented from having normal human relations with me. And all this comes upon me for the simple mistake that I may be doing by voting for a party which the bishop will not like! It is that situation which we do not brook. So, I want my hon. friends on the other side not to look at this from the partisan point of view but to look at it from the long-term interests of the whole country and the interests of democracy, and then I believe there will be no difference even between me and Shri Maniyanganam.

**श्री ब्रजराज सिं. (फ़िरोजाबाद) :**  
उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं इस बिल की भावना का स्वागत करता हूँ। मैं नहीं समझता कि कोई भी धार्मिक गिरोह या घुप किसी तरह से, संगठित रूप में राजनीति में हिस्सा ले सकता है, खास तौर से एक ऐसे देश में जिस देश की राजनीति साफ तौर से सेकुलर या धर्म निरपेक्ष कही जाती है। मैं अकेले कैथालिक चर्च के सम्बन्ध में ही कोई बात नहीं कहना चाहता, लेकिन जब मैं इस बिल की भावना का स्वागत करता हूँ तो मेरा यह मतलब है कि किसी भी धर्म को संगठित रूप से राजनीति में हिस्सा लेने का अधिकार नहीं होना चाहिये, और इस का एक स्वभाविक परिणाम यह होगा कि जो धार्मिक पूजा के स्थान हैं, उन पूजा के स्थानों को राजनीतिक कार्यों के लिये उपयोग में नहीं लाया जा सकेगा। यदि कैथालिक चर्च भी धार्मिक पूजा के स्थानों को इस्तेमाल करता है किसी राजनीतिक काम में तो फिर वह भी एक ऐसी चीज है जिस की आज्ञा नहीं दी जा सकती। मुझे को जान कर आश्चर्य होता है कि कैथालिक चर्च में सम्भवतः भ्रम भी ऐसा है कि यदि पोप बाहें कि किसी देश में किस व्यक्ति को वोट दिया जाय तो वह इस तरह के आदेश दे सकते हैं और उस आदेश के बारे में यह भ्रमशा की

घाती है कि कैथोलिक चर्च को मानने वाले उस को मानेंगे। यह साफ तौर से हमारे भन्दरूनी मामलों में एक तरह का दखल है और इस तरह के दखल को कोई भी स्वतंत्र राष्ट्र बर्दाश्त नहीं कर सकता।

इस के कतई यह माने नहीं हैं कि मैं किसी दूसरे धर्म के लिये यह कहूंगा कि उन की पूजा के जो स्थान हैं उनका इस्तेमाल राजनीतिक कार्यों के लिये हो सकता है। हमें मालूम है कि देश का बटवारा भी कुछ इसी भावना के कारण हुआ कि एक धर्म की पूजा के स्थान राजनीतिक कार्यों के लिये इस्तेमाल हो रहे थे। सन् १९४७ का हिन्दुस्तान का इतिहास इस बात का साक्षी है कि एक धर्म के लोगों ने अपनी पूजा के स्थानों में तरह तरह की मीटिंगें की और वहां पर इस तरह के संगठन बने जिन के लोग इस बात की मांग करते थे कि हिन्दुस्तान का बटवारा किया जाना चाहिये। यदि पूजा के स्थानों का राजनीतिक प्रयोग होने के कारण देश की इतनी हानि हो सकती है, इतना घातक परिणाम हुआ है, तो मुझे खतरा है कि भविष्य में भी यदि किसी पूजा के स्थान को राजनीतिक कार्यों के लिये कोई गिरौह प्रयोग करता है तो उस का नतीजा अच्छा होने वाला नहीं है। जब मैं यह बात कहता हूं तो मेरा ध्यान सिर्फ केरल की तरफ नहीं है। केरल में कैथोलिक चर्च के मानने वालों ने किस को बोट दिया, इस से भी मुझे मतलब नहीं है और न मैं समझता हूं कि इस से किसी को कोई मतलब होना चाहिये। लेकिन हमें इस से मतलब जरूर होगा कि यदि हमारे देश के बड़े हिस्सों में विचार स्वातंत्र्य के नाम पर और किसी धर्म के नाम पर यह मांग की जाय कि हम धन्य होना चाहते हैं इस देश से, इस राष्ट्र से अलग हो कर कोई नया राष्ट्र बनाना चाहते हैं, तो यह बहुत ही खतरनाक बात होगी। मैं इसारे के तौर पर कहना चाहूंगा कि नागालैंड की जो मांग की जा रही

है, उस के पीछे भी यही भावना है। इस लिये मैं चाहता हूं कि सरकार इस पर गम्भीरतापूर्वक विचार करे। सिर्फ कैथोलिक चर्च के लिये नहीं, चाहे हिन्दुओं के पूजा के स्थान हों, चाहे मुसलमानों के हों, चाहे बुद्धिस्ट्स के हों, चाहे सिखों के हों, चाहे जैनियों के हों, किसी भी धर्म के मानने वालों के जो पूजा के स्थान हैं, उन का प्रयोग केवल पूजा के लिये ही किया जाना चाहिये।

मैं जानता हूं कि जो अल्पमत में होते हैं उन्हें कुछ खतरे हुआ करते हैं। वह हमेशा सोचते हैं कि उन के धर्म को कोई नुकसान न पहुंच जाये, इस लिये वे विशेष सुविधायें चाहते हैं। मैं यह बात चाहूंगा और कहूंगा कि यदि किसी तरह की विशेष सुविधाओं की जरूरत है अल्पमत वालों को, चाहे कैथोलिक चर्च हो, चाहे मुसलिम हों, चाहे बुद्धिस्ट्स हों, चाहे जैन हों, चाहे कोई हों, उन सब को विशेष सुविधायें दी जानी चाहिये इस बात की बारंटी जरूर की जानी चाहिये कि जहां तक उन के धार्मिक कार्यक्रमों का ताल्लुक है, उन्हें पूरी आजादी है और उस में कोई भी दखल नहीं दे सकता। लेकिन किस, पूजा के स्थान में कोई गुप्त मीटिंगें हों कोई गुप्त सभायें की जायें जो कि राष्ट्रीय हित के विरुद्ध हों तो उन से हमेशा राष्ट्र के लिये खतरा हुआ करता है। मुझे भय है कि जैसे भूतकाल में हुआ वैसा ही भविष्य में भी हो सकता है वर्तमान में भी हो सकता है यदि जो पूजा के स्थान हैं उन में गुप्त मीटिंग्स और राजनीतिक मीटिंग्स करने की इजाजत दी जाती है। अब एलेक्शन के टाइम यह आर्डर दिया जा सकता है आशा प्रसारित की जा सकती है कि वे अल्पमत लोगों और पार्टी के उम्मीदवारों को बोट न दें तो मैं इस तरह की आशा को गलत मानता हूं। यदि रोमन कैथोलिक चर्च द्वारा केरल के उम्मीदवारों को ऐसी आशायें दी गई हैं तो उस को अनुचित समझता हूं यह लोकतांत्रिक प्रजातन्त्र

[श्री बजराल सिंह]

के धनुष्य नहीं है क्योंकि भारतीय संविधान ने हर एक नागरिक को यह अधिकार प्रदान किया हुआ है कि वह अपने मत का स्वतन्त्रता-पूर्वक और बगैर किसी दबाव के उपयोग करे। मैं जब यह कहता हूँ तो इस का यह अर्थ न मगया जाये कि मैं कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी का कोई प्रशंसक हूँ, मैं तो चाहता हूँ कि हिन्दुस्तान से कम्युनिज्म खत्म हो जाये लेकिन कम्युनिज्म को खत्म करने का यह तरीका नहीं है कि कैथोलिक चर्च लोगों को यह आदेश दे कि वे कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी के उम्मीदवारों को चुनाव में मत न दें और इस के लिये उन पर तरह तरह के दबाव डालें। कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी को खत्म करने के लिए हमको देशव्यापी प्रचार करना होगा और जनता को शिक्षित करना होगा कि किस तरह कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी हमारे देश के हित में नहीं है और इस तरह जनमत को उस के विरुद्ध करना होगा। लेकिन रोमन कैथोलिक चर्च ने जो इस तरह की धांधला निकाली और ऐलैक्शन के समय वोटों पर और तरह तरह के दबाव डाले जिस से कि वे कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी को बोट न कर सकें तो यह आपत्तिजनक बात है और इस तरह की आपत्तिजनक चीज को कम से कम आज के हिन्दुस्तान में बर्दाश्त नहीं किया जा सकता। भारतीय संविधान ने हर एक आदमी को यह अधिकार दिया हुआ है कि वह स्वतन्त्रता-पूर्वक अपने मताधिकार का प्रयोग करे और हर एक देशवासी को नागरिक स्वतन्त्रता दी गई है। अब इस मुल्क में यदि कोई घोषणा करे कि अमुक शख्स ट्रेडर है गद्दार है तो उस से तो हम भुगतेंगे लेकिन इस तरह कि हम जनता को यह अधिकार देंगे कि वह उस गद्दार से भुगत ले। आज यही बात हो रही है। कुछ लोग हमारे मुल्क में हैं जो कि चीन द्वारा हमारी सीमाओं पर जो अतिक्रमण हुए हैं और आक्रमण किये जा रहे हैं उन को वे आक्रमण नहीं समझते हैं। अब ऐसे लोगों से मुल्क भुगतने के लिये तैयार हैं लेकिन वोटों पर इस तरह से दबाव डालना

और उन को धांधला देना कि वे कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी को बोट न करें गलत चीज होगी। इसलिये ये निवेदन करना कि जहां तक किसी धार्मिक स्थान को किन्हीं राजनैतिक कार्यों के लिये प्रयोग करने का सवाल है उस पर रोक लगनी चाहिये। अब वह रोक किस तरह लगाई जाये यह विवरण की बात है। मैं नहीं समझता कि वह इस बिल के द्वारा लगाई जा सकती है लेकिन जहां तक कि इस बिल की भावना का सम्बन्ध है वह सही है और उस भावना का धाँवर और स्वागत किया जाना चाहिये। सरकार को यह विचार करना चाहिये कि क्या अब समय नहीं आ गया है जब कि किसी पूजा के स्थानों को राजनैतिक कार्यों के लिये इस्तेमाल करने पर रोक लगा दी जाये। मैं चाहता हूँ कि सरकार रोमन कैथोलिक चर्च के सम्बन्ध में और दूसरे जो धार्मिक स्थान हो सकते हैं उन के बारे में गम्भीरता-पूर्वक अध्ययन कर के कोई उपयुक्त कानून बाये।

श्री० रणवीर सिंह : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, इस बिल के पीछे भावना तो बड़ी मासूम सी दिखाई देती है लेकिन जरा इस बात के ऊपर गौर किया जाये कि किस तारीख को श्री विट्टल राव न इस बिल को भेजा है। १३ जुलाई, सन् १९५९ को उन्होंने ने यह बिल भेजा था तो क्या इस से पहले उन्हें रोमन कैथोलिक चर्च का ज्ञान ही नहीं हुआ था ? उन्हें यह बिल भेजने की तब आवश्यकता महसूस हुई जब विमोचन समिति ने वहां पर कम्युनिस्ट सरकार को हटाने के लिये सत्याग्रह किया तो उन्हें शायद इस बात का ज्ञान हुआ कि यह खतरनाक है। अब अगर इस देश के मायने सिर्फ केरल स्टेट है तो उन्होंने ने जो यह रोमन कैथोलिक चर्च पर प्रतिबन्ध लगाने की बात कही है वह समझ में आ सकती है लेकिन यह केवल एक रोमन कैथोलिक चर्च का ही मामला नहीं है बल्कि इतिहास इस बात का साक्षी है कि

इस देश में धर्म के नाम पर कितना बाबेला हुआ है। खास तौर से जिस प्रदेश से ध्राप और हम आते हैं वहाँ धर्म के नाम पर काफी बाबेला हुआ है। एक धर्म के नाम पर हमारे वहाँ एक दफा १०,००० धादमी जेल चले गये और दूसरी दफा फिर १०,००० धादमी दूसरे धर्म के नाम पर जेल गये। श्री बजराम सिंह ने ठीक ही कहा कि मजिदों का इतेमाल राजनैतिक कार्यों के वास्ते किया गया और ध्राखिर में धर्म के नाम पर ही इस देश का बंटवारा हुआ। इसलिये यह कोई नई बात नहीं थी।

दूसरी बात यह कही गई कि धमरीका से पैसा आता है तो पैसा तो यहाँ कई जगह से आता है और अपने अपने खयालत को बढ़ावा देने के लिये आता है। कोई मजहब के खयालत को बढ़ावा देने के लिये भेजता है तो कोई खास पोलिटिकल खयालाता को बढ़ावा देने के लिये भेजता है। अब मेरी राय में जो पोलिटिकल खयालाता को बढ़ावा देने के लिये रुपया देश में आता है वह अवश्य खतरनाक है क्योंकि उस से देश की इंटैग्रेटी को काफी नुकसान पहुंच सकता है। अब बाकी रही यह बात कि धर्म स्थानों का या धर्म संस्थाओं को गलत रूप में या राजनैतिक कार्यों के वास्ते इस्तेमाल करने की कोशिश की गई हो और उन को पिछले १२, १३ साल में रोकने की कोशिश न की गई हो जैसा कि इस बिल के प्रस्तावक महोदय की मंशा है तो वह समझ में आ सकती है और उस हालत में इस तरह के बिल लाने की आवश्यकता हो सकती है। लेकिन ऐसी बात नहीं है और धर्म संस्था के बाहर जो लोग आते थे उन को गिरफ्तार किया जाता था क्योंकि वह केवल एक धार्मिक संगठन था। मुझे याद है और ध्राप भी जानते हैं कि कितने पादरी ऐसे हैं जिन को कि पिछली दफा जेल के धन्दर नजरबंद रक्खा गया था क्योंकि उन के बारे में सरकार का खयाल था कि वह देश

की इंटैग्रेटी के लिये खतरनाक हैं। सरकार ने इस बात का सदैव ध्यान रक्खा है कि अगर कोई धार्मिक संस्था देश के हितों को नुकसान पहुंचाने की कोशिश करती है तो उस पर रोक लगाई गई है और उस का इंतजाम किया गया है। अब मैं समझता हूँ कि हमारे कम्युनिस्ट भाइयों की इस विधेयक लाने के पीछे जो भावना है वह किसी कदर समझ में भले ही आ जाये लेकिन उन का वह गलत बाबेला है और उस की पर्वाह नहीं करनी चाहिये। उन की मंशा इस तरह का बाबेला करने से यह भी है कि वहाँ पर लोग जोकि रोमन कैथोलिक के हक में हैं उन को अपने हक में करें। मैं समझता हूँ कि कोई भी धर्म इस तरह से कर नहीं सकता और न ही किया होगा। हाँ जिस तरह से हम स्वतंत्रतापूर्वक राय दे सकते हैं और अपने पक्ष का जनता में प्रचार कर सकते हैं उसी तरह से दूसरे मत वाले भी अपने लिये प्रचार कर सकते हैं और रोमन कैथोलिक चर्च के पोप को भी यह स्वतंत्रता है कि वे अपनी राय प्रकट करें और जनता में उस का प्रचार करें। इसी तरह कोई धार्मिक समाज का लीडर कबवा मास्टर तारा सिंह भी अपनी अपनी राय ध्रा-ध्राजादी के साथ जनता के सामने प्रकट कर सकते हैं और इस देश में ध्राप जानते हैं कि राजनैतिक संस्थायें तो चुनाव लड़ती ही हैं लेकिन हिन्दू महासभा, रामराज्य परिषद और मुस्लिम लीग सरीखी कम्युनिज और धार्मिक संस्थायें भी राजनीति में हिस्सा लेती हैं और चुनाव लड़ती हैं। जहाँ तक इस बिल के पीछे यह भावना कि धार्मिक स्थानों व संस्थाओं का राजनैतिक कार्यों के लिये प्रयोग न किया जाये, यह भावना तो अच्छी है लेकिन भावना के पीछे जो जड़ है वह अच्छी नहीं है और वह एक सियासी नुकसंनिगाह से यह मांग की जा रही है कि रोमन कैथोलिक चर्च पर प्रतिबन्ध लगाया जाय क्योंकि हमारे दोस्तों को इस का भय है कि वहाँ जो बच्चा-

## [श्री रघुनाथ सिंह]

हुवा जनमत है और जोकि अभी भी केरल में उन के साथ है वह भी भागे चले कर उन से विमुख न हो जायें।

श्री रघुनाथ सिंह : (वाराणसी) :  
उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, इस सम्बन्ध में मैं दो उदाहरण देना चाहता हूँ। एक तो यह है कि यूनाइटेड स्टेट्स आफ अमरीका का प्रेसीडेंट रोमन कैथोलिक नहीं हो सकता हालांकि वहां पर इसाईयों को तादाद ६६ प्रतिशत है। इसी तरह इंग्लैंड का कोई राजा अथवा रानी रोमन कैथोलिक नहीं हो सकते . .

श्री म० ब० जैन (कैथल) : सारे के सारे प्रोटेस्टेंट्स हैं।

श्री रघुनाथ सिंह : आप मेरी ही बात का यह कह कर समर्थन कर रहे हैं और इस के लिये मुझे बीच में टोकने की कोई आवश्यकता नहीं थी। इंग्लैंड में यह कानून बना हुआ है कि इंग्लैंड के सिंहासन पर वही शक्स बैठ सकता है जोकि रोमन कैथोलिक न हो। यूनाइटेड स्टेट्स आफ अमेरिका में भी यह परम्परा हो गई है कि कोई रोमन कैथोलिक वहां का प्रेसीडेंट नहीं हो जाता। यदि आप नवों शताब्दी से ले कर अठारहवीं शताब्दी के योरोप और वैस्ट का इतिहास देखेंगे तो आप पायेंगे कि वह सारा इतिहास रोमन कैथोलिक और प्रोटेस्टेंट्स इन दोनों के संघर्ष का इतिहास है और एक रक्तमय इतिहास है। यह संघर्ष इस कारण हुआ कि रोमन कैथोलिक विश्वास करते हैं कि इस दुनिया में किसी दूसरे धर्म के लिये स्थान नहीं है। उन के उदार विचार नहीं हैं और वे समझते हैं कि जब तक मनुष्य बाइबिल पर विश्वास नहीं करता चाहे वह कितना भी अच्छा क्यों न हो कितना भी सात्विक क्यों न हो और कितना भी सच्चा क्यों न हो, उस की मुक्ति नहीं हो सकती। यूरोप में इसी कारण इन दोनों के बीच संघर्ष हुआ। आज हम देखते हैं कि यही कारण है कि अमरीका में प्रोटेस्टेंट्स हैं। रोमन कैथोलिक के साथ

प्रोटेस्टेंट्स नहीं रहना चाहते थे उन्होंने ने यूरोप को छोड़ दिया और जा कर अमरीका आबाद किया, आस्ट्रेलिया आबाद किया और साउथ अफ्रीका आबाद किया। मैं एक नया उदाहरण देता हूँ। आस्ट्रेलिया में कानून बनाया गया है कि एजुकेशन सेकुलर होगा। उनका कानून है कि किसी धार्मिक संस्थान की शिक्षा के लिए कोई सहायता नहीं देंगे चाहे वह रोमन कैथोलिक हों या प्रोटेस्टेंट हों या कोई और हों, क्योंकि धर्म और राजनीति का स्थान अलग अलग है। हिन्दुस्तान में भी धर्म का स्थान अलग है और राजनीति का स्थान अलग है। जब भी यहां धर्म और राजनीति को मिलाने का प्रयास किया जायगा तो यहां पार्टीशन की स्थिति पैदा हो जायगी जोकि पहले भी पैदा हो चुकी है।

रोमन कैथोलिकों का एक और उदाहरण मैं देना चाहता हूँ। एशिया में आजादी के पश्चात् आप देखें कि बर्मा में केरन एरिया में और हिन्दुस्तान में नागा क्षेत्र में रोमन कैथोलिक लोग अधिक संख्या में हैं। उस का परिणाम यह है कि बर्मा में आज केरन विद्रोह हो रहा है। वह कहते हैं कि उन का अलग राज्य होना चाहिये। इस कारण उन का बर्मा के लोगों के साथ संघर्ष चल रहा है। अभी चार पांच रोज की बात है कि शायद बर्मा के प्रधान मंत्री श्री ऊनू ने एक भाषण में कहा है कि हम लोग यह सोच रहे हैं कि बर्मा को बुद्धिस्ट स्टेट बना दें। थाईलैंड ने अपनी स्टेट को बुद्धिस्ट डिक्लेअर कर दिया। आज बर्मा भी यही सोच रहा है क्योंकि उस के सामने केरन लोगों की समस्या उत्पन्न हो गयी है। इसी तरह से आज हिन्दुस्तान में भी नागा एरिया की समस्या है। खैर इस के विषय में मैं ज्यादा नहीं कहना चाहता। मैं केवल यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि जो इस बिल की स्पिरिट है वह बहुत अच्छी है।

अभी हमारी माता जी (श्रीमती उमा नेहरू) ने मुझे एक बहुत अच्छा उदाहरण

बताया। जब जापान और रूस का युद्ध चल रहा था उस समय वहां धर्म राजनीति का सहायक हो रहा था। वहां के धार्मिक नेताओं ने कहा कि जो बुद्ध की प्रतिमाएं तांबे की बनी हैं उन को धातु की तोपें बनाई जायें और जो मूर्तियां सोने की बनी हैं उन का सोना लड़ाई के लिये खर्च किया जाय। यह वहां इसलिये हो सका कि धर्म राजनीति में सहायक था। ऐसी स्थिति में देश की उन्नति होती है। लेकिन जहां धर्म राजनीति को नीचा दिखाना चाहता है, जैसा कि केरन एरिया में हो रहा या जैसा कि नागा एरिया में हो रहा है, तो उस से हम को सावधान हो जाना चाहिये। हमारी सिक्यूलर स्टेट है। हम ने यह बात अपने संविधान में कही है कि सब लोग बराबर हैं, सिक्यूलर स्टेट का धर्म है कि धर्म का स्थान धर्म की जगह है और राजनीति का स्थान राजनीति की जगह है। जब दोनों को मिलाने की कोशिश की जाती है तो संघर्ष पैदा होता है। मैं तो कहता हूँ कि कोई धर्म स्थान, चाहे वह मन्दिर हो या मस्जिद हो या चर्च हो, वहां बैठ कर राजनीति की बातें नहीं की जानी चाहियें। धर्म के स्थानों में बैठ कर सियासत की बात करना बिल्कुल अनुचित है और सिक्यूलर स्टेट में यह चीज नहीं होनी चाहिये। मैं तो कहूँगा कि आस्ट्रेलिया ने जो उदाहरण हमारे सामने रखा है उस से हम को सबक लेना चाहिये और इसी प्रकार का प्राबिजन अपने कांस्टीट्यूशन में भी करना चाहिये कि चाहे कोई धार्मिक संस्था हो उस को अपने धार्मिक स्थानों में राजनीति की बात नहीं करनी चाहिये।

**Shri M. C. Jain:** I stand to oppose this Bill on various grounds. This Bill suffers from several vital defects. One of them is that it is very vaguely worded. More than that, another very vital defect is that it is discriminatory in nature. It wants to bind only the Catholic Church people. Neither the Hindus, nor the Muslims,

nor the Sikhs have been bound by this Bill. If a Muslim uses the mosque for political activity, there is no restriction. If a Hindu uses his temple for political activity, there is no restriction. If a Sikh uses his Gurudwara for political activity, there is no restriction. The restriction placed by the Bill is only on the Roman Catholic Churches.

So far as vague wordedness is concerned, sub-clause (3) of clause 2, which defined "political activity" states:

"any activity in favour of or against any Government;"

It means that if these church people want to support the Government, they are not allowed to support the Government. The second part of the sub-clause says:

"any activity in favour of or against any political Party or Group;"

Suppose they want to support the Communists. This very sub-clause will prevent them from doing that.

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** Yes, as an organised church.

**Shri M. C. Jain:** Then, if you read sub-clause (2) of clause 3 it says:

"No Cardinal, Archbishop, Bishop, Vicar, Mother-Superior, Nun, Brother or other dignitary, functionary or officer of the Catholic Church shall in his or her capacity as a functionary of the Catholic Church or by using his or her ecclesiastic position or title take part in or encourage any political activity."

So many personalities and dignitaries are debarred from taking part in political activity by this clause. Now, he may be anybody,—he may be a Churchman, a clergy, a padiri, a mulla or a pandit—but how can you forbid him from taking part in political activity? Our Constitution provides freedom of association and so no law can be passed which prohibits such persons from doing things. Therefore,



[Shri M. C. Jain]

so far as the wording is concerned, this Bill is entirely undesirable.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** When you read it you dropped two sentences about ecclesiastical activities?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The hon. Member shall remain alert so that no other hon. Member misleads him.

**Shri M. C. Jain:** There is another thing. As has been stated by several speakers in this House, so far as the spirit of the Bill is concerned, the spirit may be good. But why do you throw the responsibility on the Government? I concede that the church, mosque, temple or Gurudwara should not be used for political purposes by anybody. But I know that Gurudwaras are used for political purposes, temples are used for political purposes and mosques have been and are used for political purposes. Why single out poor Roman Catholics? So far as the principle is concerned I agree that these religious places should not be used for political purposes. But why do you throw the responsibility on the Government? Take the responsibility upon yourself, go to the people and tell them that the use of religious places for political purposes is entirely undesirable, that it is against the unity of our country. This responsibility is of ours, public men. We should go to the public, educate them and we should create public opinion against it. If we throw this responsibility upon the Government, what can they do? Government have got so many other things to attend to. So, we cannot throw this responsibility on them. If we throw this responsibility on the Government, and the Government undertake this responsibility, I can certainly say that they will fail in their duty. This duty should be cast upon the people, upon the peoples' representatives, upon public men, who should go to the people and create public opinion against it. That is the only desirable thing.

With these words I oppose this Bill and I hope the mover will withdraw the Bill. I do not want to enter into a controversy as to why this Bill was sponsored and whether it was because of the part played by the Roman Catholic in Kerala. Whatever their attitude may be, this Bill applies or will apply to the whole of India. Therefore, I oppose it on several grounds, particularly because it applies to a very small minority community. Why single out a minority community like that for this treatment? With these words I oppose this Bill.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The hon. Minister.

**Shri P. K. Deo (Kalahandi):** I request that I may be given five minutes.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I am sorry, it is too late now.

**The Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs (Shri Datar):** The short question that arises for consideration after this fairly long debate is as to whether there is any need for any legislation under article 25 (2) of the Constitution. We are aware that under article 25 of the Constitution we have laid down certain important rights with regard to religion—the right to worship, the right to conscience, all these circumstances have been laid down as constituting the fundamental rights of the citizens of India. Clause (2) of article 25 begins with the words:

Nothing in this article shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law—".

The sub-clause (a) says:

"regulating or restricting any economic, financial, political or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practice;"

Therefore a question arises as to whether the Catholic community to

which this particular Bill is confined has committed such acts of omission and commission as to make it necessary for Parliament to enact a law regulating, or rather restricting, its political activities.

So far as the Catholics are concerned, you are aware that their number is in the neighbourhood of 45 to 50 lakhs. According to the census of 1951 the total population of Christians in India is, I believe, about 80 lakhs to 85 lakhs. Nearly half the number is that of Catholics. Therefore I should like the House to know whether about 50 lakhs of Roman Catholics in India have committed or have not committed any such acts as to make it necessary for the Parliament to legislate for the purpose of restricting their activities.

In the course of the debate the hon. Mover of this particular Bill brought in instances mainly from the Kerala State though incidentally he made a reference to a circular issued by a priest of Nellore District in Madras State.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:**  
Andhra Pradesh.

**Shri Datar:** I am sorry. I agree with the correction. Formerly it was in Madras.

Now assuming for the sake of argument, without admitting it, that at the time of the last elections the hon. Mover's party did not get any support from the Catholics in that State, does it mean that all the Catholics in India ought to be brought under the punitive provisions of any such Bill? There are a number of Catholics in the whole of India and not only in Kerala State. Therefore the question is whether any such law of a restrictive nature is at all called for. Here I am not dealing with the question of spirit. But has any such action been done of such a nature as to affect adversely the interests of India because ultimately we have to take into account the largest interests of India? Are the political activities, assuming

what they are, of such a nature as to have restrictions placed upon them? This is the very simple question that has to be now considered by us.

So far as individuals are concerned, there are provisions in the various Acts. We have got the Representation of the People Act where also I may point out it is open subject to certain restrictions to preach that a particular candidate should be or should not be elected. I have gone through a number of rulings on this subject and I find that there are instances where it is open to bring in religion because the conscience of the particular elector is aroused by the fact that a particular candidate is not likely to act conscientiously. This is what has been laid down.

"But all clerical or spiritual influence is not undue. In the proper exercise of their legitimate influence, priests and clergy may lecture the people and address their congregations upon the conflicting claims of the different candidates even in their chapels;"

This is a ruling of the High Court.

"They may counsel....."

This sentence may be noted.

"They may counsel, advise, recommend, entreat and point out the true line of moral duty and explain why one candidate should be preferred to another;"

Then there are also subsequent rulings.

"So also if priests believe that a spirit of antagonism to their church, religion or clergy has arisen, and recognise in a particular political party.....".

I should like the hon. Mover to note this.

"...recognise in a particular political party.....".

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** I think there is already a commentary on the book of this gentleman.

15.54 hrs.

[SHRI MULCHAND DUBE in the Chair ]

**Shri Datar:** "...recognise in a particular political party elements of danger to religion, they may use their influence to assert and maintain due respect to religion, and may express their opinion, in suitable language, that issue of great importance to religion are involved in a pending political contest."

May I point out.....

**Shri Punnoose:** May I know from the hon. Minister as to what exactly his attitude is towards disciplinary action, including, ex-communication, to be taken by religious threats for voting.....

**Shri Datar:** If the hon. Member may wait and hear me, I shall have answered all his questions.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** Agreed.

**Shri Datar:** So far as this question is concerned, therefore we have to see whether a time has arisen for restricting the activities of the Catholic Church. As my hon. friend has rightly pointed out, there are certain orders or directions that are issued by the higher ministers or the highest authorities of the Catholic world—I am very happy that he has quoted from them—to the effect that all the Catholics in the world have to keep entirely aloof from political interests and matters of State so that "you never meddle with the administration of civil matters even though requested and if importuned by many persons to do so".

That is a correct attitude. I would agree in principle that so far as places of worship are concerned, such controversial political matters should not be discussed at all there. That is true. But suppose certain circumstances arise, as for example in a case that my hon. friend has pointed

out, namely, there are certain principal concepts of life to which Christianity is adhering. There are certain concepts of life to which my hon. friend's party is adhering. In the opinion of many members of Catholic Christianity the type of life and the type of ideology that is being preached by Communism is not only against their political interests but is also against their religious interests in the sense that they are opposed to the conscience.

What have the Catholic Christians done? Certain instances were quoted. All the instances that have been quoted might be summarised or analysed thus. They had issued certain directions that they should not vote for the Communist candidates. Then, subsequently after the elections were held certain priests issued a directive that those who have voted should be ex-communicated or something like that.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** Not vote for Communists alone.

**Shri Datar:** I have gone through the whole proceedings. I was present here. Ultimately what they have done is this.

**Shri Punnoose:** What is your position?

**Shri Datar:** There is no question. May I point out very clearly that these Catholic Churches or Catholic priests did not preach that electors should vote for the Congress? They preached that they should not vote for the Communists. Let us make that point very clear.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** That is wrong. The ex-communication letter of the Trivandrum Bishop says.....

**Shri Datar:** I shall illustrate. The ex-communication order was to the effect, according to the hon. Member, that those who did not comply with

their directions should suffer from ex-communication. I hope I have put it quite correctly.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** Yes.

**Shri Datar:** Therefore under these circumstances the position arose in the Roman Catholic world in Kerala. I am not going into the political question because we are not at all concerned with it. The question arises if certain Roman Catholic people believe that the Communist Party have been carrying on certain activities and have been after certain ideologies which are opposed to the fundamental principles of religion should they or should they not oppose them? Let us understand the question in a very clear way. Let us not go by any prejudices against anything.

The Indian Constitution, as you are aware, has given us fundamental rights. These fundamental rights have been conceived of and embodied in the Constitution after full consideration.

16 hrs.

It is true that we have to be secular to the fullest extent possible. What is secularism? Secularism consists, first, in having a common attitude against the members of all religions, parties or communities. That is to say, I should not consider that I am superior to others because I am a Hindu, because I am a Christian, or because I am a Muslim, or that it is anybody's privilege. We have got numerous religions. But so far as political or public rights are concerned, all are entitled to those rights.

My hon. friend Shri Raghunath Singh pointed out certain instances in certain countries. In India any man or any woman of any caste or community, Christian or Muslim or anybody else, can aspire to be, and can be, the President of the Indian Union. That is the greatest advantage

that we have so far as secularism is concerned.

Secondly, secularism consists also in making it necessary that the Government have no religion at all, that there is no such thing as an established religion in the sense in which that term is used in other countries like England. Here we recognise all religions; but we ourselves, as a government machinery, have no religion at all.

Subject to this principle of secular government we have recognised—you should also note that—we have recognised the right of every person of association in the cause of religion. He can practise, preach and propagate any religion. So this is, what you can call, a harmonious blending of the two doctrines of religious superiority or religious requirement on the one hand and requirement in public life, and political life in particular, of a spirit of secularism.

Under these circumstances, the question arises whether we should restrict the political activities of any particular church, or Roman Catholics in general. That is the next point to which I am going to address myself. The hon. Mover has defined the word 'political' in a very ingenious manner. He says: either for or against Government. Is there any such thing as, what you could call, a line that can be drawn between political life and, say, religious life? According to the common concepts of religion, either of Hinduism or Christianity, religion enters, or the good form of religion, the highest principles of religion must enter into our whole life. My hon. friend Shri Nagi Reddy complained that Roman Catholicism has entered the life of its followers from birth to death. That is exactly what religion has to do.

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** I enumerated what I meant, saying that they are controlled even politically.

**Shri Datar:** What I say is this that religion, the good form of religion,

[Shri Datar]

not the sectarian religion, not the religion which puts one religion on a high pedestal and the other on the lowest—that is not correct—religion is based on liberalism and on equality. Therefore, if a particular community feel that their interests would not be safe in the hands of a particular party, the question arises whether they should or should not preach in favour of a particular person. This is all that they have done. They have not shown any instances at all....

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** The hon. Minister is repeating whatever is said by the Catholics.

**Shri Datar:** I am not repeating anything but only pointing out what is the correct position. My hon. friend is possibly carried away by the obsession that he failed to catch the vote of the electors.

**Shri Punnoose:** Is it the position of the Minister that it is open to religious heads to punish people for voting for a particular party?

**Shri Datar:** What I desire is, as I have already pointed out, that so far as religion is concerned, as my hon. friend has rightly pointed out, people belonging to any religion as an institution should not enter politics, especially of a controversial type. That is quite correct. If, for example, any punishment is given, my hon. friend wants to know whether, as a matter of fact, there was the exercise of ex-communication against certain persons. What the hon. Member did was, he pointed out certain circulars before the election, and he pointed out certain circulars after the election. So far as the law of social ostracism or ex-communication is concerned, there are two circumstances which have to be noted. One is that in the case of individual ex-communication, under the general law of India, it is open to any person to approach a court of law and ask for relief against it. And in

some of the States, for example in Bombay, may I point out that they have passed a special Act according to which it is not open even to the Mahant of a particular Mutt to ex-communicate his disciple on any ground whatsoever; because, it does not constitute merely a religious right but a civil right as well. My hon. friend Shri Patel might be knowing this. There were certain cases of ex-communication in Gujarat, and the Bombay Government passed a law immediately.

But we have got here the civil law according to which, if a man has been ex-communicated, then, in that case he can take the matter to a court of law. If, for example, on the other hand, in the course of elections any such thing has been done, then it comes under the definition of the term 'undue influence'. Let the hon. Member note it very carefully that under section 123, if I mistake not, of the Representation of the People Act, they have defined 'undue influence' thus. They say: "Provided that without prejudice etc. any person... (i) threatens any candidate or any elector, or any person in whom a candidate or an elector is interested, with injury of any kind including social ostracism and ex-communication or expulsion from any caste or community".

Therefore, the Indian law is quite sufficient and adequate for the purpose of preventing the mischief that is likely to be done in such cases. And any individual who is aggrieved is entitled to take the matter to court or, if a large number of individuals are affected, they can call in question the propriety of the elections on this ground. So, this is so far as social ostracism is concerned.

But a question arises as to whether the whole Catholic Church itself—because my hon. friend has not confined it either to Kerala State or even to Andhra State....

**Shri Datar:** Whatever it is. So Madhya Pradesh.

**Shri Datar:** Whatever it is. So far as Madhya Pradesh is concerned, there is nothing before us. Only the other day when a Member asked a question as to whether any reference has been made to the Government of India in respect of these two reports, it was pointed out to the hon. Member that no reference has been made at all.

Under these circumstances, merely because there are certain reports, it would not be proper to restrict the rights that have been given to our people by the Constitution. Therefore, I would submit to my hon. friend that what he has done arises, of course, out of, if you will excuse my saying so, political considerations and a sense of frustration that a large community there (*Interruption*) threw them out of power.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** Look at the date of the introduction of the Bill.

**Ch. Ranbir Singh:** And political animus.

**Shri Datar:** Now, let me suggest this. Let them have a sense of introspection. They brought a Bill when Kerala State was in the throes of an agitation against the Communist Government, on 13th July, I think. Within three weeks the President took over the administration, in the interests of the State itself, because he found that the conditions were entirely bad.

There also my hon. friend cannot say that all these Roman Catholics—their number might be about 20 lakhs, I am speaking subject to correction—it is not their case that all the churches consisting of nearly 20 lakhs of people have acted in a particular manner. And the manner also has been confined by them only to two instances. They have not stated that persons were actually ex-communi-

cated. My grievance is this, that when you are going to damn a particular community, you ought to do it on the basis of adequate and sufficient evidence. Because, especially here, the Constitution has given a fundamental right, and under proper circumstances. For example, if the act of any person or association is not proper, then restrictions can be introduced. But the High Court has rightly pointed out that these regulations can be used not when there is a political activity but when there is an undesirable, objectionable, pernicious or subversive activity.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** The High Court has never said "undesirable". It never used that word.

**Shri Datar:** If he wants it, I shall read it.

**Shri Narasimhan (Krishnagiri):** He wants you to read it.

**Shri Datar:** It reads:

"...Political activity. Nor can the State allow subversive activities to be carried on in the name of religion."

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** That word you did not say.

**Shri Datar:** If he wants, I can give the ruling also.

Therefore, merely because it affects certain people or parties, we should not take away these valuable rights.

I shall not take long, but I may point out that "political activity" has been defined in this Bill in such a comprehensive way that even the discussion of a political question in a classroom for explaining to the students will come within the mischief of the Bill. Political activity is defined as any activity in favour or against any Government—including the former Communist Government also. They wanted to condemn that particular activity.

[Shri Datar]

When there are questions of conscience, it ought to be open to any person to raise them in a constitutional and peaceful manner, whatever the party in power may be. The Congress may be there or any other party. It does not mean it is not open to people to raise an agitation provided they do it within the orbit of a peaceful and lawful agitation. If this definition is accepted, all their activities will be over.

There are many Roman Catholic schools and colleges there. They cannot appoint even a professor of political science,—the expression may be noted, "political science".

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** Why? It does not obstruct that. The hon. Minister must know a little bit of the sense of the Bill.

**Shri Datar:** It refers to any activity in favour or against any Government. A political party ought to face an agitation. Why do they want to seek shelter under any such Bill?

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** No, we are not afraid of that.

**Shri Datar:** You have brought this Bill, not we. The hon. Member's party has brought this Bill, not the Congress. In spite of their agitation in Andhra and Kerala, we know it in a fully satisfied manner that they cannot placate the people because their methods are wrong, and their ideology is highly defective. It is only on account of this that they have lost. In the circumstances, it would not be proper merely to single out Roman Catholics.

It is not confined only to Kerala or Andhra. There are about 40 to 50 lakhs of people, and it would entirely be wrong to use this against them.

Therefore, I would submit that unless a very strong case has been made out by which any such religious organisation can be legitimately

held responsible for what can be called bad or subversive activities, it would not be proper to take away this important right that they have.

So, I appeal to my hon. friend to withdraw his Bill. I know he would not withdraw it, but I would appeal to him to take note of the very grave implications of the provisions of the Bill, because tomorrow it may be the Muslim community, the third day it may be the Hindu or any other community. I also desire that all these communities follow the very fine principles that have been laid down in the directions issued to the Roman Catholics that they should "keep themselves entirely aloof from political interests", except where there is a question of conscience, when naturally it is open to them to create opinion, provided they do it in a legitimate, law-abiding and peaceful manner.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** May I seek a clarification? He said that under the penal law which is applicable throughout the country, in the case of excommunication a person can go to court, but I find that the Bombay Act was passed because the law of the land was insufficient. Therefore, what is the purpose of having a law in Bombay alone, and not throughout the country?

**Shri Datar:** I merely pointed out an instance I personally knew, but we have got the general civil law of torts.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** Then, is the Bombay (Prevention of Excommunication) Act superfluous in view of the explanation given by the hon. Minister, or is it *ultra vires* of the Constitution?

**Shri Datar:** Sometimes legislatures pass laws or legislations out of abundant caution; that does not mean that the law is not there. Otherwise, there would not have been any instance at all.

**Mr. Chairman:** Anyhow, hypothetical questions need not be pursued further.

**Shri Maniyangadan:** The Bombay law only prohibits....

**Mr. Chairman:** It is merely a hypothetical question. I do not think it need be pursued. The Bombay law is not before us, we are not discussing it. There is no use going into it.

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** I have heard the speeches of the hon. Members and the Minister very carefully, and I am afraid that, after hearing the speech of the Minister, it has become incumbent on me not to accept his advice to withdraw the Bill under any circumstances.

**An Hon. Member:** So convincing.

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** He has not understood the purpose of the Bill, because he told us that we want to pressurise 50 lakhs of people of our country. My contention is that the Bill is not against the Catholics or the Catholic religion. I am talking of the organised Catholic Church and the organised manner in which this Church is introducing religion into politics. It is not the individual man I am talking about.

The Minister has asked us whether we can restrict preaching. I am not for restricting preaching. I do not want either a Mullah or a priest of the Hindu religion,....

**Shri Maniyangadan:** Or a Nambardiripad.

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** ...or even a Bishop should be refused the right of taking part in politics. I give him that right which he has constitutionally. But my purpose is to see that the Catholic Bishop or the Catholic hierarchy does not take organised religion into its hands to pressurise Catholics to see that they accept only one political party which at the particular time is right ac-

ording to the Church. That is my point.

For example, I am a Hindu and I am a communist. After I became a communist I married in a religious manner with Hindu rights, and no priest ever told me that since I was a communist I would not be allowed to perform a Hindu religious marriage.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** You were not a communist at that time!

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** But the Catholic Church refuses to give any religious benefit to those people who do not support the political programme or ideology of the party in which the organised Church believes. That is my contention.

I want to ask the Minister whether he thinks this is not interference in politics being introduced in India in the name of religion by the organised Catholic Church. If it is so, is there true secularism in the country?

I know temples are being used for political purposes. There is no doubt about that, but then the temple is the property of the village. But here is the Catholic Church which declares in the beginning and at the end that whoever acts in a particular manner politically will be excommunicated. It comes to this that since they do not hear the word of the Church in regard to a particular political situation, the Church will not baptise the baby when it is born, it will not perform the sacrament at the time of marriage, not perform the burial service. I would like to know if this dictatorship is not religious interference, what else is.

Does the Minister believe that my Bill is against every religious activity? It is not so at all. My point is this: Here is a Church which is trying to introduce politics. I read out to the Minister, which he has perhaps forgotten, that one of the Bishops, Maria Doss, in his evidence in court has said that if the Pope were to declare



[Shri Nagi Reddy]

that the Indian Catholic shall not vote for Prime Minister Nehru, it would be his duty to see that the Catholics do not vote for him. It is not a question of communism; it is not a question of anti-religion; it is a question of the interference of religion in politics. If that is true, if that is the bent of mind of the organised church, I would like to know what exactly the hon. Minister means by secularism. That is my point. The Minister has told me and the House that naturally, religion should not interfere. But, is it not a fact that religion is interfering? The Minister might think that we are angry because it is against the Communists. I can tell him, as I told him last time, that today it might be against the communists, but tomorrow, it might be, I am sure, against the Congress. After all the Communist Party in the country today is small. I shall tell you why. Was it not a fact that at the time of the elections, as per the report in *The Times of India*—I would wish the hon. Minister to go and look into the papers again—on the day of the polling, the church bells were rung, and the voters were called to the church, and in the church they were given bibles, and from there a procession had been taken to the polling booth?

**Shri Datar:** Has the hon. Member's party taken any action, against that under the election law?

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** Why should we? What is the Government for? Has it no eyes? Has it no C.I.D.? Has it no Intelligence Department? Or is the Intelligence Department only against the Communist Party?

**Shri Keshava:** Government is not the aggrieved party. It is the aggrieved party that has to go to court.

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** If the Government has eyes, if it has an Intelligence Department, then what action has it taken when all these things have taken place? Therefore, I

would like to know what exactly the hon. Minister means by political interference. Here it is. Not only we, but the papers have given the evidence that is necessary for the country.

Then, I would also like to speak out one other thing. Here is a news which has appeared about a Catholic conference, and mind you, this has not appeared in the Communist press, but it has appeared in *The Hindu* and the *Indian Express* of December, 1958, namely that there was an all-India conference of the Catholic Bishops of India held at Bangalore on 4th December, 1958. And what did they discuss? Catholicism, I thought, and I do think, is a religious institution. I thought that these great spiritual heads who had gathered there under the leadership of the Vatican Ambassador to India. Mr. Robert Knox would discuss about spiritual matters, would discuss about religious matters, would discuss about elevating the spirit to the higher level. Instead, they began to discuss about the mundane matters of the day-to-day life in our country. The All India Congress Committee meeting was held a few days earlier in Bangalore; I would like to know how many hours they spent in discussing about communism in India. But here is a Catholic organisation which has discussed about it. According to the report of *The Indian Express*, during its fifty-hour deliberation, the conference spent most of the time to discuss reports on communist danger to India. Here is a religious conference which is being held under the spiritual leadership of the vatican Ambassador to India, and what did it do? They devoted most of their time, to discuss about the communist danger which they alone could see probably through their spiritual eyes, and not the Government of India or anybody else. Here is a religious organisation which is actively taking part in politics. That is the most dangerous thing.

**Shri Datar:** Should they not discuss communism, if they find that it is against the tenets of their religion?

**Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** Let them come out as a political party.

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** Exactly, that is my point. If there is the Muslim League, I say that that is wrong; it's the same, I give them the greatness of courage to come out and say that they are here as a political party on a communal or religious line.

**Dr. K. B. Menon (Badagara):** Is not the Communist Party encouraging the Muslim League? Is it not sponsoring the progressive Muslim League? (*Interruptions*).

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** Dr. K. B. Menon and his party are capable of standing only on others' shoulders and never on their legs. They are capable of only that. Therefore, my hon. friend may not please interrupt. (*Interruptions*). They stand on the shoulders of the Congress to get election to the Lok Sabha, they stand on the shoulders of the Congress to get elected and become Ministers in Kerala. I am not sorry for him, he can have all the privileges of that. But let me tell him that the Communist Party always stands on its own legs.

**Dr. K. B. Menon:** The hon. Member need not feel sorry for me; we know the Communist methods. (*Interruptions*.)

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** Here is a report which has appeared as to how the Catholic church functions. Here is a report which appeared in *Deepika* on 2nd June, 1959. It says that the church bells began to toll, and people collected like flood-waters with spades, knives, pick-axes and other implements. I would like to ask whether Government did not read this. If they had read then I would like to know what action Government took for religious interference in politics in this manner. The *Deepika* is not a Communist Party paper, it is not a Congress

paper, but it is a Catholic paper.... (*Interruptions*).

**Mr. Chairman:** If it was the hon. Member's intention to rely upon this report, it should have been placed on the Table of the House earlier, so that other hon. Members might see what it says. So, it is better that he does not refer to it.

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** I have been quoting with responsibility, and this *Deepika* is not a political paper, but it is a Catholic paper....

**Shri Maniyangadan:** No. It is not a Catholic paper.

**Dr. K. B. Menon:** It is not a Catholic paper.

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** It is the incumbent duty of a government which wants to safeguard democracy, to see that religion is not allowed to interfere in politics in the manner in which these people have been doing, particularly organised religion. Hinduism may be organised or may not be organised. But Hinduism is tolerant in this respect that a communist can be a Hindu, a Congressman can be a Hindu, a PSP man can be a Hindu and so on. But here is a Catholic Church which says that he is a communist or a PSP man, he shall not be given the rights of any Catholics simply because he does not belong to the political party in which it believes. If this would be allowed, then some day, the danger which they think is not there may come about. They may be happy today that it is only against the Communist Party. But the Communist Party has withstood this danger all over the world, and it will withstand.

I only appeal to the Minister that he and his party should safeguard themselves from the religious interference, and not we. I shall not withdraw this Bill because the speech which the hon. Minister has made is itself a danger to the country.

Shri Jinachandran (Tellichery): Is not Shri Punnoose a Catholic?

Mr. Chairman: The question is:

"That the Bill to restrict the use of Catholic Church for political purposes and the participation of ecclesiastic personnel of the Catholic Church in political activity, be taken into consideration."

Those in favour may say 'Aye'.

Some Hon. Members: 'Aye'.

Mr. Chairman: Those against may say 'No'.

Several Hon. Members: 'No'.

Mr. Chairman: The 'Noes' have it..

Some Hon. Members: The 'Ayes' have it.

Mr. Chairman: Let the Lobby be cleared.

16-29½ hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

16-30 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That the Bill to restrict the use of Catholic Church for political purposes and the participation of ecclesiastic personnel of the Catholic Church in political activity, be taken into consideration."

Those who are in favour of the motion may kindly rise in their seats—I find that 8 hon. Members are in favour.

Those who are against may kindly rise in their seats—I find that an overwhelming majority are against the motion. The motion is lost.

The motion was negatived.

16-32 hrs.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (AMENDMENT) BILL

(Insertion of new section 7A)  
by Shri T. B. Vittal Rao

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

"That the Bill further to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1951, be taken into consideration."

Through this Bill, I am amending section 7 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, by the introduction of a new clause, 7A, which provides for the recall of an elected member when he loses the confidence of his electorate.

16-33 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

While commending this Motion for the acceptance of the House, I would like briefly to touch upon two reasons why I have brought forward this Bill. In recent times, we hear a good deal about panchayat raj, decentralisation and other things, which it is thought would invoke the latent strength of our people, to enable them to fulfil their tasks in the society. There is no doubt that if we really and truly mobilise the strength that is in our people, we shall succeed in moving mountains and achieving the goal of socialism that the country has set for itself.

My object in bringing forward this Bill is to help the process whereby our people can assert themselves and see that their will prevails. This is an object which we all must share. That is why I feel I can claim the sympathy and support of the House to my Bill. Among the most potent instruments of the people in a truly self-governing State are such devices as the initiative, the referendum and