

13397 Resolution re: Inclusion of English in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution

VAISAKHA 4, 1951 (SAKA) Indianisation of Foreign Firms in India

English cannot be said to contribute anything in any sense whatsoever in the evolution and development of the new national language. You may pass that English should be the national language. That is different question. But to include English in the Eighth Schedule means simply that English should be considered as one of the languages which is expected to play its part in the evolution and development of the new national language in the sense in which any cultural language plays its part in that evolution. In what way English can play that part, I fail to understand.

English has been helpful in many ways. It taught us many things. It might be the one language which might be a great vehicle of many great things that would build the future of this country, and perhaps it may build the future of humanity in the world to come. That is a different question. It is not to detract from the importance and significance of the English language and its usefulness that I oppose this. But to say that within the words of the Constitution, within the concept of the coming evolution of a language which would inspire the Indian mind as their own language and which will play its part as a medium, a vehicle in the national development in every sphere of life, English should find a place is something with which I cannot agree. English cannot find its place because the fundamental concept of English life has not become a part of the Indian life and Indian mind and blood. Their very bone and flesh refuse to accept the fundamental concept of the English language.

Therefore, Sir, with these words, I make my humble submission that the resolution is badly framed, it will have a bad effect and it will serve no useful purpose. I oppose the resolution.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy (Kendrapara): Sir, this resolution has given

us an opportunity to discuss among many other important things our attitude towards English language. Although it has a very limited and narrow scope, I feel that we should give full consideration to this proposal, because in a democracy it should be our endeavour to see that no minority suffers any difficulty whatever in the matter of their education or otherwise on account of its adherence to a particular language. Ours is a multi-lingual nation, and we want to give full scope to all and everybody to do their best in promoting cultural unity which only can promote the growth and solidarity of the national unity of this country.

Sir, the Mover has already admitted that this resolution has nothing to do with the question of national or official language. Hindi has been accepted as our national language, our common language, the sooner we adopt it, the sooner we take all steps to see that it is made practical in this country to use this language in all our activities, the better for us.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Does the hon. Member like to continue next time?

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: Yes

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: This discussion will be continued the next day. Let us proceed to the Half-an-hour discussion.

17 hrs.

*INDIANISATION OF FOREIGN FIRMS IN INDIA

Shri Tangamani (Madurai): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, on the 11th March, 1950, Starred Question 1102 was answered in this House. The question dealt with the covenanted Indian employees in the foreign-owned companies like the plantations particularly those who were drawing more than Rs. 1,000. In reply to the

*Half-an-hour discussion.

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question, the hon. Minister was pleased to state that the Government had framed a policy in 1952 and the gradual Indianisation in these foreign concerns is taking place. He also mentioned that in 1952, there were 2,290 Indians as against 7,104 non-Indians. In 1958 there were 6,704 Indians as against 5,652 non-Indians. This dealt with the group outside the plantations; 54 per cent. are Indians and 45 per cent. are non-Indians.

But in the case of plantations, the story was different. The minister himself told us that the total number of Indians in this group is 370 and that the non-Indians will be 1,111. That will constitute a little less than 25 per cent.

It was also asked as to why there is such a low percentage in the plantations and what steps do the Government propose to take for rectifying this. Certain reasons were given. I shall refer to them briefly. In bringing forward this matter before the House by way of half-hour discussion, I wanted to raise three points. The first is the question of the Government policy. The second is the low percentage in plantations. The third and the last point is, the steps Government propose to take in the immediate future for rectifying the position so that there will be complete Indianisation.

Regarding Government policy, the hon. Minister stated that there has been gradual Indianisation but I would like to refer him only to one industry through which I have received certain representation that the Indianisation process is not taking place as it ought to take place, particularly in the case of foreign pharmaceutical manufacturing companies. I understand that they are circumventing the difficulty of obtaining the visas in respect of administrative officers and technicians from continental countries like Switzerland and Germany by substituting them by

nationals from the Commonwealth countries particularly from the United Kingdom, and that these methods are adopted so that the senior Indian executive and technicians are denied the normal right of taking their place in the vacancy caused by the European officers thus progressively Indianising the various pharmaceutical manufacturing companies.

Another point in this connection is that some of these Indians are forced to resign so as to give place to those foreign officers. In the secretarial and accounting departments these European officers are drawing fantastic salaries and allowances and having other comforts which are now denied to the Indians. This is a matter to which I would request hon. Minister to pay some attention. The principle of equal pay for equal work does not seem to apply in these concerns.

The most important thing is about plantations on which I will have to say a little more. The Plantation Enquiry Commission's report published in 1956 deals with this in detail. There is one chapter devoted to the regulation of working of companies, particularly foreign companies—Chapter XIX, pages 240 to 244. I may be permitted to read the paragraph from page 244:

"Higher salaries paid to the non-Indian staff are sought to be justified by the companies on grounds of monotony of life on a plantation far removed from civilised habitations, on the need for managers to have dual establishments—one in England and one here—the difficulties of schooling their children and so on. Though the employment of Indian managerial staff may not bring about any change in existing managerial efficiency, there may be the natural reluctance on the part of non-Indian companies to entrust Indians with the responsibility of looking after their affairs. Since Indian managerial staff are willing to work and are available at

lower scales of salaries than the non-Indian and in view of the necessity for economising costs, we recommend that an increasing number of Indians be appointed in the managerial cadre of tea companies. In this connection, we quote below the evidence of the West Bengal Government:

"The number of Indian nationals recruited to the industry's cadre of officers is painfully low. Training facilities should also be arranged for imparting to Indian nationals the required technical knowledge as would qualify them for a garden manager's job."

In another place, they say:

"High managerial overheads are by no means essential for efficient productivity. They are only an accident of historical circumstance. We suggest that the Tea Board should be empowered to examine cases of disproportionately high remunerations paid to managerial and other senior staff in tea companies and when necessary advise companies concerned in this connection and exert its influence in reducing the disparities that exist at present."

Many of the recommendations of the Plantation Inquiry Commission were not accepted and implemented. But at least this recommendation may be seriously looked into, because Government have also stated that they are for progressive Indianisation in these foreign companies including plantations. So, some greater attention may be given to this aspect.

When this question was raised by one hon. Member, whether this high administrative expenditure is also leading to the closure of certain tea gardens, no direct reply was given. The hon. Minister stated that the total number of Indian officers in the tea

plantations group is lower than the number of Indian officers in other foreign companies. He said, the reason was, at the time of independence, the tea plantations were more or less completely manned by foreign companies. So, there was an understanding arrived at between the Indian Tea Association and the Government of India and the present target which has been reached is well over the target fixed for 1st January, 1959. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what was the understanding and what was the agreement that has been arrived at.

In another place, he stated that these tea companies, particularly foreign companies, are divided into four groups—A, B, C and D. In A group, where there are over 25 per cent. Indians, they have been asked to recruit 2 Indians for every non-Indian. In B group where Indianisation is from 20 to 25 per cent, they have been asked to recruit 3 Indians for every non-Indian. In C group where Indianisation is between 10 and 20 per cent, they have been asked to recruit 4 Indian officers for every non-Indian. In D group, where Indianisation is below 10 per cent, they have been asked to recruit 5 Indians for every non-Indian. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether this has been strictly followed.

I would mention one instance to show that this does not appear to have been strictly followed. Many instances may be known to the Ministry. I am referring to Peirce, Leslie and Company, which is a sterling private company incorporated in England with business throughout Kerala, Madras and Mysore State. They are coffee curers, managing agents of Indian Estate Companies, etc.

Here, I find that between the years 1957 and 1958 only one European left the Company's service while two Indian officers retired, one Indian officer resigned and another Indian Labour Officer relieved as unfit for

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confirmation. Against these, one Indian clerk was promoted. I can mention the names also Mr. T. Linton replaced Shri Raja at Coimbatore, who has done the same job for the last nine years. Mr. Bryant has taken over from Shri Mahadev transferred to another department. Mr. McIntosh, another European, is newly appointed at Cochin. Mr. P. D. Kaye, Factory Manager at Jeppo Cashew and Coffee Works, replaced Shri Ahmed, who trained him for the job at Mangalore. Mr. G. Robson appointed in Estates Supplies Department, Mangalore. These people do not seem to have any technical qualifications.

There are two or three points which I will like to mention. If we go into the scales of pay, we find there is such a disparity for the same work that is done. I have got the full list of the scales of pay also. Another thing is that they do require certain qualification, if it is to be an Indian, but if it is to be a Britisher or a foreigner no educational qualification is necessary. That sort of thing has got to stop today.

These who have had experience in the plantations will bear with me as to how rude these British or the foreign planters could be. It has evoked so much resentment. It has evoked criticism and several protests also in the past. It has even produced a novel, "Two leaves and a bud" You know the condition of labour in these plantations. There does not appear to be the slightest difference in attitude because the stock from which these planters and managerial staff are recruited is a stock which is not very desirable. They still have the bee in their bonnets, thinking about the old Imperialist concept. So, it is necessary that when we have people for the plantation staff, let us have men who are suited for that, not anybody because he happens to be a European.

Now, special preference is extended to the Armymen. They recruit from

the British tommies and, without any disrespect to the British Armymen, the sort of English that they speak is not the English which a person who speaks English English or Indian English could understand. They are the people who are brought as managers and they are to control the destiny of thousands of these employees. That sort of thing also should stop. So, what I would like to know.....

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: If there are so many varieties of English like English English, American English...

Shri Tangamani: Because that is Tommy English. People who speak Tommy English.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty (Basirhat): They talk tommy rot.

Shri Tangamani: ... are brought here and they are to be the bosses in such big companies controlling the destinies of thousands of workers and treating even the trade unions with scant respect. So, the industrial relations also tend to break because of such elements etc. So, I would like to know what positive and concrete steps are being taken in the case of these plantations.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Any other hon. Member who desires to ask a question? None. Then the hon. Minister.

Shri Tangamani: Then I would have taken some more time.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: There is only one more minute. At least half the time should be left for the hon. Minister's reply.

The Minister of Industry (Shri Manubhai Shah): I am grateful to my hon. friend

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: There were so many names for supporting the motion that I thought that one or two

hon. Members would like to ask a question.

Shri Tangamani: If you would have given me two more minutes, there is some more material which I would have placed before the hon. Minister.

IV.14 hrs.

The Minister of Industry (Shri Manubhai Shah): Sir, last time I had the occasion to place before the House the progressive results of Indianisation of personnel in foreign controlled firms. As the House is aware, it is a common practice since 1952 to issue a Press Note on the 31st December, every year reviewing the entire position of foreign personnel in India in different concerns. As the hon. Member, Shri Tangamani, rightly pointed out, during the answer to that question I had said that in the informal agreement between the Associated Chamber of Commerce and representatives of the Indian Tea Association, which took place in 1955, the broad categories of foreign employees in plantations—I am touching the plantations first because that is what my hon. friend, Shri Tangamani, is more interested in—was drawn up. Four categories were drawn up, (a), (b), (c) and (d). I will not repeat the same here to take the time of the House. I can say that from the figures of progressive Indianisation, it is not the picture which Shri Tangamani placed before the House. Instead of the agreed 25 per cent, the overall percentage in foreign plantations is 33.6, by the end of 1958. Therefore, it is a matter more of satisfaction rather than any legitimate grievance either on the part of the Government or in the execution of the policy.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: Can he give us also the figures for particular categories?

Shri Manubhai Shah: So far as all the details are concerned, details for every category are not with me. I can say, in the firm which I was just going to mention, which my hon. friend mentioned, *Pierce Leslie & Co.*,—the managing agency firm; I am

not taking the different gardens which are managed by them—Indianisation is, 16 Indians and 19 non-Indians. That is, the percentage of Indians in that company is 45.7 and 54.3 per cent. is non-Indian. This does not mean.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The interrupter wanted....

Shri Manubhai Shah: I will bring all those points.

Therefore, the point is, wherever an opportunity arises, we try to see that whenever a foreigner has to leave or his time is over, the post is generally given to an Indian of competence. Neither tommy English, knowledge of Englishmen or foreigners, or his otherwise capability in literature or anything is taken into account, but his managerial capacity, his capacity for the job for which he is being invited, is broadly being scrutinised to the extent that the Government of a country can do. I can say, in most of the cases, wherever personally our attention has been drawn, we have taken objection sometimes to very many foreign youngsters coming up here, aged 25 or 30, claiming competence to run or replace an experienced man of 55. We have taken objection many times and foreign firms have been persuaded to withdraw such nominees and replace them either by Indians or by more competent foreigners, as the case may be. That is as far as plantations are concerned. I will come to other industries, other than plantation, because, there, the figures, as Shri Tangamani himself, admitted are much better. In 1947, when India became free, there were hardly 504 Indians. Today, the figure has been raised to 6704 Indians. There, the percentage of Indians is 54 and non-Indians is 45.7. There, the figures are much more satisfactory than plantations. The reason why in plantations, the figures are not as much as other companies is that the plan-

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tations are a matter of little more detailed technique and those who have been more accustomed to that type of managerial duty which is required in far off corners of the country are not readily available. They are not situated in townships or where other facilities are available or where there is a particular type of agriculture or marketing crop activity in which the man has taken proper training.

During the current year, when the agreement is now again going to be reviewed in 1959, we are going to have further talks with the Associated Chamber of Commerce, and the Indian Tea Association, to frame out a programme of progressive Indianisation in the next 3 to 5 years. I have no doubt that when we discuss this with representatives of foreign firms and the Associated Chamber of Commerce, we will draw their attention to the fact that, just as we have broken up the posts into different categories, Rs. 1000 to 1500, Rs. 1500 to Rs. 3000 and Rs. 3000 and above,—as we have drawn in the past—not only the average is a matter of satisfaction, but in each pay group, we should see that the percentage would proportionately increase.

Shri Prabhat Kar (Hooghly): What is the present percentage?

Shri Manubhai Shah: I have not got the details of that, because, we, generally, just now, take up replacement man by man and the percentage is taken, as a whole, of Indianisation. Because, it is very difficult to work out the pay groups very exactly. Pay of individuals varies. It is not necessary that one pay group is replaced by the same equivalent pay group. Sometimes a man with Rs. 500 less or Rs. 1000 more is employed in his place. Therefore, equivalent posting has not been possible. Nor is it practicable. What I can assure the House is this. We have divided just now the groups between Rs. 1000

and Rs. 1000 and above. In future, we are going to work in this direction for pay groups up to Rs. 2000 and pay groups above Rs. 2000. The result that we have achieved in the last seven years is complete Indianisation in posts in the pay group from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1000. In the bulk of the posts in this pay group, there is practically no foreigner. We shall try to see in future that posts in pay groups below Rs. 2000 are preponderantly manned by Indians. And for the future programme of Indianisation, the pay groups will be raised further.

Shri Prabhat Kar: In this process of Indianisation, what steps are Government taking in regard to equating the service conditions?

Shri Manubhai Shah: I was exactly coming to that. Government are not merely satisfied with percentages in an overall manner; we are also going into each group as far as possible and also company-wise in the big companies, because the average may be very good in one company while it might be not be good in another company, or while it may be progressing well in one company, there might actually be a regression in another company and more foreigners might be there and less Indians. So, the attention of Government is also focused on this point; not only should the average be brought up, but in the different pay groups also, there should be a proportionate rise, and also in important companies, company-wise, Indianisation should be progressing.

I now come to the question of service conditions. So far as we can, we have been trying to find out the position from the tea plantations as well as the foreign companies whether there is any discrimination, and whenever complaints have been brought to our notice, we do look into the matter. In fact, I am happy to say that during the last eighteen months we have not received any complaints in respect of discrimination as between one employee and

another. It was in 1956-57 that a few complaints were received. I can assure the House that if any hon. Member or any person working in these companies, either the plantation companies or other foreign-controlled companies, brings to our notice that there is any discrimination or that there is not equal pay for equal work, or in the respect of house allowances or various other allowances there is any discrimination, then we shall certainly look into the matter and take remedial measures. Here, I would only sound a word of caution. As far as leave allowance for going home is concerned, naturally, the Indians cannot have that facility to go to foreign countries like Britain or Germany or Switzerland or other places.

Shri Tangamani: Even for travel inside this country, the European officers get air passage, air conditioned accommodation and so on, whereas the Indian officers are not getting the same thing.

Shri Manubhai Shah: As far as travel inside the country is concerned, they will naturally be governed by what privileges they get, whether they are entitled to first class or air-conditioned accommodation or any other allowances. These must be the same whether they be Indians or foreigners. But when it comes to leave allowance for going home, then, there is bound to be some difference. In fact, recently when I visited Canada, I found that many of our Indian gentlemen in Canada were being given that type of treatment; whenever they had to come to India on three months' or six months' leave, they get leave with pay and certain passage allowances. That is not discriminatory treatment by any means. Those who are in India and who are serving in India cannot claim that privilege to go to a foreign country which only a foreigner can claim. Barring that allowance, I can assure that if any discriminatory treatment is brought to our notice in respect of any other type of allowance, such as house allowances, or travelling allowances

or various other facilities, as between an Indian and a foreigner, we shall try to take the remedial measures.

Shri D. C. Sharma (Gurdaspur): I hope the man who brings this to the notice of the Minister will not lose his job.

Shri Manubhai Shah: Not at all. He need not bring it to our notice; hon. Members here can bring it to our notice, and in fact, we do not want even the names of the workers; if we merely come to know that if there are any managers or other technical men or other types of personnel who are suffering from any disability in a foreign controlled concern, we shall certainly look into the matter and take the remedial measures.

Here, I would like to take this opportunity of informing the House, lest any other impression be created, that, as far as Government are concerned, in the light of the facts and the details known to them, we are satisfied that the progressive Indianisation in foreign firms is being done by a method almost considered unique in this country, that is, by persuasion and by voluntary agreement between the foreign-controlled firms and the Government of India and the people of this country. Therefore, I must express my sense of gratitude to these various foreign-controlled firms for having borne in mind the national sentiments and risen to the occasion to fulfil our targets which have been reached already. I hope that during the next year, we shall be able to negotiate and achieve a more progressive Indianisation for the higher jobs, category-wise and in the pay groups Rs. 1000—2000 and Rs. 2000 and above.

As regards plantations, even in the concerns which Shri Tangamani has referred to....

Shri Prabhat Kar: May I know whether Government have ascertained from the Associated Chambers of Commerce whether there exist separate pay-scales for Indians and non-Indians in various branches and in

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various offices controlled by non-Indians?

Shri Manubhai Shah: If the jobs are not equivalent, none of us can give an assurance, but, as I have already mentioned, if for the same type of job, or responsibility that is of a similar or allied nature, the foreigner gets a higher pay or allowance and the Indian less, we are certainly ready to take remedial measures. If merely somebody complains that he is not being treated well, that will not be enough ground.

Shri D. C. Sharma: I think the hon. Member has banks in mind

Shri Manubhai Shah: We will seek the co-operation of every hon. Member in this House and others outside the House who can bring to our notice, whether it is in the case of

banks or insurance companies or plantations or chemical plants or other factories, cases of discrimination in pay or allowances for the same type of responsibility, and we will certainly try to remedy the situation.

As I have mentioned earlier, in the current year we are going to have meetings with the representatives of the different foreign controlled companies and the Associated Chamber of Commerce, and we hope to work out a long-term programme for progressive Indianisation and I have no doubt that, looking to the past performance, the future programme also will be satisfactory

17-27 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, the 27th April, 1956/Vaisakha 7, 1881 (Saka).