

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(Part II—Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

OFFICIAL REPORT

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HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Friday, 11th July, 1952.

The House met at a Quarter Past Eight of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(See Part I)

9-15 A.M.

STATEMENT BY SHRI A. K. GOPALAN

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Gopalan will now make a Statement.

Shri A. K. Gopalan (Cannanore): The hon. the Prime Minister on 4th July, 1952 made a speech on the floor of the House. In the course of the speech, he remarked:

"I do expect, if I may say so, a modicum of intelligence in the Opposition."

I submit that these remarks contained in the speech were derogatory to the dignity of the House, the Prime Minister himself, the whole Opposition and the electorate. Such remarks constitute a bad precedent.

STATEMENT BY SHRI MEGHNAD SAHA

Shri Meghnad Saha (Calcutta North-West): I am thankful to you for giving me this opportunity of making a Statement. In the course of a debate on July 4th, the Prime Minister made some personal references to me, saying that I did not understand the meaning of the word Fascism, and had degraded 'Science' by using this term in the course of the debate. He said that I have lost all touch with Science.

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I had been to Italy in the year 1927 (again in 1936), being a delegate to an International Scientific Conference in honour of the centenary of the death of Volta, the discoverer of electricity and had first hand opportunities of studying Fascism at close range. I was also invited along with other delegates to an evening party at his residence given by the Duce Mussolini, and had opportunities to observe at close range the attitude of very famous Italians, Scientists and public men, towards the Duce. There is no greater intoxicant than power, as our old Kautilya says, and this intoxication of power which does not allow one to see the other man's point of view, gathering round one, large bonds of 'yes-men' is Fascism. I have not said that our Government has become fascist, but I simply said that it is drifting towards Fascism. (Interruption).

Mr. Speaker: Let him finish.

Shri Meghnad Saha: I may add that I am in close touch with my Science as anybody in India, (Some Hon. Members: Not at all) and the International World of Science does not yet consider me as a back number. The Government of India cannot be ignorant of this, because just a month ago an application for giving air passage to myself and one of my colleagues and co-workers, Prof. B. N. Srivastava of Lucknow to attend an International Conference on low temperature to which we had been invited at the instance of the sponsors of the International Conference itself was recommended by the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research, but passage was refused to us by the Ministry of Finance presumably because they wanted to conserve foreign currency.

STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER

The Prime Minister and Leader of the House (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): Sir, I seek your indulgence to say a few words, because the two statements that have been read out relate to what I said on a previous occasion. May I first deal with the somewhat longer

[Shri Jawaharlal Nehru]

statement of my hon. friend Prof. Saha? Prof. Saha, as everyone knows in this House and outside, is a very eminent scientist and a very eminent physicist, whose work has brought credit to this country. There is no question of challenging Prof. Saha's eminence in science, but it is because of that very eminence in science that one expects the scientific temper to be brought into the domain of politics also. We cannot keep science separately and leave science far behind, or rather the temper of science and the approach of science and the mental climate of science far behind, when we come into a political chamber.

What I had said on that occasion was that I wished to protest against the use of the word "Fascism" in relation to our Government by the hon. Member. Perhaps, if you, Sir, and the House agree, I will read out two or three sentences from what I said on that occasion. I said:—

"Now the other point is and I must point out—I won't say I protest—but I must express my surprise at the loose way hon. Members who ought to know better, use words. Dr. Saha, an eminent scientist, threw about the word "Fascist" in a way which only leads me to think that the hon. Member does not know the meaning of the word "Fascist". I may call him as a "Fascist" too as a term of abuse. But surely these are words of meaning and cannot be used by scientists unless they have forgotten science and lost touch with their science. They cannot use loose words and vague words. It is a degradation of science, if I may say so. He talked about "Fascism" in this House. Why? What is "Fascism" here? Because we have not got Standing Committees of the Legislature?"

The subject before the House was whether we should have Standing Committees of the Parliament or not. Now, it is open to the House to have them or not. It is open to us even now to evolve some method of having those committees, but it did seem to me that the use of the word "Fascism" in that connection had absolutely no logic or relevance. If I may say so with respect to the other Members of the House, if any other hon. Member had used the word "Fascism" rather loosely, I would not have perhaps thought about it very much, but expecting as I did a degree of precision from an eminent scientist I was a little surprised at the loose way he used that word.

Dr. Saha told us how he gathered his knowledge of Fascism by attending a party given by Signor Mussolini. My own knowledge of Fascism was derived by keeping away from Signor Mussolini. Indeed, on one occasion when I was in Rome, in spite of Signor Mussolini's repeated invitations I found myself unable to accept them. But that is a minor matter. Dr. Saha, no doubt, reacts strongly against what is considered Fascism and I hope that most, if not all, Members of this House react just as strongly as he does against what is considered Fascism. What I submit is that these words are used more in a denunciatory sense than as if they had any particular meaning. I find that happening very often in the newspapers. But for our part, we should be precise.

Then, Dr. Saha referred to a certain Conference to which he had been invited and to which he could not go. May I explain the position? Of course, I do not know anything about that Conference. But as Dr. Saha knows, a number of people are sent to such Conferences and it is natural for the Finance Ministry to screen the requests. This particular request came at the last moment, when there were only two or three days more, and as far as I can gather, the Finance Ministry thought that they could not sanction this particular visit. They sanction many; they do not sanction some; but this has nothing to do with any particular Conference. They do it with reference to the context of things. As the House perhaps knows, we send large numbers of scientists abroad, and Prof. Saha has often gone to these International Conferences and the Government has gladly welcomed his going.

May I now refer to the first statement, which I confess has somewhat surprised me? I am glad, of course, that the hon. Member is so anxious to maintain the dignity of this House. That should be the first duty of all hon. Members. I did not notice that particular desire previously expressed in words or action. So, I am glad of that assurance. I am supposed to have offended against the dignity of the House by saying: "I do expect, if I may say so, a modicum of intelligence in the Opposition." Now, first of all, the Opposition, as it is constituted here, consists of a very large number of groups of different ways of thinking and a larger number of independent Members also of different ways of thinking. It is not one single group, or one single way of thinking. And anything that may be said about the Opposition cannot possibly apply to everybody, because they are so differ-

ent from each other, except possibly for a negative quality which applies to oppositions, whatever group they may belong to.]

In this particular instance, I do submit that what I said was completely not only parliamentary but also justified in the sense of language. I mean. I am rather careful in the use of language. Occasionally it is possible, of course, that I may make a mistake. If that happens, you will no doubt pull any one up who makes such a mistake. But I do submit that if it is a question of language it would be worth while to make a list of the epithets that have been hurled at this Government and at this side of the House by the Opposition in the course of the last few weeks. It would be a large vocabulary and not pleasant reading. We have not come here to make statements protesting against all these epithets, although they were not pleasant to hear. In fact, most opposition has become a string of epithets. And when I venture to say at a particular moment, in a particular context, in regard to a particular interruption that it shows little intelligence, then a statement has to be made by the hon. Member.

As a matter of fact, if the hon. Member will refer back to the reports of that day, that particular remark was made by me not in regard to him, or his group, but in regard to another gentleman and another hon. Member, whose looks belie his words very greatly and who has got a habit of interrupting in season and out of season, relevantly or irrelevantly. In the course of about a minute and a half he interrupted me three times and (I confess that my mind could not quite grasp the logic or reason of his interruption. Therefore, I ventured to say this in that context. Now, if any Member of the Opposition, belonging as far as I know to about twenty-five groups or thirty groups, including independents—each independent is a single group in himself—if all of them want to take this remark to heart, as I said on a particular occasion, I do not wish to deny them the satisfaction of doing so. But surely I would like,—and I am perfectly serious in this matter—this House to consider this. Much has been said in this House about lack of decorum but the way some hon. Members have encouraged and even participated in demonstrations at the door of this House to influence Members does not add to the dignity of the House or of the Members of this House.)

Dr. S. P. Mookerjee (Calcutta South-East): It is allowed, and recognised everywhere.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I have not protested against it. I am merely pointing out that it does not add to the dignity of this House or of the Members of this House. [And when I comment on a behaviour which I think was not very decorous, then I am told that it affects the dignity of this House and the country. I regret to say that my understanding both of the English language and of decorous behaviour is different from that of some Members of the Opposition.]

ELECTION TO COMMITTEES

COURTS OF ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY AND BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY

Mr. Speaker: I have to inform the House that upto the time fixed for receiving nominations for the Courts of the Aligarh Muslim University and the Banaras Hindu University, 3 nominations in the case of the first and 5 nominations in the case of the second were received. Subsequently one member in the case of the first and three members in the case of the second withdrew their candidature. As the number of the remaining candidates was thus equal to the number of vacancies in each of these Committees, I declare the following members to be duly elected:—

I. Court of the Aligarh Muslim University—

1. Shri Shahnawaz Khan.
2. Maulana Mohammad Saeed Masuodi.

II. Court of the Banaras Hindu University—

1. Shri Rohanlal Chaturvedi.
2. Prof. Diwan Chand Sharma.

CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr. Speaker: The House will now proceed with the further consideration of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Second Amendment) Bill. The consideration motion was adopted yesterday and we have to proceed with the clauses.

But before I take up the clauses, I wish to invite the attention of hon. Members, who have tabled amendments that there seems to be some misconception about the scope of amendments to this Bill. It has resulted in many of the amendments being obviously out of order. I shall