

I am saying this because the new Government thinks that gherao is a red rag and the moment it is there, there should be shooting. But gherao has been a normal practice since 1974 in these mills and the workers never got their wages without repeated gheraos. Also, Sir, the Government used to lend money for that. Now what happened was that there was a gherao even on October 26. The feature of the gherao was that the workers themselves would start a telephone with the officers. The workers continued production and the arrangement was that the shift that was on production would not join the gherao and only the other shift would point it. Sir, they never got their wages after 1974 without a gherao. In this condition, Sir, a Receiver was appointed. The real fact is that the past U.P. Government of Mr. Narain Dutt Tiwari was in league—and the present Government also—with Sitaram Jaipuria and they appointed a Receiver—not for the other five mills, because they are prosperous—but only for Kanpur because they did not want the workers to receive their wages. This is the biggest mill among the northern Indian textile mills through whose profits the other mills had come up. Now, Sir, I have no time to go into greater details. The gherao took place at 2 P.M. There were two police men sitting there when the gherao took place. It was the same spot as in the case of the 26th September gherao. Telephone lines were being brought for the service of the guard officers when the police attacked from outside and it was a horrible massacre in which 227 workers remain untraced. I have to bring to your notice some very urgent suggestions at this stage because of the situation. First, there should be a judicial inquiry because the inquiry by three eminent persons, a leading journalist, Mr. Nikhil Chakravarty, a leading Member of the ruling party in Lok Sabha, Mr. A.K. Roy, and a leading academician, has held that horrible conditions are there. Then, Sir, immediate steps should be taken to ensure that the lock-out is

lifted and the management is not allowed during the lock-out to remove the property of the mill. (Time bell rings): I will finish in a minute. Then, Sir, as a result of the dirty squabble, the quarrel between the two persons, they are being allowed to sell this polyester fibre mill to the Thapars and other big houses. My suggestion is that it should be taken over by the Industrial Development Bank of India. The mills should be taken over by the Industry Ministry under the scheme of take-over of sick mills so that the workers who were serving so long and who are untraced, by a large number—more than 200—get their due share.

Thank you.

REFERENCE TO APARTHEID, AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN SOUTH AFRICA AND RHODESIA

श्री श्रीकान्त वर्मा (मध्य प्रदेश) :

सभापति महोदय, पिछली एक शताब्दी से दक्षिण अफ्रीका में काले लोगों का नर-संहार चल रहा है और उन्हें हर तरह से अपमानित करने की कोशिश की जा रही है।

14 साल पहले दो भारतीयों जार्ज नाइकर और मनुस्वामी को रंग भेद की नीति का विरोध करने के अपराध में जेल में डाल दिया गया। 14 साल पूरे हुए और पिछले सप्ताह वे जेल से छूटकर आये और उसके बाद फिर दक्षिण अफ्रीका की सरकार ने उनको जेल में डाल दिया और उन पर प्रतिबन्ध लगा दिया और इस तरह से उनका जीवन असम्भव बना दिया। महोदय, यह कोई छिट-पुट घटना नहीं है। 6 महीने पहले जाहान्सबां में 97 भारतीयों को गिरफ्तार किया गया था। वस्तुस्थिति तो यह है कि दक्षिणी अफ्रीका में सबसे ज्यादा अत्याचार भारतीयों के साथ ही हो रहा है। यह बड़े आश्चर्य की बात है कि जो लड़ाई रंग-भेद की नीति के विरुद्ध महात्मा गांधी ने आरम्भ की थी, वह कहीं जाकर रुकी हुई लग रही है। यह लड़ाई हम नहीं लड़ रहे हैं, हम भारतीय

[श्री श्रीकान्त वर्मा]

नहीं लड़ रहे हैं, बल्कि यूरोप के निवासी लड़ रहे हैं। मैं जितना साहित्य और जितने समाचार-पत्र पढ़ता हूँ, उससे तो यही लगता है कि यूरोप के लोग रंग-भेद की नीति के ज्यादा विरोधी हैं, बजाय हमारे, क्योंकि हम लड़ नहीं रहे हैं, हम विरोध नहीं कर रहे हैं। आज यूरोप के बहुत से दार्शनिक, लेखक, बुद्धिजीवी और कुछ हद तक राजनेता भी दक्षिण अफ्रीका की रंग-भेद नीति के विरुद्ध एक अभियान चला रहे हैं। लेकिन हमारी सरकार ने इस विषय में उदासीनता बरती है। यह बड़ा दुःखद विषय है कि रोडेिशिया में भी यही हो रहा है और दक्षिण अफ्रीका में तो यह पहले से ही हो रहा था। सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से सरकार का ध्यान इस ओर आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ और यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि वह दक्षिण अफ्रीका में जिन भी भारतीयों को गिरफ्तार किया गया है, उनको छोड़वाने के लिये मध्यस्थ सरकारों के जरिये प्रयत्न करे। वहाँ भारतीयों के साथ जो भी जुल्म हो रहा है, उसे बिल्कुल बन्द कराने का प्रयत्न करे। मैं भारत सरकार की विदेश नीति का प्रशंसक हूँ, लेकिन उसमें चार चाँद और लग जायेंगे अगर वह रंग-भेद विरोध की नीति को अपनी बुनियादी नीति के रूप में स्वीकार कर लेगी। धन्यवाद।

THE CHILD MARRIAGE RESTRAINT (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1978

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI SHANTI BHUSHAN): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, and to make certain consequential amendments in the Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1872, and the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

Sir, this Bill seeks to amend the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 for the purpose of increasing the minimum age for the purpose of marriage. It provides also that offences under the Child Marriage Restraint Act may be investigated by the police under the Code of Criminal Procedure as if they were cognizable offences, but the police is not sought to be conferred the power for effecting arrests without a warrant or an order of a Magistrate.

Sir, as the House is aware, the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 was enacted with a view to prevent child marriages, namely, a marriage of a male person if he was under 18 years of age and a female person if she was under 14 years of age. Subsequently, this age limit for a female was raised to 15 years as a result of an amendment Bill, 1948 which was brought forward by Pandit Thakurdas Bhargava in the Constituent Assembly, Legislative Wing. A provision was made in that Bill for increasing the age of a male also from 18 years to 20 years and that of a female from 14 years to 15 years. The Bill was, however, referred to a Select Committee which agreed with the proposal, but finally the Bill was ultimately passed providing only for the raising of the minimum age for the females from 14 to 15 years and the position in regard to the males continued to remain the same, namely, 18 years. The proposal to increase that age from 18 to 20 years was dropped when the Bill was enacted as an Act.

Now, Sir, apart from the fact that marriage is such a solemn institution, being the foundation of a family it is such an important social institution also having very important impact on the happiness of individuals and on the growth of the society, that it is necessary that people who enter into a marriage should be in a position to clearly understand for themselves the implications of it, they should have