

ने जो कुछ अखबारों में छपा उसको देखो ? आज आप प्रोसीडेन्स की बात करते हैं ? जब ये चीजें सब अखबारों में छपा चुकी हैं और उनमें सीक्रेसी या गुप्त जैसी कोई बात नहीं रह गई है तो क्या हमारी पार्लियामेन्ट के मेम्बरों को इस बात को जानने का अधिकार नहीं है कि जो बातें अखबारों में आ चुकी हैं उन में कितना तथ्य है और उनके अन्दर क्या बताया गया है ? सदन में प्रोसीडेन्स और डेमोक्रेसी की बात कही जाती है । यहां पर इतना बड़ा हाउस बैठा हुआ है और इसमें अगर आप मेजोरिटी और माइनोरिटी की बात को जाने भी दीजिये तो भी अगर वे यह चाहते हैं कि ज. चीजें अखबारों में निकल चुकी हैं, विदेशी अखबारों में भी जिनकी चर्चा हो चुकी है, उन तमाम बातों को क्या उन्हें जानने का अधिकार नहीं है ? हम लोग पार्लियामेंट के मेम्बर यह जानना चाहते हैं कि इन पत्रों में क्या रहस्य उसकी जानकारी हम को भी हो । इन पत्रों में कौतसी चीज लिखी गई है और क्या यह कोई सांप है या बिच्छू है, इसको सामने रखा जाय । मैं समझता हूं कि इसमें किसी तरह का कोई प्रोसीडेन्स तोड़ने की बात नहीं आती है ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have heard very patiently the discussion which has taken place so far and I am very keen that the proceedings of the House should continue very smoothly. This is agreed by one and all on this side as well as on that side. The only thing that is troubling Members of the Opposition is what they should do for getting the information which they have been asking for for some days. If you give me one day more, I will, in my capacity as the Chairman, try to contact the Leader of the House and see whether I can find out some solution which may satisfy all of us. If it is acceptable to the entire House, then I will try to get hold of him, talk to him, discuss with him and see whether some solution can be found out which may satisfy all of you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then, No. 2, as you have already promised just now. I hope you will keep it up and allow the business of the House to be carried on. I will also keep it up. Give me time for today and tomorrow. Let the proceedings be smoothly carried on. By tomorrow evening I will see what I can do. Day after tomorrow I will come and let you know.

The Visva-Bharati (Amendment) Bill, 1978—*contd.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bishambhar Nath Pande, you are to speak on the Visva-Bharati Bill.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, may I request the hon. Members to be here. Visva-Bharati is our great institution. I should like the hon. Members to be present because a bad Bill has been brought forward and we want to improve upon it.

[Mr. Deputy Chairman in the chair]

SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDE (Nominated): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to express my views on the Visva-Bharati (Amendment) Bill, as introduced in the Rajya Sabha, by the hon. Union Education Minister. In the Statement of Objects and Reasons the Minister has claimed that "Every effort will be made to preserve and promote the unique character and ideals for which the great institution was established." In paragraph 3 of his Statement, the Minister has expressed his anxiety that: "Complaints were received that the Visva-Bharati was drifting away from the ideals Gurudev had in mind in establishing it and the academic standards were going down. The Government were disturbed at the developments and were anxious to ensure that the original character of the University be restored."

[Shri Bishambhar Nath Pande]

Sir, I appreciate the noble sentiments of the Education Minister and his keen desire to restore the original character of Visva-Bharati University.

Sir, personally I am vitally interested in this great institution. It gave me shelter when nearly sixty years back I was rusticated from a college in Nagpur for my audacity to invite Lokmanya Balgangadhar Tilak to address the College Debating Society, of which I was the Secretary. The institution, where I had received the rational and liberal education is very dear to me. That is why I felt grateful to Dr. Chunder for his determination to re-establish the ideals that Gurudev had in mind and to restore the past glory to that great Institution of international fame.

And, what were those ideals that Gurudev had in his mind for establishing the Visva-Bharati? Let me quote his own words: "The one abiding ideal in the spiritual life of India has been deliverance of man's soul from the grip of self, its communion with the Infinite Soul through its union with the universe. This spiritual harmony is not a theological doctrine to be taught, as a subject in the class, for half-an-hour each day. It is a spiritual truth and beauty of our attitude towards our surroundings. It is our conscious relationship with the Infinite and the lasting power of the Eternal in the passing moments of our life. Such a spiritual ideal can only be made possible by making provision for students to live in intimate touch with Nature, daily to grow in an atmosphere of service offered to all creatures, tending trees feeding birds and animals, learning to feel the immense mystery of the soil, water and the air."

"Along with this there should be some common way of life with the tillers of the soil and the humble workers in the neighbouring villages; inviting them to feasts, joining them in works of co-operation for community

welfare; and in our intercourse we should be guided, not by moral maxims or the condescension of social superiority but by natural sympathy of life for life and by the sheer necessity of love, sacrifice for its own sake. In such an atmosphere students would learn to understand that humanity is a divine harp of many strings waiting for its one grand music. Those who realise this unity are made ready for the pilgrimage through the night of suffering, and along the path of sacrifice, for which the call comes to us across the darkness.

The Visva-Bharati is an outcome of this call."

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In modern terminology education is sometimes called a tool and is thought of as a workshop process. The raw material of this workshop is the child. The child is moulded into the desired product as with a machine. The founding teachers of the Visva-Bharati were conscious of their responsibility. They would stimulate, they would encourage, they would sympathise, they would provide the means and the opportunity but they were very careful not to superimpose their will on the child. They helped the child to intensify the quest of knowledge from within. They did not impose knowledge from without. The child had complete freedom to adventure in the realm of song, of music, of poetry, of drama and dance, to reveal in the expression of ideas through colour, line or form, to wander on the limitless horizon of thought and meditation, but always in touch with the voice within. There was no room for repression, suppression, rod, and iron-bound rules. Such was the education which the student received at the Patha-Bhavana.

Gurudev made intensive and extensive efforts to lay the foundation of Visva-Bharati in the Patha-Bhavana. The Patha-Bhavana prepares students upto preuniversity stage. On the foundation of Patha-Bhavana was laid the edifice of the University of Visva-Bharati. Take out the foundation and the conception of University education of Gurudev would crumble down.

Perhaps, keeping that in view, the Masood Committee appointed by the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare attached great importance to Patha-Bhavana. The report says:

"The adoption of the pattern of twelve years of schools (10 plus 2) preceding the first degree courses would call for a re-organisation of the two schools in Visva-Bharati known as Patha-Bhavana and Sikhsha-Satra. They should be developed as two ten-year units—one functioning in Santiniketan and the other at Sriniketan, leading to the two-year course for which a single unit should be enough to meet the students attending classes in both ten-year units. These three units should together constitute Patha-Bhavana, under one Adhyaksha, with two headmasters or (Upadhyakshas) for the two ten-year units. Owing to the importance that will be attached to work-experience and vocational courses at the ten-year and two-year levels, Patha-Bhavana would be expected to develop the closest liaison with training and production facilities available at Sriniketan."

The Masood Committee rightly placed the Patha-Bhavana at the top in the list of Bhavanas. One who knows Vishva-Bharati knows that Patha-Bhavana has enjoyed and must be permitted to enjoy a status and structural significance which is absolutely equal to that of any other Bhavana. I am afraid, "hon. Education Minister, while swearing by the Masood Committee report, has inadvertently omitted this point. Hence, the necessity of amendment No. 30. Once this is accepted, six amendments 1,3,5,6, 9 and 34 will follow. Amendment No. 39 assuring teachers of Patha-Bhavans place in Board of Studies organised subject wise is the necessary extension of the logic of amendment No. 36.

Gurudev regarded Santiniketan and Sriniketan as the fulfilment of his life's aim. Describing it, he said:

"In the midst of world-wide anguish, and with the problems of over three hundred millions staring us in the face, I stick to my work in Santiniketan and Sriniketan, hoping that our efforts will touch the hearts of our rural neighbours, and help them in reasserting themselves in a new social order. If we can give a start to a few villages, they would perhaps be an inspiration in some others—and my life's work will have been done."

Sir, I would plead with the hon. Education Minister that "Patha-Bhavana is an integral part of the Vishva Bharati and not a separate entity within the University. Sir, to quote the Masood Committee on the definition of a Bhavana;

"A Bhavana should be visualised as a community of scholars belonging to disciplines which are linked with one another organically in terms of subject-matter and methodology and in terms of problem areas."

The majority of the amendments relates to re-establishing the structural position of Patha-Bhavana in the integral totality that Vishva Bharati was originally conceived and accepted to be by the original 1951 Act. The 1971 Ordinance has appeared to the present Government as unexceptionable.

Now, Sir, I would like to plead for the addition of Palli Siksha-Bhavana amongst the list of Bhavanas. The inclusion of Palli Siksha Bhavana would give a worthy status to the Sriniketan complex. This necessary step would help in restoring the original vision of Gurudev.

The Masood Committee rightly points out:

"In the effort to prevent Visva-Bharati from turning out to be a

[Shri Bishambhar Nath Pande] inferior replica of the traditional Indian university and to restore to it some of the original vision of Rabindranath Tagore, a key role will have to be assigned to Sriniketan. At present, a visit to the Sriniketan complex gives one the impression that compared to Santiniketan, it has to be content with the status of a poor relation."

It also says:

"Everyone is agreed that it would be a betrayal of the original vision of Visva-Bharati if it now settled down to producing the same academic stereo-type as is being produced by a hundred other universities in the country . . . There must be something distinctive, and, if possible, pace-setting about the Visva-Bharati programmes. This can be achieved without undue subtractions from existing establishments by adding a new dimension to the learning process."

The Report further says;

"The truth is that the current programmes for the B.A. and B.Sc. in our universities do not keep the students busy for even half the time available to them and even so, the courses could do with some pruning. Besides, involvement in productive work and in service to the rural community would be a welcome departure from the routine of academic studies."

So compact a university as Visva-Bharati should be immune from the perils of academic fragmentation. It is also to be expected that experience with richer undergraduate programmes would help the faculty to improve the quality of post-graduate courses.

Imaginative and dedicated involvement in the welfare of the rural community around Visva-

Bharati would, paradoxically, be a way of rescuing it from sinking to the level of a regional or purely local university. What is suggested above will turn the Bolpur-Surul region into a laboratory for a national university—instead of Bolpur-Surul turning the university into a local facility for itself."

Expressing his views on Sriniketan, Gurudev once said:

"You know how for a long time I have been cherishing my hope of establishing an ideal centre of education at Sriniketan—an ideal which is not curtailed to the strictest measure of a narrow-village environment, which is not specially set apart to be doled out as a famine ration, carefully calculated to be just good enough for an emaciated life and dwarfed mentality. It is well known that the education which is prevalent in our country is extremely meagre in the spreading of its area and barren in its quality."

Unfortunately, this is all that is available for us and, the artificial standard set up is proudly considered as respectable. Outside the bhadralogue class, pathetic in their struggle for fixing a university label on their name, there is a vast, obscure multitude who cannot even dream of such a costly ambition. With them we have our best opportunity if we know how to use it. There and there only, can we be free to offer to our country the best kind of all-round culture not mutilated by official dictators. I have generally noticed that when the charitably-minded, city-bred politicians talk of education for the village folk, they mean a little left-over in the bottom of their cup, after diluting it copiously. They are callously unmindful of the fact, that the kind and the amount of the food, that is needful for mental nourishment, must not be apportioned differently according to the social status of those that receive it."

Palli Siksha Bhavan would incorporate Palli Shiksha Sadan within its complex. The Sadan has been functioning as full-fledged college of agriculture carrying on programmes of education upto the Ph.D level. The Masoor Committee has recommended that Sriniketan should fill in the total programmes of Vishva Bharati of which Palli Siksha Bhavan would be a prominent adjunct. The report says, I quote:

"Through its auspicious rural development service should an integral Part of education of Visva-Bharati. Shilpa Sadan for instance would not only continue to give advance course to craftsmen in the neighbouring villages, arrange follow-up both schemes at extension workshops and carry on research in design, production methods and techniques, but also involve students at the secondary and under-graduate stages in such work. The Palli Siksha Bhavan would not train only rural folk but should also serve as agency for bringing the academic community both the teachers and the students in contact with the rural community around."

The insistence of Gurudev was that Visva Bharati should be a perpetual creation by the co-operative enthusiasm of teachers and students, growing with the growth of their soul; a world in itself; self-sustaining, independent, rich with ever-renewing life, radiating life across the space and time. The aim of Gurudev was that Visva-Bharati should impart life-breath to the complete man who is intellectual as well as economic—bound by social bounds but aspiring towards spiritual freedom and final perfection.

In the modern educational institutions there is no adjustment of individual life to social life and of these two with the vast life of man. In the words of Gurudev, I quote;

"This creates a basic deficiency in our educational pattern. Ordinarily our process of education do nothing to train our minds for the realisation of our deeper spiritual relationship with the Supreme Truth. For want of this training, we fail to develop that spirit of detachment that gives us the broader atmosphere in which our inner being finds a natural dwelling for fulfilment in imaginative creation. Our creations in the worlds of science, of philosophy, of art, and of literature can reach their fullness to growth only under the sky of this kind of detachment. On account of this absence of deeper harmony we lose faith in ourselves and proceed to sink our recourses in the pursuit of immediate self interest."

Gurudev tried to build the Visva-Bharati on the basis of these lofty ideals. It attracted pupils not only from all parts of India but also from beyond its frontiers. He collected around him the teachers of high repute, lofty ideals but of simple habits; teachers like CF. Andrews, Pearson, Vidu Shekhar Bhattacharya, Kshiti Mohan Sen., Nandal Bose, Gurudayai Mullick, Anil Chanda, Leonard Elmhirst, Tan Yun Shan, Hajari Prasad Dwivedi, Krishna Kripalani and others. I remember how we sat under the banyan tree with our *asans* facing the teacher. The whole ideal was to let the education grow from within and not imposed from without. Sir, let me express my thankfulness to the hon'ble Education Minister for meeting our point of view to a great extent by introducing amendments Nos. 56 and 58 to clause 26. I would request the Education Minister that he should see to it that representations to the University bodies should be according to proportion. The present composition of the teachers in Visva-Bharati is: Professors-25, Readers-58, other teachers-355. The composition of representative bodies should not be top heavy; otherwise it will create a lot of bickerings.

[Shri Bishambhar Nath Pande]

Visva-Bharati is fortunate that the amending Bill of the University is being presented by a son of West Bengal who is determined to restore the pristine glory of this great institution of Tagore. I earnestly request him to have a second thought over the amendments so that nobody should point out a finger at him that having got an opportunity to amend the working of Visva-Bharati, he could not avail it fully as he was inadequately advised by the Educational Advisers of his Ministry. Let him do every thing possible to give solace to the soul of Gurudev, the founder of the University, who had the power and vision which sought its realisation in some concrete formation. In the words of Gurudev—I quote—"Unless our different works in Visva-Bharati are luminous with the fire of vision, I myself can have no place in them. This is why all the time when Sriniketan has been struggling to grow into a form, I was intently wishing that it should not only have a shape, but also light; so that it might transcend into immediate limits of time, space and some special purpose... A lighted lamp is, for us, the end, and not a lump of gold." I earnestly request the Education Minister to accept the very useful amendments tabled by the hon. Members. Sir, I have much to plead but I must conclude with a line of Gurudev:

“मनेर कथा मनई थाके, भाषा धेक  
जाय बाहिरे”

धन्यवाद ।

DR. V. P. DUTT (Nominated):  
Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I should like to say that it gives me great pleasure to be able to participate in this discussion on the Visva-Bharati Bill. Of course, like Shri Pande Ji, I have not had the opportunity of studying in this University. I missed that opportunity. But I have had the

pleasure to be associated with this University on the *Karma Samiti*—Executive Council—for a number of years and, therefore, this University occupies a special place in my heart too and I do wish that this University will grow, prosper and flower because it is a university with a difference. It is a university with certain distinct features. Certainly it is a university inspired by a very different vision than the other universities.

Sir, we all know about Gurudev Tagore's vision which led to the founding of this University. Shri Pande, my esteemed senior colleague, has eloquently described for us the vision of Tagore—the acquisition of knowledge without being 'burdened by that knowledge, without being burdened by the weight of that knowledge, the enjoyment of becoming aware of the beauty of life without being crushed by the modern processes of education, of cramming or learning by heart, of feeling oppressed by what is being taught. Unfortunately, there is this modern process of education which continues to press upon children, which continues to make feel oppressed by the kind of education that we are giving them...

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION,  
SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE  
(DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER): And examinations also.

DR. V. P. DUTT: Tagore thought of our growing into the awareness of knowledge, of coming to be in harmony with our surroundings, with our environment and acquiring not only knowledge but also appreciation,—if I might quote Keats, "A thing Of beauty is a joy for ever"—how to acquire that appreciation without necessarily being oppressed by the burden of that knowledge. Now this was what has been very aptly described as the vision of Tagore. Unfortunately, I might also add that this vision has to contend new with the pressures of modern education—no! only the pressures of modern educa-

tion but also the problem of the students because the students want modern education. They want the opportunity to be able to meet the challenges of modern education and the challenges of modern times they want to be able to be gainfully employed, they want to be able to be accepted in society on equal terms with students elsewhere and, therefore, there is a certain measure of contradiction—the problem that we face. On the one hand we do want that some of the characteristics of this distinct University should be retained but on the other hand we also want that the products of this University should not be at a disadvantage, should not be handicapped in comparison with students coming from other universities with their very modern, competitive outlook, producing for the market. And those who work the hardest got most of the cake.

Now, how to resolve this contradiction? I am not saying that I have readymade solutions. In fact, nobody can claim that he has readymade solutions. But I would be distressed, I would be disappointed, if the original vision of Tagore is totally lost in the process of, what we call, modernisation, or, in the process of enabling those students, withstand the challenges of life. I would like some kind of a harmony or, at least, I would like some of the basic features of this University to continue to be maintained, that this legacy should not be totally destroyed. On the distinctness of the University, hon. Pande Saheb has already spoken and, I hope, my esteemed elder colleague, Mr. Krishna Kripalani, will also speak on the subject. I think the hon. Education Minister himself knows very well about the legacy of this University.

It was pointed out earlier also that one of the important features of this legacy is an integrated school and college education. This is the dis-

tinctive feature because nowhere else in this country do we find a university experimenting with a single system of education from school to college and university education. I do not know, there may be some places in the world, may be one or two. There may be some where a child is given education from the cradle to almost about the time that you enter adult life. Now this aspect, I would like to say, is not a traditional aspect. I would like to say it is not an anachronistic concept. And I would like to say that it is not an ante-diluvian concept. On the other hand, I would think that modern education in fact is gradually inching its way towards this kind of a concept of education. Already we find all over the world people now coming round to the view that undergraduate education and post-graduate education should not be compartmentalised, should not be divided very sharply, and the modern concept is beginning to be that of integrated undergraduate and post-graduate education. In fact, one of the distinctive features that were supposed to distinguish the Jawaharlal Nehru University from other universities was that it would introduce an integrated undergraduate and post-graduate education; and I hope that that concept will be implemented there. If that is so, then I would say that this distinctive feature of Visva-Bharati, of combining school education with college and university education, or of leading from school education into college and university education, should not be done away with either surreptitiously or at a later stage. We must try to preserve this concept because it is a good concept, because it is a concept towards which the modern world is working and moving and it is an experiment which deserves to be cherished. But there arises one problem. This University has 3,234 students, if I am not wrong, and half of them are in pre-university education. In other words, half of the student population of this University is in school education—certainly, what is pre-university educa-

[Dr. V. P. Dutt]—and they have what they call the Patha-Bhavana; but in this Bill Patha-Bhavana hardly find's a place. I am not blaming the hon. Minister for Education because it is a serious problem. When you are establishing the various authorities of the University, when you are establishing a scheme of 'management, of administration the'n where do you fit i<sub>n</sub> the school education with the university education? But I would say that just to take it out of the scheme of administration that has been outlined here would, in fact, be run'ning away from the problem and would create serious difficulties for the students there, for the teachers there, because half of the student population is involved. Therefore, personally I think that, if we are loyal t<sub>o</sub> this concept of integrated school and college and university education, the'n Patha-Bhavana should be brought on par with other Bhavanas. Certainly n" viable alternative solution has been offered here in this Bill.

I welcome many features of this Bill. This Bill has tried to bring the Visva-Bharati University in line with what is obtaining in many other universities and, therefore, looks forward. But I would like to sa<sub>v</sub> that other j universities are not experiencing this problem. They are not faced with this problem because the<sub>v</sub> do not have school education as part of the university itself. Therefore, a rational solution has to be found, and I would urge on the Hon. Minister of Education that he should either give us a practicable and feasible alternative solution or accept the proposal to bring the Patha-Bhavana on a par with the other Bhavanas and mention that in the body of the Bill. Otherwise, as my esteemed colleague said, the Patha-Bhavana would be like a poor relation. How can you build your university and college education o<sub>n</sub> the foundation of a poor relation, the school education which you have neglected or ignored? It is f<sub>o</sub>r these reasons that I appeal t<sub>o</sub> the Hon. Minister of Education to consider this I

problem, and I hope that he would accept our suggestions, o<sub>r</sub> t<sub>o</sub> tell us what is the feasible or workable alternative,

I have a few other points. I do not want to speak at length. I think, whatever needed to be said about the University's distinctive features, has already been said, but I would like to mention one o<sub>r</sub> two other problems for the Hon. Minister's consideration;

One is the question of the Executive Council. The question of the composition of the Executive Council has, to some extent, exercised the minds of the teaching community there, because the composition of the Karma-Samiti, the Executive Council, as provided by the Bill is this: There are of course ex-officio Members. I will not go into those who come from outside t<sub>o</sub> the University apart from the Vice-Chancellor and the Head of the Palil-Samgathana Vibhaga. Already five Professors are included in the Executive Council as Principals of the various Bhavanas, then another professor is provided for to be directly elected and then two teachers other than the Professor have also been provided for, one of whom must be a Reader. Now there are some amendments. I think the hon. Minister himself has given some amendments.

DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHANDER: No. 58.

DR. V. P. DUTT.— But o<sub>n</sub>e teacher is to be represented in the Karma-Samiti out of a total of 315 of the college teachers, 5 Professors out of 25 and 1 Reader out of 48. To my mind, it is really not necessary to do it in this way. Five Professors are there, no doubt, a<sub>s</sub> Principals of the Bhavanas, but they are also Principals by virtue of their being Professors; if they were not Professors, they could not be Principals. Therefore that representation for the Professors should be enough. I am myself a



Professor, and, therefore, I do not think that I am discriminating against my own category of people. But I think that 5 Professors represented in the Executive Council are already there, and it is not necessary to have another Professor elected from either amongst the Professors or the General Body of Teachers. In fact, I would suggest to the Hon. Minister if he would consider my submission, that it would not be a good idea to have a Professor elected by the entire General Body of the teaching community. You have already given certain status to the Professors. Let that status remain and let the Professors be there in the composition as Adhyakshas of various Bhavanas. But do not let a Professor be now subjected to the process of election by the entire body. That is one suggestion I would like to make. Therefore, there is no need for another Professor to be there. In the Delhi University, I think, a similar provision was made that for the Executive Council two teachers will be elected: Professors are there as deans, and there is no provision for election of Professors. It is, therefore, not necessary. But I would like to suggest that where you have put two teachers other than Professors, one of them to be a Reader, to be elected by the teachers from amongst themselves, it makes too nominal a representation for the teaching community.

DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER: That is changed.

DR. V. P. DUTT: I would say, have three. If you want to have a Reader, have three; one of them shall be a Reader and two will be teachers. There should be some such arrangement by which the teaching community gets adequate representation in the Karma-Samiti. That is one suggestion I would like to make.

I would also like to say that, to my mind, it is not fair that the non-ac-

ademic staff should find no representation at all in the Executive Council. I personally think that one representative of the non-academic staff should be there, should find representation in the Executive Council because, after all, the Executive Council is also their governing body and they should also be able to exercise and enjoy some rights of representation in this regard. I believe there is an amendment in this regard. I hope the hon. Minister will give it careful consideration.

Another point that I would like to submit to the hon. Minister of Education is that the Headship should ordinarily go by rotation. Although you have said that there will be a change, may be after three years or so, the same person can be reappointed. I think now in fairness to the modern processes of education that we are witnessing everywhere, it is good to have rotation and not let this become a matter of contention and heart-burning. I have seen that in various universities where this principle of rotation is being followed between Professors and Readers, it has eliminated one great source of contention because everybody knows that it is going to be by rotation and it will not be a matter of patronage. Therefore, I would suggest that the hon. Minister could consider this question of making the Headship by rotation. As it is, in many universities in India, by an Act of Parliament, the statutes have been changed and Headship is now by rotation amongst the Professors and Readers. Therefore I would like him to consider this suggestion.

Now, Sir, I do not want to speak at length on the various aspects of the Bill because I think the problem of Patha-Bhavanas, the problem of representation in the Executive Council and the problem of rotation of Headship, first, what I would say, the sum and substance of the problems that the teaching community has raised, that many of us are exercised about.

[Dr. V. P. Dutt]

In the end, I would like to say that I am glad that this Bill is being brought forward to strengthen the university. But if, because the problems are serious, because the differences of opinion may also be very great the hon. Minister finds himself unable to agree to some of our suggestions, then I would like him to consider referring the Bill to a Joint Select Committee of Members of Parliament of the two Houses so that further consideration could be given to some of the grave problems that have been raised here, particularly the question of school education and its link with university education and the problem of Patha-Bhavas in the scheme of 'management of this university. If he thinks that it is not possible for him to agree to these amendments that have been given or to accept our joint view, I would like him to consider very seriously referring the Bill to a Joint Select Committee, a proposal which I made to many hon. Members of Parliament of various parties here. I suggested it on the very first day. I said, if there is any serious difference of opinion, let us consider this before rushing through with it: instead of some amendments being accepted and the Minister of Education being embarrassed or later on our regretting that we should have done it this way and not that way, let us give it more consideration. Finally, taking off from this and having an opportunity talking about universities, as I said, I am happy that the honourable Minister of Education has brought forward a Bill with a view to strengthening the Visva Bharati University which we all want. But I am somewhat distressed, and I have just mentioned this in passing to the honourable Minister of Education—I do not want to speak at length—I am somewhat distressed at what is happening in many universities. On the one hand this Bill is being brought forward to strengthen the Visva Bharati University and on the other hand, there are disturbing reports in the newspapers about what some have called operation destabilisation going

on in many universities. It has been said by some newspapers that one Vice-Chancellor has been asked to resign on the basis of some informal inquiry. Nobody knows who conducted it, where was conducted. In fact, when I raised the matter in this House, the honourable Minister of Education was good enough to tell me that there was only an informal inquiry just to find out whether there was any basis for a visitor's inquiry. But now we are told on the basis of that informal inquiry a Vice-Chancellor has been asked to step down. I do not know what the truth is. But I would appeal, on a matter of principle, to the honourable Education Minister, let us observe the sanctity of the universities, let us not destroy the universities. It is easy to destroy the universities but it is difficult to build universities. In fact, Parliament has itself laid down the law for the universities. And the Government itself should not be the one to violate that law; it should not be the one to go outside the law given by Parliament and do something which is called an informal basis. I think the honourable Education Minister knows very well that the academic standards of a university are built by granting the university the maximum amount of intellectual and administrative autonomy. And on that there is no difference of opinion in this House. That intellectual and administrative autonomy should be preserved, should be strengthened, and not taken away under one pretext or another. Our universities in this country are in a delicate and difficult position today, because there are all kinds of political pressures. But let us not add to those pressures. Let us not do something which is really not only not legal but which would say is something which will hurt the universities much more, than if you were to do something frontally, politically and tell them, "All right, politically we want these things to be done and you have to do them." That might be much better. But this indirect and dubious way of doing things will destroy our universities. I am sure that the hon.

ourable Minister of Education and Members on both sides of this House accept what I am saying, that the sanctity of the universities should be maintained, that their intellectual and administrative autonomy should be preserved and that what we all ought to do is to strengthen this intellectual\* and administrative autonomy and not erode it. Thank you very much.

DR. SARUP SINGH (Haryana): Sir, normally Dr. Dutt and I agree. Even today we will agree. But I do not know why he has made certain suggestions which he has often rejected himself, as, for instance, about the headship by rotation. Our experience in most universities is that headship by rotation has not worked very well. In fact, when you rotate heads, what you are really doing is that you are refusing to take a decision.

[The Vice-Chairman (Shri U. K. Lakshmana Gowaa) in the Chair.]

What a department needs is intellectual leadership. Frankly, everybody is not competent to provide intellectual leadership. But the Vice-Chancellor does not know what to do. Therefore, often he says, "All right, let it go by rotation". It has unfortunately meant lowering of standards in quite a few universities in the country. We know about the Delhi University itself. We had three very distinguished men, one came from Bengal, one came from south India, one came from another part of the country. These distinguished men, who were invited by the Delhi University, became Heads of Departments. They built these Departments and they built them so well that these Departments became centres of advanced studies. And then came the business of this late decision on account of some kind of timidity on the part of the authorities; and now I am told that these Departments are in trouble. Dr. Dutt knows more than me because his relationship with the University is more intimate than mine.

Coming to representation to the non-academic staff on the Executive Council, I think there is a point. After all the non-academic staff are also governed by the Executive Council. Therefore, their representation should be there.

I am not sure whether you can do anything about the various categories of teachers that exist. Tagore's idea was that all teachers are equal, whatever they are teaching. I am in fact thinking of what the Masud Committee has said on equal salaries for all teachers at one time. Those days are gone. In Delhi too we had experimented it in Jami Milia at one time. I know there was a time when the Jamia Milia Vice-Chancellor was getting the same salary that one of his peons in the University was drawing. All of them used to eat together and live a kind of corporate life which is just not possible today. What do we do then? These are facts of life. They have to be accepted. Universities are hierarchical organisations with Professors, Readers, Lecturers and so on and so forth. The fact is that many of the ideas of Tagore cannot be resurrected very easily, if at all.

The other day when the Minister for Education was speaking, he mentioned two objects. One object is also mentioned in the Bill. To quote : The objects of the university shall be to disseminate and advance knowledge. Till now it is all right. That is what all universities claim. But Visva-Bharati claims something which is distinct. I am reading that part. It also says : "Wisdom and understanding". I hope Dr. Dutt will forgive me when I say that Delhi University has been trying to disseminate knowledge, but I do not think we can ever claim that it disseminates "wisdom and understanding". Then it talks of providing "instructional and research facilities by the example and influence of corporate life." This is a very vital question. Tagore mentioned again and again how to teach children sympathy. Imagination is

[Dr. Sarup Singh] another quality. He always wanted three faculties to be cultivated in the mind of a child by education. These are mind, imagination and sympathy. That is why he thought of Sriniketan where rural people were to be served and so on. I take the point which has been very well made by Shri Pande that Sriniketan must be developed and integrated with Santiniketan. Otherwise the whole purpose will be lost. Unfortunately that has not been done. However, the Minister for Education and the Bill have mentioned that the objects are set out in the First Schedule. The objects set out in the First Schedule, even though they are quite idealistic, should, I think, be fulfilled. I do not think that they are less important now than in Tagore's time. I am reading from the First Schedule. What is being said here is one of the old ideas mentioned in the original written also. With a view to making Santiniketan a centre of culture, "research into and study of the religion, literature, history, science and art of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Islamic, Sikh, Christian and other civilisations may be pursued" and so on. And, Sir, I would say, alongwith that, of course, the civilization of the West. Now, I think that this is a very important ideal and I am surprised that the Visva-Bharati has not done as much in this regard as it could have done. It is very unfortunate, Sir, that we do not have today even an authoritative cultural history of India in spite of all the work that has been done. Very many of us do not recognise, whether we are Hindus or Muslims or Christians or Sikhs, or whatever we may be, that the culture in which are brought up, the culture that we imbibe, is essentially a composite culture and it is a great pity because the Hindus do not recognise the contribution that Islam has made to our culture and the Muslims forget that Hinduism has also made a great contribution to lot of ideas that are there amongst the Muslims. Now, this whole idea of a kind of conscious-

ness in India, that we are having cultural streams that have contributed to the culture that we have inherited, is a very important thing. I think this is a very important thing. I would also like to say that the Visva-Bharati should have a Department of Comparative Religion which could really be a centre of this kind of study. I hope the University Grants Commission with the inspiration from the present Minister would help in financing some of these things so that the Visva-Bharati may retain at least a little of its distinctive character. I think this is one area in which I am afraid no University at present is trying to achieve any excellence. I hope Dr. Dutt would agree with me when I say that the Visva-Bharati today has the largest collection of Chinese manuscripts. What I am told is that the Visva-Bharati at present does not have any outstanding Chinese scholars and there are not many students. Now, Sir, we could have made Santiniketan not only a centre where people could study all these religions, all these cultures, but also could study some of the Asian languages, some of the -Asian cultures and so on. Of course, about the Chinese, I do not know what the Shanti Niketan can do. Every University has "Western Civilization and Western Literature and so on and so forth. But, unfortunately, even though Universities specialise in Western Culture and Western Civilization and in fact these things, have become the very integral parts of university education today, but in India, we need a proper history of our own. I hope the Minister would not mind my saying so. People are quarrelling about history books and I think that it is too small a thing. I think Indian history can be written in all sorts of ways because it is a mixed kind of history and different books can be written and all kinds of interpretations are possible. But the point here is that Santiniketan should retain at least this one feature: Comparative Religion, Comparative Philosophy, should be there. Even those manuscripts which are there—

manuscripts from China and also from Tibet—of course, these manuscripts are there. But my complaint is that they are not even properly looked after and they are not even properly catalogued. At least, I have been told that this is the position and I was very much distressed. Therefore, whatever else is done or is not done, two things can certainly be done by the Visva-Bharati which no one would be able to do as well. One is this: Comparative religion, comparative philosophy and making Shantiniketan a centre where students from all over the world can come. Second, let them also integrate Sriniketan and Shantiniketan, so that the new experiments the Ministry of Education is making at present about work experience, integrating work experience into education, could be taken advantage of. This is very simple. I think there should be no problem. If they need some money, money can be given.

Now, one more thing I would like to say and I say that with some hesitation. You know that, in the beginning, after the death of the Poet, his son became the Chancellor. And then came Shrimati Sarojini Naidu. And, then Pt. Nehru became the Chancellor. I think that was perfectly all right because, as regards the legacy to the country, the then Prime Minister felt, very rightly, that he should take the responsibility for ensuring that Shantiniketan flourishes and blossoms and it does not fade away. So he became the Chancellor. Then, a tradition grew that the Prime Minister of the country should be its Chancellor. And my personal opinion is that howsoever outstanding the Prime Minister may be, even academically, it is unfair to the Prime Minister to make him the Chancellor. It has caused difficulties. We know what the Chancellor does. He presides over a Convocation. We know it is difficult to hold Convocation. Students protest; others protest. Why expose the Prime Minister to this? Moreover, however impartial the Prime Minister may be, he is connected in any

case with a political party.

Now, Tagore has something very interesting to say on this. This is quoted by the Masud Committee. Tagore said:

"Shantiniketan must be saved from the whirlwind and turmoil of politics... One must not forget that our mission is not politics.. Where I have my politics, I do not belong to Shantiniketan...".

Now the Governors are *ex-officio* Chancellors. In the Central Universities—at least in Delhi—the Vice-President of India is the *ex-officio* Chancellor. I hope the Ministry of Education would kindly keep this in mind.

In Delhi University at one time we used to have election of the Chancellor. There were serious difficulties till we decided that the Chancellor shall be *ex-officio*. And so the Vice-President of India is the Chancellor. I would not like to comment on the Nehru University; though I would say this about this University also. In no University should any man who has a political standing in the country be a Chancellor or a Vice-Chancellor. In fact, in the Bill at page 7, when we talk of the Chancellor, this is what we see:

"The Executive Council shall prepare and recommend not less than three persons, each of whom shall be a person of eminence in the academic life..."

But it is also mentioned:

"... or public life".

Public life is of course very important. And in this House all of us know the importance of public life. But the University, I think, might not be subjected to any kind of pressures which at present are so difficult in the country.

[Dr. Sarup Singh]

One word more, and I have done. Mr. Vice-Chairman, they have their students on the Academic Council. Now, it is good that there are students on the Academic Council. In Delhi we made an experiment which, I thought, the Ministry of Education might have taken advantage of. Every student cannot make a contribution in the Academic Council. Academic questions are difficult questions, and only certain types of academically oriented students can really make a contribution when these questions are discussed. So it is decided that every student will not have the right to be elected, but only those students who have stood first and second in the University of Delhi in various areas of knowledge would be eligible for election to this body. I am glad to say that the student community of Delhi University welcomed this idea, and I am told that the contributions made by some of these students to the deliberations of the Academic Council have been qualitatively better than even those of some of the teachers. Clearly, they are good students. They want the University standards to rise. And, therefore, the contribution they make is always very valid and very real. Therefore, I was wondering whether the Minister of Education, instead of making a general statement about students, should not have pointed out as to how to attract academic and qualitative candidates in the university. I think that might have helped. I would like to say that it is an excellent Bill as far as I can see and frankly I do not accept Dr. Dutt's view that there should be a Joint Select Committee. I do not think there are matters of that vital controversy involved here. I think it is a kind of Bill which should be passed, with some marginal changes if you like, as soon as possible. After all, the university is facing a problem. The university was closed down and all its bodies were disbanded. They are nominated bodies and the

sooner they are given these proper democratic bodies, the better. In fact, one of the objects of this Bill, as mentioned by the hon. Minister of Education, is to restore the democratic character of the university. The sooner it is restored, the better. Thank you, very much.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, I am very sorry and I express my sorrow at the beginning that over a Bill of this kind concerning Visva-Bharati, it was not possible for the Minister of Education to consult, before preparing the Bill, even the Members of Parliament coming from West Bengal, not to speak of others. Sir, I say this thing because over a measure of this which transcends all narrow party considerations, it is both desirable and possible for the Government to have mutual consultations with other Members of Parliament in order to arrive at, as far as possible, a common understanding and approach and possibly common formulations. I do not think this was beyond the realm of possibility in this particular case. But, somehow or the other, it was not done. I feel particularly sorry because our dear friend, Dr. Pratap Chander, is piloting this Bill as the Education Minister of the country. He himself is an educationist and is well aware of how things go on in the academic world. I think, and I am also not in doubt, that he has the good of the Visva-Bharati University at heart as all of us, Bengalis, non-Bengalis, Indians, men and women, would have the good of the institution founded by Tagore at heart. It gives me a little additional pain when I think that that discussion has not been carried out or conducted. Now, Sir, I do hope sincerely that in this very House the matter will be approached in a constructive manner with high vision and with understanding so that we do improve upon the proposals that have been brought before us. Sir, how do we go? Obviously, Sir, we will have to go by

5 P.M.

the collective wisdom and experience mainly of the teachers, students and the non-teaching staff of the Visva-Bharati which have been at the same time enriched by the affection given to the institution by the people around. I do not know to what extent the hon. Minister has drawn upon the collective experience and collective wisdom in this matter. I am quite aware the Masud Committee was appointed. Justice Masud is a personal friend of mine. I had the occasion to talk to him about the university matters. In fact, even before he came to be appointed in some high position, he had talked to me. In fact, we were together in England as students and since then we have maintained our friendship. Sir,, I also know the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Mr. Sinha, who comes incidentally from my district, and he is an younger man compared to my age. And I would not like to say anything against anybody that way. And,, of course I know many teachers and students. Here also I claim to know if not quite intimately but sufficiently well our friend, Dr. Pratap Chunder, for whom I have got very great personal regard. Now, Sir, this is my dilemma. Well, if I were to speak about the Home Ministry, not much thought need be given. I can speak blunt and straight. Well, here in this matter, I always have certain inhibitions to speak. "Nevertheless, the demands of the interest of the Visva-Bharati are such that I have to be necessarily a little plain-spoken and I should speak what I think to be right. When I say T, it is not in the personal sense. I have tried to gather information, instructions from various sources and on the basis of that, I present my views to this august House.

Sir, this Bill is a mis-conceived one in many respects and it does require improvement. I hope the Government will have an open mind, to carry out certain things, improve-

ments in this matter. The Visva-Bharati is one of our finest institutions. I only wish it has received a little more attention of Parliament and of country. Maybe, poet Tagore is no more with us now. But his heritage is there which we must cherish, which we must carry forward, and which we must bring in tune with the temper of our times. We must know how to blend the past with the promptings and the demands of the future into a common symphony of cultural advancement and progress in the highest ideals which poet Tagore had set before when he inaugurated this institution many years ago. Sir, the ideals are there. We are not to improve upon them. What we need here is to live up to the traditions and also capture the spirit of the ideals which once prompted the foundation of this great institution by one of the greatest sons of our beloved land. Sir, I must say that things are not going on well in the Visva-Bharati. I am sorry to say this. After all, it gives one pain when we feel that we have not lived up to the tradition which has been bequeathed to us, the heritage that we were expected to carry forward, the torch which we were supposed to keep above everything else in its flaming and position of the time. We have failed to some extent in this matter and, I think, we require to correct ourselves. And here is an occasion when we can do so.

Sir, ever since 1971, the Visva-Bharati has been functioning with the help of nominated bodies, having no links with teachers and students and with other employees. Yet the communion between those who were at the helm of the institution and those others who ran it is of fundamental and crucial importance for the success of it. That was the teaching of Poet Tagore. That was the example he had set in his time. That is the spirit which should guide us. But there has been a default, there has been a lapse and there have been

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta] certain aberrations. I think we should take note of them in order to go ahead and improve things. Sir, there has been a steady deterioration of all aspects of the Visva-Bharati, academic, cultural as well as administrative. Everything we cannot set right. Much will have to be done by the willing co-operation of the teachers, students and employees together, playing their part of the greater heritage, which in their precious possession. That is how things will improve. But here in Parliament we can give them some help by way of amending this Bill. I suppose we can make our humble contribution to the effort that we expect of them.

Sir, here I must say that this institution has lost some of its direction. It is said, it has been conventionalised, it is said it has been static, it is said it has lost and tended to lose its identity, its distinctiveness, its personality and, above all, its majestic stature. Are we not to ponder over this thing and find out as to why it should be so? Why such a noble heritage be not safe in our hands? Have we become vandals? Have we become incompetent? Have we become all lost to the demands of learning, teaching and our culture in life that even an institution of this kind, built with so much care and affection by one of the greatest thinkers of this country, we cannot look after? I should like to know from the hon. Minister and others why it should be so.

Therefore, Sir, I say that something drastic has to be done; drastic in the good, constructive sense of the term. Sir, there are many things said there. I know what the hon. Minister will say. But I do feel as I read the Bill that there is much of bureaucratic imprint on it. The tradition of Tagore, the spirit of the Poet and the touch of excellent heritage seems to have been submerged

in and clouded by the bureaucratic-interference, visibly and invisibly, projected in the formulation and conception of the present measure. I want this to be examined very carefully and very wisely, with an open mind, with courage and conviction. Sir, we do need structural improvements but the ideals do not hang in the air; the principles do not live in the air- You have to sustain them by a proper structure by unleashing creative human energy and human talent into a co-operative effort from all sides, teachers, students and non-teaching staff. Only then, the temple of education of this type can prosper and shine. Sir, here I find that it has been done in the bureaucratic way in the recent period, without the co-operation of teachers and student", and that has not proved very useful. Therefore, Sir, we must overcome them.

Sir, one point has been raised about the position of Patha-Bhavana in this set-up. Sir, as has been very rightly claimed; the Patha-Bhavana should have identical status with all other constituent units of the University. This is denied in this Bill, denied openly, denied secretly, denied directly and denied indirectly. I want a forthright approach which would give Patha-Bhavana equal status with all other constituents of this University. Why do I say so? It is because the Visva-Bharati sprang out and all the schools sprang out of these Patha-Bhavanas; they are the product of the Patha-Bhavana growing year by year and step by step into a great glorious institution of our times. Therefore, Sir, if the Patha-Bhavanas are not given their due place, you are rejecting the ideals on the basis of which this institution was founded. In fact, you are suppressing, you are demigrating the very spring-well of the institution itself. That is why I say, the Patha-Bhavanas should get equal status with all other units of the University. Masud Committee recommended?



this thing. Well, that is there—I am told—at page 33 of the Masud Committee's recommendations, but this has been rejected by the Ministry. Why? Why this monitoring in th)- manner over the recommendations of the Masud Committee? I do not know much about the Masud Committee but I do know how the teachers, the students and others feel. Why should not their opinion be respected? The institution is run by them; the institution is not run by some IAS official sitting somewhere, I do not know, in one of these Ministries. In Santi Niketan, young men and women, teachers and students, and employees, inspired by the high ideals are dedicating themselves to the preserving and to the building up of this noble great institution of our country.

Well, Sir, I should like to know what should dominate—the ideals of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore or the odious obnoxious spirit of some IAS and other officials?

I would not say they are illiterate. But some of them are certainly not cultural enough. This is what I say. Therefore, Sir, I would like this matter to be gone into.

Another question comes in regard to representation. Representation of the teachers should be based on elections, joint electorate, without any reservation of seats. Here, Sir, an arbitrary policy is laid down in the scheme of the Bill. Here, you will find a very interesting thing. Hon. Members should consider this. We talk of democratisation of education. But what does the Bill say? In Visva-Bharati, there are 25 professors, 58 readers and 315 others belonging to the teaching staff. This category dominates, 315 as against 25 professors, as I said, and 58 readers. Sir, there is an Executive Council or Karma Samiti, the real executive body, the directing and the guiding) centre of this University. The Court has become more or less

a nominal body. It has hardly any function today. It is the Executive Council or the Karma Samiti which is most important. How is it constituted? How is it elected or not elected? Who are there who determine the fate of this institution? There, apart from the Vice-Chancellor, there are 15 members, seven from outside the University, I am not going into that. But there are eight from within the University. Out of the eight from the University, six are from the professors, one from the readers and one from others. That is how it is done. Among the six professors, five are ex-officio. That leaves only three. Among these three, again, one is selected, more or less appointed, by seniority and by rotation. Now, Sir, you will find that the 315 others, that is to say, who are not from the category of professors and readers, get only one representative. Here again, there is no election, of course, of the professors that way. Therefore, our proposal is that, all the three—in fact, there should be more—should be elected from among the teachers themselves on the basis of no representation, joint electorate. Well, professors may come, readers, may come and others may come. Nobody is barred. But election should be on the basis of joint electorate. All of them should constitute the electoral college and send three by election. That is to say, in other words, the representatives of the non-ex-officio members who will come on the Executive Council should have the mandate and the sanction of the general body of the teaching staff and should be elected. That is a very reasonable demand. I do not understand why this is not being accepted. I think, Sir, Government should seriously consider this and accept this demand.

In fact, Sir,, I have got a few other examples. The employees of the Visva-Bharati demand one representative on the Karma Samiti. This is justified. Now, Sir, the non-teaching staff are not represented on the

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta]

Karma Samiti. This should be gone into. I think, Sir, the Karma Samiti should have some representation from the category of non-teaching staff also. But elections, joint electorate and no reservation should be the principle and that is how the posts other than the ex-officio posts should be filled. Is it not a reasonable demand? They are saying nowadays that if you bring in election, politics comes in. Our friends there in the Government side would not like university to be involved in politics. I do not know what they mean by politics. When elections come all of them are asked to vote. If Mr. Pratap Chandra is here, is he not in politics? He has not set an example of being non-political. Elections; why should it be politics? When you have elections, it is the democratic process. You may have elections in a college, in a society, in a political party. You may have elections in various places. How does politics come in there? Whether appointment does not bring in any irregularities, nepotism, favouritism and all the rest of it, may I know from the Government?

Therefore, Sir, it is entirely a perverse, wrong and distorted argument when they say that elections would involve the teacher in what they call 'politics'. I reject that idea. It is an insult to our teaching community. It is an insult to the Visva Bharati itself. They are guided by the interest of the institution and by the consideration of cultural advancement, they are not guided. I believe, by the petty consideration as to who should do which party politics in this matter and even if they do you could not stop them because political parties all are functioning in this country and there also. Therefore, why should you bring in such extraneous and absurd arguments? This I cannot understand. Therefore, I suggest that election should be the principle.

Now, Sir, I would like to say a few more things here. Palli Siksha Sadan

is an agricultural college. Why should it not be raised to the level of a Bhavana? In fact, agriculture has a very great importance which has a faculty in the Visva Bharati, it should be raised to the status of a Bhavana and that can be easily done. There should be no difficulty on the part of the Government to do so.

Then, Sir, I have given some more suggestions. When the amendments are taken up, we shall deal with them better. I will not take much of the time now. The amendments are very important. Today the amendments will not come up. Tomorrow I have asked our friends here to be present. We can deal with the amendments tomorrow. I have given a list of amendments. There are certain important amendments. With regard to the Dean of the Rabindra Bhavana, the Tagore Professor should be the head. This is how it should be done. Why can't it be done? Why again this thing is not there I do not know. Here, Sir, I have suggested, you can see, "The Tagore Professor of the University shall be the Adhyaksha (Principal) of the Rabindra Bhavana." It is a very reasonable suggestion. Government should accept it. Similarly, there are certain other concrete amendments. I need not go into them now. We shall deal with them tomorrow very carefully and I would ask the Minister to consider them and accept our suggestions. These are not Bhupesh Gupta's suggestions. I would not accept my own suggestion in this matter if it were given by me only. These suggestions embody the opinion, views and experiences of many others, teachers, students, staff and many others. Had it not been so, I would not have been ventilating these here or asking you to consider them. After all, I am not an educationist. Many of you are better educationists. You know better, but I venture to make this suggestion because I have the conviction that I am doing so in the interest of the institution, because I

have taken the counsel and advice from the teachers, students and the concerned people.

Sir, our friends, Shri Pranab Mukherjee and others, have given notices of amendments. Now, Sir, I feel here the Congress Party also snares this: *Oo* we exist in Bengal? Mr. Prasenjit, may I ask you, do we exist in Bengal? There the ruling party, the biggest party in Bengal, is running the Government. Now, here, our friend, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, has given some amendments. I find that our amendments are the same. We agree on them—not that we have discussed them among ourselves. We are drawing from the same source of experience. Therefore, the amendments are basically the same—even identical. Should you ignore them? Should you ignore us? Should you ignore the Congress Party, or the Cong(I) for that matter? We all together also represent some thing. Are we such uncultured people? Are we such uncultured people that we cannot talk about Visva-Bharati, that we do not understand the problems of Visva-Bharati, that we do not have the good of the Visva-Bharati at heart, that we do not think of that, so that we should be brushed aside because somebody in the Secretariat here has thought of it? I am sure if the hon. Minister had been sitting by me, he would have fully shared my views. The hon. Minister is a very well-mannered person. He may say that he is taking both sides into account. Which sides? Is it an industrial dispute? Is it an industrial dispute between the workers and the employer, between the Birlas and the employees? It is not an industrial dispute. There are no two sides to it. There is only one side to it. And that side is the side of those who have dedicated themselves to live up to the heritage of Poet Tagore, that side belongs to those on the one side who stand by the culture and inheritance that have been bequeathed to those who are running this institution

—the professors, readers, teachers, students and employees of this institution in its various organisations and otherwise. That is the only one side. There are no two sides. Our job in Parliament is to understand that side, to give expression to the feelings and experience of that side. That is our job.

We are not here divided over the Janata or the CPI, the Congress or the Janata, Cong(I) or the Janata, or between the various parties. We are not divided that way. There is some thing which is common to all of us, and that common thing is the possession that we have got in Visva-Bharati which is a common, shared possession of all parties, of all men of goodwill, of all those who stand for culture, economic advancement and learning. It is our bounden duty to be true to our conscience, to see as to how best we can muster our intelligence, our vision, our thought to see that this institution is strengthened, enriched, preserved in all its glory and help it to advance along the course that has been set before it by its immortal founder. That should be our approach to this matter.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI U. K. LAKSHMANA GOWDA): You can wind up now. You can speak more when your amendments come.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I do not wish to say anything more. I have said enough. When my amendments come, I will speak more. Once again, before I sit down, I pay my wholesome tribute to the teachers and students of the Visva-Bharati, the employees and others who have, even in the difficult days, striven to maintain the distinctive personality of this institution, the glory and shine of this institution, who have sought in their own ways—sometimes ignored, sometimes neglected and even humiliated—to live up to its noble traditions and respond to the calling to which they have been assigned by life, by our society, because we need their co-operation, need their help,

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta]

need their creative labour, need their thinking, need their spiritual effort, need their physical labour for taking this institution forward. It is our duty here in all humility to fall in line with their experience and thinking and live up to it, give it the needed expression and make this Bill an instrument, a document, a testament which will help this institution rise to its greatest stature, overcoming weaknesses, shortcomings, aberrations and pitfalls to which this institution had been subjected in the recent years. Thank you.

SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I deem it a great honour to me to be able to take part in the discussion on Visva-Bharati. I am also proud that I come from the great land of Tagore.

Tagore's Visva-Bharati is a great heritage to our nation, to all of us and, therefore, it is our great and noble duty not only to keep this great heritage and its ideals but also to take them forward. The hon. Education Minister, while moving this Bill, has correctly stated that this is our prestigious institution. It is true, by all means. The name Visva-Bharati itself gives expression to its great ideals. Tagore's conception of universality and unity in diversity is reflected in Visva-Bharati. I would just cite a poem of Tagore:—

"He Mor Chitta Punna Tirthe  
Jagore Dhire

Aye Bharate Maha Manaber Sagor  
Tire"

Thus Tagore conceived the world in unity, that is, unity in diversity. This is not the place to discuss in detail the great ideals of Tagore, but I just mention it to point out that it is our sacred duty towards Tagore.

I am sorry to mention that the great institution of Tagore is presently as if under Emergency. You know Sir, in 1971 an Ordinance was promulgated which was afterwards converted into an Act. The Visva-Bharati Act of 1951 was later on replaced by the Visva-Bharati (Amendment) Act of 1971 and, by this Amendment Act, the Samsad, Karma-Samiti, the Siksha-Samiti and all other committees had been replaced by nominated bodies. The hon. Minister has stated that the aim of the present Bill is to restore its democratic structure. But I am sorry to say that I was shocked to find that he did not condemn the promulgation of the Ordinance in 1971. In the Statement of Objects and Reasons—on page 48 of the Bill—he refers to disturbances in the Visva-Bharati Campus and the negative attitude of certain persons. In his speech also on the 19th he said:—

"During November, 1970 and February, 1971, there was a lot of trouble in the campus of the University. You will remember, Sir, those were the days of the Naxalite movement in West Bengal. Not only this University, but many other universities and educational institutions also were troubled. Unfortunately it so happened that in those days some people were killed in the campus of the University or near about. There was loss of property also. So, the then Government thought something ought to be done. Therefore, in 1971, on 3rd November, the Visva-Bharati Amendment Ordinance was promulgated to amend the Visva-Bharati Act to provide for nominated bodies."

It seems that he has supported promulgation of that Ordinance. Sir, the hon. Education Minister himself came to the other House after fighting against the promulgation of Emergency, after fighting against authoritarian rule. Should he not

condemn promulgation of this Ordinance which is something like the Emergency and which spoiled the sanctity of Tagore's great institution?

One thing I would like to point out, which is there in the Memorandum of the teachers of Visva-Bharati, that the disturbance in Visva-Bharati was nothing special, it was a common feature all over West Bengal at that time. There was nothing to single out Visva-Bharati. So Visva-Bharati actually was the first victim of the emergency. What the reasons were, we do not know. But authoritarian rules were imposed at the beginning on Visva-Bharati. Actually, disturbance was a common feature. Trouble was there in all other universities; Visva-Bharati was not an exception at all. From the records of Visva-Bharati, it will be seen that not a single man-day was lost. How could he say that that was the place of disturbance which could be singled out? Secondly, about the so-called negative attitude of certain persons, obviously it refers to the demands of Adhyapaks and Karims for democratisation of the University's Constitution and for their representation in various bodies. But, is it not in accordance with Tagore's ideals? Did Tagore conceive of any authoritarian or autocratic or bureaucratic administration of his Visva-Bharati? Certainly not. Even the Gajendragadkar Committee in its report subsequently supported these demands of Adhyapaks and Karims. Even at one stage the University Samsad (Court), under the chairmanship of the then authoritarian Chancellor, Indira Gandhi herself, passed a resolution supporting it. But for reasons obvious that was not put into action at all. The representations of the teachers were not taken and all the suggestions—concrete and constructive suggestions were all along turned down.

Now I would like to quote from the memorandum of teachers dated the 16th February 1978:

"The situation in Visva-Bharati since 1971 administered by a small body of nominated persons while favouring vested interests has undermined the larger interests, academic and otherwise."

Again, the Visva-Bharati Adhyapaka Sabha has given one open letter to the Vice-Chancellor dated the 16th April, 1978 in which there are serious complaints about administrative lapses:

"Another matter that has caused deep resentment and frustration among the teachers is a series of irregular appointments during your Vice-Chancellorship..."

"Sometimes appointments have been made in such an illogical manner that one feels puzzled. We cannot explain why an eminent physicist who had done all his teaching and research work in the field of Physics was appointed Professor of Mathematics at a time when Professorship in Physics itself was lying vacant at the University."

So that is the state Visva-Bharati is going through. So it is an urgent need that we should have a Bill which will give a democratic shape to the administration, but, at the same time, if a wrong type of a Bill and a defective Bill is passed, it will do more harm than good. That point we must see. Similar things as the one referred to above are happening in handling of fellowships etc.

Again, from the Statement of Objects and Reasons we see that the hon. Minister seems to be supporting the last heritage of Indira Gandhi's time itself. And that has given me much pain. When in 1951 Parliament declared Visva-Bharati to be 'an institution of national importance' it accepted the School to be an integral part of the educational system of Visva-Bharati and granted it a status of a Bhavana. I need not say much about it because others have already mentioned about it. The only thing I,

[Shrimati Kanak Mukherjee]

want to point out is that Visva-Bharati is not one of many universities. It has got its unique character. When Rabindra Nath, a great poet and a great educationist and "a man speaking to man" (according to the definition of a poet by Wordsworth), along with Scott and Wordsworth cried out of his heart:

"Dao Fire She Aranya Lao Aye Nagar"

When he was much pained and troubled with the hectic advance of the industrial civilisation of the 19th Century, he wanted to go back to the heart of nature. What does Wordsworth say? "One impulse from the vernal wood, may teach you more of man, of moral evils and of good than all the sages can." That was his ideal also. So he started with experimenting with the child. He took the child as the seed. That is a great point in educational psychology. We cannot divide a man. We must see that development of man takes place gradually as one whole man, that is from the beginning to the end. From the seed grows the tree and blossoms all the flowers and all the branches. If we cut the roots, the whole tree will collapse. The University is a great edifice of universal learning, and each stage is a stair to the great universal edifice. If you take out the lowest stairs, the whole edifice will collapse. That is our point. Dr. Chunder may say that if we take the 1951 Act, that does not mean that it will be correct. I do not say that if it was 100 years before it should be now. Rabindra Nath Tagore also was not so static; he was definitely very much dynamic. What he said in his early stages of life he revised it at the later stages. The best example is his "SABHYATER SANKAT". He was very much dynamic. Had he lived now, he would have changed many things of the Visva-Bharati. If we see something which was there a hundred years ago, we must not say that it must be good. We must not also say

that because it was not so in many other universities, it must not be so. If it is at an experimental stage, let us have that experiment. If the Visva-Bharati complex did not produce the desired effect so long, as some other Members mentioned, that is a different point, and we shall discuss that if the occasion arises afterwards.

Now we are concerned about the administrative structure of the Visva-Bharati. On that stands actually the whole academic structure. There is division between schools and colleges. This classification is an introduction of caste system.

I must say that Tagore himself liked to teach the seedlings, the children were his life actually. He started from that thing which is not yet polluted, which is pure in touch of primeval nature. Now let us not make the Visva-Bharati as one privileged island of the selected intellectuals in the midst of the under-privileged and let us not deprive the uneducated masses, the neglected school children etc. As a matter of fact, I would like to point out to the Hon. Minister of Education, in this year when he was specially emphasising mass education, we should have some scope in the Visva-Bharati for it. I do not know how? Actually we will have to discuss that afterwards so that the Visva-Bharati can do its bit in educating the masses. Today we are going for the adult education, for educating the entire uneducated people. So, the Visva-Bharati has an important role in this sphere. Instead of doing that, we are trying to disassociate the lower rung from the upper rung. That will give scope for differences. There will be administrative differences and there will be structural differences.

Then there will be differences in financial responsibilities. There is a fear which already exists that after some time it may be said that it is school and school is not college and the U.G.C., do not have to pay for them and, therefore, the children

will be neglected. So let us not do this in a hurry. I request the hon. Education Minister to give proper attention to our amendments. Surprisingly and happily I found that the amendments I gave have been bracketed with the amendments of Mr. Bhupesh Gupta and Mr. Pande and some others. Naturally these are the demands of the teachers of Visva-Bharati. You know, some of the teachers and some of the workers have already come to New Delhi. They are going from Member to Member, from Minister to Minister, to see that something undemocratic is not passed. I have seen many of the papers in West Bengal. " They have started discussing this and most of the members have already thought over the article of the hon. Member, Mr. Krishna Kripalani in 'Statesman' dated 1st July, 1978. So a discussion is going on. So I think the hon. Education Minister should pay proper attention to this matter and accept our amendments for the actual democratisation of the structure of the Visva-Bharati administration.

Regarding Headship, now the Calcutta University is also discussing about rotation of Headship. In many of the places they have not come to any final conclusion yet. It is still under discussion. So let this be open to all the teachers. About representation, it is not that there should be one from here, one from there and so on. That is not the main point. The main point is, there should be one joint electorate, without any reservation. This gives some feeling of communion, which is the essence of Visva-Bharati. In many of the universities, in all the universities we see that castes are there—readers, lecturers, professors, teachers, school teachers, primary school teachers, and the non-teaching staff etc. There are compartments. That is what actually Tagore did not want. That is what actually we do not want in Visva-Bharati. Tagore himself taught and most respected and senior-most

teachers like Kishiti Mohon Sen also taught young children first. So let there not be the distinction of castes and classes in the election. That is the main thing in the elections. (*Time bell rings*). Sir, you heard the voice of Mr. Bhupesh Gupta for 45 minutes. Please hear my voice for 20 minutes at least.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. RAM KRIPAL SINHA); If there are so many Bhupesh Guptas in the House, what will happen to the House?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI U. K. LAKSHMANA GOWDA): The session will be extended.

SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE: The Bill systematically excludes lecturers from all offices of responsibility, e.g. Head of the Department, Proctor and the Dean of Students' Welfare etc. These clauses of the various statutes should be omitted.

Now, the Tagore Professorship was originally instituted with the idea that the Tagore Professor should be ex-officio the Principal of Rabindra Bhavan. For quite some time now, the Tagore Professor was indeed holding that office. But the Bill seeks to dissociate the Tagore Professor from Rabindra Bhavan. This is what we do not like. So let us not hurry with this Bill. It is not a question of voting out the Education Minister. This is a great task assigned to us. Let us do it soberly. Let us fulfil our responsibility and do our bit to the great memory of Tagore. Tagore was one of the greatest educationists, the greatest poet and the greatest thinker of one age. That is why I say, let the hon. Education Minister give second thoughts to the question. If it is possible for him to accept the democratic opinions of the various sections, let him change this Bill a little bit. If he does not find them

[Shrimati Kanak Mukherjee] agreeable, let him send it to a Select Committee so that at least we can satisfy the democratic minds that we have taken into consideration the opinions of the various democratic sections and afterwards we have accepted the opinion of the majority. There is no shame in it, we will only be doing our duty towards the Viswa Bharati University better. That is what I say, I hope all of us have got that sincerity to do something to see that Tagore's Viswa Bharati University, his ideal, is not only preserved but advanced. We must not remain static; we must be dynamic. Our duty is not only to maintain this institution but also to develop it. Ideas have changed. Necessities have changed. Accordingly, we should adjust ourselves and we should see how best we can do our duty towards the Viswa Bharati University as not only Members of Parliament, but as educationists also.

Thank you.

SHRI KRISHNA KRIPALANI (Nominated); Mr. Vice-Chairman, I regret I am unable to congratulate the honourable Minister of Education on the Viswa Bharati (Amendment) Bill. I have no doubt that he means well, but I fear he has been misled by the legacy of his predecessor in office. This is evident—as has been very pertinently pointed out by the honourable lady Member from West Bengal, from even the Statement of Objects and Reasons attached to the Bill which seeks to justify the emergency ordinance of 1971, in almost the same language as the previous Government justified the imposition of the national emergency four years later. The Naxalite disturbances were not confined to the Viswa Bharati campus but were a feature of the entire landscape of West Bengal. Except for a couple of ugly incidents the Shantiniketan had, on the whole, maintained a less turbulent atmosphere than many other places. Indeed

the University did not have to lose a single working day and the classes and examinations were held as usual. Nor was "the negative attitude of certain persons," as has been stated, a speciality of Shantiniketan. It is a common feature even today of many universities and other public bodies. But the dog has to be given a bad name if it is to be hanged. And so an ordinance was issued to replace the elected body by nominated once which was later forged into a constitutional fetter by the Viswa-Bharati (Amendment) Act of 1971.

The present Bill seeks to make some amends by restoring the elected bodies. This is a mercy. There are a few other mercies, minor mercies, too. But, by and large, the Bill has retained the reactionary character of the earlier Act of 1971 which had so drastically ended the principal Act of 1951 as to drag the University much further away from its original character as envisaged by Tagore. While introducing this principal Viswa Bharati Act of 1951 the then Minister of Education, the late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, had said on 20th April, 1951 that when he took charge of the Ministry in 1947 Mahatma Gandhi had said to him that Gurudev Tagore had left with him a great trust which he was now placing in Maulana's hands. In Maulana's words,

“गुरुदेव की एक बहुत बड़ी अमानत है जो उन्होंने मेरी हिफाजत में दी है। आज यह अमानत तुम्हारे सुदूर करता है।”

The Mahatma was referring to his last meeting with Tagore in 1940, when, as he was taking leave of the poet, the latter put in his hand a letter saying that the Viswa Bharati was a vessel which carried the cargo of his life's best treasure which he was entrusting to the care of the Mahatma and the nation. Maulana Saheb went on to add that it



would (I quote the English text) "an sheer dishonesty and a betrayal of the trust" if any attempts were made to change the ideals which Gurudev had embodied in his creation. Intervening in the debate the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru said:

"We have looked upon this not only as a very great institution but as a very special and unique institution and we are particularly anxious that it should not fall into the rut of other universities. We are anxious that our Education Department should not try to bring about any regimentation of it in line with others. ..."

This regimentation is exactly what has gradually crept in since and which the present Bill has not only taken for granted but has taken special care to reinforce.

Sir, this university grew from the soil, like a tree from a little seed, naturally and unobtrusively. It began as a little school for children. All teaching was through the mother tongue and, along with other subjects common elsewhere, music, dance, drama, painting and handicrafts were part of the child's education. Later, music, dance and the fine arts came to be cultivated on their own and a centre of Indian culture grew up, and along with it, a faculty of scholarly research in the many complex sources and off-shoots of Indian civilization, vedic, classical, Buddhist, Jaina, Zoroastrian, Medieval (both Hindu and Islamic), Tibetan and Sino-Indian. There was learning but no degrees and no snobbery. All teachers were known as Adhyapaks, irrespective of what they taught. All drew more or less similar emolument which then was very modest, "and" all were glad to participate in the teaching of children.

Parallel to this educational-cultural complex, grew up in the adjacent Sriniketan a centre of experimental activity in rural development

of the neighbouring villages which included farming, cattle breeding, dairy, village handicrafts, rural schools, health centres, etc. The students, artists and scholars at Shantiniketan were encouraged to participate in these rural welfare experiments, so that knowledge and culture might be better rooted in the soil and the soil be enriched by knowledge and culture. A bridge was thus sought to be built between the educated elite and the peasant and craftsman in the village.

This was, Sir, the Viswa Bharati as Tagore founded it in 1918 and formally inaugurated in 1921. The school had started twenty years earlier in 1901. Tagore had proudly and rightly claimed that it was a hundred per cent indigenous centre of a whole and wholesome education, not modelled on any western pattern. This was the set-up, well integrated and harmonious, at once of the soil and world-oriented, about which Gandhiji would speak to foreign visitors and ask: Have you been to Shantiniketan?

If not, you have not seen 6 P.M. India. Unfortunately, Sir, a little compromise had crept in even in Tagore's lifetime. Under pressure of some teachers, students and their guardians, students who craved for academic degrees were allowed to prepare for the Calcutta University examinations. This concession, which seemed a minor one then, has gradually assumed colossal dimensions until it is today the major obsession of the academic community. What was once unique and creative is today increasingly becoming an imitation of the conventional Indian Universities which are themselves an imitation of the British and American Universities. What was once a seat of learning and culture where at one time students from all parts of India would come to learn what they could not learn as well elsewhere, is today, despite its

[Shri Krishna Krtipalani] having become a Central University, little better than a mofussil Bengal University where a majority of students seek admission because they cannot get it in more prestigious Universities. What was once simple and small has become big, bloated and sterile.

I am not blaming the Government of India for it. When the late Maulana Azad introduced his Viswa-Bharati Bill in 1951, he did it with the best of intentions, believing that, thus relieved of financial insecurity and vested with legal authority, the University would be in a position to recover its creative vitality and would develop along the lines of its own tradition, character and genius. The Viswa Bharati Act, as then passed by Parliament, put no fetters on the freedom to grow along its own lines. If those in charge of the University then failed to steer it along the right lines and allowed it to drift into the rut of the conventional Universities, it was their lapse and the University's misfortune. They craved for expansion and were greedy for more funds, a craze common and universal enough. More funds could not be had except by the mercy of the Ministry of Education and, later, the UGC. The officials of the Ministry and the UGC, able and well-meaning in their fashion, knew no better than the conventional pattern of the so-called higher education in India and, without meaning ill and in good faith, imposed on the Viswa Bharati a regimentation against which the late Jawaharlal Nehru had warned and which would have been anathema to Tagore, had he had the misfortune to live to witness it.

Sir, what made the position far more tragic is that the previous Government, taking advantage of the Naxalite disturbances did away ruthlessly with such flexibility as was provided in the Act of 1951 and introduced a severe regimentation by

its Act of 1971 so that the University almost ceased to be autonomous. Nothing could be done, no decision taken, no act initiated, without the sanction or approval of the Ministry of Education or the UGC. Thus between the high and mighty in New Delhi and the *Johukums* at Santiniketan, the noble creation of Tagore became an ignoble handmaid of the Delhi bureaucrats. The present Bill, except that nominated bodies are replaced by their elected counterparts, has confirmed this regimentation.

It is claimed, Sir, that the Bill seeks to implement the recommendations of the Masud Committee. This is far from true. I speak as a former Member of the Masud Committee. The Masud Committee, on which both the Ministry of Education and the UGC were represented by responsible officers, had discussed in detail, and on more than one occasion, the various measures by which at least some of the original character and shape of the Viswa Bharati could be salvaged. These vital suggestions have been ignored by the present Bill which is an elaborate rigmarole of ill-conceived and clumsily drafted clauses which might as well have been drafted by three Deputy Secretaries of the Ministries of Education and of Law and the UGC, without bringing in the ritualistic farce of a public Committee. Sir, the Masud Committee itself functioned under certain limitations. For example, when I protested that the Samsad or Court of the University which is composed of eminent educationists and public men, including representatives of the two Houses of Parliament, and which the Act of 1951 had described as "the supreme governing body of the University" should not be shorn of its powers and reduced to a mere advisory and almost superfluous body, with no voice in the selection of the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor in whose appointment the last word will now lie with the Ministry of Education in the name of the Visitor, when I protested against this uncalled

for crippling of the Samsad's authority, I was told that the Government of India had decided that in these matters all the Central Universities shall follow the same pattern and procedure. This put a stop to all further discussion.

And now, Sir, what do we find? The Aligarh Muslim University (Amendment) Bill which the Minister introduced in the last session of the Lok Sabha and which will shortly be moved by him in this House, lays down the provision that "The Court shall be the supreme governing body of the University" and shall have the power to elect the Chancellor, the Pro-Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor, as also the Hon. Treasurer. If the old status and autonomy of the Aligarh Muslim University could be restored, what comes in the way of doing the same for Tagore's University? Why need Viswa Bharati be deprived of its dignity and autonomy and be made subservient to the dictates of some official or other in the Ministry or the U.G.C? Why in the case of poor Viswa Bharati alone should the Janata Government follow in the footsteps of the previous regime? Even if the original shape envisaged by Tagore in 1921 is difficult to recreate, why could not the flexibility permitted in the principal Act of 1951 have been restored?

Sir, thanks to the innocent liveliness of the children in the school and such creative activity as still survives in Kala Bhavan and Sangeet Bhavan, Santiniketan retains something of its old atmosphere which the academic obsession with exams and degrees has not been able totally to destroy. But apart from this atmosphere, which few other places in India can rival, Santiniketan is also a place of pilgrimage to hundreds of daily visitors. It is to many Indians—at any rate to Bengalis and in that respect I look upon myself as an honorary Bengali, though born and brought up nearly two thousand miles away at the other end of what once was India un-

divided—it is to many of us what Stratford-on-Avon is to the English or, Yasnaya Polyana to the Russians. Indeed, more. If the Tolstoy Museum in Moscow were also part of Yasnaya Polyana, the latter would be as the Rabindra Bhavan is. For it is not only a complex of houses, including a mud hut, where Tagore lived and wrote, sang and painted, for the last forty years of his life and where the Mahatma too stayed as his guest more than once, but is also the storehouse of his manuscripts in hundreds and paintings in thousands, besides the many editions of his published works in not only Bengali but in almost all languages of the world, as well as a vast and still uncatalogued volume of material relating to his life and work. It is the one place where scholars and writers working on any aspect of Tagore's many-sided genius have to come for reference and they do come from places as remote as the U.S.A. or Australia.

Sir, it took the Ministry of Education and the U.G.C. a long time to recognise the importance of Rabindra Bhavan. Fortunately, the Masud Committee did and the present Bill too has recognised it as one of the Bhavans of Viswa Bharati. This Bhavan is, however, much more important in the long run than any other Bhavan for the simple reason that while whatever is being taught or done in any other Bhavan is being taught and done as well, if not sometimes better, elsewhere, Rabindra Bhavan, remains a unique treasure-house which cannot be duplicated elsewhere. It is in that sense the only place of real international attraction of Viswa Bharati today. Its importance which will become increasingly obvious in the years to come, entitles it to be treated as a national trust in its own right. Its Board should have representatives of not only Viswa Bharati's Karma Samiti or Executive Board but of some outside bodies concerned with Tagore research. or, competent to

[Shri Krishna Kripalani] advice on the proper preservation of manuscripts, paintings and other objects of historical value.

Sir, despite a few redeeming features of the Bill, before us, like restoration of the elected bodies and a half-hearted recognition of Patha-Bhavan and Rabindra Bhavan, I am convinced that on the whole and in its present shape, the Bill, if passed, cannot but perpetuate a total distortion of Tagore's ideal of Visva Bharati. So deeply is this Bill, which I may be forgiven for calling a bastard Bill, permeated by the unholy spirit of the Ordinance-born Act of 1971, that merely tinkering with a few amendments will not redeem it. I shall, therefore, refrain from moving any. Instead, Sir, I would respectfully suggest to the hon. Minister that he be pleased to consider referring it to a Select Committee of both the Houses of Parliament or to consider withdrawing the Bill, to re-introduce it later after careful consideration and revision, to ensure that the powers of the Samsad (Court) are restored and the autonomy of the university is respected, that adequate provision is made for the study of all Indian languages and literatures, without prejudice to select foreign ones, as well as comparative literature, comparative philosophy, comparative religion, as also of Indian music and dance in their many forms and styles of the north and the south and folk, so that the university may achieve a truly national character, that no invidious distinction is made between Patha-Bhavan and other Bhavans, which distinction has reduced the school, the first-born, to the lowly status of a Harijan in the academic hierarchy, that a more

effective co-ordination is maintained between the academic life at Santiniketan and the rural activities of Sriniketan, and that, above all, a sufficient scope and freedom are left for the university to determine the lines of its future development in the changing context of national and human values. By doing so, the Government of India will lose nothing, the university will be assured a bright future and the Minister will have the satisfaction of rising above bureaucratic biases. The Bill,

as it stands, is a travesty, a mockery of Tagore's legacy.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI U. K. LAKSHMANA GOWDA): You will have to wind up. It is already 6.15.

SHRI KRISHNA KRIPALANI: I will take a minute more. I know, Sir, that my protest will cut no ice with those who matter, that my voice may only be a dog barking as the car of Juggernaut passes. Nevertheless, I would like my protest to go on record, lest it be said one day that when the wheels of Janata Government's car of Juggernaut crushed Rabindranath Tagore's dream into dust, not even a dog barked. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI HAREKRUSHNA MALLICK (Orissa): The word 'bastard' should be deleted as it is unparliamentary.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI U. K. LAKSHMANA GOWDA): The House stands adjourned till 11 o'clock tomorrow.

The House then adjourned at fifteen minutes past six of the clock till eleven of the clock on Tuesday, the 25th July, 1978.