

लेकिन हमें हर 6 महीने गालियाँ खाने की आदत सी पड़ गई है कि शायद हमें खाना नहीं पचता जब तक दुनिया से हों इस तरह की गालियाँ न मिलें। मेरा निवेदन है कि यदि इस सम्बन्ध में सचमुच सरकार ईमानदार है तो वह फंसला करे और घोषणा करे कि जो कुछ कदम आगे बढ़ाए जा रहे हैं वे किसी के कहने या किसी विदेशी सत्ता के प्रभाव में आकर नहीं उठाए जा रहे हैं। आज देश की जनता में इस तरह का भ्रम है। भ्रम में इसलिए कहता हूँ कि वह भ्रम सिद्ध हो, लेकिन लोगों को लगता है कि इस भ्रम के अन्दर आधार है, लोग यह समझते हैं कि काश्मीर को भारत के साथ रखने के सवाल पर एक तरफ रूस का दबाव है भारत सरकार पर और दूसरी तरफ अमरीका का दबाव है। अगर ये दोनों दबाव पड़ कर देश के एकीकरण के मार्ग में रुकावट बन सकते हैं और हमारे लिए समस्या पैदा कर सकते हैं कि हम काश्मीर को जितना एक साथ मिलाने जा रहे हैं उसके स्थान पर घड़ी की सुई की चाल को उल्टा कर वहाँ पहुँचा दें जहाँ काश्मीर शुरू में था तो मैं समझता हूँ कि हमारी जो आजाद नीति है, देश की स्वतंत्रता है वह मृगमरीचिका के सिवाय, एक सपने के सिवाय कुछ नहीं साबित होगी। मेरा आपसे निवेदन है कि जिस तरह का यह विधेयक लाया जा रहा है उसके बजाय सरकार से आग्रह किया जाय, मैं आग्रह करना चाहता हूँ कि एक बार एक फंसला करके काश्मीर को भारत से अलग करने वाली जो रेखा है उसको सदा के लिए समाप्त कर दिया जाय ताकि जवानों का खून और करदाताओं का पैसा व्यर्थ न जाय। आज भी जिस भाव पर वहाँ राशन विकता है उस भाव सारे देश में नहीं विकता है, वह हम खुशों से देते हैं, वे हमारे भाई हैं वह हमारा हिस्सा है, हमारी भूमि है, लेकिन हमारा कहने के बाद भी यह फर्क कैसे है कि हम नौकरी न कर सकें, वहाँ के नागरिक

न कहलाएँ, वहाँ जमीन न ले सकें। मैं तो विरोधी दल का हूँ शायद यह अधिकार न रखूँ लेकिन जो सरकार के सर्वोच्च अधिकारी हैं उनको भी यह अधिकार न रहे, यह देश के लिए स्वस्थ स्थिति नहीं है, यह उस इलाके के देश के साथ एकीकरण का बढ़ाने वाला नहीं है। इसलिए मेरा निवेदन है कि जो एक अधूरा सा, अनमना सा और कच्चा सा कदम उठाया जाता है उसकी बजाय एक पक्का, निश्चित कदम उठाया जाय और जो भी फंसला सरकार करे वह हमेशा के लिए इस सवाल को खत्म कर दे। अनिश्चितता जो काश्मीर के सभी नागरिकों के मन में लटकती रहती है कि न जाने कल क्या होगा, न जाने पाकिस्तान में जाएंगे, यहाँ रहेंगे या आजाद होंगे, यह सारी अनिश्चितता काश्मीर के भविष्य के लिए बड़ी घातक है, भारत की शान्ति के लिए बड़ी घातक है और भारत में जो अल्पमत और बहुमत के मेलजोल की आवश्यकता है उसके लिए सदा खटको वाला कांटा है। इसलिए सरकार से मेरा आग्रह है कि इस स्थिति को सुधारे और आज जो देश के अन्दर अनिश्चितता है उसको हमेशा के लिए समाप्त करे।

**SHORT DURATION DISCUSSION
UNDER RULE 176 RE ALLEGED OFFENSIVE REMARKS AGAINST
HARIJANS BY A MINISTER OF
ANDHRA PRADESH**

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, we go on to the Short Duration Discussion. There are 22 names before me and there are another four or five names added to the list of names. I propose to go party-wise. I propose to call party-wise and all the Members may not be called, because one cannot cover about 26 names. Mr. Arjun Arora is not there. Mr. Dharia.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA (Maharashtra) : Madam Deputy Chairman, I have gone through the evidence recorded by the hon. Chief Minister, Mr. Brahmananda Reddy. There are the statements of the journalists, who were supposed to be present at the time of the press conference. I have also gone through the statement made by Mr. Thimma Reddy along with the letter of Shri Brahmananda Reddy. After going through the evidence I would like to submit that it is not at all satisfactory. It may be argued that the hon. Minister, Mr. Thimma Reddy, did not say anything about Harijans or that they should be kicked. However, if we refer to the evidence, it is very clear that Mr. Thimma Reddy was agitated not because of the atrocities committed on Harijans, but because of the wide publicity given to this issue and it is in this context he said whatever he had to say to the press people. If we look at the whole tenor, there is no doubt that the wild publicity was all the while in the mind of Mr. Thimma Reddy and in that context one has reason to believe that whatever has come before us is not the truth. The statements were recorded by Mr. Brahmananda Reddy, the Chief Minister . . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Dharia, you will be very brief.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: Yes, how many minutes?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That I leave it to you. There are 26 names on the list. I think Members themselves should know how to adjust.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE (Maharashtra): It is a very important question, Madam, and I suggest that you may give three hours for this, because every Member would like to speak.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If every Member speaks, there will be much repetition and repetition. I do not think we should do that. You take three or four minutes each.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI (Maharashtra) : How can it be? It is such an important question.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN; Please do not waste time. Every second is important.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: With due respect, the Member who initiates the discussion always gets some more time.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Seven minutes.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA; You will kindly appreciate and will give some more time because I am initiating it.

If we go through the whole evidence—I will not read it because the statement is before the House—it has been stated by Shri Vaman Rao, the journalist, when a reference was made to him that:

"Whoever indulged in these writings presenting the problem in this coloured way should be thrashed."

It has been stated by Shri Shyam Rao Harnur:

"No. He said that those who write about these incidents giving a colour of caste should be beaten."

Then, at another stage it is stated that the Minister said that he should be thrashed, he should be beaten, he should be kicked. These are the words used by the hon. Minister against the journalists who give the colour of caste while sending their reports.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: Still, the journalists are tolerating this insult.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: I really fail to understand what the Federation of Working Journalists has been doing when the hon. Minister said that they should be kicked and thrashed and beaten. Not a single word of protest have I so far heard from the Federation of Working Journalists. A Minister who has that capacity of using all these words when he gave the Press interview in connection with the incidents of the Harijan boy might have

said the words as have appeared in the Press—one can believe it. I do believe it.

While it has been stated by the hon. Home Minister that there is no *prima facie* evidence, it was the primary duty of Shri Thimma Reddy, as a respectable citizen of this country, to say, "So long as these charges are here, Mr. Chief Minister, please accept my resignation. You inquire into the matter." Reporters who are coming from cities, they have several things to be done by the Chief Minister and persons of authority; there is the problem of accommodation, the problem of housing, the problem of so many facilities; so many things are there. And naturally, to say something against his colleague in a free and frank way before the Chief Minister might have perhaps caused great difficulties in their way and even for the Chief Minister. He should not have accepted this inquiry himself; Shri Thimma Reddy himself should have proposed, "This is my resignation. Let some retired High Court Judge go into it. Let him record the statements." Even though a demand was made, nothing has occurred of that type. On the contrary, the very letter of Shri Brahma-nanda Reddy says:

"Dear Shri Chavanji,

You will kindly recall that when I saw you on the 25th April at about 11.30 A.M. in your room in . . ."

Shri Brahma-nanda Reddy was asked to go into this inquiry—

"... I told you that I had already programmed to visit the drought-affected areas in Rayalaseema and that I would return to Hyderabad only on 2nd May in the afternoon and that I would be sending my report by 4th or 5th May."

It is not a well-recognised principle in law that if evidence is to be recorded, it should be recorded as early as possible? We all know the impor-

tance of registering the first information that is lodged at every police station. Instead of recording the state, ment immediately or making that arrangement, the Chief Minister wanted to go to Rayalaseema. I can understand his going to drought-affected areas. But he could have authorised somebody else of a high stature to go into all this matter and record the evidence. Nothing was done for 15 days. Therefore, if anybody suspects that this inquiry is not a fair inquiry, I also feel that it can be suspected that this is not a fair inquiry. Therefore, I feel that a fair inquiry is absolutely essential in this matter. With due respect to the hon. Home Minister, I differ from him when he says that *prima facie* there is no case made out against Shri Thimma Reddy. When he says like this, he relies on this evidence which is before him. The evidence which is before us itself is not reliable. Under the circumstances, I demand a fair inquiry into this matter is absolutely necessary.

My second submission is regarding a Code of Conduct for the hon. Ministers. Why should the hon. Minister go to the length of speaking even against the journalists that they should be kicked, beaten or thrashed. I looked into the Oxford Dictionary as to what is . . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have already made that point.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: ... the meaning of the word 'thrashed'. According to the Oxford Dictionary, 'thrashing' means beating with a whip. It is having a more serious meaning than beating.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL (Gujarat): Thrashing means that harvesting is going on.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: I feel that a Code of Conduct has become absolutely necessary for them. The time has come to tell the Ministers that even when they are speaking with journalists or officials they should not use such sort of words.

[Shri M. M. Dharia]

So far as the Press people are concerned, I would like to say that they have become a power. Whenever they send their information or their reports, they shall have to be more cautious because we know that one information appearing in one paper 'Patriot' has agitated both the Houses rightly or wrongly—I feel rightly, because ultimately Press itself is the nerve through which we understand what is going on in the local areas. I would appeal that these people also should be more responsible while sending information. But here no charges could be made because the evidence as has come before us cannot be relied on. I have gone through every statement and I have come to the conclusion that this is not a fair inquiry.

Therefore, I make a demand today that there should be a fair inquiry. And I also make a demand that due security shall have to be given to the down-trodden people, if after 20 years of independence we cannot protect the interests of these down-trodden people, what is the use and meaning of this democracy? Therefore, I feel that we should take serious note of it.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA (Orissa) I have my own reasons for taking Shri Thimma Reddy to task. But I could not quite appreciate the attitude taken by our young, smart Turk . . .

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Hesitant.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: . . . Shri Mohan Dharia. His attitude is to run down the Indira Lobby.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: To run with the hare and hunt with the hounds.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: It is most unfair . . .

(Interruptions)

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA; I am entitled to give my opinion. Let him refute it.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: I fail to understand why he should bring in such political atmosphere here.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: Because I read between the lines.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: It is not correct. All people are not Misras to bring in politics in such serious matters.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: When I demanded the resignation of the Home Minister, this very same gentleman got up and said that I should have demanded the resignation of the entire Central Cabinet here.

Now, when Shri Thimma Reddy's case comes and the Chief Minister of that State has taken evidence from different journalists and has submitted it to Shri Chavan, he takes the plea that we cannot take Shri Brahma-nanda Reddy's statement to be correct, that we cannot take it at its face value and a separate . . .

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: On a point of interpretation . . .

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: You are taking away my time.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: I have said nothing regarding Shri Brahmananda Reddy. He is not . . .

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: You began with Shri Brahmananda Reddy.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: Records will show that he disbelieved Shri Brahmananda Reddy for that statement, and he does not rely upon that. Therefore, I feel that it is a deliberate attempt by Shri Chavan through his own lieutenants to run down the Indira Lobby. But I have my own grounds. I want every guilty Minister to be taken to task, not like Shri Dharia playing one lobby against the other.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: Absolutely false.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: We are not arguing here a case in a court of law. We are arguing here a case politically. We have to take the political implications into consideration when we consider about the conduct of different Ministers in the States or the Chief Ministers. In this case what is very evident from all the statements of journalists and the statement of Mr. Thimma Reddy himself goes to show one thing very clearly. It is crystal clear that the Minister has no respect for the rule of law. Mr. Thimma Reddy has himself admitted to have said that people take cognisance of these thefts and they heat up the thieves. This is something which he has not discouraged, despised, or he has not commented adversely against it. He has rather accepted the fact that people should take to task thieves, because they have no other alternative. This is very wrong on the part of a Minister. He holds a responsible position and he gives a statement that these things happen in the country and there is justification for these things happening in the country. That is why I hold him guilty. This man has no respect for rule of law. He has no place in a democratic institution. Therefore, he must be dismissed, and hot for reasons put forward by Mr. Dharia.

Madam, Mr. Rama Rao says in his evidence that the Minister said: "Would they not be taken to task? Would people kiss them for stealing somebody's property?" This is sufficient evidence to show that this man has lost his head probably. If he had anything to say about the thieves, it should have been only against the people who steal. Why should he have said that it is the Harijans who steal? Who is responsible for the plight of the Harijans, this economic plight of theirs? This particular Thimma Reddy may have been there in the Congress Ministry for about ten or fifteen years. I do not know how long he has been there. He is too insignificant a fellow for me to know about him. (*Interruption*) He is not a human being because he does not talk like a human being. He has been talking as if

he had lost his head (*Interruption*) Do not take my time. I have lost the trend of my argument.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You address the Chair.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: I was talking about the economic plight of the Harijans. He has been there for ten or fifteen years as a Minister. (*Interruption*) I am prepared to reply to all questions. Do not put me into tight corner, I am hard pressed for time.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He wants to finish within the few minutes I have given.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: Having become responsible for the plight of the Harijans as a Minister he addresses a Press conference and puts all the blame on the Harijans for being weak economically and therefore for stealing. What does that show? He takes that as a justification for heating the Harijans. Therefore, I demand again that he should be dismissed. Whether there is a subsequent Commission of Enquiry or not or any enquiry at all, that is not the point. The point is that this man has absolutely no respect for rule of law and therefore, he must be dismissed.

One point. I am told that the An-dhra Government has discontinued its subscription to the U.N.I. after this

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY
(Andhra Pradesh). It is not a physical fact.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: It may not be a physical fact . . .

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Why is the lady Member so much excited?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him finish.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: I would very much like to know about it because we are functioning in a democratic State. We want our Press to be free. If such intimidation, if such pres-

[Shri Lokanath Misra] sure is being applied by the Andhra Government for forthright statements about Ministers, then I think we are heading towards a dictatorship. It is worse than a dictatorship the way Mr. Thimma Reddy and his accomplice the Chief Minister, have discontinued the subscription.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: Madam Deputy Chairman, within the very short time given it is very difficult to deal with all the aspects of the question involved in the case. I will have to crave your indulgence a little bit more.

If we go through the whole statements recorded by the Chief Minister, we have to draw only one inference and conclusion that, as Mr. Dharia has mentioned, the enquiry is not impartial and fair. Madam, the Chief Minister should have gone to Hyderabad immediately he came to know about, the statement of Mr. Thimma Reddy. But instead of doing so, he went to Rayalaseema. If you go through the statements recorded of all the seven correspondents, you will find that it will have hardly taken him two or three hours to record the statements. He could have gone to Hyderabad, recorded the statements and then proceeded to Rayalaseema. At the most he may have to forgo the tour programme by two or three hours, about six hours. But not going to Hyderabad immediately, he has provided the opportunity to Mr. Thimma Reddy to bring pressure if possible on the journalists and to change the statements.

Madam, the statements have been recorded under pressure because in today's "Patriot" it has been reported:

"Journalists functioning in a State capital have obvious limitations in giving unvarnished evidence when they come in direct confrontation with the Chief Executive. Even otherwise the IFWJ is aware of documents other than those placed in the Lok Sabha which have a bearing on the issue."

It is clearly mentioned in the "Patriot" that the working journalists cannot give evidence fearlessly in front of the Chief Minister. Otherwise also if you go through all the recorded statements, you will come across a number of discrepancies regarding theft of foodgrains or regarding theft of electric starters or electric pumps. One journalist says one thing and another journalist says another thing. Regarding the statement whether the journalists should be kicked or thrashed or beaten, there are three different versions by three different journalists.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister and the House to the statement of one Vaman Rao. In the course of his statement he has given three different versions. I would refer to the three statements of the gentleman. Firstly he says: "Whoever indulged in these writings presenting the problem in this coloured way should be thrashed to which immediately Sri Ramarao said in this case the Government" etc. Firstly he said "thrashed". Secondly he says: "I felt that he must have probably meant that those who gave colour to their reports should be taken to task". There is no question of "thrashed". He says "should be taken to task". In the same statement, thirdly, he says: "I do not think that his remark was meant to be an attack on 'is'". So, one journalist, Mr. Vaman Rao, gives three different versions in the same statement.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: That means there is no truth in it.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: That means there was intimidation, there was pressure brought on him, and therefore he could not speak the truth.

There are one or two instances I would like to quote from the same recorded statements which indicate that the enquiry has not been fair and impartial. Firstly, the Agriculture Minister, Mr. Thimma Reddy, has said that Mr. Sitaram did not enquire from **him**

before sending his despatch. But Mr. Sitaram has tried to make enquiries from one or two journalists, from Mr. Vaman Rao and Mr. Sharma. He met them in a programme of dance recital the same evening. Mr. Sitaram asked them why they did not protest against the Minister when he said that the journalists should be kicked. But when the question was asked of those people whether he enquired about the incident, both of them said 'no'. Naturally when I discuss the incident I would ask what was the fact—actual incident. It is not that I will discuss only one part of the incident and will not enquire and not ask anything about the other part of the incident. Therefore, when those two journalists have said that only Rama Rao asked why they did not protest and there was no further enquiry, this cannot be relied upon; this cannot be believed.

If we go through all the statements, we find that the statements have not been properly recorded and everywhere the journalists had fear in their mind. Madam, I am rather worried about two things. Madam, the statement which was issued by Mr. Thimma Reddy has two more pernicious aspects to which I would like to refer. Firstly, he said that those people should be beaten and thrashed. He was inciting the caste Hindus to beat and brutally murder the Scheduled Caste people wherever they came across. We can never tolerate this thing. We are not here to be butchered by any caste Hindus, reactionary people. Therefore, the incitement to the caste Hindus to butcher the Scheduled Caste people, irrespective of anything, whether they really indulge in any offences or not, is most offensive. There were certain incidents in Andhra Pradesh, particularly in Kanchiki Cherla and other places where Scheduled Caste boys have been burnt alive. If we consider these incidents we feel that Mr. Thimma Reddy was rather obsessed with all those incidents. Therefore, he said that the Scheduled Caste people should be kicked. This is one aspect.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please wind up. Everybody has taken five minutes.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: He wanted to incite. That is one thing. Secondly, what is worse, he wanted to gag the Press. He told the reporters that it did not matter even if the Scheduled Caste people were butchered or burnt alive the incidents should not be reported.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That will do. There are so many speakers.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: The caste Hindu people are afraid and they wanted that these incidents should not come before the people, that all these incidents should not *come to light* . . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That will do.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: . . . That was the second pernicious thing about the statement by Mr. Thimma Reddy. Firstly, he incited the caste Hindus against the Scheduled Castes, and secondly, he tried to gag the Press.

I will end up by making one appeal and that is, as pointed out by Mr. Mohan Dharia, that this is not a complete enquiry. I would only say that another Parliamentary Committee should be appointed to make enquiry into all these allegations.

Madam, I would only refer to one statement by Mr. Yashwant Rao Cha-van . . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You cannot do that. There is no time. You have already taken too much time.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: Mr. Chavan, the hon'ble Home Minister, said in the other House: —

"I have got my own sources *at* information. That, of course, I cannot disclose now. Certainly I have got my machinery of knowing what happened or not happened. Certainly if the House wants to give my own personal assessment, naturally

[Shri B. D. Khobaragade] I will do that after the Chief Minister's report is received."

Therefore he should give his own opinion. Madam, any way there is a case for another impartial enquiry, if not judicial, for a Parliamentary enquiry. Let there be another enquiry.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Rajnarain. Just five minutes.

श्री राजनारायण (उत्तर प्रदेश) : माननीया, जो तर्क मोहन धारिया जी ने और जो तर्क सम्मानित मित्र ने अभी दिया है, मैं उनसे पूर्णतः सहमत हूँ। मैं समझता हूँ कि न्यायशास्त्र का जो तर्क भी विद्यार्थी होगा वह अवश्य मानेगा कि मुख्य मंत्री को इन चीजों की जिम्मेदारी अपने ऊपर नहीं लेनी चाहिये थी। श्री बिम्बा रेड्डी मंत्रिपरिषद् के सदस्य थे। यदि मुख्य मंत्री को सही तरीके से जांच पड़ताल करानी थी तो उनको किसी ज्युडिशियल न्यायाधीश के समक्ष सब बयान ले जाने की व्यवस्था करनी चाहिये थी। न्याय हम करते हैं तो केवल यह काफी नहीं है। जिस के साथ न्याय हो रहा हो उसको यह एहसास होना चाहिये कि हमारे साथ इन्साफ हो रहा है। यह ज्युरिस्प्रूडेंस का सिम्पल सिद्धांत है। इसलिए कोई विवाद की आवश्यकता नहीं है। मुख्य मंत्री ने जो तरीका अद्वितीय किया कि अपने मंत्रिपरिषद् के सदस्य को छुटकारा देने के बारे में, वह संविधान और न्याय की दृष्टि से सलत रहा है। एक मुक्तकंठ से इस चीज को सब को मान लेना चाहिये और इसमें तर्क और विनर्क करने से अनावश्यक भ्रम होगा।

अब मैं जरा बुनियाद की ओर जाना चाहता हूँ। इस सदन में जो माननीय सदस्य बैठे हुए हैं, वे क्या सचमुच में वह चाहते हैं कि हरिजन ब्राह्मण को जात न मारे।

मैं समझता हूँ कि जितने लोग बैठे हुए हैं, उनमें से 90 प्रतिशत लोग इसके खिलाफ होंगे। केवल जबान से कह रहा हूँ कर्म से नहीं क्योंकि हमने देखा है। एकलव्य की कहानी आने मुनी होगी और रामराज्य में भी इस तरह की घटना हुई है।

(Interruptions.)

हमारा एक प्वाइंट आफ आर्डर है। जब मूल प्रश्न पर सदन में विचार हो तो माननीय सदस्यों को आपस में विचार नहीं करना चाहिये। तो मेरा प्रश्न यह है और मैं आज यहाँ पर घर मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ, दूसरे मंत्री भी यहाँ बैठे हुए हैं। श्री मोहन धारिया जी दिल से गोचें, हम भी अपने दिल से सोचें, क्या अपनी लड़की को चमार के लड़के को देने के लिए तैयार हैं? मैं तैयार हूँ। क्या महावीर प्रसाद शुक्ल, अपनी घर की लड़की को चमार के लड़के को देने को तैयार हैं? अगर तैयार नहीं हैं तो अनावश्यक ढंग से यहाँ पर चर्चा करने से कोई फायदा नहीं है। भारतवर्ष बिजुल सड़ा हुआ है। समाज में जात पात की गाँठ बहुत गहरी है और यह आर्थिक विषमता को मिटाने से हल नहीं की जा सकती है। मैं नवाब साहब अकबर अली खान साहब से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या अकबर अली खान साहब...

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN (Andhra Pradesh): I will call you Maharaja Saheb if you call me Nawab Saheb.

श्री राजनारायण : क्या अकबर अली खान साहब अपनी घर की लड़की को जुलाहे के लड़के को देने के लिये तैयार हैं? मोक्ष, सय्यद, पठान, जुलाहा, चमार, ब्राह्मण, भंगी, ये जो जात की रेखाएँ हैं ये खड़ी चलेगी या पड़ी चलेगी। मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि जब तक जात की रेखाएँ खड़ी रहेंगी तब तक देश में उत्पात होगा। जब रेखा पड़ी बनी रहेगी तब सही मानों में समता रहेगी।

माननीया, आपको पता होगा कि भारत-वर्ष के प्रथम राष्ट्रपति डा० राजेन्द्र प्रसाद वाराणसी गये और वहाँ उन्होंने 101 ब्राह्मणों का चरणामृत लिया क्योंकि कल्पना थी कि चक्रवर्ती राजा के लिए ब्राह्मणों का आर्शीवाद चाहिये। इसलिए बनारस में महाराजा बनारस की कोठी में 101 ब्राह्मण आये। उसमें से एक हमारा मित्र ब्राह्मण चला गया। जब उसको पता चला कि राजेन्द्र प्रसाद चरणामृत लेकर दक्षिणा देंगे 100 भग्या तो वह भागा कि यहाँ पर इस तरह का फ्राड हो रहा है। जब वह भागा तो पुलिस वालों ने एक आदमी को, जो ब्राह्मण नहीं था, उसके बदले भेज दिया।

तो मैं यह निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ कि इस देश में राष्ट्रपति, प्रधान मंत्री और घर मंत्री इस तरह की खुराकत और तूफान करते जा रहे हैं। आज जर्नलिस्टों को धमकी दी जा रही है, क्या इस बात में कोई तर्क है? मुख्य मंत्री अखबार वालों की गवाही ले रहे हैं। तो मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि अगर पत्रकारों में थोड़ा सा भी मर्यादा का ज्ञान होता तो पत्रकार मुख्य मंत्रों के सामने गवाही देने से इन्कार कर देते और कहते कि किसी निष्पक्ष व्यक्ति को बुलाओ, हम वहाँ पर गवाही देने के लिए तैयार हैं। ऐसी स्थिति में मुख्य मंत्री गवाही ले सकता था। लेकिन मुख्य मंत्री ने आज अपने प्रभाव का इस्तेमाल किया। पत्रकारों को कह देना चाहिये था कि हम तुम्हारे सामने गवाही देने के लिए नहीं आयेगे। पत्रकारों ने इस तरह से बुज-दिली दिखलाई, कायरता दिखलाई। बदमाशी और गुन्डागर्दी वहीं फैलती और पनपती है जहाँ पर बुजदिल और कायर होते हैं। सबसे बड़ा कायरपन है। इसलिए मैं अपने चमार दोस्तों से कहना चाहता हूँ क्योंकि मैं स्वयं भुक्त भोगी हूँ।

माननीया, मैं एक दिन की अपनी घटना बतलाना चाहता हूँ। बनारस में हमारा

एक छोटा भाई रहता है। हमारे तीन भाई हैं। एक हम से बड़ा है और एक हम से छोटा है। हम बीच के हैं। हमारे साथ बैठकर चौके में कोई खाना नहीं खाता है क्योंकि हमारा नियम है कि चाहे मुसलमान तो, चाहे भंगी हो, चाहे चमार हो, सब एक जगह बैठेंगे बराबर। जब उसको पता चला कि हमारी थाली में एक मित्र चमार लड़का खा रहा है तो उसने कहा कि भाई जी तो चमार के साथ खाते हैं और वह थाली हमारे घर में नहीं आयेगी। तो हमें गांधी जी की याद आ गई। आपको मालूम होना चाहिये, सदन के सम्मानित सदस्य जान लें कि गांधी का एक झगड़ा हो चुका था। गांधी जी का कोई साथी नहीं था जो उस दिन उनके बर्तन साफ करता। बर्तन में 6 P.M.

किसी क्रिस्टान ने खाया था और कस्तूरबा जी ने उसको साफ नहीं किया। गांधी जी उठे, बर्तन साफ करने लगे। फिर कस्तूरबा को परेशानी हुई। उन्होंने हाथ से छीना और कहा "अरे, आप साफ मत करो"। उन्होंने कहा, "क्यों साफ न करें, तुमने क्यों नहीं किया?" उन्होंने कहा, "मैं क्रिस्टान के बर्तन नहीं साफ करूंगी।" गांधी जी ऐसे व्यक्ति थे कि कस्तूरबा का गट्टा पकड़ा और कस्तूरबा का गट्टा पकड़े पकड़े झर झर खींच लाये। जब वह चौखट पर पहुँचे तो कस्तूरबा ने चौखट पर पांव अड़ा दिये। उनकी आंखों में आंसू आ गये। उन्होंने कहा कि क्या हमारे मां बाप ने इसीलिये दिया था कि तुम घर से निकालो। गांधी जी ने कहा कि इस तरह जीव को अपने मन में रख कर तुम हमारे साथ नहीं रह सकतीं। यहाँ पर कौन ऐसे लोग हैं जो गांधी जी के इस आचरण को अपने व्यवहार में लाने को तैयार हैं।

(Interruption)

मैं चमार तो आज अपने से बड़ा मानता हूँ क्योंकि हमारे पूर्वजों ने, हमारे लोगों ने चमार को आज ऐसी दयनीय स्थिति में रख दिया है। अगर हम इंसान हैं और इंसानियत

[श्री राजनारायण]

का मादा रखते हैं तो हमारा यह कर्तव्य हो जाता है कि चमार को हम अपने से ऊंचा समझें, हरिजनों को अपने से ऊंचा समझें। मैं यह बात 1940 से आचरण में व्यवहृत कर रहा हूँ।

आज मैं सभाई के साथ कहना चाहता हूँ कि जो कांग्रेस के लोग शासन में बैठे हुए हैं, जो बड़े-बड़े मंत्री हैं, जो बामन हैं, ठाकुर हैं, बनिया हैं या ऊंचे परिवार के घरों के हैं वे खुद देखें कि वे अपने घरों में अपने हरिजन नौकरों के साथ और दूसरों के साथ कैसा व्यवहार करते हैं और अपने भाई के साथ कैसा व्यवहार करते हैं। क्या वे अपने घरों में अपने हरिजन नौकरों के साथ वैसा ही व्यवहार करते हैं जैसा वे अपने परिवार में अपने भाई के साथ करते हैं? अपने बच्चे के गोरे-गोरे और लाल-लाल गाल देख कर के हमारे माननीय मंत्री लोग बड़े प्रसन्न होते हैं और जब दूसरी जगह वे जाते हैं तो हरिजनों के बच्चों के चुचके चुचके गाल को देख कर के उनके मन में कोई परेशानी नहीं पैदा होती है क्योंकि उनके बच्चे तो लाल-लाल गाल वाले होते हैं।

इसीलिये मैं सीधे रूप से इस नतीजे पर पहुंचा हूँ कि उस मंत्री को तो हटना ही चाहिये और यहां जो केन्द्र की सरकार ने यह दोंग रचा कि मुख्य मंत्री की ली हुई गवाही की बुनियाद पर इन्होंने कह दिया कि हां, बिल्कुल ठीक है, मुझे मंत्री ने जबाब भेज दिया, यह रपट पढ़ लो, यह सरकार भी हटे। केन्द्र की सरकार, इन्दिरा की सरकार, चह्वाण की सरकार यह दोषी है, यह इसकी पापी है जो आज अपने कुकर्मों से इस देश में जातपात की दीवार को ढहाने के लिये तैयार नहीं हो रही है।

मैं सम्मानित सदस्यों को यह बताना चाहता हूँ कि बृद्ध धर्म को हमारे देश ने बर्हा से लोप करा दिया क्योंकि गौतम बुद्ध

जिन की जनन क्रिया समान है, उनकी जाति एक है, इस सिद्धांत में यकीन करने वाले थे। इसलिये खूब मजबूत हो कर के ठोस कदम उठाओ और हरिजनों में, पिछड़े हुए लोगों में और जो समाज में ऊंचा स्थान पाये हुए हैं उनके बीच में जो सामाजिक विषमता है उसको मिटाने के लिये जो मंत्री के पदों पर हैं वे आगे बड़ें। अगर इस विषमता को मिटाना है तो मैं आपसे कहना चाहता हूँ कि जितने कांग्रेस के मंत्रिगण हैं, जितने बड़े-बड़े नेता हैं वे एक प्रतिज्ञा कर लें कि उनकी लड़कियां हरिजन लड़कों के साथ विवाहित होंगी, उनका सम्बन्ध उनके साथ ज्यादा होगा, उनका उठना, उनका बैठना उनके साथ ज्यादा होगा और फिर देखिये कि यह मामला अपने आप हल हो जायगा और फिर भाषण की जरूरत नहीं होगी।

SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS (Orissa): Madam Deputy Chairman, we are very sorry and are really ashamed that even after 21 years of independence, we are to discuss such a subject in this country now, particularly when we are going to observe this year the birth centenary of Bapuji who dedicated his life for the cause of Harijans. Here, I will refer to only one statement, because the other statements have been referred to by others, and that is by Mr. K. Parthasarathy, Reporter of U.N.I., whom the Chief Minister himself has referred to in his forwarding letter. He says that Mr. Thimma Reddy said: "Some of the thieves happen to be Harijans and they are thrashed. Do you expect them to be kissed? The scribes and reporters should be thrashed for playing up too much the caste." This clearly shows how very indecent the words were that the Minister used about the reporters, and particularly in this we see what the attitude of this Minister is towards the Harijans. He takes serious exception when any reporter mentions that a thief has been thrashed and that he belongs to the Schedu-

Jed caste Community. He does not remember that the Constitution itself has been framed by a great Harijan of this country, Dr. Ambedkar, and JK) by any upper caste Hindu. He gave a Constitution in which the rights of the untouchables have been guaranteed. We all should be ashamed that after 21 years of independence, we have not been able up till now to give protection for the minimum rights that a human being ought to have in this country. The very psychology exhibited by this Agriculture Minister clearly shows that he has no respect for the Harijans. It is immaterial as to what exactly he said. One might say that he did not use those very words. Now it was published in the Press that the Home Ministry had sent an officer to Andhra Pradesh. That officer must have returned by now. He was sent there to get an objective analysis of the situation after getting evidence from different persons. So I take this opportunity to demand that the Home Minister should place on the Table that report of the officer of the Home Ministry who was sent so that we can know what the real state of affairs is.

In this connection, I want to refer to another thing also. I am very sorry that about Harijans we are getting reports regularly. On the 7th of this month, some of us got a telegram, and I can say that some of the important members in the treasury benches also got that telegram, from Cuddapah. The telegram says:

"Harijan kidnapped mercilessly beaten murdered in Rajupalem Village Kamalpuram, Cuddapah District, Andhra Pradesh."

Even after this incident, we are regularly getting reports that in some parts of the country, including Andhra Pradesh the Harijans are being treated like that. And when there is a Minister like Mr. Thimma Reddy, who has no respect for the rights of the Harijans, making such statements, these statements incite the caste

Hindus who are still suffering from caste prejudices to behave like this with the Harijans. I will not say more because my Andhra Pradesh friends got angry last time when I referred to some facts. So this is the state of affairs in the country. Everywhere, in every State in India, even now the Harijans are economically exploited and they are being ill-treated. There are certain States—Andhra Pradesh and other places—where the Harijans even for a small cause are being beaten up and murdered. I know in that incident in Andhra Pradesh when the Harijan boy was burnt, before his death he rushed to a private practitioner, but the private practitioner did not treat him lest the caste Hindus should get angry with him; and afterwards he died. So that is why I am saying that we are not going to believe all the statements that have come. One would not depend upon the report of the Chief Minister who has been asked to enquire about the conduct of his own colleague. Secondly, we know under what circumstances the journalists are functioning and how always pressures are brought to bear on them. So, to give an impartial colour to the enquiry, I demand here—to some it may be a very small matter—that a Parliamentary Committee consisting of a few members from the treasury benches and a few from this side also should immediately go to Andhra Pradesh at least to judge what is happening there and conduct an enquiry about this case. I am very sorry that after all these clamours throughout India, that Minister up till now does not want to leave his *gr. ddi*. At least he can show by a sacrifice, by leaving that gaddi, that he has not committed such a crime. I understand that up till now even the Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee has not taken up this question. I belong to the journalist class and I would very much like that all the working journalists of this country should raise their voice against the conduct of the Minister because if you see all the statements, you will find that he has absolutely no

[Shri Banka Behary Das]

respect for the journalists. As a journalist, had I been in that informal discussion, I would not have reported this because it is absolutely beyond the journalistic etiquette. That is the minimum etiquette which should be observed. Once that fact has come to light, we should not take advantage of that journalistic etiquette. I know as a journalist how we function; informal discussions we never bring to the Press. That is why I demand.— just to clear the position in the interest of the Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee and in the interest of this Andhra Pradesh Minister also—a Committee of Parliament should go into this whole matter (*Interruption*) The question is after these 21 years or so how we have been treating the Harijan community in this country. It is well known that every caste-Hindu has absolute contempt for Harijans.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: I will only interrupt him for a minute. Mr. Thimma Reddy on his own admission has said that taking the law into one's own hands is very much justifiable.

SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS: He takes glory in that. That means he is giving encouragement to the caste-Hindus to ill-treat the Harijans. That is why I demand that either he should resign or he should be dismissed or if they fail to do this, a parliamentary committee consisting of Members from different Parties may be appointed to go into the matter thoroughly.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN) in the Chair]

SHRI C. ACHUTHA MENON (Kerala): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I am very sorry to see the way in which the whole Congress Party has treated this question—the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister as well as our own Home Minister. It is a very serious situation, Sir. This is not an isolated incident. We all know that many incidents of this sort have taken place all over the

country,, especially in- Andhra Pradesh. We have already referred to it—the burning of a Harijan boy and the parading of certain Harijan women naked in some villages. Like that so many things have taken place. This is the time when there is something like a revolt among the Harijan people all over the country because of the way they have been treated for the last so many years. This was precisely the time, when such an incident had taken place, the Congress Party ought to have come forward and boldly demanded an impartial enquiry, which would have unearthed the whole matter and the Government could have come to proper conclusions. That would have created certain confidence among the Harijans and the oppressed people all over India that some sort of justice could be got from this Government. That golden opportunity has been lost. Mr. Vice-Chair-man, I should think that they were more concerned with saving their own skin. How else can we explain the manner in which the whole enquiry about the episode has been conducted? We all know that point has been criticised' here very much, the casual way in which the Andhra Chief Minister, Mr. Brahmananda Reddy, treated this whole question. The incident occurred on the 22nd April; he was here in Delhi on the 25th April; he had a talk with Mr. Chavan; he knew the matter was very important and still he does not take any step towards making any sort of enquiry. He went on tour and then he went to the headquarters on the 2nd of May.' Then he called certain journalists and recorded their statements.

I will briefly state only one or two points because I am afraid I have no time to discuss the details. The so-called enquiry conducted by the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh is a very shabby affair. He has called certain journalists and put them certain questions and recorded their statements. There is no opportunity to test the veracity of the statements. These questions have not been put

journalists in the presence of the very person whose statement has been called in question, that particular journalist, Mr. Sitaram. Therefore, there is no opportunity to test the veracity of the statements which have been recorded. So I do not know what kind of reliability we can attach to the statements recorded. *ken*. from the very statement made it is very clear that Mr. Thimma Reddy must have stated something substantially similar to what has been reported. You will please note that the way in which Shri Brahmananda Reddy has put questions to certain journalists is very significant. I have read the whole statements. To certain journalists he puts the question directly like this: "Did the Minister say that Harijans are thieves and they should be kicked?" But please note that he has not put these questions directly to two journalists out of whom one is Mr. Rama Rao who was that very same person who objected to the Minister's saying that journalists are to be thrashed he had the guts to speak up to the Minister. So he was careful not to put that question to him and, secondly, to Mr. Parthasarathy who sent the first report. He thought that putting these questions to such people would be dangerous. He did not ask any direct question either of Mr. Parthasarathy or of Mr. Rama Rao. I say the whole thing is a very fishy affair. The Chief Minister did not want to get at the truth of the matter; that is very obvious.

Sir, there is one other point which I want to make. I learn from reliable authority that the statements made by or the reports sent by some of these journalists to their own papers are at variance with their statements made before the Chief Minister. I can very well understand why this is so. It is because the Chief Minister is a big person and journalists have to depend upon him or the Government for so many things. We can understand the way they are approaching

this question. So I say that the so-called enquiry conducted by Mr. Brahmananda Reddy has not revealed the truth, has not enabled us to get at the truth of the whole matter. From the statement it is clear that Mr. Thimma Reddy must have stated that Harijans should be thrashed or some such thing. It has also been stated that the Minister referred to journalists and said that they should be thrashed. I am sure that he will also say that those M.P's who agitate this matter should be thrashed. So, it is a very good case for the appointment of a parliamentary committee. The least that should be done is to conduct a proper enquiry into the whole affair so that we can get at the truth of the whole matter. I therefore demand that a parliamentary committee should be constituted to go into this question so that Harijans may feel that they can get justice from the representatives of the people in Legislatures and Parliament.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: Mr. Vice-Chairman, I get up with a very sad heart to-day because such a major issue like the issue of the Harijans has to be tackled in such a way because of the sad incident which has been so much discussed in the two Houses and this incident is an incident which never existed.

AN HON. MEMBER: You are a Reddy.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY. They are reminding me that I am a Reddy. I do not think there is anybody more conscious of this fact that I am a Reddy and I am an Andhra and I am also conscious of this fact—maybe I will be striking a different note—for that maybe I will not be appreciated but certainly being no coward, being a honest person, I want to put the practical realities of the things that exist to-day, not only in Andhra but in the whole country. The issue by itself, is such a small matter

[Shrimati Yashoda Reddy]

for me and I do not think—and I did not think—I would even spend one minute on it. From the way it was argued and the way it was answered in the Lok Sabha, I thought there was nothing on which to be talked but still I see there is a great originality and talent still existing in the Rajya Sabha in spite of all this . . .

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: Very elder Sabha.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: Every Member who wanted to speak said 'One thing was clear' but one thing that was clear was that Mr. Dahyabhai Patel went from Member to Member to instigate them to speak. One thing which was clear here was that all the parties are united to damn our Government, that is the Andhra Government and if possible the Andhra . . .

(Interruptions)

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Including . . .

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: I seek your protection. I am a minority. I am the accused. If these people talk of minorities, I want to be protected as an accused.

(Interruptions)

SHRI C. ACHUTA MENON: We have not accused you . . .

(Time bell rings)

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: No. These people have taken five minutes of my time. Please grant me that time and extra time also because I am the accused. I represent my accused State. When I am standing here certainly as an accused, I have to present the views of my State here. I do not want to get emotional.

SHRI KESAVAN (THAZHAVA) (Kerala): May I know whether Mr. Thimma Reddy has stated: 'Do you want them to be Kissed?' What do you say about It (Interruptions) We know about it. If they are to be thrashed . . .

(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: I am prepared to agree with Mr. Banka Behary Das that it is a very sad thing that after 20 years there are people in India who talk of Harijans as if they were a different set of people. I visualise India, as a student of Constitutional history, where hereafter there would be only one set of people—Indians—and nobody else and neither language, nor religion will ever be discussed but after 20 years this has come. So if anybody has said any such thing, I would have been the first person to protest and I would have been ashamed to belong to that community or even that State. I can say it with all the emphasis here. At least one thing my Opposition friends will grant me and that is my sincerity. I am sure you will grant me that. They said that the Chief Minister should not have enquired . . .

(Interruptions)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Please, you do not answer them. You address me. They are not doubting your sincerity and you go on.

SHRI M. H. SAMUEL (Andhra Pradesh): He said: 'Do you want to be kissed'? He was talking to Yashoda Reddy. Is that correct for him to say that?

SHRI KESAVAN (THAZHAVA); Generally Harijans who are . . .

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): He was referring to the statement, Mr. Samuel

SHRI KESAVAN (THAZHAVA): Do you want them to be kissed—he *said*. They are not be kissed, but they are to be killed—that is the meaning of his statement.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: There are two instances. There are three major things . . .

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Be very brief.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: I am trying to be brief. The Harijan problem is one of the biggest problems and let us not add it to the other difficulties which we have like the language one . . .

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY (Madras): Who created?

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: Maybe it is not the time to question the propriety itself but in the wisdom of the Lok Sabha and also in the wisdom of this Sabha, We brought this issue and I would humbly submit that this was not an issue to have been brought here at all. It was made that a certain remark was made. That remark was never made. It was made in a private conversation by a Minister of that State and I would like to say . . .

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: Hari-jans are the special responsibility of the Centre.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: I know that. Still I would appeal and -say that there is also a responsible Legislature in Andhra Pradesh. There are also responsible people in Andhra Pradesh. There is no lack of public opinion in Andhra Pradesh and there are still Harijan leaders who are sympathisers of Andhra Pradesh and Andhra will certainly deal with the person if this person is morally or socially wrong because legally there is no case at all. So the case gets closed.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: It is a moral case.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: Here I come to the moral side of it. The moralities are of different shades, Mr. Misra. I would like to refer to . . .

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: Mr. Dharia is on one side . . .

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: Mr. Dharia made one very important point. He said that a code of conduct should be kept both for Ministers and the journalists. I entirely agree but by suggesting that is he not contracting his own argument by saying that a Minister when he said these words, by saying that he kicked these people and when this journalist reported it, he got wild? What did the Minister say? The Minister did not say: 'Do not use the matter' He said, any writer or journalist, for that matter if you, myself or anybody, who highlights the castes and communities should be treated harshly. I am coming to you, Mr. Dharia. If he says that, when we went to have a Code of Conduct for Ministers and journalists, what are you saying? Let the Minister, as a responsible person, not talk rashly and let not the journalists try to highlight such things which do not take place. That is exactly what he said—my be in a very uncultured way or crude way, maybe not in the polished way as we Parliamentarians do—and he is not known for it, there is no doubt about Thimma Reddy's rudeness . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: He is a farmer.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: Of course he is a farmer.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: I did not know that Congress Members are uncultured people.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: Most of us are farmers, there is no doubt about it at all. One word more about the word 'thrash' . . .

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): And finish.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: I will finish. The words were 'thrash', 'beaten' and 'dealt with', for your information; the words 'kicked' was never used by the Minister. The word 'kicked' was used by the journalist when he said 'It is not the journalists that should be kicked, it is the Ministers, your police officers who highlight these castes who must be kicked'. The word 'kicked' was literally, correctly, absolutely, unambiguously was used by the gentleman 'journalist' and never by the word of Mr. Thimma Reddy.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: You read the statement of Mr. Rama Rao.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: I have read it once, twice, three times and a dozen times. If a leader like Mr. Lokanath Misra's strain of thought could be upset by interruptions, with all these people heckling me, certainly even my brain is shaken. They do not allow me to talk reasonably.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): All right, you should be steady, and you address me.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: Because I am steady . . .

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: May I put one question to the hon. Member? In these statements I come across a passage where a journalist is saying that the Government should be kicked. Now, until and unless the Minister had said that the journalists should be kicked, the journalist would never have said that the Government should be kicked. The hon. Minister must have said it first that the journalists should be kicked, and then, as a reaction on the part of the journalist, he should have said that the Government must be kicked.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: If the hon. Member takes into consideration the whole evidence, it may be interpreted also that he could not have said it. Why can't you place a charitable interpretation on whether this Minister said so or not? Even if

he happens to be a Reddy, he is still a human being, as much as anybody else. This is all that I want to ask Mr. Khobaragade.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: Are Reddys human beings?

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: Certainly they are; they are human beings and I may tell the hon. Member that I am a Reddy too.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: You may be an exception.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: But the exception has got the right to speak. These people ask me the question: How do you tolerate the word 'thrash'?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): You are not to answer these questions.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: I am not answering but this thine cannot go on like this. You know, Sir, the position; you are also from Andhra. Unfortunately, for the first time now I am prepared to say that the English translation of some words in this case has brought about all this trouble. English is a wonderful language and usually I defend English. Now, when we talk in the local language in the idiomatic form, whether Telugu or Tamil or Kanna-da, we use very idiomatic words which if literally translated into English will give, for example, words like 'thrash and 'kick' as the English equivalents appearing in the Oxford dictionary and such words, naturally, have very very bad meaning. But you know, and every honest Member sitting next to me on my right and left will agree with me in this. When you say somebody has to be kicked, it does not mean literally kicked, it does not mean literally thrashed. They are just some idioms in the local languages.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: Mr. Vice-Chairman, I would have agreed to

this generous interpretation, but the Very person had said, prior to three years, in reference to *one* journalist, that if he did not behave properly, he would meet the fate of the journalist who was murdered in Madras. And here, when the very same person has used the_{se} words, I am not prepared to accept the generous interpretation of my dear colleague.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: I agree with him. Sir. If the_{se} people are prepared to excus_e my Chief Minister . . .

(Interruptions)

SHRI KESAVAN (THAZHAVA): The hon. Member is making an in-orrecit statement. *(Interruptions)* Mr. Rama Rao ha, said this in his statement as Thimma Reddy has spoken: "You journalists who day us or highlight the caste should be kicked." *(Interruptions)*

(Time bell rings)

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: I am finishing, Sir. It is the Laksh-mikanthan murder case, I agree. But if it had been fact—Mr. Dharia is a very intelligent man—how did he come to remember it only three years later? I cannot understand why people say things and publish things in the 'Patriot' even when they do not exist. About this one gentleman I know, I have got so much record. He had waited all these thre_e years to say for the first time about that threatene_j murder. Mr. Dharia should have a little more intelligence. That is all I say to him.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: Since I am in your company I am losing that.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: "We ai*e responsible persons. Let us not be emotional. Nobody can be mor_e emotional than I when Harijans ar_e in the least ill-treated. Let us not even indirectly, by these bicker-

ings, harm more th_e cause of Hari-jans. Now let us forget about this and strive for communal harmony and national unity. This i_s all that I want to say. I repudiate th_e allegations made against Mr. Thimma Reddy, it is very unfair.

SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD (Maharash- ' tra): Sir, I can reply to Mrs. Reddy in on_e sentence by saying that the Scheduled Cast_e people of Andhra Pradesh are demonstrating against this Minister. Now I start my speech.

The hon. Home Minister was pleased to assur_e us that he had his own assessment and he would submit ins report; he said that he had his ewa source of information. But, in my opinion, whatever he has done is nothing else but the job of the P^{os}-tal department. He has simply submitted to the Hous_e the informations he got from Andhra Chref Minister— th_e informations contained in these lette_{rs} of the Chief Minister and the Agriculture Minister and in these other statements. This is th_e job which my friend, Mr. Yashwantrao has done, and this is nothing else but the job of a postman. This I should tell you.

The incident took plac_e on the 22nd April, 1968, and the news appeared in th_e press immediately. Now suppose some news appear_s alleging something against some people, the'people ar_e in the habit of criticising it, or they always contradict the news and say, 'Oh, I hav_e not said so.' But here you will find that no press correspondent has contradicted the news. None of th_e press correspondents has questioned the veracity of th_e report in th_e 'Patriot' against Andhra Agriculture Minister Thimma Reddy. This is one thing to be noted and always remembered. Afterwards, when the Chief Minister called them and they met him, then they say "No"; ^ The Agriculture Minister ha, hot said so.

[Shri B. K. Gaikwad.]

That is all. But earlier you will find that none has contradicted the news. That is a point that cannot be forgotten.

Then you will find, Mr. Vice-Chairman, in these statements of the correspondents that everywhere every correspondent says that there is the practice that if any man is found stealing, he is thrashed, he is beaten, he is ill-treated, he is kicked, and so on. And who is recording these statements? The Chief Minister is recording these statements. Now can anybody take the law into his own hands and can the Chief Minister tolerate these lawless acts? And if the Chief Minister and the Agriculture Minister tolerate these lawless acts, do they deserve to be there as rulers of that State? They do not deserve to be in power any more, even for a minute. If a man is taking the law into his own hands, and these Ministers are encouraging them to take the law into their own hands, they should not be tolerated even for a minute any more, their remaining as rulers of that State. That is why I support the proposal put forward by Mr. Dharia, and I also second it, and I say that this Minister Thimma Reddy should not be kept in the Ministry even for a minute.

Then you will find And that the correspondents have said that some of the thieves happened to be Harjans. It has also been said that the Scheduled Caste people are poor and so, naturally, they commit these thefts.

Now in the other records you will also find that it is said that the journalists who mention these cases and mislead public opinion should also be beaten. This also shows that there must have been some talk before this and that talk was nothing else but the talk about the Scheduled Caste people.

SHRI BALACHANDRA MENON
(Kerala): That sentence must be noted, Sir.

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SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD: Here is the passage: 'You journalists who play us or highlight the 'caste' should be kicked. Then I protested. I said, why kick the journalists? It is the police which mentions the caste in the wireless messages and therefore they should be kicked, and your Government also if they cannot control the police.' It means that there must have been some talk before this about the Scheduled Caste people, and that should not be forgotten. Moreover, you will find that the Minister comes forward and says, "Would not thieves be taken to task? Do you want them to be kissed? They should be kicked." So what sort of a Minister we have there? And such a Minister is there for years together. Even then Mrs. Reddy comes forward and says, "Oh, nothing has happened. He is very good man." Being a Reddy herself she can represent his case. But I should say that if he is wise enough, he should immediately resign. And if he is not going to resign, then the Government should compel him to resign and ask him to go out of the Government.

Then my friend, Mr. Yashwantrao Chavan, while replying in the Lok Sabha, said, "Oh, I would have taken some action, but there is no prima facie case. What other information does he want for action ever and above all this? Now the Chief Minister called some correspondents and put them questions in such a way that they should say 'yes' or 'no'. You should not also forget, Sir, the fact that fifteen days had passed after the incident and in the meantime every preparation was made to stage-manage the thing, and after that these correspondents were called and set questions were asked of them so that they could give this sort of evidence in their replies. For this, what they have been given, I do not know. Things had been manipulated in such a way to spoil the prima facie case against Minister Thimma Reddy. In the circumstances, to be very brief

in my observations and to run them up, I have no other alternative but to request that a parliamentary committee should be appointed immediately to inquire into this episode and to submit a report as early as possible,

SHRI A. D. MANI (Madhya Pradesh) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, there are two short points in this matter, as lawyers say, and these two are, firstly, did Mr. Thimma Reddy use the expression attributed to him that Harijans should be kicked? That is the first issue. The second issue is, if he did not say that what did he say which made people misunderstand what he said? These are the two issues arising in this case.

Taking the second issue, Sir, it is clear from the evidence placed on the Table of the House in the form of tape-recorded statements of the press correspondents that the Minister had mentioned that those who played up caste in reporting events should be thrashed. I do not approve of the denition given by Mrs. Yashoda Reddy about the word "thrash". We all know what thrashing means, particularly these who get thrashed knew it much better than those who do not. I am very sorry that often in private conversation, in informal talks, we are so loose in our expressions that we use expressions like "thrashing". If a Minister had said it and I am satisfied that he did not make this statement, then it is deplorable and irresponsible for a Minister to have made such a statement, because that almost, amounts to an incitement to the people to take the law into their own hands. I am also aware of the fact that Ministers, particularly not only in Andhra Pradesh but elsewhere also, when they get annoyed with press correspondents, would like to use similar expressions also. If newsmen are going to be thrashed for everything that they write, then the Irwin Hospital and the Willingdon Hospital would be filled with journalists and there will be no room for

Members of Parliament and other VIPs. If he did say as is very clear from the tape-recorded interview, that those who write about caste should be thrashed, then it is quite clear that he did not use the expression that Harijans should be kicked and thrashed. This is quite clear from the evidence. I know some of the journalists in Hyderabad. I have been there as a member of the Small Newspapers Committee—and I have met journalists there. I attach much importance to the evidence by three judges, the correspondent of the PTI, the correspondent of the Times of India and the correspondent of the very responsible newspaper, The Hindu of Madras. And all the three correspondents say that the Minister did not use the expression about Harijans, as has been reported, and it is on that basis that this Short Duration Discussion has taken place.

I am not sure whether there would be so much enthusiasm in the Houses, either in this House or in the other, if journalists had been substituted in place of Harijans, because the journalistic profession does not get the protection it deserves from attacks from politicians and people might perhaps enjoy journalists being thrashed for whatever they publish. It is quite clear, Sir, that the Minister did not use the expression about Harijans and on that ground.

SHRI B. D. KHOBAR AGADE: What about the Scheduled Castes and . . .

SHRI A. D. MANI: He expressed the view that those who played up caste should be thrashed.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: See what he says about the . . .

SHRI A. D. MANI: We all of us feel thoroughly ashamed about the treatment that Harijans have received at the hands of caste Hindus in our country and our sympathies are with them.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): We are dealing with this specific case.

SHRI A. D. MANI: But we should not try to use an imaginary issue like this that the Minister had said something which he did not say and try to work up a good deal of feeling on this question.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: Why don't you go through the statements?

SHRI A. D. MANI: I have read all that and I know all these people. And now, Sir, Mr. Khobaragade wants to know something. This gentleman who filed the story in the Patriot is also the correspondent of the UNI and the UNI is one of the responsible news agencies of this country. He did not make use of that message for the UNI. His informant was Mr. Rama Rao. Mr. Rama Rao in his evidence does not say that the Minister used the expression which is attributed to him.

As far as the point arising from the Short Duration Discussion is concerned, it has been fully met by the evidence that is tape recorded, namely, that the Minister did not use the expression attributed to him.

Sir, a suggestion has been made that a parliamentary commission should be sent to conduct an enquiry into this matter. In this connection, Sir, as a journalist, in this country—and I have been 38 years a journalist and 32 years the editor of a newspaper which is almost a record in this country—I must say that the performance of some of my own colleagues in the profession in Hyderabad is astonishing. Here is a tape-recorded interview. We journalists have got one code of conduct. When a fellow journalist is concerned we do not give evidence except before a professional body or in a court of law. Here the Minister has caught hold of the journalists and taken tape-recorded interviews which sets

up a very bad precedent. My suggestion in such matters is . . .

SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS: They were afraid, perhaps.

SHRI A. D. MANI: As far as the question of Harijans is concerned, this issue should be dropped. But regarding the matter of reporting, if Mr. Sitaraman has misused the information given to him by Mr. Rama Rao, the matter should be considered. It is quite clear that it is a case which should be reported to the Press Council. After all . . .

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: How is it a misuse?

SHRI A. D. MANI: He asked Mr. Rama Rao and Mr. Rama Rao told him that the remark was that journalists should be kicked. But he said that Harijans should be kicked. The information given by Mr. Rama Rao was misused and it is a fit case to go to the Press Council.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: Mr. Mani, Mr. Rama Rao sent it to the Blitz and the Blitz has published that Harijans should be kicked.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Why did he not send it to the UNI? He could have sent it. He does not say so in the evidence.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: It is reported in the Blitz that he wanted the Harijans to be kicked. And Rama Rao is the correspondent of the Blitz.

SHRI A. D. MANI: My suggestion is that since a newspaper man is involved and we have passed the Press Council Act by both Houses of Parliament and there is the Press Council this matter should be referred to the Press Council because Mr. Thimma Reddy will have to be examined as a witness in that case.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: One thing I want to get clear. Do you hold

him' guilty for suggesting the taking of the law in one's own hand.

SHRI A. D. MANI: I have already stated that it is unbecoming of a Minister to use that expression. It is highly irresponsible and he deserves condemnation from the Central Government for that. I do not defend what Mr. Sitaraman had done.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Mr. Villalan, please take only three minutes.

SHRI THILLAI VILLALAN (Madras): So far as this issue is concerned, it is whether an individual placed in a high place has passed disparaging remarks about a community. So far as the evidence before the House is concerned it is only statements by some journalists and the letter of the Chief Minister. From the evidence before the House we can come to a conclusion. But according to me this is not at all an enquiry. It is a mere record of statements of some individuals and also the report of the Chief Minister. In the presence of the Chief Minister some seven journalists have given statements. You may call it the recording of statements. It is not worth being called an enquiry. But even from the statements we can come to a conclusion as to what happened on that day. There is admission by Mr. Thimma Reddy that there was talk of theft in the villages of Andhra. There is clear admission by Mr. Thimma Reddy that there are thefts and also that the poor people of Andhra are indulging in theft. There is another admission on the part of Mr. Thimma Reddy and that admission is that Harijans are poor in Andhra. If we put two and two together we should get four.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: The inference is clear.

SHRI THILLAI VILLALAN: Yes, that is the inference from the evidence recorded. It is evident that the Minister has stated that the poor people are

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indulging in thefts in our State and whenever thieves are caught red-handed they will be kicked. All the three sentences must be looked into together. If we do that we will come to the conclusion that he stated that poor Harijans are indulging in theft and therefore they deserve to be kicked. This is the conclusion even from the statement sent by the Chief Minister of Andhra.

However, according to me the matter at issue is not against any individual like Mr. Thimma Reddy or against the Ministers or against the Government of Andhra Pradesh. According to me the matter concerns the plight of the down-trodden members of a class in the whole country. That is the issue before us. It must be taken up and considered in that light. If we look at the matter in that light then my submission is this. I cannot say that Mr. Thimma Reddy is the symbol of Caste Hindus. As one hon Member stated, he is not a representative of the Caste Hindus. He symbolises the people, the non-Harijan in the whole of India. Even in the Congress they are still following the ideals of Gandhiji and they had served the cause of Harijans for a long time. So the matter may be left to the people of Andhra, the Andhra legislature and the Chief Minister there, because they are all wedded to the ideals of Gandhiji who stood for Harijans. This sort of utterances should not be encouraged. In Tamil there is a couplet saying:

*Teejinal Sutta Pun Ulla Rum, Arathe
Navinal Sutta Vadu.*

This line is from Kural. It means that a wound inflicted by fire can be cured but the wound inflicted by tongue cannot be cured. And so far as Mr. Thimma Reddy is concerned he has wounded by his tongue. We should see that such things are not repeated.

With these words I conclude.

SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHARAN (Kerala): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir,

[Shri K. Chandrasekharan]

hon. Members from all sections of the House except for two hon. Members who struck a different note have stated that the case should not end at this stage and that something more will have to be done. Sir, I was myself at Hyderabad on the 27th and 28th when this matter had been published and several people with whom I happened to casually discuss this matter told me that Mr. Thimma Reddy is such a person who could say this and something more. There was almost unamtmity so far as this aspect is concerned among the people with whom you talked. The question is whether this statement was actually made by him. From a legalistic point of view . . .

SHRI A. D. MANI: And you are a lawyer.

SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHARAN: I never forget that Mr. Mani.

SHRI BALACHANDRA MENON: Not merely a lawyer.

SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHARAN: From a legalistic point of view I am prepared to concede that the various statements taken by the Chief Minister and the denial made by Mr. Thimma Reddy himself may indicate that Mr. Thimma Reddy has not spoken the words attributed to him. But the question is not merely legalistic that way. Even if it is legalistic, a legal method of enquiry has not been adopted. The enquiry made by the Chief Minister does not satisfy anybody in this world except the body of Mr. Chavan—I am not prepared to say the conscience of Mr. Chavan. I submit, Sir, that apart from the mode of enquiry, even going through the papers that have been given to us, reading them between the lines, we are left in an arena of suspicion and doubt. Again speaking in a legalistic sense no amount of suspicion or doubt can establish that the guilt against an accused is proved. But here again Mr. Thimma Reddy is not in the position of an accused in a criminal case. He is a public man

he is a Minister holding a high public office and if there is any suspicion or doubt I have no hesitation in submitting that in the interests of public administration, in the interests of the public life of this country it is necessary that the suspicion and doubt should be cleared and so long as it is not cleared, as was demanded in the Lok Sabha and on the floor of this House, it is the duty of the Home Minister, it is the duty of the Congress Party, it is the duty of the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, to mention to Mr. Thimma Reddy that he had better resign and quit his office. If that is not done, the least that the Congress can do in this regard is that the Home Minister must indicate to the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister that Mr. Thimma Reddy must stand a judicial enquiry.

SHRI M. H. SAMUEL: Sir, the an problem in this country, from time immemorial, has been a sensitive problem. It is a sensitive problem to the extent that each one of us has got a moral responsibility for the perpetration of the treatment that has been given to the Harijans. To speak about the Harijans in this manner to get a handle, instead of doing something for them, to use an occasion like this for political purposes and excite people is something monstrous. I share the bitter cup which the Harijans drink to the dregs. I have tasted it and nobody is going to tell me that they have tasted it as much as I have. When I hear these speeches, I sometimes wonder whether these speeches are really genuine expressions of their feelings towards the Harijans and their problems. And to use this occasion to damn a Government, a stable Government, a Congress Government, is to my sense of justice utterly unfair. Let us go into the facts of the case.

The Opposition leaders have quoted from the statements of the various journalists and they believe what they want to believe and disbelieve what they do not want to believe.

That is hardly fair. You take all the statements together as the hon. D.M.K. Member said just now and then come to a proper, objective and fair assessment of the whole issue. I think Mr. Mani has put the whole -case very squarely and, as a journalist I also feel that the report that has been published needed a great deal of thought and circumspection before being sent to the Press.

Now, Mr. Rajnarain and some others said that the statements made by the journalists were taken under pressure and that they were cowards and that he has suffered on account of it. I can tell him that the newspapermen in this country are no cowards; anybody else may be cowards but not the newspapermen. If you want newspapermen to serve your ends and they do not do it, they cannot be called cowards; they are courageous men. Journalism in this country has grown on the principles of independence and forthright judgment and I am glad to say that our newspapers are some of the best in the world. If there is somebody somewhere who slips now and then it does not mean that the entire profession should be maligned.

SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD: That is why they have published this.

SHRI M. H. SAMUEL: That is the sort of journalists, sometimes with six months' experience. Even you can do it. Even without experience you can come in. And people without even a proper knowledge of English try to judge a certain report to the extent they understand it. 7 P.M.

There is another matter, namely, the Chief Minister's tour to Rayala-seema. Now, I come from Rayala-seema and I know for the last five years we have had no rains. In two districts there is no water to drink. This tour he had fixed up after a lot of delay. Arrangements were made for that and some engineers had been sent there to do some work. He had to go and give orders for these things.

Therefore, to say that he ignored this matter and went to Rayalaseema is not fair. (*Time bell rings.*) Now, one minute more.

Mr. Lokanath Misra said that the UNI contract was suspended as a result of the publication of this report. Now, I have Information . . . (*Interruptions*) Please listen to me because I want you to listen to facts. (*Interruptions*) I am drawing your attention to certain facts. You are taking pleasure in listening to your own speeches. You do not want to listen to us. You want to listen to your own speeches. That shows how fair you are in your judgment. It does not matter, and I do not care. Shrimati Yashoda Reddy said that it is not a physical fact, (*interruption*) The position is that this matter was taken up as an economy measure a few days before the interview and the publication of this report, and the decision was taken at that time along with other decisions for *economy*. Now, after this report was published, the Manager of the UNI represented and the contract, it seems, has been restored for the time being for re-consideration.

Now, Sir, this incident must at least open the eyes of the people in the entire country to the wrongs being done to Harijans. You must realise it, not merely talk about it. You must personally do your own bit in this regard. Speaking in Parliament about Harijans merely will not do. It is your own actions and your Party's actions which matter and I do not know how much you are doing in this matter. I doubt very much if you are doing anything, except talking. I hope all of you will now take this as a lesson and bend your energies to doing something for the welfare of Harijans and treat them better than what you have been doing before.

SHRI KESAVAN (THAZHAVA): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Mr. Thimma Reddy is a member of the Cabinet of Mr. Brahmananda Reddy and in the interests of Mr. Brahmananda Reddy's Cabinet and, also, in the interests of

[Shri Kesavan (Thazhava)]
 their Party, it is the duty of Mr. Brahmananda Reddy to see that Mr. Thimma Reddy is not made liable for this statement. So, he took the statements of certain reporters. These statements are only *ex-parte* statements. The veracity of the statements has not been tested by the particular reporter of the "Patriot". Since it is an *ex-parte* statement and since the veracity of the statements made by the reporters concerned has not been questioned in cross-examination, it cannot be accepted as evidence under the Evidence Act. It is the duty of Shri Brahmananda Reddy to serve the interests of his Cabinet and also of the Congress . . .

SHRI M. H. SAMUEL; As I have said, it is a political question.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): No interruptions please.

SHRI KESAVAN (THAZHAVA): Answers were given and going through the statements it can be seen that there is no cogent version with regard to the statement of Mr. Thimma Reddy. If one goes through the statement, it can be seen that the statement alleged to have been made by Mr. Thimma Reddy appears to be different in each statement. There is no cogency with regard to that. But from these statements it can be seen that Harijans are very poor. He said that poor Harijans are in the habit of committing thefts. Then, they are caught hold of and they are thrashed. He further asks: "Do you mean to say that they are to be kissed?" A minister of a State says: "When they commit thefts, do you mean to say that they are to be kissed?" He intends them to be thrashed or killed. That is the conclusion that can be drawn from that. There is no other meaning. They are illiterate men, but Mr. Thimma Reddy is an educated man. The Minister, therefore, asks: "Are they to be kissed?" The meaning of it, I said above. Yet he remains a Minister in Andhra

Pradesh. Most probably this may be the policy they follow against Harijans. Now, when the election comes, they will kiss them. There is no doubt about it, to get their votes, but at other times they will kick them and kill them. We know that in Andhra Pradesh the caste Hindus are playing the role of the White people in Rhodesia. We heard that some Rhodesians were hanged to death. In Andhra Pradesh Black people were killed by caste Hindus. (Time bell rings) So, what I have to say is that the evidence given by Mr. Brahmananda Reddy cannot be accepted under the Evidence Act or under any other law. A judicial enquiry has to be instituted and Mr. Thimma Reddy must stand a judicial enquiry and he has to be sent away from the Cabinet also, if not Mr. Brahmananda Reddy.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA): Mr. Vice-Chairman, the entire episode has been a very unhappy one and I share the sentiments of hon. Members, when they say that the lot of Harijans has yet to improve to the extent that is necessary. What should have been done for the abolition of untouchability and for other improvements in the conditions of Harijans has not been done in these twenty years. This incident only typifies and points to the need for urgent action to be taken to tackle this question on a fundamental basis. It is quite true that conditions in our villages are far from satisfactory. The incident regarding the burning of a Harijan boy and other incidents in which Harijans in Mungeli, in my own home State of Madhya Pradesh suffer and all kinds of complaints that we are receiving from time to time from various parts of the country go to show that, apart from apathy in the governmental machinery, even the social consciousness of a portion of the society to this problem is not what it should be.

As far as this particular instance is concerned, we were very pained and

shocked when we first heard of it and the Home Minister has, from time to time, given expression to his own views and sentiments on this. But since this matter concerned the Minister of a State, we thought that it would be best to ask the Chief Minister himself to look into it and give us his well-considered opinion. Sir, it is very unfair to the Chief Minister or even to the journalists if it is said that the enquiry by the Chief Minister has not been fair or that the journalists were working under pressure or gave the statements to the Chief Minister under pressure. When we consider such public matters, we must assume that everybody concerned is honourable unless proved to be otherwise. Unless we have reasons to believe that the Chief Minister himself has views which are not wholesome or that he was unduly trying to shield his colleague, we should not allege that the enquiry by him is not reliable or that it is not fair. I can see that the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh was put in a difficult position. But when he took the action of calling the journalists who were present at the news conference and had taken their statements and got their signatures on them, then he just forwarded them to the Home Minister without giving his own opinion about it. So, the Chief Minister has not said that Shri Thimma Reddy did not do or did do it. That is to say, it was wrong to say that the Chief Minister himself was acting in an unfair manner or that he pressurised the journalists to give a version of the news conference which is not true.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): My question is that . . .

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: And if you go through all the letters, even the letters of Shri Rama Rao and others, you will find that nowhere in the letters did they say that the Minister concerned made the statement that is attributed to him. That is the main point. There would be no question of not punishing a

person or removing any person from public office, who holds views as alleged to Shri Thimma Reddy. There is no doubt in my mind about this. But in this particular case, as the matter has turned out to be, even the journalists who were present there and the gentleman who sent the report to the *Patriot* did not say specifically that he said so. This is the position. And the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh is unnecessarily blamed because, as I have pointed out, he did not append the opinion of himself with the report that he sent; he just sent true copies of the statements given by the journalists who were present. That is why I would say that whatever the unwholesome nature of this episode, we have to treat it as closed and we have to accept that there is no *prima facie* evidence that the Minister indulged in the kind of statement that has been attributed to him . . .

(Interruptions)

Shri Banka Bepary Das enquired whether an official was sent from here. As far as I am aware, no official was sent from here at all. But we did collect our own information to come to a certain conclusion . . .

(Interruptions) It is not a question of our information or anybody's information, we have considered the matter from all . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I have information that the Central Government has got, is in possession of, information . . .

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: He is making an irresponsible statement. I am not going to . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Deny It.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: There is no question of denying or confirming. I will not deny or confirm. I will not engage myself in an irresponsible manner over an irresponsible statement.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I put it to the hon. Minister. The Central Government, through its agency, has got the information that he did say so. If I am wrong, let him deny that and say that there is no such information in the possession of the Central Government. Let the House know.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: I would only repeat what I said that the hon. Member is making an irresponsible statement.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I take strong exception to it. What is irresponsibility? Is Shri Thimma Reddy who kicks the journalists a very responsible person?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): You have had your say.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Shri Thimma Reddy it was who according to the evidence given said that all the journalists are to be kicked.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: I would like to finish. You protect me from his interruptions.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: With due respect to the hon. Minister, when a particular question is put to him, instead of saying that he is making an irresponsible statement . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: It is very bad.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: Is the hon. Minister prepared to confirm or deny the question put to him?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: On a point of order. This is the mentality, the Thimma Reddy mentality. I did not say any bad words, I did not use any unparliamentary language. I say, I have that information through my sources. Now, I put it to him through you, Sir, let him either confirm or deny it. Can he deny it? He would neither deny nor admit and then he calls me irresponsible. I say, he is

displaying not only height of irresponsibility but the grossest arrogance in such matters.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: Mr. Vice-Chairman, I say that if the hon. Member claims that he has got any CIB thing, his claim is irresponsible, I maintain.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Again, I have said about no CIB report. I say, the Central Home Ministry is in possession of information.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: May I be allowed to complete my statement, Sir?

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: Sir, I want to make one submission. Shri Bhupesh Gupta has said that the Central Government is in possession of some information and that information is to the effect that Shri Thimma Reddy did say so. And Shri Ctvavan also in the other House has said that he has got other sources of information and will make his own assessment after receiving the report from Shri Brahmananda Reddy. I would request the hon. Minister here, if he has got some information and some documents in his possession, let him place all the documents on the Table of the House so that the House can make its own assessment whether Shri Thimma Reddy has said so or not.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA-I wish to state here that whatever information we have, we have get from various sources, even from political persons from Andhra Pradesh, from other parts of the country, from journalists and others. They have all given their own version of the story. And as I said earlier in this House when I made a statement, we have information of all kinds with us. But we are going to depend on the information given to us by the journalists who were there and the Chief Minister himself, and this is our position. And that is why I request the House ...

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: On a point of order. This is not at all fair. Certainly, he should take into account the information he has got from the Chief Minister or the journalists. I am not disputing it. But *how the* information available or in possession of the Government from other sources becomes . . .

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): What is the point of order?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Listen. That is why sometimes some people do not get more than 42 votes.

How that becomes irrelevant or immaterial? I say, 'all information I am prepared; and let the Minister of State in the Home Ministry place before the Chairman all information in their possession. Let the Chairman

go through it and tell us what the information is.

SHRI VIDYA CHAR AN SHUKLA: I was saying that with regard to this matter after having received this report, I do not think anything further needs to be done in this matter and that is why I would request the House to agree with me and close this matter and treat it as finally closed.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: I want to ask a clarification.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): The House stands adjourned till 11.00 A.M. on Monday.

The House then adjourned at nineteen minutes past seven of the clock till eleven of the clock on Monday, the¹ 13th May, 1868.