

anything to the Chairman in order that it might be placed before the House There was no such thing. Otherwise I do not think we were obliged to carry on some propaganda on the Radio and everywhere on behalf of all those friends If they had not done some other thing, they might not have been detained I cannot do something entirely contrary to the purpose for which they are detained and . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA You, Sir should

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA I do not think there is any question of privilege here and . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA Sir, it is for you

MR. CHAIRMAN No, Mr Gupta Please sit down I have allowed you a full say I am not discussing the matter just now I wanted to hear if he had something to say. I am considering the proposal and I will let you know

SHRI G MURAHARI (Uttar Pradesh) The letters may be placed on the Table of the House.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA All right Sir, you may consider the matter I have nothing to say now.

MR CHAIRMAN. Now we pass on to the next item on the agenda

RESOLUTION RE APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE TO ENQUIRE INTO THE WORKING OF THE EX- ISTING PROCEDURE FOR SANC- TIONING OF CINEMATOGRAPH FILMS FOR EXHIBITION

SHRI S B BOBDEY (Maharashtra) Mr Chairman, I beg to move

"This House is of opinion that Government should appoint a Committee consisting of literary men,

educationists and Members of Parliament to enquire into the working of the existing procedure for sanctioning of cinematographic films for exhibition and the effect that these films have on the society and to make recommendations to effect improvements therein"

[THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

Madam Deputy Chairman, the statistics reveal that on a average over twenty lakhs of people visit cinema houses daily in India This speaks of the unimaginable popularity that could be earned by the movies in the hearts of the people from all classes and especially the younger generation

Within three decades only, the movie industry reached the stage of mushroom growth. It is said that our film industry occupies the third top place in the world regarding production of films The capital investment exceeds eightyfour crores of rupees and it employs directly more than a lakh of workers The Government earns a total revenue of over one crore of rupees and large amounts of foreign exchange every year Besides, the movies have received general acceptance, as the cheapest medium of entertainment for all people, in every strata of society Despite this unprecedented and vast growth of the industry, one must not be disillusioned

The movies have an inherent tremendous power for good or evil. The Government of India recognised this from the national point of view long back The first Film Enquiry Committee was appointed in 1928 and the second one in the year 1949 under the Chairmanship of Shri T. Rangachari and Shri S K Patil respectively The Cinematograph Act was passed in 1918 and this was further amended in the year 1952 under which a Central Board of Film Censor was constituted to regulate film production activity. Although the question is debatable, one will have finally to accept that every art and even a

[Shri S. B. Bobdey.]

business has its purpose and aim. Although it is true that the primary function of the movie is entertainment, one must not forget that entertainment may be ennobling or degrading. Now it is high time to study the merits and demerits of movies with reference to the national morals. Although we accept that the code of censorship was formulated with the utmost good faith and due safeguard of the social sanctity, I am now convinced that the existing censorship procedure requires a radical change. The working of the code of administration and censorship during the last ten years has revealed many serious drawbacks in its implementation. If this state of affairs continues further, a day is not far off which would witness the defeat of the purpose of the code. Despite the application of the occasional scissors to the films by the Censor Board, to our surprise hundreds of films certified are exhibited to the people which are surely ones that would endanger the nation's morals in the disguise of entertainment. The Cinematograph Act of 1952 in section 5B, has laid down certain principles for guidance in certifying films. It lays down:

"A film shall not be certified for public exhibition if, in the opinion of authority competent to grant the certificate, the film or any part of it is against the interests of the security of the state, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency or morality or involves defamation or contempt of court or is likely to incite the commission of any offence."

The Censor Board has to decide as to which film falls in the above category and which do not. Films falling in the above category are not certified for exhibition but at the same time the films which are certified for exhibition are classified as U and A. By this a distinction is made between films considered suitable for adults only and those suitable for general

exhibition. Such distinction, I think, presupposes that films which are passed with an A certificate contain something which is harmful to the society or nation in general and even then they are released for exhibition. I think this point will have to be reviewed in view of the fact that the masses of our country are not so adequately educated as to have the capacity to discriminate between good and bad. At this stage, every precaution must be taken to ensure the safety of the Republic and disruptive and demoralising forces must be held in leash. Since all social values are in a state of flux and the new order is not yet born, every attempt must be made to check propagation of ideas which may vitiate the growth of the right mould of social and moral values. Film is the most powerful medium of expression today and has a tremendous moving power for the masses for good or evil. If there is no proper pre-release censorship, it may be too late to undo the mischief done by the films. An undesirable aspect of the distinction between A and U certificates has been the tendency on the part of producers and distributors to exploit the fact that a particular film has been granted an A certificate, their advertisements tending to imply that an A certificate vouches for the contents of the film being salacious. Moreover, there are obvious difficulties for exhibitors while judging the age in many cases and in enforcing their decisions particularly when they are faced by angry mobs at the theatres. The result therefore is that the enforcement of this law is left to the good sense of the cinema-goers to the extent that it can operate in the face of added temptation to see films or portions thereof which could probably be kept away from the screen. This view was correctly emphasised by the Film Enquiry Committee of 1951 and no action has been taken so far to amend the Act.

Secondly, the Cinematograph Act of 1952, under section 5(1) provides for the establishment of advisory

panels at regional centres but it is generally criticised that they do not discharge their responsibilities in a judicious manner. Also, the film industry in general has been agitating over the indiscriminate and whimsical attitude of the Censor Officers towards the dialects. They complain that people not well conversant with the language of a film under review are made to sit in judgment resulting in fantastic deletions and additions which not only create a lot of botheration and monetary loss to producers concerned but also harm the inherent values of a film greatly. We are one with the industry on this point, since we feel that the examiners must have a thorough knowledge of the language of a film which they are to examine for certification. They should be highly proficient in the regional languages and should be eminent authorities on literature, history and the sciences.

Thirdly, the Act does not in any way provide for pre-censorship of film scripts. This question has in the past been often raised debated and left where it was. I think the scope of censorship should be widened slightly so as to include censorship of film scripts which will help the producers to a considerable extent and save them, the ordeal of saving the music when the Censor Board puts its foot down at the time of examination of a picture. Moreover, the wastage of national wealth will be checked.

We have no doubt whatsoever that films as an important means of communication of ideas through language and as an interpretation of life through art have an important cultural and sociological significance and as such a valuable formative role. Hence it is the duty of the State and the community to ensure that the films which are passed for exhibition or which are seen are healthy and desirable and make their due contribution to the building up of national character.

Madam Deputy Chairman, I will congratulate the Government of India for the work that is being done by the Films Division. We will have to admit that the Films Division is doing a commendable job for educational and cultural propaganda. Many films have been produced in India which are ennobling and inspiring. But it is a general impression in the country that the bulk of the Indian movies are of the sex and crime variety and are breaking up the moral fibre in the individual and the collective mind.

Madam, research in America has established that movies depicting violence, life and death, create false values in children and distort their outlook. In one study it was found that out of 200 boys under 12 years of age, 75 per cent. attempted playing impersonation of film stories. Fifty per cent. out of 1200 Chicago elementary school children expressed that their day dreams were influenced by what they saw on the screen. What is true of this class of American movies is more true of the Indian products of this variety. They have less art and greater vulgarity than their American prototypes. Most of them are base imitations of the lower class of American movies. These Indian movies of this class are inartistic in plots, vulgar in dances, songs and dialogues and disgusting in tone.

Often we find that very vulgar and derogatory titles are given to pictures and they are passed by the Censors. Titles like 'Dilli-ka-Thug', 'Bombay-ka-Chor' and 'Dilli-ka-Dada' dampen people's morals and often a whole city is treated with contempt. The Censor Board should be strict in passing pictures that bear derogatory or vulgar titles.

If you take the case of cinema posters, most of them are a disgrace to our street corners, only displaying men and women in amorous attitudes

[Shri S. B. Bobdey.]

which can scarcely be considered decent, if adopted by the people in public. They have, besides, the effect of vulgarising our sense of delicacy and decorum and thus breaking down Indian standards of behaviour. Even Vinobaji and his workers have rightly decided to take action against such posters.

The overall effect of cinema on the blossoming younger generation is more perverse. The moral fibre is shattered. The mental outlook of youths is governed by cinema deities and they try to lead a life of stars by copying in all fields of life their activities. In fact the youths have been prematurely given lessons in affairs of love. How does one expect from these engrossed and love-stricken youths any enterprising feat of bravery or ambitious work of national interest?

The men behind the film producing industry are financial magnates of the country. Their only aim is to multiply their wealth though it may cost the nation its character. Hence, Madam Deputy Chairman, I would like to urge that the time has come when it is absolutely necessary for the Government to come forward with stringent measures to correct the attitude of the film producers, directors and others who endanger the nation's morals in the guise of entertainment. With these good intentions, Madam, I move the Resolution and I am confident that my hon. friends in the House will support it. Thank you.

The question was proposed.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA (Uttar Pradesh): Madam, I move:

"That in the Resolution,—

(i) for the words 'and Members of Parliament' the words 'Members of Parliament and representatives of the film industry, more particularly producers, directors and artistes of note' be substituted; and

(ii) after the word 'society' the words 'keeping in view the development of the film industry,' be inserted."

Madam, the first part of my amendment is that:

"for the words 'and Members of Parliament' the words 'Members of Parliament and representatives of the film industry, more particularly producers, directors and artistes of note' be substituted".

The purpose of this amendment is that when we are appointing a committee which is to go into a particular industry, representatives, technical experts of the industry should also be represented on such a committee.

The second part of the amendment is that:

"after the word 'society' the words 'keeping in view the development of the film industry, be inserted."

The purpose of this amendment is also self-explanatory. While we go into the working of a particular industry we must keep in mind the development of that industry. The Committee should view it from that point of view also. The approach should not be only destructive; the approach should be constructive. And, therefore, these words are very necessary.

The question was proposed.

SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN (Maharashtra): Madam Deputy Chairman, I wish to support the Resolution as it is most desirable.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING: (SHRI C. R. PATABHI RAMAN): May I inform the House at this stage that I am accepting the amendment of Shri Bhargava?

SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN: The film industry has grown during the last ten years tremendously and is occupying in our country an important place. The industry has also its own problems. . . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Somehow your voice is not clear. Can you not come closer to the mike?

SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN: I think there must be some defect in the mike.

Madam, besides the film being the most flexible and sensitive of the mass media, as has been aptly described by the hon. Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, it is necessary to assess the effects of films on men's minds and assess whether these effects are desirable and if not, to what extent and in which way they are not desirable and how to remedy them without hampering the artistic and technical features of the film. I know there is the Cinematograph Act of 1952 which regulates the exhibition of films. The Government also helps the industry through the Film Finance Corporation. It is, however, necessary to examine whether these measures are adequate or not. A thorough examination of the place and role of films from different angles has become urgent. Hence it is hoped that this Resolution moved by my friend, Mr. Bobdey, will be given earnest consideration by the Minister of Information and Broadcasting.

I will now trace the brief history of this film industry. The film industry started, as I have said, more than half a century back. It was nursed and nurtured in Bombay first. The industry for a considerable period produced each year only a few pictures. Till 1926-27 the production was very limited. The reasons are obvious. There was the competition with foreign English films. There were difficulties of studios, techniques and talents. There were very few theatres also, and be-

sides that the capital that is required for such a production was also scarce. But during the last decade a complete transformation has been effected so to say in this particular film world. New techniques have come, both photographic as well as about music. The play-back technique is now very popular. There are now many more talents. May I say this? You find queues at studios. There was recently an incident when a girl from Delhi went to Bombay in order to become a star there. Theatres have also increased. At least up to taluka level, where there is a population of 10,000 or so, people have taken to cinemas. The only entertainment that they find is that of films. So far as capital is concerned, because of the black and unaccounted money it may be that the investment potential is very high even though the production costs have gone up very much higher.

Now you will find that the production of films is done not only in Hindi or Hindustani but in a number of other languages. From the statistics that has been given by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in 1964 as many as 300 films have been certified out of which 113 are in Hindi, 122 are in South Indian languages, 34 are in Bengali and 18 are in Marathi. So you will find from these that the language films are also coming up rapidly. Not only this but the film industry is getting transformed in another direction in that two out of three films today are colour films and it may be said that in the last few years a number of films that we produced in colour were only Eastman colour.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You may continue after the lunch hour.

ANNOUNCEMENT RE GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C. R. PATABHI RAMAN): Madam, on behalf