

MR. CHAIEMAN: It is not very material information that you are seeking.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Because their conception of being unfortunate and fortunate is like this. When you conceal things, you are supposed to be fortunate. And when you do not conceal, you are unfortunate. This is the thing. Since the allegations came, among others, from Congressmen, what concrete steps did the Government take in order to have them investigated by an impartial body? Why was it not done and the matter was left to the Government?

DR. K. L. RAO: When I said "Unfortunate", I meant that the ruling party there, the Government there, is a Congress Government. And obviously these Congressmen could have gone to the Government and explained things to them and discussed with them. Instead of doing that, they have resorted to sending some vague allegations to the Centre. That is why I said "Unfortunate".

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Who runs the Central Government? Congress, I believe.

DR. K. L. RAO: All that I meant was that being the same party they could have had much easier access and they could have greater facility for explaining their differences. And so far as the allegations are concerned, there were two allegations made. In both the cases very careful consideration was given and it was found that there was absolutely no justification whatsoever for proceeding further in that. It would be sheer waste of time to have gone into any judicial enquiry.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: May I remind the honourable and learned Minister that the Chief Minister of Mysore promised a judicial enquiry in this case which involved the payment of huge amounts to contractors for doing nothing? On the face of this assurance given by the Chief Minister of

Mysore, how does the learned Minister say that there is no case for further enquiry?

DR. K. L. RAO: I am not aware of any such assurance. Now, Sir the Mysore Government has issued a White Paper. And here I can assure the hon. Member that nobody pays for doing nothing.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister who were the arbitrators in this case and what machinery was employed to investigate the *prima facie* case, whether the Attorney-General or any other man was consulted in this matter or only the Irrigation Ministry investigated the case and found out that there was no *prima facie* case?

DR. K. L. RAO: There were three arbitration cases, not one. The names of the arbitrators are given in the White Paper. I would request the hon. Member to see the names there. So far as the enquiries by the Central Government are concerned, it is the Ministry that has done it. Normally, naturally, there was no necessity of going to the Attorney-General.

*270. [The questioner (Shri Sita-ram Jaipuria) was absent. For answer, vide col. 1985 infra.]

WEALTH-TAX

•271. SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state the number of persons in the country who are assessed to Wealth-tax on a property of over Rupees twenty lakhs; how many of them are members of a Joint-Hindu family and how many are individuals?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRIMATI TARKESHWARI SINHA): As on the 31st March, 1963: The number of individuals and Hindu Undivided Families having 'net wealth' of over Rs. 20 lakhs on the basis of their last completed assessment to wealth-tax or

where no such assessment has been completed, on the basis of the 'net wealth' shown in the latest return -was 597. Out of these 498 persons were assessed *in the* status of 'individual' and 99 persons in the status of 'Hindu Undivided Families'.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Is the hon. Minister in a position to give us the break-up of these figures, *namely* the number of those who had wealth ranging from the minimum of Rs. 20 lakhs to a crore of rupees and over?

SHRIMATI TARKESHWARI SINHA: The range between Rs. 20 lakhs and Rs. 25 lakhs as on 31st March, 1963 was individuals 169 and H.U.F. 32, between Rs. 25 lakhs and Rs. 50 lakhs individuals 232 and H.U.F. 39, between Rs. 50 lakhs and Rs. One crore individuals 62 and H.U.F. 23, over Rs. One crore 35 individuals and H.U.F. 5.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: According to the information given we learn now that there are only 232 individuals whose wealth -is between—is it correct—Rs. 25 lakhs and Rs. 50 lakhs in the whole country, and that wealth, Sir, includes . . .

SHRIMATI TARKESHWARI SINHA: I have said 169 individuals and 32 H.U.F. between Rs. 20 lakhs and Rs. 25 lakhs.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I do not know how many are there in the Birla families. But, Sir, is it not a fact that Wealth Tax is assessed on the basis of movable and immovable properties which include not only liquid assets but also housing property and everything? Are we to understand that there are a little over 160 people throughout the country whose wealth is of this order, namely between Rs. 25 lakhs and Rs. 50 lakhs. Is it not a fact that there are many more people and the Government has not been able to assess the

wealth and bring them to a position where they can collect taxes from them?

SHRIMATI TARKESHWARI SINHA: The statistics that have been available to us have been given. These are the people and their assessment is done according to the rules laid down for the assessment of Wealth Tax.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Has it not been pointed out through public statements and otherwise that even in the streets in Calcutta like Harrison Road and Burra Bazaar, there are more than 200 to 300 people whose wealth could be easily assessed at Rs. 50 lakhs and more, leave alone the country as a whole? What steps the Government are taking despite the fact that such representations have been made publicly and criticisms of the Administration of the Wealth Tax have been made and why since the time the Wealth Tax came into operation, no material improvement in the matter has taken place in order to assess the wealth properly and get the tax?

SHRIMATI TARKESHWARI SINHA: Most of the hon. Member's question is on the basis of assumptions.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Come with me to the Burra Bazaar.

SHRIMATI TARKESHWARI SINHA: He has given some information about some of these properties in Harrison Road and others. I take this information from the hon. Member.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Is it not a fact that even the house of Mr. Jain at New Alipur will cost about Rs. 60 lakhs? May I know at what value Mr. Jain has been assessed and the Birla family have been assessed? Will you tell us?

SHRIMATI TARKESHWARI SINHA: I have not the individual information. I have given the number of

cases. I have no information of each individual family.

SHRI D. THENGARI: Out of these 169 people, how many belong to the Birla family? I want the number, not the names.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: How many Princes?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I do not think it is a proper question. She has not got the names.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: May I know if the Government will consider the advisability of publishing these names along with the wealth for which they are assessed? That will not harm the persons whose names are published and it will only add to their stature.

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: Under the Finance Bill approved by the Parliament the Government will now be in a position to give more information. The suggestion of the hon. Member will be considered.

श्री आर० के० भुवालका : क्या मिनिस्टर महोदया बतलायेंगी कि १९६०-६१ और १९६१-६२ के मुकाबले में इस समय ज्यादा वैल्यू टैक्स देने वाले हैं या नहीं ?

श्रीमती तारकेश्वरी सिन्हा : ३१ मार्च, १९६२ तक वैल्यू टैक्स देने वालों की कुल संख्या ५१८ थी और ३१ मार्च, १९६३ तक जो आंकड़े इस संबंध में हमारे पास हैं उसके मुताबिक वैल्यू टैक्स देने वालों की कुल संख्या ५९७ है ।

SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD: From the reply it appears that there is something wrong in the machinery which assesses the income or wealth. May I know whether the Government will appoint some officer to check up these assessments which have been made by these assessing Officers?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: The Government do not agree that there is something wrong in the figures given.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: May I request the Minister, through you, to make a list of all the assesseees in the category of Rs. 20 lakhs and above and make it available to the Members of the House before the next Session so that we may also help the Government in the matter and detect people who have escaped?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: The information that has been vouchsafed by my colleague has been given in an answer to a question On 2nd April. The figures are there. In regard to individual cases. I have said that under the new Finance Bill which has now become an Act, the Government have certain powers, more powers than they had before, and the suggestion made by the hon. Member may be considered as to whether the names should be published or not.

TAKE-OVER OF PLOTS BY GOVERNMENT

*272. SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state the number of plots which Government have taken over in Delhi due to noncompliance of their order for completion of construction of buildings within one year?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA): In November 1963, a Press Note was issued giving the lessees of vacant plots in Rehabilitation colonies in Delhi a final opportunity to complete construction by 31st December 1964, failing which action would be taken to resume the plots in accordance with the terms of the lease. The question of taking over of plots by Government, therefore* does not arise at present.