

**SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA:** Therefore, Sir, something should be done. Let this Resolution be moved by some of us.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** All right, you wait. Let Mr. Dahyabhai Patel move his Resolution first.

RESOLUTION RE APPOINTMENT  
 OF A COMMITTEE FOR THE  
 SPEEDY COMPLETION OF THE HIS-  
 TORY OF THE INDIAN FREEDOM  
 MOVEMENT

**SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL**  
 (Gujarat): Mr. Chairman, I beg to move:

"This House is of opinion that a Committee of eminent historians and scholars should be appointed to assist in the speedy completion of the work on the history of freedom movement in India."

As you know, Sir, there have been questions in this House in regard to the progress made in this matter. There have been several remarks of several hon. friends which prompted me to move this Resolution. Many of us feel that the work on the history of the freedom movement should be conducted at a much quicker pace than what is being done today. Perhaps, in a few years, if not already, a lot of material that would be available would be lost. The opportunity of verifying some of the facts that would come up or that would be published would also be lost. In a work of this type which entails a lot of labour, which would entail collection of a lot of data, and perhaps meeting some people, it may not be possible at the instant to cover all this ground, and possibly many omissions and many discrepancies would come in and once a work of this type is put out, people would come forward and produce evidence that they have to point out the inaccuracies, if there are any, errors, if

there are any. They would also come forward with further proof. This would be helpful in publishing a revised and a second edition later on. If there is delay, I am afraid much of this material would be lost. That is the primary consideration which urged me to move this Resolution.

Sir, I have nothing against the author of the volume that has been published, "History of the Freedom Movement in India." He is a very eminent scholar, and if I have to say anything against him, I hope you, Sir, and the House will understand that my remarks are not against the person. I have nothing personally against him. I am not here to offend people or to give offence to any Member of this House nor is that the purpose of my Resolution.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** All the time, we must be temperate in our language, restrained in our outlook, behaviour, manners, etc.

**SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL:** Having said this, I must point out that there are many many, if I may say so, far too many, inaccuracies in the volume that has been published and which is called "History of the Freedom Movement in India." I asked a question as to the amount of money spent on this venture. In answer to my question on the 24th April, I was told that the Government had spent a sum of Rs. 1,02,909 and Rs. 22,000 on this publication. I dare say that a work of this type would be expensive and I am not quarrelling about the cost but what I would like to say is that when such a large amount is being spent, some care should have been taken to see that there is accuracy. This book is packed with inaccuracies beginning from the first page right up to the last. I will point out a few. In the first page, he refers to the Kushan conquerors who exercised control over North Western India being completely Indianised. Does he mean to suggest that Mathura was the centre of North

Western India? That would be the inference that would be drawn from this. I now come, if I may, to the last page.

THE MINISTER OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS (SHRI HUMAYUN KABIR): Would the hon. Member kindly give the page number?

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: I started with the first page and I am now coming to the last page. I will give you what is in the middle later on. I am just beginning from the first page. In the last page he writes:

"By 1857, the work of economic revolution had been completed." What is the economic revolution? "Meanwhile new forces had started the work of re-construction and the establishment of a new order." Sir, I do not know whether this is an expression of opinion or whether this is history, but I do feel, Sir, that expressions of opinion should not find a place in a volume of this type.

I would have thought that Government should have associated persons who were actively in the freedom movement. I have looked up the books supplied by the Rajya Sabha Secretariat, "Who's Who?" and I find that the hon. gentleman, who is the author of this book, is a nominated Member of this House. He has been Principal of a college from 1925 to 1945, after which he was Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University. He then became Educational Adviser to the Government of India. It is but natural that he has very little contact with the people who were in the movement and who struggled for freedom. Could not Government have associated people who were in the movement for freedom with him if they had made up their mind to entrust the work to him? I do not know whether that was the right choice but even if Government had decided that this hon. gentleman was to do this work, surely

there were other people who could have been associated with him. A proper committee should have been appointed. There have been many many comments in the press about this, and I am sure the hon. Minister and other Members in this House have seen that some of them are in rather strong language. An eminent historian like Dr. Romesh Chander Majumdar says, "the History of the Freedom Movement is an insult to Indian scholarship and a disgrace to the Government of India." Sir, these are the remarks of an eminent historian which have been published and circulated widely. What has the Government of India to say to this? He suggests that the book should be withdrawn from circulation, and the sooner it is done the better it will be. One of the reasons for urging this point of view is this. An attempt has been made to belittle the contribution of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President, in the initiation of this work. But Dr. Rajendra Prasad's work in this matter, his initiative, is such—it is on record—that it cannot be brushed aside. Therefore while it is admitted that he took the initiative, credit for this work is sought to be given elsewhere, to that Ministry, which I think is unjustifiable.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): What is the period to which this history relates?

MR. CHAIRMAN: All this has nothing to do with history.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: It has.

MR. CHAIRMAN: With initiative, enterprise, etc.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: I am referring to the initiative in suggesting that the history of the freedom movement should be written.

MR. CHAIRMAN: One good thing is that you are all now studying Indian history

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Yes, Sir.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I have my doubts. For a Resolution, can he study the history of India?

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Sir, on page 86 of the "History of the Freedom Movement in India." we find that the Kushans have been identified with the Scythians, though it is very well known that the Kushans were a branch of the Yue-chi tribe who came from the borders of China towards the West whereas the original homeland of the Scythians was "between the extreme northern shores of the Indus and the headwaters of the Oxus." This is what is said in the Cambridge History of India. I am quoting authority; I am not saying it myself. If you refer to page 338 of Vol. I of the Cambridge History of India you will find this. But Dr. Tara Chand's idea about the Kushans is rather hazy. On page 1 we find him writing:

"The Kushan conquerors who exercised control over north western India became completely Indianised."

This is what I referred to in the beginning. Is Mathura, usually regarded as an important city of their empire in North Western India? These are the two statements I referred to earlier.

Again on page 86 we find the following statement:

"Then in the eleventh century Afghans and Turks led by Mahmud of Ghazni forced open the gates of India."

Dr. Tara Chand obviously ignores the fact that the gates of India were

opened when Sultan Mahmud's father conquered Kabul from the Shahis. I do not want to go into these details, but Afghanistan was at this period an integral part of India, and it is a pity that Dr. Tara Chand is either ignorant or has lost sight of that important fact.

On page 131 we find Dr. Tara Chand writing that the Sultanate was an "elective office conferred by the *millat* (community)." Sultan Mahmud is usually supposed to be the first Sultan known to history. Will Dr. Tara Chand inform us as to who elected Sultan Mahmud and the procedure followed? We are aware that later in India the Muslim nobles after the death of a Sultan sometimes had some say in the selection of the successor but to call it election is either not knowing the Turko-Afghan period of Indian history or what election implies.

SHRI HUMAYUN KABIR: Has my hon. friend read that page? If he will read the whole paragraph he will find that the paragraph contradicts what he is saying.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: I do not think so.

SHRI HUMAYUN KABIR: Read the page once again.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: The next inaccuracy I would point out is when he says:

"The Sayyids and the Brahmanas constituted the non-military wing of the ruling class."

That is on page 144. One wonders if Dr. Tara Chand has heard of the Sayyids of Barha and the Peshwas.

Then a similar howler is found on page 148 where Dr. Tara Chand writes:

"In Bengal, although Chaitanya was born in a Brahmana family his

disciples came from the lowest strata of Hindu society, and even from among Mussalmans."

It may be news to Dr. Tara Chand that Advaita Goswami, Nityananda Goswami etc. came from the most distinguished Brahman family of Bengal and I may inform Dr. Tara Chand that Rupa Goswami and Sanatan Goswami were not Muslims, but good Brahmins. It is not a matter of opinion but it is a matter of fact that should be stated in history and I think here Dr. Tara Chand is again completely wrong.

To complete this list of howlers—I do not think it could be completed because it would require a much longer and deeper study than I have made—which is by no means exhaustive. I shall point out what appears as the conclusion of Dr. Tara Chand's studies. He says:

"By 1857, the work of economic revolution had been completed."

This is on page 392. Sir, no remarks is called for to elucidate this final fatuity.

I shall now point out a few inconsistencies. In the Introduction on page 7 Dr. Tara Chand writes:

"Thus it happened that India, carrying the dead-weight of a moribund social system, yet the bearer of a rich heritage of art, literature, philosophy and religion, stood face to face with a triumphant, proud and progressive Britain, modern in its moral and material make-up."

Let us now first take up this "modern moral" of Britain. On page 256 Dr. Tara Chand writes:

"It is an amazing fact of history that the agents of this great and irresistible force (i.e. the English) were largely unscrupulous, greedy, quarrelsome, envious men, and these bad bold adventurers had under their command the rank and file of

their fellow countrymen, many of whom were the veritable scum of the earth—criminals, renegades, half-castes, and the riff-raff of all the races of Europe."

Of the conditions in England of this time Dr. Tara Chand writes:

"Thieves, robbers and highway-men abounded... Crime, smuggling, gambling, animal baiting, adultery and profligacy were common. Relations between the sexes were loose ... Wives could be sold by auction."

This is on page 259. And on page 277 we find Dr. Tara Chand writing:

"In the latter half of the eighteenth century, public morality was at its lowest ebb in England."

Now, about the "progressive material make-up" of England. It should be remembered that the Industrial Revolution in England took place after the Battle of Plassey. Dr. Tara Chand writes:

"The main basis of trade until now (i.e., the Industrial Revolution) had been the export of Indian textiles against British silver. As Vera Anstey points out, up to the eighteenth century, the economic condition of India was relatively advanced, and Indian methods of production and commercial organisation could stand comparison with those in vogue in any other part of the world."

This is on page 312 and on pages 364-365 Dr. Tara Chand writes at length and quotes from authorities to prove that the Indian textile industry was ruined by the prohibitive duty imposed on imported textiles by England. But on page 312 he writes:

"Hand-made Indian textiles could not withstand competition against the machine-made goods of England and so the textile industry of India was ruined."

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And on page 370 we find him writing:

"On account of the lack of sea power, India failed to maintain the overseas markets, which were forcibly acquired by the European nations."

Thus we find on page 312 that our foreign trade was ruined by Industrial Revolution, on pages 364-365 by British tariff policy and on page 370 owing to the lack of sea power, which of these is correct? If all the three, then why did not Dr. Tara Chand say so openly in his book instead of rambolling incoherently and jotting down at random any idea as it struck his fancy?

I shall now pass on to two of his observations which, added to what I have already pointed out, raises grave doubts as to Dr. Tara Chand's knowledge of the basic facts of Indian history. On page 127 Dr. Tara Chand writes:

"Notwithstanding the fact that throughout the medieval period the head of the State in India was a Muslim . . ."

My question is, where did Dr. Tara Chand get this fact from? What happened to Assam, Orissa, Rajasthan, Vijayanagara and its successor States? Does Dr. Tara Chand claim it to be a fact that the head of these States were also Muslims? To this list shall we add the Maratha States or would Dr. Tara Chand say that Shivaji was born after the medieval period? What then is Dr. Tara Chand's conception of medieval India? Does he mean by this term the territory under the Sultans of Delhi? Would he say that the territory ruled by the Sayyids, for example, can by a stretch of imagination be called India?

Such prejudice based on ignorance becomes dangerous when Dr. Tara

Chand forays into unfamiliar grounds, though I hasten to add that Indian history seems to be unfamiliar to him. However, I meant Dr. Tara Chand's statement on page 75:

"While Orissa has existed through the centuries in isolation from the main stream of India's past, Andhra and Tamilnad have been participants in the stir and bustle of the country's history."

In one small sentence Dr. Tara Chand has vividly displayed his ignorance of the history of Orissa, Andhra and Tamilnad. I cannot undertake to make good his neglected education, but I cannot refrain from telling him a well-known fact of history, namely Asoka's conquest of Kalinga, by which Orissa is meant, and of a great king and a dynasty namely, Kharavela and the great Gajapati Kings of Orissa. I mention these not to parade my knowledge, but to place on record that though the Government selected possibly the man most unsuited to the task of writing a history, the Members of this House were not equally ignoramuses.

The hon. Minister for Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs has, I understand, invited Members to correspond with Dr. Tara Chand regarding the shortcomings of his work. I am not inclined to accept this offer, for I cannot see any benefit arising out of correspondence with a man who, sitting practically inside a first class library and with adequate assistance, could produce this work. However, if the hon. Minister of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs invites me formally to prepare a list of howlers found in Dr. Tara Chand's book, I shall do so, though it is quite a formidable task in view of the number. But I can do this only on two conditions, firstly, if the corrections proposed by me are not accepted, they will have to be submitted to some

eminent historian or a board of historians for their opinion. For it has probably by now become apparent to the hon. Minister that Dr. Tara Chand's opinions are worthless.

Secondly, pending my preparation of the list of howlers and its acceptance or rejection, the sale of the present publication should be suspended.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have another three minutes.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: I will utilise them only to say that the attitude of the Ministry in this matter, or, if I may say so, the Minister of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, is summed up in the manner in which he has published what he calls the "Autobiography of Maulana Azad". I wrote to him.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are not discussing autobiography now.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: I am discussing the attitude of the Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: I am asking him whether at any place he has got the signature of Maulana Azad on any of his writings, as final proof of what he calls Maulana Azad's autobiography. He wrote a very nice, polite letter. He had given a lot of quotations, but the last line says that it has no signature. This, to my mind, sums up the attitude of the Minister and the Ministry to these matters and, therefore, I thought I might refer to it.

Thank you.

*The question was proposed*

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is a very innocuous Resolution, but the speech was not like that.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: The book is such.

DR. R. B. GOUR (Andhra Pradesh): But the hon. Member has not spoken on the Resolution. Will you please give him five minutes more?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Surendra Mohan Ghose. Every subsequent speaker has fifteen minutes.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHAN GHOSE (West Bengal): No, Sir. Today I must seek the indulgence . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHAN GHOSE: I shall have to give some of the references given here about the Central Board of Editors and the "History of the Freedom Movement in India". Therefore, today I should be given a little more time. Otherwise, I will not be able to do justice

MR. CHAIRMAN: The rules prescribe fifteen minutes for every subsequent speaker. I am bound by the rules. Please go on.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHAN GHOSE: Sir, I welcome the Resolution, because it has given us an opportunity to discuss the first volume of the "History of the Freedom Movement in India". But before I proceed to discuss this volume, I must congratulate my friend, the hon. Prof. Kabin on the Foreword which he has written to this volume. And also must thank him for mentioning the activities of the Central Board of Editors in the Foreword.

I should like to draw his attention to one thing. Probably, this was printed in a hurry. Therefore, my own name has not been properly printed there. I am not 'S. N. Ghose' but 'S. M. Ghose'.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is a small error.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHAN GHOSE:  
 Probably, it was printed in a hurry  
 and the proof was not corrected.

Now, Sir, I come to the Preface to  
 this volume. First of all, let me  
 mention here that I have no quarrel  
 with the general lay-out of the plan  
 as it has been suggested here. I also  
 welcome the suggestion given here  
 that—

“Independence is a negative  
 concept . . . Freedom is more  
 than the mere absence of foreign  
 control, for it implies a society  
 possessing certain positive attri-  
 butes—a capacity to order its affairs  
 in accordance with the will of the  
 people, and a democratic way of  
 life guaranteeing liberty and equa-  
 lity to all its members.”

Quite true. No freedom movement,  
 no revolutionary movement can be  
 properly understood, unless we go  
 into the background of the people—  
 not only in India about our own  
 freedom movement but also else-  
 where. If we take the Russian  
 Revolution, there are so many ver-  
 sions of it. I would first like to go  
 into the minds of the people who  
 organised that Revolution, who  
 carried it through successfully and  
 what they meant about this Revolu-  
 tion, to understand the Revolution  
 itself. Similarly, there is the French  
 Revolution and the American War of  
 Independence. Unless we go into the  
 working of the minds of the people  
 who led those revolutions, unless we  
 go into the minds of the people, we  
 cannot really assess the real meaning  
 of those revolutions. Here also in  
 India we are to understand, first of  
 all, what the people of India had in  
 their minds while struggling for free-  
 dom and independence.

Then, here is a brief reference.  
 Although Europe was practically  
 independent, it took them nearly a  
 thousand years—

“From the settlement of the  
 Teutonic tribes in the provinces of  
 the Roman Empire to the eighteenth  
 century—but it had not experienced  
 foreign occupation and rule.”

About India he says:

“India, on the other hand, had to  
 surrender the sovereign power  
 before setting out on the perilous  
 voyage which led to self-govern-  
 ment, and it had to complete the  
 stages of the journey in one-fifth  
 of the time taken by Europe.”

That also has to be explained, viz.,  
 why India took so much less time  
 than Europe. In my opinion, to  
 explain these things such a volume  
 was not necessary to be written. This  
 could be done by taking up the activi-  
 ties of important and prominent  
 leaders of the movement such as  
 Tilak, Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi  
 and many others.

Then, it says:

“The achievement of freedom by  
 India is a unique phenomenon.”

Yes, I agree. But then here it is  
 stated:

“Where similar struggles have  
 been accompanied with bloodshed,  
 the movement in India, though  
 intense and accompanied with much  
 suffering, was non-violent.”

Sir, I want to draw your attention to  
 one fact. Though Mahatma Gandhi  
 was universally accepted by the  
 Indian people as really the leader,  
 one fact which is significant is that  
 he himself kept out of the Congress  
 organisation. He did not become a  
 four-anna member of the Congress  
 because he realised his difference with  
 his own colleagues and the entire  
 mass of the people. Therefore, it  
 would not be true to say that India  
 achieved freedom without any blood-  
 shed. There was bloodshed, and  
 before the coming of Mahatma Gandhi  
 in the field the only method adopted

all over the world India also adopted, and they also sacrificed in that period. Therefore, it would not be correct to say that, though intense and accompanied with much suffering, it was always a non-violent movement.

Then, Sir, I come to another point. "The history of the freedom movement is a dialectic process". True. "Its first step was antithetical in so far as it amounted to the destruction of the old order". Here again he says: "This is the argument of the process which started in the middle of the 18th century and culminated in the revolt of 1857". If it was meant to end the foreign domination, then so far as the statement goes it is correct that the attempt was to overthrow the British from India and to drive out the "Firangees" from the whole of India. But in this connection we have to remember that Raja Ram Mohan Roy started another movement which he has mentioned in the first paragraph. It is very interesting that, although this volume is called, "History of the Freedom Movement in India", in the first paragraph of the Preface he has expressed his own doubt as to where from to start this history of the freedom movement. He has expressed his doubt in this way:

"In undertaking to write the History of the Freedom Movement I was faced with a number of problems. Where should the history begin?"

Except mentioning this doubt, nowhere in this volume you will find him touching on any real problem of the freedom movement in India. Just a background of it only is given. Sir, what I was mentioning here was that in the 1857 movement it will be noticed that the work and activity which were started by Raja Ram Mohan Roy had no effect on the people who led that movement, who joined in that struggle. As a matter

of fact Raja Ram Mohan Roy's activities only came to shape the political activities of the Indian people near about 1885 when the Congress took its birth. Before that, in the whole of the movement of 1857 there are records, which we collected during the activities of the Board of Editors, to show that the leaders were against the idea which was brought forward by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. They wanted to drive out the British and to go back again to the olden days.

Sir, as my time is very limited, I shall draw your attention to the Sixteenth Report of the Estimates Committee, 1957-58, Second Lok Sabha, where they also recommended:

"After the dissolution of the Board on the 31st December, 1955, the work of collection of further material was entrusted to the National Archives of India. Steps were taken by the Department to complete the catalogues by incorporating the items which were listed by the Board. Attempts were also made by the Department to fill in as far as possible the gaps in the material sent by the different States. In all, the National Archives of India collected material on 1,507 items involving 79,490 pages. The entire material collected has since been catalogued. The Committee suggest that a classified catalogue of the material collected should be published so that it could be made use of by scholars and historians.

The Committee were informed that Dr. Tara Chand had been appointed Narrator to write the History. The Committee suggest that it would be of advantage if a Committee of advisers was appointed to assist the Narrator. The Committee of advisers may consist of persons who were associated with the Freedom Movement and who knew the various phases of the Movement. The Committee are of the view that the work relating to

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the History of Freedom Movement has already been considerably delayed and should be expedited as much as possible.

The Committee understand that the material collected for writing the History of Freedom Movement by the Board of Editors is so voluminous that it may not be possible to publish a substantial portion of it. The Committee, however suggest that suitable selections from the material should be properly documented and published."

This is the recommendation of the Estimates Committee. The descriptive catalogue which was prepared by the Board was as a matter of fact given to a press, but the press could not give delivery of those books because there was a strike, and the Committee earmarked the money for taking delivery of those catalogues. So far as the Board was concerned it had prepared in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Education—

- (1) descriptive catalogue of materials arranged according to period and locality;
- (2) classified list of materials according to certain topics and important names.

These catalogues, as suggested by the Committee, should be published, and nothing has been done as yet.

Then, Sir, regarding the materials collected by the Board when the Board was first formed, the Government did not know that there was any material in its possession anywhere. The Prime Minister and the late Maulana Sahib told us in the first meeting of the Board that the Board was to depend on materials from outside because all records had been burnt, but with much effort the Board could really find out that there was

no dearth of material in the possession of Government. And the Board recommended that special attention should be given to these materials—

- (1) "Native Newspaper Digests available in Calcutta and in the National Archives practically covering the whole period from 1863—1947, containing comments either in original or translated."

About every newspaper which was to be published in India the British Government had to keep a record which was called the "Native Newspaper Digest" from 1863 to 1947. There you can get how the mind of the people was working as the movement developed.

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

Then the other thing is this—

- (2) "Fortnightly secret and confidential Government reports on the political developments in the different districts of the Provinces."

It is given district-wise. They also refer to important parties and personalities connected with politics. Some of these files date from the sixties of the last century—

- (3) "Personal files of important personalities, e.g. Sri Aurobindo Ghose, Tilak, Maulavi Liakat Hussain, Bipin Pal, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Annie Besant, Lajpat Raj Hasrat Mohani, Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, M. A. Jinnah, Mahammad Ali, Shaukat Ali, Satyamurthy, and many others."

- (4) "History of the Partition Movement in Bengal."

This was prepared by the West Bengal Government—

- (5) "History of Anushilan and Jugantar parties in Bengal."

The whole history was compiled by the British Government about their activities.

(6) "History sheets of Indian patriots abroad, e.g. Hardyal, Barkatullah, Dr. Bhupen Dutta, Birendra Chattopadhyaya, Madam Cama, Syamji Krishna Varma, Bhagwan Singh, V. V. S. Aiyar, Tirumalachari, Champakaraman Pillai, Mahendra Pratap, Obeidullah, M. N. Roy and many others."

(7) "Detailed reports on I.T.U.C., Forward Bloc, Kisan Movement, Muslim League, 1946 riots in Calcutta."

(8) "A large number of files on the 1942 Movement throughout India."

So, we thought that it would not be possible for the Government to write a satisfactory history of the freedom movement and we thought that from time to time selected source materials, a little edited, could be published for the benefit of the general public.

(Time bell rings.)

Sir, please give me five minutes; otherwise, I will not be able to finish this. I ask you for more time because the time is very limited and I will be failing in my duty if I do not touch important points.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: As a special case, you will get five minutes more.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHAN GHOSE: Sir, I have my fear about the length of the volumes. When so many pages, 400 pages, have been given to the first volume, which has nothing but a background to the freedom movement, I have my fear that the next two volumes may not be of more than 1200 pages. How much justice he will be able to do to the different aspects or the different phases which really contributed to the freedom struggle of India, I do not know. I am just mentioning about 1857. I have seen two volumes already pub-

lished. One the Government themselves have published. A gentleman connected with our work has also published another book.

AN HON. MEMBER: What are these books?

SHRI SURENDRA MOHAN GHOSE: These are about the history of the 1857 struggle.

One gentleman has taken one of the lines from the *Edinburg Review* just to show that the civilian population of India had nothing to do with this 1857 struggle but nearer at home, we had Hurrish Mookerji's *The Hindoo Patriot*. This was published on April 2, 1857 in *The Hindoo Patriot*:

"Months before a single cartridge was greased with beef swet or hogslard, we endeavoured to draw public attention to the unsatisfactory state of feeling in the Sepoy army."

He wrote in *The Hindoo Patriot* of April 9, 1857 thus:

"All the cartridges in the stores of Bengal may be burned before the eyes of the men, yet they will not cease to murmur."

This is from *The Hindoo Patriot* of May 21, 1857:

"The sepoys who, in accepting service under the British Government, neither relinquished the rights of citizenship nor abnegated national feelings have been led to believe their national religion in danger."

This is from *The Hindoo Patriot* of June, 1857.

"The sepoys began to fear not only for their caste and their pay, but likewise for their lands. They struck the first blow. The feudal aristocrats urged them on. When a certain measure of progress was

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made, that aristocracy put itself at  
the head of the movement, and the  
Sepoy Mutiny became the Indian  
rebellion”

These words were written in *The  
Hindoo Patriot* of Calcutta during the  
1857 struggle. I shall in this connec-  
tion come to another statement by  
Sitaram Bawa. One of the writers  
on the Sepoy Mutiny who has recently  
written a book, has dismissed it as a  
cock and bull story. Another gentle-  
man has tried to discredit it because  
the age of a *Sadhu* is mentioned there  
as 200 years. But it is stated here in  
the statement of Sitaram Bawa:

“In reply to a question, Sitaram  
Bawa said:

‘As a mark of my telling the  
truth twice mention that a letter  
which you (Captain Pearse) sent  
by express to the French Rocks  
was opened at Seringapatam and  
read by a number of people. It  
was on the subject of posting  
some Sawars and making other  
arrangements at a time when  
matters looked suspicious.’

And Captain Pearse had noted:

“The above bears the stamp of  
truth as Captain Pearse perfectly  
well remembered an express let-  
ter of his to the French Rocks  
having been about seven hours in  
its transit to that place only 13  
miles distant and then an  
attempt was made to discover the  
cause, but without avail.”

12 NOON

I have no time, otherwise I would  
have quoted extensively from the  
statement of Sitaram Bawa. But I  
may just mention this. He said that  
they had sent a letter to Russia  
through the Maharaja of Kashmir,  
Gulab Singh, and the officers who  
were examining him asked, “How is  
it that when Gulab Singh was help-

ing us you say that you sent this  
letter through Gulab Singh”? He  
said, “These Maharajas are like this.  
They help you as well as help us”,  
and he added that they received a  
reply from Russia. In this connection  
I would like to mention only one  
thing. We came to know that one  
Russian gentleman had written a book  
on ‘1857’ based on Russian materials.  
We contacted him through some  
friends and came to an understanding  
with him that we would like to have  
a copy of the manuscript which he  
had written depending on the mate-  
rials available in Russia. Ultimately,  
he agreed and wanted to hand over  
his manuscript to us. By that time  
the Board was dissolved. I as Secre-  
tary wrote a letter through our  
Ambassador to collect that book from  
him. I do not know what happened  
to that effort. The Government, after  
winding up the Board, should have at  
least continued some of the activities  
of collecting materials not only in  
India but from outside also to have  
a complete picture of our freedom  
movement.

As you have rung the Bell and my  
time is over there is no use taking  
up a new point, because I would not  
be able to develop it. But my last  
appeal to the Government is that they  
throw open to the public these mate-  
rials so that they themselves would  
write not one but several volumes on  
the materials that were collected by  
the Board of Editors.

Thank you, Sir.

DR. A. N. BOSE (West Bengal):  
Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, perhaps it  
is the sad performance of the author  
in the first volume of the “History of  
Freedom Movement in India” which  
has actuated the mover of this Resolu-  
tion to urge for the creation of a new  
committee. Sir, the contents of this  
volume have been variously criticised  
in the press and many of these criti-  
cisms were renewed by the mover  
who also brought some fresh criticisms

and I suppose, Sir, there is no room for adding to them. The whole volume is a sort of survey of Indian history from Aurangzeb to Dalhousie without any reference to the freedom movement in India which it pretends to deal with. In 40 pages out of 400 the book deals with European history during the Middle Ages. All these have either no relevance or very remote relevance to the movement of freedom in India. It is only when one comes to the end of the book, that is, to the last two chapters, that one finds something which has bearing on the freedom movement. These are the chapters which dwell upon the social and economic consequences of British rule. They also dwell upon the land settlement, the revenue assessment which ruined the Indian agricultural class, the destruction of Indian arts and crafts and the dumping of British manufactures in the Indian market, the ruination of Indian foreign trade and the building up of British Industrial Revolution on the foundation of Indian loot. All these are very significant but even then, Sir, there is not a word about the reactions which these drastic revolutionary changes in the social and economic life had on the public mind, or the resistance and struggle which they provoked. Therefore, Sir, after reading through these 400 pages one would go away with the impression that the first outburst of public resistance was what is known as the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. In fact, Sir, there were so many public outbursts, outbursts of resistance and resentment, which were going on intermittently ever since the Battle of Plassey, and struggles which sometimes assumed menacing proportions against the alien rule. I shall cite a few of these.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth there was the Sanyasi rebellion of Bengal, which enlisted large-scale support from the peasantry. The rebellion was the inspiration

for Bankim Chandra's famous novel "Ananda Math" and for the National Anthem "Bande Mataram". About this we have the following reference in R. C. Majumdar's book "The Sepoy Mutiny and Revolt of 1857":

"The Sanyasi rebellion was one of the most formidable that the British had to face almost at the very beginning of their rule in Bengal. The movement was initiated by the anti-British activities of two different groups—Hindu Sanyasis and Muslim Fakirs, but they gained momentum from the support they received from the starving peasantry, dispossessed Zamindars and the disbanded soldiers."

Their incursions into Bengal became almost annual from 1763, and they assumed formidable proportions since 1770:

"In 1772 they defeated a company of sepoys sent against them and killed its commander Captain Thomas. Next year Captain Edwards, who attempted to overtake a band of 300 Sanyasis, suffered a disastrous defeat in which he and his detachment were all cut off excepting 12 sepoys."

Then, Sir, there was the Faraidi movement, a movement inspired by religious fervour, which also enlisted large-scale support from the peasantry. About this we have:

"Shariatulla founded the Faraidi sect for religious reforms and began to preach his doctrine as early as 1804. But he gradually turned it to political ends and declared the country under British occupation to be Dar-ul-harb where a true Muslim should not live. His son Dudhu Mian was more politically minded and improved the organisation by dividing Eastern Bengal into Circles and appointing a deputy or Khalifa over each to collect contributions."

[Dr. A. N. Bose.]

Sir, this Faraidi movement was the precursor of the Wahabi movement which is well known to students of Indian history and which began early in the 19th century; it started from the North-West Frontier Province and from the Punjab and spread as far as Bengal; it had its stronghold in Patna. About this we find a reference in Robert's History of British India. He says:

"... At Sitana on the spurs of the Hindu Kush range, north of Peshawar and west of the Indus, there had existed since the early part of the nineteenth century a curious colony of Muhammadan fanatics known as the Wahabis. They possessed a kind of recruiting depot or agency at Patna in Bengal, and their influence spread far and wide by secret channels throughout India. They formed a rallying point for all fugitives from justice, turbulent Pathans, Afridis, and every wild spirit with a grudge against British rule."

Then, Sir, just on the eve of the Mutiny, there was the Santhal rebellion in Bihar and Bengal. The Santhals were forced to migrate from their lands by the landlords who were of the Company's creation. They rose in rebellion in July, 1855, in the areas of Bhagalpore and Rajmahal. They also had several encounters with the British forces in which the British army had the worst of them. About this it is said in, "The Sepoy Mutiny and Revolt of 1857":

"But the oppressions of the Mahajans, who lent them money at excessive interest, and the insults and indignities they suffered from the Englishmen goaded them into rebellion. The dishonour to their women by the 'Sahiblok' specially irritated them. Under the leadership of two brothers Sindhu and Kanhu, who are said to have divine revelation, ten thousand Santha's met in June, 1855, and declared

their intention, 'to take possession of the country and set up a Government of their own'. Sporadic depredations commenced immediately, but the movement assumed a formidable aspect by the middle of July, 1855. They assembled in different parts in parties of 10,000 each, cut off the postal and Railway communications between Bhagalpur and Rajmahal, and were in complete control of this area. The Santhals proclaimed the end of the Company's rule and the commencement of the regime of their Subah. Several Europeans were killed. 'British force under Major Burrough was defeated, and the situation assumed a 'a very alarming aspect'."

Besides, the impact of western education provoked a fermentation of political ideas and nationalist feelings. The father of the renaissance was Raja Ram Mohan Roy who died in 1833. He is not mentioned here. Raja Ram Mohan Roy is universally acclaimed as the Father of Indian Renaissance but not a word about him occurs in this book. His activities ultimately led to the formation of the British Indian Association in Calcutta in 1851, which was followed almost simultaneously by the formation of similar organisations in Madras and Bombay. Sir, these are the preliminaries of the Indian National Congress of which we have no mention in the volume.

Sir, there is so much material which is left out, and it will seem that the outburst of 1857 came all of a sudden like a bolt from the blue. It seems possible that the author might have in mind all these things to be brought in the next volume. But, Sir, this volume pretends to come down to 1857, that is on the eve of the Mutiny. And supposing that these incidents, these early attempts at popular and public resistance against foreign rule should come in the second volume, it

is a strange thing that the background and preliminaries should cover one-third and two hundred years of freedom movement the rest of the whole series. Had it been the contemplation to spread over the work to about 20 volumes, it might have been intelligible that the first volume should be devoted to such a background.

Sir, apparently the hon. Minister shares the blindness of the writer since in the Preface, pages VIII-IX he pays compliments to the writer that he has:

‘ adopted a wide and imaginative approach and presented not only a comprehensive account of conditions in India on the eve of British rule but also undertaken comparative studies in Indian and European history in order to focus our attention on the causes which led to the progress of Britain and the decline of India in the period under review ’

I am afraid this is not the scope of the book. A comparative study of Indian and European history is far out of the range of the history of freedom movement. Therefore, I hesitate to associate myself with the motion that is before the House. Perhaps, these serious lapses in the first volume induced the hon. Member to move this Resolution, and I have a suspicion that a fresh committee will not improve matters. A fresh committee set up under official aegis will be subjected to the same weaknesses, and there is the risk of the same lapses being repeated.

Sir, originally the proposal for writing the history of freedom movement was mooted by the Historical Records Commission. They asked for a grant to pursue the work. Instead of doing that, the Ministry took it upon themselves. I think the work should appropriately be handed over to a learned body, maybe to the Indian History Congress or to an inter-university board or to any non-

official body of competent historians, competency to be judged by the historians themselves and not by the Government. They are fit to undertake the job and I think the Ministry's job begins and ends with supplying the necessary funds to get the things published. Sir, the history written under the aegis of the Ministry is bound to be distorted. The Government may be competent to write an official history of official matters. They may write the history of the Army, the history of the development of communications and transport etc.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA Better the history of themselves

DR A N BOSE But a history of a national movement with such a wide compass is far beyond their range. Therefore, Sir, I discourage any association of the Government with a project like this apart from the supply of necessary funds. I also urge the withdrawal of this volume from circulation so that the reputation of Indian scholarship may not be further damaged as it has already been done.

SHRI T R DEOGIRIKAR (Maharashtra) Mr Deputy Chairman, Sir, when there was a flutter in this House about the, "History of the Freedom Movement in India", I was curious to know what was written therein and I got the book purchased. Naturally enough, I was interested in knowing what the author had written about Maharashtra. I greedily read that portion and I caught hold of a historian and asked him whether what had been written in this book was correct. I must say that he has disagreed with many of the facts that are mentioned in the book and, of course, it is no use condemning a book because it is already in the market and the mischief done cannot be undone.

Generally speaking, it is very difficult to write history and if a person is your worst enemy, entrust him with

[Shri T. R. Deogirikar.]

that task because the critics are many and admirers are few. Especially when a history is written on behalf of the Government, the sympathy that we generally expect is lacking. You know the famous instance of Walter Raleigh. He was sitting at his window and saw some scuffle going on down below. Out of curiosity he asked one of the persons who was a witness to the scene, to come up and asked him what had happened. After knowing from him the version of the scuffle, Walter Raleigh burnt all the manuscripts that he had written about the history of the world. So, it is a very difficult task. It is easy for us to criticise but the person who writes history knows the pangs of it. The question that I would ask the Government and not the author is, "What is the object in publishing this book? Why have you brought out this history of the Freedom Movement? Is it for glorifying or vilifying our ancestors that you have done so? Is this book meant for historians, politicians, students or foreigners? For whom is it meant?" If it is meant for historians, then I have no quarrel with the author. The historians will fight among themselves. If it is meant for foreigners, then enough scandalising about us has been done in this book. If it is meant for students, you are doing the greatest harm to the coming generation by placing at their disposal 'the black history', of this country. For whom have you written this book? Are we going to take some inspiration from what has been written therein? I hang my head in shame when I read that these were my ancestors. If it is for the purpose of self-expression, then I have no quarrel. If it is for the purpose of self-introspection, then I must praise the author for opening our eyes to the realities that existed in some parts of the country. I am not going to refer to other parts. I am going to concentrate on the history of the Marathas that has been painted in this volume. I have made an inven-

tory of the abuses or should I use another word? But these are the remarks which he has made. One by one I will mention them and treat them each separately if time permits.

"The Marathas abjectly failed Hinduism in its agony". That is number one. "The Marathas had betrayed his (Abdali's) father and their word could not be relied upon." So the Marathas were unreliable persons and they had betrayed the father of Abdali. This is number two. "Surajmal had little faith in their promises", that is in the promises of the Marathas. This is the third epithet. The fourth is, "The Marathas committed two fatal mistakes", at the battle of Panipat. The fifth is, "Goaded to desperation by hunger, Bhau resolved upon the hazard of battle". The Battle of Panipat was fought because there were pangs of hunger and there was no other purpose. The Marathas coming from Poona, hundreds and thousands of miles, in order to fight the Battle of Panipat were goaded to fight their battle because there was hunger. I cannot understand what he means thereby. Then I go to the sixth. "The Afghans had better morale and discipline", in the army as compared to the Marathas. I have nothing to say about the Afghans but I can say this much that barring a few incidents in the history, while the Maratha army might have committed loots and other things they never spoiled, they never attacked the women and this speaks volumes about their morale. The author has nowhere mentioned this aspect of the Maratha character and I would pray that he should, if an occasion comes, correct his mistake.

Then we go to the seventh. "The Maratha policy was showing unmistakable signs of cracking up even before 1761." This is another thing which was a revelation to me. Then on page 63 he says that in the Maratha empire the peasants were ground down. The Marathas had no goodwill

for their subjects. The rulers, the Peshwas, had no goodwill for their subjects. Then they were greedy and grasping. This is another epithet. Then they were wanting in higher statesmanship. Then they had no interest in cultural advancement of the people. To sum up, this is the characteristic of the Maratha Empire: The peasants were ground down, the rulers had no goodwill for their subjects, the rulers were greedy and grasping, and they were wanting in higher statesmanship and there was no interest in cultural advancement of the people. This is the history which you are writing about the Marathas of whom you should really be proud but we have to tolerate so many things and we are going to tolerate this as well.

Then he says that the Marathas were attracted by the glitter of the prize alone. There was no nationalism, no patriotism and no religion. They were simply attracted by the glitter of the prize. They were freebooters, they were dacoits. Why don't you say it, as Grant has already said? So, this is another edition of Grant.

Then we come to the next remark. "Nana Phadnavis was extremely close-fisted and he built up a large fortune for himself." I challenge the author to show whether he had built a fortune for himself. After his death, all his property was confiscated and nothing was found at his house. Still the author makes himself bold enough to say that he had built a fortune for himself. That is really strange. Then we go to the next remark. "The foreign policy of the Marathas was erroneous." What a bold remark he has made. Certainly, it was wrong according to you but you cannot judge sitting in 1961 what has happened 200-300 years back. Then I come to the next, "But under the Peshwas it (*mulkgiri*) assumed the form of naked aggression." "No distinction between friend and foe", that is, these Peshwas, the Marathas, were *Rakshasas* or giants and they made no distinction

between friends and foes and there was naked aggression. I ask, are we going to tolerate this scandalisation of the Marathas? I cannot understand it.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: (Madhya Pradesh): Have you asked the Bengalees?

SHRI T. R. DEOGIRIKAR: They will also say the same thing with regard to them. "The Maratha system outside its own domain was purely predatory". This is another remark. "No statesmanlike wisdom". That is another remark. "Cultivators were oppressed and harsh measures were adopted to extract money from them." "The downfall of the Marathas was brought about by their own insensate dissensions, inordinate folly and criminal self-seeking."

This is the history of the Marathas which has been painted by the Government. I do not mention the author. This has been painted by the Government. Are you expecting that there would be emotional integration if you are going to write history of this kind? Are you going to expect that India would be united if you go on scandalising each and every portion of India in this way? You ought to have taken into consideration at least that you are writing history for the purpose of unifying India and not for antagonising the various elements in this country. That you have not done. What is the purpose of writing such history? Are you going to make divisions in the country? Are you going towards unity or diversity, that is the question I ask? This will not lead to emotional integration but this is the surest way of leading to emotional disintegration.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the Resolution is of a broad scope. It wants a committee to be appointed to assist in the speedy completion of the work on the history of freedom movement in India. The discussion has turned on a particular book and we have before us the

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta.]  
 first volume of the work that has been undertaken. As far as this book is concerned, I do not wish to say much. I would only like to say here that it has given rise to very serious controversy and polemics in the country and it has been assailed by a large number of eminent historians. I do not say that everyone of them is such an eminent historian that his words can be taken for granted. For example, even Shri Majumdar sometimes writes and says things with which we do not agree. But then he is an eminent historian just as Dr. Tara Chand is an eminent historian. Therefore, Sir, in view of these things and since this is a government publication, I think, it should be referred to a board of historians and the board should be set up in consultation with us and everybody in this House and the other House. The board should review this particular work, offer its criticisms and then Government should draw correct lessons from it, because it would be a sad day for our country if the Government were to undertake the production of a history which, hardly had it come out, should give rise to so much of criticism, suspicion, doubt and even anger. Therefore, this step should be taken by the Government. The Government should not stand on prestige. And I take it that every historian would learn from the criticisms that are made.

Next I would like to deal with the subject-matter of the Resolution before the House. I have great respect for other historians in the country. But may I make a statement here that I have little faith in the bourgeois historians?

AN. HON. MEMBER: Who?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Well, Sir, the simple reason is because their approach is bound to be essentially a narrow class approach in this matter, unless they consciously struggle against it. We might say that in the

context of history, the people are sought to be relegated to the background.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA (Uttar Pradesh): Just as Stalin is being relegated to the background?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The people are relegated to the background. Their creative activities are relegated to the background and individuals are made to look as the makers of history. I do say that we Marxists have an approach in this matter of writing history and we think that the makers of history are the people.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: You write the history of the Communist Party or the Soviet Union after a person had fallen from power.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Please do not talk. You have not read any history. If my hon. friend thinks that he is making history, let us write something about Arjun Arora, I don't mind. But he is one of the unmakers of history, perhaps. That is not the point here. Please understand things. It is not a partisan question. The people make history. In the centre of the historical processes we see the people. Naturally, leaders come up in so far as they represent the dynamic movements and the social forces. This is how they come up. They represent the growing historical trend and those who represent them best become the leaders in the historical set-up at a given point of time. This is how I view this matter. I do not deny the role of individuals in history. But that role has to be viewed in the context of the role of the masses and the role that the people play. At all stages of history, it has been so. But the bourgeois historians sometimes seek to ignore it and they think history is made by some people at the top. And when I say "top" I mean those at the top in whichever society you may take. But that would be a wrong approach. This fault is there and every work of history such as this one here suffers from that

basic defect. That has to be corrected.

The achievement of Indian independence has been one of the great historical events of our times, and in that are interested not only our own people but also the peoples of the world. Therefore, it is great and solemn task to be undertaken with proper perspective and handled in an able way. I think here is something where you cannot just rely on the Government. Government should help the process and help the work. But if you leave it to Government, to the Ministry, to the Deputy Minister or the Minister or the Minister of State, I think what you will get will not be history but an abortion of history. That is what I feel. Therefore, the work should be given to the eminent historians of the country and those who have participated in the freedom struggle, those who have got a proper outlook in this matter, and the collective endeavours of these people, their thoughts and work in the process and in the work of writing history should be mobilised by the Government. That should be the task of the Government. Naturally, one or two or three persons would write it, but the work will be a collective product. That has not been so in this case.

When we look at our own history as it unfolds itself before us, we see in it various currents of political activities, various streams of struggle against the British, various types of awakenings, commingling into a broad mainstream. It is not a question of narrowly viewing it as something between violence and non-violence. We had both violence and non-violence. The war of independence of 1857 was a struggle of the Indian people and they spoke through the mouths of guns. The Salt Satyagraha was another form of struggle of the Indian people and guns and bullets were used against them and the people died in brave silence. These two aspects of the struggle we do find

expressed, time and again, in the progress of our freedom movement. Therefore, it will be a mistake to try to glorify one side and forget the other side of things that happened. There will be tendency on the part of the Congress Party, if I may say so with all respect, to look upon Indian history as if it is the work, in the recent period, of a single party only or as a single trend or political activity. I do not deny that that party had the most important part to play in recent years. I do not deny that their ideology had swept the masses. I do not deny that the non-violent struggle had played an important part. But in this very period we had the revolts in the Army. We had the rebellion of the naval people, the Bombay uprising in 1946. These are historical facts and historical movements. Similarly, you cannot forget the I.N.A. and what happened leading to the militant mood in our soldiers and navy men and air force men and so on. That again was an expression of the freedom struggle, militant and angry.

Then we had also the working class and their struggles. There were the general strikes and so on, and the actions of the peasantry, actions of every section of the people. Also in the early days, we had in the beginning of the century what is known as the terrorist movement. It was actually the movement of the intelligentsia mainly directed through violent forms, against the British raj. Those young men sought martyrdom and displayed such bravery, courage and heroism at a time when very few people dared even to speak out that they wanted independence for the people. That is how, step by step the Indian freedom movement progressed and to it contributions were made from various classes, various sections, various ideologies, various thoughts of the people. That is how it was done. That should be reflected in this history. But my fear is if you leave it to a certain set of people only, and if you do not broaden the base of it, it will not

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta.]

reflect all this. Of course, in the writing of history there will be mistakes, there will be errors and you cannot help it.

I say these things with all seriousness, because today fortunately, as we propose to write the history, we have amongst us many people who had taken part in the making of this history of the recent period—the history of the freedom struggle. It becomes the duty of the Government, without prejudice, without political bias, to draw upon their experience and knowledge, to note what they saw and heard in those periods and to sort it out properly and sift that evidence and then see what historical essence could be drawn from it. That would be necessary, and if you take that approach, you cannot ignore any movement. All these things are there. There is the 1857 movement; there is what followed that; then come the struggles, not only here but abroad also of the Ghadar Party, by other people in Paris and London.

Then comes the question of the working class movement. I cannot but recall on this occasion the strike of the great Bombay proletariat in 1908 in protest against the arrest of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Lenin was the only revolutionary in Europe to acclaim this strike and declare that the Anglo-Saxon game was played out in India and noted that the working class had come into political action against the British. It was history. Even before that Marx wrote about certain historical processes. Founders of Marxism-Leninism had given us an approach in this matter even in regard to Indian history.

After that period, we find the movement gradually developing. Here is Diwan Chaman Lall. He was in the trade-union movement. The working class came into the field and it developed gradually into a political movement playing a greater and greater part. I would like to know whether

we have taken enough care to see that the great role of the working class and the peasant movement in our country, movement in the Punjab, movement in the south, movement in the east and so on are properly reflected in the historical research that we have undertaken. This is very very important. My fear is that if these things are left in their hands we will get only a one-sided view. In this matter, all should be consulted because the freedom movement brought within its fold all people fighting against the British for national liberation. Broad leadership of the freedom movement reflected participation of all classes. Therefore, that way, many things come into it I think that should be the approach. I do not like the manner in which the Committee that was formed was treated. Even that Committee was partial but at least it should have been helped a little more. Here is our friend, Shri Surendra Mohan Ghose. Today he is a very innocent Congressman sitting here but I know that at one time, in the dawn of this century, he was a well-known figure in the district from which I come. He was arrested with a revolver and went to jail in 1911, if I am not wrong. He had played an important part in what is known as the Terrorist Movement but he would not like that now, nor would I like. There were various other people. The Chittagong Armoury Raid was an act of bravery; the act of Bhagat Singh was an act of bravery. Here, in Delhi, when a bomb was thrown at Lord Hardinge, it was a declaration of a rebellion on the part of the youth of our country. Such things should be historically processed in order to weave them into a historical theme. They should not be treated as mere isolated acts of bravery. The struggle went on in two streams; one stream took the path of non-violence, drawing more and more people into that. There was the other stream, mostly under the impact of the Russian Revolution, under the leadership of the peasantry and the working-

class. What has been the co-relation between these two forces and how they had been integrated into the Indian history are matters for the historian to judge but the fact of life cannot be denied. A partisan attitude in the writing of history would be doing great dis-service to our history. We write history not just as a matter of hobby or for some academic study; we write history in order to inspire people, to enlighten people, to educate the people and for educating and enlightening them in such a way that they move forward. We write history so that the generations that will come tomorrow can play a better part in making a still better and brighter history. That is how historians should approach this matter. It is not a matter to be dealt within a seminar; it is not a matter in which only lecturers and students are interested. The writing of history is a great task, it is a task of profound importance and significance. Therefore, I say that all these aspects should be taken into account. Fortunately, we have among us, representatives of all trends of activities that made what is known as the Indian freedom struggle. I say, "the Indian freedom struggle" because it is a much broader thing than the struggle made by any particular phase, broader than a particular struggle of a particular party, broader than a particular movement. No doubt, the movement led by the Congress has the central position there, I am not saying anything against it or that it should be ignored. Nothing should be ignored. All I am saying is that all these things should be placed in their proper place, in a proper historical set-up. Now, the Maharashtra people will complain. You see, if things go wrong in life and society, it is not the people who are to be blamed. Therefore, no historian would be right in running down the people or defaming them or blaming them. It will be writing a wrong history. If anything is wrong it should be traced to certain other

basic things. We trace it to the classes, to the social relations and so on. The historians should do it in this manner.

As far as this book is concerned, I do not think we should have acrimony. An attempt has been made and some criticisms have come from all quarters. Therefore, the task of the Government should be to take this thing seriously and, as I said, appoint a review board for this book and discuss this matter so that in a proper way we can undertake the task of writing the history and produce a history of the freedom movement, a history which will be equal to the great movement that our people have led and the great achievement that we have made namely, the independence of India.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK (Orissa): You need not worry. You will be having your place.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: Mr. Deputy Chairman, after the frenzied speech of Shri Bhupesh Gupta, one feels rather worried about the historians who may have to write in future also. I feel, Sir, that when in the early days of independence, the Government decided to have the history of the freedom movement written, the Government of India was ill advised. Sir, the age of court historians and of official histories should have ended with the departure of the British. As such, when in 1955, the Government of India announced that Dr. Sen had been entrusted with the task of writing the history of the great revolt of 1857, and a friend of mine who was then sitting with me asked me to join him in congratulating Dr. Sen, I turned down the suggestion and said, "I heartily sympathise with him. I cannot congratulate him". These histories, written at official invitation, satisfy none, and put the historians in a very bad place. As such, I have my very sincere sympathies for the

[Dr. Raghurib Sinh.]

author who was called upon to write this book, and as a person who has had to deal with the task of writing history, I know how difficult it is.

I just heard a frenzied attack from a great son of Maharashtra, talking about things which are really hard historical truths. Every historian knows very well that before the Battle of Panipat, the Maratha army was literally starving for five days. Every historian knows that on a particular day the battle had to be fought because they could not continue to remain starving any longer. Every historian knows that the Maratha economy was a deficit financing business from the outset and the Maratha power was never consolidated, anywhere. Well, Sir, this debate about the right treatment of the history of Maharashtra has been going on among the great historians and I would not like to join the issue with any of them but my only point was that an official history can never satisfy anybody. Therefore, I would have very much wished that the Government had never thought of getting this official history written. And further now when that history is being written, my friend, Shri Dahyabhai Patel, wants to further hedge the freedom of this author by appointing this committee. As I said at the outset, I oppose this idea of official histories and I oppose all the more this idea of appointing advisers to the historian. Shri Dahyabhai Patel is a great friend of mine and I admire him but I am afraid the infection of his close neighbours there on the seat seems to have got down on him. Down in the U.S.S.R. old histories are being torn up and new histories are being concocted. There everything is written to order. The old history of Stalin has been torn up and new one is being written now.

DR. R. B. GOUR: I am sure you have read neither.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINGH: You must be prepared to hear the truth. At least there is one place where . . .

DR. R. B. GOUR: I am sure you have read neither the old history nor the new one.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINHA: I have read the communist version of the history of Russia and I also know about their efforts to re-write the history of India. That is being done in one place and I have got a very good sample of it, and knowing as I do a little of history myself. I know to what extent distortions go. So, my submission is, for heaven's sake, do not try to hedge and dictate to the historian. It is his job to tell the present generation and to tell posterity as to what has been the truth. It is his business to tell you hard truths, unpleasant truths. A nation that is not prepared to hear unpleasant truths will go down the drain. Otherwise, it will have to face destruction. Therefore, I very strongly oppose this Resolution. When in the beginning there was this talk of writing a history and there were a series of questions on the floor of this House I requested the Minister for Education to throw open these records to the historians but we were told that it will be done only after the official history has been written. Sir, that was the biggest mistake. The Government should never have asked anyone to write the history. They should have collected all the material and thrown it open to the scholars and the scholars would have done the job and would have done it much better and in a more scientific way because they would have been in a position to examine all the material more closely and quite thoroughly.

My friend, Mr. Surendra Mohan Ghose, talked of the vast amount of material that has been collected. Sir, I know it. I greatly appreciate the work done by that committee but I also know one thing that some of the things collected by them are definitely

spurious. Once my friend Dr. Romesh Chandra Mazumdar showed me one document and asked me what I thought of it. I had a look at it and I showed him how the whole thing was most obviously a forged document. So, all these things have got to be done.

All the Members who have been talking here before me have raised the question that persons associated with the freedom movement should also be on the Board of Historians. Probably, they forget the famous dictum that it is the onlooker who sees most of the game. So I would beg of those persons who have participated in the freedom movement to sit down and write their autobiographies and their memoirs and those works will contain the necessary material for the future historians. Only those persons who have taken part in the movement know what part they have played. But our friends would not do that but they would want that the part they played should be officially written out. It is a tall order on the Government or on any historian who has to write the history at the invitation of the Government. I would beg of the Government instead of asking some historian to sit down and write a history of the freedom movement they should ask these eminent persons who have taken part in the movement to sit down and write their memoirs. Those memoirs should be collected, edited and published or the whole material be only preserved *in extenso* and made available to the future historians. Therefore, my submission to the House is that any attempt to dictate to the historians what they should write and what they should not write, what they should emphasise and what they should not emphasise, would be a wrong move. I do not say that there are no mistakes in whatever has been written. In any work of this nature one has to summarise many things and in doing that he cannot possibly include therein everything. And after all the English language is not a very easy language. Persons who

bring out any study of history have to generalise on whatever had happened. As I mentioned before, in whatever has been said about Maharashtra there is much truth which when put very briefly in print might appear to be half-truths.

So, what I submit is, a mistake has been committed by the Government in thinking of getting an official history written. Official history, as I said, is a thing of the past. When in olden days the King wanted the court historian to write a book the historian knew what he has to write and whom he has to please. Now, in a democracy if an official history is to be written, you please none. And, Sir, we know the famous story of the father and his son going on the donkey's back. The man who tries to please everybody will please none. Therefore, I would say that any suggestion to hedge the independence of the historian would be suicidal; it, would be a great mistake. So, I submit with all the humility at my command to the House, if you do not want such an official history to be written, stop it. I do not say that you pursue the thing but if you want to pursue it, if you want to entrust the job to a certain person, then do not hedge him; do not take away his freedom. Otherwise, that would not at all be a history; that would be something which nobody would look at. I do not think you want a thing to be written about which the author himself cannot say that he has done it and that he has said things which are far from what he honestly believes. Therefore, I would personally beg of the hon. mover that, having pointed out whatever he had to say,—I would rather wish he would not—he should not insist upon his Resolution and should not ask for any curbs on the independence of the historian in this way.

Thank you, Sir.

The House then adjourned for lunch at one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at half past two of the clock. MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE LOK SABHA

THE MOTOR TRANSPORT WORKERS BILL,  
1961.

SECRETARY: Sir, I have to report to the House the following message received from the Lok Sabha, signed by the Secretary of the Lok Sabha:—

“In accordance with the provisions of Rule 101 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I am directed to inform you that the following amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Motor Transport Workers Bill, 1960, at its sitting held on the 28th March, 1961, were taken into consideration and agreed to by Lok Sabha at its sitting held on Thursday, the 4th May, 1961:—

*Enacting Formula*

1. That at page 1, line 1, for the words ‘Eleventh Year’ the words ‘Twelfth Year’ be substituted.

*Clause 1*

2. That at page 1, line 6, for the figure ‘1960’ the figure ‘1961’ be substituted.

3. That at page 1, line 10, for the figures and words ‘31st day of December, 1961’ the figures and words ‘31st day of March, 1962’ be substituted.

*Clause 2*

4. That at page 4, lines 2-3, for the words ‘required to work or is engaged directly or through any agency, in a professional capacity on a transport vehicle or who attends’ the words ‘employed in a motor transport undertaking dir-

ectly or through an agency, whether for wages or not, to work in a professional capacity on a transport vehicle or to attend’ be substituted.

5. That at page 4, line 7, after the word ‘time-keeper’ the word ‘watchman’ be inserted.

*Clause 18*

6. That at page 9, line 38, for the words ‘each adult motor transport worker’ the words ‘motor transport workers’ be substituted.

*Clause 20*

7. That at page 10, line 23, for the word ‘holidays’ the words ‘days of rest’ be substituted.

*Clause 28*

8. That at page 13, line 3, after the word ‘wages’ the words ‘for the days on which he worked during the month immediately preceding his leave’, be inserted.”

RESOLUTION RE APPOINTMENT  
OF A COMMITTEE FOR THE  
SPEEDY COMPLETION OF THE  
HISTORY OF THE INDIAN FREE-  
DOM MOVEMENT—continued

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. J. C. Chatterji. There is nobody here to represent the Government. It is rather a sad state of affairs.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Then, please give them a few minutes to come.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is a non-official Resolution. You can start, Mr. Chatterji.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, before he starts, you see those Benches. At least some Minister should be there. It is an unheard of thing. It is getting absolutely into wrong habits.

(Interruptions)