

traffic, either goods or passenger, for the Railways to lift, and it is for consideration whether the Railways should undertake the construction of new railway lines in those areas or not.

SHRI D. A. MIRZA (Madras): What about the unhealthy competition?

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: I am not entering into the details of healthy or unhealthy competition. What I am suggesting is this that given a certain quantum of resources for the development of transport in the country, whether it is rail or road, if one mode of transport is existing, it will not be desirable, it will not be to the national interest to develop another mode of transport in that area, whether it is road transport or whether it is rail transport. I say that it should be applicable to both. Where road transport has developed, it will not be wise on the part of the Railways to construct a new line in that area. Sir, I don't think I am called upon to say anything more.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the service of the financial year 1958-59 for the purposes of Railways, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up clause by clause consideration.

Clauses 2 and 3 and the Scheduled were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: Sir, I move:

"That the Bill be returned."

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That the Bill be returned."

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, while accepting the proposition of the hon. Railway Minister that where there are facilities for traffic existing, new lines need not be constructed, I can say that there are many places where the new lines are required and where they will be paying. I hope the hon. Railway Minister will give attention to those lines.

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: I say that the Planning Commission has laid down a criterion that where new industries are to be planned out by the Centre or by the States or where minerals are to be developed, priorities are to be determined for the construction of railways and I personally feel that where no mode of transport is available and there is enough chance of traffic developing, railway lines should be constructed.

SHRI D. A. MIRZA: Let him have a soft corner for the South.

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: I have a whole corner for the South.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be returned."

The motion was adopted.

THE APPROPRIATION (VOTE ON ACCOUNT) BILL, 1959.

THE MINISTER OF REVENUE AND CIVIL EXPENDITURE (DR. B. GOPALA REDDI): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to provide for the withdrawal of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of a part of the Financial year 1959-60, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

This Bill arises out of a sum of Rs. 145 crores voted by the Lok Sabha.

[Dr. B. Gopala Reddi.]
on 12th March 1959 in accordance with the provisions of article 116 of the Constitution, and Rs 519 crores in respect of expenditure "charged" on the Consolidated Fund of India as shown in the 'Vote on Account' Statement circulated to the Hon. Members. As the House is aware, it is usual to seek the approval of Parliament for one month's supply pending the completion of the procedure for the voting of the Demands for Grants for the whole year and the passing of the connected Appropriation Bill. Accordingly provision has been made in the Bill to meet the estimated requirements for the month of April 1959. These broadly represent 1/12 of the whole year's gross requirements as provided for in the Demands for Grants except in a few cases where the expenditure is not uniformly spread over the year and larger provision is required to meet the likely payments next month. In para 4 of the Note to the Statement of 'Vote on Account', the items where larger provision is required have been detailed with explanation of the reasons for the additional requirements.

Sir, I move.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Motion moved :

"That the Bill to provide for the withdrawal of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of a part of the financial year 1959-60, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: How many speakers want to speak on this? (After a pause) I have got 4 names. Two from Mr. Gupta's side. All right, ten to twelve minutes each.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): We will manage it. Sir, I rise to draw the attention of the Finance Ministry to the misuse of funds from the Consolidated and other Funds of the Government of India, misappropriation of such Funds in

connection with certain unholy purposes. I would give a concrete example and I would like the Finance Ministry to enquire into this matter.

An English evening daily began its publication in Calcutta on the 21st August 1954. The name of the daily was the *Free Lance*. Now, this publication suddenly surprised everybody because all the other evening papers—the English evening papers—like the *Star of India*, *Advance*, *Jai Hind* and others had closed down. Therefore, people were surprised how this venture could come, from where the money came for these things etc. Some speculation went on. Some thought it was inspired by certain U.S. agencies, others thought that the money came from certain Missions or that the multi-millionnaires gave loans etc. but nobody knew exactly where the money came from. I think the *Blitz* even before its publication, made a kind of forecast, speculation and all that as to its origin. This is the paper which ran till December 1957. In order to bring out this particular journal, a company was floated, a private limited company called the 'Progressive Publishers Limited' was floated and the paper was published under its aegis. A private limited company was suddenly floated with Rs. 1 lakh. Then one Suresh Chandra Das became the Printer, Publisher and Editor of the paper. Mr. Suresh Chandra Das was at that time an obscure publisher and printer. He was connected with a press called 'Avinash Press' and also he was the Director of the General Printers and Publishers Private Limited, an obscure concern. That caused more surprise as to how an evening paper could be brought out under the aegis of a newly started company when others had gone into liquidation and how it could be undertaken by a person who had no *locus standi* practically. This is how it came. I have it now from the Assistant Editor of the paper. Shri Ashutosh Das—he was the Assistant Editor—that this paper was actually sponsored by Rai Bahadur Sasadhar Majumdar, Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Bureau,

S. K. Haldar, his Personal Assistant and some other people. I have got it—and I am stating it on the basis of a statement supplied to us by Mr. Ashutosh Das, a statement which is in writing and every page of which has been signed by him. This is the position. Then what happened? Then comes the financial part of it and the Finance Ministry should be interested. I think in the middle of June, 1954, Mr. Asutosh Das informs us, that he was approached by Mr. S. K. Haldar who said that the money would be forthcoming from the Government of India's Consolidated Fund, that it would be some fund which would not be subject to any auditor—anything of that kind and that it would not be known. This was told to Mr. Asutosh Das who acted as the Assistant Editor of the paper. Then he also informed me that Rs. 8 lakhs had been deposited in the name of the Progressive Publishers Limited's accounts—the newly floated company—with the Llyods Bank in account number 26303. The money was deposited, Rs. 8 lakhs, taken from certain Government Funds, Home Ministry's perhaps, and deposited with the Llyod's Bank in the name of this particular company. And the paper came out. Many people, Sir, were associated with this paper. These people did not know that this paper had that kind of an origin. Some of the correspondents were paid heavily. I have got here that one person was writing a column. "Weekly Spray" under the pen name "DDT" and he was being given Rs. 500. And many people started writing under pen names, and I have information from the same source that even Mr. Nabagopal Das, a member of the ICS, wrote a column under the pen name of "Abhimanyu Bagchi."

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is your authority for all these allegations?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I have found it out, as I have said . . .

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MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Have you got anything in writing?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I have it, but . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order. You are making very serious allegations. What is your authority? You should take full responsibility for what you say.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I am taking full responsibility and I am asking them to enquire.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Have you written to them to enquire?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Why should I write?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow such allegations to be made on the floor of the House.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, I have a right to . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It has nothing to do with the Finance Bill.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Yes, because these funds come from the . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order. I cannot allow this.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: For this anti-Communist paper . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Have you got anything in writing to show that these officers concerned were involved in it?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: You leave out the officers, if you like.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have made serious allegations. If you have anything in writing, place it on the Table of the House.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I will not place it. I may give it to the Finance Minister.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am not allowing such allegations against persons who are not here.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: But the Government is here. You leave out the names, if you don't like . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Not a question of my liking. As a responsible Member of Parliament, you should take full responsibility.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I say I do.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Have you anything in writing to show that they were involved in all these things?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Do you think I should get it in writing?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, you ought to.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Yes, I have.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Members of Parliament should satisfy themselves and they should write to the Government to verify these things before they make allegations like this.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I have satisfied myself.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am sorry. I cannot allow these things to go.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I may not mention names; but it is my privilege to . . .

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, on a point of order, if the hon. Member is prepared to make any written allegation, he should be able to place it on the Table of the House.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Contact Mr. Das and get the allegations from him in writing.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Have you got anything in writing from that gentleman?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I have; but I will not place it on the Table. I will certainly pass it on to him.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bhupesh Gupta, you are a Member of Parliament and the freedom of speech here should not be abused. Before making such allegations, an hon. Member should satisfy himself that these are facts, that they are true.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I beg of you to understand my position.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I understand it fully. Have you got anything in writing?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Whatever I have said I am saying on the . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am not going to allow such things.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I will not mention any names.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is a very serious matter. You have made allegations and people have no remedy against allegations made in Parliament.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I know, but when I spoke about Mr. Mathai—and that is before the enquiry committee now—you did not ask me at that time to produce things in writing. Did you ask me? Why didn't you ask me? Why? Therefore, please understand it, kindly understand me.

SHRI D. A. MIRZA (Madras): Sir, let his remarks be expunged. Or let him withdraw these remarks.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Why? What am I asking? You are right, Sir, in asking me if I have been satisfied I say I have been satisfied. Him I may not be able to satisfy.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You should write to the Government and ask them to enquire. And if you get no proper reply, then you can raise it here.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: It is for me to write to the Government or not to. What I have been submitting . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Have you satisfied yourself?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Do you think I am telling a lie here?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I don't know.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: It is my privilege and I say I am convinced. I and my party have satisfied ourselves as far as possible.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Produce something in writing before such allegations are made.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY (Mysore): It is not enough if he is convinced. We are not here to . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Is this a bar? I am trying to convince you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: These allegations against people who are not here to defend themselves I cannot allow.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Did Mr. Feroze Gandhi produce everything in writing when he made allegations against Bharat Insurance or against Mundhra? I would like to know why this treatment against me. If you don't like it, I can understand the position. I will not quarrel over it. I will pass this on to the Government, I will do it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please do pass it on.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Cut out the names. I will not name anybody. Well, money in this venture has been spent like water. Correspondents—I will not name them as you have said so—were paid heavily, and they were writing under pen names, against the Communists. The paper did not succeed. But what is important for the hon. Finance Minister

to know is that—and it is of public interest—some of the funds are still there and that should be recovered. They have been shifted to certain other accounts with the Lloyd's Bank—account No. 26480. I have satisfied myself about the account in the Lloyd's Bank. The company has gone into liquidation, this newly started one, the Progressive Publishers Limited. But according to my information and according to the written statement made to us by a member of the staff, by the Assistant Editor of the paper, the funds actually belong to the Government and the Government should, therefore, take care. The liquidator, I am told, has absconded. That also the Government should take note. This person, whose name I will not mention, is absconding.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: Why? Why is he absconding?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I am told he has misappropriated some of the funds.

Now, Sir, you asked me whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to this. I have also information, Sir, that the attention of Government has been drawn by other people to this matter. It is not for me to tell you what has been the result of what the other people have been doing. My point here is this. Certain funds are there and the Treasury Benches should take care of these funds. For instance, even in this Budget, you find a sum of Rs. 1,16,00,000 has been provided for the Central Intelligence Bureau, out of which a sum of Rs. 20 lakhs has been provided for some secret service. Whatever that may be, I am not concerned. But these accounts should be properly checked. My information is that money was obtained by these people for running a paper to counter the influence of the Communist Party and a large part of it was misappropriated, in the hope that these funds will not be open to audit, in the hope that they are secret funds, in the hope that the

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta.]

Estimates Committee will not be able to go into them, or some such thing.

It is for you to consider. I am not upset by any anti-Communism of that sort, because many others have done it in the past and they have not been able to succeed. My point is this: Is it permissible for the Government or for the Central Intelligence Bureau or for its officers to embark upon such kind of a venture of bringing out a paper and investing funds allocated to the Home Ministry and the Central Intelligence Bureau? That is my point. You consider and if you think it is right, do it by all means, but if you think it is wrong, then you should really look into the matter. I can only say this since you have very strong views in this matter; otherwise, I could have given you more details and personally I am prepared to show this thing that I have got but I will not bring it up here at this stage. Let things be enquired into. I am not saying that everything that has been communicated to me is absolutely right. All that I am saying is that since a serious thing has been brought to your notice, enquire into it. Myself, my colleagues in the other House and my colleagues in the Bengal Assembly have decided to bring the facts to the notice of the Government and that is why I brought it up. Hon. Members want proof. In that case, I will have to go to the Supreme Court to prove it. That is not the way.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can write to the Government. If they do not reply, then you will be right in raising it here.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I do not think it is always right. Sometimes we do and sometimes we do not. In this matter, we brought it to your notice.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: As a responsible Member of Parliament,

you ought to write to the Government.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I do not know whether Mr. Chacko is being asked to write to the Government in Kerala. I do not see him writing any letter. Anyway, I will consider it to be a suggestion. I object strongly to this that such funds should be utilised for such unholy purposes. It is a waste. The fund is allowed to be misappropriated and these people play ducks and drakes. The Deputy Director has retired. He is out of reach. He retired in 1957 August, the Rai Bahadur I mentioned. He has retired but the others are there. Enquire into the matter and let us know what the position is. If it is found that I am wrong, I will admit my mistake but I tell you that I am saying all this on the basis of a written statement. We are satisfied but we have no means of direct enquiry all through. Anyway, you will be glad to hear that this paper could not run and had to be closed down in 1957. The Calcutta people thought that that kind of people would not do. There was a lot of wastage of public funds.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is past history.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Yes, but money is still there. History is past but money is still there. I would ask the Government to look into the matter and get at the money. The liquidator, I am told, has absconded. I wanted to say another thing but since you are very strong on that, I shall not. I would have, if you had asked me in your Chamber, shown it to you.

I would like to draw the attention of the Government to I.P.A. Publication of March 9, which contains sensational details about criminal and irregular transactions with regard to the disposal of vast evacuee lands in Punjab. These things have been compiled in the report of the special investigation conducted by Shri P. C. Chaudhuri, I.C.S. The investigation

which was conducted at the initiative of the Union Government—please note this—was with regard to land transactions covering twenty lakh acres. Out of this, fraudulent deals covered over one lakh acres and the total amount involved was estimated to be four to five crores. The publication goes on to say,

“It is understood that a number of high officials are implicated in this transaction. . . .”

I am reading it out, Sir—

“...prominent among them being Dr. M. S. Randhawa, I.C.S., now the Vice-Chairman of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Mr. Tarlok Singh, I.C.S., at present Joint Secretary of the Planning Commission.”

This is what has appeared in the Press on the basis of the Report and I would like to ask the Government what is being done about it because money is wasted that way.

I would now draw the attention of the Government to another factor. Government is insisting on the collection of a betterment levy from the Punjab people as a result of which firing had taken place and many people had been killed. Now, in the name of betterment levy and in the name of attachment of property, robbery is taking place. The peasants' houses are being looted, plundered and the belongings of peasant women, their ornaments and things like that are being taken away by force. Mr. Gopalan was nearly beaten.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is for the Punjab Assembly.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I hope, Sir, Government would intervene in that situation.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Law and order is a *St te* subject.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Yes only when it is not Kerala.

I would request the Government to intervene in this matter because they say that this thing is being done under the instructions of the Central Government. I understand the Bill to replace the Betterment Levy Ordinance will come up before the Assembly on the 21st of this month. The Central Government should intervene before that date, hold an all-parties conference to discuss this matter so that necessary changes and modifications may be made in order to bring about a peaceful settlement of the problem. It is a very serious situation and the entire economy is affected. I hope the Government will intervene.

Now, Sir, my last point. In this House, with you in the Chair, I made certain, well, you may call them allegations or charges against a certain officer, the Special Assistant. We were informed in the other House that certain investigation had been started officially. I do not know how the investigation is progressing. I regret, Sir, that no Minister has made a statement here. We are adjourning now and we do not know what progress has been made in that affair. Since the matter originated in this House, a statement could have been made as to the progress of the investigation. All I would ask is this. I insisted on a judicial enquiry and I am more than ever convinced now that there is a case for judicial enquiry. In this connection, Sir, I would ask you to take note of the fact that very powerful influences are throwing their weight about to frustrate the official enquiry and prevent a judicial enquiry. I have information that when this Special Assistant arrived here, the Secretary-General of the External Affairs Ministry was the first caller on him. I have also information that this gentleman, the Special Assistant, after arriving here, met along with Mr. G. D. Birla, the Finance Minister. I would like to

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta]
 be told that it is false. Similarly, various other people are pulling their wires. In the interests of the country, I would request the Government to take necessary steps so that influences, power of wealth, are not harnessed, pressed into service against a proper judicial enquiry or even an enquiry by an officer. I have nothing against the particular officer who is enquiring into it but it is important as to how we set about this matter of enquiry. It seems that power of wealth, privilege, connections, big money, are all ranged against us, Members on this side of the House and that side of the House, to frustrate a proper enquiry which may make startling revelations before the country from which we all shall profit. I am not going into it any more I hope, as we are adjourning now, Government will take necessary steps to prevent interference with the enquiry and also prevent the big forces being utilised, being mobilised, in order to frustrate this enquiry now and a judicial enquiry later on. I wish a judicial enquiry had been ordered where much of these things could have been brought to light.

Thank you, Sir.

SHRI N. M. LINGAM (Madras): Mr. Deputy Chairman, this is hardly the occasion for any detailed examination or scrutiny of any major financial or economic problem especially after the Budget debate we have had recently a few days ago. However, I would like to avail of this occasion to bring to the notice of the Government the hardships experienced by certain sectors of the tea industry. Sir, the House will recall that when we were discussing the Tea Excise Duties (Amendment) Bill, the hon. Minister's attention was invited to the plight of common tea producers. It was explained then that the relief Government sought to give to these growers under that Bill was small and that if that sector of the industry was to be rehabilitated, Government should be liberal in their aid.

The hon. Minister of State for 4 P.M. Finance was pleased to say then that the Government were watching the situation and that they would not hesitate to extend relief if relief was really necessary. Sir, in the Budget proposals the Government have come forward with some measure of relief. Having divided Zone No. III into two Zones, III-A and III-B, in one of the Zones they have reduced the excise duty from 10 nP to 8 nP per pound. At the same time they have reduced the export duty on tea from 26 nP to 24 nP per pound. This is greatly to be welcomed because in effect it does give relief to the extent of 4 nP per pound of tea. Welcome as this is, it does not help certain sectors of the industry. As I pointed out on the last occasion, in certain regions, especially in the Nilgiris, small growers are mixed up with the big ones with the result that the small growers have to pay the higher duty which the big growers have to pay. Sir, it is three or four months since the Government have been seized of the problem and although they have come forward with some measure of relief, it does not really solve the problem of the small grower. Sir, I would once again invite the attention of the Government to the existence of this problem which is affecting the small producers. He has, as I pointed out on another occasion, to pay 5 nP more per pound of tea for which his neighbour has to pay only 3 nP. There is a difference of 5 nP per pound and for a peasant producer to lose at the rate of 5 nP per pound is really a big hardship because he does not export tea and in the internal market his tea is not in a competitive position. Sir, I understood that there was some difficulty in evolving a formula by which this small class of common tea producers could be given relief but I feel that the difficulty in evolving a formula should not stand in the way of relief being given if the Government is convinced that relief is necessary and I

do hope that before long some tangible measure of relief would be forthcoming.

Sir, I have another point to make. In the Budget proposals no mention was made about our financial transactions with Pakistan. As early as 1953 when the hon. Mr. Deshmukh was Finance Minister, he took credit for a sum of Rs. 9 crores as the first instalment of partition debt of Pakistan. We know that the partition debt amounted to Rs. 300 crores. There were other outstanding issues also. For instance, for the supply of canal waters, Pakistan owes us several lakhs of rupees. I refer only to the undisputed claims. Then there are the disputed claims. Possibly, there are other financial issues also to be settled with Pakistan and it is surprising that there was no mention at all about it, either about the steps that the Government have taken or they contemplate taking for settling these outstanding financial issues with Pakistan. Sir, it is a matter of urgent importance. In the interests of smooth settlement of the partition problems we agreed to these arrangements by, what may be called, the rule of thumb method. In fact, we have been very generous to Pakistan when we agreed to pay the debt of the composite country, undivided India, at the time of partition, and now even after the lapse of so many years we have not been receiving what is legitimately due to us. I hope the hon. Minister will throw some light as to what the Government propose to do in this matter.

श्री निरंजन सिंह (मध्य प्रदेश) : उप-सभापति महोदय, हमारे मध्य प्रदेश में डाकुओं की समस्या बढ़ती ही जा रही है और अब वह चरम सीमा तक पहुंच गई है। हमारी यह सरकार डाकुओं की समस्या को रोकने में बिल्कुल असमर्थ रही है, यह बात मैं सदन के सामने कहना चाहता हूं। हमारी सरकार ने जो जोनल कौंसिलें बनाई थीं वह इसलिये

बनाई थी कि दो तीन स्टेट मिलकर अपने-अपने जो कॉमन ग्रिवांसेज हैं, उनको दूर करें। लेकिन हम देख यह रहे हैं कि हर तीसरे और चौथे महीने में जोनल कौंसिलों की मीटिंग होती है, मिनिस्टर और आफिसरों का लम्बा-लम्बा बिल बनता है मगर मध्य प्रदेश में डाकुओं की समस्या का अभी तक कोई हल उसने नहीं निकाला है और न भारत सरकार ही इस काम को करने में समर्थ मालूम पड़ती है। यही नहीं, हमको तो यहां तक मालूम हुआ है कि जब एक प्रान्त में डाका डाला जाता है तो दूसरे प्रान्त की पुलिस जहां से डाकू आता है उसको प्रोटेक्ट करती है। इन सब बातों के होते हुए न जोनल कौंसिल ही और न भारत सरकार ही इस समस्या को अभी तक हल कर सकी है। मेरी यह प्रार्थना है कि इस काम में सरकार का लाखों रुपये खर्च हो रहा है फिर भी वहां की स्थिति में किसी भी प्रकार से फर्क नहीं आया है। डाकुओं की समस्या से वहां की जनता का अमन चैन बिल्कुल खत्म हो गया है। कल ही हमारे प्रदेश के मुख्य मंत्री जी ने कहा है कि बोर्डर के एक जिले में एक डाकू ने एक गांव में डाका डाला और करीब ६ लाख रुपये का सामान लूट ले गया और कई आदमी मारे गये। इस तरह से एक महीने में वहां तीन-चार गांव की जायदाद लूट ली गई है और कई लोग घायल हो गये और मारे गये हैं। जो मारे गये और घायल हो गये उनको सरकार की ओर से किसी तरह की राहत नहीं दी गई है। जो डाकू डाका डालने आये वे चम्बल के उस पार राजस्थान के जिले में चले गये। न सरकार को इस बात की चिंता है और न पुलिस वालों ने ही उनका पीछा किया, इस तरह से वहां की गरीब जनता हर तरह से मारी जा रही है। जब पिछली लड़ाई में अंग्रेज जर्मनी में लड़ रहे थे तो यह प्रोपेगन्डा करते रहते थे कि हमने आज यह जीत लिया, कल वह जीत लिया, लेकिन परिणाम यह होता था कि वे बराबर हारते ही जाते थे। उसी तरह से हमारी मध्य प्रदेश की सरकार भी बार-बार

[श्री निरंजन सिंह]

यह कहती रहती है कि हमने इतने डाकुओं को मार दिया है और उनकी संख्या इतनी तक पहुँच गई है। कल ही मध्य प्रदेश की सरकार ने यह बतलाया है कि ५८८ डाकुओं को पकड़ लिया गया है। तो मैं आप से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि ५८८ डाकुओं को पकड़ने के बाद भी मध्य प्रदेश में डाकुओं की समस्या हल नहीं होती है तो यह किसकी जिम्मेदारी है। निर्दोष आदमियों को डाकुओं के नाम से पकड़ा जाता है और उन्हें तरह तरह से तंग किया जाता है। इस तरह से डाकुओं की समस्या कभी भी हल होने वाली नहीं है हिन्दुस्तान के जिन प्रान्तों में बोंडर के उस पार से जो भी मुश्किलें आती हैं उनकी जिम्मेदारी सीधे सेटर के ऊपर है बनिस्बत प्रान्तों के। इसलिये मैं सरकार से प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि मध्य प्रदेश में डाकुओं की समस्या को हल करने के लिये कोई उचित कदम जल्दी से उठाये।

उपसभापति महोदय, दूसरी बात जो मुझे आपके सामने अर्ज करनी है वह स्टेट ट्रेडिंग इन फूड ग्रेन के सम्बन्ध में है। आइटम नम्बर १२०-२१ में यह लिखा हुआ है Capital Outlay of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture इस चीज के ऊपर आपका ध्यान तब गया जब कि जगह जगह इस बारे में सत्याग्रह हुए और लोगों को ठीक कीमत में अनाज नहीं मिला। मैंने इस सम्बन्ध में पहले भी कहा था और आज भी कह रहा हूँ कि आपकी इस नीति में गरीब जनता को किसी प्रकार से भी राहत नहीं मिल रही है। अगर इससे किसी को राहत मिल रही है तो वह व्यापारी और सरकारी अफसरों को ही मिल रहा है। गेहूँ के बारे में तीन राज्यों का जो जोनल सिस्टम था उसको आपने खत्म कर दिया है। अब आपने मध्य प्रदेश, राजस्थान और बम्बई का अलग-अलग यूनिट बना दिया है। इस पर आप यह कह रहे हैं कि हम इन प्रान्तों में अलग अलग गेहूँ खरीदेंगे मगर अभी तक आपने

गेहूँ की कीमत मुकर्रर नहीं की और न दूसरे प्रान्तों ही ने मुकर्रर की है। मध्य प्रदेश में पंजाब का गेहूँ एक महीने पहले आ जाता है। यू० पी० का गेहूँ मध्य प्रदेश में २५ दिन पहले आ जाता है। अब थोड़े ही दिनों के अन्दर मार्केट में गेहूँ आ जायेगा मगर आपने उसकी कीमत अभी तक मुकर्रर नहीं की है। बोंट आफ अकाउंट्स में आपने एक महीने के लिये खर्च मागा है और वह इसी महीने खत्म हो जायेगा। आपके पास गेहूँ खरीदने के लिये पैसा नहीं रहेगा। किसान गेहूँ को अपने पास नहीं रख सकता है और वह उसको जल्दी ही बाजार में बेचने के लिये लायेगा। इसका नतीजा यह होगा कि सरकार की ओर से तो खरीददारी नहीं होगी और व्यापारी लोग किसान से सस्ते दाम पर गेहूँ खरीदकर उसका स्टॉक कर लेगा और महंगे दामों में जनता को बेचेगा। एक तरफ तो सरकार ने यह बयान निकाला है कि पिछले तीन महीनों के हिसाब से प्रान्तीय सरकार गेहूँ किसान से खरीद सकती है और दूसरी तरफ आपने प्रान्तों को इस सम्बन्ध में किसी प्रकार के इन्स्ट्रक्शन नहीं दिये हैं। गेहूँ को खरीदने के लिये सरकार ने पैसे का कोई उचित प्रबन्ध भी नहीं किया है। जैसा कि मैं ने पहले भी कहा था, सरकार स्टेट ट्रेडिंग से कुछ ब्रोकरों और और मिडिलमैन को मदद करना चाहती है, इससे आम जनता को कोई राहत पहुँचने वाली नहीं है। आप जब तक इस सम्बन्ध में अपना रवैया नहीं बदलेंगे तब तक आप इस काम में सफल नहीं हो सकते हैं।

दूसरी बात मैं इरिगेशन के सम्बन्ध में कहना चाहता हूँ। यहाँ पर सेट्रल गवर्नमेंट के पास प्राविशियल गवर्नमेंट्स लिफ्ट इरिगेशन वगैरह के सम्बन्ध में जो स्कीमें भेजती हैं उनके सम्बन्ध में यहाँ कोई सुनवाई नहीं होती है। आप बड़े-बड़े डैम बनवा दें या और बड़े-बड़े काम कर दें तो उससे आप कितना बड़ा इलाका सींच सकते हैं ? असली चीज तो यह है कि हमें लिफ्ट इरिगेशन को प्रोत्साहन देना है और छोटे-छोटे बंध वगैरह बनाने

है और तभी इरिगेशन का सवाल हल होगा और इरिगेशन का सवाल हल होने से ही फूड प्रॉब्लम साल्व होगा। लेकिन हमको मालूम है कि यदि कोई स्टेट अपनी स्कीम भेजती है, जिसमें कि यह कहा जाता है कि हमको इतने इलेक्ट्रिक पम्प्स चाहियें या यहां-यहां इसके लिये इन्फ्रैक्ट्रक लाइन चाहिये या कोई और चीज मागी जाती है, तो उस स्कीम के बारे में कोई निर्णय नहीं होता है। वह या तो सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट के ठंडे बस्ते में रह जाती है या क्या उसका होता है, मालूम नहीं। अक्सर यह होता है कि कभी वह कम्युनिटी डेवलपमेंट मिनिस्टर के पास जाती है, कभी फाइनंस मिनिस्टर के पास जाती है और कभी कम्युनिकेशन मिनिस्टर के पास जाती है और इसी तरह से न मालूम कहां-कहां पेपर घूमता रहता है और उनके बारे में कोई निर्णय नहीं होता है। इसलिये मेरा कहना है कि इरिगेशन का काम बहुत धीरे चल रहा है और उसके बिना आपका उत्पादन नहीं बढ़ सकता है। अगर आपका उत्पादन ज्यादा नहीं होता है तो आप फाइनैन्शल क्राइसिस से भी बाहर नहीं निकल सकते हैं और अगर देश में फाइनैन्शल क्राइसिस रहती है तो देश में अन्न और चैन नहीं रह सकता है और अगर लोगों के मन को शान्ति नहीं मिलती है तो फिर कार्य करने के लिये जो उत्साह होना चाहिये वह भी उनमें नहीं होगा। तो ये तीन चार चीजें ऐसी हैं—जो कि मैंने बताई—जिनके कि ऊपर सरकार को ध्यान देना चाहिये।

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND (Uttar Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Chairman, it is usually the custom not to discuss at length the "Vote on Account" which is only for one month, but if you look into the Appropriation Bill, you will find that it is not one-twelfth of the whole Budget. Probably, the reason would be that now they want to pay some loans and some amounts which would be due in the month of April, and for that provision has been made.

I would not like to go into the figures at this moment, but I would resort to that at a later stage when the whole Appropriation Bill comes. But there are some things which are necessary for the existence of human beings, and I would like to draw the attention of the Finance Minister to them. I would have been happier if the Health Minister had also been here, because what we usually find is that, when we go out of the big cities, even in small cities, we cannot get pure drinking water. This is a need on which I need not lay more emphasis. I hope every section of the House will agree that it is the duty of the Central Government as well as of the State Governments—because the Central Government cannot function without the help of the State Governments—to provide at least pure drinking water to the citizens of this great Republic.

Now, Sir, if you look to the health of the people, the incidence of T.B., in certain sections, is on the increase. In regard to malaria, although it has been said to be controlled by the malaria section, still during our recent tour of Bihar, we found mosquitoes everywhere. And the funniest thing was when we were in Dhanbad, in the new Jagjivan Nagar, we found, when we reached there at about two o'clock in the night—and there were no mosquito nets—that it was impossible to sleep there. When we wanted to know why anti-malaria action had not been taken there, we were told that the mosquitoes were now immune to D.D.T. Now, this is a point which the Health Ministry should look into.

Now, take the case of leprosy. You will find so many people moving about at every station, in every place, with leprosy. Nothing is being done. We are talking about big plants—Durgapur, Rourkela, Bhilai, etc. But we neglect at the same time these persons who are suffering from leprosy, small-pox, T.B. and other things. Now, Sir, there are great doubts whether health should be in charge of the Government of India or not. I would not enter into that

question, because here also the agency is used by the States. But I think that, when there is a Health Ministry, it is the duty of that Ministry to look to the supply of good drinking water, good sanitation and measures to combat leprosy, T.B., small-pox, etc.

Now, Sir, leaving the Health Ministry, I would like to say something about the new tax, about which much agitation is going on. I refer to the increased tax on diesel oil. When this was increased two years back by the ex-Finance Minister, Shri T. T. Krishnamachari, I was one of those—when I spoke on it—who said that there was reason to increase this duty on diesel oil. And the argument which I then thought of but did not advance was that we were now having more vehicles run on diesel oil. Now, we find that there is competition between rail and road and we find that diesel oil has practically replaced petrol. On petrol the duty is really high. But then it is a matter of luxury for those persons who can afford big cars. As far as diesel oil is concerned, there should be a ratio between the petrol price and the diesel oil price. In this trade of trucks and buses there is a handicap for those persons who are running their old trucks and passenger buses on petrol. Those persons who are running their vehicles on diesel oil get a premium over those persons who are using petrol. Therefore, it is but reasonable and proper that, when we want to nationalise road transport and when we think in terms of nationalisation, it is necessary that the persons who are carrying on this trade should be at a par. The passenger or the person who gives his load to be carried pays the same amount for the buses run on petrol or diesel oil. Now, when there is this disparity in taxation it is but proper that there should be increased taxation on diesel oil.

Now, Sir, another thing to which I would like to draw the attention of

the hon. Minister is income-tax. As far as we know, the arrears of income-tax today are to the tune of Rs. 278 crores . . .

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: It is not so much as that.

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: What are the effective arrears?

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: It is about Rs. 170 crores or Rs. 180 crores.

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: All right, Let us assume the figure to be Rs. 178 crores, although as far as my information goes, and the information which was supplied during questions and answers goes, it was to the tune of Rs. 278 crores. But I will take it as even Rs. 178 crores. Now, why should this amount, which is due to the State, be in the hands of those persons who have to pay this amount? There is something inherently defective in the system of realisation of income-tax. I have tried to find out as to what the reason is. The reason is very simple. Those persons who have to pay more income-tax move applications for adjournment. They say, our accounts are not ready, this and that, and the amount which they have to pay to the Government, they take out from their accounts. They deposit it somewhere else and get interest on it and evade paying income-tax at the proper time. Therefore, where the small earners. . . (*Time bell rings*). If you will permit me 4 or 5 minutes . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Not 4 or 5 minutes. Just finish this sentence.

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: If the income-tax authorities, when they send a demand notice, also make it compulsory, in those cases where there are arrears, to deposit the previous arrears, I think much money can be realised.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the low income group housing scheme, because that is a matter which does trouble people. Under the system for the disbursement of loans, if you want to

construct a house of Rs. 10,000 or Rs. 11,000, the Government gives a loan of Rs. 8,000. In actual practice in the same financial year nobody can get more than Rs. 3,000 or Rs. 3,500 out of that Rs. 8,000. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that the Budget is passed by the 30th of April but the State Governments who have to disburse the money get the information that so much money has been allotted to them some time in the month of October or November. Thereafter, the first instalment is paid by the State Government in the month of January or even in the month of February. The Finance Minister is just smiling, but what I am telling him is from personal experience. I happen to be one of the secretaries of a co-operative society. We got the first instalment for seven houses in the last week of January. If we finish the construction of the plinth, then we will get the second instalment by the 31st of March, and thereafter the third instalment of the loan will be received some time in October 1959. This is a point on which I say that if you want to help the people who want to make houses for themselves, then help them properly. That is what I want to say. You should give the money in such instalments that they may be able to utilise it.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: Sir, when I presented the Vote on Account Bill, I thought that there would not be much of a discussion, because it is an innocuous Bill. The House is prepared to sanction the entire expenditure, but we only wanted 1/12th of the expenditure for the month of April, and I thought that when the full Appropriation Bill comes, hon. Members will take that opportunity of discussing the entire expenditure of the Government. But anyway my good friend, my indefatigable friend, Mr. Bhupesh Gupta, has sprung a complete surprise on the Finance Ministry on this occasion.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: That was not my intention. I asked the Deputy Home Minister to ask the Home Minister to be present or herself to be

present today. It was not my intention to spring a surprise on the Government.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: Had he told either the Finance Minister or myself, we would have seen that some of them were present. But he did not give the intimation.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It was not concerned with the Budget. It was about something which happened in 1957, about officers who had retired.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: According to my information they are still there. It is for him to find out.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: He had certain information. I do not know how long ago he got that information and whether it is a recent or it is an old information. If it is an old information, he could have elicited further information by putting questions to the Home Minister directly, and on the information supplied he could have come forward with his plea here on this occasion. But neither the Home Ministry nor the Finance Ministry was kept aware of the situation at any time, and therefore, Sir, I say that it has come to us as a surprise . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is one of his particular tactics.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, please do not say that. I have said that I have brought it to the notice of the Government. Let Government enquire and satisfy themselves. You can understand the position, Sir. An Assistant Editor who works in such a paper says such things. Naturally, I must satisfy myself whether he admits it. It is now for you . . .

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: Anyway there are many opportunities for the hon. Member to press this point if he is keen on it, because he is after all entitled to put questions and then

[Dr. B. Gopala Reddi.]
speak again on the entire appropriation. Anyway, Sir, our Ministry is not aware of any of these things or the details which he has given. It is a complete surprise to us and, therefore, I am unable to give him an assurance as to whether we would take it as a complete truth and therefore order an investigation . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: All that I want is that you should look into it. I am not saying that you should take it as complete truth. I believe what I stated, on the face of it, to be correct. I would like to share my information with you on this matter so that the truth could be arrived at. I am not saying that you should take it as the truth.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: Then, Sir, he has again raised this question of Trust and pleaded again for a judicial enquiry.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Not Trust, but the person and his conduct.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: I think the matter has been dealt with in great detail by the Prime Minister himself, and I have nothing more to add to that. I think my friend must have a little patience and await the enquiry report which will be referred to the Finance Minister and the Auditor General. I think that must satisfy him completely instead of his raking it up again and again and demanding a judicial enquiry.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I have not said that. As today we are adjourning, I thought I should draw the attention of the House to certain other moves to frustrate it.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: Nobody is anxious to protect anybody if he is found guilty of things like that. Certainly, we are reassembling in April and we would have ample opportunities of eliciting information with regard to further proceedings, enquiry

etc. Simply because we are adjourning it does not mean that he is not going to have an opportunity of knowing what has happened to the enquiry. It is too premature. The report has not come to the Finance Minister or the Auditor General. The enquiry is going on, and to say that something is happening and that somebody has called on somebody . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The hon. Minister is talking about the Auditor General . . .

SHRI D. A. MIRZA: We do not want his running commentaries.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Then what do you want? Stopping commentaries? All right.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: Then Sir, he referred to the law and order situation in the Punjab. We see in the papers that there is some little agitation with regard to the betterment levy. I do not know who is responsible for it, but the Government want some money and they are levying this. This has been done in other States also. It is entirely a matter for the Punjab Ministry to deal with the situation as it arises. I think the Government of India need not call a Round Table Conference, bring all the parties together and get some settlement in that way. The Punjab Government is capable of dealing with the situation as it arises.

Sir, Mr. Lingam has again raised this question of tea on this occasion. Due to the persistent demands made by various sections of the House and also outside we have given certain reliefs to certain teas. As I said on the last occasion, we are watching the situation and if further relief is needed, certainly we shall consider the matter. But just now I feel that whatever relief we have given with regard to exports and with regard to those high class teas is sufficient for the time being. But Mr. Lingam has raised a difficult issue altogether. In

the Nilgiris there are good and common teas side by side, and he wants certain relief to be given to these common teas. That is a matter which has to be looked into very carefully. We have already referred the matter to the Collector of Central Excise, Madras, and if necessary, I will go into the question in greater detail and see whether administratively it is feasible to give relief to the common teas when they are side by side with the quality teas. Therefore, it is a difficult administrative matter and we will certainly look into it.

With regard to the Pakistan affair again, we have given in the Explanatory Memorandum, page 78, that Rs. 300 crores are due from Pakistan. Sometime ago, in April 1957, there was a meeting at official level and it was promised that after the Finance Minister of Pakistan returned from Dacca—sometime in 1957—he would intimate this Government whether the Finance Ministers could meet. But we have not heard anything since then, and 1½ years have passed. These issues are still there and we are sorry that we could not come to an agreement so far on these matters. I do not know whether anything can be done now, in the present situation in Pakistan when there is no responsible Government and when there is the President's rule or whatever rule it is called. Therefore, we will have to wait in patience to see whether at some later date, we could come to some settlement on these outstanding issues. Of course, it is true that a large sum of money is still under dispute and we are unable to come to any understanding on this matter just now.

Mr. Niranjan Singh has referred to the dacoit menace in Madhya Pradesh. I am sure the Madhya Pradesh Government and also the Rajasthan Government and other Governments who are concerned with this matter are dealing with the question very effectively.

SHRI P. D. HIMATSINGKA (West Bengal): They are not dealing effectively.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: But they have arrested five hundred odd people according to him. Of course, yet there are other people at large. It is a very difficult question and I am sure the State Governments are dealing with the question as best as they can.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Rajasthan): It is increasing day by day and they are not doing anything adequately and efficiently.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: I am not quite prepared to accept that they are not alive to the issues and that they are not dealing with the matter as effectively as they can. They are trying to do what they can, but in spite of that, these dacoits are at large, and, of course, we will have to see what else could be done or what other steps should be taken to meet the menace. I do not know whether the hon. Member has any particular suggestions to make so that we can forward them to the State Governments concerned.

SHRI NIRANJAN SINGH: You can depute the military there.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: What will they do? They come overnight; they take some dacoits. Some abscond. What can the military do? I do not think it is the duty of the military to maintain law and order or meet a situation like that.

DR. W. S. BARLINGAY (Bombay): Martial law in Madhya Pradesh?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him finish.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: I do not think we can declare an emergency and have martial law there because there are a few dacoits abroad. Again, with regard to irrigation also, both the Central Government and the Planning Commission and the State

[Dr. B. Gopala Reddi.]

Governments are keenly alive to the need for irrigation—lift irrigation, minor irrigation, major irrigation and all that. Whatever money can be made available is being made available to the State Governments for irrigation purposes.

Mr. Amolakh Chand has discussed about health matters. The Health Minister here in the Government of India is not the Health Minister for all the States.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR): He is not.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: I know, Sir. I have been connected with State Governments. The Health Minister here is to stimulate certain researches, afford certain facilities and do things like that, and he is not the Health Minister for Andhra Pradesh or West Bengal or U.P. or Bihar. I do not think the Health Minister can function in that manner. It is entirely the State Government . . .

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: May I interrupt the hon. Minister because the Health Minister is also there? Again, in the scheme of things of the Government of India, have they included this scheme for drinking water supply?

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: I am aware, Sir, that the Health Ministry is making available large sums of money for drinking water supply schemes for the various municipalities, panchayats and all that. But they have certain priorities and they are to go according to the priorities. Because of the limitation of finance, they cannot undertake water supply schemes for all the villages and panchayats simultaneously. Therefore, they are doing their best. If in certain places they are not able to get potable water-supply, I think those people have to wait.

DR. W. S. BARLINGAY: Our difficulty is that the Finance Ministry is not helping the Health Ministry.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: The Finance Ministry is doing its best, but it has its limitations also.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: I am very happy that Shri Amolakh Chand has fully supported our levy on diesel oil. I must express my thanks to him for having fully supported our proposal. With regard to income-tax arrears which has been referred to so many times, we are also doing our best to see that there are no arrears. But there are so many reasons and so many stay orders and writ petitions, and the matter is rather difficult, and all the Commissioners have been asked to realise the money as much as possible within the . . .

SHRI P. D. HIMATSINGKA: Lot of them.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: Effective arrears are Rs. 170 crores out of Rs. 280 crores.

DR. W. S. BARLINGAY: The Finance Ministry and the Health Ministry should see that so far as rural water-supply is concerned . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He is on 'income-tax' now.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: We are doing our best now to see that in this month also and in the next financial year, larger amounts are collected. We are examining the matter also. Sir, I have replied to all the points.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill to provide for the withdrawal of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of a part of the financial year 1959-60, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up clause by clause consideration.

Clauses 2 and 3 and the Schedule were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI: Sir, I move:

"That the Bill be returned."

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be returned."

The motion was adopted.

REFERENCE TO THE PHARMACY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1959

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA (Uttar Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, before we take up the next item on the Agenda, I would like to make a small suggestion for your consideration. We have got only twenty-five minutes before us and it will not be sufficient to consider such an important Bill as the Pharmacy (Amendment) Bill. I would, therefore, suggest that the Pharmacy (Amendment) Bill, 1959, be held over, and we might take up the half-an-hour discussion.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Does the House agree?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It will be taken up during the next session.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION RE THE IMPORT AND DISTRIBUTION OF KEROSENE AND OTHER PETROLEUM PRODUCTS

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, for the last few years, we have been

giving our attention to the question of the distribution of petroleum products in this country and also the question of prices of such products. The object of this discussion is to raise certain points and to draw the attention of the House to certain important issues involved in them.

India's total oil imports are estimated to be about 5½ million tons annually, for which the country is spending about Rs. 100 crores in foreign exchange. According to the latest figures in the *Eastern Economist* of March 6, 1959, a copy of which I have got, you will find that the imports of crude and partly refined petroleum and petroleum products in 1957 were of the value of Rs. 107,51,00,000 and in the next year, 1958, they were of the value of Rs. 74,80,00,000. It is here. This important branch of our national economy is entirely controlled by foreign monopolists, not only as regards imports, but also as regards distribution. In other words, they are in complete control of the distribution of such petroleum products. The foreign monopolists who hold an unchallengeable sway over this branch and who are in control of distribution are the Burmah Shell, Stanvac, Caltex and the Western India Oil Co. connected with French monopolists having a very small share in the business. Now, I would like to know from the Government as to whether they have made enquiries into the activities of distribution and they have noted the plunder that goes on in the name of this oil trade on the part of these foreign monopolists.

There are a few glaring facts which cannot escape the notice of any one who has had anything to do with the problem. Take, for instance, the price of kerosene. Kerosene oil is a commodity which goes to every house. It is the largest item of import, representing about 30 per cent. of the total imported oil products. We are importing approximately 1½ million tons of kerosene, for which we are