

RAJYA SABHA*Friday, 3rd August 1956*

The House met at eleven of the clock, Mr. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE LOK SABHA**THE CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1956**

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 133 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha I am directed to enclose herewith a copy of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 1956, by Shri Raghunath Singh, as passed by Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 27th July 1956."

Sir, I lay the Bill on the Table.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE**STATEMENT SHOWING ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON VARIOUS ASSURANCES, PROMISES AND UNDERTAKINGS**

THE MINISTER FOR PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA NARA-YAN SINHA) : Sir, I lay on the Table the following statements showing the action taken by the Government on the various assurances, promises and undertakings given during the sessions shown against each:—

(i) Statement No. II—Thirteenth Session, 1956. [See Appendix XIV, Annexure No. 8.]

(ii) Statement No. III—Twelfth Session, 1956. [See Appendix XIV, Annexure No. 9.]

(iii) Statement No. VI—Eleventh Session, 1955. [See Appendix XIV, Annexure No. 10.]

(iv) Statement No. VIII—Tenth Session, 1955. [See Appendix XIV, Annexure No. 11.]

(v) Statement No. XI—Ninth Session, 1955. [See Appendix XIV, Annexure No. 12.] 1—5 R. S./56

(vi) Statement No. XXVII—Fifth Session, 1953. [See Appendix XIV, Annexure No. 13.]

(vii) Supplementary Statement No. XXV—Fourth Session, 1953. [See Appendix XIV, Annexure No. 14.]

PANDIT S. S. N. TANKHA (Uttar Pradesh): On a previous occasion, Sir, I made a request that these statements should be circulated to us so that we may know what assurances had been given by Government.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY (Mysore) : They have been circulated to the concerned Members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: They are now being circulated to the concerned Members. You want them to be circulated to the whole House. We will consider the matter.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO SHRI S. N. MAHTHA

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform hon. Members that the following letter dated July 30, has been received from Shri S. N. Mahtha:

"On account of ill-health, I am not able to attend the current session of the Council of States which begins today. I shall be grateful if you will kindly grant me leave of absence."

Is it the pleasure of the House that permission be granted to Mr. S. N. Mahtha for remaining absent from all meetings of the House during the current session?

(No hon. Member dissented.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Permission to remain absent is granted.

RESOLUTION RE PRESERVATION AND MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH (Madhya Bharat): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I deem it a matter of pleasure and privilege for me to get a chance to speak on the

[Dr. Raghubir Sinh.] Resolution that stands in my name. Sir, I move :

"This House is of opinion that with a view to ensuring the due preservation and maintenance of records of national importance, a Committee comprising of Members of Parliament and persons possessing special knowledge on the subject be appointed to examine the question in all its aspects and to recommend to Government rules regulating the custody, cataloguing, preservation and weeding of records for their adoption by Government."

Sir, the subject raised by me is not only one which is possible to be dealt with by the House by virtue of Entry 67 of the Union List of the Seventh Schedule, but article 49 of the Constitution in the Chapter on the Directive Principles of State Policy also imposes a specific duty on the Union Government in this respect. As I said I deem it very necessary that the question raised by me here should be taken into consideration by this House. It is obvious that the term 'object' used in article 49 of the Constitution positively includes records also. Then, again, we find that Entry 67 of the Union List gives the Union Parliament the necessary powers to take the initiative and pass the requisite legislation for the purpose. Both these constitutional provisions say that the records that shall be dealt with by the Union Parliament shall be of national importance, and should be declared to be so, according to the proposed amendment also, under a law made by Parliament. It is, therefore, necessary that the national importance of the records in question should be duly determined before they could or should be declared as such. For determining the importance of such records, therefore, it is obviously necessary that some historical criterion has to be applied to historical records, and those which are important or are likely to become important, however indirectly, as sources of information on any aspect of history whether political, military, social, economic, literary, cultural, etc. or which are or may prove in future to be of biographical or antiquarian interest must be necessarily preserved.

Now, Sir, if we take note of all such records that should accordingly

be preserved, they can be roughly divided into four different categories. First of all come the records in the custody and under the control of the National Archives of India. Secondly come the records of the Central Government in the custody and control of authorities other than the National Archives of India. Thirdly come the records of the State Governments, for it is obvious that there will be records in the possession of State Governments which would be of value not only to themselves but also to the nation as a whole. Lastly come the records belonging to and in the custody and control of private persons.

All records of the State Governments save those that may be declared to be of national importance are, according to Entry 12 of the State List of the Seventh Schedule to be dealt with by the State Governments and as such, I would not like to touch upon those records here. Then, there is the question of the records that are under the control and custody of the National Archives. As you are aware, I have already introduced a Bill to provide for a Union Archival Law, and that is scheduled to be taken up next Friday. As such, I would not like to make any remarks in respect of those records today. Time is limited, and I cannot possibly expatiate on those details now. Therefore, for the present, I am going to refer only to two of the four categories of records, viz., the second and the fourth, as of the most imperative and immediate importance at this stage in connection with this Resolution.

Now, coming to the second category first, I have to deal with records of the Central Government in the custody and control of authorities other than the National Archives of India. Sir, these records which are admittedly Central Government records are still not under the custody and control of the National Archives of India. Now, these records can be further divided into two different types. Firstly, there are the Central Government records still in the custody and control of the State Governments; and secondly, there are the non-current recorded files of the various Ministries, Departments and other record-creating agencies of the Government of India.

Coming to the first sub-category, viz., Central Government records which are

still in the custody and control of the State Governments, I would like to quote an extract from a National Archives of India publication. I do not know whether my hon. friend will disown it, as he has disowned some of such previous statements. There it is said that the exact details of the location and the nature of such Central records still in the custody of the State Governments and the definite names of the custodians of the same were not known fully to the Director of National Archives till about 1950. Because up to a time there used to be usual inspection of these records in the custody of the State Governments, but, as this report says, in 1950 it was decided that no useful purpose would be served by such visits until these details are fully ascertained. So, in 1950 an effort was made to collect the necessary information. I am still doubtful if the Director of National Archives still has a complete list of all these records. I make this assumption on one queer thing. I gave notice of a question on the subject asking for these details to be asked in this House. The question was sent, I believe on the 9th July and I intended to ask it, I believe, on the 30th or beginning of this month. It is more than a month, but that question has not even been taken up because, obviously, no answer has yet been received from the Ministry.

So, what I have to say on this is that such occasional inspection or a few stray suggestions for the preservation of these records have not borne fruit; and what happens is that the majority of these records, which belong to the Central Government but are continuing to be in the possession of the State Governments, are still there. Now, what exactly is the state of affairs of these records, I would like to bring before the notice of this House.

I give a quotation from the proceedings of the Historical Records Commission for the year 1950, Part I, where it is said:

"There is a body of Central Government records in the custody of the Government of West Bengal located at the Writers' Buildings in Calcutta. These go by the name of "State Papers" and consist of all records concerning both States and the Indian Dominion, which cannot be split up and which are in the custody of the

Provincial Government (Government of West Bengal). These records were inspected by Dr. Sen in March, 1948 when he found them in the same location and same condition as in 1943, both of which he had pointed out in 1943 as being most undesirable. The same conditions prevail even now."

That is what the Director of National Archives recorded in 1950.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (DR. MONO MOHAN DAS) : Will he enlighten the House as to what are the conditions? Same conditions means what?

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: He had said the year before—the hon. the Deputy Minister is rather impatient and should have heard with a little more attention what I have read—these records were inspected by Dr. Sen in March 1948 when he found them in the same location and in the same condition as in 1943, both of which he happened to point out in 1943 as being most undesirable, and then he added that the same conditions prevailed even now. I have given you only a sample of a lot of many records which are still in the possession of the State Governments. They are neither sorted out nor cared for. I have another quotation here saying this. It is from the proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission, Twenty-ninth Session, Part I, where it is said that the Department could not make much headway in implementing its programme of centralization of the Government of India records mainly owing to shortage of space. Obviously, nothing is being done in this respect. Now, it is high time that definite steps should be immediately taken to get all such Central records directly under the custody and control of the Director of National Archives.

Coming to the non-current recorded files of the various Ministries, Departments and other record-creating agencies of the Government of India, the Central Secretariat Manual of Official Procedure provides for their transfer to the Central Secretariat Record Room in the National Archives, but one would like to be definitely told if this rule is being properly adhered to. So far as one can ascertain from the Reports or other details possibly available to an outsider, it can be asserted without any

[Dr. Raghbir Singh] fear of being ever contradicted that in majority of cases such a transfer is in arrears by as many as twenty and more years. Now, the Local Records Sub-Committee presided over by Prof. Humayun Kabir, my esteemed colleague there, took note of the fact that there was such an acute shortage of accommodation in the Ministries and advised that the bulk of their non-current records be transferred to the National Archives to provide adequate space for their semi-current and current records. Now on the other side, I have got another reference here.

AN HON. MEMBER: He has exhausted his own archives.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: I am sorry I cannot readily find out the relevant extract, but I do know of a definite statement where it has been said that no transfer of these records to the Central Record Room has been lately made possible because the Central Record Room at this time has no space at all to take over any more accessions. Now, you can imagine the position. On the one side the Central Record Room has no space. The Ministries have no space and the records are developing every day. What must be the condition? Now, I see that an extension is going to be sanctioned under the Second Five Year Plan. The building of that extension will take time. In the meanwhile something shall have to be done. For, the building will take at least a year or so; and before that is completed, what must be the condition prevailing in the record rooms here or there? About the record room of the National Archives I must speak next time. I will not speak today. The House can well imagine as to what must be the terrible storage condition in the different Ministries at present.

Another vital question relating to these non-current records is about the weeding out of the unimportant records. The original rules, approved some time in 1947 and then circularised and which were in force till about a few years ago, provided that "the records marked for destruction after weeding by the department of origin should be sent to the Director of National Archives." But in the new Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure which obviously holds the field now and because of which the old

rules have been supplanted, there is no such provision. I understand that in pursuance of these rules at one time a big bunch of the weeded records was sent to the Archives by the Railway Ministry, but the Archives had not sufficient hands to examine them with requisite promptness. As a result of that or probably due to some other consideration also, that provision in the rules was dropped. I understand—and in this if I am wrong, I may kindly be corrected—it was possibly so decided to drop it because the Department of Archives was not ready to take up this responsibility as they did not have the necessary hands. Now I ask whether that Department did this in the right spirit. If they had asked for more money for more hands for undertaking this work, to carry out this responsibility, and if the Government had refused that money, then and only then would the Archives have been justified in saying that they were unable to do the job, but they shirked their responsibility without any such justification.

A somewhat similar though much better condition prevailed in the United Kingdom and, therefore, they had a committee appointed known as the Committee on Department Records, in 1952. The report of that Committee was submitted in 1954 and they have said :

"We consider the responsibility for the selection and transfer of records to the Public Record Department must rest on the Department themselves but that the Public Record Department should be responsible for coordinating these arrangements and should supervise the way they are carried out by the Departments."

When this need is felt even in a place like the United Kingdom, the need for more supervision and closer examination of these weeded records is all the more in India, because, obviously, whosoever may be sanctioning the final disposal of the weeded records, the work is generally done by the Section Officer who in turn delegates it to the ordinary clerks. I am afraid, it is a truth which must be admitted that neither the Section Officer and much less the clerk is in a position or has the requisite training to be able to apply the correct criteria to weed out the records and to find out which should be destroyed and which should not be destroyed. I find that as a result of the Inter-Ministries Conference held in April,

1953, the Government of India accepted its recommendation to promulgate an executive order laying down the general principles of records administration which would be binding on the records-creating agencies as well as on the custodian of Archives. And again it was Prof. Kabir, who announced in 1954 that a Special Committee had been appointed to draft this executive order. But I do not know if this executive order has yet been drafted. When I asked once how the weeding was done, I only referred to the Central Secretariat Manual. I do not know if the provisions of the Central Secretariat Manual are the outcome of that Inter-Departmental Committee's recommendation. If that is so, then obviously, as I have already pointed out before, those provisions need to be modified and amended in the interest of the nation and in the interests of history as well as of the future historian.

Finally, I would like to submit that though all these matters may be deemed to be more or less departmental or relating to very specialised matters, they are of very vital importance to the historical wealth of the country. One plea has been every time raised, namely, the paucity of funds. But I have got one submission to make. It is high time that the Government of India thinks of some priorities according to relative importance of things. Sir, in this very House some months back, when the question of paying a loan of Rs. 26 lakhs for the Ashoka Hotel was raised, I pointed out the need to see whether it was necessary to build the Ashoka Hotel without giving priority to the Central Secretariat or the archaeological library or the National Record Office. Sir, we can do without having these big hotels. I find from private reports and also from the newspapers that for obvious reasons, the entire burden of about Rs. 2 crores relating to the hotel may have to be borne by the Government of India. Sir, we must give this matter some thought and have some special priorities for these national and important matters of real value.

Now, I come to the final point. We must deal with the records belonging to and in the custody and control of private persons. The vast mass of most important historical records in the private archives or the collections of former rulers, jagirdars, zamindars, ancient families or descendants of persons who

had anything to do with various important historical events or movements in the past cannot possibly be ignored by any means. Their value as well as volume is really immense and cannot possibly be duly ascertained easily without a full survey of the same. In this respect, the Indian Historical Records Commission has taken up the question more than once and it has tried its best to draw the pointed attention of the Central and State Governments as also of private persons to this matter. Regional Record Survey Committees have been constituted in a majority of the States with this very purpose and quite a few of them have been doing much useful work. But all this has not even touched the very fringe of the whole problem and it is very vitally necessary that some definite steps should be taken without much delay to ensure that all these invaluable treasures are not lost to the nation. In view of their private ownership, any general legislation in respect of these records is neither feasible nor advisable. But at times there could come up some special cases wherein action of some kind on the part of the State could not be avoided, if this priceless national inheritance is not to be seriously impaired. Following similar steps taken in the United Kingdom in respect of such important historical records of national importance in private custody, in India too, a proposal was mooted in 1947 for the preparation of a National Register of Records in Government, semi-public and private custody. But not much progress has been made in that respect since then. The Government of India, however, accepted the principle of this proposal in 1953, though its execution has not yet been taken up. It was pointed out in 1955 that this project would be included in the Second Five Year Plan, but no mention is to be found of the same in the Second Five Year Plan as it has been published and as it has come before us.

Obviously enough, the problem is immense, and quite clearly, the resources available are not fully adequate. But records or manuscripts once lost cannot possibly be ever replaced. Climate and other conditions prevailing in the country are by no means favourable to their easy preservation. Hence some positive steps must be taken to expedite things, improve conditions and provided better control and correct

[Dr. Raghubir Singh.] direction in respect of the Central Government records, while popular cooperation also must be secured and necessary help and requisite technical guidance provided with regard to the records in the private custody.

To ensure all this, a proposal is hereby made for constituting a Committee comprising of Members of Parliament and persons possessing special knowledge of the subject. Parliament, Sir, contains a complete cross-section of the entire population and the different strata of Indian society. Hence association of suitable Members from Parliament should prove useful in more ways than one. Therefore, I have suggested that this committee should include some Members of Parliament.

Sir, one word of final appeal and I have done. It is a matter of genuine regret that the Maulana Saheb is not here. Maulana Saheb has drunk deep at the fountain of muse and culture and he would certainly have appreciated what I have said much better than what many others can. But I still hope that Maulana Saheb would give my appeal a more sympathetic and responsive answer. Sir, if he were here, I would have reminded him that it was eight years before while he was presiding at the Indian Historical Commission in 1948 he had said:

"Today only a fraction of our records are available to us in the National Archives; but scattered throughout the land, there are family documents, *sanads*, *farmans* and ancient manuscripts which will be lost unless they are acquired without delay. The present is also the opportune moment to appeal to the public, to hand over such documents to the National Government. Such an appeal will meet with a readier response now than perhaps at any other time."

I would have pointed out to him that in the last eight years we have seen what could possibly be achieved on the specialised fronts or on the Government level. Now, my appeal to him is to give this national co-operation front, suggested by me above, a trial and I am sure much more will be done, in future in this respect.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution moved :

"This House is of opinion that with a view to ensuring the due presentation and maintenance of records of national importance, a Committee comprising of Members of Parliament and persons possessing special knowledge on the subject be appointed to examine the question in all its aspects and to recommend to Government rules regulating the custody, cataloguing, preservation and weeding of records for their adoption by Government".

Members who participate have fifteen minutes each.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA (Uttar Pradesh) : Mr. Chairman, I rise to make some observations. This is perhaps due to the fact that the honourable mover of the Resolution kept us completely in the dark in regard to the main object of this Resolution. I am sorry that he has made some unwarranted assumptions in the Resolution. If we read the Resolution, it appears that it is a serious warning and a serious reminder to the Government that it has been neglecting all its prime duties for a very long period of time inexcusably and unpardonably. If it is that, it was for him to have given concrete examples and illustrations but he has not done so. So, if I am dissatisfied with the Resolution and fail to support it, the fault is not mine. He himself is responsible for it. He also made a grievance of the fact that some of these old records are kept lying with the States. I never for a moment believe that India reside only in the capital at Delhi. Every inch of space in the country is entitled to preserve its old records and its ancient monuments and everything in that connection and the only condition and which is prevailing just now is that they should be properly kept and maintained.

I am one of those who believe that the world is fast improving. This is not the time of the Pharaohs of Egypt whose sovereigns used to be embalmed. I wonder why that practice was started and what good did it do to the Egyptians of ancient times. There was a lot of expenditure but, perhaps, the art of embalming was developed. Beyond that, it did not do any good to society.

I am a keen believer in deeds rather than in the preservation of old records and things that do not count.

us in the present day world. **किताबों में**

घर क्या है ? I am wondering all the time "What is there in the books?"

बहत लिख लिख के धो डालीं । Hundred upon thousands of books were written and destroyed. Washed away literally.

हमारे दिलों में नक्शे कलहज है तेरा फरमाना

I

I am one of those who believe in doing things according to the instructions of those in whom we have faith and confidence and whom we adore, whom we worship and whose greatness is recognised and realised. Believing in that, as I do, I do not see any great good coming out of this preservation of old records, 2,000 and 5,000 years old. The older they are, the better they are as curios. They serve no other purpose because the world has been changing and improving. It has never been static and, therefore, I do not find this necessary. Then, some hon. Members would say, "What is the good of epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata?" Well, they teach us so many things without even our taking any trouble to read them. We should also bear in mind the apathy which has developed in our youth towards reading things and making anything out of them. The Resolution does conform only to one thing and it is this that there is much ado about nothing. The serious assumptions that the honourable mover of the Resolution has made are a challenge to the Government to explain its conduct because it is a condemnation of the Government and of the Department which is responsible for the preservation of old records. I am conscious of the fact that my hon. friend, Dr. Raghu-bir Singh is very fond of this. He could never bring himself to forget the fact that in the old days the royalties that existed in the States used to encourage these things, help these things financially. They did so many good things; I do not mean that all that they did was wrong; they were very great patrons of art, knowledge, sculpture and so many other good things but then the times have changed. We are building a new India of our own dreams. We should direct the whole of our energy towards building new India of our dreams and that is a dream of every one of us. They all share it and it should grow in every walk of life.

With these words, as I said, I am not in a position to support the Resolution or to oppose it. I have given you my view by pointing out that all that this Resolution does is to conform to the title, "Much Ado About Nothing".

PROF. HUMAYUN KABIR (West Bengal): Mr. Chairman, I do not think I would entirely agree with my hon. friend who has just sat down and who would condemn all records out of hand. Records also have their place and if records were destroyed, not only would the history of man be the poorer for it but in many cases we would not be able to decide how to act in a particular situation. This will become all the more important as we go to a more and more democratic form of Government. These records are very often the basis on which decisions are taken. In the past when individuals could take decisions and shape policies, the question of continuity, the question of having uniformity, the question of having the same kind of policy continued in spite of a succession of rulers was not quite so important. Therefore, whatever might have been the position in the past, today no Government can function unless it has at its command preserved records of the past; and not only has it these records under its command, but has also devised methods by which these records can be consulted whenever the occasion demands. Therefore, I am afraid, I cannot agree with my hon. friend Mr. Saksena, in his dismissal of records altogether, and I think Dr. Singh deserves congratulations of the House from one point of view for bringing to the notice of the House the urgent necessity of taking steps to ensure that the records of which we have a very rich collection in this country are properly preserved.

I agree with the intention of his Resolution but I am afraid I cannot go much further than that. I think, in his rather long and elaborate speech, he has himself given sufficient reasons as to why the particular Committee which he has proposed should not be appointed. He has given the arguments both for and against. I think everyone in this House will agree that the rules regarding the custody of records should be clear.

We should know in whose hands the custody lies. Everyone in this House will agree that records should be properly catalogued and there should be

[Prof. Humayun Kabir.] rules and regulations regarding the cataloguing of records. Everyone in this House will agree that records should be preserved and preserved in such a manner that they can be readily consulted by whoever has need to consult them. I think everyone will also agree that in view of the fact that nowadays records are being manufactured in an almost geometric progression, some weeding of records is necessary and if records have to be weeded at all, certain clear regulations about the weeding would also be required. So far I do not think there will be any difference of opinion with Dr. Sinh, but what the committee which he has suggested is going to do is more than, I think, many Members of this House could follow. There are definite rules today regarding the custody of records. There are definite rules today regarding the cataloguing, the preservation and the weeding of records and the special Committee which he has suggested, in a sense, already exists.

Dr. Sinh referred to the Indian Historical Records Commission. The Indian Historical Records Commission is a body of experts who go into this question, and if at any time there are any rules or regulations of the Government which are not appropriate, which do not help the proper preservation of the records, it is the business of the Indian Historical Records Commission to make appropriate recommendations in that behalf. Dr. Sinh read from many of the reports and the minutes of the proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission; and I am sure he knows as well as any other Member of this House that these reports are nothing but a series of recommendations. Every year the Indian Historical Records Commission goes into these questions and makes appropriate recommendations. I think Dr. Sinh also knows that, wherever possible, Government have accepted the recommendations and have acted upon them. Where the Government have not been able to accept all the recommendations, the reasons have also been generally given.

Dr. Sinh referred to the fact that nowadays records are being manufactured at a very fast rate and that in many cases the Government Departments which are creating the records do not have adequate space for housing them. He also referred to the fact that

the National Archives also do not have adequate space for housing them. Here is then the crux of the problem. If the National Archives do not have sufficient space for housing the records, how is the Committee going to make any effective suggestion regarding solving that problem? The only answer to that problem is building additional accommodation for the Archives and that as Dr. Sinh has himself pointed out, is already being done. A scheme has been sanctioned and I do not know if the work has started. If the work has not started, it will start very soon and we shall have more space than we have today. I would not say that even then the space would be adequate. There is a fairly long-term programme and in view of the fact that records are being continually created, the National Archives will also have to be continually expanded. Dr. Sinh also probably knows that there is a branch office of the National Archives opened at Bhopal and there are suggestions for opening similar offices elsewhere. No final decisions might have been taken, but these are matters which are already under consideration.

Then again there are the State records. Dr. Singh, probably, remembers that the Indian Historical Records Commission has several times recommended that every State Government should have a properly constituted records department with people who are properly trained for the purpose, and Dr. Singh also probably knows....

DR. D. H. VARIAVA (Saurashtra): If I can just make a correction, he is Dr. Raghubir Singh and not 'Singh'.

PROF. HUMAYUN KABIR: Here is again a case for the archives! I know that every single letter may be of very great importance. It may not be of very great importance here, but if he prefers Dr. Raghubir Singh I will certainly refer to him like that.

As I said, I have every sympathy with the purpose of his Resolution and he has done real service in drawing attention to the fact that this is a matter which cannot wait for long. All that I am objecting to is the suggestion for the appointment of a Committee. I do not see in what way a Committee, even if it is constituted with Members of Parliament, is going to help in solving the problem of accommodation, in

bringing the different State Governments to establish their own records department. I was saying a moment ago that the Indian Historical Records Commission and the various committees associated with it had already made suggestions to the State Governments. Approaches have also been made to the State Governments to see that they have properly trained officers in the State Governments to look after the preservation of records. Dr. Raghbir Singh also referred to a Committee which met sometime ago in order to find out how the different Ministries of the Government of India preserve their records and whether greater uniformity could not be established. Well, if that Committee had been appointed and if it went into that work, he should give that Committee and the authorities of the different Ministries of the Government of India sufficient credit to act on the recommendations of that Committee. This was after all an inter-Governmental Committee. In such an inter-Governmental Committee, the only object was to devise methods by which records could be properly preserved. I think there are good reasons to believe that today there are already in many of the Ministries of the Government of India persons who have been given training either in the National Archives or elsewhere so that they can look more properly after the preservation of records.

With regard to weeding again Dr. Singh referred to the section superintendents and assistants and clerks. Well, I do not have the same, shall I say, lack of respect for an assistant or a clerk, which seemed to inspire the observations of Dr. Raghbir Singh. Among these assistants and clerks also, there are sometimes very able people. Besides that, the persons who originate a file very often are more aware of the importance of that file and the implications of its preservation than the persons who see it only superficially. I may also inform Dr. Singh that no clerk or assistant as such can pass orders about the destruction of any file. No file can be destroyed unless it is put up at a much higher level and there all the various aspects of the question are properly examined.

Now, Sir, I could go on dealing with the different points raised by Dr. Singh one after the other, but I think I have said enough to prove that while on the one hand his raising of the issue on the

floor of the Parliament is a distinct service to the cause of the development of archival work in this country and to that extent he deserves the thanks of the Members of the House, on the other hand, the remedy he has suggested has really no relation and, if I may be permitted to say, has no relevance to the issues which he has raised. This Com., mittee, by itself, will not solve the problem of accommodation; it will not help in solving the problem of cataloguing; it will not solve the problem of preparing regulations; and in any case it would be a superfluous Committee because there is already in the Indian Historical Records Commission an expert body, which is performing its functions and performing them as efficiently as any Committee we may think of setting up today.

श्री रामेश्वर अग्निभोज (मध्य प्रदेश) :

श्रद्धेय सभापति जी, मैं डा० रघुवीर सिंह जी को इस बात के लिए बधाई देता हूँ कि उन्होंने हमारा ध्यान इस ओर आकर्षित किया। हम जानते हैं कि हमारा राष्ट्र संसार में सबसे पुराना राष्ट्र है। परन्तु इसके साथ ही हम यह भी जानते हैं कि हमने स्वयं अपने देश का इतिहास लिखना प्रारम्भ नहीं किया। जब तक हवन-सांग नहीं आये या विदेशी इतिहासवेत्ता या लेखक नहीं आये, हमने अपने इतिहास को हाथ नहीं लगाया और न जो हमारे पास पूँजी थी उसी को संग्रहीत करके रखा। सक्सेना जी ने कहा कि किताबों में क्या रखा है। मैं आपसे कहूँगा कि जितना भी ज्ञान और जितनी भी गवेषणायें हमने आज तक संसार में एकत्रित की हैं उन सबको प्राचीन काल से आज तक लाने के लिये केवल इतिहास के पन्ने ही हैं जो अपने पंखों पर बैठा कर भूतकाल को वर्तमान तक ले आये।

आखिर, हमारी संस्कृति क्या है? संस्कृति तो संस्कार ही से बनती है और संस्कार हमारे बनते हैं तब, जब कि समय और काल के चक्कर में घिस-घिस कर चलते-चलते हम एक लीक बना देते हैं, एक रेखा बना देते हैं, और आगे बढ़ते चले जाते हैं। इन रेखाओं को बनाने के लिए हमारा साहित्य, हमारा पुराना ज्ञान, हमारा कोश, हमारा भंडार ये सब के सब सहायक होते हैं।

आखिर, इतिहास की क्या आवश्यकता है? मैं कहता हूँ कि किसी भी समाज को, किसी भी राष्ट्र को, किसी भी देश को आगे बढ़ाने के लिये

[श्री रामेश्वर अग्निभोज]

इतिहास की बड़ी भारी आवश्यकता है। जिस तरह से धनुष की प्रत्यंचा होती है जिस को हम जितना ही पीछे खींचते ह उसना ही बाण अधिक दूर तक जाता है उसी तरह से जब तक कि हम अपनी ऐतिहासिक गवेषणा को, अपने संस्कारों को, अपनी संस्कृति को और अपने इतिहास को नीचे खोद कर नहीं देखते, तब तक हमें आगे बढ़ने के लिये न तो प्रेरणा मिलेगी, न साहस मिलेगा, न बल मिलेगा और न हम में दूरदर्शिता आयेगी। अतएव, ऐतिहासिक गवेषणा के लिये और इतिहास के पत्रों को सुरक्षित रखने के लिये डा० रघुवीर सिंह ने जो प्रस्ताव हमारे सामने उपस्थित किया है, उसका मैं हृदय से समर्थन करता हूं।

आप यह समझते हैं और अच्छी तरह से जानते हैं कि हमारे देश में यदि ३५ या ३६ करोड़ लोगों के रहने के लिये जगह हो सकती है, उनके लिये अच्छे या धुरे, छोटे या बड़े, टूटे-फूटे या सुन्दर मकान, झोपड़ियां या महल मिल सकते हैं तो कोई कारण नहीं है कि इस भारतवर्ष की यह सरकार हमारे ऐतिहासिक पत्रों को सुरक्षित रखने के लिये कोई आसरा न खोजे। मेरे मित्र ने यह कहा कि यह कमेटी क्या करेगी। मेरा कहना यह है कि यह कमेटी बहुत कुछ करेगी। यदि इस समिति में कुछ ऐसे लोग रख दिये जायं, जिनकी इतिहास से रुचि है, तो बहुत कुछ हो सकता है। हमारी जो ६०० रियासतें थीं, उनके लगभग ६०० महल खाली पड़े हुये हैं, उनमें काफी जगह है, बहुत से महल ऐसे हैं जिनमें आज कोई झाड़ू नहीं लगाता है, उनमें ताले पड़े हुए हैं। यदि किसी अच्छे राजा या महाराजा से कहा जाय, तो बहुत ही शीघ्र हमको एक नहीं दस-पांच महल मिल सकते हैं जहां पर अच्छे रूप में इतिहास के रिकार्ड रखे जा सकते हैं और सुरक्षित रखे जा सकते हैं। मैं आपसे इस बात के लिये प्रार्थना करूंगा कि यदि पार्लियामेंट के सदस्यों की कोई समिति बन जाय—इसमें यह भी नहीं है कि वे ही लोग रहें, दूसरे लोग जो इसको जानते हैं, समझते हैं, जिनको इन रिकार्ड्स का ज्ञान है और इनके महत्व को समझते हैं, ऐसे लोग भी रह सकते हैं—तो मैं समझता हूं कि इस काम को करने में अधिक सहूलियत होगी, अधिक सुविधा होगी और यह काम ज्यादा जल्दी हो जायगा।

हमारे राष्ट्र ने जब से स्वतन्त्रता पाई है तब से ८-१० साल के अन्दर इतना काम किया

है, जितना कि शायद किसी भी राष्ट्र से शताब्दियों तक नहीं होता। हमारे देश के न केवल कागजों के एक-एक पत्र, वरन् हमारे देश के एक-एक व्यक्ति, एक-एक नेता और उनकी जीवनियां हमारे राष्ट्र के लिये एक ऐसे रिकार्ड्स हैं, जो कि संसार में जब तक कि संसार कायम रहेगा, तब तक अपना एक विशेष स्थान रखेंगे। हमने संसार में नवीनता पैदा की परन्तु दुर्भाग्य की बात है कि ऐसे महा-पुरुषों की जीवनियां भी, ऐसे महापुरुषों के रिकार्ड्स भी, ऐसे आन्दोलन का इतिहास भी हमारे यहां ठीक ढंग से सुरक्षित नहीं है। इतना सब करने के बाद भी हमने ऐसी पोजीशन उत्पन्न नहीं की है कि यदि हम कांग्रेस के इतिहास को, अपनी आजादी के इतिहास को, सर्वांगपूर्ण रूप में, परिपूर्ण रूप में, देखना चाहें तो उसे हमारा इतिहास हमें दे सके। इसलिये यह मेरी प्रार्थना है कि डा० रघुवीर सिंह ने जो प्रस्ताव उपस्थित किया है उसे मान्य किया जाना चाहिये और सरकार की ओर से विशेषकर यह प्रार्थना की जानी चाहिये कि जिन-जिन विभागों में, जिन-जिन राज्यों में, जिन-जिन व्यक्तियों के पास इस तरह के ऐतिहासिक और महत्वपूर्ण रिकार्ड्स हों, उनको इस समिति के सामने रखा जाय। इतना कहते हुए मैं इस प्रस्ताव का समर्थन करता हूं।

SHAH MOHAMAD UMAIR (Bihar): Sir, I had no intention of speaking on this Resolution, I had not even fully studied the underlying implications of this Resolution but it is my friend, Mr. Saksena who excited a wish in me to speak, not only to speak but also to greet this proposal which has come from Raghubir Sinh.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: No, I thought my speech provoked you.

SHAH MOHAMAD UMAIR: You have excited as wish in me. Sir, I simply wonder how Mr. Saksena could go to the extent of opposing even the preservation of these records, particularly those records and manuscripts on which the entire organisation of the world and the human development today depends. I do not know how he has opposed this sort of proposal which has been brought forward by my friend Dr. Raghubir Sinh just to draw the attention- of the Central Government and not to accuse anybody. I do not find any accusation in any part of the resolution or in his

argument. All that he says is only this that these records, old manuscripts and other things, which require national attention for national purposes, should be preserved. Sir, may I remind my friend Mr. Saksena that we have lost many things in the past ? We have lost the records of the Vedic period, dating back some 3,000 years. When I was in Russia, in the metropolis, where I had to speak, I had to remind my Soviet friends there—they are proud of their Soviet structure—that the social structure they possessed today was conceived in our country 3,000 years ago during the Vedic period. According to that period society was responsible to the individual and the individual was responsible to the society. That sort of rule of society or the philosophy of life was conceived 3,000 years back in our country at the time of the Vedic period. But we have not preserved the records of those times and because of the loss of such valuable documents of those times we are handicapped very much in our progress today. Not only this ; we have destroyed many other things by our own hands through our own negligence and because of our own indifference we have lost that valuable heritage that we possessed thousands of years back, that heritage which ought to have been preserved is no more now. Is it not a fact that some of the very valuable documents are still lying thousands of miles away from our country, in the India Office in London and in spite of the best efforts of Maulana Saheb they could not be brought back to this country? In this way there are so many things lying uncared for and it is at the right time that Dr. Raghbir Singh has drawn the attention of the Government to the necessity for preserving these records which are scattered here and there in different States. Of course, the States are within our own country; they are within the Union and within the Indian Republic but that does not mean that those things will not be taken care of. Of course, some of them are very valuable which require our best attention and serious action. For want of such serious action and attention; and of course, in the absence of particular care, those things are rotting here and there. And sometimes, when the next generation or generation after that will require for their information, for the development of their thoughts those records, they will not be available, just as we find now that the records that we possessed in the Vedic period are

not available with us. Therefore, it is very necessary that the Government should take steps, at least now, for the preservation of the documents that are not only in this country but also those which are outside this country. They should also be brought over here.

Sir, I also support the proposal of Dr. Raghbir Singh that a Committee of Members of Parliament should be appointed. I do not agree with my friend Prof. Kabir that the Committee will not serve any useful purpose. If Members of Parliament can serve useful purpose in Parliament, why cannot a Parliamentary Committee serve some purpose in the matter of preservation of records and manuscripts ? I, therefore, wholeheartedly support this Resolution and through you, Sir, I congratulate the mover of this Resolution for having brought this forward.

12 NOON

SHRI R. C. GUPTA (Uttar Pradesh) : Sir, I stand to accord my wholehearted support to the principle underlying the Resolution of Dr. Raghbir Singh. Prof. Humayun Kabir has correctly characterised that at least the effect of the Resolution would be to focus the attention of the Government to this very important question with regard to the preservation and maintenance of records of national importance. He has taken objection to the appointment of a Committee. According to him, probably, such a Committee will not serve the purpose which the mover of the Resolution has in view. My grievance with regard to this Resolution is that its scope is too much restricted. The Resolution now says that a Committee should be appointed to recommend to Government rules regulating the custody, cataloguing, preservation and weeding of records for their adoption by Government. Such a Committee is certainly needed, but it should be authorised to go into this question in all its bearings and make suitable recommendations for the preservation of the records of national importance. It is true that we have already got the National Archives and also the Historical Records Commission. They have done good service in the past. The Historical Records Commission, year after year, goes into practically every aspect of this question and make suitable recommendations, which the Government takes into consideration. But the

[Shri R. C. Gupta.]

progress made so far is not very satisfactory. It is wrong to say that the preservation of records of national importance would not be of any importance either now or hereafter. I consider the preservation of national records to be a paramount duty of every good Government, and the more we do so, the better it would be, and we would be the wiser for that. The records of national importance cannot only be found in the National Archives or in the Central Government's record rooms, but they are scattered all over the country, and you will find the records of national importance with individuals and with private institutions. In this connection, I can quote one example.

Maulana Saheb, who is a man of letters and has a very great desire to find out monumental works of the people who have lived in the past, could discover a book in the Agra College Library, which was in manuscript, and which was lying there for more than a hundred years or so. Somehow or other, he got the clue and he got that book. This is one instance in which Maulana Saheb himself took personal interest and got that book. Similarly, there may be hundreds and thousands of such books lying all over the country in many institutions and with many private individuals.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY
(Mysore) : What was that book?

SHRI R. C. GUPTA: It was Fir-dausi's.

Therefore, Sir, to say that such a Committee would not serve the purpose in view, is quite wrong, and I do not agree with that view at all. I only wish that the terms of reference of the Committee should be wide enough. There is so much material collected by the Historical Records Commission and by the National Archives, and with the help of that material, the Committee can easily go into this question and make the necessary enquiries. The Committee can also examine all prominent persons and probably experts. The Committee thus will be in a position to make suitable recommendations to the Government in order to put the matter on a better footing. I think the need for the appointment of such a Committee is clear. The Committee will surely serve the purpose in view. I only

desire that the terms of reference should be wide enough. Such a Committee should be appointed, and I think the labours of the Committee will bear fruit if it can accelerate the pace of the working of the Historical Records Commission and the National Archives. With these few words, Sir, I support the Resolution.

DR. D. H. VARIAVA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I had no intention to take part in this debate. But I find that some hon. Member has suggested that the Committee is not necessary at all. I will just give one or two examples. I read about two months back in the papers that certain records pertaining to the construction of Taj Mahal of Agra were taken away by some people to Pakistan, and these records were really very valuable records, and very important. And I think they paid some money for them. So, if such records, which are very important from the point of view of the history and culture of India, can be taken away like this, then, I think, it is very necessary that the Committee suggested by Dr. Raghbir Singh should be appointed, so that such matters can be brought to the notice of the Government of India, and in future such things can be prevented from happening.

Also I would like to mention something about the records which are lying in the India Office Library. This matter was referred to by my friend here just now. Now Sir, it has been very difficult to induce the British Government to allow the India Office Library to be transferred to India and Pakistan. I think they are taking shelter behind the argument that there is some difference of opinion between Pakistan and India as to the division of the records in this library. And that is the reason why they do not want to transfer this library either to India or to Pakistan. And I am sure that this Committee will be able to make certain suggestions in regard to that particular matter, which will be very helpful. For these reasons, Sir, I support the Resolution for the appointment of a Parliamentary Committee to go into this matter. I know that the National Archives and the Historical Records Commission are doing good work, and I have no difference of opinion with regard to that matter. But at the same time, I feel that all the records which are now scattered all over India should be collected and preserved in some central place.

Now, Sir, my friend. Dr. Raghubir Sinh, said that when an enquiry was made about certain records in 1940 in Calcutta, they were found to be in the worst condition. Well, it is very necessary that all possible steps should be taken in order that such valuable records are not damaged or lost. I also read in one of the papers, Sir, that in the Soviet Union, the care which is taken for the preservation of records is so great that there is almost a hospital there for the preservation of books and other valuable records. There is a regular research going on as to how to preserve these records from white-ants and other harmful things and even that could be suggested by the Parliamentary Committee. So, I support the Resolution of my hon. friend, Dr. Raghubir Sinh.

SHRI KISHEN CHAND (Hyderabad): Sir, this resolution is divided into two parts. The first relates to the due preservation and maintenance of records of national importance. A committee will go into the question of the preservation and maintenance of these records. Then, the second part says that the Committee will recommend to the Government rules regulating the custody, cataloguing, preservation and weeding of records for their adoption by Government. It has been argued by certain hon. Members that as these things require expert technical knowledge, a laymen's Committee of Members of Parliament would not be of much use in really helping the matter. Well, the Resolution says, "a Committee comprising of Members of Parliament and persons possessing special knowledge on the subject". After all, it will be mainly a Committee of persons with expert knowledge on the subject and there will also be certain Members of Parliament who are interested in this subject. They too will come in not as Members of Parliament but as specialists in the subjects and also Members of Parliament.

It is very essential that national records should be preserved. Some hon. Members have tried to ridicule the idea saying that there is no point in keeping records and that they should be thrown away. I am rather surprised. The entire history of the past is built up by a careful study of the records, and their preservation is very essential. There is the National Archives of India. They are doing their level best, and, in my opinion, they are doing their duties very well. Yet, there are certain points

on which they cannot express an opinion, for example, the question of cus-today. Now, as has been pointed out by several hon. Members, records of national importance may be in the possession of private individuals, may be in the possession of State Governments and may be in the possession of foreign countries, if it is a Committee of experts only, probably, they will not be able to suggest ways and means of acquiring these records from private custody or from foreign Governments. They will not be able to properly trace these records with the State Governments. If it is a Parliamentary Committee and experts also, they will be able to examine this question of custody of these records of national importance. An hon. Member has very rightly pointed out that certain records relating to the construction of the Taj Mahal were in the possession of the descendants of the original builders of the Taj Mahal. Similarly, I can point out that during the 200 years of war between the Nizam and the Mahrattas under the Peshwas, there was a whole series of correspondence, and all these records are very carefully preserved by the Hyderabad Government in what we call the Daftar-i-Diwani, but I think there is a strong body of opinion that they are of such national importance that they should be transferred to the National Archives of India. The entire history of the period of nearly 200 years can only be written if a very thorough study is made of all the correspondence that passed between the Peshwas and the Nizams of Hyderabad. Similarly, at that time there was a lot of correspondence between Tipu Sultan, the Peshwas and the Nizams. These are preserved in three places, and if all these are brought together, it will be very useful indeed. To say that there should be only a Committee of experts is not correct. A Committee of experts will not be able to suggest to the Central Government what Bills would have to be introduced so that we may bring all such records in one place.

Then, there is the question of cataloguing. Certainly, I admit that cataloguing can only be done by experts. We can only lay down the general principles of cataloguing and weeding of records. I think that in the National Archives of India there are a large number of records not of very great value. If we weed out the records which are not of national importance

[Shri Kishen Chand.] that will provide space for other records of national importance.

The objection has been raised that the State Governments have not got funds and, therefore, they cannot keep these records well. Sir, in foreign countries, these things are made to be self-supporting. They are displayed in museums, and there is a fair amount of fee paid for visiting the museum, and that way you collect a good amount of money. In Hyderabad, for example, we go to the Salar Jung Museum. On holidays that museum is visited by as many as 4000 people and on working days by about 1000 people. The visiting fee is one rupee. They have plenty of income and they have got a section where they keep important documents also. If we keep such records well preserved and in beautiful cases so that they could be seen well by visitors side by side with the museum articles we can certainly get a fair amount of income, which can be utilised for the preservation and maintenance of these records. So, I do not see any reason for saying that it is only a matter of experts and so there should be no such Resolution saying that a Committee may be appointed consisting of Members of Parliament and persons possessing special knowledge on the subject to recommend to the Government rules regulating the custody, cataloguing, preservation and weeding of records. With these words, I support the Resolution.

SHRIMATI T. NALLAMUTHU RAMAMURTI (Madras) : Sir, I want to say a few words on this very vital question of the value of history and historical records to the nation. As a student of history, I was completely shocked by what my hon. friend, Mr. Saksena, said.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Saksena, you are expected to hear.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: I beg your pardon, Sir.

SHRIMATI T. NALLAMUTHU RAMAMURTI: He said that historical records were not necessary, but I am sure that every Member of the House will agree with me when I say that we are what we are because we are so much rooted in the traditions of our past—both men and women. I may not be able to speak for our brothers here,

but, certainly, on behalf of the women of India I can say that we owe a deep debt of gratitude to our noble past. The history which has come down to man from the pre-historic and historic times is a vast emporium of knowledge, culture and tradition. The Muse of history has been hailed as the foremost Muse among all the Muses of knowledge. Sir, "Life is real, life is earnest." "Dust thou art, to dust returnest" was not spoken of the soul. The soul of a nation is its history and its historical records, and therefore, I am grateful to my colleagues, Prof. Humayun Kabir and others, for having come forward to stress the value of our historical traditions and historical lore. I have visited many countries as well as my own and no greater person has visited and has represented the best in ours and has drunk deep of the best in other countries as the Chairman of this House—an erudite scholar, philosopher and sage; and I am sure he will stand by my friend Dr. Raghunath Singh when he pleads so eloquently for all that is best in our records to be preserved. I would go further than my friend and ask that we should at least—I do not know about priorities of financial provisions—create in our capital a structure like the British Museum and we should have vast space and a suitable structure for preserving everything that is of value in our records. Old is gold. There might be many things with which this 20th century may not agree, it may not agree with the lore of our past but that does not mean that we must bury them. Growth or development you cannot simply annihilate. You will have to look back and learn to grow better by the things that were not so good in the past and thus compare and live in the proper perspective rooted in the past, deep-rooted in the present and grow into the future with all that is best in the past. Our spiritual value, all that is great, all that is of India today in Indian culture, is because of that deep root that we are still having in the past. That is why as I sat here, I was shaken to the root of my being when some Members said that records were not valuable. I not only plead for a structure like the British Museum but I say that I have visited some of the parts in our own country including my own and there I found—I will not mention the name or place—some of the most valuable records not being looked after as they should be and it brought tears to my eyes to see such gems buried in

the cobwebs of negligence. Also in some of the places or private houses, generations have come and gone and the present generation does not seem to know the value of all that had gone on in the past. Huge pictures and written documents, some of them untranslatable by the present generation, are kept in the shelves of private families and I think our friend is doing a great service in drawing the attention of this House to the existence of such valuable material for being preserved so that we might go down in history as a great nation living in all that is best that is ours. I would ask only one further question of my friend there. Hundred years hence, probably, he would like to bury deep all that is recorded of the Indian Constitution, Independent India, and all that is recorded of this House and the Lok Sabha, and all that is ours; and then start with a clean slate as a vacuum in the past with no dreams or visions for the future; and thus fly up in the air as atomic bombs fly today just for destruction and self annihilation and nothing else. I lament over the possibility of such a view being taken about the preservation of all that is valuable in our records. Thank you.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA (Mysore): Mr. Chairman, I rise to lend what little support I can to the Resolution that my friend Dr. Raghunath Singh has brought before this House.

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.]

I do not think I should traverse the ground which has already been done so ably by the other supporters of this Resolution. I do feel that it would be a good thing if we can have a Parliamentary Committee to go over the whole question, examine it in all its aspects as the Resolution says and then make its own recommendations to the Government. As has already been said, it is not only a question of preservation of documents in the possession of the Central Government and the State Governments. I think even more important is the matter of securing the most precious and valuable records and documents in the possession of private persons and private institutions. My friend, Dr. Kabir, was speaking on this subject and he said that after all there was not much necessity of a Committee to go into this question and those who had been dealing with the matter were seized of this question but he did not answer

this particular aspect that was raised by the mover of the Resolution, namely how best to secure the documents in the possession of private institutions and private individuals.

PROF. HUMAYUN KABIR: That has been discussed.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: Discussed no doubt, but what attempts have been made and with what success is the very question that we have to deal with. I don't want to give very many instances. The history of India that has been written so far may have to be radically revised in the light of the documents that we can lay hold upon. Some aspects of it my friend, Mr. Kishen Chand, has already referred to. Just for the purpose of illustration and not for enlightening the honourable House I may say this. Take the relationship of the great Tipu with the Hindus and with the Hindu institutions. If we go by the history as has been presented to us by the foreigners, you get a horrible picture of Tipu. I don't say that he has not committed mistakes or wrongs. This is not the time for me to deal with them but as you might remember very well, the recent unearthing of the correspondence between Tipu and the Sringeri Math or His Holiness the Sringeri Jagat Guru of the great seat of Hindu religion, is a thing most revealing and brings out the character of Tipu in a totally different light. Now I ask if those documents were not there, what is the impression by which the multitudes of India would have gone with regard to his own personal relationship with the subjects of his own State? Now, are we sure that there are not hundreds and thousands and millions of such documents which still have not seen the light of day? My friend, Dr. Kabir, for whom I have great regard, has said that the subject has also been dealt with. But one of the supreme advantages of having a Parliamentary Committee going into this question is that it focusses the attention of the whole people on this particular problem. *Ad hoc* Committees or Departmental Committees, no doubt, serve their valuable functions. I do not deny that for a moment, but it is only when we take up this question as of national importance that you find the enthusiasm of the people to contribute their best to make the job a great success. So, from that point of view, I think it is very necessary, I may say it is absolutely essential for any self-respecting and responsible

[Shri H. C. Dasappa.] Government to undertake this great and glorious task.

Certain other points have also been dealt with in a very touching manner by the hon. lady Member, Shrimati Nallamuthu Ramamurti. Sir, it is one of the characteristics of a great nation that it is grateful for its past, its own past as well as of others. One positive and practical demonstration and expression of that gratitude is to preserve those things with all care and attention and not merely to leave them to be moth-eaten in the various corners and various record rooms. So, that is another good suggestion which, I think, should be taken into consideration.

With regard to the relationship of the State archives and the Central archives, I do not entirely agree with my hon. friend Dr. Raghbir Singh when he says that all of them should be centralised, that there should not be two places for these archives, one at the State level and the other at the Centre. I feel it would be a wrong thing if we think of centralising all these various records. It is of equal importance that the respective States which have their own local pride and have a sense of honour, should have their own archives in their particular places. Now-a-days, science has advanced so much that we need not think of having at the Centre all the originals of these records. We can easily micro-film them and there are numerous ways of duplicating them and preserving them at the Centre. I agree with him that at the Centre we must have, as far as possible every important document which is in the possession of the various States so that for purposes of study, research and so on, there might be all facilities for research students and the like. So, while we should encourage the States to have their own archives, I would suggest that at the Centre they should have at least the duplicates of all the important records so that we may have one place where all the important documents are easily available.

I do not think I should answer my hon. friend Mr. Saksena. I really do not think he ever was serious in what he said; for if I were to ask him now, he would say he never meant it. Therefore, I do not propose to answer him. I do hope the hon. Minister will not take amiss this Resolution. What very

often happens, is when people are ordinary Members of Parliament or a Legislature, they feel very strongly on certain points. But when they cross over to the Treasury Benches or to the seats of office, they seem to feel that they could, so to say, be trusted to do everything possible by themselves for the progress and development of the nation. I think Sir, in this particular case, at any rate, the Minister who is in charge will not take up such an attitude. I hope he will at least give us an assurance that this is a matter which he will consider, that the Government will consider it and he will do his best to focus attention on this very important subject by constituting a Parliamentary Committee.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Rajas-than): Sir, I have read this Resolution and heard the discussion on it with great attention and without traversing the ground already covered, I would support this Resolution.

The question of preservation of records is indeed, a very serious one. From the point of view of history and from the point of view of knowing what we have been and what our culture and civilisation have been, these records would be helpful and would throw a good deal of light. Coming as I do from one of the former Indian States, especially one of the States of Rajasthan I would like to say something. A few instances have been referred to from Southern States. As we all know, in Rajasthan the States have been very ancient and the former States and their rulers as well as private individuals there possess veritable jewels and gems of documents with regard to our culture and on various subjects like literature, music, astrology and so on. There are also records connected with the recent history, namely, the relationship of the British with these Indian States and if we go through them we will get a very different idea of that relationship, different from what we generally have now. There are some States which possess valuable archives and if those records come into the hands of the historian of the present day, they would throw light which would be quite different from the general opinion that prevails among the politicians and the people. Rajasthan is the home of the Jains and I have personal knowledge that there are thousands of *mathas*, Jain *mathas*, and also individuals and many Jain *sadhus* who possess very

valuable documents and materials and manuscripts, the like of which you will not see anywhere else. But these would be lost in course of time if they are not properly taken notice of. Similarly, among the former rulers in Rajasthan—I know of some ten or fifteen of them—there are many who possess such valuable libraries containing such collections. I know that in Bikaner there is a library of Sanskrit books and there are original manuscripts the like of which you will not find any-where in India or in the world.

Therefore, Sir, this Resolution which Dr. Raghbir Singh has brought forward is a very necessary one and he has done a great service in bringing it forward. The appointment of such a Committee is necessary. I do not know how Prof. Kabir has opposed the appointment of such a Committee. Probably, he has only put forward the view of the Departmental heads, who feel that they know everything and that either a Parliamentary Committee or a Committee of public experts would not be able to throw as much light as the Departmental heads or the Government can. So, he has put forward to this House that point of view and what he knew of the mentality of Departmental heads. But if a public Committee, consisting of Members of Parliament as well as experts is appointed, that Committee would take a broader line and they would suggest ways and means by which these extremely valuable gems and jewels of Indian culture, Indian history, literature and so on, could be brought to light and also the people who have these archives could be induced to bring them out and place them in the hands of the Government.

Moreover, when the suggestions and recommendations of that Committee are received, the Central Government can also induce the State Governments, particularly, those States which at present are styled the Part B States in our Constitution, to take measures to have their own archives. At present I know that in some of these States they have not the least idea of what valuable materials there are in them. So, if some expert Committee, a Committee of the Members of Parliament and other experts, make recommendations, the Central Government could take steps on those recommendations and impress upon the various Part B States as to 2—5 R. Sabha, 56.

how this valuable asset of our country could be preserved. I really cannot, therefore, understand how the Government should have any difficulty whatsoever in accepting the Resolution. It not only does a very great service to the country, but it will also throw light on various matters which at present lie buried and throw light on certain matters about which the country at large has very wrong notions, particularly about the relationship between the British and the former Indian States and their rulers.

With these words, Sir, I wholeheartedly support the Resolution moved by Dr. Raghbir Singh and I hope the Government will have no difficulty whatsoever in accepting this innocuous Resolution which will do a very great service to this country.

DR. MONO MOHAN DAS: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I have listened with great attention and interest to the speeches that have been delivered by the hon. mover of the Resolution and other hon. Members who have taken part in this debate. I am, particularly, thankful to the hon. Member, Prof. Humayun Kabir, for he has made my burden lighter. Prof. Kabir, till a few months back, was much more intimately and closely connected with the Education Ministry than myself and he has very ably refuted the allegations that have been made against the Government of India by the hon. mover of the Resolution, Dr. Raghbir Singh. There can be no doubt that the object of this Resolution is a commendable one. The hon. Member has brought this Resolution before this House with the best of intentions. Public records, their maintenance and their preservation is of paramount importance to every country in the world. They are important not only for the proper administration of the country, they are important not only for the successful carrying out of researches in the field of history but they are also greatly important for keeping good and friendly relations with other countries of the world. Sir, the Radcliffe Award today is a document that lies with the External Affairs Ministry. A hundred years hence it will find a place in the archives of India but then it is bound to play a great part in the border disputes between Pakistan and India. So, Sir, no Government in this world today can afford to neglect its records.

[Dr. Mono Mohan Das.] The hon. Dr. Raghubir Singh has been taking keen interest sometimes past in this subject and we are highly thankful to him for the very valuable suggestions that we have often received from him. I am, particularly, thankful to him for having brought forward this Resolution because it has given the Government of India an opportunity to place before the hon. Members of this House a truer, a clearer and a more detailed picture of the management of our archives in this country. After listening to the speeches of some of my hon. friends here, I really feel that there is a real necessity for placing a clearer and a more detailed picture of the archival administration of India before this House. The Constitution of India authorises Parliament to declare by law certain categories of documents and records as records of national importance and thereby bring them under the custody of the Central Government. Many of the hon. speakers here have expressed their anxiety to bring under the Central Government the valuable records that are lying elsewhere in the country. There can be no two opinions about this particular point. The Central Government also is very anxious to bring these records to safety because once these records are lost, they can never be replaced. If the Central Government has not yet been able to take steps for bringing forth legislation in Parliament by which we could bring these documents which are lying in other parts of the country, either under private ownership or under other organisations, under the custody of the Government of India, it is because of unavoidable reasons. Highly complicated legal questions have cropped up and the Government is trying to do its best for a satisfactory solution of these questions. We are aware that my hon. friend, the mover of the Resolution, has introduced a Bill for declaring certain categories of records as records of national importance. We hope that my hon. friend and this poor self of mine will get some opportunity in the near future to discuss that matter when his Bill comes up before the House for discussion.

SHRI GOPIKRISHNA VIJAIVAR-GIYA (Madhya Bharat) : Is the Government agreeing to this Bill?

DR MONO MOHAN DAS: I think it is premature to say that. When that

Bill comes up before the House, Government will give its opinion. My only submission to the hon. mover of the Resolution and of the Bill is that he has failed to some extent to appreciate and understand the implications of this measure.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: What is the hon. Minister talking about? The Bill is not before the House. He cannot offer any comments. The House is not seized of the Bill and any remarks passed on it by responsible Ministers on the floor of the House only vitiate the point and greatly prejudice the course of the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can reply at the end.

DR. MONO MOHAN DAS : If I remember aright, during the speech he mentioned about the Bill three or four times.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: I only mentioned that these points will come up when the Bill is taken up.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have got an opportunity to reply.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: It is a very important question of procedure. The hon. Member might have referred to the Bill saying that he does not want to traverse the ground but it does not mean that the merits of the Bill are under discussion. Any comment on the merits of the Bill would, at this stage, greatly prejudice the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He is not making any comments on the Bill.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: He obviously said that.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : He said that they could be discussed when the Bill comes up for discussion.

DR. MONO MOHAN DAS: A large number of Members who have taken part in this debate have tried to impress upon Government the necessity of bringing those valuable records, which are lying in private hands under the custody of the Government of India. That can be effected only after a law is passed by

Parliament by which those records will be declared as records of national importance. That is why the question of the Bill came up. Anyhow, my only submission to him is that the matter is not so simple as he thinks. I am the last man to say anything which will wound the feelings of any hon. Member here.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: It is not a question of wounding any one's feelings; it is a question of propriety.

DR. MONO MOHAN DAS : During my Parliamentary career I don't think I have done anything the propriety of which could be questioned.

There are many important records that are left in the hands of various organisations of the country, such as the municipalities, the corporations, the different commercial organisations of the country, the Chambers of Commerce, etc. As has been mentioned by some hon. Members here, some are also lying in private hands. The Government of India cannot be held responsible for the management and preservation of these records until Parliament passes the necessary legislation declaring these records as records of national importance. Under these circumstances, we presume that the Resolution of the hon. Member covers only those records which lie in the custody of the Government of India, the archives of India, and the different Ministries of the Central Government. It is true some of the records are also lying with the State Governments on loan. Sir, these records, in my opinion, can be divided into three groups. The first group is the records which are owned by the Government of India, which are created by the Government of India, by the different Ministries of the Government of India. The second group is the records which have been presented to the Archives of India as are the Bhopal records. The records of the Bhopal Government, the former Bhopal Government, have been presented to the Archives of India; and the third category is of those records which are purchased by the Indian Archives. There is, of course, the fourth variety, as has been pointed out by my hon. friend, the mover of the Resolution, that a large number of records of the Central Government are lying with the State Governments. These records have been given on loan to the State Governments because they are connected with

the administration of those States. They are necessary for carrying out the day to day administration of those States. That is why it has not been thought proper to take away those records from the States. They are lying with the States, but the proprietorship, the ownership rests with the Government of India.

Sir, one thing I may impress upon this House. Although all these records are properties of the Government of India, they belong to the Government of India and they are managed by the Government of India, although, legally speaking, they are managed by the Government of India by executive action, yet factually speaking, they are not so. There is the organisation to which a reference has been made by my hon. friend, Dr. Raghbir Singh—the Indian Historical Records Commission. This Commission is there to give its guidance and expert advice to the Government of India for the maintenance of these records. Sir, my hon. friend, the mover of this Resolution, is thoroughly acquainted with this organisation because he happens to be a member of that organisation.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: Yes, I know all about it.

DR. MONO MOHAN DAS: I am telling that. Sir, the Indian Historical Records Commission is a body set up by a Resolution of the Government of India in the year 1919. The functions and authority of the Commission have been made clear in the Resolution itself. The Resolution reads thus "that in matters relating to records the Government should have at their disposal a permanent body of expert advisers." I repeat again: "Government, relating to these records, should have at their disposal a permanent body of expert advisers whose opinion would carry weight with the record officers and the public. With such a body at hand for advice they are convinced that the methods adopted would meet the real wants of genuine historical students." Sir, this Indian Historical Records Commission which supervises and guides the activities of the Archives of India and the management of India Government records is a consultative and advisory body, but the vast majority of members of this body are drawn from sources other than the Government of India. The present constitution of the Indian Historical

[Dr. Mono Mohan Das.] Records Commission is: The Minister of Education, the Secretary of the Education Ministry, the Director of Archives and five members nominated by the Government of India. In addition to that there are 17 representatives of the 17 State Governments of this country. There are 27 representatives of the 27 universities of India. There are 12 representatives of the twelve top-ranking research institutions of this country. Actually Government servants, if we can call them, are only three, the Minister of Education, the Secretary of the Education Ministry and the Director of Archives. Five members are nominated by Government. The rest are drawn from other sources. This is the body, Sir, that have been appointed under the Resolution of the Government of India to give expert advice for the management of these matters. Sir, this body has got two other adjuncts, the Research and Publication Committee which looks after the research and publications of the Indian Archives and the Local Records Sub-Committee which looks after the transference of records from their parent bodies, that is, their creative agencies, the different Ministries of the Government of India, to the Archives. Then, this body the Local Records Sub-Committee, also looks after indexing and cataloguing of the records, and, thirdly, weeding of the records also. So what I am labouring to impress upon the hon. Members of this House is that in every step, every activity of the Indian Archives, the Government of India is guided by some expert bodies.

Sir, the Indian Historical Records Commission meets once in every year and they survey, scrutinise and examine in great detail the activities of the Archives of India. Perhaps, the ground they have covered during the last few years, the subjects upon which they have made recommendations, will convince this honourable House about the interest that is taken by this body. Sir, the Indian Historical Records Commission have advised the Government of India during the last few years about matters relating to—I am quoting only a few, not the whole list—the regional survey committee, establishment of records offices in India, classification of historical documents, inspection of records, preservation of archives, weeding and classification of records, access to records, reproduction of records and

historical documents, printing of inscriptions, etc., preparation of lists, hand books, etc., indexing of records, calendaring of records, facilities for research, publication of records, preservation of records and division and centralisation of records. These are only a few of the many aspects of the activities of the Indian Archives that have been surveyed and upon which recommendations have been made by the Indian Historical Records Commission during the last few years. Sir, I do not want to say that all the recommendations that have been made by the Indian Historical Records Commission have been implemented or are being implemented by the Government of India, but what I do say, Sir, is that, barring a few, with the exception of a few, which could not be implemented either on financial grounds or for other reasons, all other recommendations are implemented by the Archives of India. Thus, Sir, it will not be correct to assume, as many of my friends have assumed here, that the archival management is done only by the Government of India by executive action. As I said before, in every step we are advised by expert bodies.

Now, Sir, I propose to take the Resolution of the hon. mover and examine it closely and see whether there is any real necessity, whether there is any real scope for acceptance of this Resolution. Sir, the Resolution mentions specifically four objects, namely, to frame rules for regulating the custody of records, the preservation of records, the cataloguing of records and the weeding of records. His Resolution limits the scope of the Committee which is sought to be set up under this Resolution ; the Committee will have a very limited scope. This scope will limit itself to the custody of records, the preservation of records, the cataloguing of records and the weeding of records. I propose, Sir, to take up these items one by one and discuss them.

Sir, first I take up custody of records. The National Archives of India, as hon. Members know have got a magnificent building here in Delhi with spacious halls where records are preserved and kept under the supervision of qualified and experienced staff. Records belong to the Government of India, I mean, the different Ministries who are the creators of these records; and the archival authorities are merely the custodians, the *chowkidars* of those records. Sir, before

these records are transferred to the Archives they are kept under the care and custody of the parent organisation, I mean, the different Ministries, whose day to day transactions, create these records. I do not think, Sir, that elaborate rules are necessary to control this movement of records from the different Ministries to the Archives of India.

Next, I come to the second point in the Resolution—preservation of records. I want to submit to this honourable House, most respectfully and humbly, that the preservation of records has now become a cent per cent technical job. With the development of science and technology, new methods of preservation have been evolved. In the field of preservation of records, what is necessary is not elaborate rules, but proper training and proper experience in carrying out the scientific methods which are necessary for preserving these records most carefully. I may place before this honourable House, Sir, some of the elaborate processes which are practised in the Archives of India for the preservation of records.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Will you take some time more ?

DR. MONO MOHAN DAS: If my time is up I am sorry, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have got ten minutes more.

DR. MONO MOHAN DAS: Then I shall take a few minutes more, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Then you can continue in the afternoon.

The House stands adjourned till 2.30.

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.

DR. MONO MOHAN DAS: Sir, I was in the midstream when the House rose.

SHRI SATYAPRIYA BANERJEE (West Bengal): You were not drowned in midstream.

DR. MONO MOHAN DAS: No, fortunately. Sir, I was trying to impress upon hon. Members that so far as preservation of records is concerned, it is a cent per cent technical process. The development of science and technology has introduced many new and novel processes in this field of preservation of old records, and I was going to give to this House some of the processes and the names of some of the machines that are used in our archives for carrying out these processes of preservation. Among the several processes these are the most important :

Air-cleaning of records—All records that come to the archives are cleaned of dust with air pressure carried out in chambers specially constructed for this purpose.

The second is fumigation. I am talking about these things because this forms an integral part of the Resolution of the hon. Member. The hon. Member wants to set up a Committee which will frame rules about these and one of the items is preservation of records. The second process is fumigation.

Fumigation—Vacuum fumigation, with carboxide mixture. It is considered to be the most efficient process for killing insects.

Flattering and humidification—The folded documents required to be flattened are humidified, that is, moistened in a specially constructed room with a machine and then flattened with an electric iron.

Lamination—Repair of very old, brittle and damaged documents and records is carried out with cellulose acetate foils. This is carried out in a big machine fitted with a hydraulic ' press. Training and experience are necessary for operating these machines.

I may inform hon. Members of this House that this process of lamination with cellulose acetate foils is considered as the most recent advancement in the field of archives rehabilitation.

Sir, I have said that this preservation of records has become now a cent per cent mechanical and technical process. So what is required for carrying out this process of preservation successfully is not framing of rules but knowledge, training and experience in operating these machines and carrying out these processes satisfactorily.

[Dr. Mono Mohan Das.]

I may mention here that there is also a Committee of experts which discusses among themselves these different processes and exchanges their views and experience about these technical matters. This Committee is known as the National Committee of Archivists. The Committee consists of the Director of Archives, and the Keepers of the Records of the different State Governments. The Committee was appointed by the Government of India in 1953 and during these three or four years they have held several meetings, discussed among themselves all the technical problems that have arisen and have found suitable solutions for them. This Committee has brought out a very valuable Report which is available in our Parliamentary Library and a perusal of this Report will convince hon. Members about the highly technical nature of the processes which have now come into vogue in the matter of preservation of records.

Next, I come to cataloguing. This is one of the items mentioned in the Resolution. Indexing, recording and cataloguing are essential reference media for any record office. The Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure gives a detailed description of these processes. Chapter VIII of the Manual deals with indexing and recording of records. The procedure which is adopted in the Central Secretariat is the same as that which is adopted in our Archives. There is nothing novel or new that has been introduced in our Archives. Any senior Assistant or any Superintendent of the Central Secretariat, I hope, will have much more knowledge than many of us here. At least, Sh\ I do not consider myself an expert in this matter. I am not prepared to say anything about how my hon. friend thinks about himself.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: I do not wish to be catalogued with Section Officers.

DR. MONO MOHAN DAS: But that is in the Resolution. I do not think that any Committee consisting of Members of Parliament will be able to give much help to improve this process of cataloguing which has been evolved in our Central Secretariat as a result of years of trial and error.

Sir, next I come to the last item, weeding. Weeding is of great importance in the management of records. Now, the

principles for weeding of records were thoroughly investigated by a Committee appointed by the Government in the year 1923 in connection with the weeding of pre-Mutiny records. This question of weeding was again considered by the Local Records Sub-Committee in the year 1944. The recommendations of this Committee were placed before the Indian Historical Records Commission and that Commission in their meeting of 1946 made some recommendations about this weeding. The present practice that is followed by the Central Government is based upon the recommendations of the Indian Historical Records Commission. Recently, this question of weeding is being considered again in the light of the Grigg Committee's Report of England to which a reference has been made by the hon. the mover of the Resolution. Now, this Grigg Committee was appointed in 1951-52, and my submission is that the conditions which prevailed in England and which necessitated the appointment of this Committee do not prevail in our country. But we have considered very closely in detail the recommendations that have been made by the Grigg Committee about weeding of records and if any recommendations made therein are found suitable to the conditions that prevail in our country, we are prepared to revise our rules in the light of the recommendations of that Committee.

Sir, I have tried to give a detailed picture of the management of the Indian National Archives as it is carried on today. The main points which I have tried to impress upon this honourable House are as follows.

All records referred to in the Resolution are the properties of the Government of India and the Government of India has got the legal sanction behind them to manage these properties. The maintenance of these records, their custody, preservation, cataloguing and weeding and all other activities relating to them are carried out by executive action under the guidance and advice of four Commissions and Committees; I should not say 'Commissions' because there is only one Commission and three Committees. These are the Historical Records Commission, the Research and Publication Committee, the National Committee of Archivists and the Local Records Sub-Committee. These four bodies give the Central Government

advice and directions about the management of archives. Now, it is for this august House to judge whether there is any necessity at all to have another Committee of Members of Parliament, super-imposed on these four bodies which are already working in this field and giving advice and directions. Moreover, Sir, the terms of reference of this Committee, which is proposed to be set up by this Resolution, do not include any question of broad policy. They are concerned with the framing of rules only. And so far as the framing of rules is concerned, I would like to make one submission.

Sir, this Parliament passes so many legislations every year. Now, rules have to be framed under each one of those legislations. The work of framing rules is not entrusted to any Committee, but it is entrusted to the Government. Therefore, Sir, the appointment of a Committee solely for the purpose of framing rules will, in our judgment, be a sheer waste of time, money and energy. Under these circumstances, Sir, the Government of India do not feel that any useful purpose will be served by the acceptance of this Resolution. I, therefore, request and appeal to my hon. friend, Dr. Raghubir Singh, to withdraw his Resolution.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINGH: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I have one disadvantage. The eminent Deputy Minister has spoken for half an hour. I have only 15 minutes to reply, and then I have also to reply to a couple of other hon. Members also. I will be very brief.

Now, Sir, I, first of all, completely refute the statement made by Dr. Mono Mohan Das that I have made any allegations. I have made none. I have only repeated or read out certain extracts from the books, and I believe, they are his own Department's books. If he disowns them, it is for him to say so.

Then, Sir, he has tried to say some thing about the private records and the legal difficulties involved about them. I am afraid, probably he did not hear that part of my speech with care and attention. I have not at all pressed for any legislation in respect of private records. My only submission is that if there is a Committee comprising of Members of Parliament, it will inspire confidence among the people, and very likely some private persons can come

out with their possessions. Probably, my friend, the Deputy Minister, does not know what fate the proposal of the Government of India met in 1948, when an effort was made to list some of the important paintings and other manuscripts. At that time, a small Committee was appointed to do this job, and I think Prof. Humayun Kabir might be knowing about it. These things aroused suspicion that the Government of India wanted to take all those historical valuable paintings. Well, now that suspicion can be set at rest by such a Committee in which Members of Parliament are there. I think the Members of Parliament can never be agreeable to any such proposition which will not inspire confidence among the people. I fully realise the difficulties involved in any legislation in respect of private records. I have said that in my speech. And I would be the last person to call upon the Government of India to get involved in any such legal and other difficulties.

Now, Sir, I am afraid, the Deputy Minister erred when he said that the Indian Historical Records Commission was a statutory body. A statutory body is a body which is constituted by a statute. But this body is formed as a result of the Government of India's Resolution, and hence it is not a statutory body. Therefore, Sir, he is quite wrong in saying that it is a statutory body.

Now, Sir, my friend has said that there was a recommendation of the Historical Records Commission in respect of weeding of records. Yes ! I know that, and I also know that the Commission had recommended that the weeded records meant for destruction should be subject to the scrutiny of the Archivist. And that is what I had said in my speech. My grievance is that in the Secretariat Manual, that provision has been dropped. And I am only pleading with him that the recommendations of the Commission should be accepted and should be implemented. I am not asking him to do anything more. My friend says* "We are implementing the recommendations." But obviously enough they are not implementing those recommendations. He ought to be informed about that fact.

Now, Sir, when I say "rules regulating the custody, cataloguing, preservation and weeding of records," I do not mean that the Members of Parliament

[Dr. Raghubir Sinh.] or anybody else can sit and advise the experts and tell them as to what the processes are. I am afraid I know more than my friend knows. There is already a debate in his Department between the American school and the English school. The Madras Records Office completely differs from the method followed by the National Archives in New Delhi. So, it is not for me to tell him all these things. But my suggestion was for the appointment of a Committee for finding out ways and means for solving these difficulties. Sir, much of the speech of my friend dealt with what the National Archives is doing, which was not very relevant at all.

Then, Sir, I have got to say one word about Prof. Humayun Kabir. I am glad he is here to hear what I have to say. In this connection, Sir, there is an English proverb, namely, 'Power corrupts'. So, it seems that his association with bureaucracy has had some effect on his outlook. Sir, I had hoped that he would be able to see my point of view. What I want to press is this. When I ask for a Parliamentary Committee for this purpose, I want only to strengthen the hands of the Ministry. There is no doubt that efforts are being made but no actual move results therefrom. Therefore, some steps are needed to make things move. For instance, I know the difficulty which the Education Ministry has with the Finance Ministry. Now, Sir, if there is a body consisting of Members of Parliament who back all these proposals, I am sure the Finance Ministry will have to agree. So, I am only trying to help him, and I am only trying to support him. I am not at all criticising him. My pleading is that things should move a little faster. They are moving extraordinarily slowly. We want you to be more efficient and we want you to work with more vigour. And that is why I thought that a body consisting of Members of Parliament would be quite helpful.

Now, Sir, it may be asked: What will a Parliamentary body do in the matter of weeding of records? Prof. Humayun Kabir asks that question. In this connection, I have got to tell him that in England, there is the Public Records Office Act which provides that destruction lists of the Records Office have got to be placed on the Table of both the Houses, and only if no objection is

taken to any of the items there, those records are destroyed. Now, at this stage I am not asking for anything like that. I am simply suggesting, let the Members of Parliament assist in laying down the rules.

Finally, Sir, I knew already what the fate of this Resolution was going to be. I was not completely unprepared for that. But I felt it my duty to raise this question before this House, so that it may be recorded that there were some Members who knew what ought to be done, and who actually did offer their hand of co-operation. Now, it is for the hon. Minister to accept or not to accept the Resolution. But let it be known that we tried to help them. It is their choice to accept it or not to accept it. Posterity will pass whatever judgment it wants to pass and historians will have the last word, later, not now.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What about your Resolution?

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: Since the Minister said that he would not accept it, the only alternative for me is to withdraw it.

The Resolution was, by leave, withdrawn.

RESOLUTION *RE. APPOINTMENT OF A WAGE COMMISSION*

SHRI SATYAPRIYA BANERJEE
(West Bengal): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I have the honour to move the Resolution that stands in my name, *viz* :—

"This House is of opinion that Government should immediately appoint a Wage Commission to enquire into the wage structure of industrial and agricultural workers in the country and to recommend adequate wages for them."

My resolution is very simple, and I hope and trust that the Government will not find any difficulty in accepting this innocuous Resolution of mine. My Resolution seeks to appoint a Wage Commission, a thing which, has never been done in the long history of the Government of India, both British and indigenous. That Wage Commission has to enquire into the wage structure of