

Bill is only a regulating Bill. This is not a Bill of appropriation or for making a demand on the Consolidated Fund of India. This Bill only tells us, how various things are interconnected with each other and that inter-connection does not involve a charge on the Consolidated Fund of India. And therefore, Sir, I submit that the objection is not valid.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Objection has been raised that the Bill involves financial expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India, and that article 117 clause (3) of the Constitution of India applies.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMA-NAND: It is pertinent to ask: If the number of universities proposed by him is reduced instead of being increased.....

SHRI K. D. MALAVIYA: If it is increased, then?

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMA-NAND: He says it will be reduced.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think that article 110 does not apply to this Bill. It is only article 117 clause (3) which applies. But Mr. Kishen Chand contends that the Bill does not involve any financial expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India. If clauses 15, 18, 19, 21 and 23 are to be implemented, it involves financial expenditure either from the Consolidated Fund of India or from the State funds. I feel that it comes under the operation of article 117 clause (3) of the Constitution which reads as follows:

"A Bill which, if enacted and brought into operation, would involve expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India shall not be passed by either House of Parliament unless the President has recommended to that House the consideration of the Bill."

As such permission of the President has not been obtained, I uphold the point of order raised by the hon.

Deputy Minister. The Member may apply for recommendation of the President under clause (3) of article 117 of the Constitution. If the recommendation is received, the Bill will be proceeded with.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMA-NAND: I would like to raise an objection.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member can see the rules.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMA-NAND: Under rule 51 of the Council's Rules of Procedure, the orders of the President granting or withholding the sanction or recommendation to the introduction or consideration of a Bill should be communicated to the Secretary by the Minister concerned: in writing. Has this been done?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can ascertain it from the Secretary. It is not relevant at this stage. We will go to the next Bill.

THE HINDU CHILDLESS WIDOWS- RIGHTS TO PROPERTY BILL, 1953:

DR. RADHA KUMUD MOOKERJEE (Nominated): Sir, I rise to move the Bill.....

SHRI RAMA RAO (Andhra): Before the hon. Member proceeds, I want to know if there is any financial, political, constitutional or biological or any other objection to this Bill.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: When the time comes, we will see.

SHRI RAMA RAO: It is better it is given now. It will save a lot of trouble and time.

DR. RADHA KUMUD MOOKERJEE: Sir, I rise to move:

"That the Bill to amend the Hindu law governing Hindu childless widow's rights to property be taken into consideration."

[Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerjee.] Sir, I may at the outset say that this Bill is a very simple one, and I hardly require any long speech from me to commend it to the approval of the House. The Bill intends to supply a missing link in the chain of social legislation which has been passed from time to time for the expansion of the rights and liberties of women. Unfortunately, the legislators in the past have not properly safeguarded the interests of the childless widow. The purposes of my Bill are explained in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, and I think hon. Members have already read this Statement. My point is that when a Hindu widow inherits any property, she acquires only a limited right. Under existing legislation, she cannot transfer, sell or otherwise dispose of such property except for legal necessities. The position of the Hindu widow without any issue is much worse, because she can hardly dispose of the property which she has inherited from her husband even for legal necessities, for it is difficult to prove the legality of the necessity for such disposal of property and the prospective buyers have been deterred from the transaction from fear of litigation by the reversioners. I fully understand that the Government is contemplating to introduce a comprehensive measure dealing with the rights of women in their various aspects, but I think that in the meanwhile, this small lacuna in our social system may be removed by endowing the poor, helpless childless widow with some improvement in her rights to property, viz., making her right to her husband's property absolute.

Now, as regards the provisions of the Bill, they are very simple. Clause 3 fully explains what I mean:

"When a Hindu governed by the Dayabhaga school of Hindu law dies intestate leaving any property, and when a Hindu governed by any other school of Hindu law or by customary law dies intestate leaving separate property, any

interest in such property devolving on any Hindu widow who is childless at the time of such devolution shall be an absolute interest and such widow, shall have the right to transfer, sell or otherwise dispose of such interest in any manner she likes."

Some of my socially conservative friends apprehend that perhaps the childless widow's position, if this Bill is passed, will be made worse, because there may be designing relations, who will try to get out of her by unlawful means her property on learning that she has absolute right to the property. Sir, times are moving fast and we shall soon have comprehensive legislation by the provisions of which the disabilities, from which women suffer, will be removed.

I think that this small measure that I am proposing should not give rise to any fund of controversy. Times are changing. Women are getting higher education and they are taking care of themselves. So, the childless widow will be quite able, culturally and educationally, to take care of herself, and she should not be unduly fettered in regard to the possession of her property, which is left to her by her husband. Consider the case of this poor woman whose life has been shattered by widowhood, with nobody to look after her. She is absolutely without any help in the wide world, and therefore, it will be a very small mercy, to endow her with full and absolute rights to the property left by her husband. There may be many near relations with whom perhaps the family was not on good terms and therefore, I think we should not take any risks in the matter. Rather we should see that what is only fair is accorded to this childless widow in the shape of her having complete, full, and absolute rights to the property that has been left to her by her husband. The husband, if he is inclined, may make a will, but if the husband dies intestate, the property should go automatically to his widow. She should be given full rights to her husband's property instead of very

limited rights, as at present. I, therefore, commend this Bill to the consideration of the House. There has been notice of an amendment by my hon. and learned friend, Dr. Kane, and when the time comes for the moving of the amendment, I think I shall be glad to accept it.

Mr. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to amend the Hindu law governing Hindu childless widow's rights to property be taken into consideration."

SHRIMATI SAVITRY NIGAM (Uttar Pradesh):

श्रीमती सावित्री निगम (उत्तर प्रदेश):
उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, दी हिन्दू चाइल्डलैस
The Hindu

Childless Widow's Rights

to Property Bill)

का मैं हृदय से समर्थन करती हूँ। हालांकि मैं जानती हूँ कि गवर्नमेंट (Government) जो सोशल लेजिस्लेशन (social legislation) जो

सम्पत्ति विषयक और विवाह सम्बन्धी बिल (Bill) लाने वाली है। इसके बाद इस बिल का कोई अधिक महत्व नहीं रह जायेगा। क्योंकि शायद उस बिल द्वारा इस बिल की सब आवश्यकताएँ पूरी हो सकेंगी। फिर भी आनरेबिल मूवर (hon. mover)

ने इस बिल को मूव (move) करके जिस ओर हमारा ध्यान आकर्षित किया है, उसके प्रति शायद ही कोई समझदार व्यक्ति हो, जिसकी सहानुभूति न हो। हमारे समाज में विधवाओं की कितनी करुण दशा है, उनकी कितनी दुःखद कहानी है, यह हर एक के हृदय पर लिखी हुई है और सभी को भली भाँति विदित है। इधर मांग का सिन्दूर पुछा नहीं उधर आज की रानी कल की भिखारिनी बन गई, जिसे तमाम परिवार की घृणा, उपेक्षा और तिरस्कार का पात्र बनना पड़ता है। यही नहीं, कभी कभी तो उसे पेट की रोटियों

के लिये भी ऐसा विकट संघर्ष करना पड़ता है कि उस संघर्ष के कारण उसे परिवार को एक ओर छोड़ना पड़ता है और उधर कुछ बुरे प्रवृत्ति के लोग, गुंडे उसे पथभ्रष्ट करने की कोशिश में इतने गलत रास्ते पर ले जाते हैं कि उसको अपने मृत पति के सम्मान की ओर अपने सम्मान की रक्षा करना भी कठिन हो जाता है। इसमें सन्देह नहीं कि पहले भी परिवारों में विधवाएँ होती थीं और उनका पालन होता था, लेकिन आज के आर्थिक दबाव और आर्थिक संघर्षों की दुनिया में, जब कि एक व्यक्ति को पूरे परिवार का पालन करना बड़ा कठिन होता जा रहा है, विधवाओं की हालत दिन प्रति दिन बदतर होती जा रही है। यदि सम्पत्ति पर विधवा को अधिकार दे दिया जाय तो मैं समझती हूँ कि उसकी स्थिति में अत्यधिक सुधार हो सकेगा। क्यों कि आज भी ऐसी बहुत सी कठिनाइयाँ हमारे सामने आती हैं जिनमें हम लोग देखते हैं कि यदि पति मृत्यु के बाद एक बड़ी सम्पत्ति छोड़ जाता है, फिर भी विधवा को दरिद्रता का जीवन भुगतना पड़ता है। पति के कुछ न छोड़ जाने पर तो उसे कष्ट भुगतना पड़ता ही है। क्योंकि अक्सर यह होता है कि उसको अपने मृत पति की सम्पत्ति पर यह अधिकार प्राप्त नहीं होता कि वह उसे बेच सके या किसी से बदले में कुछ ले सके जिससे संकट में अपना जीवन-यापन का प्रबन्ध कर सके, अपने को समर्थ बना कर इस योग्य बना सके कि वाकी जीवन में अपने सम्मान की रक्षा कर सके।

इसलिये, श्रीमन्, इस बिल पर यही नहीं कि सरकार और तमाम सदस्यों की पूरी सहानुभूति है इसलिये यों ही टाल दिया जाय, पर साथ ही साथ यह भी अवश्य ध्यान में रखना चाहिये कि किन्हीं कारणों से इस बिल का भी वही हाल न हो जैसा कि अन्य बिलों का यहां पर हुआ है। मुझे पूर्ण आशा है कि

[Shrimati Savitry Nigam.]

गवर्नमेंट इस बात की ओर विशेष ध्यान रखेगी कि जब दूसरा सम्पत्ति विषयक कानून प्रस्तुत हो, तो उसमें विधवाओं को सम्पत्ति पर ऐसा अधिकार अवश्य दिया जाय, जिससे कि वे अपने पति की मृत्यु के बाद अपने जीवन की रक्षा कर सकें और सुविधापूर्वक तथा शान्तिपूर्वक जीवन बिता सकें। कम से कम धन प्राप्ति में उन्हें नाना प्रकार के कष्ट न हों। आज लाखों नारियां हमारी ओर इस दृष्टि से देख रही हैं कि आज्ञादी प्राप्त होने के बाद, ऐसे अच्छे जागृति के युग में, उन्हें उन्हीं कष्टों का सामना न करना पड़े जिन्हें वे अब तक झेलती आई हैं।

इन थोड़े शब्दों के साथ मैं इस बिल का हार्दिक समर्थन करती हूँ।

[For English translation, see Appendix VI, Annexure No. 56.]

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Mr. Deputy Chairman, with regret, I have to oppose this Bill, not because, Sir, that a childless widow would get the property but because, I find that, the Government is comprehending a comprehensive legislation, this Bill is out of place. I am really surprised that when Government Ministers one after the other with regard to the other Bills got up and brought forward the plea that the Government had comprehensive legislations in view and as such that measure was unnecessary, the hon. Law Minister did not get up on this score and take objection to this Bill.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We have not yet heard him.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: I feel also that allowing such piecemeal legislations to be introduced and to pass various stages takes away valuable time from Private Members' Legislative Business and for that reason, I think, it is absolutely unnecessary that this Bill should be

allowed to proceed. Government itself should bring forward that objection and if all things go according to a plan—and there is no reason why they should not go accordingly—the Government has the intention, as has been said in the Parliament, of seeing the Hindu Code Bill on the Statute Book by 1954 in any case. It is for these reasons, and again I would add—not because I am opposed to the childless widow getting an absolute right to property, that I oppose this Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR LAW AND MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI C. C. BISWAS): Sir, a challenge has been thrown to me as the Law Minister and I will take it up. I only hope my hon. friend is not jealous of her fellow lady Members.

DR. P. C. MITRA (Bihar): Widow Members.

SHRI C. C. BISWAS: She is perfectly right that this is a half-hearted measure and she need not have anticipated that Government would not point that out and raise an objection to this Bill on that very ground. It is a half-hearted measure. It does not deal with the whole problem. Why should it be limited to the childless widow? As has been pointed out by Dr. Seeta Parmanand, the Hindu Code Bill envisaged that whatever is inherited by a widow, which is now a limited right—known as "widow's estate"—that right should be regarded as absolute right. I might assure her that Government still adhere to that view. So, when the promised legislation regarding succession is brought forward, there will be a provision that the interest, which a widow inherits, will be an absolute interest. In view of that, possibly it is not necessary to go on with this Bill. As the mover himself stated, it seeks only to fill up a small gap in the law, but we are going to bridge the entire gap.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR (West Bengal): So postpone the whole thing indefinitely.

SHRI C. C. BISWAS: So this Bill i might be withdrawn. I am in entire sympathy with the Bill so far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. Is it worth while going on with the Bill? There is no preliminary technical or legal or constitutional objection. I am very sorry I cannot raise any such objection. I suppose that will satisfy Dr. Seeta Parmanand.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: I said Government has always taken an objection that this' Bill—say, for instance, the Childless Widow's Rights Bill—was not necessary because Government was introducing comprehensive legislation and for that reason

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ME. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There is no constitutional or legal objection.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: I never said that there was any constitutional or legal objection. I said that that was taking the time of the House.

SHRI C. C. BISWAS: It may be my j misfortune but it is not my fault that there is no constitutional or legal objection. It will be for the House to consider whether, on the principle that something is better than nothing, ' it should go on with this Bill or

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Is there going to be nothing? I should like to know that.

SHRIMATI SHARDA BHARGAVA (Rajasthan): Up to now there has been nothing.

SHRI C. C. BISWAS: Why should it be assumed that there will be nothing? I cannot give you an exact date and say that something will appear on the horizon on such and such a date. I can only promise that Government stand by the assurance it has given, that the Bill, which will be introduced dealing with succession as a part of the Hindu Code, will contain a provision which will make the interest of a widow an absolute interest. From that point

of view, if the Bill is pushed forward. Government possibly will vote against it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: In view of the Law Minister's statement, is further discussion on this Bill necessary?

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU (Madras) : If the learned mover of the Bill is withdrawing it, I am not going to speak; but if he is pressing, I would like to speak a few words.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Even if the hon. Member intends to withdraw the Bill, I want to make a few observations.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: AH right. Do you want to speak, Mr. Naidu?

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Yes, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes. Mr. Naidu first.

SHRI K. B. LALL (Bihar): I would like to speak a little, Sir.

SHRIMATI SHARD A BHARGAVA: Is he going to withdraw before the Members speak?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: When so many Members are prepared to speak I cannot shut them out.

SHRIMATI SHARDA BHARGAVA: I would also like to speak.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Sir, I quite agree with the hon. Law Minister that in view of the proposed Hindu Law Reforms Bill with regard to succession by a widow and also about the reforms connected with the daughters getting a share along with the sons, the learned mover of the Bill would not press this Bill. But we do not know when this Hindu Law Reforms Bill will be considered and when the reforms will come into effect. It has been said for the last four years, long before we became

[Shri Rajagopal Naiidu.] Members of Parliament we had had read about in the papers, that the reforms were going to take place. We have been seeing that this proposed measure, intended to reform the Hindu Law is being split up into several small legislations and they are introduced piecemeal, bit by bit. It was the opinion of some Members also that at least a special session of Parliament may be called to consider the various phases of the Hindu Law legislation and push through the entire legislation together. It is being postponed and some smaller, minor and unimportant Bills are given precedence, pushing this very important Hindu law reform measure into the background. Taking into account the present state of society, it is absolutely necessary that women should have property absolutely. It is really pitiable in the case of widows that they cannot possess property absolutely. I am glad that the Hindu Women's Right to Property Act of 1937 had given them at least the right to claim a share in their husband's interests though not the right to inherit the property absolutely. Under that Act, they are given a share only. They can enjoy the property but they are not given absolute interest in the property. They are given only what is called the "widow's estate". Under these circumstances it is absolutely necessary that women should have the right to enjoy the property absolutely as well. No doubt. Hindu Law recognises for certain purposes, what is called in legal parlance, a legal necessity. The widow cannot at all alienate the property. The widow can only enjoy the income from the property. At the same time she cannot touch the corpus of her husband's estate. That is the present position. Of course, if it is for a legal necessity, the widow can certainly sell a portion of the property, for instance for repayment of her husband's debt and all that. That is not enough. The woman should have the property absolutely for herself. It is high

time that the Law Ministry should give precedence to this Hindu Law Reforms Bill and try to put it on the Statute Book, as early as possible, so that more than fifty per cent, of the franchise in our country, namely the women, would be thankful to the Government.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Mr. Deputy Chairman. I was surprised to listen to the arguments of the Leader of the House. I am afraid, he has forgotten that his arguments are likely to cut both ways. They may go against the Government, sometimes. If they wish, Government bring half measures before the House and say just the opposite of what the Law Minister said today. As regards the Hindu Law Reforms Bill itself, what we have seen without exception is that it is being postponed from one session to another. The business of the Parliament, particularly of the Council of States, could have been easily arranged in such a way that the pending Bills could have been taken in the last session and disposed of, at least in the sense of passing a motion for reference to a Joint Select Committee. I remember that during the last session of the Council of States there were two or three days on which there was practically no agenda and we went on discussing minor Bills. The Ministry for Parliamentary Affairs had not arranged the agenda of the House in such a manner that these important Bills could have been taken up. That is why, in spite of the assurances of the Government, they are nullified and cold-shouldered and that is why hon. Members like Dr. Mookerji have been prompted to come forward with such a Bill as this one. With the principles of this Bill I do not think anybody can have any objection. But the behaviour of the Government in connection with this Bill lends additional strength to the suspicion that the promise of the reform of the Hindu Law was dangled before the public for the purpose of the elections, and they will later on be salvaged before another election.

Sir, I do not want to take much of the time of the House. This Bill is really a non-controversial one and there cannot be any objection to accepting it. This Bill has been necessitated only because of the delay. I do not know how Government will be able to pass a comprehensive Hindu Code Bill at another time. The arguments of the Law Minister are contradictory. All those reform Bills, Bills reforming the Hindu Law were brought forward as piecemeal or partial measures on the ground that it will take a long time to pass a comprehensive Hindu Code Bill. So they said, we shall take these small Bills step by step and proceed step by step. Even small or half-measures are sometimes necessary and even small measures are appreciated by the people. Therefore, I would seriously request the Leader of the House and the Government, and particularly the hon. Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, to arrange the agenda of the House in such a manner that the Bills which are pending may be disposed of very soon.

DR. P. V. KANE (Nominated): Sir, I had tabled an amendment to this Bill, but I am not speaking on my amendment. I am only submitting that after the assurance that has been given by the Leader of the House, that the Government themselves are intent and they stand by their decision to bring in and push forward a comprehensive measure, there is no need to be in a hurry and proceed with this Bill. The widows have waited for centuries and if one or two years more pass by, there is no very great harm. What I suggest is that we should not be in a hurry. The whole Bill will be taken together. Particularly in view of the assurance of Government that a comprehensive Bill will be forthcoming, this small measure need not be proceeded with.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think Dr. Mookerjee is withdrawing the Bill.

DR. RADHA KUMUD MOOKERJEE:
A little later, Sir.

SHRI K. B. LALL: I have to say something in opposition.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All right, Mr. Kailash Behari Lall.

SHRI K. B. LALL: Sir, there have been many opponents and supporters for this Bill but no one has opposed it on the ground of principle. Some want to show even more favours to the widows and there are others who want to give them better things later on. I am opposed to the very principle and I take this opportunity to sound a note of warning to those gentlemen and to that section of the country who want to go on at a break-neck speed in the matter of social reforms. Surely, reforms are good and it is not that I have not got a heart and I do not feel for the trouble of ladies. My hon. friend here, old or young, I do not know, is more enthusiastic than the ladies themselves and I appreciate the spirit and the enthusiasm. I will give a concrete example of how the right, proposed to be given to the ladies, will be abused. In this age at least we want to move cautiously and not run at a break-neck speed. That cautious speed will preserve our nation. My hon. friends here know and they are seeing in the cinema how people are moving and what is the thing inside their own heart. It is all enjoyment and nothing else. They do not care for the preservation of the families.

(Interruptions.)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

SHRI K. B. LALL: They do not care for the preservation of the integrity of the country but are running for enjoyment and more and more enjoyment for all the people. When they let loose this enjoyment on our womenfolk, you will see what is happening. I am giving a concrete example of how a woman poisoned her husband in order to be independent. The man was the only

[Shri K. B. Lall.] son of the family and the only representative of the family. By this act, the whole family was blighted. The whole thing was only for the sake of obtaining cinema friends.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kailash Behari Lall, you cannot generalise like that from a single instance. Well, if there are such women, there are such men also.

SHRI K. B. LALL: Surely, Sir, I am not generalising. We are not living in an abstract world. We are living in a practical world.....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please avoid such language.

SHRI K. B. LALL: It is not that I am against it. Am I irrelevant, Sir?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please avoid all such language.

SHRI K. B. LALL: If that is so, I will beg pardon of my friends. I do not think I have used any language which is unparliamentary. Of course, if it is unrestrained language, I do not think it is more unrestrained than the unrestrained things happening before our very eyes outside this House.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We are discussing a very serious matter and you must use dignified language so that you may not wound the susceptibilities of any person in the House.

SHRI K. B. LALL: I am not wounding the susceptibilities of anybody. I have got as much feeling for the society, for our womenfolk, for our daughters, sisters and mothers as any of us here can claim to have. It is not that I have come down on earth from heaven, that I have been dropped. I have also come from a mother's womb and I possess as much of feeling for mothers as anybody else.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Question.

SHRI K. B. LALL: So, if any thing-harsh is coming out, it is because I feel strongly and I think I should not be misinterpreted as not having a soft corner for the womenfolk. The sympathy for the womenfolk should not be appropriated by my friends, I am not using harsh language.

I say that as a mother we worship her; as a wife we treat her as equal and as a daughter we treat her as subordinate and apprentice for her life.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please speak on the Bill.

SHRI K. B. LALL: I think, Sir, I am speaking on the Bill. If you say, 'speak on the Bill' then like a parrot I will have to go on repeating 'on the Bill'. I think what I am saying is relevant to the Bill. If you again rule it, I will resume my seat. I am expressing my own point of view with regard to the state of the society in which we are living today and I feel too much. Even my sisters who are sitting there will feel how the society is going on. It is not as if they are so much harassed that they want so much of independence. I know the feelings of my hon. friend, the mover of this Bill. He wants to give some rights to the childless widows. There are childless widows, who are experiencing difficulties. I know of instances of heartless cases in which childless widows are suffering. I am living in the midst of society. But, what is the remedy? The remedy is not to be sought this way—going from the frying pan into the fire. I think you must go slow and see the pros and cons of the question. If you paint the condition of childless widows or the womenfolk in such colour that they are suffering and that you must come to their rescue at any cost.....

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMA-NAND: On a point of order, Sir. "The Bill is going to be withdrawn and....."

SHRI K. B. LALL: Of course, I understand that the Bill is going to be withdrawn and I hope that more opportunities will be given later on. So, I am not in such a hurry. I come to give my point of view with regard to the merit of the Bill itself. I think the hon. Member should not be in a hurry. I should be given an opportunity to place another side of the issue before the House and before the country.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMA-NAND: There will be plenty of opportunity when the Hindu Code Bill comes.

SHRI K. B. LALL: If there is no such hurry about the matter, I think I have given sufficient expression to my views and I take my seat.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: There will be some Members who would oppose it. If there is a withdrawal, there is every danger of the Bill being not opposed.

SHRIMATI SHARDA BHARGAVA: This is being discussed now.

SHRI SARDAR SINGH (Rajasthan): Mr. Deputy Chairman, as I was listening to the arguments of the Members from the Government benches it seemed to me that the stand which they have taken reflected three different attitudes. The first is the attitude which the hon. the Law Minister has taken which is, "we are bringing in a more comprehensive measure. Just wait a little longer and you will see that this is incorporated in a wider measure". Now, that is all very well. We have seen that that kind of attitude has prevailed on the Hindu Code Bill for several years. I think for the last four or five years we have waited to see the Hindu Code Bill become a law and yet nothing has happened.

The second attitude which to my mind seemed to be slightly different from the first, was reflected by another hon. Member from that side of the House. He said that the widows had existed in this condition for several years, several centuries; so, it did not matter if they waited for another two or three years. I would remind the Members of this House that, when we had the national struggle for independence, the English always used to say "Yes, we are prepared to give power but you are not yet fit to rule yourselves. Therefore, wait for some time. When the time comes and you are fit and ready to rule yourselves we shall get out." Now, we are being told by the Members of the Congress Party exactly the same thing with regard to the Hindu widows.

Now, the third attitude which has not been specifically made clear, but which possibly exists in the minds of some of my hon. friends on the other side of the House is this: This Bill is a private Bill and it is being brought forward by a Member of the Congress Party. Why then is the Government opposing this measure? Is it because they do not like the thought that an independent Member should have the credit of sponsoring the measure and pushing it through? Perhaps that may be the reason why, although they do not say so openly, the Government is objecting to this Bill.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMA-NAND: Not at all. It is impartial. Whether it is Congress or others, we go on principles.

SHRI SARDAR SINGH: If it is on principles, why do you not agree to it? You say that you are going to incorporate it in your larger measure. Now, what harm does it do if you accept this measure? When you have a larger measure, you can always incorporate this. But your larger measure may not come in for another couple of years and in the mean while here is a measure which will be on the statute book and will

[Shri Sardar Singh.] immediately come into operation. So, I do not see what good reason there is for rejecting this.

(Interruptions.)

Mr. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order. Let the hon. Member go on.

SHRI SARDAR SINGH: I do not remember the hon. Law Minister giving an assurance that it would come up during this session. In any case, let us be quite frank. It is a progressive measure which you in your heart of hearts oppose but you dare not say so openly. Is that the reason why this particular measure is being delayed or is being opposed? If not, I implore the Members on the Congress benches to agree to this measure as there is no possible harm in their accepting this. If you say that this Bill is a part of what, you have said, is going to be your larger measure, I do not see any objection to your accepting this. I say this to the Members on the Congress benches and to the hon. the Law Minister. If you are really genuine about promoting the rights of the Hindu widows—and you have all, except my hon. friend who spoke recently, said that in principle you agree—I urge you to accept this measure here and now, instead of going on putting it off, and thus prove that you really do stand for the rights of Hindu widows.

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU (Utlar Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am in favour of the principle underlying this Bill. The Rau Committee on the Hindu Law, so far as I remember, was in favour of giving the childless widow an absolute right to the property that devolved on her after her husband's death. I have understood all these years that the Government had accepted not merely the principles underlying the Rau Committee but also the proposals embodied by it in the Bill, that it sent up to Government for eliciting public opinion several times. I do not, therefore, see any reason why the Bill before us should be opposed.

It may be said that the Rau Committee was not in favour of piecemeal reform because you could not in that case see exactly what effect the passage of a particular law would have on the remaining aspects of Hindu Law. But so far as this particular thing is concerned, I do not think that its acceptance at this stage will create any difficulty at all. The Hindu Code Bill, which was introduced in the Provisional Parliament, has enabled us to see the entire picture and what has been proposed in this Bill fits into that picture. Even if, therefore, this Bill is passed now, it will introduce no complication when a more comprehensive Bill is introduced later. But I should like to know from the hon. the Law Minister as to when he proposes to introduce a more comprehensive measure.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: He is not in a position to say that.

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU: The Hindu Marriage and Divorce Bill is before us and we do not know even when that Bill will be considered by a Select Committee. I do not know whether the Select Committee will be appointed during this session. In this state of affairs is it right for Government to say that as it intends to introduce a more comprehensive measure very soon, this Bill should be withdrawn? I think it would be far better for Government to take its courage in both hands and say that it opposes the principle of this Bill.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: It would be more honest.

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU: I think, Sir, that it is the moral duty of the Government, if they oppose this Bill, or ask for its withdrawal, that they should tell us when they will bring forward a Bill dealing with succession and adoption. Had they brought such a Bill before us earlier, it would not have been necessary for the mover of this Bill to ask us to discuss his Bill today. It is because of the-

delay that has occurred, because of the procrastination indulged in by Government, for some reason which we are unable to understand, that it is necessary to consider this Bill. If Government want that this Bill should be withdrawn—and I understand that the Law Minister appealed to the mover to withdraw his Bill—then he is under a moral obligation to tell us when a Bill dealing with succession and adoption will be introduced. I see no reason why it should not be introduced in this session. It can then be circulated for eliciting public opinion. If it cannot be, if there be difficulty in the Government's way, can the Law Minister tell us that such a Bill will be introduced in the next session? But if he cannot give us even this assurance, then I cannot understand his indirect opposition to this Bill. Why should the mover of the Bill withdraw it when the Government is not prepared to give any satisfactory assurance with regard to its future course of action? Sir, the entire Government accepted the principle underlying the Hindu Code Bill; that was discussed for some time by the Provisional Parliament. The Prime Minister has assured us again and again that he stands by the principles of the Bill.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: And falls by it.

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU: Why should there be then any hesitation on the part of the Government in bringing forward a Bill which will incorporate the reform suggested by Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji? I think Government owe it to us and to the people to tell us the reason that prevents them from asking us to consider, at an early date, legislation relating to the two subjects, mentioned by me. You may wait. Sir, for two years or ten years or even twenty years. If Government think that just by the passage of time public opinion will change and that they will then be able to introduce a Bill dealing with the right of women to a share in their father's property—I think, Sir, that they are not in touch with the realities

of the situation. We know, as a result of the discussion that has taken place on Hindu Law reform since 1942, what the present situation is. And it was with a full knowledge of this position that the Prime Minister promised his complete support to the Hindu Code Bill. I can see no justification, therefore, for the attitude adopted by the Law Minister and it was not only the Law Minister who is responsible for this but the whole Government, and in particular, the Prime Minister. I wish he would come to this House and tell us why the Government are adopting this attitude of procrastination. What is this hesitation, this want of courage on their part due to? Are they sincere in their professions or not? If they are—and I cannot believe that the Prime Minister makes any promise about which he is not sincere.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMA-NAND: Hear. hear.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: What use?

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU:.....I think they should not delay the introduction of a Bill dealing with the succession and adoption a day longer than is absolutely necessary for the preparation of the Bill.

Sir, there is a great deal that can be said on this subject. The Rau Committee's Report is full of arguments in favour of further action by the Government. But my purpose is not to discuss any particular provision, but to ask the Government to explain its position and to assure us that either in this session or in the next session they will take action to fulfil the promises that they have made more than once during the last three or four years.

SHRI J. S. BISHT (Uttar Pradesh): In view of the assurances given by the hon. the Leader of the House, I would respectfully request my learned friend Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji to withdraw this Bill and I am sure, that he will do so. As the hon. the

[Shri J. S. Bisht] Leader of the House himself has said, it is not only a half-hearted measure, it is a bad half-hearted measure. Any lawyer who knows something about Hindu Law will say that Here the mover is trying, out of sympathy for the childless widows, to do something for them. The main question today is whether women in Hindu society are to inherit property absolutely because under the Hindu Law a woman is not entitled to inherit property absolutely. All what she gets is a life estate. She cannot dispose of the property; she cannot gift it; she cannot sell it. The main question of controversy in the country today is: whether a woman in a Hindu family is entitled to inherit property absolutely. If that is settled—and I believe that is practically settled by the Rau Committee and accepted by the Government—in due course the Government will bring forward a measure. Most of the criticism levelled by hon. Dr. Kunzru is not well-founded because it is not the Government that is delaying it. It is the vast conservative masses in the countryside.

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU: Does my hon. friend realise what he is saying?

SHRI J. S. BISHT: I can tell my hon. friend Mr. Kunzru to go to the hills of Kumaon and ask the peasants—any man or woman—whether they are prepared to concede the right of inheritance absolutely, and I am sure he will get 99 per cent, of votes against it. It is not so simple as my friend is trying to make out.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: You should ask women.

SHRI J. S. BISHT: Yes. Ask any woman. You will get 99 per cent, of votes against it. It is not a handful of educated men with advanced views and a handful of ladies in Parliament that have to be carried along. We have to carry along the 300 million people and see that there is no resistance, no objection. The

main difficulty is this. We are marrying our daughters and paying huge amounts as dowries to them which is more than their share. Ordinarily 90 per cent, of the people who belong to the middle class actually give dowry which is more than the share of the daughter. Tomorrow you are also going to give them inheritance which means that the son will be completely deprived of his share in the property.

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU: Is my hon. friend aware that during the last general election the Prime Minister said more than once that he stood by the Hindu Code?

SHRI J. S. BISHT: We have got a great leader who has got great prestige. Even he is finding so much difficulty not because he does not want that but because the country's countless millions have to be carried along. I should like to remind my hon. friend, Dr. Kunzru, that at the instance of Shri Thakurdas Bhargava, an Act of Parliament was passed that any marriage between any two Hindus, however different they may be in law and custom, should be recognised by law. May I ask how many marriages have been performed since then? Take the instance of the Special Marriages Act. The law has been there for more than half a century, say, three-quarters of a century; and how many marriages have been celebrated under that law? You do not legislate for one out of a million. I know that this Bill will come in due course; but in this Bill there are many defects. When a Hindu widow inherits any property under the Hindu law, she acquires a limited interest therein. If there is a childless widow, she inherits her husband's property.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: It is not at all so.

SHRI J. S. BISHT: Take one instance. A man dies leaving a daughter, who is married but is childless. Does he mean to say that she is not going to inherit the pro-

erty of her father absolutely? She has no right either to sell or transfer, mortgage or otherwise dispose of that property. That is known as a Hindu woman's estate. If that daughter has not got a son from her husband, the property reverts to the other collaterals or co-parceners. I would, therefore, appeal to him that when the Law Ministry, after very careful consideration, are trying to remove the flaws in the Law of Succession so that the daughters should inherit the property irrespective of whether they are widows, married, or whatever it is, to bring in all these half-hearted measures and complicate the law is not good. It will not do any good.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Mookerjee.

SHRIMATI SHARDA BHARGAVA: Sir, I should like to speak.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All right; I have called Dr. Mookerjee; only in her (Shrimati Sharda Bhar-gava's) case, there is exception.

SHRIMATI SHARDA BHARGAVA:

श्रीमती शारदा भार्गव: उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, यह तो मुझे मालूम ही है कि यह बिल (Bill) जो यहाँ उपस्थित किया गया है, वह खिचड़ी (withdraw) करा दिया जायगा और खिचड़ी करने के लिये मूवर (mover) महोदय तैयार भी हैं। पर तो भी कुछ सज्जनों को मुझे बर्खास्त देनी है, जिन्होंने इस पर अपने कुछ विचार प्रकट किये हैं।

सबसे पहले मैं श्री केशव विहारी लाल को उनके विचारों के लिये बहुत बर्खास्त देना चाहती हूँ, जो वे स्त्रियों के सम्बन्ध में रखते हैं। आपने एक बड़ा अच्छा उदाहरण दिया कि किसी स्त्री ने अपने पति को जहर दे दिया। मैं उनसे पूछना चाहती हूँ कि क्या उन्होंने इस बात का पता लगाया कि उस स्त्री ने पति को जहर इत्यादि दिया कि

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उसके पास प्रॉपर्टी (property) थी जो उनकी मृत्यु से उस स्त्री को मिलने वाली थी? मेरी समझ में नहीं आता कि एक स्त्री ने यदि अपने पति को जहर दे दिया तो आप उसका उदाहरण नारी जाति के लिये रखना चाहते हैं। मैं बड़े जोर से कह सकती हूँ कि यह एक रेअर (rare) उदाहरण है जब कि औसत क्या भारत की लगभग सभी स्त्रियाँ अपने पति को जहर देना तो दूर रहा, अपने पति की जीवन-रक्षा के लिये अपना जीवन देने तक को तैयार रहती हैं और पति के जीवन में किलना भी कष्ट मिले साराको सहर्ष सहन करके, पति की बड़ी उन्नति हो, यही भगवान से प्रार्थना करती रहती हैं। इसके साथ साथ मैं यह भी कहना चाहती हूँ कि यदि आप पता लगायें तो मालूम होगा कि जायद पुरुषों की संख्या कहीं अधिक होगी जो अपनी स्त्रियों को जहर देते हैं। मैं तो एक्सेप्शंस (exceptions) सब जगह हो सकते हैं, मगर मैं फिर बहुत जोर से इस बात को कह सकती हूँ कि स्त्रियाँ ऐसे काम पुरुषों की अनिश्चित दस प्रतिशत भी नहीं करती हैं। तो मुझे शर्म आती है कि उन्होंने भारत की स्वार्थ रहित स्त्रियों के प्रति ऐसे विचार प्रकट करने के लिये यह स्वान बूटा। दूसरी बात जो उन्होंने कही वह यह है कि स्त्रियों को इतनी जल्दी इन्डिपेंडेन्स (independence) नहीं देनी चाहिये। तो एक विधवा को अपना पेट भरने के लिये बिल में यह जो अधिकार दिया गया है कि वह खास करके पढ़ने पर या अपने भरण-पोषण के लिये अपनी सम्पत्ति को जिस तरह से चाहे उपयोग में ला सकती है, इसे अगर आप इन्डिपेंडेन्स बनाते हैं और उसे इंकार करते हैं तो इसका मतलब यह हुआ कि आप उसे भूख मर जाने देना चाहते हैं।

दूसरी बात मैं श्री काने के सम्बन्ध में कहना चाहती हूँ कि उन्होंने यह कहा है कि

[Shrimati Sharda Bhargava.]

जहां इतने दिन विधवाओं ने परेशानी में बिता दिये हैं, वहां दो चार साल और सही। मैं कहती हूँ कि फिर आज की सरकार और भी बहुत से मुधारों को दो चार साल के लिये क्यों नहीं स्थगित कर दे ? क्यों अनइम्प्लायमेंट (unemployment) को दूर करने की सोचती है और क्यों दूसरे मुधारों को ? जो अब तक था और दो चार साल सही। इसमें श्री काने के हिसाब से कोई असर नहीं पड़ता। अभी तो हम लोगों को दो चार साल आराम करना चाहिये; मुधारों की क्या जल्दी है ? अगले चुनाव के बाद देखा जायेगा। यानी अब तक लोग भूखों मरे तो और दो चार साल सही। अतः मैं श्री काने से यही कह सकती हूँ कि आपके विचार देश के हित के लिये बधाई के पात्र हैं।

तीसरी बात जो हमारे विष्ट साहब ने कही, उसका भी मुझे उत्तर देना है। उन्होंने कहा है कि लड़कियों को डावरी (dowry) में लड़कों से भी ज्यादा दिया जाता है। यह मैं जानती हूँ कि कितना ज्यादा दिया जाता है और किस हर्ष के साथ। मगर यदि हम लड़कों और लड़कियों में किसी प्रकार का भेद ही मिटा दें तो मैं समझती हूँ कि डावरी देना अपने आप बन्द हो जायेगा। डावरी के तो वैसे भी बहुत से नुकसान हैं। वह तो जिसके पास पैसा है, वह तो देता ही है और बिना पैसे वाला भी देता है। अतः इसको तो हमें बन्द करना ही होगा। अगर डावरी न देकर आप अपने बच्चों को सब को बराबर हिस्सा दे देंगे, बिना लड़के लड़की के भेदभाव के, तो यह ज्यादा अच्छा है और इसमें गरीब और अमीर सबकी कठिनाई समाप्त हो जायेगी। मगर आप जो कहते हैं कि डावरी में लड़कियों को ज्यादा दिया जाता है, इसलिये उनको प्रोपर्टी में हक

नहीं मिलना चाहिये, यहां इस बिल में यह बात भी नहीं है। यदि आप इस बिल को अच्छी तरह पढ़ कर समझने का प्रयत्न करें तो मैं आपको कहना चाहूंगी कि इस बिल में यह है कि जो प्रोपर्टी किसी विधवा को मिलती है उसको बेच कर भी उसे रुपया मिल जाने का अधिकार हो, खाली यह नहीं कि कह दिया कि यह माल तुम्हारा है मगर ताली में हाथ मत लगाना।

उन्होंने यह भी बताया कि यदि स्त्रियों से पूछा जाय तो वे स्त्रियों के सक्सेशन (succession) (उत्तराधिकार) में हिस्से के पक्ष में वोट नहीं देंगी। वैसे तो विडो रीमैरेज (widow remarriage) के बारे में अगर आप स्त्रियों से पूछेंगे तो ९० प्रतिशत से ज्यादा स्त्रियां इसको बुरा कहेंगी और विडो रीमैरेज बिल को नहीं चाहेंगी। स्त्रियां तो अब भी विडो रीमैरेज के खिलाफ हैं। कारण यह है कि उनमें प्रकृति से ही ऐसा स्वभाव है कि वे रीमैरेज के उद्देश्य को कभी पसन्द नहीं करेंगी। परन्तु कुछ स्त्रियों के लिये रीमैरेज के अतिरिक्त दूसरा जीवन-निर्वाह का रास्ता ही नहीं दिखता। इसीलिये हमने स्त्रियों की इच्छा के विरुद्ध भी रीमैरेज कर लेने की इजाजत का कानून बनाया ही। इस देश की स्त्रियों के बारे में यह सोचना भी कि वे सम्पत्ति किसी को दे देंगी, मैं कहती हूँ, बिल्कुल निर्मूल है और यह उन पर झूठा दोष लगाना है। हां, पुरुषों में तो यह प्रवृत्ति होती है कि वे घर के जेवर और कीमती चीजों को बाहर दे आते हैं और उसका दुरुपयोग करते हैं। स्त्रियां ऐसा कभी नहीं कर सकतीं।

एक और चीज में यह कहना चाहती हूँ कि पुरुषों और स्त्रियों में इतना अन्तर क्यों माना जाता है। यदि कोई स्त्री मर जाती है तो उसके पति को तो उसकी तमाम प्रोपर्टी,

जंवरत बगैरा, जो उसके पीहर के होते हैं और उसकी स्वयं की सम्पत्ति होती है, उस पर पूरा अधिकार है, चाहे वह उसे बँच दे, या पराई या रखैल स्त्री को दे दे, परन्तु स्त्री को अपने पति की सम्पत्ति पर कोई अधिकार नहीं। यह कहां का न्याय है, मैं नहीं समझती।

अभी मिनिस्टर (Minister) साहब ने कहा कि जब हम बड़ा बिल लायेंगे, तो उसमें यह सब बातें आ जायेंगी। जैसा कि कुंजरू साहब ने कहा, मैं भी यह मानती हूँ कि हमारे यहां अभी तक तो किसी उत्तराधिकार बिल की शकल भी नहीं दिखाई देती है। जब तक वह बिल आता है तब तक के लिये तो इस बिल को पास कर दिया जाय। और यदि इस सत्र में कोई आने वाला भी हो तो मैं जानती हूँ कि नया बिल यदि अभी आ भी जायेगा तो उसके स्वीकृत होने में एक दो वर्ष लगे। अतः अगर एक दो साल पहले स्त्रियों को उनके श्रेष्ठ से अधिकार दे दिये जाते हैं, तो मेरी समझ में नहीं आता कि मिनिस्टर साहब उसे क्यों न मंजूर करें। समर्थन इज बट्टर दैन नथिंग (something is better than nothing)

(Hindu Code Bill)

मेरा तात्पर्य यः

इस ओर कुछ नः

नहीं करेगी।

कोड बिल

स्वीकृत होने पर बहुत कुछ हो जायेगा ; पर अभी इस समय तो कुछ भी नहीं हुआ है। अतः उसी को मैं कहती हूँ कि कुछ नहीं होने से इस बिल को स्वीकार करने से कुछ हो जाय तो कुछ समय के लिये कुछ तो हो। "शुभस्य शीघ्रम्"। अतः इस काम को, चाहे छोटा सा ही है, स्वीकार कर लेना हमारा कर्तव्य है और मैं इस प्रकार इस बिल का समर्थन करती हूँ।

[For English translation, see Appendix VI, Annexure No. 57.]

DR. RADHA KUMUD MOOKERJI: Sir, I did not at all anticipate that there would be created a regular tempest in a tea-pot. It was such a simple measure of legislation that I thought that it would not give rise to any kind of acrimonious debate or controversy. The reasons which weighed with me, Sir, in bringing forward this piece of legislation were that though I am by nature an academic man, I have become a little more practical when I have joined politics. As my practical sense tells me that it is not possible for me to equate the present with the future, and as a somewhat impatient idealist as I am, I just cannot wait for the promises of the Millennium that is dangled before us. Now, in the meanwhile, I feel that the childless widow is already on our hands, and she cries for relief. I do not like that she should be crying in the wilderness, and since the mind of the public is being gradually trained in the necessity for bringing forward a comprehensive piece of social legislation, I thought that this particular Bill does not violate any of the principles which will be enunciated in any legislation in the future. Only I thought that I was in a hurry, because the case of the childless widow cannot any longer wait for relief. Therefore, I thought that perhaps the time was opportune, that, when the Government is already planning to bring in a comprehensive piece of legislation, they must find no objection to the present Bill which is really part of the whole. However, as a Member who owes loyalty to the Congress Party and since I believe in the assurance of the hon. the Law Minister of the Government that the rights to property of widows as a whole will be reformed properly in a manner which will be consistent with the legislation that I am now proposing, I feel it my duty to accede to his request and, therefore, I am ready to withdraw the Bill. I thank my hon. friends for the light they have thrown on the Bill. I now ask your permission to withdraw the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Is it the pleasure of the House that leave be given to the hon. Member to withdraw his Bill?

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Sir, I object to it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That leave be granted to the hon. the mover of the Bill to withdraw the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

THE INDIAN COINAGE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1953

SHRI KISHEN CHAND (Hyderabad): Mr. Deputy Chairman, I move:

"That the Bill to amend the Indian Coinage Act, 1906, be taken into consideration."

This is a very simple Bill, and it is my third and the last Bill. It is so simple that I think the Government will have no objection to accept it. I have received several letters from insurance and banking companies welcoming this measure. They say that, if this measure is adopted, they will be able to mechanise all their calculations work. The whole calculation of interest, simple and compound, will become very easy and can be performed by machine, leading to great convenience in sending out premium notices and such like things. Now, the machine, which deals with annas and pies, is very complicated. If the decimal system is adopted, it will become much simpler. In the present Indian Coinage Act there is a lacuna. I have read the Coinage Act several times and tried to find out how it is that we have got sixteen annas in a rupee. The Act does not say anywhere, nor is there any subsequent amendment to it by which we have fixed sixteen annas in a rupee. It is just a convention. Possibly it was done by an executive order that a rupee shall be divided into sixteen annas, an anna will be |

divided into four pice, and each pice will be divided into three pies

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI B. C. GHOSE) in; the Chair.]

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA (Uttar Pradesh): Nadir Shah might have done it at the time of his invasion,

SHRI KISHEN CHAND: My hon. friend knows more about history than I do. He perhaps thinks that the rupee was in existence at the time of Nadir Shah. I beg to submit that my knowledge of history is not as extensive as his. This Indian Coinage Bill came into operation in 1906. It is only as old as 47 years and the whole coinage is regulated by it. I wanted to remove a lacuna and when we are making a legislation, why not give it a scientific basis. By dividing a rupee into 16 annas, in arithmetical operations and in the teaching of a child, a good part of his time is wasted in learning the conversion of annas and pies into fractions of a rupee and vice versa. If this decimal system is adopted *i.e.*, a rupee is divided into ten annas and an anna is divided into ten pies, it will become much simpler. I come from Hyderabad State and Hyderabad had a currency where an anna was divided into 6 pice and a pice was divided into two pies so that an anna had the same 12 pies, but the division of a pice was different so that a rupee had 96 pice. My suggestion is that a rupee may have 100 pice and if we agree to that, we shall be forced to divide a rupee into 10 annas and an anna into 10 pice. I had earlier moved a Bill that the weights and measures may also be decimalised and if that measure had been adopted and this measure is adopted, all our calculations will become extremely simple. The present division of 16 is peculiar to our country. No other country in the world uses the unit of 16 or divides its currency into 16. In England there are 20 shillings to a