

[Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu]

authentic document in the hand written form of Dr. Gopal's letter is already in possession of the Ministry. Therefore, the responsibility has to be fixed. For this purpose, a debate is necessary on the floor of the House on how the Minister reacts to it.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY (Bombay North-East): There is a Short Notice Question. The Minister has agreed to take it up. I have also given a notice on it and I hope that would be given due consideration by you.

MR. SPEAKER: All notices will be given due consideration.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Dr. Gopal's letter is in their possession.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Bosu you have already given your suggestion. Now Dr. Chunder.

12.42 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. INDEPENDENCE SILVER JUBILEE TIME CAPSULE AT RED FORT, DELHI

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE (DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER): Sir, I lay on the Table of the House, the Report of the Committee of Members of Parliament, under whose supervision and guidance, the Independence Silver Jubilee Time Capsule at Red Fort was retrieved and the contents thereof taken out. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-2062/78]. The Report mentions in detail how the work was done and what contents were found in the Capsule. Together with the Report, I also place on the Table of the House a copy of the 10,000-word account of the history of India from 1947 to 1972 which bears the title "India since 1947", written both in English as well as in Hindi, and a copy of some informations on copper plates containing what has

been called "Calendar of Events: 1947—1972". [Placed in Library. See No. LT-2062/78]. On these copper plates, there are also engraved pictures which illustrate some of the events. The contents of the Time Capsule have been placed in the Parliament House Library so that Hon'ble Members, who may like to see them, may be able to do so. The contents will be exhibited today upto 7-00 P.M. and tomorrow from 11-00 A.M. to 7-00 P.M. I also take this opportunity to sincerely thank the Chairman and members of the Committee for supervising the retrieval operation and also for their Report. Theirs was an arduous and onerous responsibility, which they have discharged exceedingly well, considering the complicated nature of their work.

Sir, I have no pretensions to being a historian, but as a humble student of history I cannot help reacting to the contents, both of the narrative purporting to be a historical account and of the calendar of events. In my opinion, the narrative is an account of some sort but cannot be termed a historical document. It is something like a scrappy, inaccurate administrative report devoid of a historical perspective, a perspective which would signify interaction between events and human agencies woven together in a form that partakes the character of an analytical narrative. By way of background, there is only one sentence which makes mention of India's struggle for freedom by saying that "it was led since 1920 by Mahatma Gandhi who believed in non-violence". There being no other mention about the freedom struggle, which is a serious omission; the impression is likely to be that the struggle commenced only in 1920. Apart from this one instance where the name of the father of the Nation is mentioned, he does not find a place anywhere else. His philosophy and his teachings, which permeated our national life and his ideals which we strive to follow even today and which is of universal appeal, finds no place

in the so-called historical account. While attention has been given to communal riots at the time of Independence, no mention has been made of the great role played by Mahatmaji in bringing about amity.

The House will, I hope, agree that to lend a perspective to a document which was intended to be of historical significance for future generations, an introductory paragraph would have been eminently desirable to trace out briefly the history of India's struggle for freedom and the sacrifices made therefor by a galaxy of political leaders of various shades of opinion. An "Independence" time capsule ought to have said something about the role of the early pioneers in the struggle for freedom the Jalianwala Bagh massacre, the non-cooperation movement, the civil disobedience, the August 1942 struggle, etc. The document does now and then mention the secular and socialist character of the Constitution but there is no mention of those great leaders of different communities who played a very prominent role in fighting for a secular nation. One would, for example, expect a brief mention of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Lala Lajpat Rai, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Asaf Ali, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, C. Rajagopalachari, Jai Prakash Narayan and several others.

It is rather surprising to me that what purports to be a historical document should have referred to the important armed conflicts which this nation had to face in 1962 and in 1965 by making only a passing mention thereof, and by referring to the Soviet offer of mediation in the Indo-Pakistan conflict of 1965 without even mentioning the great service rendered and the sacrifice made by the then Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri.

In regard to the Constitution, while some emphasis has been laid on the

Directive Principles and Fundamental Rights, the unique feature, viz., the federal structure, which has been built into the Constitution has not been highlighted. It is this federal structure which unites the elements of both centralisation and decentralisation and which helps in the governance of this large country. What is worse, the author or authors have shown very little grasp of the facts of the Constitution.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: Sir, I have a point of order. The hon. Minister is reading out these materials which are not there in the capsule. Let him read out those materials which are in the capsule... (Interruptions). You please read out those materials that are there. We do not want your comments. (Interruptions).

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order. (Interruptions).

DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER: The President, it has been stated, "has the power to nominate (to the Lok Sabha) a few members to represent the backward communities or backward territories", whereas there is no such provision in the Constitution except Article 331 under which the President may nominate not more than two members of the Anglo-Indian community to the House of the People if, in his opinion, the community is not adequately represented in that House. About the Legislative Council of a State, it has been stated that this body "is indirectly elected by public bodies such as municipalities, universities, etc."—which does not reflect the correct position as provided under Article 171 of the Constitution. As the Hon'ble Members are aware, there are directly elected members of teachers constituencies and graduates' constituencies apart from those elected by members of the Assembly and local bodies. It has also been stated in the narrative that the union territories "have their own legislative bodies which are authorised to make laws on

[Dr. Pratap Chandra Chunder]

the State subjects'. This is a factually incorrect statement, as several Union Territories have no legislative bodies which can legislate on State subjects. The narrative also makes mention of "right of all adult citizens.....to elect their representatives to the Legislative bodies and through them the executive agencies of the government". Not only is the age of eligibility for a voter different from that of an adult as recognised by our laws, the executive agencies of the government are also not all elected. The governor is not elected by the citizens nor are the members of the services elected and certainly they are to be included in the executive agencies of the government. In short, Sir, the way in which our Constitution has been summarised in the narrative shows complete disregard of the sanctity of facts.

It is rather surprising that in the narrative there is a one-sided version when referring to political parties. For example, "Congress (opposition); party founded in 1969 after break with the All India Congress of Indira Gandhi (the present Prime Minister); this part advocates a socialist programme in theory, but in practice, tends towards conservative policies favouring the upper and middle classes". I wonder if indeed the Congress (opposition) party was really the one which broke with the Indira Congress or vice versa, and if the Congress (opposition) party really favoured the upper and middle classes. This would be a travesty of facts. For the sake of brevity, I refrain from mentioning the partisan assessment of other political parties.

The entire account appears to be insipid, unbalanced and jejune. It looks like a command performance with the sole object of projecting how the governments of the times were continuous-

ly successful in carrying the nation forward with no light thrown on the shortcomings that existed, the challenges that had to be met and the leeway that had to be made up. There is no mention of the menacing problems of mounting unemployment, of the growing numbers below the poverty line and of the predicaments of the weaker sections, particularly the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Any narrative claiming to be a historical document could not ignore these historical realities.

Even relatively simple facts have been stated wrongly. For example, the Bhakra and the Beas dams have been described as joint projects of Gujarat, Haryana and Rajasthan. Gujarat is not at all a party to these projects. In fact it is Punjab which is the third State which benefits from these joint projects. Sir, the entire narrative purporting to be a historical account would, therefore, appear to be all amateurish effort to protect the then ruling party and its government of the day. I am surprised to think what posterity would have thought of us had the Time Capsule remained buried and been taken out in the distant future.

As regards the calendar of events, they are in copper plates, one would have expected that only events of some importance from the national or international angle would be included. On the other hand, it looks like a catalogue of haphazardly collected captions from popular year books. Glaring mistakes will be found in the correlation between the happening and the year in question. To mention a few such cases, the Imperial Bank of India was nationalised in 1955* but is shown in the calendar as in 1949. The Export Credit and Guarantee Corporation was set up in 1954[†] but is shown under 1957. Some of the "events" are men-

*This has been verified from Govt. publication 'India 1956' S.B.I. Act was passed in 1955.

†This has been verified from India 1964[†] and 'Commerce Year Book of Public Sector-1976-77'. In 1957 'Export Risks Insurance Corporation' was set up. It was merged in the other body in 1964-'India 1958'.

tioned twice in the same year or in different years. For instance, the 'Fertilizer Corporation of India formed' falls under 1956 whereas "Fertilizer Corporation of India Set Up" falls under 1961. What is the difference between 'formed' and 'Set Up', I don't know. The Corporation was formed only in 1961. The export of bananas and the founding of Asoka Hotel are mentioned as though they are events of historical record. In short, the Calendar of events is a curious combination of the sublime and the ridiculous. Even a "proposal" for a port at Paradip has been glorified as an event under year 1963. Need I continue this exercise in pointing out mistakes and incongruities? There are many more inaccuracies which I do not want to mention. I leave it to the Hon'ble Members and through them to the people of this country to judge whether the two documents merited being preserved for posterity in the manner it has been intended to be done at all.

It indeed there is a virtue in preparing a historical document for the benefit of posterity should it not be one which is an accurate, carefully conceived and well-drafted piece of historical writing? Should not such a document have been placed before the public and the Parliament? One can now understand why these documents now found in the Time Capsule were shrouded in secrecy. I crave leave of this House through you, Sir, to place these documents for the judgment of this House, our people and posterity.

PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR (Gandhinagar): On a point of order

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Sir, I have written to you....
(Interruptions).

MR. SPEAKER: I can hear only one.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: This was a conspiracy to glorify Nehru's family. We must have a discussion. Other Time Capsules are also there.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: My submission is that there should be a discussion on this and the hon. Minister should agree to have a discussion on the floor of the House as early as possible

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: (Bombay—North East): There are also other Time Capsules which have to be dug up. We must have a discussion in this House.
(Interruptions).

SHRI KANWAR LAL GUPTA (Delhi Sadar): I endorse what my friend Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu has said that there is distortion of facts and all those responsible for it should be prosecuted. They have distorted the history for the sake of only one individual or family and they have distorted the whole history of the nation and..

MR. SPEAKER: We are at the stage of considering it.

PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR: Generally when a Minister makes a statement, the House either hears it or it is laid on the Table of the House and the matter is dropped there; and we are not allowed to ask questions. My point of order is based on two grounds. You will see that the long statement which the hon. Minister read out was an extraordinary phenomenon. For the first time in this Hon. House—whose duty it is to dig out truth—has been compelled to hear a series of lies officially perpetrated on us.

MR. SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR: My point of order is this. This statement is not an ordinary statement which can be governed by ordinary rules. You will now have to use, may I say with respect, your discretion and do two things minimum, because this cannot be even discussed under the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Education. You must kindly now see how the House can get at least one full day's discussion for such an important topic. In the last Parliament, for your information, may I say that some of us who were on the opposition benches had sought the permission of the chair to raise this matter on the floor of the House and the matter was discussed in bits for hours together and that discussion was not even conclusive, as my esteemed friend, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee will hear me out. As the House is very much seized of this grave matter. I would request you not to look into the normal rules, as this is an abnormal situation, and so you should allow us one whole day's discussion. In the meantime, we can ask the Minister to go into the process of telling this House what steps he is taking against the preposterous historians. *(Interruptions)* This is my request. That is my point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: It is not a point of order. It is a suggestion. We shall consider it.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I have written to you that Dr. Gopal, the historian, sent a hand-written letter which is in the possession of the Ministry. Let the minister deny it.

SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM (Tiruchirappalli): I do not want to enter into the merits of the statement made by the minister. But I strongly support, on behalf of my party, the suggestion made by Shri Mavalankar and Shri Bosu for a discussion on this.

SHRI D. D. DESAI (Kaira): This is a gross misuse of executive power. This has to be debated fully in the House. We must see to it that in future nobody is permitted or has the authority to bury such a document.

SHRI D. N. TIWARY (Gopalganj): The Minister has quoted only some portion of the lies that have been embodied in it. We want the whole thing. He says he has placed it in the library. It should be circulated to members.

MR. SPEAKER: The whole report is placed here. Only the articles which have to be seen, which have been taken out, are placed in the library so that the members may see them.

SHRI KANWAR LAL GUPTA: Can't you ask your office to distribute one copy to each member? It is a matter of amusement also.

MR. SPEAKER: I will get a copy of the report circulated to all the members, so that we shall consider it at a later stage. I shall go into the question of having a debate. I shall certainly try to find time, but the question is. I must look into the matter as to when we can find time, because the budget demands have to be passed. I shall certainly try to find time.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: My allegation is very pointed. Let the minister deny it.

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the time to say yes or no. When the debate is held, it can be raised.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: If he keeps quiet, I will say, it is in the affirmative. But if he wants to say 'no' he can do so.

श्री विजय कुमार लहोना (बलियाँ हिस्सी) : यह जो शक्ति वन में दूसरा कैपसूल है क्या उस कैपसूल को भी निकाला जायगा और देखा जायगा कि उस में भी इतिहास को लोड़ भरोड़ कर तो नहीं लिखा गया है।

MR. SPEAKER: That is not relevant to this. That is a separate matter. If this is going to be a debate, let us not have another debate. All these are separate matters. This is not the occasion to raise them.

श्री रामजी लाल चुमन (किरोनाबाद) : माननीय मंत्री जी ने अभी ध्यान दिया और अपने बयान में कई चीज का जिक्र किया कि उस में बहुत बहुत चीजों को जोड़ने की आवश्यकता है। उन्होंने लगभग राष्ट्रीय नेताओं के नाम भी गिनाए। पिछली बार जब सम्पूर्ण क्रान्ति के बारे में जय प्रकाश जी से पूछा गया तो उन्होंने कहा था कि डा० लोहिया की सप्त-क्रान्ति ही मेरी सम्पूर्ण क्रान्ति है। हिन्दुस्तान में जब व्यवस्था परिवर्तन का इतिहास लिखा जायगा तो बुनियाद उसकी सन् 67 से शुरू होगी, जो डा० लोहिया ने शुरू की थी। मैं चाहूँगा कि ये नाम जोनाए गए हैं उसमें इन दो लोगों के नाम भी जरूर जोड़े जाने चाहिए।

(Interruptions)

DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER: Sir, the omission was unintended. I include the name of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia in my statement.

PROF. R. K. AMIN (Surendranagar): Mr. Badrinath was the person who drew our attention to all these lies and he has suffered a lot.

It must be told to the minister that he should take action to save him.

MR. SPEAKER: You can do it at the time of the debate. In fact, Dr. Lohia's case has also been specifically referred to and that is also an

(Interruptions)

omission. We will have a debate.

13 hrs.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA (Begusarai): I wanted to know whether after all these revolutions, the government has taken any step to reconstitute the Council of Historical Research and secondly, whether the government wants to reconstruct the history on the basis of accurate facts or it does not want to embark upon that kind of exercise in future, because it may not be possible for us to reconstruct the history that has been undertaken by them. And it may not also be a very useful exercise to undertake. So, let the Government make it clear that they do not want to embark upon such an exercise in future even though it might mean reconstructing the history on accurate lines. (Interruptions) And thirdly, so far as these persons who were associated with constructing history on these lines are concerned, whether the Government has taken steps to see that they do not become associated with any government bodies in future and particularly in the matter of history.

MR. SPEAKER: All that will come after the debate. They would like to hear the Members and then decide the matter.