

[Shri Nihar Laskar]

the following Reports of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes:

(1) Report of Study Tour of Study Group I on its visit to Bangalore, Mysore and Madurai during June-July, 1976.

(2) Report of Study Tour of Study Group II on its visit to Bombay, Ahmedabad and Jaipur during July, 1976.

(3) Report of Study Tour of Study Group III on its visit to Madras, Pondicherry, Trivandrum and Kanyakumari during July, 1976.

(4) Report of the Committee on its visit to certain DDA Resettlement Colonies and a village in the Union territory of Delhi in June, 1976.

#### PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

##### TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVENTH AND TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTIETH REPORTS

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE (Calcutta-North East): I beg to present the following Reports of the Public Accounts Committee:—

(i) Two Hundred and Twenty-seventh Report on Excesses Over Voted Grants and Charged Appropriations disclosed in the Appropriation Accounts for the year 1974-75 and action taken by Government on the recommendations of the Committee contained in their Hundred and eightieth Report on Excess Over Voted Grants and Charged Appropriations for the year 1973-74

(ii) Two Hundred and thirtieth Report on Paragraph 36 of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year 1973-74—Union Government (Civil)—relating to Expansion of Mormugao

Port (Ministry of Shipping and Transport).

#### COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES

##### NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH REPORTS

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE (Betul): I beg to present the Nineteenth and Twentieth Reports of the Committee of Privileges

#### COMMITTEE ON ABSENCE OF MEMBERS FROM THE SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

##### (i) THIRTIETH REPORT

SHRI VEKARIA (Junagadh): I beg to present the Thirtieth Report of the Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House.

##### (ii) MINUTES

SHRI VEKARIA: I beg to lay on the Table Minutes of the sitting of the Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House held on the 30th August, 1976.

12.08 hrs.

#### SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI K. RAGHU RAMAIAH): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Salaries and Allowances of Members of Parliament Act, 1954.

MR SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Salaries and Allowances of Members of Parliament Act, 1954."

**SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE (Howrah):** Sir, I stand to oppose the introduction of this Bill. This proposal was mooted more than two years ago and it was discussed in the Joint Committee several times. We have consistently opposed this. Why have we done so? I know that members who are eligible to get pension will be glad when this provision is made. But we must remember that we represent millions and millions of people and more than 50 per cent of the population are now below the poverty level.

Whenever we think of an assurance or a guarantee of our own future.

**SHRI R. S. PANDEY (Rajnandgaon):** On a point of order. The hon. Member said that whenever the question of pension came up before the Joint Committee, his party opposed it. The Joint Committee passed it long ago. Later on it was revived. When it was revived, I was the Chairman, and I can tell you that the decision was unanimous without any opposition by any party.

**MR. SPEAKER:** There is no point of order.

**SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE:** The Joint Committee held a meeting at a time when our Member was to speak on a particular motion here. He requested the Committee to change the time, but taking advantage of his absence, the Committee passed the motion. I want that it should be recorded that taking advantage of his absence, it has been declared to be unanimous. It is not so.

**SHRI SAROJ MUKHERJEE (Katwa):** The proceedings are here. It is recorded that the CPM was not in favour of pension.

**SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE:** That does not mean that we have no sympathy for those ex-MPs who have no source of income after retirement. But we are the representatives of the people, and more than 50 per cent of

the people are now living under the poverty line. We are bringing this Bill at a time when several lakhs of workers have been thrown out of their jobs, when we are getting daily reports of starvation deaths of workers from those factories which are now closed or laid off. So, does not our conscience prick? This is the point we raise

We thought that some conscience was roused because privately some M.Ps. tried to argue with us as to why we were objecting.

**SHRI VASANT SATHE (Akola):** On these grounds you should not take any salary at all.

**SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE:** Let me explain our position.

We were told that because we were objecting, the Bill was not coming. We tried to argue with them. It is not a personal question. It is a question of the image and stature of M.Ps. By adopting this Bill, will you heighten the stature of the M.Ps. before the toiling masses, those who are starving, those who are dying of starvation, or will it reduce your stature? That is the question which is involved.

When you are taking away the bonus of the workers, when you are impounding their wage increases, you are bringing this Bill here for pension to the ex-M.Ps.

**SHRI VASANT SATHE:** Let all those who do not agree, take the pension and distribute it to those below the poverty line.

**SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE:** Unfortunately, these Members are taking it as a personal question. I am not talking in terms of a personal question. That is why we have opposed it. Because of that I thought the Congress Members were considering it, were waiting, but I see that it has been brought now despite our opposi-

[Shri Samar Mukherjee]

tion. So, I think there might be some compulsion from below. In order to solve a crisis inside your party, you are now bringing this. So, do whatever you like, but we register our protest, we register our objection. That is why I am opposed to the introduction of the Bill.

SHRI K RAGHU RAMAIAH: If the hon. Member had confined himself to constitutional issues, I would not have said anything, but he has gone beyond what he should have said at this stage. However, it is my duty to reply.

In the first place, I must tell him, if he is so unaware of it, that this is not the only country where pension is provided to Members. In fact, we are too late on the scene. It is a normal feature of most of the democracies to give pension to ex-MPs, and I was looking forward to cite the names of the countries while I move the Bill for consideration. But I may say, generally, we are not the first but the one of last in this matter. There is nothing abnormal about it. It has become a cheap fashion all over the world, whenever MPs are being provided something, that one goes on attacking and comparing them with this sector or that sector of the community. MPs are a class by themselves. They have to be respectable and they have to discharge their duty in no less an efficient manner than any other sector of the community whom we all represent and they have to be reasonably looked after.

My hon. friend has said that this should not be done and that this is something very undesirable. May I say, if he is really sincere about it, he and his party which he represents could by all means refuse the pension. That will be the standard by which they will be judged. (Interruptions).

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Whenever the Salaries and Allowances of the Members of Parliament were raised, we objected. That is on principle. We represent the poorest sections of the people. Whether I take or not take, that does not change our basic stand that you are giving priority to your own selves than to the common people, the starving millions of people, whom we represent.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Salaries and Allowances of Members of Parliament Act, 1954."

*The motion was adopted*

SHRI K. RAGHU RAMAIAH: introduced the Bill

12 12 hrs.

KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
(EXTENSION OF DURATION)  
SECOND AMENDMENT BILL—  
Contd.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will now take up further consideration of the Kerala Legislative Assembly (Extension of Duration) Second Amendment Bill. The balance of time is only 15 minutes.

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI K. RAGHU RAMAIAH): The time may be extended. I think there are some more speakers on this.

MR. SPEAKER: All right, I will extend the time. We can spend half an hour more on this. So, 45 minutes are there. We should finish it before lunch. If the hon. Members are brief, we can accommodate more Members who want to speak on this. Shri B. R. Shukla.

†Introduced with the recommendation of the President.