

*DEMANDS FOR GRANTS—Contd.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE
—Contd.

MR. SPEAKER: We go to the next item of the Agenda.

We have already taken 1 hour and 30 minutes more than the time allotted for this Demand. And the Minister has yet to reply. He will take 45 minutes. That means, we have exceeded even two hours. If we do like this, it means, one more demand will have to be guillotined.

The Minister may reply now and then we will conclude this.

SHRI A. S. SAIGAL (Bilaspur): Before we start another item, may I make a submission...

MR. SPEAKER: I thought I have discussed it with the Minister and the Congress Party...

AN HON. MEMBER: About what?

MR. SPEAKER: Will you kindly hear me first? I have already discussed the question of extension of time with the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. Already about two hours we have exceeded. I am not taking responsibility for that. You can put it to the House, if you want to have further extension. Again if we extend it by two hours, one hour should go to the Opposition. If there is anything to be said on this, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs will say and it is not proper for every member to get up and say something on this.

SHRI A. S. SAIGAL: My point is altogether different.

MR. SPEAKER: Then you cannot raise it, if it is different. Kindly sit down.

SHRI SONAVANE (Pandharpur): May I make a submission?

MR. SPEAKER: Kindly sit down.

SHRI SONAVANE: In view of the intensity of feeling...

MR. SPEAKER: I have not permitted you to speak. It is for the Minister to say about that. If every Member wants to get up and say, what can I do? I have already discussed it with the Minister. The Minister of State for Home Affairs will say something.

AN HON. MEMBER: About what?

MR. SPEAKER: On this demand that is before the House. Yes, Shri Shukla.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA): Mr. Speaker, I am making a brief intervention to explain certain points that the Hon. Members have raised regarding the representation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Central Government services. Sir, We are continuing our efforts to ensure that.

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been given greater representation in Classes I, II and III of the Central Government Service. We are continuing our efforts. Before I indicate the special and extra efforts that we are making towards this direction, I would like to indicate the efforts that we have already made and the concessions that we have already provided for this purpose.

As far as Scheduled Castes are concerned, this Honourable House is aware that we have reserved 12½ per cent vacancies if they are directly recruited to the posts on all India basis by open competition, then the reservation is 16 2/3 per cent. As far as Scheduled Tribes are concerned, this reservation is 5 per cent. Where the recruitment is not on all India basis and it is on regional basis, then the population ratio of Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes is taken into consideration. But the minimum limit has been put and it will not be less than 5 per cent in the case of Scheduled Tribes in relation to regional population where regional recruitment takes place. This is the present position.

The honourable, house also knows that we have given age concession, we have given them the concession in fees and have relaxed the standard of suitability. As far as standard of suitability is concerned, we have.....

AN HON. MEMBER: It is only on paper.

*Moved with the recommendation of the President.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA..... further made a special liberalisation in this matter. We are generally seeing that even after the relaxed standards are applied, candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes and Tribes are not recruited. So, we have now provided that in certain categories of posts even if they do not come to the relaxed standard, then from among the applicants the best candidates who fulfil the required educational qualifications should be selected against the reserved vacancies—even though they may not come to the relaxed standard so that these reserved vacancies do not go unfilled and have to be filled by candidates belonging to the general category. Apart from this, we have also given travel concessions by railways so that poor scheduled castes candidates can make use of them.

SHRI RANGA (Srikakulam): Is there any machinery to ensure that these instructions are respected and carried out in letter and spirit?

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: There is a statutorily-appointed commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and he submits an annual report to Parliament.

We know there are lapses and they are not always faithfully carried out. But wherever they are not carried out, a report is submitted to the hon. House and we take up these matters with the departments and ministries and other central agencies where lapses have occurred and see that they are not repeated but corrected in time.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY (Cooch Behar): The Commissioner has no power to enforce those things.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA : I shall answer questions at the end.

We have been continuously striving to improve the situation as it is. We have appointed a Working group headed by our Additional Secretary, Shri M. R. Yardi, to look into this so that we can improve the recruitment of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes personnel in government services at the Centre and in the States. His recommendations have been received. On the basis of

these, we have provided for certain additional concessions. With your permission, I would like to mention these concessions we have allowed to persons who belong to these categories.

The first is provision for carry-forward of unfilled reserved vacancies to the following two recruitment years. This is subject to the total reserved vacancies including carried forward reserved vacancies not exceeding 45% in any one recruitment year. The second concession we have given is that prior approval of the Ministry of Home Affairs is required to be obtained by the appointing authority before dereserving any reserved vacancies is permanent and temporary posts likely to become permanent or continue indefinitely. Wide publicity is given to reserved vacancies by advertisement in newspapers, notifications to employment exchanges and intimation to certain associations of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes recognised for this purpose. We have also now appointed a liaison officer in each department and ministry and also in offices under the heads of departments who are responsible for ensuring due compliance with the reservation orders in the offices under their charge. The liaison officers in the ministries and departments are of the rank of Deputy Secretary.

Ministries and departments have also been asked recently to set up Cells within the Ministry/Department for this work under the direct control of the liaison officer.

In posts and services filled by direct recruitment, reservation is required to be made for scheduled cast and scheduled tribes both at the time of initial appointment on a temporary basis as well as in confirmation.

श्री अब्दुल गनी डार (गुडगांव) : इतना सब करने के बावजूद भी क्या यह सच है कि वह अपना टेन परसेंट भी हक नहीं ले सके ?

[**श्री عبدالغنی ڈار (گورگانوہ) :** اتنا سب کرنے کے باوجود بھی کیا یہ سچ ہے کہ وہ اپنا ٹین پرسینٹ بھی حق نہیں لے سکے ؟]

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: In the matter of promotions, after a review of the concessions already admissible to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, some additional concessions have been given to persons in these categories. I shall briefly mention these—this is with reference to the point made by Shri S. M. Banerjee about reservations in promotions.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur): There was a Supreme Court judgment after the Madras High Court judgment. The Supreme Court judgment said that in the matter of promotion also, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes should be given proper representation. I would like to know if it is covered.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: I am replying to it.

As far as promotion through the limited departmental competitive examination is concerned, reservations at 12½ and 5 per cent respectively of the vacancies have been provided for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. In the case of promotions made on the basis of competitive examinations limited to departmental candidates in classes II, III and IV posts in categories of services in which the element of direct recruitment, if any, does not exceed 50 per cent. As regards promotion by selection to classes I and II posts, there is no reservation, but the following important concessions have now been given to these two categories. In the case of promotions made by selection from class III to class II and within class II and from class II to the lowest rung or category in class I, it has now been provided that in the categorisation on merit of eligible employees belonging to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, the departmental promotion committee will give weightage in grading the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes candidates, that is an employee who is categorised as 'good' on the basis of record of service will be deemed as 'very good'.

One who is categorised as "very good" will be deemed as "outstanding" for the purpose of selection. This concession is however to be confined to only 25 per cent of the total vacancies in a particular grade

or post filled in a year from the select list prepared for the purpose of promotion. It has also been provided that those Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes employees who are so senior as to be within the number of vacancies for which the select list has to be drawn should be included in the select list unless they are considered unfit for promotion and even they should be given by the departmental promotion committee one grading higher than the grading otherwise assignable to them on the basis of their records of service, their place in the select list being determined on the basis of the higher categorisation.

In the case of promotions made by selection in Class III and IV posts, reservation at 12.5 per cent and 5 per cent of the vacancies had been provided for Scheduled Castes and scheduled Tribes respectively in the grades or services in which the element of direct recruitment, if any, does not exceed fifty per cent.

In regard to promotion on the basis of seniority subject to fitness, there is no reservation in appointments made by promotion on the basis of seniority subject to fitness but cases involving supersession of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes officers in Class I and II are required to be submitted to the Minister or Deputy Minister concerned for prior approval. Such cases of supersession in Class III and IV are required to be reported to the Minister or Deputy Minister concerned within a month.

12-24 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the chair*].

As a result of the various concessions, I am happy to report that the number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes employees and their percentage to total employees under the Central Government are steadily increasing. On 1.1.60 the number of Scheduled Castes employees (all classes excluding sweepers) stood at 2,23,124. On 1.1.1968 that number stood at 3,01,035. Similarly the number of Scheduled Tribes employees of all classes excluding sweepers rose from 35,652 on 1.1.1960 to 54,400 on 1.1.1968.

[Shri Vidya Charan Shukla]

It is still below our requirement and expectation and we still want to improve the position. That is why we have provided for special concessions and we hope that when these special concessions are fully utilised in due course the position will improve further. The question of recruitment to All India services was somewhat unsatisfactory.

SHRI RANGA : If they take those persons, it is found that they are obliged to make so many concessions in regard to qualifications and so on. They make special arrangements for giving them special training to help them get into the IAS, etc. Would they be able to make special arrangements, after they are recruited, in the first or two years, for special studies and preparation so that they can rise to the level of the others and there would be no trouble thereafter in regard to promotion.

* **SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA :** It is a very valid question. I am happy to say that wherever we gave this special concession, we made special provision for in-service training so that after they are recruited they are brought to a particular level so that in actual functioning they are not below anybody else and their promotion chances do not suffer.

We make this arrangement wherever it is necessary.

I was mentioning about the All India Services. Here the position was not very satisfactory. As the hon. Member Shri Ranga mentioned, we have made arrangements for the training of candidates at two institutions, one in Allahabad and the other in Madras, where these candidates are given training before the examinations, and as a result of this training given for the last six or seven years, we have been able to fill all the reserved vacancies in the IPS and the IAS and this experiment has proved successful. I am happy to say that two candidates belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have stood first and second in the competitive tests. This indicates that with a little bit of encouragement and some training given they can compete with the best in the country.

As far as the newly constituted Indian Forest Service is concerned, I am happy to report that in the first competitive examination that we undertook, 50 persons were appointed and out of this number, almost one-fifth belong to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. That is six of them belonged to the Scheduled Castes and three of them belonged to the Scheduled Tribes. •

Apart from this, we have now set up a committee under the chairmanship of the Home Minister to review the performance in the matter of recruitment of the scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the services and the posts, under the Government of India, the Union territories and public undertakings, so that we can still find out if there is any scope for improvement here and there so that we could give further concession and see whether there is any lacuna or drawback that could be set right.

We have also requested the various State Governments to set up committees in their respective States as recommended by the Yardi Working Group, and according to the information received so far, the Government of Kerala, Gujrat, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra have set up committees. We are pursuing this question with the rest of the State Governments and we hope that they will also set up such committees to review the performance of the recruitment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the State services so that the condition improves.

The last point that I want to make is regarding the public sector undertakings. So far, out of the 174 public sector undertakings, statutory and Semi-Government bodies, 157 undertakings have agreed to make reservations for scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in services under them. With the rest of them, we are following this up and we hope that the rest of these undertakings will take up this question. With all these things, we hope that we will be able to fulfil the promise that we have held out to these oppressed classes of society and before long the position should become satisfactory.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS rose—

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : No questions please. I am sorry. I have to finish the Demands for Grants of this Ministry before lunch.

SHRI A.S. SAIGAL : The speaker, when he was in the chair, said that after the statement, we can put questions. Now, the Minister has finished the statement, and I have to say something. I am not asking on the statement that he has made, but something else. You must allow me.

SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN LAL (Bareilly) : You must allow us to put questions.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : If you start right now, it will take another half an hour and the time for these Demands will have to be extended. It is not possible.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : Just one clarification.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I would request hon. Members to write to the Minister and get the reply. It is not necessary to get the replies on the floor of the House.

SHRI A. S. SAIGAL : I am not asking anything on that point. When the Speaker was in the Chair, he said that after this item of business, we can raise our points.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I am not allowing any questions now. Any doubt that may remain may be got dispelled by writing to the Minister concerned and he can answer them.

SHRI A. S. SAIGAL : Certain things have taken place in the Delhi Municipal Corporation where two Congress members were beaten and they are lying in the hospital. What are you going to do about it? It is a law and order question and it is our own responsibility.

श्री शशि भूषण (खारगोन) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, यह बड़े शर्म की बात है कि कल दिल्ली कारपोरेशन में दोनों दलों में झगड़ा हुआ, कुर्सियाँ चलीं और लोग अस्पताल गये।

यह ला एण्ड आर्डर का सवाल है। यहाँ होम मिनिस्टर मौजूद हैं, आप उन से कहें कि वह इस के बारे में कुछ कहें... (व्यवधान)...

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I know the urgency of the problem you are raising. The minister is here and he has taken note of it. I will not permit a discussion on this.

SHRIMATI SUCHETA KRIPALANI (Gonda) : The Harijans' rights are fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution. If this kind of flagrant violation goes on in Delhi and nobody takes notice of it, it is a very serious matter. It is a question of not only law and order, but fundamental rights. After all, the administration of Delhi is not merely the responsibility of the Corporation but of the Centre also. We want an answer from Mr. Shukla and from the Law Minister.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You have brought it to the notice of the Home Minister. I expect in due course he will reply to that. Now, Mr. Menon.

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRI GOVINDA MENON) : Sir, my task has been lightened a good deal by the speech of my colleague, Mr. Shukla, because most of the speeches made during the debate were connected with the representation of scheduled castes and tribes in the services. Therefore, I made a special request to Mr. Shukla this morning to intervene because this is a matter, all the details of which are not available with the ministry over which I am presiding.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : May I know whether orders have been issued... (Interruptions).

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have already ruled that if you want any further information about the services, you can write to the hon. minister and he will reply.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : The Department of Social Welfare has come with a demand of Rs. 25½ crores—about 1 per cent of the total expenditure of the

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Government of India. Therefore, it is a small sector of the activities of the Government and yet, I see that 21 members participated in the debate which was very lively. That is an indication that this House attaches very great importance to the activities of this department. I hope, therefore, that sooner than later, this department will become a full-fledged Ministry of Social Security, which it should be the function of a Welfare State to maintain.

The activities of this department touch many aspects. Apart from the welfare of backward classes and scheduled castes and tribes, this department deals with, for example, education, training and rehabilitation of the handicapped—blind, deaf—mute and physically handicapped people, etc. I attach the greatest importance to it, but I have not been able to hear any comments regarding our activities in this direction. Further, my time is limited and therefore, I wish only to say that I agree with many members who suggested that this should become a more important activity of the Government of India. I hope it would be so very soon.

Some comment was made regarding the registration of the Central Social Welfare Board as a company under section 25 of the Companies Act. There has been some misunderstanding about the scope of this step.

This had to be done because of the criticism of the Public Accounts Committee. I would read from the Fifty-second Report of the Public Accounts Committee where they said:

“The Committee are constrained to observe that all previous recommendations of the Committee about giving statutory status to the Board yet remain to be implemented. It is surprising that the Board has been in existence for the last twelve years but no final decision in this regard has been arrived at yet. What is more surprising is that the Government has been advancing funds year after

year to a body without a legal entity which the Committee consider as irregular and unconstitutional. The Committee desire that this anomalous position should be remedied without further delay.”

The comment was that the Government should not give grants to a body which has no legal status—that is to say, to a Board not endowed with a legal personality. There were three or four courses open to Government—I think three courses. We could have registered it under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. We could have registered it under the Companies Act, Section 25. We could have also brought a Bill here so that it will be by a legislation of Parliament made into a separate corporation. The result would have been the same. It would have become by any one of these processes a corporation to which Government could give grants. It was thought, in consultation with the Attorney-General and also with the State Governments that the more feasible course would be to register it under Section 25 of the Companies Act. Because it is registered under the Companies Act do not consider that it is a company in the usual sense of the word. It has just become a corporation. The object was to give corporate capacity and status to the Board. That has been achieved. No profits are to be divided among the directors and shareholders. This is a well known method in England and India. Where charitable societies have to be incorporated, often those societies have been registered under Section 25 of the Companies Act. That is all we have done, and the large majority of State Governments who were addressed in this behalf had agreed to this course. That is why we did it and from the 1st of April this year the Central Social Welfare Board has become a corporate body.

Because it has become a corporate body no change in the functioning of that body will be there. One of the hon. friends raised the question of the employees under the Central Social Welfare Board. These employees have been enjoying certain privileges. The Central Social Welfare Board even after incorporation will continue to give them the same privileges and facilities if not better ones. I can assure

the House that there will be no difficulty with respect to the employees of the Social Welfare Board.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : When the Silk Board, the Handicrafts Board and other such bodies have not been registered under Section 25 of the Companies Act, what was the reason to register this Board under that Act?

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : I have already stated the reason. The Public Accounts Committee objected to our continuing the *status quo* and it was repeatedly criticised by the Public Accounts Committee. Not to heed to the criticism of the Public Accounts Committee would have been a sort of disrespect shown to this House because it is a Committee set up by Parliament. They did it not once or twice but several times and therefore, we had to do it.

A criticism regarding incorporation should be directed with the object of showing that by such incorporation some disability will follow. I do not think there would be any disability which would follow either to the employees or to the bodies in the States which are enjoying the grants given by the Central Social Welfare Board.

After all, the Central Social Welfare Board deals only with a small amount of one or two crores of rupees, which is being given as grant to voluntary bodies in the States. Even those grants are distributed on the advice of similar bodies set up in the States in co-operation with the State Governments. Wherever State Social Advisory Board exists, 50 per cent of the members are nominated by the State Government, 50 per cent by the Central Social Welfare Board and the Chairman is nominated by the State Government in consultation with the Central Social Welfare Board. It is a co-operative effort. There will be absolutely no clash in the form of functioning because this incorporation was effected only in deference to the criticism made by the Public Accounts Committee.

Most of the speeches here naturally were about the status of the population

of our country described as members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. It is natural because the Constitution has attached great importance to the elevation of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. There are several provisions in the Constitution even in the Fundamental Rights chapter, concerning them. We have taken care to see in article 17 that untouchability is abolished.

SHRI RABI RAY (Puri) : But they are not carried out.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : Please wait. Under article 17 untouchability is abolished and the practice of untouchability is made punishable. It is prohibited.

We have also provided that there shall be a Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, appointed by the President, whose duty it will be to see whether the guarantees given by the Constitution to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are being observed.

श्री रवि राय : कितने प्रोसीक्यूशन लांच किये गये हैं इस सिलसिले में ?

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : He is, therefore, in the position of a critic of the activities of the governments in the States and in the Centre and his report will be placed on the Table of the House. Now we have gone a step further. In the last session of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha we have appointed a parliamentary committee.

SHRI RABI RAY : After much pressure.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : Even if it is after pressure, it is a fact that it has been appointed. Government often act upon the suggestions made by Members of Parliament.

SHRI SURAJ BHAN (Ambala) : It is being treated shabbily.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : When we have appointed a parliamentary committee, it cannot be treated except with respect because, Sir, it is your committee like the

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Public Accounts Committee, Estimates Committee and Committee on Public Undertaking. This is the fourth standing Parliamentary Committee and the Speaker has been pleased to nominate a veteran parliamentarian. Shri Basumatari, who belongs to a tribal community, to preside over the activities of that committee. How can we treat such a committee except with respect ?

We have appointed that committee ; by "we" I mean Parliament ; I do not take any credit for that. With respect to the ambit of working of that committee I accepted all the suggestions made by members belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in both the Houses. Therefore, this parliamentary committee is also there apart from the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes appointed by the President, to point out to Parliament the deficiencies in the working of the guarantees given to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The Home Minister has now read out some of the steps which have been taken by the Ministry of Home Affairs. Apart from what the Commissioner can do, it will be open to this Committee to look into this matter and every year, perhaps more often than once a year, the reports of this committee regarding the extent to which these guarantees have been fulfilled will come before this House.

I welcomed very much the various criticisms which were made in the House by Members of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes and others regarding the defects or the imperfections in the working of the Central Government and of the State Governments in this matter. This condition of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes has been in existence for thousands of years and I would be making a preposterous claim, an empty claim, if I say that during the period of 22 years which elapsed after independence we have done everything to remove the disabilities of this oppressed community. I will not make that claim.

When the Constitution was framed we thought that reservation for these communities need be there only for 10 years in the

Parliament and the State Legislatures. We found at the end of nine years or so that that was not sufficient. Therefore it was amended to 20 years. I can now tell the House that processes are in motion to see that that particular article of the Constitution is amended so that the period of reservation will further be extended.

It is easy to point the finger of criticism towards the Minister and the Government saying that even after working for so many years the backward classes, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have not been elevated to the position and status of the more advanced communities. It is easy to make that comment but it is not so easy to do things to bring about a change in their status. This has to be done continuously, consistently, courageously and without break. I hope, by the exertions of all of us, belonging to all parties in this House, it will be possible for us to turn back and say after some time at least that we have been able to do a good job and I, as the Minister presiding over the Department of Social Welfare, give this undertaking that whatever suggestions are made in this regard will be accepted and all attempts will be made to implement them. I particularly extend this promise to Shri Basumatari, the Chairman of the Committee on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : May I make one suggestion ?

SHRI OM PRAKASH TYAGI (Moradabad) : What are you going to do to stop the preaching of untouchability ?

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : Please be patient ; I have not finished my speech. I have to go from point to point. I felt while I was attending to the debate going on here that apart from the Members who were participating in the debate and listening to it, there was another invisible person in the Parliament Hall in the figure of the Puri Shankaracharya. Do you think I would leave him out ? I have to deal with him also because he figured prominently in this debate. When Shri Basumatari or any Member of the Scheduled Castes was standing up to make a speech, I could see that invisible figure extending his finger of scorn against the speaker saying, "Here is an un-

touchable ; here is an untouchable." That was what was happening here.

Before I go to that I want to speak about more concrete matters. Regarding scholarships to the Scheduled Castes I want to say something. I do not say that the conditions are extremely good or exemplary or could not be bettered upon. In the year 1951-52 or rather I will take the year 1950-51 which is the first year after the Republic was inaugurated, the number of Scheduled Caste students who were getting post-matric scholarships was 1,316 and in the year 1966-67 the figure has gone up to 90,264.

So, from 1316, it has gone in the course of these 18 years to about a lakh. I think, it is significant. But considering the conditions of these communities, it ought to be more and we shall make all attempts to see that it is more. Speaking about Scheduled Tribes, in the year 1950-51, the number of post-matric scholarships given to Scheduled Tribes students was only 348 and in the year 1966-67, it is 17,760. I do not want to take the Members of the House through the forest of figures which I have got with me. But these two figures of 1950-51 and 1966-67, I hope, would be a pointer to the very energetic efforts made by Government in this regard.

Some statements were made regarding the Elyaparumal Committee. The Committee was appointed in April, 1965. That itself is an indication that the Government wanted to see that there should be available with them matters with respect to the conditions of the Scheduled Castes. Mr. Elyaparumal who was a Member of this House at that time was ill in between and he could not report before 30th January, 1969. Extensions of the period of the Committee were made from time to time. Finally, we got a report on the 30th January, 1969. Mr. Achutan who was also a Member of this House did send a dissenting minute but for some reason it was not affixed or referred to in the body of the main report.

SHRI RABI RAY : Why ?

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : I do not know ; it is unprecedented.

SHRI RABI RAY : You have not tried to know the reasons ?

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : I do not know. I asked Mr. Elyaparumal but he did not give a proper explanation.

SHRI SIDDAYYA (Chamarajanagar) : The Minister is not correct. The reason for not including it in the main report has been sent to the Ministry. That finds a place in the report itself.

SHRI SURAJ BHAN : Is it a fact that Mr. Achutan applied for a loan or grant of Rs. 5 lakhs and, in lieu of that, he was forced to give a minute of dissent ? He was pressurised.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : It is easy to say that I or somebody else in the Department...

SHRI SURAJ BHAN : Your Director of Social Welfare pressurised him.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : Why don't you be patient ?

SHRI SURAJ BHAN : Mr. Achutan does not know what is the meaning of a minute of dissent even.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : There is no questions of being pressurised. What do we gain thereby ? By asking one Member of the Committee to send a dissenting minute, it would be foolish to think that thereby anything is gained. We have nothing to gain. We are trying to do everything possible for the upliftment of the backward communities and the Scheduled Castes. To call a Scheduled Caste Member to send a dissenting report against many others in the Committee, hoping that thereby something could be gained, is wrong. After all, in that dissenting report, Mr. Achutan says that the Scheduled Castes are suffering more from economic difficulties than otherwise. That is a point of view...

SHRI SURAJ BHAN : That has been obtained by your Director or Social Welfare by pressurising him.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : Then, a reference was made to his applying for a

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grant. I say that no grant has been made to this particular gentleman of Rs. 1 lakhs of even a rupee and there is no money with us to give grants to persons of that kind. Why this sort of a criticism ?

SHR. S. M. BANERIEE : Did he apply for a loan is the question ?

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : He did apply for loan; many others apply for loans. But we have not granted the loan. (Interruption) If the Members of the House want to attribute motives, I have nothing to say. Please accept what I say at the face value.

श्री मोलह प्रसाद (बांसगांव) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय मैंने इस कमेटी की रिपोर्ट के संबन्ध में कल आपसे प्रार्थना की थी पर यह रिपोर्ट हमको अभी तक नहीं मिली जब कि समाचारपत्रों में भी इसके बारे में चर्चा है। मैं फिर प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि कमेटी की रिपोर्ट हमको मिलनी चाहिए।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : He is dealing with it.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : He has written an article in *Yojana* and that article is different from the dissenting report which he has sent. And he is free to write any article. *Yojana* is not my publication; it is a Government of India publication. He has sent an article to *Yojana* and it has been published there.

I deny the allegation of pressurisation and I also deny making of any grant to Mr. Achutan...

SHRI SURAJ BHAN : Hold an inquiry.

SHRI NAMBIAR (Tiruchirappalli) : He may deny, but he must so deny that people must believe in what he says.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : What can I do if there are people who are not prepared to believe ?

Much of the criticism here with respect to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes has been in regard to the failure of the

Government to grant lands to members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. I have to say repeatedly that this is a matter for the State Governments. Is that not so ? At the time when appointment of this Parliamentary Committee on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was being discussed, some Member suggested that it would be advisable if similar Committees were appointed by the State Assemblies also. In my speech I said that I welcomed that suggestion. Now I would suggest here on this occasion that if a similar committee is appointed by each one of our State Assemblies, then it would make the picture complete. Matters within the jurisdiction of the State Government, also will be covered, it will be open to the members of the committees appointed by the States to point out whether there are deficiencies in working, and with respect to the Centre and probably with respect to everything else, the Parliamentary Committee also can report.

SHRI SURAJ BHAN : Please recommend to the States.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : Here and now I do make the recommendation and request every member of this House to make a recommendation to their respective State Governments in this regard; that will be a very good thing. Can I, for example, order a State Government asking them to allot land, so many acres or so many bigas...

SHRI RABI RAY : Give guidelines.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON ...so many bigas to Scheduled Castes ? They will say, 'We know our job.'

SHRI SONAVANE (Pandharpur) : May I know whether he has written to the State Governments, Social Welfare Departments, that they should appoint such committees on the same lines as the Central Government has done ?

SHRI GOVINDA MENON : I have not written to the State Governments, but I stated that in Parliament and I repeat that statement here. If it would be of any use, I will be writing to the Chief Ministers also and not to the Social Welfare Boards.

श्री एस० एम० जोशी (पूना) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह प्रार्थना करूँगा कि अगर यह जमीनात जो हैं वह शैड्यूल कास्ट और शैड्यूल ट्राइब को देने के लिए प्रिफरेंस किया जाता है तो क्या मंत्री महोदय या हुकूमत स्टेट गवर्नमेंट्स को यह लिखेंगे कि जो भी जमीन आपके पास है, उसके ऊपर उनका पहला हक होना चाहिए और जो प्रोजेक्ट्सके कारण डिसप्लेस होते हैं उनके लिए इन लोगों को नहीं दी जाती, वैसा नहीं होना चाहिए।

SHRI GOVINDA MENON: It may not be in the nature of a 'hukumat' because with respect to a matter falling under State Governments, I cannot give a directive; I can only say that this kind of a committee may be appointed by the states also.

श्री एस० एम० जोशी : पालिसी तो यह होनी चाहिए कि जो शैड्यूल कास्ट के लोग हैं, उनको जमीन पहले मिलनी चाहिए। यह तो पालिसी उनको आप बता देंगे।

13 hrs.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON: I will do that.

Now a good deal of the time in the discussion was taken by reference to untouchability.

And Members here particularly belonging to the Scheduled Castes spoke with great anger and indignation. I am only surprised that this anger came only to this limit. They are entitled to be angry regarding any one in this country who says that untouchability is sanctioned by the Shastras. When the Constituent Assembly met, the Constituent Assembly thought that it is its sacred duty to declare that untouchability is abolished and the practice of untouchability is forbidden. And as per direction of Article 17 this House has passed the Untouchability Act. (Interruptions)

SHRI RABI RAY: May I know from the hon. Minister as to how many prosecutions have been started on the basis of this Untouchability Act ?

SHRI GOVINDA MENON: This is made a cognizable offence and the Elayaperumal Committee has recommended that the punishment should be made more severe. That is to say that imprisonment should be made not optional but compulsory. We will take up that suggestion and amend the Untouchability Act. With respect to the feelings of the Scheduled Caste in our country, here is Puri Shankaracharya who appears to have more interest in animals than in men, saying that the Shashtra do lay down that there shall be the caste system, untouchability, etc. Mr. Siddiah made a very angry speech and I do not find fault with him saying that it is difficult to remove untouchability so long as the caste system is there. Now it may be that it is so. (Interruptions) But I want to put this question. If I bring a resolution or if Mr. Siddiah brings a resolution or if anybody else brings a resolution declaring that the caste system may be abolished, it may be that the caste system stands not disappear because I have received, memorials from scheduled castes who were converted to Christianity that they should still be treated as scheduled castes. I have got such representatives with me. Now they on are treated as Backward communities.

Regarding the statement made by Shankaracharya of Puri many people have spoken about it. I do add my voice of protest against this antediluvian approach to a burning question in this country by His Holiness Puri Shankaracharya. (Interruptions)

SHRI RABI RAY: His Unholiness.

SHRI A. S. SAIGAL: His Holiness cannot say like this. All humanity is one before God.

SHRI GOVINDA MENON: Some hon. Members have not enough sense of humour to appreciate that I used these words 'His Holiness' in this connection with a feeling that he has made a most unholy statement. That is clear. I am not well-versed in the Shastras or in the Darsanas but I want to answer His Holiness Shankaracharya of Puri in the words of one who is treated as one of the builders of modern India, a great soul whom we respect very much, Swami Vivekananda. What has he spoken about this ? There is a book published by the

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Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas. The title of the book is 'India and her problems'. I will read out a portion from the book.

The great predecessor of Puri Shankaracharya and other Shankaracharyas was born in Kaladi, in my constituency. I have great respect for Adi Shankaracharya. The world respects him. The great philosophy of Advaita, otherwise known as Monism has been propounded with very great skill by Adi Shankaracharya. The greatest exponent of this philosophy of Advaita in modern times is Swami Vivekananda. If you would read his lectures you would understand that the views of Shankaracharya on religious problems have been expounded by Swami Vivekananda with great lucidity. I refer to Adi Shankaracharya. Here is a beautiful statement which contains the views of Swami Vivekananda on untouchability. I would read out this statement made by this great soul who is respected throughout the world. This is the passage.

"Formerly the characteristic of a noble-minded was—(*tribhuvanamupakara shrenibih priyamanah*)—" to please the whole universe by one's numerous acts of service", but now it is—I am pure and the whole world is impure. "Don't touch me!" "Don't touch me!" The whole world is impure, and I alone impure! Lucid *Brahmajnana*! Bravo! Great God! Nowadays Brahman is neither in the recesses of the heart, nor in the highest heaven, nor in all beings—no! he is in the cooking pot!

Swami Vivekananda speaks about himself and his brothers :

"We are orthodox Hindus, but we refuse entirely to identify ourselves with 'Don't-touchism' That is not Hinduism; it is in none of our books, it is an orthodox superstition, which has interfered with national efficiency all along the line. Religion has entered in the cooking pot. The present religion of the Hindus is neither the path of knowledge nor that of Reason,—it is "Don't-touchism" "Don't touch me" "Don't touch me."—That exhausts its description.

"Don't-touchism" is a form of mental disease. Beware! All expansion is life, all contraction is death. All love is expansion, all selfishness is contraction. Love is therefore the only law of life. See that you do not lose your lives in this dire irreligion of "Don't-touchism". Must the teaching (*Atmavat Sarvabhuteshu*)—Looking upon all beings as your own self—be confined to books alone? How will they grant salvation who cannot feed a hungry mouth with a crumb of bread? How will those, who become impure at the mere breath of others purify others?...

"Each Hindu, I say, is a brother to every other, and it is we, who have degraded them by our outcry. "Don't touch"! "Don't touch"! And so the whole country has been plunged to the utmost depths of meanness, cowardice and ignorance.

These men have to be lifted. Words of hope and faith have to be proclaimed to them. We have to tell them: "You are also men like us and you have all the rights that we have."

Sir, no words from me would be a greater condemnation of the statement made by Puri Sankaracharya with respect to untouchability.

Regarding legal action, the Ministry of Home Affairs consulted me as Law Minister and I have said that the Government of Bihar should be advised to launch prosecution and I understand from enquiry that the matter is now in the hands of a Magistrate.

SHRI S.M. BANERJEE: One point, Sir...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If I allow you, I will have to allow all...(Interruptions.)

SHRI SONAVANE: I want to ask...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will request all the Members to address their points for clarifications to the Minister and get the clarification from him. Now, with the permission of the House, I will put all the Cut Motions together to the vote of the House...(Interruptions.)

SHRI SONAVANE: We are walking out in protest against the weak-kneed policy in not taking action against Sankaracharya.

श्री प. ला. बारूपाल (गंगानगर) : मैं वाक-
आउट करता हूँ। हम आपसे सहमत नहीं हैं।

13.02 hrs.

(Shri Sonavane, Shri P. L. Barupal and some other Members then left the House.)

All the Cut Motions were put and nega-
tived.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now I shall put the Demands to the vote of the House.

The question is:

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the fourth column of the order paper, be granted to the President, to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1970, in respect of the heads of demands entered in the second column thereof against Demands Nos. 97 and 98 relating to the Department of Social Welfare."

The motion was adopted.

[The Motion of Demands for grants which were adopted by the Lok Sabha are reproduced below—ed.]

DEMAND NO. 97—DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL WELFARE

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 16,48,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1970, in respect of 'Department of Social Welfare.'"

DEMAND NO. 98—OTHER REVENUE
EXPENDITURE OF THE DEPART-
MENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,78,32,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray

the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1970, in respect of 'Other Revenue Expenditure of the Department of Social Welfare.'"

13.03 hrs.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE AND
SUPPLY

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House will now take up discussions and voting on Demand Nos. 34 to 37 and 115 relating to the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Supply for which 4 hours have been allotted.

Hon. Members present in the House who are desirous of moving their cut motions may send slips to the Table by thirty minutes past two of the Clock indicating the serial numbers of the cut motions they would like to move. They will be treated as moved if they are otherwise admissible.

DEMAND NO. 34—MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
TRADE AND SUPPLY

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Motion moved :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,16,63,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March 1970, in respect of 'Ministry of Foreign Trade and Supply.'"

DEMAND NO. 35—SUPPLIES AND DISPOSALS

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Motion moved :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,55,41,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March 1970, in respect of 'Supplies and Disposals'."

DEMAND NO 36—FOREIGN TRADE

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Motion moved.