

हो रही है। इतनी अशक्त, इतनी निर्बल, इतनी दुर्बल सरकार किसी तरह से ब्लैक मार्केटिंग और भ्रष्टाचार को, कर्प्शन को दूर नहीं कर सकती।

यह सरकार आज इस ऐक्ट के एक्स्टेंशन की इजाजत क्यों लेती है। इसलिये कि वह इस बात को जानती है कि वह पास करा लेगी, और इस बात को भी जानती है कि हमारी मर्जी के बगैर भी वह पास करा लेगी क्योंकि उन की डिक्टेटरशिप चलती है। किसी स्वतन्त्र देश में, डिमाट्रेटिक कंट्री में ऐसा नहीं होता कि इल्जाम लगाने वाला वही हो, और सजा देने वाला भी वही हो। किसी भी जम्हूरिया मूलक में ऐसा नहीं होता कि वही शरूम इल्जाम लगाये और वही शरूम सजा दे। इस तरह से देश का इत्मीमान खत्म हो जायेगा, हिन्दुस्तान के अन्दर किसी तरह का विश्वास बाकी नहीं रहेगा। अगर कोई पार्टी ऐसी है जो गद्दारी करती है तो उसे वैन कीजियेगा, अनलाफुल करार दीजियेगा, इल्लीगल कीजियेगा, लाकानुनियत के मातहत उसे लीजियेगा। अग्नेजों की यह चाल थी कि वह चाहते थे कि हिन्दुस्तानी काबल नहीं हैं। आज कांग्रेस की भी यह चाल है कि वह कहती है कि ताजोरात हिन्द है उस से काम नहीं चलता है। इस वक्त जो आप के डिफेन्स आफ इंडिया रूल्स हैं उनके मातहत इतने अख्तियार पुलिस और कलेक्टर के पास हैं फिर भी नया ऐक्ट बनाया जा रहा है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि इस की जरूरत किस लिये हुई। यह मेरी समझ में नहीं आता है। यह रूल्स चोरों के लिए, डाकूओं के लिये नहीं, ब्लैक मार्केटिंग करने वालों के लिए नहीं। यह किन के लिए है। उन पी० एस० पी० के बहादुर साथियों के लिये जिन्होंने अन्याय और

अत्याचार के खिलाफ उन से लोहा लिया और गाजियावाद में, यू० पी० के वार्डर को पार कर के दिल्ली आना चाहते थे। जो किसान कल गेहूँ ५५ रु० मन खरीदता था, ६० रु० मन खरीदता था, जिस किसान के घर में गुड़ आया है। जिस वक्त किसान उस गुड़ को खरीदने गया था उस वक्त वह उस गुड़ को ५५ रु० मन में खरीद कर लाया था लेकिन जब किसान के घर में गुड़ आया तो उस गुड़ की कीमत २० रु०, २२ रु० मन कर दी। इस अत्याचार और अन्याय के खिलाफ अगर पी० एस० पी० के बहादुर साथी खड़े होते हैं तो उन्हें डी० आई० आर० के मातहत गिरफ्तार किया जाता है। यह कानून चोरों के लिए नहीं, डकैतों के लिए नहीं, ब्लैक मार्केटिंग करने वालों के लिए नहीं वन्कि पोलिटिकल पार्टिय का, मूखालिफ पार्टियों का दमन करने के लिए लाया गया है।

मैं आप के द्वारा हाउस से अनुरोध करता हूँ कि वह सरकार से कहे कि इस कानून को वापस ले लिया जाये।

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The hon. Minister will reply tomorrow.

17 hrs.

LODI HOUSE HOSTEL*

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: We shall now take up the half-an-hour discussion.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath (Hoshan-gabad): It is my painful duty this afternoon to invite your attention and the attention of the House and the attention of the hon. Minister of Works, Housing and Rehabilitation to that shabby, ill-designed monstrosity of a hostel called the Lodi House Hostel which has unfortunately attracted unfavourable notice in many of the important daily newspapers of the capital. I have no hesitation in saying that whoever designed the living

[Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath]

rooms in this hostel, which are supposed to be intended for Central Government employees drawing, I believe, round about Rs. 500 or 600 P.M., whoever designed those living rooms, or at any rate, whoever approved the design of those living rooms in this rabbit-hutch as it has been rightly called, deserves to be sacked.

The matter was raised in September last, and again early in this session, but due to an unfortunate concatenation of circumstances, it was not reached for oral answers; neither of the questions was reached for oral answer, and, therefore, no supplementaries could be raised. Hence the need was felt for having a fuller discussion of this issue which concerns the residence intended for Central Government employees, this hostel which is, in my humble judgment, a disgrace to a welfare State and should never have been built as it has been in the first place; and once having been built, the argument seems to be that Government have spent about Rs. 35 lakhs on this hostel, and, therefore, somebody must be forced to occupy it; somebody must be forced to occupy it because so much has been spent on this hostel.

The dimensions of the living room are, according to the hon. Minister's statement of September last 14-1½ feet X 8-1¼ feet on the ground floor; some of the rooms on the top floor are slightly larger. It comes to about 125 square feet per room by way of floor area. I have had some talk with certain knowledgeable persons on this subject, and they were unanimously of the view that the minimum floor area for a single room should be 150 square feet. I am not an expert on this subject, but I have been told so. But, I can say from my personal experience that even the prison cells which I occupied during the British regime were bigger; I have seen five jails, and the cells which I got in those jails were bigger and better ventilated than the rooms that have been designed for Central Government em-

ployees in a welfare State in the year of Grace 1963, by a free India Government. It is monstrous on the part of Government to force the Central Government employees into these cubicles, cramped and ill-ventilated cubicles. There is no window at all. I wish you, Sir, could and see them. I have myself been there twice. There is no window to the rooms at all. There is just a small ventilator at the top, about the size of 2½ x ½ ft. That is all the ventilation that there is to the room.

Dr. M. S. Aney: For purdah ladies?

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Even purdah ladies need ventilation. There is a small narrow balcony which is expected to accommodate a cot. But the balcony is so narrow that the cot cannot be fitted lengthwise; either the pillow or your feet can be on the balcony and the rest of the body must be inside the room and the door should be kept open if you want some ventilation in summer. The parapet wall is so low that in that locality where the *gandah nullah* flows close by, there have been, I believe, quite a few minor crimes if not major ones. And no Government employee who is anxious to protect his life on his own would like to sleep in such a room or on such a balcony exposed to the depredations of criminals.

Another curious feature of this hostel is the catering. For the catering, no tenders were invited as is done normally. But it was auctioned. The rates were fixed by Government.

There is compulsory breakfast for all. The breakfast menu is as follows. The menu for non-vegetarians is: one egg to order, tea or coffee (two cups), two toasts, butter, assorted jam or marmalade. For vegetarians, the menu is vegetable cutlets or any vegetarian preparations such as *samosa*, *pattis*, stuffed vegetables etc., tea or coffee (two cups), two toasts, butter, and assorted jam or marmalade. And

the amount charged for this compulsory breakfast is Rs. 1-25.

As for the rest, the catering was auctioned in such a fashion that the caterer or the tenderer was asked to offer his terms as to how much he would be able to pay per month to Government, and the rates were fixed by Government for meals, and the rate was Rs. 7-50 for full meals a day. And tenders were invited and the tenders were asked to quote their terms about the rent that they would be able to pay to Government every month and the highest bidder was given the catering. This novel procedure has been adopted with regard to this hostel. I do not know why this procedure was adopted at all. The normal procedure is for Government to prescribe the menu for the various meals and then invite tenders for supply of those meals and the rates for those meals. But, here, they have inverted it; in fact, they have not even inverted it, but a wrong procedure, a wholly unsatisfactory and insalutary procedure has been adopted for reasons best known to the hon. Minister. I would like to know who is the caterer whose tender was accepted, and whether he has been conforming to the schedules prescribed or laid down under the contract.

I have been told by some Central Government employees, who, much against their will, have occupied the rooms there or have gone to live there that they have fallen ill because of the bad ventilation. My hon. friend the Minister may laugh, but I wish one of his employees goes and lives there; in fact, that was what I wrote to him once; I do not know whether he has tried to find out how the rooms are, whether the rooms are fit for human habitation at all.

Before I pass on to catering, I would like to mention this. The hon. Minister has had the audacity to suggest that a Member of Parliament also, if he wishes, can occupy a room; this is

a great favour which he has shown or showered upon the Member of Parliament, a would-be resident of this monstrosity of a hostel or rabbit-hutch. He says that the rent payable by a non-eligible person, that is, the commercial rents is Rs. 220 P.M. for this living room of 125 square feet. Then, the hon. Minister goes on to say that in other words, the Government servants, that is, the eligible Government servants, at a subsidy of Rs. 120 P.M.; for much bigger rooms which a Government employee has been occupying in the Constitution House, he pays only Rs. 75 P.M. and the dimensions of those rooms are of the order of 16 feet x 14 feet x 12 feet or so. But in the new hostel consisting of rooms with an area of 125 square feet each, he is asked to pay Rs. 100 P.M. plus Rs. 30 for electricity.

Shri U. M. Trivedi (Mandsaur): Is that correct?

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Let him contradict it. This is pending the installation of meters—thanks for small mercies—for the rooms. That means, Rs. 130 per month. A Government employee drawing a salary of Rs. 500 is asked to pay for this cubicle Rs. 130 per month, for this ill-ventilated, hell-hole, dungeon, practically.

So far as the MP is concerned, he has had the hardihood to say that if an MP were to take a room—very nice of him to suggest that—he would get a further remission of 25 per cent. That is to say, he made it very clear that the subsidy in the case of an MP would come to Rs. 145 per month. Out of Rs. 220, the MP would get Rs. 75. I wrote to the Minister and told him that even if an MP is offered this free, I am sure he would not occupy this dungeon of a hell in that Lodi Road Hostel.

Now I want to say a few words about catering. I have been told very sorrowfully by Central Government employees who have been herded, literally forced, into this monstrosity

[Shri Hari Vishnu Kainath]

of a hostel, something about this catering. Before I proceed further, may I say that according to the Minister's reply, it was intended for Central Government employees. At the moment, there are only 40 or 50 rooms occupied—so I am told,—out of 280 rooms—by Central Government employees and the rest by an MRA troupe which has been here for the last one month or so. Even for temporary habitation, it is bad enough. For permanent habitation, it is out of the question, being surely a hell. The Minister eminently deserves the censure of the House for having approved of the construction of such a hostel for Central Government employees in this so-called socialist welfare state.

As regards catering, I have been told by those residents there who have been living there for the last month or so, that one of the terms of the contract is that 'free helping will be permissible without stipulation in any quantity'. One of my friends went to eat there once and he saw the Central Government employees eating by his side in the table. I am told the caterer does not cook in that place. He brings food cooked in another place and then serves it to the residents. On that particular evening, there was only *dal* and rice. *Dal* and *bhath* was served only once. There was no soup, no pudding, no *coffee*. Only rice and *dal* was served, and no second helping even.

The friend asked, 'Is this the normal thing?' The caterer said, 'I am sorry. I have not got anything more tonight'. And yet for eating such meals, an employee, the resident there, is compelled to pay—because the rates, daily tariff, is fixed by Government, not by the caterer—whether he gets a second helping or not, a full meal or not, Rs. 7.50 per day. In Constitution House, it is different; in Western Court, it is different; in other hostels it is different.

About the rent, I have no doubt that it is simply legalised loot on the part of Government. They talk of rack-renting. This is rack-renting of the worst type, and this legalised looting by Government must stop.

One word about the servants who are working in that hostel. I am told the servants' quarters are either not ready for human habitation or are unfit—more unfit than the other accommodation—for habitation. The servants living there have got to stay in a place about 2½—3 miles from that place in the servants' quarters attached to the Constitution House—many of them. They have to trudge every morning at 4 or 5 o'clock to that place, because there is no transport provided for them and there is no bus available so early in the morning, covering 2 or 3 miles. I hope Government will provide some sort of transport to the Class IV servants to carry them every day if they have got to stay elsewhere compulsorily, because no servants' quarters are available there. If they have to compulsorily stay three miles away from the place, they must be given some transport to carry them to and fro.

One last word and I have done. I think this entire matter of this Lodi House hostel, the construction, the manner in which Central Government employees have been forced to occupy it—they have no option in the matter, the hapless Government employees have been told, 'take it or leave it'—should be inquired into. The Minister has also said that the provision of residential accommodation to government servants is an amenity. He does not believe that government servants who are being posted here, in thousands, are entitled to it. He calls it an amenity; he says they are entitled only to house rent allowance. A government employee posted here is facing this problem of accommodation, and the Minister says: 'Take this dungeon, hell-hole or leave it; I cannot give anything else'. And he is asked to fend for himself.

This is not my conception of a welfare state, let alone a socialist democratic State. It is high time Government approached this question in a better spirit. The whole attitude of Government to this matter should change. I would also ask whether the expenditure incurred Rs. 35 lakhs, on this hostel, for 280 rooms of the dimensions I have described, is not too much. This morning I raised the question of the CPWD's cost of construction and said that it is inordinately high because there is corruption in the CPWD, there is extravagance in the CPWD, there is waste in the CPWD. This calls for an inquiry.

I would also ask the House to appoint a parliamentary committee to go into the CPWD construction costs, why this hell-hole has cost Rs. 35 lakhs of the taxpayers' money. Now the Government is faced with the problem of getting it occupied by reluctant people who refuse to go there.

The Minister of Works, Housing and Rehabilitation (Shri Mehr Chand Khanna): I have listened to the speech of Shri Kamath with great attention. He made certain observations rather in an intemperate language and also paid me some compliments. I have no intention of replying back in the same strain.

Before I come to the specific question he has raised, I feel that the general policy that Government is pursuing in the matter of the construction programme in Delhi and other cities like Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, should be known to the House. I would only take a few minutes to dwell upon it. In that manner, I feel that the questions—I wish to answer the question fully—would be better appreciated. In Delhi, like any other big city, we are faced with a serious problem of finding accommodation for government servants. There is also the desire of government servants, like anyone of us, that they should be provided accommodation in central

areas as near to their offices as possible. Another thing which has to be taken into consideration in this connection is the construction cost or the financial implications of the projects we undertake.

Now if we have to build houses in central areas, it is essential that we have to go in for vertical construction. We have to make intensified use of the land and without undertaking multi-storeyed construction, we can never solve the problem. I have on my hand about 50,000 government servants in Delhi who are waiting for accommodation for quite a long time. I can well imagine their plight if they have to go out and take houses on rent, because rents in Delhi are very high, and land costs are very high. So my attempt has been to undertake a big construction programme and, at the same time, see that I build houses or flats or hostels to suit different types of accommodation that have to be provided to government servants who are in different pay grades. We are undertaking the construction of different types of houses, from pay ranges, Rs. 100 right up to Rs. 3000—4000. For obvious reasons for the lower categories we are undertaking construction to a bigger extent; the availability is hardly 30 or 40 per cent as opposed to what it is in the higher categories above. The rent that is paid is regulated by F.R. 45-A; and only the cost of the superstructure is taken into consideration. The value of the land, the development charges—these are not taken into consideration. According to the formula it is either six or seven per cent of the capital cost of superstructure or ten per cent of the pay of the Government servant whichever is less and not higher. So, I have to plan accommodation for different types according to these conditions.

The first hostel the construction of which was undertaken is called the

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna: I have to meet the requirements of different types of officers. I am not forcing anybody to do something.

This time we invited tenders for catering. We have laid down the menu; we have fixed rates. It is nothing unusual. We have done so in the case of Constitution House.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: That is wholly wrong; in the Constitution House it is the lowest tenderer; here it is the highest bidder. . . (Interruptions).

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna: We have invited tenders; this has been given to the man who will pay highest to the Government. This tenderer is going to pay at the rate of Rs. 3525 per month; his tender was Rs. 42,300. Till now the caterers in the Constitution House and Western Court were having an easy time. I have fixed the menu; he read out the menu himself. It costs only Rs. 1-4-0 or Rs. 1-8-0 for breakfast. Only breakfast is compulsory. No meals are compulsory; there is no obligation that a resident should take his meals there.

This hostel was completed about a month ago and when I had a census taken a few days ago; 140 of the 276 rooms were occupied. There were 40 Government servants; the remaining, outsiders. At no time in the Constitution House which has existed for the last twenty years the presence of Government servants, I am told, was beyond fifty per cent.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: It was meant for MPs.—not Government servants.

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna: Please let me carry on. It was not meant for MPs. It was built at the time of the last war for the British or American soldiers who came to this country. It was a temporary structure. If you take the cost of this temporary structure whose life span was only 5-6 years, you will see it

has outlived it by 20 years. You cannot compare the costs of these two houses. If a Government servant does not want to go there, he is entitled to his house rent like 50,000 of his brethren in Delhi who have not been provided accommodation.

I thought that my old friend Mr. Kamath would pay me high compliments for our trying to solve the problem by making intensive use of the land, going in for vertical construction. Even Ministers have been accused here that they were living in big bungalows. I am now going to build houses for Ministers on the same lines as we are doing for the Government servants so that we can prove to Mr. Kamath and men like him that we do believe honestly and sincerely in the socialist pattern of society. . . (Interruptions.)

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: 125 sq. feet per single room?

Shri Joachim Alva: To be fair to Mr. Kamath, he is living in a small house while his erstwhile colleagues, ICS officers live in palatial bungalows.

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna: Perhaps Shri Kamath is a little upset in leaving the Constitution House.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Ho, no. He is side-tracking the issue.

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna: I know about the demolition of the Constitution House and the questions about it in Parliament and about the Emergency but for which all this hullabaloo would not have been made.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Sir, on a point of order. I have not raised the issue of the Constitution House today. The subject under discussion is the Lodi House Hostel. I have never mentioned anything about the Constitution House. He is now side-tracking the issue with bad intent.

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna: Questions have been asked in this House and letters have been written by Shri Kamath himself that as a matter of Emergency, the Constitution House should not be demolished.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: No mention about it was made by me now.

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna: The demand that it should not be demolished

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Why this talk about the Constitution House? I raised the matter only with regard to the Lodi House Hostel. He is only trying to bluff.

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna: The only submission that I wish to make is that unfortunately my department has been accused of corruption.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: I shall do it again!

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna: This word 'honesty' is a comparative term. I do concede that Shri Kamath is more honest than me, and the party to which he belongs has perhaps more honest ideals than we have. But all I can say is that there may be corruption in the CPWD, but the CPWD is pulling up, and is doing extremely well. I am not only proud of my department and the architects, but I am also proud of the engineers who in these difficult times, in the time of emergency, are delivering the goods.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, December 19, 1963/Agrahayana 28, 1885 (Saka).
