

aiya, Shri Satyendra Narayan Sinha, Shri George Thomas Kottukapally, Shri A. M. Tariq, Shri Kamalnayan Jamnalal Bajaj, Shri B. R. Bhagat, Shri Mathura Prasad Mishra, Shri T. Sanganna, Shri S. R. Damani, Shri Rajeshwar Patel, Shri T. C. N. Menon, Shri Prabhat Kar, Shri R. K. Khadilkar, Shri Bimal Comar Ghose, Shri Arjun Singh Bhardauria, Shri M. R. Masani, H. H. Maharaja Sri Karni Singhji of Bikaner, Shri Premji R. Assar, Shri Tribhuan Narayan Singh, Shri N. Siva Raj, H. H. Maharaja Pratap Keshari Deo, Shri Naushir Bharucha, Dr. A. Krishnaswami and Shri Morarji Desai with instructions to report by the 1st May, 1958."

The motion was adopted

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The House will now take up the non-official business.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

TWENTY-FIRST REPORT

Shri Supakar (Sambalpur): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House agrees with the Twenty-first Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 24th April, 1958."

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

"That this House agrees with the Twenty-first Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 24th April, 1958."

The motion was adopted

RESOLUTION RE: REORIENTATION OF THE SYSTEM OF EXAMINATIONS—*cond.*

Shri V. P. Nayar (Quilon): Sir, I wonder whether there is a quorum. Now we are entitled to a quorum. It

is a very important subject which is coming up before the House.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The bell is being rung.

Now there is quorum. The House will resume further discussion on the Resolution moved by Dr. Deorao Yeshwantrao Gohokar on the 11th April, 1958, regarding re-orientation of the system of examinations.

Out of two and a half hours allotted for the discussion of the Resolution, one hour and forty-one minutes have already been taken up and forty-nine minutes are left for further discussion today.

Is there any hon. Member wishing to speak?

There is no one. Then I call the hon. Minister.

The Minister of Education (Dr. K. L. Shrimali): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, my hon. friend, Dr. Gohokar, by moving this Resolution has drawn the attention of this House to an important problem which has engaged the attention of educationists for the last fifty years. The examination system has been criticised from every quarter—parents, teachers, society, administrators and everybody. But it has got such a strong hold over our people that in spite of general dissatisfaction with the system there has been little effort to change it and replace it by a better system. This subject forms the subject matter of discussion in various education conferences and committees, both official and non-official, but I must say that so far there has only been a tinkering of the problem here and there and we have not made any substantial progress. The Ministry of Education has recently taken a very important step for bringing about certain radical changes in the examination system. But before I come to this question, I think, it is necessary that we should be clear about the issues involved in this matter.

[Dr. K. L. Shrimali.]

My hon. friend, Dr. Gohokar, has, I think, oversimplified the whole problem and the remedy that he has suggested is worse than the disease. Unfortunately, he has also mixed up the question of examination with the problem of discipline. The question of examination itself is a very complicated problem and I do not think we should make it more complicated by mixing it with the problem of discipline.

My hon. friend, Shri Bibhuti Mishra, has suggested the appointment of a sub-committee. Now I would like to submit that we have now passed the stage of committees and commissions. The Government of India had appointed two important commissions on secondary education and university education. These commissions had invited certain foreign experts also to study the problem of re-organisation of education. I would like to submit most respectfully that no useful purpose would be served by appointing another committee. The question is to take certain practical measures to bring about reform in the whole system. As far as what lines the reform should take and what the evils in the examination system are concerned, they are all very well known not only in this country but in other countries also.

Before we bring about changes in this system we must know that this system has been in existence in this country for nearly a century. It has taken deep roots in our soil. I do not think it is fair to say that it is a foreign system. We have adopted it and we have used it for our purposes. Today we are dependent on it not only for the promotion of our students in the schools and colleges but also for the selection and recruitment to services. We must also remember that this examination system is linked up with our syllabus and with our teaching methods. It is the most powerful force which motivates the students and builds up attitudes in them. However bad this system may be from the psychologi-

cal and sociological point of view, we must remember that it has worked for the last 100 years and if we aim at eliminating this system altogether and if we wish to bring about drastic changes in the whole system at this stage, I am afraid, we may put the whole educational system out of gear. I am not suggesting that reforms are not necessary. Reforms are necessary and desirable. But, the question is how to bring about these reforms and is the system so rotten and so bad that we should eliminate this system altogether as has been suggested by some hon. Members. I think it was my hon. friend Shri Bibhuti Mishra who said that the system in ancient India was good enough and we may go back to that system. The world has become very complicated. The students have to face a world which is very complex and which presents many complicated problems and therefore we have to look at this problem in the present context of our society.

I do not admit that certain changes are necessary in the present examination system. There is no doubt about it. I would only like to submit that these changes must be slow, must be gradual. I would like to explain further why I am suggesting that the changes should be brought about gradually and according to a well planned programme. As far as the deficiencies in the system of examination are concerned, they are all very well known. There is, for example, the chance element in the performance of the students. If a student has studied carefully a particular portion and by chance, questions are put on that particular portion, he gets good marks. Nobody denies that chance plays a very important part in the evaluation. Various studies have been made by Sir Philip Hartog's examination of examinations. They clearly show that there is a strong subjective element in the system of examinations. Marking is influenced by the personal idiosyncracies of the examiner. It has been found sometimes that whereas

one examiner gives the highest mark in a paper to a student, another examiner puts him at the bottom in the same paper. This kind of thing has happened when systematic studies have been made.

But, the worst part of the present examination is that it depends too much on memorisation and acquisition of information. In this connection, I should like to quote here the observations made by Dr. Benjamin Bloom in his forthcoming book—the book is not yet published; it is going to be published shortly—Examination and Evaluation of Students Development. Dr. Bloom was invited by the Ministry of Education to advise on the system of examination. The House may be interested in the appraisal which he has made. He says:

“Having observed students in class, I was anxious to observe them preparing for examination. The opportunity came rather unexpectedly, as I attempted one Sunday to relax from rather arduous work I was pursuing. Having heard a great deal about Jantar Mantar in New Delhi, I took my family to the very attractive park in which these ancient astronomical instruments are located. A large number of students also chose the same day to visit the park. In one structure designed to register the different phases of the moon, I found a student sitting in almost every one of the openings intended to permit the rays of the moon to strike a pole placed in the centre of the structure. Each student appeared to be engrossed in studying for his examination.

In addition to the students sitting in the openings of the structure, throughout the park I observed students pacing back and forth with books held in hand.

This is a common scene with which we are all familiar.

These books shifted from a position in which they could be read to a position in which they could not be read. It was evident that the students in this park were engaged in a stupendous effort at memorising a subject.

I became bold enough to stop one student and asked him what he was studying and why. He showed a Chemistry book and said that he was preparing for the forthcoming examination. When I asked him how he was preparing, he offered to demonstrate. His book was opened at page 434. He claimed that he had not mastered that portion of the subject. Turning to page 386, he asked me to hold the book and then proceeded to give me word for word everything on pages 386, 387 and 388. He had mastered this material and was ready for the examination. The book had more than 600 pages in it. I am quite confident that he eventually committed a good portion of this work to memory.”

This is a picture, and I think a very graphic picture, of the effects which the present system of examination is having on our students. It lays too much emphasis on the acquisition of information and on memorising. He further says—this is a very correct appraisal—

“The system consisting of examination, syllabi, teaching methods and instructional materials has formed a grand conspiracy to persuade every one involved in it that learning is to be equated with rote memorising.”

Unfortunately, everybody in this country, students, teachers and those who are engaged in evaluation, and the employing authorities, think that learning is nothing but memorising and reproduction of the factual knowledge that has been acquired by the students. This is the problem which we have to face. It is not enough that we devise various techniques for better evaluation. Of course, there

[Dr. K. L. Shrimali]

are various techniques which have been devised such as the use of accumulated records, internal assessment procedure, gradual inclusion of objective type of question in external examinations. All these improvements have been suggested. But I would like to submit most respectfully that they do not touch the heart of the problem. We have to be clear as to what effect this testing is going to have on the minds and on the attitudes of the students. If we are only testing information, then, whatever instrument we may use,—it is possible that we may use a more precise and more accurate instrument for measuring the powers of memorisation,—it will not either change the educational system or bring about any change in the educational situation.

The important thing is that we have to link up these educational techniques with the learning procedures, on the one hand, and with the purposes of education, on the other. Now, take, for example, a student who studies science, say, physics or chemistry. One way of testing is that we might find out how much factual knowledge the student has. But that is a very superficial way of testing. We should be more interested in finding out what effect these studies have made on the minds of the students. Have they developed a critical and scientific attitude after the study of physics and chemistry? If they study history, have they been able to make an appraisal of the past so that they might understand the present and the future a little better? If they are studying literature and art, we should find out whether they have developed aesthetic appreciation.

Now, these are the things which have to be measured, and which have to be tested, if we really wish to bring about a reform in the examination system. It is not just merely devising a better instrument that is necessary. The more important thing is that we should be clear about the issues involved in this whole problem. Is

it merely devising a better instrument or is it devising a better instrument to study the changes which certain learning situations produce on the minds and on the attitudes of the students? It is from that point of view that this whole problem has to be studied.

The purpose of instruction is to bring about certain changes in the minds and attitudes of students, and a good examination should make an appraisal of the kind of changes which instructions seem to bring about on the students. The present system of examination, as I said, has in the past laid great emphasis on memorisation and acquisition of knowledge, with the result that we have completely lost sight of the basic purposes which we had in view with regard to these various disciplines, namely, the purposes with which we gave instructions to students. We forget that we are aiming at the development of the personality of the child and not just expecting him to reproduce certain factual knowledge which he acquires during the course of the school-hours.

Therefore, this problem of examination is linked up with learning experiences of students, on the one hand, and with the techniques of teaching and educational purposes, on the other. In fact, the whole problem is linked up with our whole social philosophy. During the last ten years, our society has undergone various changes, both in the social and in the economic spheres, and it is undergoing further transformation. Has the educational system made any impact on the minds of students? Do we have a proper machinery to test those changes that have taken place in the minds of students? It is only when we can devise that machinery that the examination system can be more effective. It is not merely devising a sort of more precise instrument or better techniques, but it is linking it up with the whole reform of the educational system. It is in this broad perspective that this problem has to

be viewed. Otherwise, we shall be just tinkering with the problem.

After clarifying this issue with regard to the reform of examination, I would like to tell the House about the steps that the Ministry has recently taken in bringing about certain changes. I would like to tell the House that the Ministry has set up with a view to reform the examination system, as I have suggested, a sort of pilot examination unit under the All-India Council of Secondary Education. This unit is functioning at present in five regional centres, namely, Chandigarh, Calcutta, Allahabad, Madras and Baroda. And we have appointed five evaluation officers who are at present engaged in conducting workshops for teachers for orienting them into the new techniques of examinations and for preparing new tests. Now, these tests would not merely test acquisition of information in a particular subject but also find out whether the purposes of learning that that particular subject has in view have been fulfilled.

We have also sent ten trainees to Chicago for intensive training in these techniques, and when these people have returned, a full unit will start functioning, maybe, in July, 1958. The central office of the unit will be at Delhi, and it will co-ordinate and standardise the material prepared in different places. This, I think, is a very important step. And I do not envisage that within a year or two radical changes will be introduced. As I said in the beginning, it has to be a gradual process, and if it is to be linked up with our educational techniques and the educational purposes, certainly, changes cannot be brought about within a short time; it will take a long period. But this is the only way in which a right approach can be made. We have to train teachers; we have to change their outlook; we have to experiment with the new techniques and new methods and then devise a system which will suit our needs and our purposes.

I would also like to inform you that we have set up another unit recently at the Aligarh University under the guidance and assistance of the University Grants Commission. Besides this, the Ministry has financed several research projects on objective tests and examinations in a number of training colleges. Various reports have been published, and I am quite sure that some of these investigations made in these training colleges will make their contribution in evolving better and more scientific techniques. A school record card has also been prepared in the Central Institute of Education and has been circulated to all the interested institutions.

The State Governments are also seized of the problem, and they have taken various measures to bring about certain reforms. I have been informed that objective types of questions are included in question papers in certain subjects in Madras, Bombay, Kerala, Mysore, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi. The percentage of marks allowed to these types varies from fifteen to fifty in certain subjects.

15 hrs.

When these objective tests have been introduced, they will eliminate the subjective factor to a large extent, which vitiates the examination results. Now, school record cards are also used in schools in Madhya Pradesh. I am also glad to inform the House that the Secondary Schools Examination Board in Bihar has also set up an Examination Research Bureau, and the Government of Orissa is contemplating setting up a similar Bureau.

It will thus be clear that both the Central and the State Governments are fully seized of the problem and they want to tackle it in all its aspects, and not in the narrow aspect which has been suggested by my hon. friend.

In view of what I have said, I feel sure that the hon. Mover would not press his Resolution but would withdraw it.

Dr. Gohokar (Yeotmal): The hon. Minister has also shown that the present system of examination is defective. It puts a lot of emphasis on memorisation. I also think that this system should be changed and with that in view I had brought this Resolution before the House. My main objection to the present system of examination is that our courses for the final examination are very bulky. It is beyond the power of students in general to study the whole bulky courses; they are most unmanageable. That was why I wanted that the whole courses should be split up into units, and for that purpose I had given out a scheme last time. But now since the hon. Minister has given a promise to introduce certain changes in the present system of education, I would ask for leave of the House to withdraw my Resolution.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Shri Bibhuti Mishra is not present in the House. I shall have to put his amendment to vote.

The question is:

That for the original resolution, the following be substituted, namely:—

“This House is of opinion that a sub-Committee be constituted for devising methods of imparting education in various subjects in the country and for evolving a system for assessing the progress and merit of students as have received education through these methods and to submit its recommendations after fully examining the system of examinations prevalent in different countries of world.”

The motion was negatived.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Has the hon. the Mover the permission of the House to withdraw his Resolution?

Several Hon. Members: Yes.

The Resolution was, by leave, withdrawn.

RESOLUTION RE: MODIFICATION OF SERVICE RULES

Shri P. S. Daulta (Jhajjar): I beg to move:

“This House is of opinion that all Service Rules of the Government of India be examined by a joint committee of both Houses of Parliament in order to make recommendations to the appropriate authorities for modification and improvement of such Rules.”

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty (Basirhat): May I point out that none of the Ministers of Home Affairs is present?

Dr. K. L. Shrimali: I represent the Government.

Shri Narayanankutty Menon (Mukundapuram): He cannot.

Dr. K. L. Shrimali: The Home Minister is expected here in a few minutes.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Perhaps it was not expected that this Resolution would be reached so soon.

Dr. K. L. Shrimali: That is the position.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: We had arranged that we should continue with the present Bill some minutes beyond 15:00 hours. But then there was no hon. Member to speak. I hope the Whips will make arrangements for some representation.

Shri Rane (Buldana): I have already communicated to the Home Minister.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: He ought to be present.

Shri P. S. Daulta: I have come to know that many Members are interested in this Resolution, and very senior Members at that. They want to participate in its discussion. So I will confine myself at this stage only to a few points, of course reserving my right of reply.