

[Shri D. C. Sharma]

with them and they have done this to a friendly nation. Gratitude is not a political virtue and it may not be even a moral virtue in the 20th century. But what India has done to Britain should be remembered with gratitude and I think that these persons should be taken not in 15 years, or ten years but in one instalment. We should make this demand unitedly and firmly and if we did so I am sure the Government of Harold Wilson which is already crumbling and tottering and feeling insecure will come to terms with us sooner than is imagined.

18.07 HRS.

STATEMENT RE EXECUTION OF AFRICANS BY SOUTH RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT

THE PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY, MINISTER OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : Sir, I wanted to draw the attention of the House to an event elsewhere in Africa, in that part of the Continent which is still disfigured by racism. We have learnt with inexpressible horror that the South Rhodesian regime has perpetrated a heinous crime by executing three Africans. The world has followed their fate with great anxiety in the last few days. This monstrous deed of the white racist regime evokes our wrath and our condemnation. I am sure everyone in the House and the country will condemn this barbarous act and honour the name of the three African martyrs : James Dhlamini, Victor Mhlambo and Duly Shadreck.

SHRI NATH PAI (Rajapur) : I join the Prime Minister in paying our homage to these three brave men who, whatever the court in Southern Rhodesia may say, will be described as martyrs who died on the altar of the liberation of Africa.

This sad announcement has lent a new poignancy and perhaps helps us to focus our attention on the main issue of the motion before the House today.

It is vitally important that we should not allow legal niceties and economic considerations to cloud the main issue and it is necessary that we focus our attention on the major issue which this debate has raised.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to say that by this single piece of legislation—I am at a handicap because I cannot find adequate adjectives to convey both my anger and my sadness at what Wilson has tried to do, and because we are at a handicap since you could not have found a stronger epithet and adjective to convey the resentment that we feel, than have been employed in his own country by the remaining section of decency in Britain. The *London Times* called this in its editorial, "a shameless piece of legislation". Bishop Malien, an ex-Attorney-General, said that "we hang down our head in shame." I do not think stronger words can be used by us.

Mr. Chairman, I want to concentrate on the effect this piece of legislation rather than on its other aspects. Mr. Harold Wilson, by this single—

SHRI SWELL (Autonomous Districts) : Just one minute, Mr. Nath Pai. After what the Prime Minister has announced, we feel so overwhelmed that any debate on this question becomes unreal. May I request that you adjourn the House as a mark of sorrow and sympathy for those martyrs and we take up and discuss this subject afterwards?

AN HON. MEMBER : I suggest that we stand for one minute, in silence.

श्री शशिनूषण बाजपेयी (खारगोन) :
अध्यक्ष महोदय, एक मिनट हम लोग खामोश
खड़े हो सकते हैं।

SHRI NATH PAI : May I submit one thing. While we are all sympathy for those who have been executed, while paying our homage, we are bound by certain other decorums too. Normally, the House never adjourns except on the death of a head of State. While we deeply lament and mourn the death of these three martyrs, I would like to say this. It is not as if I am more concerned with the indictment against Mr.

Wilson, and not with the execution of these martyrs. But I thought we had a tradition which we follow for adjourning the House. But if the Prime Minister, the leader of the House, wants to indicate our sympathy by adjourning the House, we would not challenge it, nor do I think any of my colleagues would challenge it. But perhaps the *via media* would be, the appropriate thing would be, in the light of this strong feeling, the House may observe one minute's silence, if the leader of the House would agree, and then we can continue the debate.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : I think the sense of the House is that the House should stand in silence for one minute.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Yes.

The Members then stood in silence for a short while

18.12 Hrs.

MOTION RE STATEMENT ON COMMONWEALTH IMMIGRANTS BILL OF U.K.—*contd.*

SHRI NATH PAI (Rajapur) : Mr. Chairman, Dr. Swell was right. I was submitting that when he said that we all feel so overwhelmed, one began to grope for words, whatever one might have thought, because we thought that conventions were discarded in this flippant manner by the authorities in South Africa.

Mr. Wilson, by this single piece of legislation, has disowned what has been enshrined in the best traditions of Britain. By my anger at him is that the dream of generations of British socialists and of other countries—that of brotherhood, that of fraternity and of equality of men—has come to nought by a man who ascended to the Chief Minister's office in Britain in the name of socialism. I am constrained to say this, because I have had the honour of knowing him as a friend and when he was expelled from his party for, I think, a stand which he

had taken on behalf of the working classes of Britain, I had the honour of playing host to him. He then showed a tremendous knowledge about Indian problems. The last speech we then delivered together was in the Congress Hall in Berlin where the theme of the meeting was against exploitation, man by man, against the denial of justice by man to man, and against every vestige of colonialism. I have a feeling—what an irony it is—that a man who was inspiring generations of young socialists around the world to fight against the approach based on birth, race or colour—it was his basic mission to treat this with contempt—should be disgracing the statute-book of the United Kingdom by bringing a piece of legislation whose main inspiration is discrimination on the ground of colour. I am constrained and pained to say that Mr. Wilson has joined the dubious company of the Prime Minister of South Africa and Ian Smith of Rhodesia. Rhodesia's Prime Minister, Ian Smith, would have laughed—perhaps the heartiest laughter of his life—when he received Mr. Wilson's message that the three unfortunate freedom fighters should not have been executed. He must have said, "Mr. Wilson to advise me when Britain is beginning to be another replica where colour will be the discriminating factor?" It will be upto the British people to decide what form of Britain they want to create; we will not have that right. But there is something more vital. This is what Mr. Callaghan told the British House of Commons. This is an example of how a man can speak with the tongue in his cheek. He said :

"... a society which will be diverse in culture and will be equal before the law..."

Indeed equal, but as George Orwell said, whites will be more equal and the brownies and blackies will be second and third! In spite of this denial of basic justice and discrimination on the ground of colour, he has the cheek to tell the British Parliament that this is the law to perpetuate the law of equality in the U.K. He further tells something which