

Speech on the East India Bill Quotations

Writer: Edmund Burke | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Quick Reform: In these words, Burke calls for an urgent reform.

"It is now to be determined whether the three years of laborious parliamentary research, whether the twenty years of patient Indian suffering, are to produce a substantial reform in our Eastern administration."

Company Power and Oppression:

Here, the speaker asserts that no Indian can do anything without the permission of the company.

"Through all that vast extent of country there is not a man who eats a mouthful of rice but by permission of the East India Company."

Sold, Treachery:

This quote suggests that the company sells many Indian territories to profit and also betrays them all.

"There is not a single prince, state, or potentate, great or small, in India, with whom they have come into contact, whom they have not sold: I say sold, though sometimes they have not been able to deliver according to their bargain."

Intention of the Bill:

The primary purpose of this bill is to ensure the fundamental rights of the Indian people.

"This bill, and those connected with it, are intended to form the Magna Charta of Hindostan."

Breaking Promises:

The company is known for breaking treaties.

“Secondly, I say, that there is not a single treaty they have ever made, which they have not broken.”

Irony and Sarcasm:

Tartar was the enemy of India, so their attack is normal. But, the British authority claims them to be India's friend, though they have destroyed India entirely.

“The Tartar invasion was mischievous; but it is our protection that destroys India. It was their enmity, but it is our friendship.”

Begums of Oude:

The company even tortured women to gain profit.

“But the Company wanted money, and the old women must be guilty of a plot. They were accused of rebellion, and they were convicted of wealth.”

Moral Voice:

This line illustrates the depth of Burke's affection for India's people.

“Worse, far worse, has been the fact of the poor creatures of the natives of India, whom the hypocrisy of the Company has betrayed into complaint of oppression and discovery of peculation.”

Concerns about Responsibility:

The author says that they have given authority to the company to rule India but they still have the power to control the company.

“We sold, I admit, all that we had to sell; that is, our authority, not our control. We had not a right to make a market of our duties.”

Rich Figure of Speech:

This line is full of rhythm, repetition, and emotion.

“Crimes so convenient, crimes so politic, crimes so necessary, crimes so alleviating of distress, can never be wanting to those who use no process, and who produce no proofs.”

Cruelty of Power:

The company snatched power from the local princes and also turned their land into a desert.

“The unhappy prince was expelled, and his more unhappy country was enslaved and ruined; but not a rupee was acquired.”

Magna Carta:

Here, the speaker mocks the rules of the East India Company.

“The Magna Carta is a charter to restrain power and to destroy monopoly. The East India charter is a charter to establish monopoly, and to create power.”

A New Charter for India:

These lines emphasizes the Indian rights.

“Whatever the Great Charter, the Statute of Tallage, the Petition of Right, and the Declaration of Right, are to Great Britain, these bills are to the people of India.”