

all-India pool for distribution, or will they be allowed to distribute it themselves?

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** It will come for all-India distribution.

**Shri Sonavane:** On a point of order, Sir. We on this side have been trying to catch your eye, but it appears your eye is not on this side.

**Mr. Speaker:** I will consult my doctors this afternoon!

**Shri A. P. Jain:** Is it a fact that iron manufactured by the charcoal process, on account of its low coke content, is particularly suited for alloys and special steels; and Bhadravati being one of the works where the charcoal process is used is particularly suited for alloys and special steel manufacture and it should be given preference?

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** That is one of the reasons why Bhadravati Iron Works is being preferred for special steel.

**Mr. Speaker:** Shri Sonavane has got my ears now.

**Shri Sonavane:** I would like to know what is the demand for special steel in the country and whether this project would be able to meet it entirely.

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** Not this project alone; we have got the other Durgapur project. And, we have licenced a few in the private sector also, many of which, I find, are not likely to come through.

**Shri Dasappa:** May I know whether it is not a fact that the delegation composed of technicians has already left for West Germany to assess the project?

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** They have not already gone; they are in the process of proceeding.

## M. I. G. Deal

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Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:  
Shri P. K. Deo:  
Shri Narendra Singh Mahida:  
Shri S. M. Banerjee:  
Shri D. C. Sharma:  
Shri Rameshwar Tantia:  
Shri Prakash Vir Shastri:  
Shri P. C. Borooah:  
Shri Warrior:  
Shri Vasudevan Nair:  
Shri M. K. Kumaran:  
Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad:  
\*102. Shri Bhakt Darshan:  
Shri Hem Raj:  
Shri Sham Lal Saraf:  
Shri Nambiar:  
Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:  
Shri P. Venkatasubbaiah:  
Shri Sarjoo Pandey:  
Shri Yallamanda Reddy:  
Shrimati Maimoona Sultan:  
Shri Nath Pal:  
Shri Hem Barua:  
Shri Basumatari:  
Shri Yashpal Singh:

Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether arrangements for the purchase of MIGs or equivalent planes and manufacture of that type of aircraft have been finalised;

(b) whether Western countries have made any offers; and

(c) if so, the nature of the offers made?

**The Minister of Defence (Shri Krishna Menon):** (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Officers have been received from more than one source. They are under examination. It is not in the public interest to disclose the details.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** We find from various reports that there is considerable resistance from the western countries, particularly U.S.A. and the U.K. about the M.I.G.S. Even now our Ambassadors in USA in today's paper has said that the aid comes without grace. May I know

how far our deal is being influenced by the resentment from western countries and what are the reasons for such resentment and what is our reaction?

**Shri Krishna Menon:** It is not part of the question. (*Interruptions*).

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** What progress has been made in the question. Whether this progress has been retarded by the resentment from the western countries is also part of the question.

**Shri Krishna Menon:** I have been asked whether this question has been finalised; and I said, 'No'. I have also been asked whether other offers have been received. I said, this is under consideration and it is not desirable in public interest to give the details. (*Interruptions*).

**Mr. Speaker:** There is nothing further to know. But hon. Members want to know whether Government would be influenced by other extraneous things or pressures. That is all what they want to be assured.

**Shri Krishna Menon:** We are a sovereign country and a self-respecting people.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** May I know at what stage of consideration and processing this matter is and whether it is a fact that even the USSR is not now enthusiastic about this on the ground that we have not got technicians who will be able to manufacture this MIG and so will give a bad name to that country?

**Shri Krishna Menon:** The first part of the question comes under what I said as being not in public interest to disclose details. About the second part of the question, it is a Press canard as usual.

**Shri P. K. Deo:** In spite of the ideological difference between the USSR and the Peoples Republic of China, which seems to be a temporary one...

**Mr. Speaker:** There ought not to be any arguments. Arguments, inferen-

ces innuendoes, defamation, all those are to be avoided.

**Shri P. K. Deo:** May I know if the question of the supply of spare parts has been considered in case of any Sino-Indian dispute?

**Mr. Speaker:** How can this be put? When they go into it then we can ask for some assurance.

**Shri P. K. Deo:** This is the proper time to consider that.

**Shri Krishna Menon:** We are not negotiating with anybody for buying ideologies; we are negotiating for planes. (*Interruptions*).

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order. Shri Mahida.

**Shri Narendra Singh Mahida:** May I know whether any political issues are involved in buying these MIGs?

**Shri Krishna Menon:** No, Sir.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** I want to know when the team which has been sent to the Soviet Union for finalising this deal is likely to return.

**Mr. Speaker:** Why should it be considered? It may return a day earlier or later.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** The deal will be finalised after they return.

**Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad:** May I know whether it is a fact that after careful consideration and examination by our experts of the Air force it has been decided to go in for MIGs, on the ground of convenience and desirability, as compared with the Lightnings and other aircraft that have been offered to us?

**Shri Krishna Menon:** That again comes under what I said that it is not possible to disclose.

श्री प्रकाशवीर शास्त्री: प्रतिरक्षा मंत्रालय के एक विशेष अधिकारी जिन का कि नाम श्री भगवन्तम् है वह रूस इन्हीं मिग विमानों की खरीद के सम्बन्ध में गये हुए हैं तो क्या उन्होंने जाने से पहले यह निश्चय कर लिया

था कि जिन दूसरे देशों ने अपना प्रोजेक्ट मिग विमानों के सम्बन्ध में दिया है उन की अपेक्षा जहाँ वह जा रहे हैं वहाँ से यह सस्ते पड़ेंगे या हमारे देश के हित में रहेंगे ?

**Shri Krishna Menon:** All that comes under this category and I am not prepared to disclose it.

**Mr. Speaker:** The only question is whether before sending a team of officers or one officer it has been assured that there are no other planes that we can get cheaper from other countries?

**Shri Krishna Menon:** Government have made investigations which, in their best judgment they considered necessary for the purpose of making a selection. Going into any further details would be to express an opinion on comparative merits in this House.

**Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath:** Sir, on a point of order. You must have noticed in this House that the Treasury Benches and particularly some Ministers are too prone to seek cover under the convenient phrase 'public interest'. May I know who is the ultimate judge, you or the Minister, to decide what is public interest?

**Mr. Speaker:** It has been decided even before, I think, that the Minister has got that privilege to claim; he can say that he cannot disclose certain information in public interest. The Minister has got that privilege. But when it is apparent on the fact of it that the information ought to be given I do interfere, just as I did just now, and ask him the question that was being asked.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** I have a submission to make on the point of order raised and the observations made by you. The hon. Minister has said now something quite contrary to what he had stated in the speech which he made while discussing the Demands on Defence. The question which was asked by Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad was definitely answered by him in that debate. Now he says that it is not in public interest . . . (Interruptions).

**Mr. Speaker:** Shri Azad made perhaps the same point in his speech as he had done today. He had made a speech and got the answer that it was our right and we could go wherever we liked. I remember that. But if there is a contradiction then the hon. Members can write to me and I will write to the hon. Minister and then the records can be seen. How can I decide it just now? (Interruptions).

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** My submission is that the hon. Minister claims protection under 'public interest' on this occasion, and is, therefore, not prepared to disclose some information. But during the Defence debate he said that this was in the best interest of the country, this was the best plane available. How is it that we have gone back upon that? . . . (Interruptions).

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Members, must appreciate that after sometime we can have only recollections of what words were said at that time. Therefore, I cannot say just now without consulting the records what exactly has been said at that time, whether the same information is being withheld or there is something different. I would not be a safe guide for me to depend upon my memory so much as some other hon. friends perhaps do.

**Shri Priya Gupta:** I want to raise a point of order.

**Shri Ansar Harvani:** Sir, I want to raise a point of order.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order. When there is one point of order, how can I call another hon. Member for another point of order?

**Shri Priya Gupta:** My submission is,—

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it a submission or a point of order?

**Shri Priya Gupta:** It is a point of order. The point is this. When a Minister takes shelter by saying that the matter is one which cannot be disclosed in public interest, I want to know how much time is given

to him, and who is the authority to interpret whether it is in the public interest or not and whether he is correct in saying that it is in the public interest, once he takes shelter under it.

**Mr. Speaker:** I have given the answer to it.

**Shri Priya Gupta:** How long? Is it six months, or one year or two years?

**Mr. Speaker:** That depends upon the circumstances.

**Shri Priya Gupta:** Who is the authority, and when? Who is the authority to interpret it?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order. Perhaps the hon. Member himself, when he does not listen to me!

**Shri Ansar Harvani:** Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad said that some information was given to him in the course of the debate on the defence demands by the Defence Minister. Is it necessary that that information should be given again and again?

**Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad:** It was given to the House; not to me personally.

**Some Hon. Members rose—**

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** I want to have one point cleared.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order. The whole Question Hour is to be taken by points of order! I think I could put it to the House, that no point of order should be raised during Question Hour, because, every time when points of order are raised during the Question Hour, subsequently it is found that it is very seldom that there is really a point of order. I have found it so often. Perhaps, if the House agrees, I will ask that no point of order should be raised during the Question Hour.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** It cannot be decided like that in a rough-and-ready method, Sir. (*Interruption*).

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order. I would not have any objection to listening to the points of order and give decisions on them but I put it to the hon. Members: how this privilege, if I may be excused, it abused. (*Interruptions*).

**Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath:** Treasury Benches too are sometimes guilty.

**Mr. Speaker:** On this privilege of suspending every business, and putting the points of order. I have to suspend all business and listen to the points of order. If hon. Members want, I can calculate all these figures. It has been found that out of 100 instances there has been just one point which was really a point of order. (*Interruption*). Order, order. I do not want to take away that privileges of hon. Members, for there ought to be, I should say, greater responsibility also which should be felt by hon. Members. When there is really a point of order, it should be raised and not otherwise.

**Shri Priya Gupta:** We raise it only when there is need for it. We do not want to waste the time of the House.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** May I suggest one thing? If a point of order should be raised during the Question Hour, then at least the rule under which we raise the point of order may also be put in and then it should be allowed. Generally anybody gets up and asks anything during Question Hour. Instead of that, if a rule is quoted, on that basis, we can ask or raise a point and ask for your ruling. That would be a much better way of dealing with this.

**Mr. Speaker:** Shall we proceed with supplementaries now?

**Shri Tyagi:** Yes, Sir. (*Interruptions*).

**Shri Nambiar:** Let us proceed with the points. There is nothing wrong.

**Shri Tyagi:** I was anxious to know one thing, and that is, whether the hon. Minister, during his interview with the Russian emissaries or au-

thorities, has come to know if it is a fact that China has protested to the USSR against their deal for the MIG aircraft and the manufacture and completion of the MIG in India.

**Shri Krishna Menon:** I am not aware of anything. But that does not come under this question.

**Shri Raghunath Singh:** It is published in the papers.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** It is unfortunate that several mistakes are committed severally and the annoyance is visited upon me! I never wanted to make any submission by way of a point of order. All that I wanted to know is this. You were good enough to state that the Minister has got the right of saying that in the public interest he would not disclose it. Is this bare statement of his merely a subjective approach or is there anything objective left in the hands of the Speaker on this point? This is what I want to know.

**Mr. Speaker:** It has been raised many a time. I remember an instance when it was done in the presence of my predecessor. He had asked the Minister to show him the record in order that he may decide whether that privilege he claimed was really *bona fide* or based on those facts or not. But certainly, presumably in most cases, I have to take the statement of the Minister as it comes and allow him the privilege, unless there are special circumstances brought to my notice by the hon. Members.

**Shri Frank Anthony:** May I submit with great respect that if we have some kind of categorical ruling, it will make us functionless? You have been a distinguished Judge and you know that this kind of privilege is raised in the courts, but the courts never abdicate their right. You have an absolute right in a matter like this. The Defence Ministry is constantly putting this House in a position where it cannot function. When they claim

privilege particularly in a matter like this, you have an absolute right to call for the records and see whether the claim is anything more than an *ipse dixit*. Otherwise, any *ipse dixit* can be raised by any Minister and the House cannot get any information.

**Mr. Speaker:** The question has been raised earlier and I have already given my answer. The Question Hour is over.

**Shri M. L. Dwivedi:** 10 minutes have been taken by the points of order and the Question Hour may be extended by 10 minutes.

**Mr. Speaker:** Who has taken those 10 minutes?

#### \*SUPPLEMENTARIES ON SHORT NOTICE QUESTION No. 1

REGARDING CONTAMINATED FLOUR FROM U.S.A.

**Mr. Speaker:** Shri Mohan Swarup. He may put his supplementary on short notice question No. 1 answered yesterday.

**Shri Mohan Swarup:** In the statement, it has been said that the flour was received in four steamers at Calcutta Port, which brought about 70,000 bags, out of which only 4,000 bags were despatched to Darrang and Malda and the rest were despatched to Bihar and Orissa. May I know whether these consignments were brought at the Calcutta port at the same time and all the ships were unloaded at the same time?

**The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas):** I have stated in the reply that this flour which is alleged to have been contaminated has been received in four steamers. They brought in about 70,000 bags out of which 4,000 bags were despatched to Darrang and Malda districts. (*Interruptions*). Even with regard to those 4,000 bags, it is not established that