

propaganda as such, particularly in their anxiety not to violate the Tashkent spirit. However, they have naturally been taking steps to counteract any false propaganda carried on by Radio Pakistan. The A.I.R. broadcasts regular news commentaries and talks in various languages, analysing tendentious statements and false news publicized by Pakistan.

#### Atomic Engineering

744. Shri Samar Guha:  
Shri Sidheshwar Prasad:

Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) whether, apart from the issue of desirability of making nuclear weapons by India, Government consider it essential that India should not fall behind other countries in developing the technology of Atomic Engineering; and

(b) whether for keeping in the line of advancement in Atomic Engineering and for utilising blasting energy of atom for peaceful and constructive purposes, Government should ask the Atomic Energy Commission to undertake underground experimental work in fission of nuclear fuels that are available and processed in India?

The Minister of State in the Department of Atomic Energy (Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. We are determined not to lag behind in acquiring knowledge of science and technology for the utilisation of atomic energy for peaceful purposes. Consistent with this aim, the Atomic Energy Commission has constantly under review all aspects of experimental work.

#### Islamic Economic Bloc

745. Shri Bharaj Madhok:  
Shri Prakash Vir Shastri:  
Shri Raghuvir Singh Shastri:  
Shri D. C. Sharma:  
Shri Atam Das:  
Shri Bibhuti Mishra:

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan is planning to set up an Islamic

Economic Bloc consisting of Pakistan, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Jordan;

(b) whether the proposed economic bloc is to be followed by a military bloc of the same countries outside CENTO;

(c) whether Government have assessed the implications of the creation of such a bloc for the security of India; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken to counteract this new move of Pakistan?

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): (a) Reports have been received that Pakistan has called for cooperation and collaboration in the economic field among Muslim countries.

(b) While there has been some speculation about the formation of a military pact between Pakistan and certain countries of West Asia, Government have not been able to obtain confirmation of the formation of such a pact.

(c) and (d). The Government are watching the developments in this regard and suitable action is being taken.

#### Defence expenditure

746. Shri S. C. Jha: Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during the last fifteen years, India's per capita defence expenditure has been less than that of Pakistan on the whole; and

(b) if so, whether the recent American aid to Pakistan has increased Pakistan's per capita defence expenditure as compared to that of India's?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Defence (Shri B. K. Bhagat): (a) and (b). I much regret that no definite conclusion on this question can be stated in the absence of relevant accurate statistics about Pakistan. As