

(ix) REPORTED DROPPING OF TRANSMITTERS AND LEAFLETS THROUGH A BALOON IN GWALIOR ON 31-8-1981

SHRI N. K. SHEJWALKAR (Gwalior): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I give this notice to draw the attention of the Government, particularly the Home Minister, towards a serious incident of dropping transmitters and leaflets through a baloon in the city of Gwalior at about 11 p.m. on 31-8-81. The baloon dropped these transmitters and leaflets in the Chinese language in the locality named Gudri Mohala of old Gwalior town which is mostly a residential area of labourers. This sort of incident is a sort of warning and note should be taken of by the Government that foreign activities are still rampant in our Indian territory. Attempt should be made to find out what is the source of this mischief and in what manner it has been committed.

15.04 hrs.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL—Contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, further consideration of the following motion moved by Shri Veerendra Patil on the 31st August, 1981, namely:—

“That the Bill further to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, be taken into consideration.”

Shri Manoranjan Bhakta to continue his speech.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman and Nicobar Islands): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, Yesterday I was speaking about the scope of the Merchant Shipping Act, which, in fact, regulates the entire shipping in the country, including the training of seamen, training of officers, regulating the shipping rules etc. And, as I was stating yesterday, an Hon. Member from the other side was referring about the seamen's service conditions.

Sir, so far as the seamen's service conditions are concerned, it is already within the purview of the Merchant

Shipping Act. There is a system of CDC holders in respect of sea worthy vessels, which is registered under the Merchant Shipping Act, according to which any shipping company, co-operative or Government has to employ sea-men who have got valid CDC's. So, his apprehension that a co-operative society procuring a ship and running a vessel might create some problems in relation to sea-men is irrelevant.

Indian shipping has made considerable improvement after independence. Before independence, the shipping tonnage was only about 1 to 1.5 lakh tonnes. But today we have achieved 5.7 million GRT. Even then, Indian ships can carry only 32 per cent of our total cargo—in terms of imports and exports. Our shipping has got this much capability only. The improvement made in shipping is in the right direction. I have no doubt that in course of time things will improve further.

It is necessary to mention here that the Union Ministry of Shipping should again examine the matter and bring a comprehensive amending Bill before this House, because a number of other problems came up, which we could not anticipate. At the moment, we are having seamen's training at Calcutta and Bombay. Offices are maintained at these two places. There is a glut of sea-men in this country. Even after two years, sea-men are not getting any call. They are sitting idle. So, the Ministry has to go into this matter in depth and see how we can provide employment to these properly trained sea-men.

I can cite one example in this connection: from my constituency, viz. Andaman and Nicobar islands, every year eleven sea-men are to be trained under the Merchant Shipping Act. They are trained at Calcutta; and after that, their names are registered at the Calcutta Sea-men employment office. But more than two years have passed; and none of them has received the call. I have written to the Minister also, asking him to change their registration from Calcutta to Bombay.