

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVENTH AND HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHTH REPORTS ETC.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA (Tumkur): I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Public Accounts Committee:—

(1) Hundred and Twenty-seventh Report on Coffee Board.

(2) Hundred and Twenty-eighth Report on Action Taken on Forty-seventh Report of the Committee regarding Lost Property Offices.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY (Bombay North-East): Sir, which comes first the statement by Minister or Calling Attention?

STATEMENT RE: PRESS REPORTS THAT INDIA'S AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON APPEARED FOR GIVING EVIDENCE BEFORE A COMMITTEE OF U.S. CONGRESS

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): Honourable Members would have seen press reports in the Times of India on March 28 suggesting that our Ambassador in Washington had appeared before the Human Rights Sub-Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives. However, as our Ambassador has himself pointed out, no Ambassador can, or will, appear before a Committee of a foreign legislature. Our Ambassador has informed us that there has been no such meeting and he did not meet any Committee even informally. The Ambassador did meet informally, a few members of the Congress, together with some Congressional aides on the Capitol Hill on March 24. He was accompanied by some officials of the Embassy. Of the five Congressmen present, only one, Levine of California, belonged to the International Organisation and Human Rights Sub-Committee. The other Congressmen who met the Ambassador were Mr. Stephen Solarz, Mr. Ted Weiss, Mr. Mervyn Dymally and Mr. Croquette,

all belonging to the Foreign Relations Committee or its Asian and Pacific Relations Sub-Committee.

It is common practice in Washington for an Ambassador to meet Congressmen to discuss with them and give them background information as also factual account about matters of current interest. Our Ambassador has accordingly been meeting Congressmen informally, on appropriate occasions, to brief them about Indian policies and developments. For example, when the arms package to Pakistan was under discussion in the Congress, he discussed India's stand on the matter with Congressmen at Capitol Hill. Such informal discussions are also held sometimes when important official visitors come from India. As a matter of fact, we ourselves furnish background information in important issues to all our Ambassadors in order that they could have such discussions and report back to us the reactions of those with whom they hold such discussions.

At the meeting on the 24th March, the Ambassador gave the Congressmen present, a description of the historical background to the Assam problem, the developments that took place in Assam and the steps taken by the Government. Naturally, he also answered questions asked by Congressmen and Congressional aides.

A perfectly legitimate, normal and necessary activity by our Ambassador in Washington has appeared in the Times of India in a manner contrary to facts. I am, therefore, placing the facts before the House to obviate any speculation or doubt.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY (Calcutta South): Allow me two questions. You permit a discussion.

MR. SPEAKER: Just a minute. You will listen to me. If you have got anything, you give a notice for discussion.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: Will you allow a discussion?

MR. SPEAKER: Follow the normal practice. Now, Calling Attention, Shrimati Sukhbans Kaur, (Interruptions) According to rules come to me. I will place it before

the Business Advisory Committee. No question is allowed, no question can be asked after statements.

(Interruptions)**

Not allowed. You can get it under a discussion. Then you can refer to that and get clarification.

(Interruptions)**

Not allowed.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी (नई दिल्ली): क्या ऐसे मामलों पर बहस के अलावा और कोई रास्ता नहीं है ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय: मरे पास तो नहीं है।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी: दूसरे सदन में -----

MR. SPEAKER: No problem. Don't quote that. I am following our own rules. I am not going to budge.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी: आप इस मामले में एक्सपोज़ कर सकते हैं। लेकिन इस बारे में लम्बी बहस का ज़रूरत नहीं है। थोड़ी वलेंट्रीफिकेशन चाहिए।

MR. SPEAKER: I don't deviate from one principle; I don't deviate from the other one also.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: What is your principle?

MR. SPEAKER: My principle is to follow the rules.

(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing goes on record. Please sit down.

Shrimati Sukhbans Kaur.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: You won't allow this. We are the elected representatives of the people.

MR. SPEAKER: I am concerned with the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business, which the elected representatives have given me; they have given me the code and the rules. Nobody else has given.

(Interruptions)**

Please sit down. Nothing goes on record. Not allowed.

SHRI RATANSINH RAJDA: Mr. Rajda, you know the rules. Read the Book

and come to me. Under the rules, there is no problem. Out of the rule, there is problem.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: According to the rules, has any impropriety been committed or not?

MR. SPEAKER: There is no question. I know the rule. It is so simple.

SHRI RATANSINH RAJDA: The House would like to know whether diplomatic impropriety has been committed or not.

MR. SPEAKER: You can come to me for a discussion if you like. Come to me through the rule. That is all. It is so simple. I am always open to the rule. I follow the rules. You also follow the rules. (Interruptions) Please don't shout Shrimati Sukhbans Kaur.

12.20 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED INCREASE IN TERRORIST ACTIVITIES BY EXTREMIST, REACTIONARY ELEMENTS AND RELIGIOUS FANATICS DISTURBING PEACE IN PUNJAB,

SHRIMATI SUKHBANS KAUR: (Gurdaspur): I call the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The reported increase in terrorist activities by extremists, reactionary elements and religious fanatics disturbing the peace in Punjab by shooting innocent persons at different places, and states taken by Government against this menace, so as to preserve the unity and integrity of the country."

THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. C. SETHI): Sir, the Government has been deeply distressed and concerned on the recent incidents in Punjab and Chandigarh since 21st March, 1983. In these incidents two persons have died and thirteen persons were injured. the