

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals and of Planning and Social Welfare (Shri Raghu Ramiah): (a) to (c). Yes. Agreement has now been reached, in principle, with the Italian Government for obtaining credit to meet the cost towards the foreign exchange requirements of Barauni and Namrup (Expansion) Fertilizer Projects.

12.17 hrs.

RE. CALLING ATTENTION NOTICES

(Procedure)

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Shri S. M. Banerjee. He may refer to his Calling Attention Notice. Just one minute. After admitting the Calling Attention Notice about retrenchment; etc., I received another Calling Attention Notice yesterday evening. The present one was admitted two days ago. Yesterday evening, a large number of notices were received, and they referred to cooks, water-carriers and so on and so forth. There were a number of them. Dr. Melkote, I think, gave it, or somebody else gave it. Since I have admitted this two days ago, naturally, I could not add all those names to this. I would suggest they can give notice of a Short Notice Question. It is important. They may give notice of a Short Notice Question and then we may find out from the Minister.

Shri Hem Barua (Mangaldai): How can you say that, Sir? You know a Member can give notice of a Short Notice Question. When one such question was submitted, the Minister refused to accept it.

Mr. Speaker: Of course, it is the Minister's business to answer or not. Only yesterday evening, I got those notices and so I could not add those names to this. I am only helping them.

Shri A. B. Vajpayee (Balrampur): You may allow them to put supplementary questions.

Shri F. Venkatasubrahah (Nandyal): A half-hour discussion can be allowed instead of a Short Notice Question.

Mr. Speaker: I looked into the rules. A half-an-hour discussion arises out of an answer given to a question or something. Therefore, on a Calling Attention matter, a half-hour discussion does not arise. If a half-hour discussion is to be allowed later on, then that is a separate matter; but it cannot be on this Calling Attention Notice. That is what the rules say.

Shri M. B. Krishna (Peddapalli): Will you allow us to put some questions on it?

Mr. Speaker: There are about 50 of them. How can I help it? Therefore, I would suggest that a separate discussion would be better.

The Minister of Defense (Shri Swaran Singh): If the other questions are to be asked, I will appreciate if this can be taken up at 2.30, by which time I could get the material about the others also.

Mr. Speaker: We will finish this call attention. I am not taking that up now.

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): This calling attention notice was given by us and I wrote to you saying that 2,000 people are losing their job today. By now they must have lost their job. I have great regard for Dr. Melkote and others, but what they do should not result in creating rivalry. I would like to draw the attention of the minister to this fact that he has tried to boost up the most anaemic federation of the INTUC—the Indian National Defence Workers Federation—by mentioning its name in this statement. He has not got the courtesy to mention the name of our Federation which champions the cause of the workers. I hold the minister responsible for this sort of partiality.

Shri Thirumal Rao (Kakinada): Sir, he is casting aspersions on us. We are

not connected with any labour organisation. We are members of this House and we have a right to draw the attention of the Government through a calling attention notice. We have not done it at the instigation of any trade union. I request you to give due consideration to our notice also.

Mr. Speaker: I have already explained that this was received 2 days ago and I had put it down for today. The other one was received yesterday evening. How can I add their names? Some other method will have to be found by them.

12.22 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

PROPOSED RETRENCHMENT OF DEFENCE WORKERS

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): I call the attention of the Minister of Defence to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

"The proposed retrenchment of more than two thousand Defence workers in various Defence establishments at Delhi, Bangalore, Poona and other places from 1st June, 1967."

The Minister of Defence (Shri Swaran Singh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, a study was carried out by Army Headquarters in 1966 to re-examine the scales of non-combatants authorised in Army establishments. The Study Group made certain recommendations in order to rationalise the scales of non-combatants, taking into account the desirability of inculcating the spirit of self-help among combatants in the Indian Army. In the light of these recommendations, decisions were taken by Government, which involved inter alia, the abolition

of the post of water carriers and reduction in the scale of sweepers authorised in the establishments of Army Units and formations. These decisions were incorporated in Government orders issued on the 13th August 1966.

2. Representations were received by the Ministry of Defence in October 1966 from some Members of Parliament against the retrenchment of large numbers of non-combatants (un-enrolled) in accordance with the decisions mentioned above. After considering these representations, Government decided in November 1966 that further implementation of the orders issued in August 1966 should be postponed till the 31st March 1967, and that every effort should be made to absorb the surplus employees in available vacancies in the various Defence installations in unskilled categories of posts like those of mazdoors, chowkidars, etc. It was also decided that the personnel who had already been retrenched might be recalled to duty if they had not been re-employed elsewhere and were willing to come back to their original posts. Necessary instructions in this respect were issued on the 24th December 1966.

3. As a result of further discussions between the Defence Minister and the representatives of the Indian National Defence Workers Federation on the 28th March 1967, Government decided that the implementation of their orders of August 1966 should be held in abeyance for a further period of two months with effect from the 1st April 1967.

4. The original decision was also reviewed in consultation with Army Headquarters in April-May 1967 and the conclusion reached was that the measures authorised in August 1966 were appropriate and should stand.

5. As a result of the all-out efforts made since August 1966 to re-employ as many as possible of the 5,000 surplus employees in alternative jobs,