

12.17 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

(i) **STATEMENT OF SOME BHUTANESE DEFECTORS IN NEPAL**

Shri Swell (Assam—Autonomous districts): I call the attention of the Minister of External Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that a statement may be made thereon:—

“The passing of Bhutanese officials through Indian territory into Nepal and the statement made by them about the assassination of the former Bhutan Premier, Mr. Jigme Dorji and India’s interference in the internal affairs of Bhutan”.

The Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shrimati Lakshmi Menon): On the evening of December 5, Sarvashri Tangbi, Penjo, Rinchen Dorji and two other officers of Bhutan Government, who have fled Bhutan, issued a statement in Kathmandu making several totally false allegations about the policies and actions of the Government of India. Reports of this statement appeared in the Indian newspapers on the following morning. The allegations against the Government of India were false and without foundation that the Government thought is necessary to contradict them immediately.

With a view to exposing the falsity of these allegations, immediately, in the Press and the other media of public information, a simple, straightforward denial has had to be issued, during the daily briefing of the Press by the Government’s spokesman. In a statement in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha a few days earlier, I had placed before Parliament such facts pertaining to recent developments in Bhutan as were then in the possession of Government.

Tangbi and four other fugitives appear to have crossed into Nepal from West Bengal, a day or two before the arrival of H.M. the King of Bhutan in Calcutta from Switzerland on November 22, 1964, on his way back to his country. His Majesty had not requested the Government of India to intercept these officers or to apprehend them. The House will appreciate that, both, with Nepal and Bhutan we have long, open borders and the movement of Indians, the Nepalese and the Bhutanese across these borders is free from restrictions.

As was stated to the House earlier, these recent developments in Bhutan are of an internal character, and it is entirely for His Majesty the King of Bhutan to decide as to how he and his Government wish to deal with this situation. In view of the most friendly and cordial relations between our two countries, the Government of India will extend to H.M.’s Government of Bhutan such cooperation and assistance as they may request of us.

The Bhutanese officers now in Nepal have said that the Government of India knew all the true facts about the assassination of the late Jigme Dorji in April this year. Government fail to understand what is intended to be implied by this. The late Prime Minister of Bhutan, Shri Jigme Dorji, who had served his country loyally had made very valuable contribution in the strengthening of Indo-Bhutan relations. The tragic news of his assassination came as a great shock to the Government and people of India. At the time of this ghastly tragedy, we had offered all the assistance that the Government of Bhutan might need of us in helping to trace the culprits or in any other way. The Government of Bhutan considered their own resources adequate to meet the situation. As the House knows, investigations by Bhutanese authorities were followed by trials in Bhutan, which led to the

[Shrimati Lakshmi Menon]

execution of the then Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Brig. Chabda Namyagal Bahadur, and punishment of others involved in the heinous crime of Shri Jigme Dorji's assassination. After the assassination of the late Prime Minister, the Government of India continued to conduct business with and lend their full co-operation to the new acting Prime Minister of Bhutan, Shri Lhendup Dorji, whom His Majesty had been pleased to entrust with responsibility for the country's administration.

To suggest, as has been suggested in the statement issued by the Bhutanese defectors, that the Government of India desired or attempted, at any time, to create misunderstanding between the King of Bhutan and the Dorji family is a mischievous and deliberate perversion of the truth. Till such time as the King was pleased to retain Shri Lhendup Dorji as his Acting Prime Minister, the Government of India worked in close co-operation with and extended the fullest measure of assistance to him. This was acknowledged by Shri Lhendup Dorji himself.

These officers have alleged that India has in some way been behind the so-called upheavals in Bhutan since 1961. The house has followed with interest the course of Indo-Bhutan relations since 1961 and earlier. So far as the Government of India are aware, but for the most tragic and unfortunate assassination of Shri Jigme Dorji there has been no trouble in Bhutan. Perhaps, the most significant event of these years was the formulation of Bhutan's development plan, which we undertook to finance, at the request of and with the approval of the King, and the then Prime Minister of Bhutan, Shri Jigme Dorji, and the Government of Bhutan as a whole.

Bhutan has made steady progress during these years. All that the Government of India desire is that Bhutan should be a strong and prosperous country. His Majesty, the

King of Bhutan is anxious to achieve rapid economic and social advancement of Bhutan and, as I said the other day, the Government of India remain anxious and committed to give all possible assistance and co-operation to Bhutan in this task.

Our relations with Bhutan are regulated by the Treaty which we entered into with that country in 1949. By this Treaty, the Government of India have undertaken to "exercise no interference in the internal administration of Bhutan", and the Government of Bhutan has agreed to be guided by the advice of the Government of India in regard to its external relations. Both Governments continue to adhere fully and faithfully to this Treaty. For any one to suggest anything to the contrary can only be termed a nefarious attempt to create misunderstanding between us and the Government of our friendly neighbour, Bhutan. His Majesty, the King of Bhutan and the Government of India confidently believe that these attempts will end in failure.

Shri Swell: It has been reported that these shocking and scandalising allegations by these Bhutanese fugitives in Kathmandu have been given wide publicity in the Nepal official news agency and the Nepal Government controlled radio, and a spokesman of the Nepal External Affairs Ministry had stated that the fugitives were welcome to stay in Nepal as long as they desired to stay. In view of this, would not the Government consider that this attitude of the Nepal Government would lend substance to the allegations of these fugitives that we have bungled in our relations with the Himalayan States in such a manner as to give rise to apprehensions that we were treating them like protectorates, and have Government taken up the matter with the Nepal Government, and has the Nepal Government given its reaction?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: All the assumptions of the hon. Member are wrong.

Shri Swell: Have you taken it up with the Nepal Government?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: When the assumption is wrong.....

Shri Swell: It is not an assumption. It has been reported in the papers. This blanket denial of everything is not going to solve any problem.

Shri Kapur Singh: To stabilise the conditions and affairs of our Himalayan borders with a view to obviate the complications of the sort that have recently arisen with reference to Bhutan, do Government propose to strive for a federated Himalayan region comprising of Sikkim, Bhutan, Nepal and Tibet.... (Interruptions). It is not a matter for laughter.

Mr. Speaker: Government will consider this..... (Interruptions). When we are dealing with questions relating to these parts, we ought to be very discreet. It is a delicate relationship that we have got and Members should exercise some restraint.....

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath (Hoshangabad): But also vigilance.

Mr. Speaker: I repeat his words: Government should be vigilant and careful.

Shri Solanki (Kaira): May I know whether these Bhutanese officials have made these false allegations inspired by some outside agencies and have we cleared the misunderstanding that has been created with the Bhutan Government?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: I am not aware of any outside influence or any outsider involved in it.

Mr. Speaker: Have we cleared that misunderstanding?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: The denial itself is the clearance of the misunderstanding.

Mr. Speaker: Before the statement had been made here today have the Government learnt of it and have any attempts been made to clear it?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: Various allegations have been made and we have issued a flat denial.

श्री हुकम चन्द कछवाय (देवास) :
मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो भटान के अधि-
कारी भारत हो कर गये थे क्या उन लोगों
ने हमारी सरकार से भारत की सीमा मे
हो कर उधर जाने की इ जाजत मांग ली थी ।
यदि नहीं, तो कोई भी विदेशी भारत की
सीमा से हो कर जाये तो क्या यह हमारी
सरकार की अकर्मण्यता नहीं है ।

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: The hon. Member did not listen to my statement. There are open borders between Nepal and India.

Shri Hem Barua (Gauhati): In view of the arrest of some Chinese by the Bhutanese Government on grounds of alleged involvement in the political feud in Bhutan and in view of the virulent anti-Indian statement made by the fugitives in Nepal and in view of its pro-Chinese slant, may I know if our Government had tried to ascertain from the Bhutanese Government about the depth and dimension of involvement of the Chinese in this political feud?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: Certain facts mentioned by the hon. Member are internal affairs—the arrest of the Chinese and other things.

Shri Hem Barua: Not that. On the face of it they may be internal matters but because our security is threatened on account of this involvement of the Chinese in the political feud in Bhutan we are interested. Therefore, to brush aside the question saying that it is an internal

[Shri Hem Barua]

matter would not satisfy us nor would it satisfy you, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: The only question was whether the Government has tried to find out from the Bhutan Government whether they suspect that there is Chinese hand behind all the trouble that has been created. Am I right?

Shri Hem Barua: I did not hear.

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: No, Sir.

Shri Nath Pai (Rajapur): In reply to a question by me last week on the same subject-matter, the hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs stated that the developments were a storm in a tea-cup which were not to be associated with any adventure, sinister and dangerous. But here, the statement clearly tells us that it is something much more sinister and dangerous for this country than what happens in a tea-cup. It is a storm that is brewing. And there.....

Mr Speaker: Order, order.

Shri Nath Pai: Sir, this has to be linked up, because the whole purpose of asking a question is to get the information. As the Government shows such a kind of under-estimate of the developments, there is a link-up. May I, therefore ask (a) whether it will be sufficient for us to declare in this House that the allegations made by the fugitive officials that India is trying to convert Bhutan into a protectorate is not correct, and that India is not interfering in anyway and that matter is purely a feud between two leading families—whether the declaration of protest to this effect by India is enough, or, whether the Government of India within the treaty terms is advising the King himself so that Pakistan and China do not get a handle to carry on propaganda against India and (b) may I also know whether because of our cordial rela-

tions with Nepal, Nepal soil is not used for anti-Indian activity and anti-Indian propaganda?

Shri D. C. Sharma (Gurdaspur): Sir, on a point of order. The point of order is, is it a question.

Mr. Speaker: So far as I was allowing it, it can be presumed that it is a question.

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: So far as the latter part of the question is concerned—whether we are going to take it up with Nepal, etc.—that matter is under consideration.

Shri Nath Pai: The first part of my question is equally important, Sir; whether it is sufficient for us to protest in this House; What we are concerned with is whether the protest should not come from the King of Bhutan himself.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Atomic Energy (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri): We will certainly take it up with the Bhutan Government. As we know the attitude of the King of Bhutan, I have no doubt that he does not subscribe to the views expressed by these gentlemen in Nepal.

Shri P. R. Chakraverti (Dhanbad): May I know whether Government has information corroborating the press report that these Bhutanese have already contacted China through the Chinese embassy in Pakistan?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: We have no information.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: It is a fact that since the Bhutanese officers, civil and military, fled their country there has been an increasing movement or exodus of Bhutanese people from Bhutan into Indian territory—into West Bengal—and is it a fact that either the Union Government has

alerted the West Bengal Government about this matter or the West Bengal Government has alerted the border police about this movement and, if so, whether the position inside Bhutan is getting more serious?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: If any such movement which the hon. Member mentions comes to the notice of the Government, the border police will be alerted. At the moment, there is no such movement which the hon. Member fears.

Shri Hem Barua: The Assam Government has done it, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: Very good; that information is conveyed!

12.34 hrs.

PAPER LAID ON THE TABLE

ANNUAL REPORT OF OIL AND NATURAL GAS COMMISSION

The Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals (Shri Humayun Kabir): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of Annual Report of the Oil and Natural Gas Commission for the year 1963-64, under sub-section (3) of section 23 of the Oil and Natural Gas Commission Act, 1959. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-3575/64].

12.34½ hrs.

DEMANDS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS (RAILWAYS), 1964-65

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways (Dr. Ram Subhag Singh): I beg to present a statement showing Supplementary Demands for Grants in respect of the Budget (Railways) for 1964-65.

12.34-3/4 hrs.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

FIFTY-THIRD REPORT

Shri Krishnamoorthy Rao (Shimoga)
I beg to present the Fifty-third Re-

port of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I am sorry to observe that there are some Members who must either be on their legs or must be talking when they are sitting!

12.35 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO U.K.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Atomic Energy (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri): In response to an invitation from the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Mr. Harold Wilson, I visited London from 3rd to 6th December, 1964. The period of my stay in the U.K. had necessarily to be brief but the visit was indeed useful.

Before my meetings with the U.K. Premier and other Ministers, I was happy to have had an opportunity of meeting Her Majesty the Queen.

A wide range of subjects came up for discussion during my meetings with Mr. Harold Wilson and several of his Cabinet colleagues. We exchanged views fully and frankly in a friendly and informal atmosphere.

There was no formal agenda for discussions. However, some of the topics on which there was an exchange of views, were as follows:

(i) The complex international situation as seen from Delhi and London, particularly the difficult situations in South East Asia, South Asia and Africa.

(ii) Problems of peace, disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, United Nations, the proposal regarding the multi-lateral force, freedom for the remaining colonies and programmes of assistance to developing countries.

(iii) Balance of payment problem of the U.K.