

Commonwealth Conference

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*64. SHRI AMAR ROY

PRADHAN :-

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER
JAIN :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Prime Minister of India had attended the Commonwealth Conference held recently ; and

(b) if so, the outcome of that conference ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The exchange of views held in a free and frank atmosphere led to a better understanding of problems confronting the international community in general and the Commonwealth countries in particular. The conference expressed its concern about "the slide from detente to confrontation, mounting tension between the Super Powers and the build-up of nuclear arms threatening the very survival of mankind." The conference also devoted considerable attention to the North-South dialogue and in this regard the Commonwealth Heads of Government issued the Melbourne Declaration. This recognised the importance of carrying forward the political commitments reflected in the Declaration into areas of practical action. In the Declaration Heads of Government also expressed their determination to help the international community to usher in a new era in constructive economic relations between developed and developing countries.

There was general agreement at the Conference that the international community should return to the

path of detente and disarmament. The conference also recognised the significant role which non-aligned countries have been able to play in world affairs. Among the other achievements of the conference was the support for an early settlement of the Namibian question on the basis of the UN Resolution 435 and the reaffirmation of the Gleneagles Agreement on sports contacts.

The Melbourne Conference also reviewed the technical and economic cooperation amongst the Commonwealth Members. Finally, it may be added that the next meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government will take place in New Delhi towards the end of 1983.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : At the outset, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister for taking the trouble of preparing such a lengthy reply. Perhaps, Sir, you know, just before the Melbourne Conference, what were the burning questions before India regarding international situation. I think, you will agree with me that the first and foremost question which struck Indian people's mind was the US arms supply to Pakistan, particularly, F-16 fighter aircraft and, secondly, the presence of US nuclear armaments in the Indian Ocean intensively, ignoring the United Nations resolution declaring Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. So, I would like to know what are the reasons and the Government of India failed to bring out the resolution to condemn U.S.A. in Commonwealth Conference.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHARAO : The answer to the first question is that at Commonwealth Conferences, bilateral issues are not discussed. They are not debated and nothing appears in the Communique as a consequence.

On the Indian Ocean issue, the general deterioration of the security environment has been referred to in the Communique. There has been no particular reference to a particular area. So many areas have been referred to in the Communique. There are any number of areas, zones of peace etc. You see, for instance, Para 26 :

“Heads of Government noted the trend inherent in the call for the States and the various regions represented in the Commonwealth for the creation of zones of peace in their respective regions.”

So, this matter has been covered. It was not possible to mention any area with particular reference because the Commonwealth consists of 45 countries and so many regions are involved. Therefore, no separate mention was made of each region but a cumulative paragraph like the one mentioned has been inserted.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: If we go through the reply, we find reference to the Namibian question and the Melbourne Declaration. All these are jugglery of sweet-sounding words only. I find no justification then why the Government of India objected to the readmission of Pakistan in Commonwealth.

At the Melbourne Commonwealth Conference, 41 countries including India were unanimous on withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan. But, in the last Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference, which was held in Delhi, there was no mention even of foreign troops in Afghanistan. I would, therefore, like to know whether there is a departure in the foreign policy of the Government of India regarding Afghanistan.

I would like to know whether the Government of India intends to quit the Commonwealth.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: In fact, I omitted to inform the Hon. Member that the Indian Ocean also has been mentioned in Para 32 and the formulation is one which is in line with our own formulation.

In regard to Afghanistan and Kampuchea, South-East Asia, I may inform the House that what has been formulated here is in line with the consensus of the Foreign Ministers of non-aligned countries arrived at in the Commonwealth Conference held in New Delhi. There may be small variations but, in the main, it is the same line.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: I would like to know whether there is a departure or not.

श्री वृद्धि चंद्र जैन : अध्यक्ष महोदय, वैंस्टन कण्ट्रीज़ की जो ट्रेड एण्ड प्रोटेक्शनिज़्म की नीति है, उस नीति को लाने में इस कांफ्रेंस को किस प्रकार की सफलता मिली ?

श्री पी० वी० नरसिंह राव : अध्यक्ष महोदय, इस मामले में भी पूरा-पूरा इसमें उल्लेख हुआ है। यहाँ तक यह बात भी की गई कि कॉमन-वेल्थ वाले देशों के कुछ विशेषज्ञ मिल कर इस बात का पता लगायें, छानबीन करें, कि इस प्रोटेक्शनिज़्म की नीति के कारण विकासशील देशों का कितना नुकसान हो रहा है।

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: You know that leaders of Khalistan movement are using another Commonwealth country, that is, Canada, to attack the unity and integrity of our country. May I know whether the Prime Minister discussed this issue in the Commonwealth Conference and expressed her resentment on that because they are citizens of Canada, whether it was discussed and what was the outcome of that.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO :

This matter has been taken up with the Canadian Government by our Government. I have answered several questions on this. The hon. Member may please refer to those answers.

SHRI BHERAVADAN K. GADHAVI :

During the Janata Party rule, India's prestige in the international forum had greatly diminished. May I know whether it is a fact that, with our Prime Minister's visit to this conference and to other countries, India's viewpoints on different problems have been more cogently emphasized and explained to the other countries and that the response is much better now?

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO :

Yes, Sir; that was the purpose of the visit; that was the purpose of our participation in the Commonwealth and other Conferences.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT :

I would like to congratulate our Prime Minister for the leading and positive role which she played in the Commonwealth Conference. I would like to know whether it is a fact that, though there were differences in approaches on certain issues, yet, because of the political wisdom shown by the various Heads of Departments and the leading role played by our Prime Minister, the Prime Minister of Australia and others who emphasized the importance of common approaches on matters of common interest, a common thinking could be achieved which, to an extent, helped the developing nations at the Cancun Conference also.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO :

Yes, Sir. Nobody pretends that there were no differences on any issue. But the differences were ironed out in such a way that the Communiqué represents the largest measure of agreement among these countries. This had its own impact and its own impetus on the subsequent Conference at Cancun also.

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL

KOCHAK : The outcome of the Commonwealth Conference is dependent on securing global negotiations. Sensing the attitude of big powers demonstrated in Cancun Summit Conference towards developing countries, is it possible to gain success in global negotiations?

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO :

No one can make any correct prognosis. What I can submit to the House is that, as a result of the Cancun Conference; .. In fact, we are going to the next question; I am answering a question in regard to the Cancun Conference—there has been some forward movement although it cannot be measured, it cannot be really assessed at this moment; we are awaiting the results of the discussions that are going on at the U.N. at the moment.

श्री मार खण्डे राय : विदेश मंत्री

जी इस बात को बतायें—भारत की इस राष्ट्रीय भावना का ख्याल कर के कि 1929 में लाहौर के कांग्रेस अधिवेशन में एक प्रस्ताव पास किया गया था कि हमारी आजादी का मतलब होगा कि ब्रिटिश लिक को हम समाप्त कर देंगे, उस बात को ध्यान में रख कर क्या प्रधान मंत्री जी ने किसी स्टेज पर इस बात की चर्चा ब्रिटिश प्राइम मिनिस्टर से की कि भारत अब कामन-वेल्थ से अलग होना चाहता है ?

श्री पी० वी० नर सिंह राव : उस

वक्त उद्देश्य यह था कि ब्रिटिश सरकार से जो हमारा साम्राज्यवादी लिक है, उस का विच्छेद होना चाहिए और वह हो चुका है। कामन-वेल्थ सार्वभौम राष्ट्रों की एक बैठक है, उन का एक सम्मेलन है, इस में ऐसा कोई प्रश्न नहीं उठता है।