

**SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA:** Will the hon. Minister kindly let us know the time when this team to the Antarctica completed its work? (*Interruptions*) I want to know when the voyage of the team was concluded. I want to know also the distance covered. I want to know the entire time taken by this team to complete its voyage.

**SHRI C. P. N. SINGH:** The team left Goa on the 6th December and reached the Antarctica on the 9th January, 1982 and they have come back to Goa on the 21st of this month.

**PROF. SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY:** We are all happy about this brilliant achievement of our scientists, technologists and other persons who are involved. In this connection, I would like to ask one question. Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the press reports which have appeared in the U.S.A. where they have questioned not only our right, but, they have imputed some bad motives and political motives also? I want to know the reaction of the Government of India to those reports which appeared in the Press in the United States of America.

**SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI:** There is no political motive in the sense that they probably insinuated. The political motive is the interest of India. It is in the interest of India to see what greater knowledge and information we can get about the monsoon and other climate conditions.

As I said in reply to another question, we do not subscribe to the view that only a few rich countries have the right to such uninhabited and other places. I think we, and other countries have equal rights.

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:** The team richly deserves the accolades that were received both nationally and internationally.

I would like to know from the hon. Prime Minister, how soon guidelines

would be formulated for any follow-up action that would take place? Specifically, a number of countries who have achieved this enormous and courageous task have set up permanent manned stations in the Antarctica. Is the Government of India contemplating such a move? If not, would this be considered?

**SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI:** I think it is too early to give any definite answer to this question. Naturally, all these matters will be considered.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Next question: Shri R. L. Bhatia.

**PROF. N. G. RANGA:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have a supplementary on this,— a very important one.

My hon. friend just now said that those who are parties to this Treaty possess the right of veto. Who gave them this right to veto, Sir? Would not the Government consider the advisability of appealing to all the nations, as well as the rest of the countries and nations also, to hand over whatever their interests may be, to the United Nations, instead of leaving all these things to a few signatories of this wonderful treaty?

**SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI:** I think that they have given to themselves the right of veto. But, as I said, if we can show some substantive research, we also can become a member and perhaps exert some pressure.

#### **UNESCO study on British news Media's Connivance with British Intelligence Service**

\*45. **SHRI R. L. BHATIA:** Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item appearing in the 'Times of India' dated 21 December, 1981 to the effect that a study sponsored by UNESCO has

revealed that British newspapers and news agencies connived with British Intelligence Service to run front news agencies in India which in fact were facades for intelligence service and such organizations worked in India as late as seventies;

(b) if so, the names of the news agencies that worked as spy organizations in India during the said period; and

(c) whether Government have made sure that the foreign news agencies operating in India are still not indulging in such activities and if so, Government's findings in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI NIHAR RANJAN LASKAR):  
(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It is not in the public interest to discuss such sensitive matters affecting national security and friendly relations with foreign countries.

(c) Government is maintaining a continuing vigilance to safeguard national security, and sustained efforts are made to detect unearth and take other necessary action against any attempts at espionage, subversion etc. Accreditation facility is given to foreign news agencies, news papers etc. only after due verification of their bonafides and suitable action is taken in cases where the correspondent concerned is found to be indulging in activities other than those of a purely journalistic nature.

SHRI R. L. BHATIA: Before I put my question, I would like to have an explanation for the reply given. In reply to my first question, the answer given by the Minister is "Yes, Sir." My question has two parts, the first one is regarding the news appearing in the press and the second part is regarding the British News Agency working and functioning in India in league with the Intelligence Services. Now, I want to know to which part of the

question you have answered "Yes, Sir."

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN LASKAR:  
Part (a) of the question.

SHRI R. L. BHATIA: Then the second part of my question regarding the British News Agencies functioning in India in league with the espionage agencies, has not been answered.

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN LASKAR:  
I will clarify the position.

SHRI R. L. BHATIA: Sir, he has not read my question fully. I will read out the question.

"(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item appearing in the 'Times of India' dated 21 December, 1981 to the effect that a study sponsored by UNESCO has revealed that British newspapers and news agencies connived with British Intelligence Service to run front news agencies in India which in fact were facades for intelligence service".

Now, in your answer, you have said "Yes, Sir."

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN LASKAR:  
Yes, this report we have seen. I can only say that this particular news item appeared in 'Times of India' dated 21-12-81 and again it was borrowed by them from 'The Guardian' dated 18-12-1981. It is reported that Richard Fletcher had been commissioned by the UNESCO to carry out research on the media. This particular report of the UNESCO has not come to us yet and as and when we get this report I can assure the hon'able Member that Government is bound to take notice of it and take appropriate action.

SHRI R. L. BHATIA: A study by the UNESCO has a very revealing information that during the last war, the British News Agencies were functioning as part of espionage system. One of these agencies was functioning in India also. They have said it in

their report and then this matter was discussed in the British Press. Some of the high authorities whose name was associated with it have openly said that they feel proud of it. It is the patriotic function that they have been doing and here what you have said in your reply is "it is not in the public interest to discuss such sensitive matters....". What has been discussed in the British Press, why has it become secret? I would like to know from the hon. Minister why he is not coming out with the names of the agencies. Even the names of those agencies have been mentioned in the press. The news agencies concerned were the Arab News Agency, NAFEN and Globe News Agency. One such agency, Arab News Agency, was taken over by the 'Reuters' in India and I would like to know from the hon. Minister when NAFEN (Asia) was established in India and what links with the Reuters it had.

MR. SPEAKER: You want to take the cat out of the bag.

SHRI R. L. BHATIA: How many Offices has it got in India and did it get the patronage of the British secret service?

SHRI NIHAR RANJAN LASKAR: I can again tell the hon. Member that we are aware of the news item. We have not yet received the report of the UNESCO. As and when the report is published, we would look into the various aspects of the report. Unless it comes to us, we cannot say anything in this matter.

SHRI R. L. BHATIA: In his reply he says that it is not in the public interest to discuss such sensitive matters affecting national security and friendly relations with foreign countries. Now, he says that he did not get that report. Which part of the answer is correct?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI-MATI INDIRA GANDHI): Sir, both parts are correct. But I think I

should draw the hon. Member's attention that if this happened during war-time, it is true that not only the British but all big countries were using such people for Intelligence purposes as well. It is not a secret or hidden mystery; it is well-known that such things were done in the Second World War. Books have appeared on this subject.

SHRI R. L. BHATIA: It is still continuing even after the War. That is my question.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: It is in answer to that question that my colleague has said that he has not seen the actual report and that he has only seen a report of the report. So we had better wait for the real thing and then decide what to do about it.

SHRI R. L. BHATIA: I want to know whether any other news agencies were connected or associated with this news agency. (*Interruption*)

#### Harijans being killed in villages

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\*46. SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH:

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOU-DHURY:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that large number of Harijans are being killed in villages in various parts of the country; and

(b) if so, whether Union Government have taken steps to set up special cells which will provide protection to these people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI NIHAR RANJAN LASKAR): (a) Recently there have been some unfortunate incidents of gruesome killings of Harijans in the States of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.