

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(Part II—Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

OFFICIAL REPORT

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HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Wednesday, 28th April, 1954

The House met at a Quarter Past
Eight of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(See Part I)

9-07 A.M.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCEFIRING BY FRENCH INDIAN POLICE ON
INDIAN UNION SUBJECTS NEAR MAHE

Mr. Speaker: I have received two different notices under Rule 215 calling attention of the Prime Minister in respect of one subject, namely, "the firing by the French Indian Police on a party of Indians proceeding at Chiru Kalia inside the Indian territory on the morning of the 27th April and also the reported repeated violation of Indian territory by the French officials from Mahe."

I am sending them for facts to the Ministry concerned.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

FIRING BY FRENCH INDIAN POLICE ON
INDIAN UNION SUBJECTS NEAR MAHE

Mr. Speaker: The other is a notice for the adjournment of the business of the House to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, namely, "the serious situation created as a result:

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of the action of the French police at Mahe in violating the territorial sovereignty of the Indian Union and opening fire on pro-merger demonstrators in the Indian Union territory on the 27th April, 1954, at Cheru Kalia enclave near Mahe, resulting in the death of Shri P. P. Anandan, an Indian national, and injuries to several others."

The motion is, of course, of an important nature. But, I do not know what facts it would be possible for the House to discuss. I should therefore like to have a verification of these facts and for that purpose I think I should keep over the motion till we get from the hon. Minister a statement in response to the notice under rule 215. After this is got, I would consider whether the motion is to be admitted or not.

Shri Punnoose (Alleppey): Am I to understand that the Minister is not in possession of the facts? This happened on the 27th and he may be able to give us some information now and here.

Mr. Speaker: I do not think it can be done now. There are Press reports and I do not think we can be guided by Press reports. They do say things which are fairly true. But Press reports sometimes give an impression from hearsay. Let us have authoritative information on the matter. The Minister will contact the Indian authorities on that side.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee (Calcutta North-East): May I submit that under rule 77 there are certain restrictions in regard to adjournment motions being admitted. If this motion does not come within the mischief of these

[Shri H. N. Mukerjee]

restrictions, if this motion happens to be in order, our purpose will be served if you admit this motion and, if the Government has no objection, a date may be fixed by which time the authoritative information may be secured from the proper sources. The matter is very important and the rules require immediate notice and it becomes necessary for us to depend on Press reports. But, we are quite ready to accept your ruling. If you fix some time after asking the Government if they have no objection, then we can have a real discussion on the matter which is really agitating the public mind.

Mr. Speaker: As I have already stated, the matter is an important one. But, before I proceed further, I should like to correct one mis-impression in the mind of the hon. Member who has demanded my attention to a particular rule. He said, 'the mischief of the limitations'. The limitations are for safeguarding and ensuring a proper discussion in the House. There is no mischief. The mischief is the other way.

As regards the procedure he suggests, the hon. Member will be pleased to see that I have not ruled the motion out. I have deferred my ruling with a view to have full facts. The procedure that he wishes me to adopt is putting the cart before the horse. He says that I should admit the motion first and then ascertain the facts. On the other hand, I should ascertain the facts first and see how far the motion is admissible, and that opportunity is given to us by the notice calling attention under rule 215 to this particular incident and I am sure the Minister will make a statement. After all, there is no charm in admitting a motion and then having admitted it to search for the facts on which we can base our judgment and on which we can have a discussion. It is all based on a Press message. I do not mean to ignore the Press message. We are not sure as to whether it was really Indian territory, what were the circumstances under which the incident happened, what

were the true facts of it and all that without reference to some authoritative statement which can be relied upon. Let us not go merely by reports or hearsay. That is the position.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi (Nellore): May I request you to let us know within what time the information will be available?

Mr. Speaker: As early as possible. The hon. Member will see that the situation so far as the French territories and Portuguese territories are concerned, is developing from day to day in such proportions as are increasingly having a tempo. It is not possible to keep in touch from day to day and it is not possible to have adjournment motions on a continuing situation from day to day. Some time will be taken necessarily for gathering information, and I think Government will themselves be keen on giving the information to the House as early as possible. I do not think that Government feel no concern about it, and I believe they have as much concern as any hon. Member of the House, irrespective of Party affiliations, and will be keen on giving the information to the House.

The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Shri Anil K. Chanda): It is only a quarter of an hour ago that I received these two notices, and I am asking the Ministry to telegraphically ask our Consul-General in Pondicherry and also the Madras Government to supply us detailed information as early as possible, and I should think that in the course of the next two or three days we shall have a full report on the incident that occurred.

Shri Punnose: In this context, may I bring it to your notice that seven days ago, when the first firing took place, we gave notice of the incident, but nothing has happened?

Shri Vallatharas (Pudukkottai): Similar incidents of shooting of Indian citizens by French Police, who trespassed into Indian territory, have happened already and I submitted, notice

under rule 215, last fortnight. But it had not deserved your consideration. In connection with this occasion, I would submit that Government may be pleased to give consolidated information on the number of incidents that have taken place in respect of all the French possessions in India and as to how many persons were shot dead in these incidents by the French Police.

Mr. Speaker: The information cannot be had in two or three days. All this information will be collected and naturally it will take some more time. I should have no objection at all to Government collecting all the information that they possibly can, but then the hon. Members will not be quite right in expecting the information in two or three days, as the hon. Deputy Minister stated.

Shri Anil K. Chanda: We shall supply as detailed a report as possible and as early as possible.

Shri Punnoose: Are we to understand from what the Deputy Minister stated, namely, "I have received these notices only a quarter of an hour ago and I am asking for information", that Government have not got any information from their representatives so far?

Mr. Speaker: I do not think we need discuss that point. They must, I am sure, be in daily touch, and perhaps hourly touch, with what is going on there, but to make a statement on an authoritative basis they would naturally require confirmation from our Consul-General as also from the Madras Government.

FACTORIES (AMENDMENT) BILL
—Concid.

Mr. Speaker: Now, we will proceed with legislative business and take up further consideration of the following motion moved by Shri V. V. Giri on the 27th April 1954, namely:

"That the Bill further, to amend the Factories Act, 1948, be passed."

We have taken, I think, sufficient time on it and I shall have to call upon the hon. Minister to reply. This is the third reading stage.

The Minister of Labour (Shri V. V. Giri): Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to take a good deal of the time of the House in replying to the debate during the third reading of the Bill. I take the opportunity of thanking the Members who have taken part in the debate for placing before the House constructive suggestions. However, I would like to say that I heard with great attention and respect the two speeches made by Professor Mukerjee and Professor Sharma. In the course of the debate, it has been stated by my esteemed friend, Mr. More, that the Government's attitude towards labour was maximum sympathy and minimum action. My hon. friend, Professor Sharma, said that it was maximum sympathy and maximum action. I would humbly say in reply that the Government's attitude is rational sympathy and rational action, and I am glad to say that luckily for us, the fundamental rights adumbrated in the Constitution have guaranteed certain amenities to the people—right to work, right to live and all those amenities that will make life bearable. I do not say that a good deal has been done in arriving at this ideal, but to say that nothing has been done is not a correct proposition. If it is said that more has to be done, I entirely agree with the critics to whichever side of the House they may belong. If I may be allowed to state a few instances in the matter of social legislation for industrial workers as to what has been done, I may humbly submit that the Employees State Insurance is one such and will be put into complete action—and we are likely to put it in the shortest time possible—in the course of the next one or two years. Two and a half million industrial workers will be benefited by that beneficent legislation in the shape of accident benefits, medical benefits, sickness benefits, maternity benefits, and so on. Not only that, but almost immediately we are considering the proposition