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LOK SABHA

Friday, 3rd December, 1954

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of
the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(See Part I).

12-06 P.M.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

SATYAGRAHA MOVEMENT IN MANIPUR

Mr. Speaker: Adjournment Motion of Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy. Dr. Katju was to make a statement of the facts.

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Katju): With your permission, may I read a statement?

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Dr. Katju: Shri Rishang Keishing, M.P., and the Praja-Socialist Party in Manipur have, for some time now been demanding the establishment of a Legislative Assembly and a responsible Ministry in the State. When the Part C States Act was passed in 1952, Legislatures and responsible Ministries were set up in the various 'C' States. An exception was made with regard to Kutch, Tripura and Manipur. These States are strategically situated on the borders of India. The people are still comparatively politically backward and the administrative machinery in these States is weak. It was not considered therefore expedient under the Part C States Act immediately to set

up legislatures and Ministries in these States. Advisers were appointed. Since then, the States Reorganisation Commission has been appointed and is expected to report to Government in about six months' time. We cannot yet foresee what changes in State boundaries the Commission is likely to recommend and what changes are likely to take place. When, therefore, Shri Rishang Keishing approached me and the Prime Minister for the immediate establishment of a legislature and a Ministry in Manipur, he was advised to be patient and await the publication of the States Reorganisation Commission's Report. He was told that when the future of the States become clear, the question of setting up of a legislature would be examined. Shri Rishang Keishing and the Praja-Socialist Party were, however, unable to hold themselves in patience and decided to launch a Satyagraha movement from November, 15, 1954.

The form which the Praja-Socialist Party Satyagraha in Manipur has assumed is to take out a procession and to hold a public meeting every day. These processions are sometimes joined by students and sometimes by a number of women. The authorities have not in the least interfered with either the processions or the holding of meetings or the passing of resolutions. This, however, did not satisfy the Praja-Socialist Party. They, therefore, decided to collect crowds every day in front of the Secretariat and the Advisers offices. On the first few days the crowd surged into the offices and were with great difficulty pushed out of the office rooms and the compound. Later, they were held by the police at the gates of these officers. They, however, collected

[Dr. Katju]

at the gates and tried forcibly to prevent the Government staff from entering into the Secretariat and the Advisers from attending their offices. Their intention apparently was to prevent the Advisers working and to force them to resign from the Council of Advisers. When a crowd collects and prevents people from going about their lawful business, it can hardly be described as Satyagraha. In any case, it is not possible for the Manipur administration to close down the Secretariat or for the Advisers to stop working in their offices. On these occasions therefore, the police tried to disperse the crowds by pushing them out so that the Advisers and others who are going about their lawful business, might come to their offices. For this purpose it became necessary to use some force against the crowd which refused to disperse and which manhandled the police preventing them from clearing a passage for the Advisers.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy's adjournment motion relates to the events of the 10th November, 1954. Until that date the police had never resorted to any lathi charge whatever. They had merely pushed out the crowds when necessary to make way for the Advisers to go to their office. The demonstrators on their side had been manhandling the police and causing injuries to constables and a sub-inspector. Neither Shri Rishang Keishing nor Shri Sumarendra Singh had been arrested on the 18th November. In fact, Shri Rishang Keishing had not been arrested at all. Shri Sumarendra Singh was arrested only on the 29th of November. Until the 18th November, only one person had been arrested and seven prosecutions cases involving 19 persons had been instituted in Court. The one arrested person has since been convicted and sentenced by the Magistrate to three months' simple imprisonment. On the 18th November the position was that only six of the demonstrators had received minor injuries like abrasions in their hand to

hand struggle with police. No one had received any kind of serious injury by that date. One sub-inspector of police had been attacked by the demonstrators. Two constables had received injuries and were medically examined. Other constables also received minor injuries, but they were not sent up for medical examination.

To complete the narrative right up to date, the first occasion when what may be described as a lathi charge took place was on November 25th. On that date about 200 persons collected in front of the Advisers' offices and were held up by the police at the gates. When the Advisers reached their offices, the group prevented their entry. There was a magistrate on duty at the spot and he declared the group to be an unlawful assembly. The demonstrators refused to heed the warning to disperse. Hereupon, the police attempted to push the group back in order to make a passage for the Advisers. On this, the group became defiant and started instead to push the police back and to attack them. The magistrate then ordered the police to use their bamboo sticks on the group to disperse them. The police used their sticks and the crowd then dispersed. It may be stated that though this has been described as a lathi charge, the bamboo sticks with which the Manipur police are armed on such occasions are not lathis of the type which are used by the police in North India. They are very light hollow bamboo sticks and not the solid type shod with metal which are used by the police in this part of the country.

According to the latest reports received from the Chief Commissioner, the total number of demonstrators injured in all these incidents is 73, while 24 policemen have also been injured. A head constable of the police actually received a wound from a sharp weapon on the 27th.

I understand that the student community of Manipur have now withdrawn their support to this movement of the Praja-Socialist Party. The other members of the public also appear to be lukewarm with the result that the number of demonstrators now appearing at the gates of offices is very small—about five or six every day. Therefore, the police have had no occasion at all to use any kind of force to remove these demonstrators after the 27th. There have been no incidents at all after November 27th, when the students held a meeting and disassociated themselves from the movement.

This is right up to date.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy (My-sore): May I make a submission?

Mr. Speaker: Has the hon. Member any personal knowledge of what happened there?

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: Not personal knowledge in the sense that I have gone there, but I have received telegrams.

Mr. Speaker: I do not think I need go by the telegrams which the hon. Member may have received. Here is authentic official information which is certainly more reliable, and I do not think I need give my consent to this adjournment motion.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: This official report is not authentic. That is my point. It is prejudiced and one-sided.

Mr. Speaker: The only point that I have in my mind is that I do not wish to allow the hon. Member to use the floor of this House for spreading information which may have no basis at all. Here is the official report which is certainly far more reliable than any telegrams or any letters received. That is why I first made the inquiry as to whether the hon. Member has personally been there. I do not want to go by reports.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: It was not possible to go and see things for myself. Is it ever possible to do so? Has the Home Minister gone there himself?

Mr. Speaker: The Home Minister has got his authorised agents who give him information. (*Interruption*). I need not go into that point. It is wrong to use the floor of the House for purposes of giving the reports which are merely.....

Several Hon. Members rose—

Shri Asoka Mehta (Bhandara): May I point out one thing?.....

Mr. Speaker: I am not going to give my consent to this adjournment motion.

Shri Asoka Mehta: May I make one submission on this point? You have made a certain statement. Would you permit me to point out that one of our colleagues, who is a Member of this House, is involved in it? We have been receiving communications from him. If it were somebody else, we may not be sure. But when a colleague of ours, who is a Member of this House is there, and he reports to us, surely we are entitled to put the same trust in his words as we are called upon to put trust in the words of the Home Minister.

Mr. Speaker: It is a question of weighing evidence and giving *prima facie* weight to facts coming. I give *prima facie* more weight to this. I do not give much weight to reports coming from interested quarters.

Shri Asoka Mehta: He is a Member of this House.

Mr. Speaker: He may be a Member of this House. But that does not make much difference, so far as the interests of the parties are concerned.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: Government also are interested.

Mr. Speaker: It is their business to maintain law and order. They have no interest in this or that.

Shri S. S. More (Sholapur): Is this democracy?

Mr. Speaker: It may be anything. I do not want to hear anything more on this point.

Shri Raghavachari (Penukonda): May I make a submission?

✓ **Mr. Speaker:** He can have a discussion with me in the Chamber, if he likes.

Shri Raghavachari: It is not a matter for private talk. (*Interruptions*).

Mr. Speaker: I am proceeding to the next business Papers to be laid.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: On a point of order.....

Mr. Speaker: No points of order now.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: On a point of order...

Mr. Speaker: No points of order now. There is no point of order. He can discuss the matter with me in the Chamber.

Shri Raghavachari: May I submit that this kind of treatment is not justifiable.

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Kanungo): I beg to lay the following.....

Shri N. C. Chatterjee (Hooghly): Can you rule out the point of order?

Mr. Speaker: There is no point of order. It is no use insisting upon that thing, because there is no point of order.

Shri N. C. Chatterjee: We feel we are being gagged by you, and we feel that it is our duty to ventilate the legitimate grievances, and we are denied that right.

Mr. Speaker: That may be. I am not prepared to give consent to this motion, on the facts as disclosed by the hon. Minister.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: As a protest, I walk out. I do not want to be here.

Shri A. K. Gopalan (Cannanore): you must hear the point of order.

Mr. Speaker: I told him that he can come and have a talk with me in my Chamber.

Shri S. S. More: May I know under what rule?

✓ **Mr. Speaker:** I do not want to allow the floor of the House for the purposes of any argument whatsoever.

Shri S. S. More: With due deference to you, may I know the rule under which a Member who is out to raise a point of order should see you in your Chamber privately, because it is the privilege of the House to hear the point of order?

Mr. Speaker: Because, to be very frank and plain about it, I do not see what point of order can arise. I want to examine first as to whether there is a real point of order to justify Members taking up the time of the House. (*Interruption*). Order, order. That is not the way of conducting the proceedings. Now, papers to be laid on the Table.

Shri Kanungo: I beg to lay on the Table of the House the following papers under sub-section (2) of section 16

Shri A. K. Gopalan: May I make a submission?

Mr. Speaker: Later.

Shri A. K. Gopalan: We feel that after the ruling that has been given now, and the attitude that has been shown towards us, especially a Member of Parliament who had been involved in this, and who had sent some information, which information the Chair was not ready even to hear, we feel after being treated like this that it is better for us not to be present.

✓ **Mr. Speaker:** It is a choice of the hon. Members. I cannot yield to pressure tactics.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE
TARIFF COMMISSION'S REPORT ON ZIP
FASTENER SEWING MACHINES AND
PICKERS INDUSTRIES AND GOVT. RESO-
LUTIONS THERETO.

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Kanungo): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of each of