

LOK SABHA DEBATES

Acc. No. 42561

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(Part II — Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

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LOK SABHA

Wednesday, 18th April, 1956

The Lok Sabha met at Half Past Ten of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(See Part I)

11.30 A.M.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

STRIKE BY CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES OF NAVAL DOCKYARDS AND DEPOTS AT BOMBAY

Mr. Speaker: I have received notice of an adjournment motion from Shri Kamath. The subject is:

"The strike of thousands of civilian employees in the Naval Dockyard and Naval Depots in Bombay, which has totally paralysed all activity at those important installations."

When did this strike start?

Shri Kamath: (Hoshangabad): Yesterday.

Mr. Speaker: Only yesterday? The hon. Minister.

The Minister of Defence (Dr. Katju): I have received no official information so far. I suggest that my hon. friend might ask a short notice question and then I shall put all the details before the House.

Mr. Speaker: What is this due to?

Shri Kamath: The point is the Naval Dockyard and Naval Depots in Bombay are important installations and any strike there is of considerable importance and will certainly jeopardise the normal life in Bombay. I thought the paper having reported it, the Defence Ministry officials in Bombay and the persons responsible in Bombay would have informed the Defence Ministry here, but there seems to be some slackness in the department somewhere. The

press has given the report but the Ministry has not received any report; it is very strange.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member has evidently based his motion on the news that has appeared in the Statesman. It is stated there that inasmuch as no machinery for settlement of disputes has been established those officers have gone on strike.

Shri Kamath: Over 3,000.

Mr. Speaker: How long has the negotiation for the establishment of the machinery been going on? Non-establishment of machinery by the Government for settlement of disputes and conditions relating to service etc., is the cause of the strike. The Government have not struck. Government takes action in due course, or if Government takes any particular action, some other man strikes. How can you censure the Government here except for the order that was passed, whether it was right or wrong? Are we in a position to say whether it was right or wrong or have a discussion on that?

Secondly, machinery has to be evolved by Government for the settlement of disputes, and negotiations must have been going on for some time. Suddenly one fine morning they say, "You have not established any machinery", and they go on strike. What am I to ask the Government to do—immediately to say: "All right, the machinery will be established." That is coercing the Government with respect to this. I am not able to see the point. When an order is passed in the course of the administration by the Government, some officers who do not like it go on strike and immediately we must strike in this House? Now, an adjournment must be for some purpose. I would like to be enlightened with respect to this matter.

Shri K. K. Basu (Diamond Harbour): The matter is very serious concerning the Naval Dockyard and Naval Depots. There has been a failure by Government to prevent the strike. Government should come forward and take

[Shri K. K. Basu]

the House into confidence and say these are the facts. As the Defence Minister says he has no material, let the whole matter stand over for a day or two. We should be enlightened and then come to a decision on the failure of the Government. We do not know who is responsible. We can judge after all the facts are laid before the House.

**The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru):** We are all anxious, Sir, that the facts, as fully possible, should be placed before the House, and my colleague has said he will place them. The best course is a short notice question. In a day or two, as soon as we have the full facts, we will place them before the House.

**Shri V. G. Deshpande (Guna):** The point is this. Government should give us the information. The Chair has given a very good defence of their case, but we want to know from the Government, and want to express our opinion by this adjournment motion. It is a sufficiently serious situation that a large number of the workers have struck, and it will have effects on the defence position of India or essential services in the country. If the House feels that it is a sufficiently urgent and important matter, we have every right to discuss it. That is the submission I want to make.

**Shri Kamath:** You have put several questions. Let the motion be admitted and we could have a discussion.

**Mr. Speaker:** The only point is whether there is sufficient ground here for my putting it off so that I may consider the adjournment motion, but if it is intended only to elicit information from the Government, then I could take whatever steps are necessary. Anyhow, I will allow this to stand over till tomorrow.

**An Hon. Member:** Tomorrow is a holiday.

**Mr. Speaker:** Till day after tomorrow. Let us have some statement from the hon. Minister, but so far as these matters are concerned, I would like to say it is no doubt serious, but it is a question of what it is based on. It is on the information that we have here in this newspaper that has been evidently handed over by Shri Kamath, that he has tabled his motion. The information contained in this newspaper is

that a machinery for settlement of disputes has not been invented or established by the Government and therefore a number of people have gone on strike. That is all. Now on that alone I have to give consent. It is not Shri Deshpande but I who has to give consent as to whether this is a sufficient cause for censoring the Government. The hon. Minister has said that he will make a statement in answer to a short notice question. I would request him to make a statement independently of a short notice question as soon as he gets the material.

**Dr. Katju:** Will you please make it the 21st so that there may be ample time to collect all the relevant materials?

**Mr. Speaker:** It will stand over till day after tomorrow.

**Shri V. G. Deshpande:** On a point of order. When the Government is censured, may I know whether it is for the House to decide or for the Chair to give a ruling? I think the House should decide whether censure should be expressed.

**Mr. Speaker:** Inasmuch as it was said to be a point of order, let me state that the Chair has to give a ruling first as to whether consent ought to be given or not. I am at that stage, and therefore it is not as if I have given consent already and I am trying to displace the opinion of the House by my own opinion. I am still considering as to whether this is a motion to which I must give consent and bring it before the House. Anyhow I have adjourned this matter today after tomorrow when the hon. Defence Minister will make a statement.

**Shri Kamath:** On a point of clarification. Is it your ruling that an adjournment motion is always tantamount to a censure motion?

**Mr. Speaker:** It is unnecessary to decide that matter now. The House will now take up other matters.

#### PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE AMENDMENTS TO TEA RULES

**The Minister of Commerce and Industry and Iron and Steel (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari):** I beg to lay on the Table, under sub-section (3) of Section 49 of the Tea Act, 1953, a copy of the