

(Part II—Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

OFFICIAL REPORT

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HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Thursday, 6th August, 1953

*The House met at a Quarter Past Eight
of the Clock*

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(See Part I)

9-15 A.M.

MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT

SHRI KAMI REDDI'S HUNGER STRIKE

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I have received two adjournment motions, one from Dr. Lanka Sundaram and the other from Mr. K. Subrahmanyam. I would like to know briefly from the hon. Members how this is the concern of this Government.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram (Visakhapatnam): Sir, the fast unto death of Shri Kami Reddi, who is now on death bed actually, on the 49th day of his fast, arises out of an executive decision of the Government of India to give certain portions of the Bellary district to the Mysore State as proposed in the Bill which has been presented to the Madras and Mysore legislatures. This executive decision of the Government of India has been arrived at without properly ascertaining, in the most approved fashion, either through a boundary commission or a plebiscite, the wishes of the people. Related to the second point, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, is the fact that when Mr. Justice Wanchoo was sent out and he made certain

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recommendations on this question, they were rejected. Then Justice Misra went and his recommendations were implemented executively. Finally, Sir, hundreds of people have been arrested, including the Chairman of the Bellary Municipality. The situation today of Mr. Kami Reddi is perilous. These are my reasons.

Shri K. Subrahmanyam (Vizianagaram): Even Justice Misra has hinted at the point that short of plebiscite, nothing can solve the problem of Bellary satisfactorily or finally. Therefore, I urge upon the Prime Minister to save the precious life of Mr. Kami Reddi and declare on the floor of the House that a plebiscite or a boundary commission will be appointed to go into the question of the disputed areas.

The Prime Minister (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): Sir, the simple question before the House is as to whether, in view of a gentleman undertaking a hunger strike for a political object, a decision of the Government of India communicated to this House long ago should be upset. Now, the gentleman in question Mr. Kami Reddi, I have no doubt, is an estimable person and has been moved by the best of intentions. But, I really cannot understand how any Member of this House can suggest that Governmental decisions taken after as careful an enquiry as possible should be changed, varied or upset because of an individual indulging in hunger strike. As a matter of fact, in this particular matter, as much care as possible was taken through enquiries by competent impartial individuals to

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find out what was the right course to adopt. It was declared and adopted. I would commend to such of the hon. Members as have not read the report of Justice Misra to read it to see how carefully he went into this question. He had no prejudice in the matter; he had no predilection in the matter. He went into the question and made his report, and Government after considering had accepted it. Now, apart from the fact that Government think that their decision was absolutely correct and the right one, they are still more convinced that no action of the Government is going to be allowed to be influenced in this way by hunger strikes. Otherwise—it does not matter what Government functions here—no Government will function.

In the present case, my colleague the Home Minister was telling me that he has received a large number of telegrams. Probably, I have received some; but he has got a bunch of them. Telegrams come in exactly what proportion I do not know, some urging one thing and the others urging the other thing, both sides threatening hunger strikes if their wishes are not adhered to, and they are contradictory wishes. Some send us telegrams or letters supporting Mr. Kami Reddi's fast; others threaten the Government, 'if you give in to Mr. Kami Reddi's fast, you have to deal with our fast after that'. So that, politics is reduced to a strange level and this House becomes powerless, if I may say so, before external happenings of this kind. I have great sympathy for Mr. Kami Reddi. I do not wish to criticise him because I know he has been a good constructive worker in the past. It is a pity that a man who has done good work in the past and can do very good work in the future in the new State of Andhra that is coming up, should associate himself with something which can only lead to bitterness on the eve of the formation of this Andhra State. I might inform the House that, not in my capacity as Prime Minister, but in

some other capacities. I sent a telegram to Mr. Kami Reddi last evening, telling him frankly my opinion that what he was doing was very wrong, that it was a wrong method, that the question of Bellary could not be re-opened in this way, that it would lead to trouble, that the question remained as it was, that I would be glad to see him if he wants to see me later and asking him to give up his fast.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: With your permission, Sir, may I draw the attention of the Prime Minister to the statement made by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, on the 17th July in Madras stating that Bellary is one of the issues to be included in the terms of reference of the proposed boundary commission?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: Which commission?

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: Commission to settle the disputed areas.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: The Andhra State Bill which would be coming up before this House presently, I believe, has some clauses about the appointment of a boundary commission or commissions. The idea is, I believe, that each of the two States concerned, that is, the Andhra and the residuary State of Madras, or Andhra and Mysore, should appoint boundary commissions—not so much the Government of India, but they should appoint boundary commissions—to deal with minor rectifications of the border. It is up to the States to give such directions as they like to their boundary commissions. Anything they agree to, we are completely agreeable to.

Shri B. S. Murthy (Eluru): Is it not a fact that Justice Misra has said that a plebiscite should decide these issues? The Prime Minister has not been pleased to state why that portion of the report has not been taken into consideration while dealing with the *frakas* of Moka, Rupanagudi and Bellary including Bellary town.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: If I may say so, I do not wish to contradict the hon. Member. That is not exactly what Justice Misra has said. He has come to firm conclusions about certain matters. He says, "If anybody asks how many feel this way or that, only a plebiscite can give that, I cannot state precisely without counting of heads; this is my firm conclusion..... etc." He has not recommended a plebiscite. Casually he has mentioned about it.

Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani (New Delhi): The hon. Prime Minister just now said that there are certain other disputed areas and that all these will be referred to a boundary commission. There is considerable feeling over this question of Bellary. Not that we appreciate a fast on political issues; I certainly would like to say that this is not the method by which we should decide such questions. But, as an honest man, he has sincerely undertaken this fast and his life is now in danger. I am sure there is also considerable feeling on this point. I do not think there is any harm if this matter be referred to a boundary commission along with other questions when you accept that you are going to appoint a boundary commission.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: The hon. Lady Member would have realised that first of all, this is not a matter between the Government of India and anybody, any party or any State or the protagonists of any State. The Government of India being, I hope, an impartial adviser, helper, friend and counsellor—call it whatever you may like—whatever we do leaves an imposition on one State or the other. We have, therefore, sent judicial officers of high standing to go into it and when we consider their report we think it is a fair report. And it has reference to a boundary commission. The boundary commissions were not in terms of disputes originally when we discussed about them but in terms of minor rectifications of the border. We do not at this stage want to trouble

this House with these minor points but to take the districts in one or the other as they were and then constitute the Andhra Province and then go in for greater details in the matter of minor rectifications. I say we have no hand in this as whether the dispute is between the Madras residuary State and Andhra or Andhra and Mysore, the parties concerned can refer anything they like in detail to the boundary commission. The House, no doubt, knows that after this matter of Andhra State is definitely settled and the Andhra State starts functioning, it is Government's intention to consider the larger issue of a re-organisation of States, etc., in India from all points of view because we have come to the conclusion that piecemeal consideration of the subject is not right. It affects other parties fourth party interests; they cannot be separated. India is an organic whole and however much we may divide it for administrative purposes, as a matter of fact, each division affects some State. Therefore, if we consider the matter as an organic whole and appoint a high-powered commission some time later this year to consider this problem dispassionately and to make such recommendations to Government as they think fit and proper. Government would, no doubt, place it before this House.

Some Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: There must be an end to this. I have heard the views from all sides.

Shri A. K. Gopalan (Cannanore): Not from this side.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The leader must have got up.

Shri A. K. Gopalan: The Prime Minister has just now referred to Kami Reddi's fast and, when the Prime Minister was referring to that, he also stated that there is the other side which is strongly opposed to Kami Reddi's fast and from that we can understand that there are, no doubt, two sections that claim a certain portion. Is it not necessary in that situation that the Central Government

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should agree to a plebiscite if both parties agree to it. That is the way how a solution can be found because the Prime Minister himself stated that from both sides telegrams have been coming about this dispute and we cannot say which side is stronger. Then, is it not the duty of the Central Government in such a situation to see that the other party does not suffer?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The hon. the Leader of the Communist Party has spoken now. It is rather unfortunate that a hunger strike should be resorted to on a matter like this. Shri Kami Reddi is a very good worker and it is now the fortieth day of his fast. His condition is very serious. It is true that some sections of the Andhras may not be thoroughly satisfied with the decision but we have always held that hunger strikes of this kind, however laudable they may be, are not constitutional methods of deciding the issue or forcing the Government to decide on the issue. As it was suggested, the matter is also coming up before the House and more coolly the matter may be discussed and if the Government would like to change the policy already decided, there is absolutely no difficulty. Under those circumstances, I may only refer to the previous ruling that has been given. It is to the effect that if this principle is conceded, it can prejudice the impartial decision of the Central Government. Therefore, while it may be proper when the matter comes up before the House during the Andhra Bill or in any other form, I am afraid I will have to reluctantly withhold my consent to the adjournment motion, because I do not feel that these are constitutional methods by which the hands of the Government or the Parliament will be forced. I am sorry, I am unable to give consent to these adjournment motions.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Now, Dr. Lanka Sundaram.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram (Visakhapatnam): May I have your permission,

Sir, to enquire from the Prime Minister whether he will be pleased to make a statement generally on foreign affairs covering all the issues and recent developments in which India is interested, and that there may be a full dress debate thereon?

The Prime Minister (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): The House knows that I welcome very much the consideration of the situation as it exists in the world today more especially in regard to matters affecting India. We are having a short session this time, and it is a very full session. It may not be particularly easy to find time. Nevertheless, I do hope to find some time to address the House. It may perhaps be longer than usual and for that purpose we will have a second sitting. If the House will be good enough to leave it to me, I would suggest that probably a good time for the debate might be in the third or fourth week of this month. I might make a comprehensive statement as Dr. Lanka Sundaram suggested because that itself becomes part of the debate.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: Does it mean that the Prime Minister would make the statement first and there will be an interval between the statement and the debate?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I have no particular desire to do that unless some occasion arises. But that was what I thought Dr. Lanka Sundaram was asking.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: Yes, Sir. I wanted to make that point clear.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I shall make a brief statement when the occasion arises and if possible more than one statement—I mean different statements on different subjects I am interested in. A comprehensive statement about the world situation becomes a long statement.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: When a day is decided on this, there will be a debate.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I have to inform the hon. Members that I have received the following letter from Shri A. K. Basu:—

"For reasons of health I have to be in Switzerland for a month or two. I would, therefore, request you to be kind enough to obtain the leave of the House for my absence during the forthcoming Session of the House."

Is it the pleasure of the House that permission be granted to Shri A. K. Basu for remaining absent from all meetings of the House during this Session?

Leave was granted.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

TARIFF COMMISSION REPORT ON RETENTION PRICES OF TATA STEEL AND GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION THEREON

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of each of the following papers under subsection (2) of Section 16 of the Tariff Commission Act, 1951:—

- (i) Report of the Tariff Commission on the fair retention prices of steel produced by the Tata Iron & Steel Co. Ltd. (1953);
- (ii) Ministry of Commerce and Industry Resolution No. SC(A)-2 (96)/52, dated 20th July, 1953 [Placed in the Library. See No. IV R 159 (22).]

COLLECTION OF STATISTICS BILL —concl.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The House will resume consideration of the motion moved on the 5th August, viz.,

"The Bill to facilitate the collection of statistics of certain kinds

relating to industries, trade and commerce be taken into consideration."

Shri N. C. Chatterjee (Hooghly): Sir, on the eve of India's Independence Day I ought to remind you that most of the foreign firms in India were expecting that some concrete steps would be taken by the Government to hasten the pace of Indianisation both in the commercial and industrial field as well as in other sectors of national life. After all, Sir, independent India demanded that the country's nationals should have an adequate place in all organisations controlling their economic life and development. Indeed, we know that many foreign firms had reconciled themselves to this position and they promoted many of their Indian executives to senior cadres. But, Sir, for some reason, some inscrutable reason, I must say the Government of India has not been very watchful, and as watchful as the circumstances warranted, and that made the foreign firms feel somewhat complacent. The result has been that from complacency there has been a drift against progressive Indianisation. And, as I gave you some facts, there has been a neglect of our nationals in foreign firms. As a consequence, there have been good many complaints against discrimination. Ultimately, New Delhi has been energised into action by the volume of complaints.

How far the charge of deliberate discrimination and victimisation is correct can only be realized if proper data and statistics are collected. The Government is stating in the Statement of Objects and Reasons:

"Though Government can exert pressure to make certain firms submit returns, it is expedient that Government should be armed with powers to compel all concerns (including Managing Agency firms) engaged in (a) trade and commerce with foreign countries, (b) inter-State trade and commerce, (c) trading firms or Corpora-